

Financing policies for small and medium enterprises still difficult

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

SANA'A, May 13 — "We were hoping to package our homemade perfumes and incense in fancy bottles to make them attractive for export," said Mohammed Al-Marfadi, a small business owner from Aden who shares a small manufacturing project with his wife Huda Abdullah. "When we applied for financial support or loan for our project, we were met with difficult requirements including providing a commercial guarantor."

Al-Marfadi and his wife tried asking some of their friends to be their guarantor so that they would be eligible to be part of the financing schemes in Aden, but their proposals were refused and their dream of exporting Adeni incense and perfumes in nice packages vanished into thin air.

"The response we received by friends was 'we only can guarantee you to have a job, but for money we are sorry,' so we started the project with only the YR 20,000 (US 100) we had," said Huda.

The Al-Marfadis received training by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on establishing small enterprises. Currently, they can't meet market demand because they don't have enough materials and they because couldn't obtain a loan. Their market is limited to the neighborhood where they live.

Potential entrepreneurs complain of the difficulty of gaining loans through microfinance institutions. They consider the conditions and requirements as too strict and above their capabilities. The financing institutions' main concern is to guarantee their money back, hence all the complex procedures.

Most institutions believe that the culture of payment on deadlines is still developing in the country.

"Guarantees required by Al-Awael Company to grant a loan are a job guarantee, a commercial guarantee or a group guarantee," said Mohammad Atiah, Operations Director at Al-Awael Company. The company is a microfinance institution and a partner of the Social Fund for Development in Taiz. "In a group guarantee, a number of women beneficiaries can provide a group guarantee so if one of them doesn't pay her installment the other pays for her," he said.

"The loans we provide are between YR 10,000 (US 50) to YR 200,000 (US 1,000) and the target group is women," Atiah continued. "Six to ten months is the period we offer for the beneficiaries to pay loans back. A representative from the company goes to interested applicants and studies their individual projects on a case-by-case basis. From this, the appropriate sum is determined."

"In March 2009, there were 2,600 beneficiaries at the Al-Awael Company in Taiz," he added.



Procrastination on payments, weak law enforcement, and guarantors lack towards commitments are some of the reasons behind the complex procedures for obtaining a loan, according to Atiah.

"The amount of the loan depends on the industry the person is interested in," said Dhafer Mohamed at Al-Amal Microfinance Bank. "Loans range from YR 10,000 (US 50) to YR 800,000 (US 4000). We almost never reward cash loans; rather, we buy materials and equipment directly for the project owner."

The guarantees are either a shop guarantee or a commercial guarantee.

In the shop guarantee, the community leader of the neighborhood would go to the bank and attest to the person's good standing in the community. Commercial registration is not required in this case.

This commercial registration is only required with the commercial guarantee.

For loans ranging from YR 10,000 to 150,000 (US 50 to 750), Al-Amal Microfinance Bank asks for a shop guarantee. For loans over YR 150,000 (US 750), a commercial guarantee is a must. It takes from two to three days to complete all procedures.

The Social Development Fund has 12 financing partners in Sana'a, Aden, Taiz, Lahj, Abyan, Hodeida and Hadramout. There were 38,091 active clients by March 2009, 77 percent of which are women.

Clients at Tadhamon International Islamic Bank also have guarantee options they can choose from. According to Fawzi Al-Tewai, Microfinance Program options are a

gold guarantee, a time deposit guarantee where the client has a fixed amount in his or her bank account, or a commercial guarantee, which could be from a grocery or any active store or a prominent personality in the community.

"By adopting the above techniques we manage to eliminate the hurdles of providing a guarantee. By April 2009, Tadhamon Microfinance Program had 4,500 clients," Al-Tewai stated.

After filling out a loan application and giving it to the loan officer at the bank, the bank conducts a simple feasibility study to make sure that the business is profitable enough so that the owner will be able to pay the loans monthly installments, according to Al-Tewai.

The guarantees required to obtain a loan sometimes outweigh the project owner's potentials. "The high interest on loans and the complexity of the procedures for granting loans are all challenges for people interested in establishing small or medium enterprises," said Adel Al-Ashtal, Director of the Fisheries and Agriculture sector at the General Investment Authority.

Al-Ashtal pointed out that people still refrain from bank financing because they prefer funding according to Islamic Sharia. Others fear failure, so they turn to the gradual approach which is based on a person's individual resources, even if it takes time and requires belt-tightening and sacrificing property.

According to the annual Doing Business report in 2009, Yemen was placed 98 out of 181 countries surveyed in the World Bank's global rankings on the ease of doing business.

needs to diversify its oil-based economy, it has undertaken a number of urgent legal, economic and policy reforms in the hope of attracting the biggest number of investors and investments to Yemen.

Yemen's strategic position south of the Arabian Peninsula across from the Horn of Africa makes it an attractive place for investment, and there are a number of investment opportunities in Yemen.

According to the Global Investment Promotion Benchmarking 2009 report, Sri Lanka and Honduras are evidence that with strong facilitation services even lower income countries, like Yemen, can successfully attract investment.

The Global Investment Promotion Benchmarking 2009 report is the second in a series that covers the effectiveness of government agencies in facilitating foreign investment projects. This initiative is led by the Investment Climate Advisory Service, which is jointly funded by the International Finance Corporation, MIGA, and the World Bank.

Al-Qaeda calls for Islamic rule in south Yemen

SANA'A, May 13 — The leader of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula Nasser Al-Wuhaishi declared on Wednesday his support for what he called "the rejection of oppression", referring to the protests which have been taking place since April in the southern cities.

At least eight Yemenis, including four soldiers, have been killed in a week of unrest in Abyan, Lahj and Aldhala'a, where witnessed clashes between the government and groups of locals who complained that northerners have abused a unity agreement to grab their resources and discriminate against them, and raised slogans call for separating their governorates from Yemen, which was united in 1990.

"What you are demanding is your

right granted to you by your religion... injustice, oppression and tyranny should not be practiced in the name of unity," Al-Wuhaishi said in an audio-tape carried by SITE Intelligence, a US group that monitors Islamist websites.

"We in the Al-Qaeda network support what you are doing: your rejection of oppression practised against you and others, your fight against the government and your defending yourself."

Al Qaeda called for Islamic rule in Yemen and vowed to retaliate for what it said was the killing of civilians in the clashes. "The time for the rule of Islam has come so that you could bask in the justice and tolerance it brings" said Al-Wuhaish, also known as Abu Basir

"The injustice that befell you, God willing, will not pass without punishment. The killing of Muslims in the streets is a great crime that has no justification."

Al-Wuhaishi criticized President Ali Abdullah Saleh saying: "As far as we are concerned, Ali Abdullah Saleh is an infidel and an agent ... and today he is using all forms of oppression with the pretext of preserving unity."

The US has backed Yemen's moves to crack down on al Qaeda after the September 11, 2001 attacks on U.S. cities.

Yemen has witnessed a number of attacks claimed by the organization in recent years against foreign missions, tourist sites and oil installations.

Government denies dialogue with the Southern Movement

By: Jamal Al-Najjar

SANA'A, May 13 - An official source has denied the news circulated by local and regional media with regard to the onset of dialogue between the government and elements of the Southern Movement, and rejected news published in the UAE-based Al-Khaleej newspaper in this regard as baseless.

However, the source confirmed that President Ali Abdullah Saleh had called on all political parties in the country to conduct dialogue to discuss all issues that concern the country under the umbrella of the Yemeni constitution, according to the Ministry of Defense's newspaper.

Al-Khaleej had reported that Egypt and Gulf countries were mediating to hold secret negotiations between the Yemeni government and leaders of the Southern Movement in Cairo within the upcoming few days.

The newspaper added that US sources had said that the Obama administration supported the Egyptian mediation to contain the situation. The sources added that Washington doesn't want "a new Somalia" or a new possible civil war.

The website Shabwappress.net reported that leaders of the Southern Movement met at the house of Sheikh

Tareq Bin Bassar Al-Fadhli, one of the Southern Movement leaders, and agreed to unify efforts of what they called "the peaceful Southern Movement" under his leadership to manage the current situation.

The website added that leaders of the movement agreed in their meeting to select Ali Salem Al-Beidh, former vice-president and General Secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party, as "a legitimate president of the southern state," and entrusted Al-Fadhli to continue leading the movement for the moment.

But a source close to Al-Beidh denied in a statement to newsyemen.net any communication between Al-Beidh and the Southern Movement, pointing out that Al-Beidh "will never come back to the political arena."

However, he confirmed that Al-Beidh had recently sent a verbal message to President Saleh suggesting that the latter "pay attention to risks of the culture of hatred that is spreading among Yemenis in an unprecedented way since the Yemeni revolutions and unity."

