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## State carries out mass arrests, ignores kidnappers' demands

Five days have passed since a Dutch couple was kidnapped by an armed group from the Bani Dhabyan tribe, just ten kilometers outside of Sana'a. State security has surrounded the Bani Dhabyan area some 90 kilometers southeast of Sana'a, and has arrested many of its members to force the kidnappers into surrender. Although the Bani Dhabyan tribe is known to kidnap foreigners to extract demands from the government - usually the release of detained relatives, this time they demand medical treatment for six men who were attacked by the state's security forces in Marib last year.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, April 5 — The tribe holding a Dutch couple as hostages has demanded the state investigate an April 2008 attack by security forces in Marib against one of their tribal convoys. Ali Naser Siraj, from the Bani Dhabyan tribe who led the kidnapping last Tuesday, explained that the state had wronged both him and his tribe when security forces attacked their tribe, critically wounding six men.

This attack could have been the same one in which the Central Security Police prevented members of the Bani Dhabyan tribe from kidnapping four engineers in Marib governorate on April 24, 2008. The foiled kidnapping attempt

targeted four engineers, who annually check flood alarms in canals which lead to the Marib dam. At the time, sources in the tribe stated that the Central Security Police in the governorate injured three of the kidnappers at a police checkpoint while the police tried to release the hostages.

However, Siraj denied his group's involvement in anything "wrong." "They opened fire on us without reason and for a year we have been demanding the state explain the attack and give the wounded medical treatment," he said. "When we did not find any response, we realized we had to do something outrageous to attract the state's attention to our plight."

Jan Hoogendoorn and Heleen

Janszen are now residing in a one-room house that was built overnight by the kidnapping tribe with an attached basic lavatory. They did not understand why they were kidnapped or what was happening to them because of the language barrier, until they spoke to Yemen Times. When the newspaper explained to Jan and Heleen what the kidnappers' demands were, they expressed their dissatisfaction at Yemeni security, and their concern regarding the state using violence against the kidnappers.

"Yemen deserves a more reliable government, we have been working in the water sector in Taiz for three years, and we had decided to leave prior to the kidnapping because their project that aims at helping Taiz cope with its water

problem was not yielding effective results due to government inefficiency," said Jan. He expressed his frustration at how excellent projects are hindered by the state's inability which he called a "very serious issue" that needed to be dealt with.

Jan is working for Vitens, the biggest water company in the Netherlands. Vitens has been developing international activities, towards the United Nations' seventh Millennium Development Goal, to reduce the number of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water should be reduced by half before 2015.

He and Heleen had sent farewell email to their friends and colleagues just



Heleen at the market in Sana'a's old city. Photo courtesy of Jan Hoogendoorn and Heleen Janszen

a few days before the kidnapping. In the email, they explained how much they loved Yemen but how difficult working in this country is. The couple has a website in Dutch in which they explain their work in Yemen and advocate for the country's nature and people.

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## Torrential rains hit the country

By: Ali Saeed

AL-JAWF, April 5 — Hail and thunder wreaked havoc as torrential rains poured across the republic three days ago. The rains caused the death of 750 cattle and 5 people and injured seven others. More rain is expected in the coming days around the republic and especially in western part of the country.

"Heavy rains fell from 3pm till 8pm on Friday evening in the district of Barat, which is in the Western part of the governorate of Al-Jawf, along with neighborhoods in Sa'ada," said Rasheed Al-Ariqi, Director of the Weather Forecast Unit at the Metrology and Civil Aviation Authority.

It wasn't only districts of Al-Jawf that were hit by the torrential rains. Ibb, Al-

Mahwit, Taiz, Hadramout, and Mareb were also subjected to heavy rain, with varying levels of rainfall. The highest level that was recorded was in Ibb with a rainfall of 10 millimeters, and the lowest was in Mahwit with 5 millimeters.

However, no losses were reported in these governorates. All losses were in Al-Jawf, Taiz, and Marib.

In Al-Jawf, the two districts that were highly affected by the rains were Khab and Shugaf. The governor of Al-Jawf, Hussein Hazeb, stated to the press that the resulting floods swept away 300 sheep and devastated agriculture.

Recent statistics from the governorate of Al-Jawf indicate that 750 cattle were swept away by the floods, 63 families were also affected by the floods since their houses are made of straw and mud bricks. Inhabitants stated to the press

that around 30 families are now homeless and living under the open skies.

Governor Hazeb set up a committee to follow the situation. He also stated that hail hit a man on his shoulder and a woman on her head, causing minor injuries. Medical teams are now receiving various medical cases that were caused by the rains, totaling around 170 individuals.

In the district of Al-Silw, Taiz governorate, people found a man under the mud after a rockslide killed him. In Mareb, floods also drowned a man and two children and swept away hundreds of acres of wheat.

The Metrology and Civil Aviation Authority continues to warn people about turbulent weather in the coming days and recommends taking needful precautions.

## Economic reforms to be adopted by government

By: Ismail Al-Ghabri

SANA'A, April 2 — A recent economic report confirms the government's intention to implement procedures and policies designed to stimulate economic growth rates during the years 2009 and 2010.

The report issued by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation indicates that the plan will focus on the implementation of procedures and remedies necessary to stimulate economic growth rates in Yemen by completing various economic reforms. Such reforms will help to create a favorable investment environment in the country.

The report emphasized that the government's priorities cover a number of strategic targets, including the exploitation of potential opportunities in the non-oil sectors and the acceleration of following up donors' pledges to fund development projects.

Other plans will encourage the exploration for oil and minerals in new areas and will promote investment in areas where geological surveys have initially proved the presence of com-

mercial quantities of minerals.

The report stated that the government is in a position to prepare and implement a national strategy for exploiting local economic potentialities and to benefit from the Aden Free Zone as well as from other economic resources. The government also plans to improve national infrastructure. It further pointed out that the government's economic agenda during 2009 will focus on ensuring the proper utilization of available resources to address the potential shortfall in resources as a result of the decline in global oil prices. These resources include donors' investments, particularly those from the Gulf Cooperation Council. The economic report said that the government's main plan to address the sharp decline in global oil prices is to pursue a policy of monetary support that will reduce price hikes in Yemen. The Central Bank of Yemen will control liquidity in the local market and will reduce monetary supply growth rates to match the growth rate of the gross domestic product.

It will also raise the efficiency of monetary policy tools through the free-

ing of interest rates, diversifying and developing the foreign exchange market instruments, and the modernization of the payments system.

In addition, the government plans to review the current financial policy so as to increase production and investment through the development of revenues, the reduction of tax evasion, the restructuring of public expenditure, and the reduction of current expenditures. It also plans to introduce reforms to bring about a balance between investment and operational expenditure and to reduce the need to endorse extra crediting for the public budget.

The report concluded that procedures to be adopted in 2009 will enhance the flexibility and the degree of openness of markets as well as expand the scope of the Yemeni economy through the strengthening of investments. The government also plans to diversify the sources of national income and accelerate the pace of structural reforms in order to improve the overall business environment, increase sustained productivity in the oil sector, and to revitalize the private sector.

## Yemen grants Somalis 100 scholarships

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

SANA'A, April 4 — Somalis living in Yemen or in Somalia can apply to study in Yemeni state universities through a scholarship program provided by the Yemeni government.

This program includes 100 higher education scholarships, ten of which are for post-graduate studies. Moreover, this 10 percent could potentially increase as per the request made by Somalia's Minister of Education, Ibrahim Ado, during his current visit to Yemen.

Somali students benefitting from these scholarships could either be refugees in Yemen or could come directly for the education from Somalia.

"We try to help increase educated and trained Somalis who will be able to rebuild their country," said Dr. Fadl Ba-Alwi, head of cultural exchange and international cooperation at the Ministry of Higher Education. "The initiative of providing Somali students with seats in Yemeni universities is more than five years old," he added. The number of scholarships has substantially increased since 2008 to 100 scholarships, although the actual number of candidates last year did not exceed 70 percent. Moreover, last year, Yemen offered 50 vocational training scholarships, but this grant has not yet been repeated this year.

The Ministry of Higher education



Somali students can now aspire to a brighter future with up to 100 scholarships to Sana'a University.

agreed with Somali education officials to distribute the 2009-2010 scholarships among different specializations. So far, medicine will take ten seats, dentistry five, pharmaceuticals seven, medical labs seven, engineering ten, science five, agriculture eight, veterinary science five, economy ten, education five, media eight, and ten for computer science, according to Ba-Alwi.

"Most of these students return to Somalia after finishing their study," said Mohamed Daware, the Somali Ambassador to Yemen. "Some of them may find jobs in Yemen." He praised President Saleh's instructions to facilitate work for Somalis in Yemen if they find suitable opportunities.

Somali refugees make up about 94 percent of an estimated total of 150,000 refugees currently in Yemen. In 2008 alone, more than 50,000 refugees arrived in Yemen. Most of them were Somalis, according to UNHCR.

Refugee skills and education profiles are very low due to poor training programs and education in their home land. More than 50 percent of the refugee population is illiterate, mostly the older generations, according to a report by UNHCR in 2008.

Because they cannot afford living expenses, Somali students tend to drop out of Yemeni schools after completing basic education.

## Continued from page 1

### No leniency in dealing with kidnappers

Governor of Sana'a No'man Dowaid said in a press statement on April 1 that the country will adopt "zero tolerance against anyone who commits such crimes harming homeland security and stability." He said this after his meeting with tribal figures of the Bani Dhabyan tribe last Wednesday, during which he had demanded the quick release of the hostages.

The Dutch couple was ten kilometers outside Sana'a on their way to their home in Taiz. They were driving their own vehicle at 11 am on March 31 when an armed group of five people forced them off the road.

"I thought I could either speed off or surrender, but when I saw the kalashnikovs I decided it is wiser to just do what they say," said Jan. He was told to get into the back of the car with his wife and driven along dirt tracks until the two cars reached the border of the Bani Dhabyan area some 90 kilometers southeast the capital Sana'a, when they were joined by a third car.

The hostages were allowed to make phone calls to inform the embassy and their family of the kidnapping. When security took note of what had happened, the Ministry of Interior surrounded the tribal area and began mass arrests of anyone even remotely related to the kidnapping tribe.

Tribal mediation have been active on the case, especially that Bani Dhabyan tribe has a long history of kidnapping. So far, all of the previous incidents ended up amicably as the hostages were released and the kidnappers' demands which usually included the release of detained relatives were met.

This time the kidnappers wanted security officials, especially Head of Marib Security Mohammed Al-Ghadra and Head of Central Security in Marib Mohammed Omar and a number of sol-

diers, to be held accountable for their attack against the kidnappers' tribe last year. So far the state has not shown any intention to investigate the incident, instead issuing a press statement describing its security measures around the area.

"What I don't understand is that how could we be kidnapped in broad daylight and from the same area where a German archeological expert was kidnapped in January this year. The lack of check points or security road blocks in an area known for its risks to foreigners was unnerving," explained Jan.

He also said that, if the alleged attack against the tribal people last year was true, "it would not be the first time the state security was out of line."

Minister of Interior Rashad Al-Masri ordered an investigation as to why and how the kidnappers could travel 80 kilometers without crossing any check point or security blocks.

### Genuine hospitality and mediation

Although not much communication is taking place between Bani Dhabyan tribe and the two Dutch hostages, they feel safe. "We eat Yemeni food, and they try to take care of us. We walk around and don't feel threatened. But despite this nice treatment, it is difficult when your freedom is taken away from you and when we don't know when we will be able to go back home," said Heleen.

She said that, although people are nice, they can't help but flinch at the sight of the kalashnikovs and arms carried by the tribesmen: "The sight of weapons is disturbing, although they are never aimed at us," she added.

The kidnappers explained that they are doing their best to make the hostages' experience pleasant, but they warned that if the state decides to use force they can't guarantee the foreigners' safety.

"If the state decides to use force, what happens to the Dutch couple is not our

### State carries out mass arrests, but ignores kidnappers' demands

responsibility," warned Siraj. "All we want is medical treatment for our men. One of them has become paralyzed, and the others are badly wounded and in pain. I just want to know why we were attacked and what kind of state this is, in which no one cares what happens to its people."

The Dutch Embassy explained that they are in continuous contact with the hostages who have been given the freedom to communicate through mobile phone to whoever they want. They have their required medicine and their basic needs have been provided for.

"We are in continuous contact with the government and the mediators and the safety of the hostages is our first priority," said Harry Buikema, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Yemen, although he admitted that he did not know when the hostages would be released.

"We have been given assurances from the Yemeni government that it would not use force," he confirmed.

Dar Al-Salam, a non-governmental organization established to promote peace and non-violence, has been actively involved in the mediation efforts for the safe release of the hostages. Shiekh Abdurrahman Al-Marwani, director of the organization, explained that a number of tribal figures are traveling back and forth between the kidnappers and the government in order to resolve the affair.

"The kidnappers have agreed to drop demands that those responsible for the attack last year be brought to justice, to just getting their wounded treated. We hope that this issue ends peacefully," said Al-Marwani.

Shiekh Al-Damani Al-Salami and Shiekh Mohammed Al-Maqtari, the main mediators, have promised that they will do their best to ensure the state and kidnappers reach an agreement without compromising the hostage's safety or wellbeing. "We know that there are people working on our issue. We are coping well,

especially since we are used to living in Yemen. We have heard of kidnapping before, but never thought it would happen to us," said Heleen commenting on their last experience in Yemen before their previously planned departure by the end of the month.

Officials from the Ministry of Interior did not respond and were not available to comment.

### A history of kidnapping

In the last five years, more than 220 foreigners have been kidnapped in Yemen by tribes demanding either money or the release of prisoners. In 1998, the Anti-Kidnapping law was passed, stating that kidnappers are to receive capital punishment, but to date the state has not executed any kidnappers.

On Jan. 18, 2009 tribesmen abducted a German oil expert in the southeastern Yemeni province of Shabwa and released him two days later. The kidnappers demanded the release of a jailed fellow tribesman.

In Jan. 3, 2009 a South African family was kidnapped in Abyan and released the following day unharmed.

In December 2008, a German family was freed after being held for less than a week by the Bani Dhabyan tribe, who received a ransom fee of about USD 100,000 from the Yemeni government.

In September 2008, armed tribesmen held two Colombian engineers hostage for three days in southern Yemen and demanded the release of a fellow tribesman detained by police in connection with criminal offences.

In May 2008, two Japanese women were kidnapped in Marib by gunmen as they were visiting the area. They were released after having been held for less than a day.

In January 2006, Yemeni tribesmen from the Zaidi tribe in Marib freed five Italian tourists after holding them captive

for almost a week to force authorities to release jailed family members.

In September 2006, four French tourists were freed after being held for more than two weeks by the Al-Abdullah tribe in Shabwa in return for the release of detained relatives.

In December 2005, former state secretary of the German Foreign Office, his wife and their three sons were freed after having been abducted for four days by the same tribe of Al-Abdullah in Shabwa. The captors demanded the release of five tribesmen held by the government. The Yemeni Defense Minister was apparently the one who negotiated their release.

Two Austrian tourists who were kidnapped by tribesmen from Marib the same month, and released two days later unharmed. Kidnappers wanted the release of detainees from the same tribe.

In November 2005, two Swiss tourists were released hours after being kidnapped by the Obeida tribe in Marib in order to exert pressure on the government to release one of its members.

In March 2001, the Polish Ambassador to Yemen was freed after nearly four days of being held hostage by armed members of the Qiyari tribe from a busy street in Sana'a.

In September 2000, a German businessman was abducted in Sana'a and released after being kept for nine days in Sirwa in south Yemen.

The same month, a Chinese accountant was kidnapped while taking a morning stroll near his home. Police later arrested four suspects. It was reported that the kidnappers were from the Nihm tribe. Their leader, a former army colonel, was demanding that the authorities cancel his retirement, return his car, and employ 20 members of his tribe in the special Guards' Army. He was released unharmed on Oct. 18, 2000.

In July 2000, 2,000 armed tribesmen kidnapped a German diplomat in Sana'a.

A security official said the man was in a car with his wife. The gunmen took him but left his wife behind. Police said the hostage was being held in the region of Amas, an area controlled by the Al-Hadaa tribe, 100 km southeast of Sana'a. He was released in September 2000.

In May 2000, a German was kidnapped while walking near Tahrir Square in central Sana'a and taken to Marib. He was abducted by the Al Ali bin Falah branch of the Jahm tribe, who demanded the release of six tribesmen who had been detained and sentenced to having their hands and feet chopped off for kidnapping Faisal Muthanna Omar, head of the Supreme Court committee. He was released unharmed on June 13.

In May 2000, members of the Al Abu Asha branch of the Murad tribe kidnapped a Bulgarian female doctor from a hospital in Rada'a, in Al-Bayda. They were demanding the release of a group of prisoners in Sana'a.

In January 2000, two Italian tourists were kidnapped by the Al-Hatik tribe near Marib, but released after a few hours.

In January 2000, a German oil expert was taken hostage in Shabwa. His kidnappers, from the Karb tribe, demanded that the company employ 50 tribesmen. He was released the next day and officials said no deal had been made.

In 2000, a Norwegian diplomat was killed in crossfire between tribes and state security.

In 1999, three British and one Italian were killed during a botched army attempt to free them from Islamist militants in Abyan where they were holding 16 tourists hostage.

In 1997 alone, 50 foreigners were taken hostage.

For detailed information on kidnapping incidents in Yemen between 1996 and 2001, please check <http://www.al-bab.com/yemen/data/kidnap.htm>



In Brief

**SHABWA**  
Three security-wanted captured in Shabwa governorate

The security apparatuses in Shabwa governorate have captured three suspects wanted for Abyan governorate, the Interior Ministry said on Saturday.

The Ministry said that the suspects have managed to escape from the hunting campaign in Abyan being carried out since few days, but the security authorities in the adjacent Shabwa governorate were waiting for them.

The security bodies of Shabwa governorate made clear that the three men were arrested in Ataq district of Shabwa after coordination between the two governorates, noting they were handed over to security bodies in Abyan.

In Abyan, the security men have captured about 50 suspects since the beginning of the hunting campaign.

The campaign will continue until all wanted persons being arrested and get their fair punishment, the Ministry said.

**SANA'A**  
Parliament agrees to question justice minister

The Parliament agreed on Saturday on a request presented by a number of representatives of the parliament to question Ghazi al-Aghbari, Minister of Justice.

The members of parliament wanted to question al-Aghbari over the arrest of a Member of Parliament Ahmed al-Barati, who is suspected by the judiciary of involvement in the murder of the Khidair District General Manager.

The decision of the parliament was based on an article No. 97 of constitution.

**39 persons died due to traffic accidents last week**

Some 39 persons died in 274 traffic accidents across the country during last week.

According to report of the traffic department, the material losses of these accidents reached around YR 31million.

The report said that the reasons of these accidents were over speed, carelessness, technical faults and ignorance for traffic signs

**Dutch businessmen desire to set up joint investments in Yemen**

In talks held in Amsterdam capital of Netherlands, Yemeni and Dutch businessmen have agreed to set up joint investment projects in Yemen in different fields.

The talks came within activities of the symposium on investment opportunities in Yemen, which was organized

in Hague city of Netherlands by the General Investment Authority GIA and Yemeni Embassy in Netherlands as well as the General Union for Commercial and Industrial Chambers and cooperation sector at the Dutch foreign Ministry.

The two-day symposium aimed at enlightening Dutch businessmen on the available opportunities of investment in Yemen especially in oil, industry, agriculture and fisheries wealth sectors.

Abdul Majeed al-Sadi, a member of General Union for Commercial and Industrial Chambers stated to the 26 September weekly that the Dutch businessmen voiced their desire to do joint investments in Yemen with Yemeni partners, saying that there are further visits to discuss fields of the investments in the country.

**Trial of 12 people to be launched next week**

The state security court is to begin next Monday the trial of 12 people out of 190 suspects who had been arrested on charges of forming an armed gang to carry out acts of murder and bombings and destructing public and private properties at the area of Bani Hoshish in Sana'a province.

A judicial source was quoted on Friday by the state-run 26september weekly as saying that the defendants would be tried on charges of committing murders and endangering the safety of the society, leading to the killing and wounding a number of officers and soldiers and the destruction of a number of military vehicles during the period from May 24 through July 19 2008.

The source added that the prosecution is currently completing the investigations with the rest of the defendants in order to submit their files to the court within the next few days.

**Accounting training course at YWU concluded**

A training course was concluded here on Thursday at Yemen Women Union (YWU)'s branch in accounting records and book-keeping field.

The six-day course was organized by YWU's branch in collaboration with Care International and with participation of 26 trainees from governorates of Sana'a, Dhala, Saada, Marib, Jawf and the Capital Secretariat.

Head of YWU's branch Horiah Jar-Allah pointed out the course included a number of important topics aiming at qualifying the workers in the union branches in accounting records book-keeping field.

Undersecretary of Sana'a governorate Abdullah al-Ansi expressed readiness of the governorate's leadership

to support suchlike specializing courses for their positive output on the trainees and their works in the union's branches in different provinces.

**Manuscripts smuggling through Sana'a airport thwarted**

The security apparatuses, antiquities office and customs at Sana'a International Airport thwarted on Thursday an attempt for smuggling two manuscripts containing drawings, astronomer symbols and Arab fonts.

Director of Antiquities Office at the airport told Saba that the found manuscripts were in possession of a passenger heading to Turkey.

The antiquities official pointed out that the Manuscripts Sector at Culture Ministry is currently conducting maintenance and inventory process for all manuscripts in the governmental and private libraries to protect the heritage and the scientific treasures from extinction.

The specialized authorities at Sana'a International Airport thwarted an attempt for smuggling over 650 antique pieces including manuscripts, coins, and sculptures on their way abroad in possession of several persons holding Yemeni, Arab and foreign nationalities.

**Terrorism to be discussed in symposium**

A symposium under the slogan of "the dangerous of terrorism in the security and stability" will be attended by social and politic figures and a number of sons of martyrs and fighters of Yemeni revolution.

The activity which will be organized by the National Gathering of Sons of Martyrs and Fighters of Yemeni Revolution aims at discussing the issues relating to terrorism phenomenon and ways of fighting it .

**ADEN**  
Aden International Airport to be extended, says official

Aden International Airport would witness expansion to be prepared for receiving 20th Gulf Football Competition that will be hosted by Yemen by end of 2010, Director of the airport Salem al-Tamimi said on Friday.

In his statement to Saba, al-Tamimi said that the expansion would include new projects such as supplying arrival and departure halls at the airport with up-to-date technical equipment and extend them to receive 3,500 passengers instead of 500 passengers.

A project of rehabilitating the amphitheater of the airport would be implemented to enable the airport to receive biggest planes, he said.

He pointed out that the airport runs 17 international flights per week, expecting an increase in number of flights in this year at 30 percent compared to past years.

It is worth mentioning that, since last year, the Yemeni government has exempted airplanes that land in the Aden airport from the navigation services fee to encourage airline companies to make Aden as one of their destinations.

**HODEIDAH**  
GAI grants permits for six investment projects

A branch of General Authority for Investment (GAI) in Hodeidah governorate granted permits for setting up six investment projects at sum of YR 3.8 billion during the period from January and February of this year.

Director of the GAI branch Abdul Raboh Amr stated to Saba that the projects are in field of industry and fisheries wealth as well as agriculture which would create 467 job opportunities.

Among these projects, a project of farming shrimp in the governorate.

Culture Minister launches Zabid streets paving

Culture Minister Mohammed al-Maflihi has launched a paving project of the streets of the historical town of Zabid at a total cost amounted to \$50000.

Zabid is one of the oldest towns in Yemen, it was the capital of Yemen from the 13th to the 15th century and a center of the Arab and Muslim world due in large part to its famed University of Zabid and being a center of Islamic education.

Speaking to Saba, al-Maflihi said that the project includes the restoration of the town's walls, noting the cement material would be used for paving and restoring the walls and streets of the historical town of Zabid that has been declared a World Heritage Site by the UNESCO.

Zabid has an urban population of around 23,000 persons on Yemen's western coastal plain.

The project is funded by the Social Fund for Development and the Department of Public Works and roads in Hodeidah province.

Al-Muflihi also opened the fourth gate of Zabid after its restoration at a cost of \$200000, fund by the Social Fund for Development.

The Yemeni Minister confirmed that it will be conserving more than 200000 square meters inside the town of Zabid, pointing out the importance of the cooperation between Yemen and International organizations to maintain this historic city to be incorporated in the World Heritage.

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In 2000, Zabid was listed on the List of World Heritage in Danger; the listing was made on the behest of the Yemeni government due to a state of poor upkeep and conservation.

Zabid's domestic and military architecture and its urban plan make it an outstanding archaeological and historical site.

He indicated that the survey is being carried out by 10 field teams contain 50 researchers.

He highlighted cooperation of the governorate's leadership, local authority and of general directors of the districts.

**IBB**  
Suspect for threatening Saudi embassy arrested

Security systems in Ibb governorate have arrested a man suspected on threatening Saudi Arabian embassy in Sana'a through telephone and warning letters of bombard the embassy.

The security institutions of Ibb governorate made clear that, according to directives of Deputy Interior Minister Saleh Hussein al-Zo'ari, they carried out searching and investigation operations against the suspected person and managed to arrest him and referred him to legal procedures.

It is worth mentioning that the security institution already arrested last March, in Taiz governorate, a man who was threatening Saudi embassy by sending similar letters.

Their News

**Youth for Human Rights International World Tour 2009**

In honor of the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights we will circle the globe in our 6th Annual World Tour, to celebrate the outstanding work that has been done and inspire further dissemination, promotion and reading of this important document in educational institutions around the globe.

The purpose of Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI) is to teach youth about human rights – specifically, the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights – and inspire them to become life-long advocates for tolerance and peace.

The YHRI World Tours of 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 traveled to almost 70 countries, presenting our human rights education programs to heads of state, leaders and educators as well as youth in universities, schools, hospitals, juvenile detention centers and orphanages.

The YHRI World Tour 2008 circled the globe to Haiti, Venezuela, Morocco, Nigeria, Kenya, Egypt, Pakistan and Taiwan. The media followed and shared stories of visits with dignitaries, officials, religious and community leaders and youth. New friends were made and collaborations formed to take human rights education to a new level.

To date, these tours have touched the lives of millions, both through direct meetings and media coverage of our activities. YHRI presently has more than 180 chapters and groups around the world, and ongoing YHRI education projects in lands as diverse as Australia, Canada, Denmark, Guyana, India, Japan, Morocco, Puerto Rico,

South Africa and the USA. It is indeed time to celebrate our accomplishments and draw strength for the work yet to come.

The YHRI World Tour 2009 will include Argentina, Australia, Barbados, Colombia, Jordan, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Uganda, and the USA. Meetings with dignitaries and leaders as well as community events will be held in every country. Additionally, our activities will be captured on video and in photographs for further promotion of the tour.

Such a tour requires a good deal of collaboration and participation, every bit of it adding to the strength and diversity of this powerful outreach action of raising individual and community consciousness of human rights that affect every one of us, no matter who we are or where we live. Youth who do not know their rights are vulnerable. Youth who know their fundamental human rights can defend themselves and help their peers.

As a non-profit corporation we depend on the generous support of like-minded individuals and groups. Your support is needed to help youth around the globe learn that they have human rights. Together we can improve the quality of life of precious children around the world.

**World's press condemns UN Council's decision on defamation of religion**

The World Association of Newspapers and World Editors Forum have condemned a resolution approved by the United Nations Human Rights Council on "defamation of religion," calling the measure an attack on the basic human

right of freedom of expression. "This decision brings discredit on the UN Human Rights Council, which should not justify censorship and the stifling of dissenting voices," said the Paris-based WAN and WEF, the global organisations of the world's press.

"Religion is a legitimate subject for criticism, satire and debate. The concept of defamation of religion is likely to severely stifle that debate," the statement said. "We are seriously concerned that this resolution will be relied on by authoritarian governments to suppress freedom of expression."

WAN and WEF called on Council members to "take all steps necessary to ensure that international standards of freedom of expression are fully supported by the UN Human Rights Council and not undermined by resolutions such as this."

The Council's resolution, proposed by Pakistan on behalf of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and approved by the Council on Friday, calls for a global fight against "defamation of religions." Islamic countries argue that criticizing or lampooning religions is a violation of the rights of believers and leads to discrimination and violence against them.

But such measures also are used to stifle debate and dissent. A list of some recent cases can be found here.

The Paris-based WAN, the global organisation for the newspaper industry, defends and promotes press freedom and the professional and business interests of newspapers world-wide. Representing 18,000 newspapers, its membership includes 77 national newspaper associations, newspaper companies and individual newspaper executives in 102 countries, 12 news agencies and 11 regional and world-wide press groups.

The ultimate in comfort for Lufthansa passengers at Frankfurt Airport  
New First Class Lounge with exclusive spa area

An oasis of calm and relaxation awaits Lufthansa First Class passengers and members of the HON Circle at the new First Class Lounge in Concourse B at Frankfurt Airport following the opening of an exclusive First Class Spa on the premises. The spa's extensive bathing area is equipped with six superior-quality shower rooms (two of them with jacuzzis), and – for the first time at a Lufthansa Lounge – two massage rooms. Here, guests can freshen up, unwind, recharge their batteries and also choose from a range of cosmetic treatments and massages.

"Frequent flyers and business travellers are constantly on the go, and so time becomes a precious asset. Far removed from the hustle and bustle of the airport, we offer guests at the new First Class Lounge an opportunity to use the time in hand to relax in an exclusive atmosphere or to work," says Lufthansa Hub Manager Dr. Karl-Rudolph Rupprecht.

The new lounge in Concourse B, which has a total floor space of 1,220 square metres, can seat more than 100 guests. It also provides all the amenities that form an integral part of the upscale service at Lufthansa's First Class lounges. A spacious comfort area with relaxing armchairs with a view of the airport apron invites guests to sit back and unwind. Two quiet rooms are available for anyone who would like to withdraw and have a snooze. Enclosed office units equipped with telephones, PCs with Internet access and writing utensils provide an opportunity for guests to



Lufthansa

work until shortly before their departure. Free WLAN access is also available. Culinary delights are on offer in the restaurant and bistro area, with its excellent choice of menus and drinks. A varying buffet is provided, and meals can also be ordered à la carte. Dishes are freshly prepared in view of the guests. In the bar area, an extensive range of spirits and drinks is offered in an open, relaxed atmosphere. Guests can contact the central Service Desk with any general enquiries, such as rebooking a flight or changing their seat.

A new addition to Lufthansa's Lounge product is the limousine service for passengers whose flight is departing from Terminal areas A and C – or, in the case of flights to a non-Schengen or non-EU destination, from an apron position. This service was previously only available at the First Class Terminal. Passengers arriving at or transferring from an apron position will also be taken by limousine from their aircraft to the Bus Arrivals point in Terminal B, where they will be met by a Lufthansa staff member and directed to the new lounge.

**Lufthansa's worldwide lounge service**  
Lufthansa currently operates about 65

lounges worldwide with a total floor space of over 28,000 square metres. Depending on their booking class and status, Lufthansa passengers have access to three different lounges – First Class, Senator and Business – all of which provide a pleasant atmosphere in which to wait for a flight, relax or work. One entirely new facility is the first Lufthansa Welcome Lounge at Frankfurt, Lufthansa's largest hub.