He added that Al-Beidh told Saleh in the message that "institutions of the government including its media are effective to spread or combat this cul-

ture that threatens us all."

He criticized "the government's pre-occupation with the opposition abroad, although they are far from internal problems."

The source added that Al-Beidh told the press that "Yemeni unity is a Yemeni accomplishment that should be protected through tackling the issues of citizens, not through fighting and chasing them."

Ali Salem Al-Beidh was the leader of Democratic Republic of Yemen in the south before unification between the two parts of Yemen. After unity on May 22, 1990, he became the vice-president of Yemen and stayed in his position until 1994 when he announced secession during the civil war between the south and north. Having failed to achieve secession, he fled to the Sultanate of Oman.

The Southern Movement is a name given to elements from the southern part of Yemen who demand secession from the north and restore the southern state. While the government says that its members are upset at having lost their individual interests after Yemeni unification, they say that the government has been neglecting their rights as citizens, particularly with regards to retirees and illegal appropriation of lands.

Date palm disease threatens livelihoods in south

MUKALLA, May 10, (IRIN) - A disease which kills date palm trees, on which thousands of people depend for a living, has returned to Hadhramaut Governorate in southern Yemen.

Khalid Saleh, 55, could not believe his eyes when he saw his smallholding in Doan District (some 250km north of Mukalla) hit yet again by the dubas bug.

In the past the disease ravaged date palms in his village leaving dozens of trees dead and spoiling the date crop for the following three years. "In 2005, 2006 and 2007 the date crop was severely damaged by dubas and consequently many people in my village went bankrupt," Saleh said.

"The reappearance of the disease means we'll get a poor crop. We celebrated when heavy rain washed the trees and we thought the disease had been wiped out."

Ommatissus binotatus lybicus De Berg, or date palm dubas, is caused by an insect which absorbs the plant's natural juices and exudes a sticky liquid, which gradually spreads and in the worst cases engulfs the whole tree, which then dies.

Saleh Ahmed is the head of Wadi Gozah Agricultural Association, an NGO working to maintain date palms in Doan District (250km north of Mukalla), and a member of the local council. He told IRIN that when the disease reappeared in his village, he immediately informed the Centre for Agricultural Research (CAR) in Mukalla which carries out spraying campaigns, but he was stunned by their reply.

"They told us that they didn't have money and when they got it they would



Date palm dubas is caused by an insect which absorbs the plant's natural juices and exudes a sticky liquid, which can spread and kill the tree

start spraying. The disease has spread wildly and they haven't come yet," he said.

Hard times

Ahmed has warned that many people in Doan District are threatened by bankruptcy. "Selling dates is a life-line for poor farmers; others get work tending to the trees. This year, they may fall on hard times again," he said, adding that farmers were no longer interested in planting palm trees.

Mohammed Hubaishan, a CAR entomologist responsible for spraying campaigns, told IRIN that lack of cash was hampering the CAR: "We don't have enough money to combat the disease in all areas and we are also wait-

ing for insecticide to be sent from the capital."

Hubaishan said the disease had struck to varying degrees in different parts of the governorate, with Doan, Al-Duais, Al-Shargiah, Qusiar and Hadhramaut Valley worst affected. Hundreds of thousands of palm trees already had the disease in the valley.

"Hundreds of tonnes of the crop were afflicted by the sticky substance in the last couple of years... and packing factories were paying lower and lower prices."

According to Hubaishan, there are no precise statistics but he believes the number of trees affected could be millions, and that thousands of livelihoods are at risk.

Continued from page 1

Updated information would encourage more foreign investment

"[But] the main challenge for investors isn't that they cannot find information. It's when they try to implement their projects," he explained.

Foreign investment to create jobs is more than welcome in Yemen where unemployment is estimated to be as high as 40 percent and nearly half the population of Yemen lives on less than USD 2 a day.

The government is working to bring about change. In 2008, it eliminated the minimum capital requirement for starting a business and launched a one-stop shop to make it easier for companies to get going, according to the IFC.

The one-stop shop makes it possible to complete business start-up at a single location, easing the ability to obtain a license from the municipality and register with the chamber of commerce and tax office.

This was one of the boldest reforms recorded in the joint IFC-World Bank Doing Business Report 2009, and resulted in Yemen advancing 25 positions in the global aggregate ranking.

To keep progress on track, in January 2009, IFC and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) launched a three-year program to support Yemen's efforts to improve its overall business environment, with the goal of creating jobs and reducing poverty in the country.

With the goal of creating jobs and reducing poverty in the country, the DFID has contributed USD 14 million to a three-year program, which will be implemented by the Yemeni government, IFC, and the Foreign Investment Advisory Service.

"If country information is hard to obtain, investors will simply go elsewhere," said Cecilia Sager, a manager for the World Bank Group's Investment Climate Advisory Services.

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is helping raise awareness among banks and bank executives in Yemen and across the Middle East and North Africa about better understanding and managing risk amid the unfolding global financial crisis.

With Yemen now realizing that it

Their News

Grave violations of children's rights during armed conflicts must end

UNICEF joined the Secretary-General's call for an end to the recruitment and sexual exploitation of children by armed groups in theatres of conflict, at the Security Council discussion of the Secretary-General's annual report on Children and Armed Conflict.

"Millions of children around the world continue to be impacted by armed conflict," said Ann M. Veneman, UNICEF Executive Director. "Adherence to international humanitarian law and respect for children's rights must be strengthened."

The Secretary-General's report, in special annexes, identifies parties that recruit children in violation of applicable international law. This latest report recommends that groups that perpetrate sexual violence and other grave violations against children also be named in the annexes of future reports.

Grave violations, as defined in the report, are recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming of children, rape and other grave sexual violence, abductions, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access to children.

While the report notes progress in releasing children from armed groups and armed forces, such as the release of more than 1200 children by armed groups in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, since the start of 2009, and of 342 children by armed groups in Burundi, it also documents violations by 56 parties to conflicts in 20 countries.

The report includes descriptions of incidents in 20 countries. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, the Lord's Resistance Army has expanded its operations across various borders in the region and has abducted 300 children since November 2008. Attacks on schools are now frequent occurrences. In Afghanistan, teachers and particularly girl students have been targeted.

"In places like Afghanistan, schools have been attacked and teachers and particularly girl students have been targeted," Veneman said. "Children remain the victims of wars of adults."

UNICEF supports national child protection systems and conducts interventions such as interim care for released children, medical and psychosocial support, family reunification and reintegration, support for survivors of sexual violence and actions to strengthen national justice system and legislation relating to children.

Youth leadership program

In the framework of the project "Bridging The Gap: Building Community Empowerment and Sustainable Development in Southern Giza - Marginal Communities" funded by EU, COSPE and ANCE invite you to participate in the Youth Leadership Camp "From Ideas to Actions". The training camp will be open to maximum 30 youth leaders, aged 18-25 with an active role within their communities and interested in planning and implementing youth

activities. Female and English speaking participants are particularly encouraged.

The training camp will focus on the following topics:

- Active Youth participation - Community and local development: the role of youth - Active participation as a tool for the promotion of *social change and as a means for young people's awareness and personal development - Volunteering: definition, rights & obligations of volunteers/ organizations
- Youth animation - group dynamics - Pedagogical approach in youth animation (active non formal methods) - The group: team building, ice breaking, empowerment and motivation techniques - Youth animator/ leader competences and skills - Communication skills - Problem solving - crisis management in team work

- Development of youth activities / projects
- Needs assessment & analysis - Youth project development & planning - Youth project management - Simulation activity: development of youth activities

http://www.cospe-egypt.org/youth-leadership-program

http://www.cospe-egypt.org/files/main/Application%20form-Arabic.doc

AHRC collaborative PhD studentship in history

University of Plymouth 'Networks, News and Communication: Political Elites and Community Relations in Elizabethan Devon'

Applications are invited for a full-time 3 year AHRC-funded Collaborative PhD studentship in History, tenable from 1 October 2009. The successful applicant will receive UK/EU tuition fees (£3,390 for 2009/10), an AHRC maintenance grant (£12,940 in 2008/9; the level for 2009/10 will be announced shortly), and an annual sum of £500 towards research expenses. The studentship is funded by an AHRC Collaborative Doctorate Award, and is part of a joint project between the Department of History at the University of Plymouth and Devon Record Office, focussing on 'Networks, News and Communication: Political Elites and Community Relations in Elizabethan Devon'.