Along with the more than 660 lounges operated by Lufthansa's Star Alliance and cooperation partners which can be used by Lufthansa passengers, Lufthansa thus offers its premium customers one of the largest lounge networks in the world. Until 2013, Lufthansa will be investing about 150 million euros in constructing new lounges and refurbishing existing ones in order to further expand and enhance its airport lounge facilities for customers.

Note for news editors: Images of the new First Class Lounge can be downloaded here.

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## Drugs in Yemen – Part 2

## Billions of riyals confiscated from drug dealers

**C**riminal prosecution records show that billions of riyals were confiscated by the state from gangs that were caught drug dealing in the past years.

Among effects confiscated were ships, boats, and expensive cars that open by fingerprint, in addition to very large amounts of money in both Yemeni and Saudi currencies.

Confiscators noticed that drug dealers make many currency exchanges through money exchange shops, that they repeatedly travel inside and outside the country, and that they establish false institutions to cover their drug related wealth.

The head of specialized criminal prosecution, Judge Sa'eed Al-Aakil, recently stated that drugs have become a phenomenon here. The following is an interview with the judge concerning the issue of drugs in Yemen.



Judge Sa'eed Al-Aakil

Courtesy of the investigative reports department  
SABA News Agency  
Translated by Yemen Times Staff

**Are you concerned about the size of the drug problem?**

Drug related incidents have increased to the extent that any observer realizes that this constitutes a war on Yemen, even though Yemen is not the final point for most of these drugs, but is used as a passing point or transit.

Under these conditions, efforts are being made by confiscation officers and by those who are responsible for the control and monitor operations in security departments. Many drug dealers have been caught and their cases transferred to the courts. Drug offenders were sentenced with strict penalties. In addition, for the first time in Yemen, capital punishment was executed in one of the drug cases.

**What are these strict penalties?**

Drug law number 3 of 1993, with regards to fighting drug dealing and psychotropic substances and according to article 33 and 34 and what comes after, states that capital punishment is the sentence for those who export and import drugs in and out of Yemen. For drug abuse in general, the punishment is at least 25 years in prison; the judge cannot hand out any sentence less strict than this.

**Will law enforcement limit this problem?**

Law enforcement will be enough and will give the desired result. However, it should be supported by other means, like the media, guidance, education, and raising awareness. The law should be the last step in facing these crimes.

**Who stands behind the drug crimes?**

The drug dealing currently going on in Yemen is considered to be a highly organized crime that crosses borders. A crime like that can't be carried out by an individual alone, but by gangs that have links here in Yemen and in other countries.

**Have you been able to uncover big drug networks in Yemen?**

In the gangs we caught, everyone has his part; some carry out the drug reception operation when they arrive at a certain place, some of them load the

drugs in various ways, some transport them to the other dealers, and so forth. That is if the goal is to sell them inside the country, but if the goal is to transport them out of the country, the roles are distributed between gang members in different ways.

**Through catching gang members, have you received any clues about who leads them?**

These gangs are made up of big mafias, and those who lead them are not in Yemen but outside of it. We can't get to them and we don't have the right to ask for them unless they are Yemenis. If they are foreigners, we contact liaison officers of other countries and we give them the files and information about these people so they can catch them.

**Since the issuance of the law, what are the most prominent cases that you looked in?**

I don't remember now the amount that got caught in these incidents, but what we received during 2008 is about 16 tons of drugs. The largest amount of drugs caught was estimated to be worth millions of dollars. It was caught by the Coast Guard in the governorate of Hadramout.

**Is there coordination between various security institutions concerning drug bust operations?**

Regarding arrests done in ports, the drug smugglers are arrested by the juridical apprehension officers as well as by the people in charge of the security and military points. As for the people who are arrested in Yemeni territorial waters, they are apprehended by the Yemeni Coast Guard in cooperation with all other concerned institutions.

**But arrests are done only with your permission?**

The person who gets caught in the act doesn't need a warrant from the attorney general, according to the law. It is called 'apprehension in the act of a witnessed crime.' As for other crimes, the attorney general should be provided with evidence that points to drug dealers, and then we provide them with the arrest and search warrants.

**What is the mechanism for holding and transporting large amounts of drugs?**

The amounts are defined and weighed often by kilos and bags. As for the cab-

tagon and amvitamin pills which have increased lately, the counting is done by pills which are then delivered to the attorney general who keeps them for the case. During the trial, the drugs are shown to the convicts during the cross-examination to confront them with it and to know their relation to the drugs, after which the attorney general hears their defense.

**What are the places from which the drugs come to Yemen?**

The main resources of what was caught recently are Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. That doesn't mean that whatever enters Yemen gets caught; it is possible that there are other amounts that escape the authorities' notice.

**Do you mean that what gets caught doesn't represent the size of the problem?**

The size of the problem is bigger than what we catch, and this is what makes everyone pay attention to the problem and highlight it with extreme strictness. I think that the vast quantities of the amounts that we get made everyone search for ways to catch all drug dealers.

I think no one can say that we didn't recognize or feel the problem till now. The problem is there, and the legislations are there to face it. It is not a problem but a phenomenon, and we face it with all our might every day.

**There is information that drug amounts that were caught on the dealers are then decreased when the drugs were transported to the capital. Is this true?**

We take a sample of the amounts that were caught in the ports, at sea, and on planes, and a committee is formed to destroy the rest.

A report of the whole amount of drugs caught is filed by the juridical apprehension officers, sometimes with the cooperation of the attorney general. The report is signed by the accused. When the drugs are counted and recorded in an official report, the attorney general considers whether the substances were brought from outside or whether they are soft and green and so were planted in Yemen. Some think that all the drugs come from outside, but there are marijuana and the poppy plants which are planted in Ibb and Al-Haima and other places. These types

are usually of great quantities and a special committee is formed to destroy them.

**Have you ever raided marijuana farms?**

We don't do a raid except based on information we receive from the juridical apprehension officers, and only when absolutely necessary. If it was necessary for the attorney general to get involved in the raid operation, then they cooperate.

**Is marijuana exported from Yemen to other countries?**

Yes; the dealers receive such substances from the farms and export them to the neighboring countries. This is considered both an import and an export of drugs; the punishment of the import is stricter.

**How does the law treat drug cases involving foreigners?**

The provisions of the law in Yemen, in the name of authority, are applicable to foreigners just as they are applicable to Yemenis, whoever they are. The legal procedures are taken, their defense is heard, they appoint or are appointed with lawyers, we inform their embassies that they were detained, and we let their families visit them in the central prison. All these procedures are to guarantee their right in defending themselves and in a trial. The punishment that a Yemeni gets is the same for any foreigner.

**What are some of the more extreme punishments received by drug dealers who were convicted by the court?**

The sentences are often 25 years of prison. There are almost 62 prisoners in the central prison who are mostly Pakistanis and Iranians.

**There are people who say that the government knows about certain drug dealers but doesn't detain them. Is this true?**

What is said about the drug dealers who operate outside of Yemen and cannot be reached by our government is true. The law states that when it comes to a person we can't find, we try him in absentia. We bring evidence against the fugitive, and there are terms in the law that define such proceedings. Actually, this is the first time I've heard that the attorney general knows about drug dealers and doesn't detain them. Sometimes rumors that don't have credibility abound when it comes to drugs. Once the attorney general is given evidence that a person deals with drugs, we don't hesitate in apprehending and cross-examining him along with taking all necessary legal procedures against him with cooperation of other security institutions.

**Are there any provisions for the fugitives in these cases?**

There are many provisions because under the umbrella of the same case there are present suspects and fugitive suspects. We issue sentences for the present suspects; as for the fugitives, they are tracked down and followed along with informing all the authorities in order to prevent them from leaving Yemen.

**What is the danger of drugs when it comes to Yemeni national security?**

Drugs constitute a dangerous problem that has a large effect, and that is why they are called 'weapons of mass destruction' by some countries because of the damage they cause to both the individual and the society. Fighting against drugs and drug abuse requires great amounts of money – money that could be used for development or other social welfare instead.

**What is its relation to other crimes?**

Drugs are associated with many crimes, like counterfeiting currency and IDs in order to escape from being tracked by using names other than their real ones. Drug dealers also do money laundering in the form of buying and selling cars, by buying properties, or by putting the money in a bank and then making withdrawals. Dealing with drug money can be complicated.

The person who is involved in drug crimes is definitely practicing other types of crime.

**How do you recognize the properties of those involved in money laundering?**

We study the circumstances of that person and how much money he has on the basis that all the drug money is confiscated or observed until the issuance of the sentence. The money then gets returned or held according to the court's conviction.

**If the money was under the name of the drug dealer's relatives, how do you deal with such a case?**

We check on those relatives and their income, and based on that we act if the money they hold is basically coming from drug sales. Drug dealing is profitable for people; as far as I know and according to price estimations of such substances, the price of a cabtagon or amvitamin pill is between 750 and 1500 riyal, and dealers gain millions of riyals from them. As for compressed marijuana that is made outside, the price for a kilogram is between 5,000 and 10,000 Saudi riyal, which is a lot of money in comparison to what is being brought and imported. Most Yemenis can't afford the high price of these drugs, so these substances are exported to neighboring countries.

**Does that mean that Yemen is only a passing area for the drug dealers?**

The amounts that were caught and meant to be sold in Yemen are few, within just 200 to 500 kilograms, and the way they are distributed and divided proves that they were meant to be sold in Yemen and not for export. You can recognize from the way that large amounts of drugs are caught and the way they are prepared whether or not they were meant to be exported outside of Yemen. If drugs are tightly closed, and if they remain in Yemen, they will not achieve their purpose because of the lack of buyers.

At some point, the neighboring countries tightened their borders and fortified them, so drug dealers can't find any exits except through our borders these days. Boats and ships carrying Iranians and Pakistanis have been apprehended; so far, five ships have been confiscated and sold at an auction in Hadramout.

**Did you ever catch Yemenis using drugs?**

Some people doing drugs have been caught. A small amount of drugs is occasionally caught with the drug user, and he sometimes confesses during the examination that he takes drugs. The punishment in this case is limited to 5 years. There is a group of dealers who receive the drugs and divide them into small pieces, then sell them to make drug use easier.

**Do the drug gangs use children?**

I had a case like that. These people communicate undercover and with discretion, and they study the circumstances of every one they deal with. Such a person should be an adult who can act, endure, and be secretive. As for a child, he will confess under pressure. If there are any cases like this, they are referred to the attorney general or to a juvenile court.

**We hear about drug crimes in which people are held as hostages by the drug importers. Is this true?**

I have had a case or two like this. This is how it works: a person travels from Yemen to the goal country to get the drugs, effectively making himself a hostage for the drug dealer until the dealer exports the drugs to the dealer who sent this person.

A Yemeni was held hostage by a drug dealer in Afghanistan and then he was taken to Guantanamo by the Americans; he stayed there for four years then he was delivered to the security department in Yemen and was tried. There is another incident that is still in court. This case concerns someone who was a hostage in Iran in exchange for having the Iranian dealer send 3 tons of drugs to Yemen; the

dealer eventually sent 2.5 tons. Holding people hostage is one of the ways in which drug dealers do business with one another. After selling the drugs, if the amount of money involved in the sale was not sent to the original dealer, the hostage may be killed or harmed. In such a line of business, there is no trust between the seller and the buyer.

**How do the drug dealers hide their goods?**

The drug dealers hide their goods in every way possible. Some hide them in the inside of the ship, which is what we found when we searched a ship and why the Coast Guard couldn't find anything. When the authorities pulled the ship to shore, they found in the inside of the ship 1,655 kilograms of drugs. As for hiding the drugs on land, the drug dealers sometimes change the structure and parts of the cars to hide the drugs in them. In addition, more than one amount was caught coming from Syria hidden in water heaters.

**Do you monitor the phones of those who are suspected to be drug dealers?**

The law allows it. In one instance, a phone call was recorded between the drug recipient and the sender, and the delivery was observed. Recordings themselves aren't proof enough, but are used as clues to follow in order to bring a case to justice. Recording the suspects' phones is done through filing paperwork to the attorney general's office by the juridical apprehension officers or by institutions that carry out such procedures against people suspected to be drug dealers. We let them monitor the calls within a period that doesn't exceed 30 days, as defined by the law. The attorney general is the one who personally allows personally the monitoring. Then, the recording process is done and the records transfer into reports that are filed to the attorney general. Sometimes the drug dealers are arrested directly, and sometimes the case is left for the attorney general's office.

**What are the obstacles that you face, especially concerning fugitive drug dealers and those who protect them?**

We have many problems, but we can overcome them if everyone does his part. As for the intervention of some prestigious and wealthy people to change some of the officials and court cases, I don't have any proof of this. The cases that are referred to the penal attorney are extremely serious. That is why the people who can intervene in them as mediators are few. In Yemen, you can't say that there is no favoritism, and you can't put an end to it, but it is up to you whether you are willing to respond to favoritism or not.

**Are you afraid of the consequences of some of your missions against the drug gangs?**

It is true that these people are capable of committing any criminal act. They study the officials who look into their cases and they look for ways to take revenge. If talking to them doesn't work, they threaten them, but the person who has pure faith, self-censorship, and conscience doesn't care about all that.

**Did you hear of any officials who take bribes from those people?**

I heard that one of the judges was discharged for taking a bribe. Recently they offered a judge 50 million dollars, not to release the dealer, but to reduce the punishment. But the judge was a decent man who fears God, so he refused the bribe. We wished he reported that amount of money to file a case against the person who offered the bribe.

**Have you ever been threatened?**

Every now and then. Once my house was bombed, but we don't submit to such things. If we get scared, we will never work.

Everyone should take responsibility in fighting drugs. If we don't recognize the problem, we will not be able to solve it.





# Portrait of an artist as a young Palestinian

MENASSAT has been featuring the work of the Palestinian cartoonist Nidal El-Khairy for a few months now. Bitter, humorous, dark, and unflinching El-Khairy talked to MENASSAT about his work.

By: TANIA TABAR  
MENASSAT

Palestinian cartoonist and illustrator Nidal El-Khairy has talent - that's not a question. But that's not what separates his work from that of other cartoonists and illustrators working in the Arab world. It's his ability to deal with complicated issues in a way that's accessible.

As the Israeli assault on Gaza worsened in December, MENASSAT featured one of El-Khairy's cartoons called "Gaza," (right) and it became MENASSAT's iconic depiction of the conflict because it spoke to a population helpless to stop the violence.

El-Khairy's drawings appear figurative, but the message is always transparent.

The 31-year old illustrator and cartoonist told MENASSAT that he has been drawing since he was a kid, and undoubtedly his family's trips to Ramallah as a young boy gave him early insight into what is the most intractable conflict in the Arab world - Israel-Palestine.

MENASSAT: Can you give us a bit of history as to how you began illustrating?

NIDAL EL-KHAIRY: "Just like any other kid I started doodling. I found out it was a source of entertainment during a boring class. I would draw football players, wars, battlefields, cars, a man crossing the road...stuff like that."

"But my subjects changed after the first Intifada and I began drawing kids throwing rocks."

"Sometimes I would draw things I hoped to see at the time - Palestinian F-16's winning a battle with a volcano in the back round (might as well) with Israeli F-16's crashing down and their Merkava tanks burning while raising a white flag."

"I wasn't aware of AIPAC at the time." (America's pro-Israel lobby)

MENASSAT: How has your work developed since then? You have lived in and visited a number of different cities, including Montreal, Amman, Ramallah. How has this affected your work?

NIDAL EL-KHAIRY: "Some images get stuck in your head. When I used to

Massachusetts I learned about Picasso and African art in art history class and I liked how things were angular and messed up."

For some obsessive-compulsive reason I started drawing faces for one my final projects, non-stop, and it worked out well. It turned out okay and people called it a style... so I stuck to it.

MENASSAT: You have contributed to and been involved in a number of movements including Israeli Apartheid Week, Artists Against the Israeli Occupation, and Solidarity Across Borders. What kind of role did you play in these movements? What kind of role did they play in developing your work?

NIDAL EL-KHAIRY: "When I moved to Montreal I decided to get involved with the Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees, which is one of many refugee-rights groups working under an umbrella called Solidarity Across Borders."

"I think working with these different groups made me understand what class struggle really means."

"While rich immigrants moved to Canada easily, refugees and migrant workers were filling the cheap labor gap needed in Canada. They had university degrees and yet they were working in kitchens cleaning the dishes."

"And with all the bureaucracy they face from Immigration Canada they filled this gap for a very long time."

"Thinking about all the hard working people I have met through this movement had an impact on me."

"I felt that this is exactly where I wanted to see my work."

MENASSAT: You recently did a sketch of Shawn Brant (right), a native political activist in Canada currently facing several charges for protesting a land development that is affecting the Mohawk community. Can you talk about the link between struggles?

NIDAL EL-KHAIRY: "When I was in Montreal, I had the opportunity to meet natives from Kahnawake."

"When I heard the father speak to his son in his native language, I knew that there was something Palestinians share with native people in Turtle Island (North America)."

"What's weird to me is that Palestinians living in North America talk about what the Israelis have done to them and how Palestine was colonized, how olive trees are uprooted by the Israelis and water is stolen right from under our feet."

"Yet they've never met a native or identified with the native struggle in North America."

"They even take part in colonizing native land and stealing their resources."

"I hope to draw more about this where I can connect the struggles and show how capitalism, colonialism and imperialism have the same goals."

"The Bee Hive Collective has done brilliant work on this."

MENASSAT: It seems your work evolved from sketches and portraits documenting certain events to being more critical with the use of dark humor? Tell us about this evolution?

NIDAL EL-KHAIRY: "I feel that most activists in the Arab world use theoretical speeches to try and provide people with a better understanding of the struggle."

"I think a dark cynical joke can be more effective conveying the same message. Ziad Rahbani and Naji al Ali were brilliant at it."

"I want people to laugh and remember the struggle rather than sleep and drool while listening to a lecture about it."

MENASSAT: Tell us about what you are working on now and what you plan to do in the near future?

NIDAL EL-KHAIRY: "Currently I'm working on my animation skills... hopefully I can become better, and more bitter about things, as time goes on."

Nidal El-Khairy



Nidal El-Khairy comments on the BBC's refusal to broadcast a Gaza aid request

Nidal El-Khairy



"Fat Rat"... a commentary on the corruption in the Palestinian Authority. The figure on the right looking dangerously like Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

After completing a Bachelor's in Fine Arts from the University of Massachusetts (USA), El-Khairy moved to Montreal, Canada where he spent four and a half years developing his craft and his political awareness.

In 2006, he moved back to Amman, where his family first settled after being displaced from Ramleh in historic Palestine during the 1948 Nakba - the 'catastrophe' which marked the expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians during the formation of the Israeli state.

MENASSAT talked to El-Khairy to find out more about what makes this bold illustrator tick.

go to Ramallah in the late 80's the occupation became live."

"What people saw on TV back in Amman, I was witnessing first hand while walking in the market in Ramallah."

"All of a sudden kids would throw rocks and Israeli soldiers would shoot back."

"Once while I was getting a haircut with my grandfather (may he rest in peace) my eyes started to burn and tear. I looked at my grandfather and he started laughing at me. 'How do you like that tear gas?' he said."

"I'm sure this affected my work."

"When I first went to Lowell



Yemen International Telecommunications Co. (TeleYemen)

## Vacant Announcement

Yemen International Telecommunications Co. (TeleYemen), would like to call qualified candidates to apply for the following vacant post within its main office in Sana'a.

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- Implement the required work orders received from other department as directed by the department Manager.

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- Participate in the department Project and produce regular management reports.

##### 3) Administrative and Financial:

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- Correct all section records, regularly and update both in H/W & S/W version.
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#### Personal skills:

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Interested candidates may submit their application letter with detailed Curriculum Vitae ONLY to the following address no later than 15.4.2009 :-Please note that only candidates who fulfill above requirements will be considered.

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## Words of Wisdom



One of the key differences between a dictatorship and a democratic system is the role of the media in general, and that of the official media, in particular. If those individuals in charge of the media feel they are more responsible towards the public than towards the politicians, and perform their job on that basis, then that is a sign of a democratic structure.

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,  
(1951 - 1999)  
Founder of Yemen Times



## OUR OPINION

## State security and tribes

As I am writing this, a Dutch couple is still held hostage by a tribe in Bani Dhabyan in rural Sana'a. In following the case, I spoke to the kidnapers, the kidnapped, the mediating tribal figures and civil society organizations, but could not reach state security for comment.

Yemen is a country where it is easier to talk to kidnapers, criminals or even a mafia member than reaching a security spokesperson for a statement. It is amazing how forbidding and unapproachable our government is towards journalists and information seekers, and this despite the president's promises last month.

In response to journalists' complaints at the Yemeni Journalists' Syndicate's general conference, the president promised to improve access to information through a designated spokesperson and points of contacts for the press. Present was the minister of information who nodded his head in approval when the president strongly suggested that his ministry provide journalists with whatever facts they need.

But, since then, neither the ministry nor the syndicate have followed the promise through, and as usual with Yemeni journalists' very short memory span, we have forgotten about the issue altogether.

When journalists now need an official statement, they resort to personal contacts or qat sessions where men running the country chat about the state's affairs. Otherwise, Yemen remains a place where access to official information is more difficult than visiting the hostages of a notorious tribe, talking to Houthi rebels or interviewing Al-Qaeda leaders.

Yet the most interesting fact in this search for information is that, when we get it - or at least part of it, we realize how unreliable state security is, and how inefficient the government is in dealing with its everyday affairs, let alone security. It suffices to know that, in the very place where the Dutch couple was kidnapped last week just 10 kilometers outside the capital Sana'a, two kidnapping incidents have already taken place in 2009 alone.

Why is it so easy to take the freedom of someone in broad daylight and in populated areas, and to drive heavily armed vehicles across the country? This is probably why the state does not like journalists asking questions: Because the answers expose how out of control the country is.

And while the state randomly arrests every relative and neighbor of the kidnapping tribe, angry citizens and wronged Yemenis vow to take revenge one way or the other, even if it means making Yemen a less attractive place for foreigners, and a dangerous place for its own people.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

## Iran policies sophisticated yet blurred (part 2)

By Dr. Murad Alazzany  
UPM University, Malaysia

It is obvious that Iran uses such bellicose statements and combative words to promote itself as the leader of the Islamic world. Iran understands the Muslim mentality that embraces resistance as the only way to defeat Israel and to get back the invaded land. For this reason, it uses this rhetoric speech to win wave of solidarity with its Islamic revolution throughout the Muslims world.

They even showed a strong support for the Islamic resistance of Hamas in the Palestinian Authority. The Iranian leaders boasted of their support to Hamas claiming that such an action emanates from their Islamic orientation and corresponds to the goals of the Islamic revolution. However, Iran's support for Hamas does not emanate from a religious urge or orientation. Rather, it emanates from its concern to protect its interests in the area.

She uses the support it gives to Hamas as a strategy to win the support of Arabs to ensure that it is accepted as the principal of regional power. This is particularly true when the

common Arabs compare Iran's position towards Hamas to that of Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the other allies that belong to what is called the moderate Arab axis. Iran uses her support for Hamas to undermine the position of this axis and to expose its helplessness.

As Arabs find the moderate axis feeble to speak their minds and to adopt their positions, they get influenced by Iran's provocative remarks considering it as an excellent model of an Islamic state. They never realize that Iranians use this support just to market illusions that hide their true intentions which are to take control of the region and to annex it to the empire they hope to re-establish in the long run.

Such an intention is shown in statements by an Iranian parliamentary member in which he declared Bahrain and some parts of emirates to belong to Iran.

The Iranian politicians keep claiming that their stand and support for Islamic issues throughout the Muslim world emanate from their Islamic orientation. Nevertheless, their claims are not as they are stated but complicated, blurred and unclear. While Iran supports Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Islamic movement of Hamas in

Palestine, it leads a conspiracy against Taliban in Afghanistan and the Sunni Muslims in Iraq. It supported America to invade Afghanistan and showed a great cooperation with it to invade Iraq. By adopting such contradicting policies, Iran in Afghanistan appears totally different from that Iran in Lebanon and Palestine.

However, we really wish that Arabs can adopt policies which are as sophisticated as those of Iran. For the past thirty years, Arabs appear to be distracted and confused. They adopt political positions that merely serve personal views and relation but never support or promote particular agendas. Their policies are designed either to fulfill vested interests, to meet short-term goals or to support some individuals. Their alliance most of them does not have a far-sighted vision or long-term goals.

While Iran supports Hezbollah in Lebanon, a party which represents an ideology, Saudi Arabia encounters that by supporting Sa'ad Al-Hareri, a person who does not represent any ideology but himself and his own interest. It is a matter of fact that supporting ideologies triumphs over supporting individual in the long run. Supporting individuals collapses

by the death of those individuals and then to become a waste. While supporting ideologies never collapses by the death of people but might cherish and grow further.

Leave aside the role of Egypt whose policies confining it up to the borders. But after every political scene with Israel, the Egyptians boast around that nobody can negotiate their support to Islamic and Arab issues or even bid over their duties. One wonders how pathetic it was when they left the Palestinians alone on a siege facing the ferocity of Israeli war machines. Yesterday, Gaza was the very embodiment of resistance but the most hegemonic Arab Countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia chose to be indifferent. They blamed Hamas of receiving a support from Iran and one wonders what Hams was supposed to do when it was classified as an enemy by a brother. We have no right to blame the Islamic resistance of Hamas for accepting the Iranian support as long as the Arab regimes choose to isolate it and to classify as an enemy. Hamas, despite getting a financial support from Iran, it never changes her principals, it didn't become a Shiite movement, It is a still a purely Sunni movement with a

principal intention of fighting Israel to restore the lost land and the dignity of Arabs. It is true that Iran is using it to polish its image as an Islamic State and to promote its ideology, but did our Arab rulers leave any choice for her.

It is not late for the Arab regimes to repair themselves and to follow the right track. They have to critically review their local situation and their surroundings, then to rise up with a strong determination to bring about a critical change in the whole area. They have to realize that they are now in between the jaws of Israeli and Iran who will never show a mercy in fighting and defeating them. They shouldn't give Iran a chance to speak on behalf of every Muslims in the world. Nothing can encounter Iran hegemony in the area except an ideology accompanied by a strong will and determination. They have to get united under the umbrella of Islam and adopt decision that emanate from their Islamic orientation. They have to be up to the challenges that threaten them and the expectations of their people. Once they do that, Iran's policies in the area will vanish like bubbles, its ideology will liquidate and all her agendas will be weakened.

## Quiet dialog with Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi

By: Mohammed Nasser Al-Hazmi

Parliament recently held an extended session on Monday, March 23, considered the longest session that was held since it was elected. Attended by Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi, who represented the government, the session aimed to discuss security procedures.

After hearing what representatives said, and instead of offering proposals based on a strategy to tackle the security issue which seems complicated enough, he attributed, in a tone that people have grown bored of, terrorism to the religious speeches in mosques and schools that teach the Holy Qur'an - shops as he called them.

As no one was allowed to comment after he finished his speech, the session was concluded. As the news of the session was circulated by media and internet websites, and it is no longer secret, I would like to address Dr. Al-Alimi quietly, objectively, and without prior consent to what he said.

I would like him to truly consider what I am going to say. I aim to objectively 'avoid sedition,' as the homeland is the ship for us all, and whoever doesn't care about its safety is not a true citizen.

Dear Dr. Al-Alimi, have you ever heard of a mosque preacher demanding or instigating the killing of tourists, diplomats, or any other foreigner entering the country? If you say no, why do you attack preachers? If you say yes, then why aren't those preachers transferred to justice to be held solely responsible, without holding others responsible? Is this an introduction to restrict the activities of mosques and repress protecting virtue, preventing vice, and

speaking the truth? If this is the tendency, it seems that we are approaching some very difficult years. I call on wise people to consider the situation before it spins out of control.

Dear Dr. Al-Alimi, do you know that the Qur'anic schools that you called 'shops' teach the Holy Qur'an in public, and that their students are between 12-18 years old? Can such thoughts of terrorism be installed in these students? Have you ever volunteered to visit one of these schools and view their curriculums? Or is the goal to get rid of schools that teach the Holy Qur'an, as you got rid of religious institutes under the pretext of combating terror? Do you know that these statements and aggressions against Islamic speech and Qur'anic schools and attacking and insulting religious scholars is the main source of what is assumed to be combated? Two days before the session, Al-Thawra newspaper attacked and insulted religious scholars as they went to the parliament to clarify their vision on determining the legal marriage age in Yemen.

Is this a justification for such people to understand that there is an attack on the Holy Qur'an and scholars, and a tendency to confiscate the call to Allah?

On the other hand, we see complete silence on whatever harms ethics, such as Chinese massages, night clubs, and all other suspicious places.

What is the justification to defy feelings of believers and destabilize the Islamic principles in such a provocative way? We confirm that Muslims, non-Muslim peaceful people, and foreigners who enter the country should be protected, and we condemn anyone who attacks them.

Dear Dr. Al-Alimi, you said that military officers in the security

apparatuses who worked for Al-Qaeda were caught. However, you didn't tell us which faculty these officers graduated from. Are we allowed to accuse all faculties as 'shops' that produce terrorism?

Some members of the parliament said that the security issue has become a seasonal game, giving examples and evidence. We hoped that you would answer questions about this issue but you didn't, which raises many red flags!

Dear Dr. Al-Alimi, did the soldier who killed the university student graduate from a Qur'anic school? Was the head of the Khadir district killed due to religious speech? Did the citizen who killed the Nashtan graduate from a Qur'anic school? Was Dr. Al-Qadasi killed while performing his duty by a graduate from a Qur'anic school, or was he an expatriate from the US? Are kidnapping, road blocks, and fighting between tribes

a result of religious speech? You are requested to place political speech far away from all kinds of intrigues in order not to lead to a result that differs from its goals.

Would you, as deputy prime minister, direct your ministers to attend the parliament to answer the questions of the people's representatives about the corruption that the government practices in billions, and that is considered one of the major crimes? Some of these questions were asked in parliament more than two years.

Do you agree with me that this organized and unorganized looting, i.e. corruption, actually instigates terrorism? Do you agree that terrorism belongs to the environment of poverty in society and instigates hatred against the regime? I am afraid that it might be said that this corruption is caused by the religious speech and schools

that teach the Qur'an, and that these officials who practice corruption graduated from Qur'anic schools.

The crime has only one title: corruption with all its sorts, including corruption in the government, corruption of morals, corruption of conscience, corruption of finances, and corruption of management. This corruption is the real and is the first kind of terrorism that should be eradicated in order to get rid of the other crimes.

Concerning the Qur'an, it calls only to the best. It is the symbol of life that calls for mercy and intimacy. The Qur'an doesn't call to kill others. The religious speech that you attack is a source of mercy and intimacy among people. Therefore, you should fear God, politicians!

Source: marebpress.net



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# Yemen Press Review



**NewsYemen.net, an independent news website**  
Wednesday, April 1, 2009

## Top Story

- Yemen, US blamed for miserable life of Guantanamo detainees

The United States and Yemen are stalled on the fate of an estimated 99 Yemenis locked inside the US military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, some of whom are in their eighth year of detention without charge, the website reported.

Hundreds of prisoners have been sent home from Guantanamo in recent years, but only 14 of them were from Yemen. Now the largest single group among the 241 prisoners remaining at Guantanamo from Yemen represents one of the main challenges to President Barack Obama's pledge to close the controversial outpost by January 2010.