We are looking for an early modern historian with interests in social, cultural and political history. A working competency in palaeography would also be an advantage. Applicants should have completed, or be about to complete, a relevant MA; and must fulfil the normal academic requirements for acceptance for post-graduate study at the University of Plymouth. The successful applicant will also need to meet the AHRC's criteria for doctoral study. Further details available at www.ahrc.ac.uk

The doctoral project ('Networks, News and Communication: Political Elites and Community Relations in Elizabethan Devon') will investigate the nature and social dynamics of political networks and community relations in Elizabethan Devon. It has three distinct elements - academic, archival and curatorial - which will provide a first-class doctoral training

and equip the successful candidate for his/her future career. The student will be encouraged to develop his/her own particular doctoral identity, leading to the production of a stand-alone doctoral thesis. Secondly, one of the key objectives is for the project to provide an intensive practical skills training element as part of the cataloguing and digitization of an important and recently discovered corpus of relevant documents (Seymour MSS) recently deposited at Devon Record Office. The successful candidate will work as the project historian alongside conservators and archivists on this important body of documents, which will form the springboard to broader study of elite networks in Elizabethan Devon. Finally, he/she will also be able to assist in curating a major exhibition on Elizabethan Devon and Cornwall to be held at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery in Exeter, as well as to be involved in tie-in conferences and publications.

Supervision The supervisory team consists of Dr James Daybell (Main supervisor; Reader in Early Modern British History) and Professor Mark Brayshay (Professor of Historical Geography) at the University of Plymouth, as well as Mr John Draisey (County Archivist at Devon Record Office).

Dr James Daybell (Director of Studies) is Reader in Early Modern History at the University of Plymouth and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. His research over the last 15 years has concentrated on early modern letters and letter-writing, with a particular concentration on women and gender, news, politics and political elites. He is author of Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England (Oxford University Press, 2006), editor of Early Modern Women's Letter-Writing, 1450-1700 (Palgrave, 2001; winner of the Society for the Study of Early Modern Women award for best collaborative project, 2002) and Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450-1700 (Ashgate, 2004), and has published more than twenty articles and essays on the subjects of early modern women, letters and letter-writing. He is currently editing Material Readings of Early Modern Culture (Palgrave, 2010) and completing a monograph entitled, The Material Letter: Manuscript Letters and the Culture and Practices of Letter-Writing in Early Modern England, 1580-1635 (Palgrave, 2011).

Professor Mark Brayshay (Second Supervisor) is Professor of Historical Geography at the University of Plymouth, Acting Head of the School of Geography and Editor of the Transactions of the Devonshire Association. He has published over 70 articles and essays, many of which concern early modern postal systems, travel and communication as well as deal with modern network theories, including 'Waits, musicians, bearwards and players: the inter-urban road travel and performances of itinerant entertainers in sixteenth and seventeenth century England', Journal of Historical Geography, 31, 3 (2005), 430-458; 'Long Distance Royal Journeys: Anne of Denmark's journey from Stirling to

Windsor in 1603', Journal of Transport History, 25, 1 (2004), 1-21; 'Knowledge, nationhood and governance: the speed of the Royal post in early-modern England', Journal of Historical Geography, 24 (1998), 265-288; 'Post horse routes, royal progresses and government communications in the reign of James I', Journal of Transport History, 18, 3 (1997), 116-133; 'The Royal Post-Horse Routes of Hampshire in the Reign of Elizabeth I', Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeology Society, 48 (1992), 121-134; 'Royal Post-Horse Routes in England and Wales: The Evolution of the Network in the late-Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Century', Journal of

Historical Geography, 17, 4 (1991), 373-389. He is currently completing a monograph entitled, A Joined-up Realm: Travel and Communications in Tudor and Stuart England (Exeter University Press, 2010).

For informal enquiries and further details about the project please email james.daybell@plymouth.ac.uk

Applications: Applicants should complete a postgraduate application form available at http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/pages/view.asp?page=23601. The application should be clearly marked CDA - History and be returned, complete with references, to the address on the form. Please send FOUR

copies of the application, which should also contain a C.V. and covering letter, including an outline (maximum 500 words) of how your research experience and training to date equips you for this project.

Interviews will take place on Friday 12 June 2009. Those invited for interview will be notified in the previous week, and requested to send us copies of an MA dissertation, if available, or of a piece of MA coursework.

Please direct any queries about the application process to artsresearch@plymouth.ac.uk

Applications must arrive no later than 4pm on Friday 29 May 2009

The Universal College in the University of Science and Technology holds in cooperation with the Malaysian universities UUM, OUM and UiTM the graduation ceremony of the first batch of Master and PHD students specialized in programs of Business Management and Information Technology (IT) on Thursday July 7, 2009 at the hall of the Universal College in the building of the university. The ceremony will be attended by H. E. Abdul Samad Othman, the Malaysian ambassador to Yemen, businessmen and custodians of the graduates.

Dr. Mohammed Shakrin, dean of the Universal College, stated that this is the ceremony of graduation of the first batch in the college (50 students). He said that this is the first fruit of partnership between University of Science and Technology and UUM & OUM universities under a trained and qualified cadre working for the most ancient public Malaysian universities.

He added that the college is proud that six of its students obtained the highest scientific scores which qualified them to attain the approval to study their PHD directly after BA in Malaysia and that



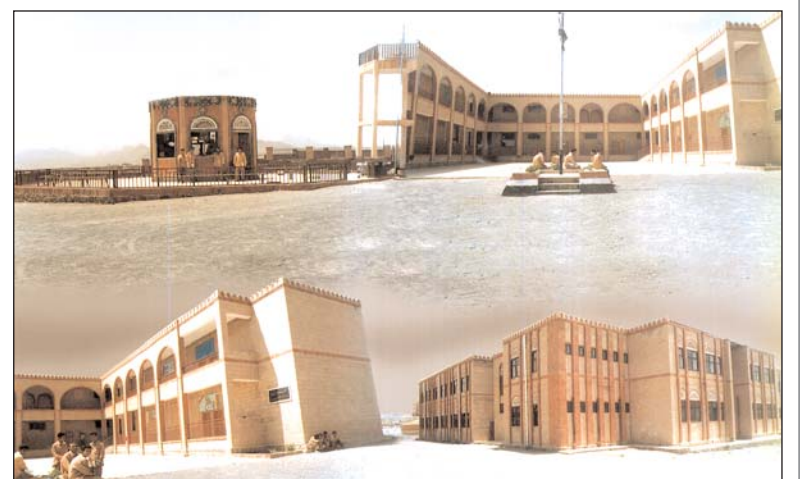
one of its female students scored the highest at the Malaysian university UUM, which indicates that Yemeni students excel in the different scientific fields.



2006. It qualifies Yemeni students to hold certificates of BA in the field of Business Management, IT, Internal Architectural Engineering (décor) and Graphics, and MA in IT and Business Management in English. Students in University of Science and Technology and attain the certificate from Malaysia.

Congratulations, Jumaan School!

In the qualifying of competition between schools of Rada' districts, Jumaan High School was qualified to represent Rada' before the other districts. During the scientific competition held between districts of Sabah, Al-Arsh, Al-Quraishia and Al-Reyashia, Rada', Jumaan school was qualified to represent Al-Baidha governorate before the other governorates of Yemen after it won over Al-Shaheed Al-Awadhi school and Al-'aaqil Education Complex by 21 scores. Consequently, Jumaan School in Rada' district the only representative of Al-Baidha governorate in the educational, scientific and methodological competition organized by Ministry of Education, broadcast in the education channel, and held at Youth Palace in Sana'a for the top students from all the governorates of Yemen from April 2-17, 2009. Result of the competition was as follows:



- Hodeida governorate came in the first place.
- Mareb Governorate came in the second place.
- Al-Baidha governorate came in the third place on the level of the governorates of Yemen.

Attended by Minister of Education and deputies of the ministry, the activity was concluded by honoring the three top schools.

Congratulations, Jumaan High School!

Sheba Hotel honors its employees and affiliates on Labor Day



Sana'a, May 11 - Attended by Mr. Sultan Abdulla Al-Hakimi, general manager of the General Corporation of Social Insurance in Sana'a, and on the occasion of the World Labor Day, the national administration of the Sheba Hotel honored its employees and affiliates and commended their efforts and contribution to continuation of the hotel's pioneering role in offering hospitality and tourism services in Yemen.

"The national administration of the hotel made a lot of progress on the level of revenues and attaining satisfaction of its agents and hosts, particularly in the promotion of quality of services, food and high cleanliness level," stated Mr. Marwan Hamdon, general director of the Sheba Hotel.

"In fact, after the administration was

handed over to the national administration 16 months ago, the hotel was able to gain the trust of more local and international companies through its efforts and the contribution of its laborers and employees," he added. "Consequently, we have to keep on the same level of performance and promote quality of work standards."