For more than a year, both Yemeni and US authorities said they want many of the Yemeni detainees to return home as soon as possible. Yet by the end of the Bush presidency in January 2009, the two countries had only agreed on the most rudimentary elements of a repatriation agreement: what one US diplomat called "not

even a shell." Even detainees who have long been cleared for return to Yemen remain in US custody.

The United States does not intend to repatriate those Yemenis it plans to prosecute. Thus terror suspects such as Ramzi Bin Al-Shibh, charged before the US military commissions with conspiring in the September 11 attacks, will not be leaving US custody anytime soon. In addition, both countries want Yemenis suspected of violating Yemeni law to be prosecuted upon return. US fears about the Yemenis in US custody, however, extend even to those whom it has no grounds to prosecute. Having held them for years as "enemy combatants," US officials are now worried that the men will "return to the fight."

Unless the two countries agree on a repatriation plan that ensures the detainees' rights, the men's prospects are bleak. For now they endure continuing arbitrary detention at Guantanamo, and upon return they face the possibility of further abuses. There is even talk of sending some of them to Saudi Arabia. Two Yemeni detainees whom US authorities have held for years without charge at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan are in similar straits.

In their public comments, the United States and Yemen agree that repatriated detainees should receive counseling, job training, and rehabilitation. But negotiators seem to have made little progress resolving

who should fund such programs and, of particular concern to US officials, how to ensure that former prisoners stay away from armed militancy.

The problem, from the US perspective, is the environment to which the men will return more than it is the men themselves. Yemeni prisoners have languished at Guantanamo and Bagram longer than other nationalities not because they are, as a group, deemed to be more of a threat, but rather because the United States views their country with serious concern.

The Yemeni authorities have sought to minimize the detention aspect, saying that the proposed rehabilitation center would be similar to a "camp." Their written summary states that participants would be rehabilitated "religiously, culturally, vocationally and medically" in a setting complete with sports, cultural activities, and family visits. The government would hire specialists to evaluate each detainee and analyze "the causes that have contributed to their joining terrorist groups."

Finally-and most practically-the proposed rehabilitation center has yet to be built. Given the January 2010 deadline for Guantanamo's closure, this may increase the odds that future returnees will end up in a rehabilitation program in Saudi Arabia, where they could also face prolonged detention without charge, or, like previous returnees, in what is clearly the default solution: the jails

and prisons run by Yemen's security services.

The experience of "Fahmi Mohammed," who was repatriated from Guantanamo in 2004, underscores this risk. He told Human Rights Watch that upon his arrival in Yemen the authorities threw him into a political security prison and tried to beat him into falsely confessing that he was acting as a US spy.



**Al-Sahwa.net, affiliated with the Islah Party**  
Thursday, April 2, 2009

## Top Story

- HRW calls for US, Yemen agreement on detainees

Sanaa and Washington must resolve their differences over the future of the approximately 100 Yemeni detainees still held at Guantanamo Bay, the website quoted Human Rights Watch as saying. The group also urged the US administration and Yemen to swiftly resolve the impasse of 100 Yemenis held in Guantanamo Bay eight days ago.

In a report released on Sunday, HRW affirmed that Yemenis would remain the biggest obstacle to President Barack Obama's plan to

close the detention facility.

The report criticized US and Yemeni proposals to transfer detainees to a Yemeni detention, pointing out that they may be held there indefinitely. The report further warned of the potential for mistreatment against detainees in Yemen.

"If Washington does not work to create a repatriation plan for the Yemeni detainees, it may try to transfer them to the United States and continue to detain them without charge" HRW said.

It also indicated that among Washington options is sending some Yemenis to a locked rehabilitation centre in Saudi Arabia in which, it said, they would face potential risks.

Fahmi Mohammed, a Yemeni citizen repatriated from Guantanamo Bay in 2004, was quoted as saying, "I was tortured for five days, from nine in the morning until dawn. The cell was dark. They beat me with shoes. There were insults, bad words and threats to do bad things to my female relatives and to imprison my father. I told them, "If you're going to torture me, it won't be anything new. The Americans already put me through torture."

Mohammed's situation is illustrative on many fronts. Penniless and depressed, he also cannot get a loan, and has no access to medical care. With no money to afford a home for his family, he lives away from his wife and child. "If our brothers at

Guantanamo knew of these conditions," he told Human Rights Watch, "they would not want to return."

In fact, unlike citizens of certain other countries at Guantanamo and Bagram, nearly all of the Yemenis are eager to go home. But if they return to continued abuse in detention, and face bleak reintegration prospects upon release, they may become the security risks that US policy-makers fear.

A comprehensive reintegration program that respects detainees' rights and helps them build productive lives could well cost millions of dollars, a sum that Yemen, the poorest country in the Middle East, can hardly afford. In keeping with its international obligations to provide an effective remedy to victims of human rights violations, the United States should provide most of the funding and oversight for such a program.

In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for Yemen to monitor the movement and associations of returned detainees. The government should not, however, impose restrictions that would be equivalent to a punishment resulting from a conviction on a criminal charge. Any restrictions require a fair legal process-one that relies on evidence brought before a court, with a right to contest the evidence and to appeal the ruling-not just a presumption of guilt stemming from the returnee's previous detention at Guantanamo.

## Re-Booting NATO-Russia Relations

By: **Dmitry Rogozin**

The crisis in Georgia last August tested Europe's security system, and the system failed to fulfill its core task of ensuring common security for the continent as a whole. As a result, Europe must re-examine its current security arrangements, analyze what happened, and take this analysis into account in reforming those arrangements.

Even before the Georgia crisis, Russia already saw a need to revisit the mechanisms of European security, including its international and regional institutions and their functions. We suggested a new, legally binding treaty system of mutual security guarantees to ensure equal security throughout Europe.

The European Union believes that the Russian initiative is well grounded and has shown interest in launching such a project. There are leaders in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) who are also willing to take part. NATO,

however, has stood aside. I was supposed to put forward Russian proposals on the new security concept to the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) last September. But the Alliance refused to hold the scheduled meeting following the Georgia crisis.

When the NRC was created in 2002, it was devised as a mechanism for dialogue, cooperation, and joint decision-making on issues of mutual interest, including non-proliferation and arms control, the fight against terrorism, civil emergency planning, and military-to-military cooperation. The NRC also was supposed to act as a forum for "holding prompt consultations" in crisis situations and to prevent such crises by "early identification of emerging problems."

Unfortunately, the Georgian crisis demonstrated that Russia's dialogue with NATO was less substantial than it should have been. Yet NATO-Russia cooperation is of the outmost importance to global security. We need NATO and NATO needs us in order to face common threats and challenges. On the other hand, Russia will not go

cap in hand to NATO. We are not interested in the illusion of partnership. Indeed, Russia's foremost foreign-policy goal is a real, strategic partnership with the West in which we work together to solve the multitude of modern security problems.

I don't have a crystal ball, but I'm certain that several years from now we should be able to look back at the Georgian crisis as a turning point. Already we can name three "growth factors" that will help the new security system to mature - the development of the European Security and Defense Policy, the transformation of NATO, and Russia's return to its rightful position on the world stage.

Russia is not becoming assertive, aggressive, or imperial, as many observers claim. We are only claiming what is rightfully ours - a place in the front row of international relations. The world will have to get used to the fact that Russia is no longer a feeble country. Is it so incomprehensible that we have strategic interests and national security concerns?

Russia has tried for years to get away

from Cold War thinking and to persuade our partners to drop their stereotypes. After the terror attacks of September 11, 2001, Russia quickly extended a helping hand to the Americans. But the West did not appreciate this gesture. Military bases have been impetuously established along Russia's perimeter. The United States plans to establish part of its global missile defense system in the Czech Republic and Poland. The Warsaw Pact ceased to exist 20 years ago, but NATO still proceeds eastward, adding new member states for reasons other than enhancing security and democracy.

Russia is not interested in confrontation; we want to focus on our own development, prosperity, and stability. But successful development is possible only in the context of transparent and equal international relations, together with stability and security in our neighborhood. Thus, we are interested in a strong and independent Europe. And the development of EU military capacities and EU security policy is an important

factor in European and global security.

It is time for Europe to stop acting like an occupied continent and start displaying its own political will. The action taken by the EU in the course of the Georgian crisis proved that Europeans have such an aspiration and are willing to fulfill their role as a global player, which will become increasingly apparent in the coming years.

As for NATO, we in Russia think it should adapt and transform itself to suit the new environment. During this transformation, NATO must keep in mind that the primary responsibility for global peace and security lies with the United Nations. For the moment, though, NATO and its leaders have no clear answer to the question: where do we go from here? The Alliance's strategic concept is outdated, yet it cannot even agree on when to start preparing a new one. Its forces are overstretched in Afghanistan, and its members are using it to advance their own goals.

A real, working NATO-Russia relationship could provide the Alliance

with solutions to problems that it cannot tackle on its own. It would also give new impetus to the European security system. This is what we want to see in the future - and it is a future that is not possible without Russia. To see why, simply compare the importance of combating international terrorism with the value of nurturing Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili's personal ambitions: things soon fall into place.

Europe needs an integrated, solid, and indivisible system of comprehensive security. We are not calling for abolishing everything and starting from scratch. On the contrary, we must build on existing institutions. In short, we need to retain the hardware, but update the software. Russia's initiative for a pan-European security treaty should be the new operating system.

*Dmitry Rogozin is head of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to NATO.*

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## Kick-Starting Employment

By: **J. Bradford DeLong**

Unemployment is currently rising like a rocket, because businesses that normally would be expanding and hiring are not, and those businesses that would normally be contracting and shedding workers are doing so very rapidly. Businesses that ought to be expanding and hiring cannot, because the depressed general level of financial asset prices prevents them from borrowing money or selling bonds on profitable terms.

In response, central banks should purchase government bonds for cash in as large a quantity as needed to push their prices up as high as possible. Expensive government bonds will shift demand to mortgage or corporate bonds, pushing up their prices.

Even after central banks have pushed government bond prices as high as they

can go, they should keep buying government bonds for cash, in the hope that people whose pockets are full of cash will spend more of it, and that this will directly pull people out of joblessness and into employment.

In addition, governments need to run extra-large deficits. Spending - whether by the United States government during World War II, following the Reagan tax cuts of 1981, by Silicon Valley during the late 1990's, or by home buyers in America's south and on its coasts in the 2000's - boosts employment and reduces unemployment. And government spending is as good as anybody else's.

Finally, governments should undertake additional measures to boost financial asset prices, and so make it easier for those firms that ought to be expanding and hiring to obtain finance on terms that allow them to expand and hire.

It is this point that brings us to US

Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner's plan to take about \$465 billion of government money, combine it with \$35 billion of private-sector money, and use it to buy up risky financial assets. The US Treasury is asking the private sector to put \$35 billion into this \$500 billion fund so that the fund managers all have some "skin in the game," and thus do not take excessive risks with the taxpayers' money.

Private-sector investors ought to be more than willing to kick in that \$35 billion, for they stand to make a fortune when financial asset prices close some of the gap between their current and normal values. If the fund does well over the next five years - returns profits of 9% per year - private investors get a market rate of return on their very risky equity investment and the equivalent of an "annual management fee" equal to 2% of assets under management.

If the portfolio does less well - profits of 4% per year - the managers

still get a healthy but sub-market return of 10% per year on their equity. And if the portfolio does badly - loses 1% per year - they lose roughly 70% of their investment. Those are attractive odds. Time alone will tell whether the financiers who invest in and run this program make a fortune. But if they do, they will make the US government an even bigger fortune. And 2% of assets under management is an annual fee that many sophisticated investors have been willing to pay private hedge funds - topped off with an extra fee of 20% of annual profits, which the Treasury is not paying.

The fact that the Geithner Plan is likely to be profitable for the US government is, however, a sideshow. The aim is to reduce unemployment. The appearance of an extra \$500 billion in demand for risky assets will reduce the quantity of risky assets that other private investors will have to hold. And the sudden appearance of between five

and ten different government-sponsored funds that make public bids for assets will convey information to the markets about what models other people are using to try to value assets in this environment.

This sharing of information will reduce risk - somewhat. When assets are seen as less risky, their prices rise. And when there are fewer assets to be held, their prices rise, too. With higher financial asset prices, those firms that ought to be expanding and hiring will be able to get money on more attractive terms.

The problem is that the Geithner Plan appears to me to be too small - between one-eighth and one-half of what it needs to be. Even though the US government is doing other things as well - fiscal stimulus, quantitative easing, and other uses of bailout funds - it is not doing everything it should.

My guess is that the reason that the US government is not doing all it

should can be stated in three words: Senator George Voinovich, who is the 60th vote in the Senate - the vote needed to close off debate and enact a bill. To do anything that requires legislative action, the Obama administration needs Voinovich and the 59 other senators who are more inclined to support it. The administration's tacticians appear to think that they are not on board - especially after the recent AIG bonus scandal - whereas the Geithner Plan relies on authority that the administration already has. Doing more would require a legislative coalition that is not there yet.

*J. Bradford DeLong, a former Assistant US Treasury Secretary in the Clinton administration, is Professor of Economics at the University of California at Berkeley.*

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Education and Culture DG

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### Erasmus Mundus Scholarship Programme Iran, Iraq and Yemen

The Delegation of the European Commission is pleased to announce Round 3 of the EM8 scholarship programme for the Academic year 2009-2010. This scholarship is funded by the European Commission to non-European students. The Erasmus Mundus "External Co-operation Window" (EM ECW) is a co-operation and mobility scheme addressing student and academic exchanges for the purpose of studying, teaching, training and research in the area of higher education co-operation funded by the European Union. The EM ECW objective is to promote the exchange of persons, knowledge and skills at higher education level between the European Union and Third-countries. EM8 targets **three** different groups 1) currently registered student/staff at partner universities Sana'a, Ibb, Dhamar 2) Student or staff currently not registered at a partner university/other 3) Iraqi citizens but has refugee or asylum status in Yemen. EM8 includes **five** types of individual mobility: Undergraduate, Master, Doctorate, Post-doctorate and Academic Staff Training.

Selected students will have the option to study at one of the 10 leading European universities. Scholarships will be given to applicants selected by the consortium to participate in the EM8 programme. The programme will finance the expenses engendered by the mobility; i.e., travel costs, subsistence allowances, tuition fees, and insurance costs. Information about the different fields of studies covered by the individual mobility can be found in the following link: [http://www.erasmusmundus8.net/info/Fields\\_study\\_scholarships/](http://www.erasmusmundus8.net/info/Fields_study_scholarships/)

The applications to Erasmus Mundus programme and the submission of all the required documents must be made online and **EC Delegation in Sana'a will not accept any application**. Applicants will find instructions, detailed information, and the link to the application form on Erasmus Mundus web-site: <http://www.erasmusmundus8.net>

The deadline for the applications registration is:

**1st of May 2009** (at midnight May 1, 2009)

The deadline for the uploading of required documents:

**3rd of May 2009** (at midnight May 3, 2009)

Congratulations.  
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**أ/ أحمد صالح الفقيه**  
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بمناسبة حصوله على شهادة التأمين المعغنية  
من معهد البحريه للدراسات المصرفية والمالية  
بتقدير عام ممتاز  
تمنئيه له دوام التقدم والإزدهار

الهاتفون

م/ خير الدين محمد النصور  
المدير التنفيذي

أ/ نادية عبد العزيز السقاف  
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وكافة موظفو مؤسسة يمن تايمز للصحافة والطباعة والنشر



# Palestinian rap godfathers DAM represent for the '48ers

March 30 marks the annual Land Day (Youm Al-Ard) commemoration for Palestinians remembering the 1976 general strike in historic Palestine to oppose an Israeli government plan to confiscate land. Today, support for this movement "from the inside" takes on a number of different forms, including hiphop! Pioneer Palestinian rappers DAM sat with MENASSAT discussing what's next in their music careers, and what is next for the Arab minority in Israel.

By Tania Tabar and Jackson Allers

The godfathers of Palestinian hip-hop, DAM (Arabic for "eternity" or Da Arabian MC's) rocked the mics in Amman, Jordan on Friday night (March 27) at an outdoor show that brought the Palestinian hip-hop group together with local Jordanian hip-hoppers, MC Maze, producer/DJ Sotusura and Palestinian rapper Ragtop from the Los Angeles-based hip-hop group The Philistines.

DAM - brothers Tamer and Suhell Nafar and Mahmoud Jleri - performed on the eve of Land Day (Youm al 'Ard in Arabic), one of the most significant incidents of Palestinian uprising inside Israel.

On March 30, 1976 six Palestinians were killed and some 100 injured in confrontations with Israeli police forces during protests against the con-

tinuing expropriation of Arab land. For young Palestinians living as second class citizens in the shadow of the 1976 protests, DAM has made a career educating listeners about the reality of the 1.3 million Arabs living in Israel.

DAM grew up in the city of Lod, a mixed town of Arabs and Jews that has become a ghetto inside Israel since the creation of the state in 1948.

"So this is reflecting our whole reality. This story of them trying to come in - we react - and the police come against us. This is our daily life," Mahmoud Jleri told MENASSAT over the weekend.

The trio's message is even more relevant given Israel's political shift to the

right in the recent elections. Example: newly appointed deputy prime minister, Avigdor Lieberman, leader of the far-right Yisrael Beiteinu nationalist party has called for the "transfer" of Palestinian citizens out of Israel.

Jleri said, "Israel will have to decide between carrying out a Holocaust on the Palestinians living in the '48 territories or agree societally to welcome ALL of its citizens. So this is the choice. And one day they are going to have to make it. For better or for worse."

Lyrical masterminds, DAM members like Jleri say their second class status is ironic, and they actively confront this in their rhymes.

"I speak better Hebrew than most Israelis and they call to kick me out and we are the native people," Jleri said.

DAM released their debut album "Stop Selling Drugs" in 1998, but the group's biggest song to date was the 2001 release "Meen Irbah" (Who's the terrorist?) - album of the same title - which is still the most downloaded Arabic hip-hop song with over one-million downloads and counting.

MENASSAT caught up with DAM after their March 27 show to discuss Land Day, life inside pre-1948 territories, their struggles with the music industry and the expansion of Rap 3arabi (Arabic rap).

MENASSAT: You're considered by many to be the originators of Palestinian hip-hop (along with the now defunct group MWR)...one of the godfathers of this up-and-coming Rap 3arabi movement in a way...and you've been in the game for a while...do you think your music is helping to bring Rap 3arabi to the masses and are people in

the West ready to hear your messages?

Mohmoud Jleri: "Our music is bringing Arabic rap to the masses, as our album Dedication (2006-2007) is being sold in Europe and in the US. And we are also touring and spreading the message."

"There are also a lot of rappers coming out of the Middle East now doing Arabic hip-hop, so it is getting bigger and bigger."

"As for the West, if it will deliver the message to them, musically yes, lyrically, well unfortunately they have to translate it, which is a hard job and they won't do it. But they can get the message. They don't get the metaphors and

everything we are saying, but they understand that we are singing for a cause."

"But it's still not enough."

MENASSAT: After Jackie Salloum's documentary Slingshot Hip Hop, we learned that you first rapped in Hebrew. Your Hebrew lyrics are actually dope, and speak of realities for Arabs inside pre-1948 borders. Does your message reach the Israeli hip-hop scene? Is hip-hop a means of dealing with some big issues between Palestinian and Israeli youth?

Suhell Nafar: "Well, first of all, we didn't start with Hebrew. Tamer started rapping around 1998 in English and then we went into Arabic and Hebrew at the same time - the first song was Arabic and Hebrew mixed."

"We tried to work on Arabic hip-hop but we didn't know how to do it, we didn't have the influences so it took us time to become stronger in it."

"And about the conflict with Palestinians and Israelis, it definitely won't solve the problem. The people who already know the situation listen to it. There is kind of a fan club for DAM including Jewish refuseniks (people who refuse to serve in the army) and people who are against the occupation. So these are the people who support our music."

"About changing the situation, I don't think so. All of these things take time. But we should connect one step at a time."

Mohmoud Jleri: "You can deliver the message but the problem with the Israeli audience is that they are right-wing, so it's very hard to deliver the message to them."

"And if you do deliver the message it's a minority not a majority who are listening. It's a problem that we are living in, because it is a racist country however you want to look at it."

MENASSAT: What advice would you give to young Palestinian rappers in the Territories and in the refugee camps in the Middle East who are trying to get their music heard?

Mohmoud Jleri: "They should keep on doing what they love and what their passionate about and to keep on, not to just do one song and that's it. To keep on going and try to make new stuff. That will help them in the future. Telling the reality, and not becoming mainstream."

"I hope that Arabic rap won't start talking about cars and bitches, which is what we don't have - we have occupation and we struggle for our freedom."

MENASSAT: There are rifts in Palestinian society between those in the pre-48 Territories and the West Bank and Gaza Strip - are those divisions mirrored in the Palestinian hip-hop scene?

Mohmoud Jleri: "Not really. I don't think so."

"There are different subjects being discussed in '48 and in '67, but we never disrespect each other. We don't even want to get into this thing of, oh I'm dissing people from '67 and they are dissing me, it's not the purpose for

MENASSAT: Who in the up-coming Arabic or Palestinian hip-hop movement should we be looking out for?

Suhell Nafar: "There's a lot of major moves being made by artists throughout the whole pan-Arab hip-hop scene."

"You can talk about the Algerians who started doing hip-hop in the early stages of the world hip-hop movement because it was part of the influence from France."

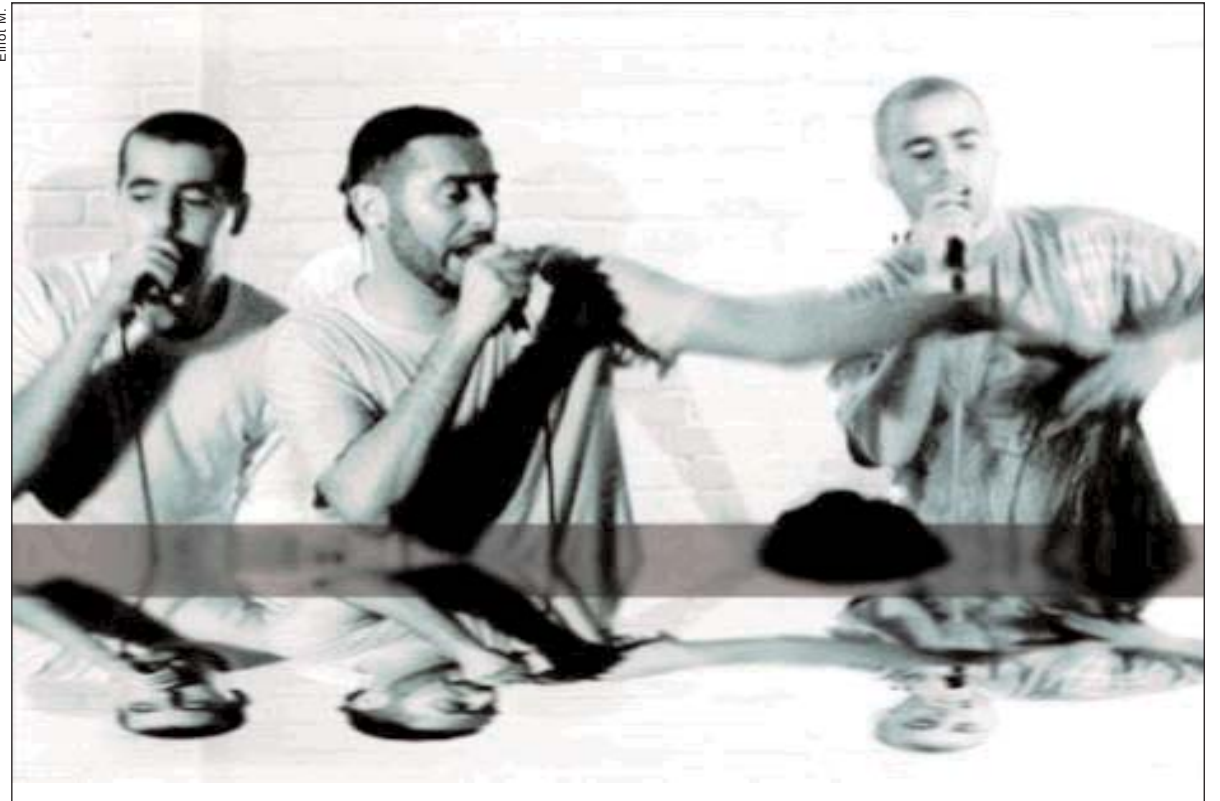
"You have Tunisian hip-hop, Moroccan hip-hop, which is really huge. You have a big movement that is starting in Amman too. You have hip-hop all around."

"I can mention a lot of names. Here in Jordan you have Taj, the 962 crew, Ragtop who is also here, Narcy ("The Narcycyst") who is Iraqi living in Montreal, PR (Palestinian Rapperz - pictured below) from Gaza, Safa from Akka, Far3an from Egypt."

"The movement is really getting bigger and bigger. Compare it to the attempts by the international community in trying to get dialog and cooperation between countries - something these governments are failing to do...And then we see we are bridging the gap between conflicting groups."

"We see we are doing it in hip-hop, which is a good feeling, after all the conquering that we had for all these years."

MENASSAT: After Slingshot Hip-Hop, people in the hip-hop world are expecting something great from DAM. What's next? What are you working on with your music? Any collaborations we should be aware of?



A picture from the Elliot M. documentary "DAM - Hip-Hop Palestinian Style - From Israel To The UK."

why we are doing hip-hop."

"We are still building the industry, we are still building Arabic hip-hop. So we don't want to begin from the end, I think. So until now, no, there are no beefs (arguments)."

MENASSAT: Dutch-Moroccan MC, Sala7 Edin, has linked up as fellow Dutch-Moroccan producer/MC Cilvaringz for his upcoming album release - Horr ("Free" in Arabic). The duo has the backing of the Wu Tang Clan and has secured distribution through Universal in the Middle-East, North Africa and Europe. Is it even possible for such distribution and big hip-hop backing to have a pan-Arab effect with the Arab youth? Is a pan-Arab hip hop movement possible...like some Nasser-hip-hop type of movement?

Mohmoud Jleri: "It's already happening. I don't know if it's big enough to call it that, but you have people like DJ Khaled, who is Palestinian, and is doing beats for every famous hip-hop artist that you can name."

"You have people like FredWreck (best known for producing for Snoop Doggy Dogg) who is also affecting the Arabic hip-hop industry (FredWreck is the host for MTV Arabia's flagship show "Hip-Hop Na/(Our Hip-Hop in translation)."

"I don't know if it will affect the movement, we are still a minority in the industry."

MENASSAT: Tell us about what is happening now in the '48 Territories - the fact that things politically, culturally are moving to the right in Israel, how is this affecting your work, your lives?

Mohmoud Jleri: "Well our lives are hard and have been hard since 1948. We were occupied and we are still occupied people."

"Nowadays Israel is starting to be more obvious and they have people saying they should transfer us and kick us out. And those people just came to Palestine, maybe 10 years ago, 20 years ago, they still have a Russian accent in Hebrew." (Editors note: Jleri is referring to Avigdor Lieberman here).

"I speak better Hebrew than them and they call to kick me out and we are the native people. So this is a problem."

"They always had the plan to kick us out, it just didn't work for them in '48. They tried it in '67 and it also didn't work. And we hope that we can keep on struggling for our resistance to stay as Palestinians on our historical land."

"What will happen, what could happen, I don't know."

"I don't expect what is going to happen to be very good. I think it is going to get worst and worst. Israel will have

Suhell Nafar: "Let's first start with after Slingshot, DAM, who started the production company called 48 records, produced a soundtrack for the movie, which is out now. You can get it on www.slingshothiphop.com."

"We are going to do a tour in a week in the USA with over 20 shows, then are going to Canada. I'm also going to Spain because there is a movie covering Palestinian art, which DAM is part of."

"There are a few songs that we recorded for the next album that will out soon, in the summer probably. And there are a lot of big people in it."

MENASSAT: Like who?

"We can't tell."

MENASSAT: When is the next album coming out?

Mohmoud Jleri: "At the end of 2009 or beginning of 2010. It will be ready in the summer but will take some time to be released."

MENASSAT: Hip-Hop Arabia (dot) com is featuring your brand new video on their main page. The song "Letters" is by Mahmoud and it's directed by Suhell Nafar. It's a great video! Can we expect more videos? Is there a chance for TV broadcasts? What's next for DAM?

Suhell Nafar: The next project will be the second letters song for Tamer. We started the alphabet song from alif to yaa and then Tamer is doing it backwards from yaa to alif. And there is going to be another video, which is going to be released in a week."

"And there is a video coming out soon with Invincible from Detroit (USA) and Abeer Sabrina da Witch and me doing one song. Also there's the music video for our song "Flow Like That," which is being broadcast by VideoMix TV."

MENASSAT: Tell us about what is happening now in the '48 Territories - the fact that things politically, culturally are moving to the right in Israel, how is this affecting your work, your lives?

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to decide between carrying out a Holocaust on the Palestinian people in '48 or agreeing to be a country for all of its citizens."

"So this is the choice. And one day they are going to have to make it. For better or for worse."

MENASSAT: Monday is Land Day (Youm al Ard)? What is happening on the ground?

Suhell Nafar: "Well I can tell you what is happening right now. Just a few days ago in Umm al-Fahm (in Israel) we had the events of the extremist Zionist right-wing who wanted to march into Umm al-Fahm to spark another fire. This is what they do all the time."

"They (right-wingers) didn't plan it, they didn't even sms each other, they made it a secret so that when they would go into the city no one would know."

"So what happened inside Umm al-Fahm was that people were on their roofs and suddenly saw all of these right-wing people just coming in, and their reaction was to kick them out, they clearly wanted to cause the residents problems."

"But the police started protecting the right-wing Zionists. So this is reflecting our whole reality. This small story of them trying to come in, we react, and the police come against us. This is our daily life."

"They spark the fire and we have to get angry and react and everything becomes bigger. This is what is happening these days."

"You have a lot of projects in '48 to minimize us, to make us more and more small in a demographic way. They have big projects. For example Yehud Lod, which is to make Lod more Jewish - our city."

"You can see it in their actions when they demolish houses. There were more than 70 houses demolished in the last two years in our city."

Mohmoud Jleri: "Not only Lod, all of the '48ers are living under this racist system, for example, house demolitions, Israel forbidding us from learning several subjects...it's not clear racism like where they say you are not allowed to go to a club because you are an Arab, which is really not important actually."

"The more important racism is when you are not allowed to, say, be a doctor until you are 21. Why? Because an Israeli is only finishing their service in the army at 21, so they want to make it "equal."

"They don't want Arabs to be doctors at an early age. So it's a much deeper racism, where you don't have jobs and if you study in university you can only hang your degree on the wall but you don't have nothing to do with it."

"All of the jobs ask for people who served in the army. And none of us served in the army and none of us will. This is a very big problem for us, and we are facing a very racist society."

"You can only imagine how they can treat you. A lot of politicians say that we are the cancer inside Israel. And you imagine how people treat cancer."



[Suhell Nafar performs last Friday in Amman.]



A shot from the documentary "Slingshot Hip Hop"



# Negligence causes death of infant

By: Ola Al-Shami

The Al-Mahdhari family received their fourth daughter with a hope to see her sleeping on her small bed as soon as her mother was discharged from Saber private hospital in Mansoura, Aden, where she gave birth.