For his part, Mr. Al-Hakimi said that the hotel is considered to be the first tourist edifice in Yemen. It obtained certificates from the General Insurance Corporation in recognition of the hotel's attention to the insurance of its employees and its commitment to paying insurance dues. The hotel also provides transparency in presenting correct information about its employees and workers - a guarantee that is relatively uncommon in Yemen.

Danish Refugee Council

Vacancy: Program Assistant - Registration

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is a private, independent, non-government organisation working with refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants. DRC Yemen operates within a broader regional context including the Horn of Africa.

Duty Stations: Aden

Overall Objectives:

5. Provide support and assistance to the Registration activity;
6. Provide assistance in the management operations of the registration field offices;
7. Ensure proper documentation and filing of programme documents and file;

Qualifications:

- University degree in Social Science, Social Work, Information Technology, and/or a related field;
- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in non-profit sector;
- Fluent drafting and reporting skills;
- Advance IT knowledge;
- Good understanding of protection of refugees is an asset;
- Good interpersonal skills and people management ability.
- Proactive, initiative and willing to work overtime;
- Willing to work in the field.

Please forward your cover letter and CV via e-mail to drc.yemen@drc.dk or via fax: (02) 349 320, by 25th May 2009.

Danish Refugee Council

VACANCY: Senior Registration Assistant

The Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is a private, independent, non-government organisation working with refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants. DRC Yemen operates within a broader regional context including the Horn of Africa.

Duty Stations: Ahwar, Kharaz, Mayfaa

Overall Objectives:

1. Lead the registration team by coach and mentoring them on group and individual interviews, identification of vulnerable people and data collection;
2. Ensure that registration and data collection is error free of high quality and undertaken in accordance to pre-determined standardized guidelines and templates;
3. Ensure optimum reach out to beneficiaries and timely response to emergencies;
4. Effective and timely analysis of the data to support the work of the Registration Officer;

Qualifications:

- University degree
- At least five years of professional experience.
- Good command of Arabic and English (written, read, and spoken). Somali, Oromo and Ahmara will be an asset.
- Drafting skills in English.
- Advanced computer skills, MS Word, MS Excel and MS Access;
- Sound interpersonal and communication skills, especially with people from different cultural backgrounds.
- Able to work under pressure;
- Ability to lead and motivate a team.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to establish effective and working relations with local and international staff and other stakeholders;
- Initiative, sound judgment and dedication.
- Experience and willingness to work in the field;
- Willing to be based in the field;

Please forward your cover letter and CV via e-mail to drc.yemen@drc.dk or via fax: (02) 349 320, by 25th May 2009.



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Creating more Yemeni bloggers with the power of change

By: Ali Saeed and Amel Al-Ariqi

Although blogs or individualized internet pages are on the rise worldwide with over 1.4 million new blog posts and 120 thousand blogs are created every day, according to World Blog Expo 2008 statistics, blogs in Yemen are still in their infancy.

A blog is an internet page where anyone can present regular entries of events through writing or other multimedia such as graphics or videos. The author of the blog or blogger can also post his opinions in the blog on a daily basis for all to read.

Last Saturday, the Ebhar Foundation for Childhood and Creativeness in Sana'a launched its program 'Innovators for human rights' in cooperation with Arab Fund for Human Rights to train and build the capacity of 20 artists and writers

to defend human rights through professional blogging.

"The program aims to give Yemeni youth writers the chance to write about human rights in a creative way through blogging," said Nabeel Al-Khadher, press officer at the foundation. "Trainees will be informed about international human rights conventions and technical skills such as creating a blog and uploading the files."

The program's trainees are very enthusiastic: "I'm expecting to use blogging in professional and creative way to protect human rights and change the situation for the better," said Jalal Al-Ahmedi, trainee blogger at the program.

The period of this program is planned to be for three years, and aims to train intellectual writers, dramatists, and artists.

It is difficult to determine the exact number of Yemeni bloggers, since not all bloggers say what country they are from and not all Yemeni bloggers reside in Yemen. However there are thousands of Yemeni blogs, mostly in the Arabic blogger platforms of Maktoobblog.com, Jeeran.com and blogger.com.

The number of blogs furthermore do not necessarily represent the number of bloggers as some bloggers tend to operate multiple blogs.

"Yemeni bloggers are computer programmers, journalists, activists, poets, students, and regular citizens with some reasonable computer literacy," noted Walid Al-Saqqaf, the administrator of YemenPortal.net, a famous Yemeni news and blog aggregator and search engine that has accumulated about 2,000 blogs.

Yemeni personal blogs are often created by an individual for personal motives such as to present him or herself and make online friendships, to express his political views, to share and exchange poetry and other texts, and even to promote software,



Yemeni bloggers are optimistic about blogging development in Yemen

multimedia content, or commercial services, according to Al-Saqqaf.

"However, the majority of bloggers don't seem to update their blogs frequently and those who keep an active blog are the ones who appear to be dedicated to the subject or theme they are focusing on," added Al-Saqqaf.

Although there are many blog platforms around the world, most Yemenis tend to create their blogs on Arabic-language websites such as Maktoob.com which was the first Arabic website to enable internet users to blog in Arabic.

Since 2000 when Maktoob.com was launched, blogging has started

slowly to emerge in Yemen hand-in-hand with the rise in the use of e-mails in daily communication.

Most prominent in Yemen are cultural blogs, which can include poetry and stories for example. Then come the political blogs, focusing on issues ranging from local to Arab politics with some having an anti-governmental slant. Others are more neutral and only highlight news and opinion items from Yemeni news websites.

This group is then followed by a diverse set of other blogs such as those focusing on technology, software and sports.

Obstacles to blogging in Yemen

Yemeni bloggers are optimistic about blogging development in Yemen, but admit that there are some barriers to overcome to ensure the trend's growth in the country.

"Blogging in Yemen faces some difficulties such as the lack of professionalism and electronic illiteracy [so those who read the blogs are few]," said Nabeel Al-Khadher, a Yemeni blogger.

Al-Khadher explained that there are Yemeni bloggers who cannot upload to their blogs with photos, video and audio files, and when they can their readers are few because

since the International Telecommunication Union estimates internet users in Yemen to be less than one percent.

In countries where freedom of expression is more constrained, blogging is arguably playing an important role in exposing human rights violations and exposing government intervention in elections, according to an article entitled "to blog or not to blog" published by the Reuters Institute for Journalism studies.

According to research conducted by Ayman Hamad in 2008 to study blogs in the Gulf and Iraq, the main motivation of blogs emergence at that time was to get information and news that wasn't published in control of state-owned media.

For example, in 2002, blogs became trusted media sources for news and debate on a wide array of issues, especially debate about global events like supporting or opposing war on Iraq, according to Hamad's research.

In Yemen, the government has started to arrest bloggers or block websites and blogs, especially in times of political tension, such as in the context of internal conflict or political demonstrations.

For instance, in 2008, the most popular blogging platforms of Maktoob.com, yemenportal.net, and other newspaper websites, were all blocked. The Yemeni government has since faced international criticism.

Blocking websites in Yemen is done by internet service providers after being instructed to do so by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the National Security Organization through filter program called web sense.

However, up until now, there is no law or article in the Yemeni constitution that prevents citizens from creating blogs or states that it is legal to arrest bloggers who criticize the regime.

4U

American journalist Justine Hall is widely accepted to be the pioneer of blogs since 1994 when he was the first person to create his personal blog on the internet.

After that, weblogs software companies started to spread in the world. Opendairy.com was launched in 1998 and blogger.com followed soon after in 1999 to provide bloggers with platforms to express themselves.

In 2001, the world witnessed a surge in blogging, especially after the attacks of 9/11, to either show support or disapproval of the events.

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Isn't it time for Yemen to follow the right path?

By: Faisal Bin Shamlan

Yemeni unity was achieved based on an agreement between two countries. A new regime was formed based on equal citizenship, public liberties, a constitution and the law, regardless of the reasons and motivations of each country involved. The feeling in the different governorates of the country, with no exception, was one of happiness and welcomed unity. However, was it possible to continue the merger of two independent armies? The ruling regime believed that this problem had to be solved, and consequently the 1994 civil war broke out.

There are many wars throughout history, but as soon as war is over, the winners return to the losers all their rights and retain all civil and military personnel in their institutions under an umbrella of equal citizenship in both rights and duties. However, the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) didn't attain anything but

exclusion, intimidation, and the confiscation of its own residences. People awaited thirteen years during which time corruption was rampant, illegal appropriation of lands took place, and public finances were looted. These practices were crowned with the neglect of provisions of the constitution and the law. This prompted one of the writers to say that the country is overwhelmingly run by lateral decisions from the president.