The baby was born on Friday, March 6 and was to be discharged by the hospital with the mother on Monday morning because the mother, Marwa, had a cesarean. On Sunday night the mother, was having difficulty breathing that she was given oxygen.

"The nurses used to give me the baby four times a day for breast feeding. When they brought her on Sunday night at around 10 P.M. the baby was crying so much and not able to breast feed. I told them that I think she was having difficulty breathing. They took her from me and the next morning they brought her again to me but she was still crying and her nose was bleeding," said the mother.

The painting was mainly in the reception area and corridors between the incubators where the infants were kept and the maternity ward were the new mothers stay. The father, Toufiq Al-Madrahah suspects that their daughter inhaled the paint while she was going back and forth passing by fresh paint. Three other new born babies died during the same week.

However, the following morning after the shift doctor signed the discharge paper for mother and baby to go home, the little baby was reported dead. She died as a result of inhaling toxic fumes from the newly painted walls of the hospital.

Around eight a.m. on Monday, a doctor

brought the baby to her aunt, telling her to urgently rush the baby to another hospital because the baby could not breathe. She died almost at once in the second hospital which diagnosed the cause of death as a severe deficiency in her circulation and respiratory systems. Her death came just four days after she was born.

Al-Madrahah, claimed that he has a forensic medical report stating the cause of death.

"They painted the hospital in the presence of patients and new born children. The components used in painting are dangerous and cause asphyxiation. This resulted in three children's deaths, and my newborn child was the fourth," said Al-Madrahah. "Those who killed my daughter by their carelessness are no different from Israeli soldiers who kill Gaza's children with their guns." Following the death of his daughter, Al-Madrahah filed a complaint to all concerned authorities, including the Ministry of Health. Accordingly, the ministry sent a committee to inspect the hospital's internal environment and to check the painting and toxic fumes complaint.

The committee issued a report stating that the maternity ward is agreeable with medical standards except for the painting issue, which they highlighted. The report indicated that there was a smell of fresh paint in the second floor in the maternity ward which can cause asphyxiation, especially for new born children.

The committee retrieved the files of the mother and child in question to follow up on the case.

Although the law of medical negligence has been issued since 2000, it is still questionable why no authority takes responsibility for executing it.

Many victims of medical negligence are losing their rights due to the absence a formal legal system used as a reference point for negligence disputes. Al-Madrahah's daughter's forensic report proves that the cause of the newborn girl's death was inhalation of harmful chemicals which inflame respiratory tissues. It is regarded as harmful for adults too.

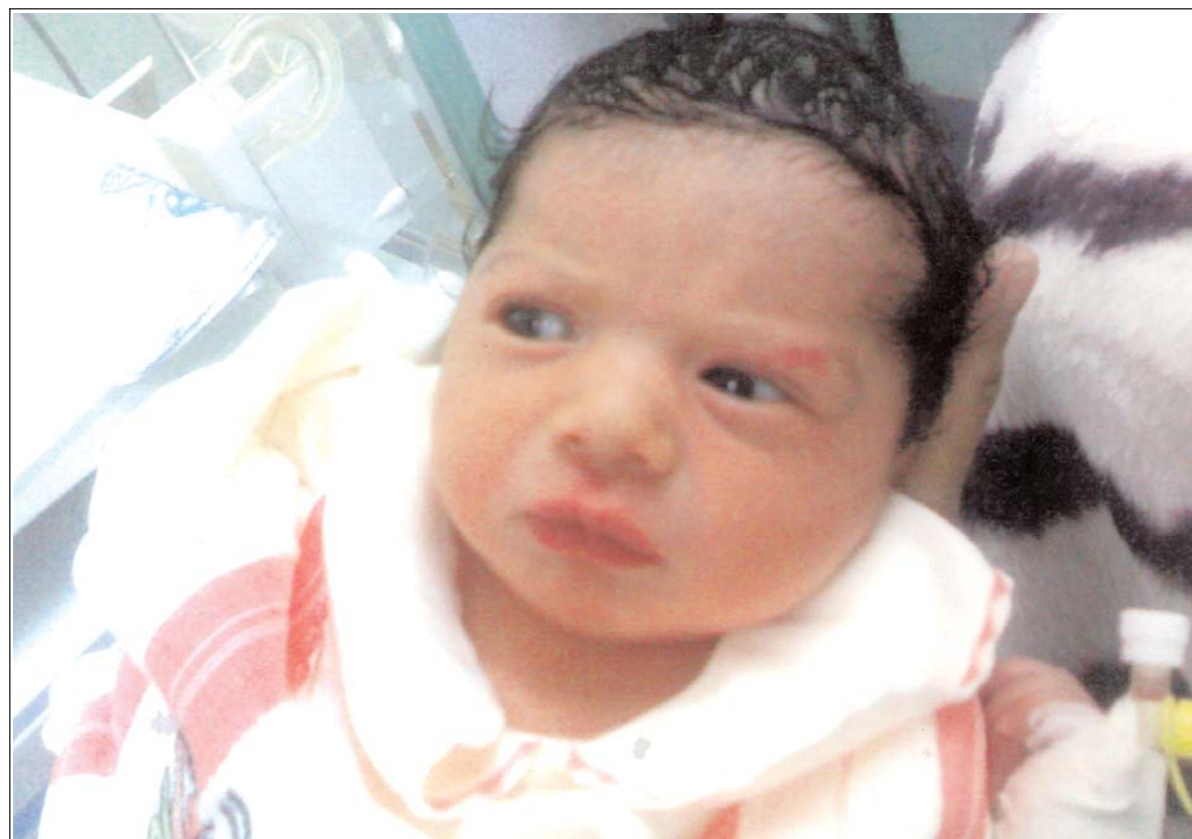
"My daughter was a healthy baby. The hospital's carelessness was the only cause of her death" said Al-Madrahah, who is currently suing the hospital, accusing them of causing the wrongful death of his child.

"The Ministry of Health can not demand or be responsible for closing any hospital because of its administration policies, even if there were medical mistakes, unless the court sentences its closure. However, we may close a hospital for other legislative reasons, such as if it has no license," said Dr. Assem Al-Samaoy, the general director of private medical buildings in the Ministry of Health.

Regarding medical negligence cases, Al-Samaoy added that it is the responsibility of the Supreme Medical Council and not the Ministry of Health's responsibility.

Although the Supreme Medical Council is regarded as the formal place for anyone who suspects medical negligence or medical malpractice, most doctors and hospitals either do not know of this council or do not acknowledge it.

Consequently, the plaintive of any medical negligence case is not aware of who will bring the negligent person responsible. Furthermore, there are no practical steps to implement this law according to concerned bodies such as the Ministry of Health and the Doctors' Syndicate.



The little baby was to be named Hala [sweetness]. Just four days old, she died because of inhaling fresh paint in the maternity ward.

Syndicate.

"People whose children died in Saber Hospital were misinformed that it was the will of God, and they accepted that blindly," said Al-Madrahah. "When people's carelessness is the reason, then why do they regard it as a matter of fate or God's will?" he asked.

However, one of the reasons that results in postponing any practical steps of establishing the Supreme Medical Council is the random work of Doctors Syndicates, Al-Samaoy regarded. "There are three syndicates of doctors: the Doctors' Syndicate, the Pharmacists Syndicate, and the Dentists Syndicate. These three do not cooperate and they all work independently from each other," he said. Although the autopsy done for the little baby proves the cause of death, Saber hospital does not consider the report to be credible because it was done by an independent agency and not by the government.

Yemen Times attempted to contact Saber Hospital staff but the deputy director, Mr. Waheeb Al-Kazmi, refused to comment except to deny that these are all false accusations against the hospital.



Hospital's cleaners clean the floor with detergents to remove the smell of the fresh paint from the walls and wards immediately after the complaint about the baby's death was raised and prior to the arrival of the inspection committee from the Ministry of Health.



## From Hydrogenated fat to high fructose corn syrup (Part 1) What's the worse food you can eat?

By: Anna May Kinney

It was over fifteen years ago that I started writing those snail mail letters concerning the hidden hydrogenated fat in the foods we were eating and how this was causing heart problems and other illnesses like gallbladder/liver disorders. As I have written in many articles, this fat was 'created by man' its not natural in any way and our livers do not recognize it so cannot process it in the right manner. And unlike what so many people think, I believe our liver is the organ that is more responsible for keeping us alive and healthy than the heart is, and what you eat or don't eat affects this process.

After many years of frustration, writing letters and articles and talking with anyone who would listen, finally our New Democratic Party got on the wagon and started a campaign to ban this chemical fat from our food and now most food manufacturers have complied to tighter regulations. It might sound like a small victory, but to me, seeing anyone in government open up their eyes to what's going on in the food industry is amazing. Yet over the years things have only gotten worse with the threat of genetically engineered organisms getting into the food chain and thus into our intestinal track where it's been found that they will colonize and reproduce. (I'll explain

lots more of this in a following article) and many, many other things that not only need public attention, but public ACTION! Remember those letters to Parliament are still free for us; hope you put that address in a safe place.

Now I'm on top of most of the food problems we are facing, the hydrogenated fat problem was at the top of my list, and now I've found others that need to be talked about and taken action to protect us. Never did I think anything could equal the damage that hydrogenated fat does to the human body, but one of the foods that I've found that is even WORSE is High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS). This stuff is in almost EVERYTHING on your grocery shelf, and eating it not only leads to a higher calorie count, higher carbohydrate count, which means people put on weight faster, have more chance of wearing out their thyroid/pancreas processing carbohydrates and sugar surges, then find



themselves facing Type II diabetes.

In a study of more than 50,000 U.S. nurses it was found that those who drank just one serving of soda or fruit punch a day tended to gain much more weight than those who drank less than one a month, and had more than an 80 percent increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. In an editorial attached to these finding in the American Medical Journal, Caroline M. Apovian of the Boston University School of Medicine said, "While it

shouldn't be surprising to anyone that soda causes weight gain because it's high in calories, these findings are very significant. I think they are really a wake-up call to the consumer of soft drink beverages, to the government, to the community, to primary care providers."

HFCS has also been shown to trick the body into believing it's hungry, so that can of soda pop you just had to hold you over till dinner actually encourages you to eat more at the next meal. And if you think diet soda is better, that is a whole other story, those neurotoxins affect the brain, besides surging your blood sugar then drastically dropping your blood sugar. (Explaining this will take another article.)

Next week we'll take a look at how HFCS is made and new evidence that a VERY toxic chemical has been found in about 50% of the products that have HFCS in them. Note: those are the ones that have been tested. You'll never believe what this toxic chemical is and it's the reason that I pick High Fructose Corn Syrup as the worse food you could eat.

### Paint and your health

Liquid paint and varnish removers are among the most toxic products used in homes and workshops. The active ingredients in most common paint removers are organic solvents which may damage the skin, eyes, respiratory tract, nervous system, and internal organs. Special precautions must be taken in their use, especially if there are children present who might come in contact with either the material or its vapors. Paint stripper formulations in paste form are less hazardous than the liquid forms because they only contain around 50% solvents rather than 100% as found in the liquid forms.

#### Respiratory System Damage

All solvents can irritate the sensitive membranes of the nose and throat to varying degrees. Solvent concentrations which can irritate nose and throat membranes also may be capable of damaging sensitive lung tissue. These inhaled substances commonly enter the blood stream here they can attack other internal organs and the nervous system.

#### Skin Diseases

All solvents can cause skin disease (dermatitis) by dissolving the skin's natural protective barrier of oils. If the skin experiences enough direct contact with a solvent, it can turn dry and white and become cracked and fissured. In case of skin or eye contact, wash immediately to avoid burns and other serious damage.

#### Damage to Internal Organs

Dermal contact with paint remover solvents, besides causing deterioration of the skin, can result in absorption through the skin. Damage to the skin may lead to greater penetration of the solvents, resulting in internal organ injury. Chronic exposure may damage the liver and kidneys, which are responsible for detoxification and elimination of toxic chemicals from the body. Certain solvents can cause heart damage. Benzene, an ingredient in paint removers up until 1978, can damage bone marrow, causing aplastic anemia and leukemia.

#### Brain and Nervous System Damage

The most commonly experienced symptom of acute solvent exposure is narcosis or intoxication resulting from the solvent causing depression of the central nervous system (CNS). Drinking or inhaling grain or ethyl alcohol produces similar results. CNS depression can produce varied symptoms including irritability, fatigue, headaches, dizziness, sleepiness, loss of coordination and reflexes, nausea, and a staggering gait. Although these acute effects are reversible if exposure to the solvent is discontinued, narcosis symptoms are an indication of overexposure to a solvent. Chronic exposure may cause permanent brain damage, including behavioral changes, loss of memory, decreased intellectual abilities, confusion, seizures, etc. Source: [www.naturalhandyman.com](http://www.naturalhandyman.com)

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### Job Vacancies

The Yemen LNG project involves the construction and operation of a gas pipeline, a harbour and a liquefied natural gas processing plant at Balhaf on the Gulf of Aden which will export 6.7 million tons of LNG per annum. The project offices are based in Sana'a and the project has an anticipated lifespan of over 20 years. Yemen LNG Company is now recruiting the temporary and permanent staff who will construct and manage the project.

#### All candidates must be Yemeni nationals

**Job Title:** Treasury Accountant - Ref. 244  
**Reports to:** Head of Treasury  
**Department:** Finance  
**Work Location:** Sana'a

#### Duties & Responsibilities:

- Update and monitor daily exchange rate statements and process international payments in SAP.
- Process Electronic Funds Transfers through BNP software.
- Submit payroll transfers to banks on a monthly basis and ensure the confidentiality of the information submitted.
- Manage the stock of USD and YER checkbooks.
- Prepare the required monthly General Ledger entries.
- Control Letters of Guarantee and the related advance balances.
- Complete monthly reports and reconciliations related to treasury, including all GL bank balances in SAP along with statements received from the banks.
- Assist the cash management supervisor as required.

#### Qualifications Required:

- Accounting / Finance degree or Professional Qualification
- 3 years' Finance experience of which one year should have been spent in a Treasury role
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent written and spoken English,
- Excellent knowledge of typical computer software programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, e-mail etc.) and familiarity with or willingness to learn, other related systems.

**Job Title:** Treasury Accounting Assistant - Ref. 245  
**Reports to:** Head of Treasury  
**Department:** Finance  
**Work Location:** Sana'a

#### Duties & Responsibilities:

- Maintain corporate banking relationships to facilitate smooth banking processes
- Process all local vendors payments by cheque or Wire Transfer.
- Ensure the deposit and booking to ledger of any cash receipts from employees to clear their advances and control petty cash replenishment.
- Process the monthly payroll tax and forward this to the Tax Authority.
- Ensure that all validated invoices are received and paid within due dates
- Prepare the monthly un-distributed checks report.
- Assist supervisor in other tasks as required.

#### Qualifications Required:

- Accounting / Finance degree or Professional Qualification
- 2 years' Finance experience of which one year should have been spent in a Treasury role
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent written and spoken English
- Excellent knowledge of typical computer software programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, e-mail etc.) and familiarity with or willingness to learn, other related systems.

**Job Title:** Contracts Engineer - Ref. 246  
**Department:** Contracts & Procurement  
**Work Location:** Sana'a with occasional trips to Balhaf

#### Duties & Responsibilities:

- Contribute to defining contract strategies
- Participate in Tenderers' Prequalification processes
- Assist technical departments in preparing Scopes of Work
- Organize the preparation of Calls for Tender
- Attend clarification meetings with Tenderers
- Assist in the tender evaluation process
- Draft contracts
- Perform the general administration of contracts
- Perform contracts close-out processes

#### Qualifications Required:

- Bachelor's degree in Engineering, Law, Economics and/or Business Administration
- Five years' professional experience, preferably in the Oil & Gas Industry (upstream)
- Well organized, efficient, proactive and methodical approach to work

- Bilingual in Arabic and English; excellent command of written English
- Excellent knowledge of typical computer software programs (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, e-mail etc.) and familiarity with or willingness to learn, other related systems.
- Strong communication and teamworking skills.