Newspapers and local and foreign analyses detailed oppression against all groups of society, including merchants, employees, businessmen, workers, civil and professional media institutions and many others. This brings to light a question: how does this happen amid all the capabilities that the president has?

Neglecting law and order led to the aggravation of three major issues that lied simmering and unsolved due to negligence.

The first issue is Sa'ada where a potential sixth war is looming on the horizon. I don't have any information

regarding the real reasons of establishing the Houthis movement and its demands.

The second issue is related to lifting the injustice imposed on the southern governorates. Neglecting this injustice developed it into a 'southern issue' and led some groups and organizations of the southern movement to call for secession and the reformation of the southern state. But can this state be recovered without recovering the conditions that originally created it? I don't believe that secession is a solution, but at the same time people are prompted to attempt to secede because of the perceived injustices in the south.

The third issue is poverty and the deterioration of public services, particularly educational, scientific and developmental services, due to financial corruption and mismanagement.

The whole regime is in the person of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. We have already warned him against a fierce war that might take place if these wrongs are not righted. But if this is the belief of

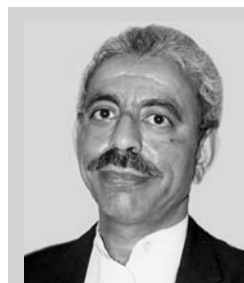
Mr. President, shouldn't it be at the top of his priorities to avoid this war through eradicating its causes and by abiding by the rule of law and the constitution? He should start with the Hilal-Basurra report on the illegal appropriation of lands and return elements of the southern army to their positions in the unified army as well as take the management apparatus away from the monopoly of the General People's Congress (GPC). People in general, and political parties and civil organizations in particular, want to feel that the ruling party is serious in calling them to reform all issues. If the ruling system doesn't want to correct these wrongs while it holds all the solutions, events may lead down the wrong path of war. Civil society, including political parties and non-governmental organizations, may demand a solution for unity to be agreed upon – and there will be people willing to fight it if their own demands are not met.

Source: alsahwa.net

COMMON SENSE

The tide against misguided extremism is turning Pakistan could not be run by a Taliban regime (1/2)

Surely the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is far more mature than to let elements of the Taliban persuasion, a highly extreme rendition of the Wahhabi/Salafi deviations of the enlightened Message of the Islam take over the helms in this important Islamic country. In fact, the appearance of the Taliban to try to take over the highly populous and relatively speaking, forward looking Moslem nation was perhaps one of the most suicidal adventures the Taliban and their backers and inciters (surely, it is not possible for anyone to believe that waging a war against the international community and now their own Moslem brothers and neighbors is an autonomously conceived, planned and financed operation) could have chosen to engage in. This cannot help but remind the observer of similarities with earlier times in history on the Third Decade of the Twentieth Century. In the early 1920s, the Wahhabis and their partners, the House of Saud, were allowed and backed by the British to return to their original habitat of Nejd, in the northeastern part of Saudi Arabia. Heretofore they were in exile in Kuwait, which was a "protectorate" of the British Crown, after the Ottoman Turks drove them out of their former stronghold of Dir'iya, a fortified town south of the City of Riyadh, over half a century or so before (by an expeditionary force led by Ibrahim Ali Pasha, brother of Mohammed Ali Pasha – the founder of the originally Albanian royal dynasty that ruled modern Egypt until 1952 with the ouster of King Farouk). One could not help but wonder if that was taken as a very kind gesture of the British by the Sharif Hussein, then ruler of the Hejaz, who had been promised by T. E. Lawrence, a British Intelligence Officer, to be the new Leader of the Arab Awakening for his assistance in driving the Ottomans out of Arabia! He and his family were eventually driven out of the Hejaz by the Saudis and their Wahhabi fanatical partners. The only surviving territory of what was expected to be a reunited Arab Nation is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, thanks to the astute and courageous survivor against all odds that King Hussein, one of the very few surviving great grandsons of the Sharif Hussein, of Jordan proved to be. Jordan is now ruled by King Abdulla Bin Hussein Bin Talal Bin Abdulla Bin Hussein (the Sharif of Mecca), whose father managed to reign for nearly half a century and produced one of the best examples of sound development in the region, out of the small desert kingdom that he inherited and held on to against incredible challenges.



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

Let us now return to Nejd again at that early significant moment in the history of the region. Once the Saudis and their Wahhabi militias held sway in Nejd, they curiously turned their attention towards Kuwait, and saw Kuwait as being ripe for the imposition of their extreme puritanical and actually unorthodox rendition of Islam. Some chroniclers suggest that this was done without the approval of the sovereign partners of the Wahhabis, namely King Abdul-Aziz Abdul-Rahman Al Saud (who ruled until the mid 1950s). The Wahhabi militias began by attacking borderline Kuwaiti Government outposts and there are poems emanating from poets of both sides describing the bravery of each side's combatants, each to his own liking of course, but the British eventually intervened and used their aerial superiority to return the tide in favor of the Kuwaitis. The latter were not at all pleased by this ungrateful attitude of their former exiled guests and were not at all interested in adopting any of the extremism of the Wahhabi Religious Establishment.

The situation in Pakistan today has a lot of similarity with this historical precedence that took place in another part of the Islamic Crescent Region of Asia that extends from Arabia to the South Seas nearly nine decades back. The Taliban (Afghani version) originally developed as a political, religious and social movement in the Afghani refugee camps in Pakistan, with the tacit backing of the powerful intelligence wing of the Pakistan military, which on and off has ruled Pakistan since independence in 1947. Needless to say this backing was strongly influenced by Saudi Arabian encouragement and financial remuneration. This allowed the Taliban to develop into a relatively speaking formidable well armed and organized socio-political group. Ironically, the Taliban did not have a known presence during the fight against the Soviet occupation and those of them that might have been involved were elements of groups with Salafi inclinations under the leadership of some of the warlords like Gulb Eddine Hikmetyar (The Islamic Party). The Pakistanis hoped that the Pashtun ethnic association of the Afghan Taliban would give them some geographical depth (the Pashtuns are probably the biggest ethnic groups in both Afghanistan and Pakistan). With the Taliban's, the name of Osama Bin Laden also rose to prominence (again probably because of Saudi encouragement at the time). Thus the Taliban and Bin Laden stole the "liberating Mujahedeen status, which was earned more deservedly by the courageous struggle that was the work of men like Ahmed Shah Massoud (killed by Al-Qaeda operatives just before 9/11 – a phenomenal coincidence? – and General Abdul Rashid Dostum). The Pakistanis under Former Prime Minister Noaz Sharif and later under General Pervez Musharraf were continuously supportive of the Taliban and viewed this as strategically important, because the former was a close friend of Saudi Arabia and the latter, at the start of his rule (which began in 1998) anyway, did so in the hope of not alienating the Saudis for removing their ally Noaz Sharif and also in the belief that a Moslem Jihadist orientation is necessary for the ongoing conflict with India (here is a link to an early article of the ties between the Taliban and the Pakistani Government: <http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/304/print>). The story continues in the next Common Sense article.

Hassan Al-Haifi has been a Yemeni political economist and journalist for more than 20 years. He may be blogged at: <http://com-senfromyem.blogspot.com/>

The first 100 days: New American engagement for the 21st Century

By: James L. Jones

U.S. National Security Advisor

One hundred days ago, the United States celebrated the inauguration of our 44th President. Many around the world joined us in celebrating what was an historic occasion for the American people, and for all who believe in the possibility of hope for a better future for themselves and their children.

The excitement and optimism we as Americans felt on January 20th has only grown since then, even in the face of a sobering global economic crisis, news of a flu virus, and daunting 21st century challenges like terrorism and nuclear proliferation; climate change and poverty; enduring conflicts and dangerous disease.

These challenges were not caused by any one nation, nor can they be solved by any one nation. As President Obama said on just his second day in office, "For the sake of our national security

and the common aspirations of people around the globe, an era of new American leadership in the world has to begin now."

During the first 100 days of his administration, President Obama has already demonstrated to the world what a new American engagement will look like.

First, he has committed himself and his Administration to a foreign policy that ensures the safety of the American people and that of our friends and allies. Global engagement on the basis of mutual interests and mutual respect is the starting point of our foreign policy. And while there will be circumstances where such an approach might not be successful, the United States will first be prepared to listen to and talk with potential adversaries to advance our national interests and those of the global community that depend on the United States for leadership on security issues. In those instances where a more demonstrable use of power is inevitable, no adversary should be under any illusion as to the

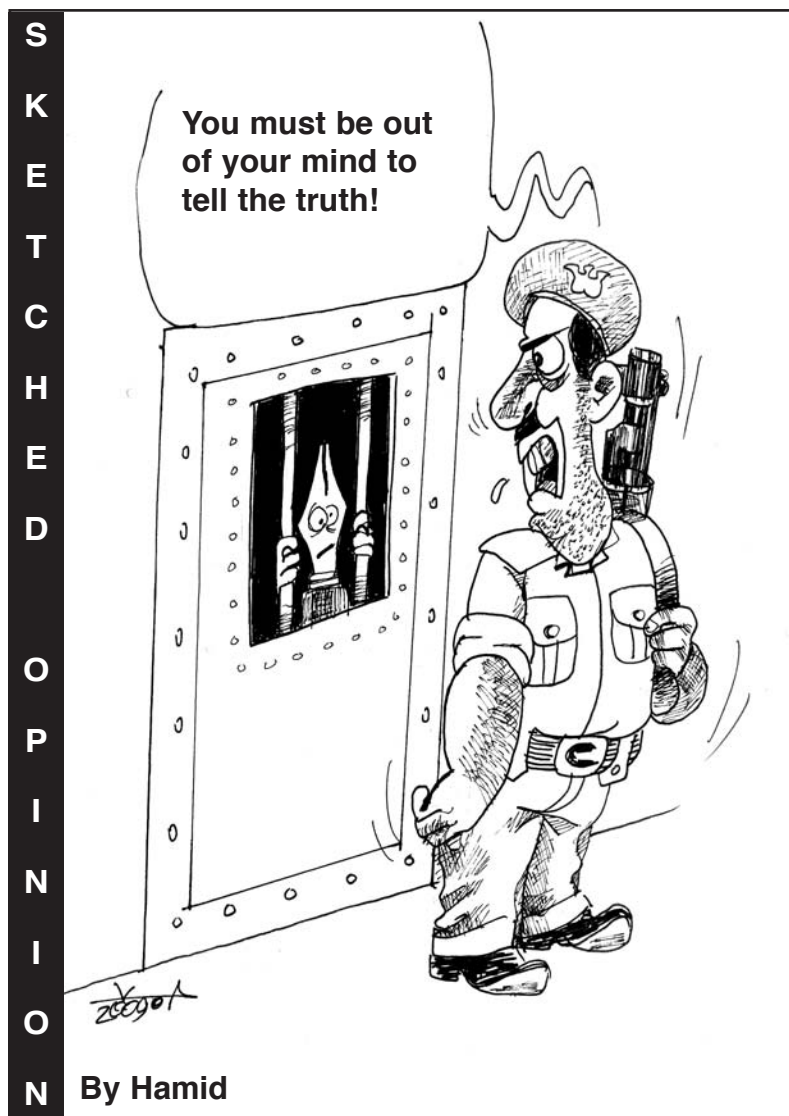
outcome. This is why we will continue to maintain our Armed Forces as the best in the world as well as the most admired and respected.

To carry out our engagement strategies, and almost immediately upon taking office the President appointed some of America's most talented diplomats to serve as Special Envoys and Representatives – for Middle East peace, for South West Asia, for Sudan, for Afghanistan and Pakistan, and for Climate Change. This fact alone illustrates that the 21st century is one in which regional strategies will be at the forefront of our energy and focus on issues pertaining to national and international security. This represents a clear recognition that we must deal with the world as it is today and not as it was in the 20th century. Over the past three months, the national security community, to include our serving diplomats abroad, has engaged in active and effective diplomacy to confront the many challenges we face. To date the results have been encouraging, but much remains to be done.

President Obama has also made clear his commitment to pursue a deep and positive dialogue with Muslim communities around the world. That is the reason he gave his first televised interview as President to al-Arabiya. It is also why he told Iran's people and leaders that he seeks a new dialogue on the full range of issues that we face, and it is also why he spoke of new partnerships on behalf of education, health care, and opportunity in his speech before the Turkish Parliament. And finally, it is why he has made it clear that the United States is not now, and will never be, at war with Islam.

Second, we've made it clear that it is our intent to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda. In March, the President announced the results of a comprehensive strategy review for Pakistan and Afghanistan that will finally provide the resources we need to achieve our goals, while helping the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan pursue security and greater opportunity. In Strasbourg, at the 60th anniversary of the founding of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the President received broad international support for his strategy and a commitment from our NATO allies to create a new strategic concept so that the Alliance can become more relevant in meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

And in Baghdad, the President reiterated his commitment to responsibly reduce our forces in keeping with the Status of Forces Agreement negotiated with the Government of Iraq, all the while helping Iraqis take responsibility for their sovereign future.



By Hamid

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The kingdom's new breed: Saudi film makers

There are no proper cinemas or film schools in Saudi Arabia. Yet, the Kingdom's underground film scene is a bustling one filled with self-taught young filmmakers whose films are increasingly being shown at festivals around the region. MENASSAT met with some of the up and coming talents in Riyadh.

By: Alexandra Sandels

In his shoulder-length curly hair and loose t-shirt, filmmaker Abdulmusin Al-Mutairi looks slightly out of context among the abaya and thobe-clad street goers in the kingdom's ultra-conservative capital Riyadh.

Al-Mutairi is among a growing breed of young Saudi filmmakers who are pushing the cultural mores of their country – and all without official government funding.

His latest project "The Dream" is a short low-budget film shot in Riyadh that recounts the experiences of a Christian woman living in Saudi Arabia.

The film, which recently premiered at the Gulf Film Festival in Dubai, is the first Saudi movie venture to talk about "the issue of the Christian religion in Saudi Arabia," as Al-Mutairi puts it.

Al-Mutairi says he was advised by some friends to not show the film in the kingdom due to the "sensitive" topic of the film - Christians living in Saudi Arabia.

"I was told not to screen this film in Saudi. But I think it's important to show different stories. Our films always talk about Muslim society. So I put the spotlight on Christian (expa-

triate) women in Saudi," he told MENASSAT.

The Dream marks Al-Mutairi's third short film. He has previously written and produced "The Project," the story of a young man from Riyadh seeking to fulfill his dream in life, and the film "Nothing" which competed in last year's Gulf Film Festival.

Self-taught

Like most of his fellow young Saudi filmmakers, Al-Mutairi taught himself how to make movies with an amateur video camera. In a country like Saudi Arabia that offers no education in directing or film production, the most important tool is the belief in oneself, Al-Mutairi explains.

"There is no 35 mm film in Saudi Arabia. There are no cinemas. No film schools. We're all basically self-taught. Our plan is to prove to young Saudis that they can do this too. If you believe in it, you can do it."

So how does one become interested in filmmaking with no resources in the industry around and with cinemas banned in the country?

Al-Mutairi points to the Internet.

"There are many websites in Arabic that talk about films. We started meeting, watching international films at

home," he said. The films are usually downloaded from the web.

The boom

Among the brightest hopes in the Saudi Arabian filmmaking community is Haifaa Al Mansour, who emerged a few years ago. According to Al-Mutairi, she has been a driving hope for aspiring filmmakers like himself.

Born in 1974, Al Mansour started out by producing a number of short films, before gaining international acclaim for her documentary "Women Without Shadows" - based on the lives of women in the kingdom.

Al Mansour's films have both been praised and criticized for bringing up the taboo in her films.

It was because of her breakthrough efforts that filmmaking seemed like a possibility with young filmmakers here, Al-Mutairi told MENASSAT.

Today, he says, there are "countless filmmakers" in the kingdom.

Still, while there are numerous talented directors and producers in Saudi Arabia, one of the more fundamental problems for filmmakers here is the lack of film venues for screening their work – especially in Riyadh.

While it is true there is an annual "official" film festival in the kingdom's more liberal Red Sea coast town of Jeddah, initiatives to organize film screenings at cultural centers in Riyadh have consistently been denied, Al-Mutairi said.

The problem he says, is the religious police or Muttawa.



Haifaa Mansour has been on the frontline of tackling taboo issues in Saudi Arabia.

"The Muttawa have consistently stopped these efforts in Riyadh. They're scared of change. There are a lot of things that need to be changed here though."

Argentinean Tango and Saudi folk
Hana Al-Abdallah is another member of Saudi's new generation of filmmakers. Her latest film "Beyond

Words" aims to bring about intercultural exchange between Saudi Arabia and Latin America through musical dialogue.

"The film documents a meeting between an Argentinean tango band and a Saudi folk music band. It's about how people can learn more about each other's cultures through music," Al-Abdallah told MENASSAT.