**Job Title:** HR Senior Secretary - Ref. 247  
**Department:** Human Resources & Administration  
**Work Location:** Sana'a

#### Duties & Responsibilities:

- Customary senior secretarial responsibilities in a busy, active department
- Maintain the daily agenda and appointments, and manage travel authorisations
- Access and use the electronic HR Database to produce reports, data and information and to distribute them as required
- Act as departmental focal point for the ordering of office supplies and verification of invoices, and organize meetings and functions.
- Maintain the HR Intranet Website, recommending innovations and improvements wherever necessary.
- Establish and maintain the departmental filing system, using manual and electronic media and update departmental documents.
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with colleagues in all departments.
- Undergo Emergency Response Training and participate actively in the ER Rota, exercises and any emergency situations.

#### Qualifications Required:

- Secretarial Qualifications or senior high school educational diploma (as a minimum). College or University Degree preferable.
- A minimum of 1 year's work experience in a similarly senior role preferably in the oil & gas industry.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, attention to detail and commitment to completing assigned tasks effectively.
- Excellent knowledge of written and spoken English and Arabic
- Excellent knowledge of typical computer software programs (Word, Excel, Powerpoint, e-mail etc.) and familiarity with or willingness to learn, HR Management and Document Control systems.
- Able to work autonomously but also to train and induct others

**Job Title:** Training Officer & Manpower Planner - Ref. 248  
**Reports to:** Head of Training  
**Department:** Human Resources & Administration  
**Work Location:** Sana'a

#### Duties & Responsibilities:

- Responsible for initiating, implementing and recording all training activities for the Sana'a office staff but may also assist with training for Balhaf staff if required.
- Has regular contact with all line managers during the compilation and implementation of annual training plans, training implementation, follow-up and assessment of training effectiveness.
- Briefs managers and supervisors directly on training issues and to identify specific training needs for individuals.
- Liaises constantly with the Head of HR Development to ensure that there is no overlap between Personal Development Plan design and implementation, and more generic training activities.
- Liaises constantly with the Head of Training in the development and implementation of the competence framework for all staff.
- In liaison with line and senior management, maintains and updates the corporate Manpower / Yemenisation plan, ensuring that Yemeni candidates for senior roles are trained and developed appropriately
- Maintains contacts with similar organizations in and outwith the Middle East in relation to training matters to remain abreast of developments in the training field, and recommends adoption of new approaches as appropriate.

#### Qualifications Required:

- Qualified to degree level in a relevant technical discipline.
- A minimum of 2 years' experience in technical training education and delivery, gained in a hands-on environment,
- Experience in designing and implementing competency development models,
- Fluent written and spoken English and Arabic
- Excellent motivational and communication skills with the ability to communicate with colleagues at all levels.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

Visit Yemen LNG's website at ([WWW.YEMENLNG.COM](http://WWW.YEMENLNG.COM)).  
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Yemen LNG Company will contact the selected candidates for interview and further assessment.  
Applicants who are not contacted have not been successful but can still apply for future positions.



# Yemeni Jews gradually migrate to the US and Israel

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

The Jews of Yemen who preferred to stay in their country are guaranteed a decent life in line with all legal, constitutional, and religious rights. They are entitled to enjoy these rights in the same manner that other people in society do, regardless of their religious affiliations.

The land, history, and soil of this country have intertwined with their lives and made them who they are today. Their ordeals should be considered ordeals for all Yemenis and not just for Jewish citizens.

## Aggression against Jews

The aggression and intimidation practiced against the Jewish population during the recent period brings to light a number of questions. Where is the role of the government and its security and judicial apparatuses? And why does the government relinquish its commitments toward its citizens?

Millions of Yemeni citizens, whether Muslims or Jews, are suffering. Ignorance and a backward mentality of those who rule this country made everyone succumb to oppression. When a journalist heard that the US and Israel intend to transfer rest of the Yemeni Jews outside of Yemen, he said, "What about us? As the situation is depressing, who will help us to immigrate?"

Yemeni Jews are subject to pressure



Mores Harary

and intimidation which causes them to think of immigration to any other country in the world, even though they still love their land where their ancestors have lived for thousands of years.

## Suffering ignored

"The Yemeni security and judicial apparatuses ignore the suffering of the Jews and refuse – directly or indirectly – to provide them with protection," said Khaled Al-Anisi, director of the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms or HOOD. "These incumbent bodies fully realize the identification of extremists who harm Jewish citizens."

Yemeni Jewish citizen Yahya Al-Marhabi who migrated to Israel along with his family around a decade ago told the Yemen Times that the Yemeni government provided his father and family, who came from Sa'ada to Sana'a, an apartment in Tourist City. However, the apartment is extremely small. "The apartment consists of only two rooms, a kitchen, and a bathroom, which is not enough to accommodate a family of 19 members," he said. "You can imagine how such a big family can live in two rooms which are only six square meters each."

Apart from an overcrowded apartment, Al-Marhabi said that his family suffers from financial difficulties as the government provided every member of the family with only YR 5,000 (USD 25) per month in addition to some food including wheat, rice, and oil. He pointed out that Jews in Yemen live in an ongoing crisis due to what is happening in Gaza, as they are unable to go to work lest they be subjected to intimidation or even death.

## The lesser of two evils

"Yemeni Jews only have two options: immigration or subjection to death under the current intimidation and extreme hatred by some ignorant extremists," said Al-Marhabi. "Additionally, we are subjected to negligence and indifference by rulers of the country."

For his part, Moses Harare, a Yemeni Jewish expatriate in the US, told the Yemen Times that he is concerned about Jewish children living in Yemen. "These children were deprived from continuing basic education even though we provided them with education books and needs," he said. "However, the general situation is bad and all of them aspire to have stability and security. But how can this come true at a time when the authorities don't do anything, as if the government is not responsible or as if we are not Yemenis. "This is our country where we were born and grew up," continued Harare. "Those Jews who don't desire to immigrate are still prepared to live in Yemen forever. Who can assist them in attaining their civil, legal, and constitutional rights, and to enjoy security and peace like the other citizens of the country?"

He concluded that Jews are "still awaiting President Saleh, the father of all citizens, to force the necessary authorities to carry out his directives." Previously, President Saleh committed the Yemeni government to giving every Jewish family a piece of land as well as the assurance of their security and safety.

## Life in the Tourist city

Rabbi Yahya Yusuf of Sa'ada who lives currently in Sana'a told newswomen.net last Wednesday that "the 65 Jews living in Tourist City in Sana'a after they were moved from Bani Salem in Sa'ada live in a very bad situation since the beginning of this year." The reason is



Raidah market in Amran where for hundreds of years Muslims and Jews used to trade peacefully until a few months ago.

that "the administration of Tourist City is not committed to paying their financial aid or food which the president allocated to them since they were moved during the Sa'ada war between Houthis and the government.



Yahya Marji

"Since they arrived here, they were lodged in six apartments in Tourist City," continued Yusuf, who has three daughters and two sons. "These apartments are not enough, and if someone wants to get married he can't because of crowding."

He demanded that the president form a committee to conduct field visits to the city to consider their situation. He said that these families live in vacuum. "Some of us can forge silver and work in carpentry, blacksmithing, and mechanics. But we don't have enough

money to establish our own projects," he pointed out. "We had all these capabilities when we were living in Sa'ada but all our property was looted."

Last Wednesday, Yusuf visited the Yemen Times and recounted the ordeals that Jewish families living in Sana'a are suffering from. "Now, food, cooking gas, and funds have been cut off for three months in spite of the directives of the president, the prime minister, and the Minister of Finance. They gave the funds to the manager of the Yemeni Economic Corporation to supply us with these things, but the latter is still refusing the directives," he said. "We appeal to the president of the Republic and the prime minister as we are approaching Passover, which is the biggest occasion for us. We don't have food, cooking gas, or money to buy the needs of this occasion, including meat and clothing."

## Demanding compensation

Yusuf further demanded that the presidential committee in charge of Sa'ada reconstruction compensate them for the damage that befell them due to war. He confirmed that he doesn't have any intention to immigrate outside the country, whether to the US or to Israel. "We are adherent to the country, loyal to God, and then to the President of the Republic Ali Abdullah Saleh," he said.

Concerning the situation of the Jewish community in Amran, located some 50 kilometers southwest of Sana'a, Abraham Yahya Yusuf told the Yemen Times that the 400 Jews in Raida district have been imprisoned inside their own houses since Masha Ya'esh Al-Nahari, a Jewish citizen, was killed last December. They are afraid that they might be subjected to similar incidents. "We are still awaiting the president's promises to provide us with protection and security, grant every Jewish family a piece of land in Sana'a, and provide temporary residence for those who desire to move to Sana'a," said Abraham.

Analysts consider that the government's negligence with regards to providing the Jewish community with security and protection contributed to activating the role of the Jewish Agency, the Israeli official institution concerned with organizing the immigration of Jews to Israel. The agency succeeded in transferring a Yemeni Jewish family consisting of nine members, Saeed Bin Israel, his wife and their seven children, to Israel. They live currently in a temporary residence in B'er Al-Sabah until the Israeli government provides them with a permanent residence in Bait Shemish located near Jerusalem, according to a news agency.

Many Yemeni Jews who live in Yemen have demanded that the Passport and Migration Authority renew their passports. The authorities seized around 200 passports belonging to the Jewish community of Amran. It

justified this act by saying that the computers used to print passports were broken, although other Yemeni citizens are receiving their passports every day. Additionally, the Jews' three synagogues and two schools were closed down.

## Ongoing threats

Many Jews living in Amran confirmed that they received repeated threats of murder after Al-Nahari was killed. They said that they try to hide their religious affiliation when they go to the market and that they avoid gatherings.

The murderer, Al-Abdi, who is proud of his act, confirmed that Yemeni Jews have to embrace Islam or leave the country. Otherwise, they will be subject to death.

The Amran Primary Court issued a

before Israel was established in 1948. After that, 60,000 Yemeni Jews immigrated to Israel, followed by more later. Some Jewish citizens immigrated to the US and other western countries. In addition, large numbers of Jews embraced Islam. "We are afraid that there might be an undeclared deal between Yemeni officials in the government and the Jewish agency in charge of transferring the rest of Jews to Israel and the US, and that the president's directives will no longer be carried out," said Al-Anisi.

Although Islam guarantees the rights of all persons regardless of their religion and convicts any aggression against non-Muslims and their property, some observers attribute the reasons behind the hatred against Jews in Yemen to social reasons rather than



Rabai Yahya Yousif (left) and the oldest Jewish citizen of Sa'ada, Suliman Marji, who is 80 years old. After the conflict, the Sa'ada Jews all moved to the Tourist City in Sana'a, where they are hosted by the government.

verdict last month stipulating that Al-Abdi pay USD 25,000 as blood money and that he is transferred to a psychiatric hospital to receive treatment.

The HOOD organization considered the verdict illegal and unjust. It filed a suit in the Ministry of Justice against Judge Abdul Bari Aqabah who issued the verdict. Supported by legal experts, the organization confirmed that the verdict indicates that the judge ignored proper judiciary procedures and legislations. It is expected that the trial will be repeated and the judge will be dismissed from his position.

"The verdict is considered an unprecedented disgrace as it doesn't abide by any legal or even traditional criteria," said Al-Anisi. "Therefore, we persistently demand that the judge be dismissed from his job and that Al-Abdi be tried again so that justice can take the right path and the victim be given his rights from the killer."

## Yemeni Citizens

The Jewish community constituted a big ratio of the Yemen population

religious ones. This is because of the crimes that Israel commits against the Palestinian people in Gaza.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh issued directives to the state-owned Yemen Economic Corporation to resume awarding financial aid for the Jewish community of Sa'ada, who now live in the Tourist City in Sana'a. The aid had been suspended since the beginning of 2009.

To celebrate Passover, he also gave the 65 member community YR 135,000 to buy an ox to feast on during the occasion as well as allowances for them.

During the week-long Passover, which starts Sunday, Jewish families exchange visits and perform prayers.

Under the current conditions in which many civil society organizations accuse the government of negligence regarding the provision of protection and security to the Jews and the unjust procedures that the court takes against the murderer of the Jewish citizen, the fate of protecting the Jewish community in Yemen remains a social and official duty for everyone.



Masha Al-Nahari's family. Masha was killed in Dec. 2008 by a radical who was later reported to be mentally ill. The Jewish community of around 400 people living in Amran have received threats and are starting to leave Yemen for other countries which they feel are safer.



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## Fluent English a passport to the future

By: Alice Hackman

With yards of carnations and sweet-scented jasmine round his neck, Ma'moon Yaqoob, 20, last Saturday graduated in a long black gown and cap from the Yemen America Language Institute (YALI) in Sana'a.

"I believe that this certificate is our passport to the future," he told a jubilant gathering of fellow graduates, students, friends and family loaded with bouquets, stressing the importance of the English language in an ever-globalizing world.

Yaqoob is so convinced by the importance of English today that he works in the school's administration while he studies accounting at Sana'a University, and hopes one day to become an English teacher to transmit his knowledge to

other Yemenis.

YALI is one of many English language institutes in Yemen to have tapped into the importance of learning English, and are doing their best to promote a bilingual generation of Yemenis to represent their country in these fast-paced modern times.

English not only opens the door to international business, but enables students to keep up to speed with the internet-fueled information revolution which has taken the globe by storm in the last 15 years.

"Speaking English nowadays is very important to keep up with the changing world and its improvements," said Majid Al-Rabaidi, 22, another enthusiastic YALI graduate. "I want to improve myself, to be a professional, to be something incredible, special."

Fellow graduate Najib Zuhra studied



Eight girls and 20 boys graduated from YALI, joining the ranks of Yemen's English-speaking cultural ambassadors.

English at Sana'a University, but says the system there was weak. Now equipped with his English diploma from the institute, he feels prepared to tackle Yemen's competitive job market, and hopes to work for an oil company.

"English is the first requirement for jobs," agreed Fahed Saleh, 20, also dressed in a gown bearing the Yemeni and American flags for the occasion. "All Yemenis should study English."

If speaking English boosts a young Yemeni's chance of finding a good job, it is also a useful tool in developing the country, providing access to a wide range of new information and the opportunity to study in specialized foreign universities.

"I want to study public health and nutrition, and these kinds of studies are richer outside [Yemen]," explained Safia Hashim, due to graduate from the institute next term. "Compared to books in Arabic, books in English are a totally different style, and show you the correct way to live - most books in Arabic are concentrated on religion."

Graduate Salwa Al-Muraqab wants to facilitate written cultural exchange between both languages: "I want to translate Islamic books into English, and translate good books to benefit [Yemen] society into Arabic," she said.

The institute's students are remarkable in their desire to put back into the system what they have learnt from it. Before Ali Sharwan, 26, even graduated, he had agreed to work for the institute compiling a film and song database for its multimedia center. Most of the latest films he writes subtitles for each month are American: "America nowadays is invading the world with globalization, we walk with the flow," he said.

Sharwan taught himself programming in the institute's language lab, and has now joined the ranks of Yemen's new bloggers with his newly-acquired skills, in English.

"Here I learned to be committed to self-study and plan for the future," he said. "You learn how to organize your ideas on a piece of paper, but also when you speak."

But new English graduates are also critical of the challenges that lie ahead: "In Yemen if I want to improve myself, I emigrate," said Salwa Ahmed who graduated from YALI last term. "When I come back, people don't appreciate my talents."

"If we want to change poverty, we have to change ourselves first," she concluded.



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