Like Almutairi's film, Beyond Words was also scheduled to compete at the recent Gulf Film Festival in Dubai.

And Al-Abdallah echoes Al-Mutairi's thoughts that filmmaking is booming in her country.

The difference between the beginning of the filmmaking craze and its current stage now, she says, is the quality of the projects coming out.

"It started out with quantity. Now it's changed to quality. The films are better produced and more artistic."

The fact that the majority of people working in film in Saudi Arabia are self-taught sometimes has a negative impact on production, Al-Abdallah said.

"Sometimes the crew is not trained which affects the quality of the movie. Many government grants are available to young Saudis but scholarships are not given yet for film studies. There are always workshops outside the country though."

Film reviews but no movie theatres

A member of the Female Consultative Committee in the Ministry of Culture and Information in Saudi Arabia, Al-Abdallah writes film critiques for a local newspaper when she's not out shooting her own movies.

Film reviews in the national newspapers when cinemas are officially banned in the country; another of the kingdom's many paradoxes.

That's when a trip to neighboring and more liberal Bahrain comes in handy.

"Many Saudis go to Bahrain to watch movies. During the holiday season, I'd say seventy percent of people watching movies in cinemas in Bahrain are Saudi," said Al-Abdallah.

And when will Saudi be ready to host its own movie theaters?

Al-Mutairi utters a brief sigh and then offers his take on the situation.

"The government is waiting for society to be ready for the cinema. They gave us the opportunity to open the film festival (in Jeddah). But I believe change is hard for our society, especially in Riyadh. It's like with anything new here. People think it will be corrupt people. And the government doesn't want confrontation with the conservatives. So they're pushing slowly," said Al-Mutairi.

Tip-toeing towards reform, in other words.

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme invites Yemeni nationals to apply for the following volunteering position with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Post Title: Protection Assistant (UNV)
Location: Al Kharaz, Lahj Governorate

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- Inform refugees and asylum-seekers of their rights and responsibilities towards their host country, asylum procedures and on the role and assistance of UNHCR and other partners in Yemen
- Assist to improve camp security through promotion of community based security management, improvement of relations between the community and the police, and strengthen police capacity to respond to security challenges.
- Under the supervision of APO Kharaz, assist to analyze problems faced by: new arrivals, spontaneous arrivals, camp refugees and urban cases at Kharaz Refugee Camp, advice accordingly.
- Assess protection needs of camp refugees, new arrivals, spontaneous arrivals and others of concern and report to the APO Kharaz Field Office.
- Report any violation faced by Refugees and Asylum Seekers in the camp; promote the respect of human rights and work to create good relations among people of concern, local authorities and host community.
- Providing counselling support to individual cases of asylum seekers and refugees at Kharaz Camp.
- Assist on monitoring of the implementation of UNHC programs related with Protection Activities in Kharaz Camp.
- Conducts interviews of individual cases and reports to Kharaz APO.
- Act as an interpreter when required, translate documents and other relevant correspondences
- Perform other duties as required.

Qualifications:

- University degree in the field of Law, Political Science, International Law, Social Sciences or other related fields.
- 2 years experience in this capacity or related field of work
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills and ability to work in a multicultural environment.
- Full knowledge of computer
- Very good knowledge of English and Arabic. Knowledge in Somali and/or Ethiopian is an added advantage.

Interested candidates are requested to send their cover letter and C.V. to unv-yemen.info@undp.org
Email Subject: Protection Assistant-Kharaz

UNV is an equal opportunity organization and female candidates are encouraged to apply.

Deadline for receiving applications is 23 May 2009

Nabil Shaiban to the Yemen Times:

“The new poverty reduction strategy is going to focus on trying to make progress in at least four of the eight MDGs.”

Nabil Shaiban is head of the Aid Harmonization and Alignment Unit at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. He is also member of the consultative group following up the results of the 2006 donors' conference in London. Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Shaiban on development issues, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and civil society.

Although there is a donor harmonization unit which you are the director of, most programs implemented by the Ministry of Planning are actually donor-driven and not based on the society's real priorities. This is a complaint indicated by civil society and general public. How can we fix this problem?

The Government of Yemen in consultation with the donor community did establish a Unit for Aid Harmonization and Alignment in the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation back in 2006.

The underlying objectives of such a unit are to carry forward and monitor the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness adopted in 2005 by the international donor community and developing countries including Yemen, which clearly calls for enhanced recipient country leadership, official development assistance and improved alignment and harmonization of aid delivery according to national priorities.

Since the Yemen consultative group meeting in London in late 2006, the government and development partners have been guided by national priorities stipulated in the Development Plan for Poverty

Reduction (DPPR 2006-2010) and its Public Investment Program.

Both documents are MDG-based and focus on helping Yemen's poverty reduction efforts, achieving economic growth, job creation and sustainable development. Both documents are adhered to by the majority of our development partners to a large extent. The government, development partners and civil society have been engaged in intensive consultations during the mid term review of the DPPR and the revision of economic policies and national priorities.

After the Minister of Planning announced Yemen's inability to even come close to achieving the MDGs, is Yemen going to adopt a new contingency plan? Will Yemen rearrange its priorities or even reactivate donor support?

It is unfortunate that Yemen will not be able to achieve the MDGs by 2015 for a number of reasons. Yemen is described as an MDG off-track country.

The challenge of achieving the MDGs is dependent, most importantly, on availability of resources to meet the eight MDGs. Yemen lacks the resources to be able to do so. Yemen remains one of the countries



Nabil Shaiban

to receive the least official development aid among the less developed countries. Yemen gets an average of USD 13 official development aid per capita compared to a low developed country average of USD 44.

Structured and long-term develop-

ment challenges facing the country have undermined the government's efforts to make headway in improving the livelihood of the population. Population pressure remains high. Human development indicators across education and health are

among the lowest in the world. Water is depleting. The global financial and food crises have exacerbated the situation. Food insecurity and fewer resources make it more difficult to achieve the MDGs.

The Government of Yemen had conducted a needs assessment on the achievement of the MDGs and developed the current DPPR in alignment with the MDGs. The new DPPR for 2011-2015 is going to heavily focus on trying to make progress in achieving four of the eight MDGs especially in enabling Yemen to achieve universal primary education, promoting gender equality, improvement of maternal health and improved global partnerships for development.

What are your expectations and needs from media? Do you think establishing private radio and television stations, especially since print and internet dissemination is very low, would help development in Yemen?

We need to forge a partnership with the media, optimizing their role in the development process and information dissemination and establishing public confidence. Proposed amendments to the Media Law entail more press freedom and broader engagement of all media outlets, including the idea of private FM radios and television stations.

There was a motion to establish what was called "Project Implementation Units" to work alongside the Ministry of Planning in order to ensure effective implementation of the ministry's projects, especially with regards to donors' aid. Why hasn't this idea materialized?

The major problem with most gov-

ernment agencies is the lack of sufficient capacities, human and technical. Government agencies are inflated with civil servants who require certain top notch and qualified skilled staff especially in ministries like Planning and International Cooperation, Foreign Affairs, Finance, etc.

Setting up such units would help the government maintain and attract the best caliber of people and national expertise, and will stop the brain drain of Yemenis by international agencies. Until we see improved civil service system, a unit with clear mandates and exit strategies will continue to be needed for some time to come.

Who is making sure that donors' support matches Yemen's priorities, and is implemented as such? Take for example the donor committee on education: It includes most -if not all- donors, yet when it comes to outcomes, we are regressing in both quality and quantity.

The challenge remains in mainstreaming all donors' agendas and policies along the lines of government and national priorities. What we have done is we have been able to establish a set of incentives to bring them onboard. We have strengthened regular dialogue on policy issues with development partners.

We have established a good culture of information-sharing and information dissemination between government and donors. We are guided in our relationship with the principles of the Paris Agenda and a compact development partnership agreement, setting mutual commitments and accountability measures on both the government and her development partners.

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Jannah Hunt Oil Company Bestows 2009 Outstanding Achievement Awards



The Jannah Hunt Oil Company has celebrated the distribution of its annual Outstanding Achievement Awards in a special ceremony in the Movenpick Hotel in Sana'a.

This year, the company bestowed 12 staffers with awards, after the winners were picked by their direct supervisors, who reported skills and qualifications showed by them.

The winners were selected on several categories of criteria, including leadership ability, promotion of teamwork, initiative, creativity and dependability. Among those characteristics cited for the selection were also self-motivation and great relations with subordinates and superiors.

Some of the winners were also noted for respect they show for co-workers. The celebration that also marks the World Labour Day was attended by: Deputy Minister of Labour, Shaefi Ali Sahger, Advisor of the Ministry of Labour, Ali Saleh Othab, Assistant Secretary General of the People's General Congress, Mohammad Hussein Al-Akbarous, Deputy Executive General Manager, Muzir Al-Kaifi as well as Ahmad Hrrimal of Yemen Company for Investment in Oil and Minerals and finally Khalid Al-Hawri from the Department of Yemenization of the Ministry of Oil and Minerals.

By: Khaled Abdullah
Raydan Media Services



VIPs panel of guests (right to left): Mr. Hrrimal, Mr. Sahger, Mr. Al-Akbarous, Mr. Al-Kaifi, Mr. Graham, Mr. Cheney and Speaker, Mr. Al-Hamad

Award winners this year cover a wide spectrum of the Jannah Hunt's work force. They included electricians, operators, craftsmen, computer analysts, administrators and engineers.

"Their contribution to the overall project is immeasurable. We would not be here today without the efforts of these award winners and their colleagues," the company's General Manager, Mike Graham, said in a keynote speech during the ceremony.

He expressed gratitude to the field personnel, who face an even more difficult challenge.

"Over the past year, there has been a marked increase in security issues and strikes which should have crippled operations in Block 5," Graham said.

"During those times, many field employees stood their ground and continued working their very best to operate the facilities at the highest level," he noted.

"Evidence of their work can be seen in the daily production, and we thank all of our field employees for their support and perseverance through those difficult times," Graham said.

Commitment for Appreciation

Adil Al-Hamad, Deputy General Manager, also addressed the ceremony saying "Jannah Hunt Oil Company has an ongoing commitment to recognize and honor these employees who consistently provide excellent services."

"Jannah Hunt Oil Company believes that its employees are its greatest assets", Al-Hamad added.

He further congratulated all nominees and wished them more and more success, and urged them to "keep up the good work".

The award winners were chosen out of around 250 Jannah Hunt Oil Company employees, after they were evaluated by their Supervisors, who in turn, submitted names of the nominees to a committee for evaluation

and final selection. "All employees can take pride in the fact that with these 250 employees and 275 contract employees, Jannah Hunt Oil Company is able to maintain production of greater than 40,000 bopd, which makes it one of the most cost effective operations in Yemen," Mr. Graham, the General Manager, said.

General Manager's Award

Sameer Al-Makaleh, who received the General Manager's Award, which is one of two special awards, sees this event as a motivator for the award recipients and their co-workers alike.

"It is a chance for all the other employees at the other sections to anticipate their chance to be awarded in the years to come. It is

motivating for everybody to exert diligent efforts to get the award." Al-Makaleh said he was surprised to hear his name announced as the winner of the General Manager's Award, which is the most prestigious among the twelve awards.

Abdullah Shalameh Memorial Award

The other special award is a memorial award named after the late Deputy General Manager Abdullah Shalameh, who passed away three years ago.

It is given every year to those individuals that exemplify the standards exhibited by Abdullah Shalameh, in recognition of their outstanding contributions towards accomplishing the goals and objectives of the company.

"We decided to name this award in Abdullah's honour for the years of service for the company in many positions," the company's General Manger Mike Graham said. This year, the memorial award was given to Khaled Al-Qubati in recognition of his teamwork, promoting capabilities and his openness to serve his colleagues. Khaled Al-Qubati is "that kind of person that not only does his job, but also tries to train others and help others in any situation," Graham said.

Epitomizing Work

The company's Administration and Human Resources Director, Wayne Cheney, said the awards were given to "recognize those employees who epitomize the work that we

all strive for at Jannah Hunt." The ceremony honoured those employees whose performance during the year 2008 "exemplified the criteria listed for outstanding service to Jannah Hunt Oil Company," Cheney said.

"This year, we have a very interesting mix of long-time employees who have worked in Yemen with Hunt for many years and more recent hires that have made an impact very quickly," he added.

The list of all Achievements Award Winners was as follows:

1. Sameer Radwan Saleh Al-Makaleh - Lead Electrician (Al-Nahr)
2. Abdul-Amin Abdullah Kaid Al-Qubati - Administrator IV (Halewah)
3. Hassan Mahmood Radwan Al-Yousfi - Administrative Supervisor I (Halewah)
4. Mohammad Hassan Salim Al-Abdali - Operator B (Dhahab)
5. Mohsin Abdullah Mansour Al-Makini - Craftman IV-Mechanic (Al-Nahr)
6. Tariq Hassan Ebrahim Al-Rabbi - Craftman VII-Mechanic (Halewah)
7. Saad Mohammad Al-Aghbari - Administrator 5-Purchasing (Sana'a)
8. Abdullah Abdulhamid Al-Qubati - Warehouse Supervisor (Al-Nahr)
9. Awan Abdulaziz Al-Mamari - Senior IT Technician I (Sana'a)
10. Abdulaziz Abdulrahim Al-Romamah - Senior Reservoir Engineer (Sana'a)
11. Khalid Ahmed Mohammad Al-Kubati - Operator B (Dhahab)
12. Khalid Mohammad Al-Sanabani - Accountant III (Sana'a)



Sameer Kaidura Al-Makaleh receives the General Manager's Award



Abdul-Amin Abdullah Al-Qubati receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Hassan Mahmood Al-Yousfi receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Mohammad Hassan Al-Abdali receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Mohsin Abdullah Al-Makini receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Tariq Hassan Al-Rabbi receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Saad Mohammad Al-Aghbari receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Abdul-Amin Abdullah Al-Qubati receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Awan Abdulaziz Al-Mamari receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Abdulaziz Abdulrahim Al-Romamah receives the Outstanding Achievement Award



Khalid Mohammad Al-Sanabani receives the Outstanding Achievement Award

Unification is Yemenis' fruitful tree

By: Mofeed Al-Gaad

Yemeni southern governorates have recently played witness to violent secessionist actions that destroyed some private institutions.

In fact, the tree of Yemeni unification was planted by the logical negotiations of faithful leaders and by the insistence and satisfaction of the Yemeni people. Then it was watered by the pure blood of the martyrs. Consequently we are living under its blessed shadow, enjoying its useful fruits which are reaped by every Yemeni both in the north and in the south. Therefore, we should thank God for helping us to achieve unification, which was the dream of our grandfathers. We should also fiercely defend the fruitful tree of unification from any enemy who intends to cut down one of its branches or dig beside its stabilized roots.

Just as we feel the blessing of health when we enter a hospital, we feel the blessing of Yemeni unification when we look at the life of our grandfathers before unification on May 22, 1990. Before this

date a lot of blood was shed, sons were denied their mother's lap, and many people were deprived from seeing their relatives. The violent actions committed by our brothers in some of the southern governorates are condemned by all wise men. These violent actions are a feature of destroyers, not a feature of builders. Those citizens who want to express their thoughts and anger via violence are completely wrong because there are many of possible ways that enable us to express our thoughts and anger peacefully.

As a matter of fact, violent actions are not the solution for spreading peace and stability and ending corruption, as is clearly noticed in Iraq. Thus the violence that is practiced by some people in the north is not the solution for ending the corruption that is widespread in our country.

I am well aware that corruption and discrimination can be clearly observed in every governmental institution. I notice oppression and corruption when I see the sons of government officials get scholarships then get high positions in the government and the talented sons of poor people are pushed to the margins.

Corruption is obvious when we notice that most Yemeni officials practice their work without a conscience, throwing many innocent people in jail because they do not have money to bribe the person in charge. However, violent actions to fight such corruption are not the solution to fixing this problem. These actions are like pouring gas on a fire to extinguish it.

Before I end this article I would like to offer some advice, first for my brothers in the south and second for our leaders.

First, I want to remind my brothers in the south of the suffering of our fathers and grandfathers before they accomplished Yemeni unity. I want to tell them that violence is not the solution to remove the veil of corruption from the face of our beautiful Yemen who kindly embraces all her people from north to south.

Second, I would like to offer frank advice for our leaders. As our prophet Mohammed (PBUH) said, "the greatest jihad is mentioning a frank right word before a tyrannous leader." Actually the leaders could be the ones responsible for this recent violence, because they don't spread justice appropriately among their people.

United we stand; divided we fall

Rashad Al-Magrebi
Safety Officer
RashadHSE@gmail.com

Unity is the great power that nothing and nobody dare or can destroy. If there is no unity, there is no glory, and if there is no glory, there should be no life. What we actually suffer from in the Arab and Muslim world is the lack of unity. If we were united, we would be an undefeatable nation. When we look back to our distant Islamic past, we find that the major problem we face today is the problem of unity. Today, the great Islamic state has been divided into about forty small countries which weakened their power. Our prophet Mohammed (PBUH) was a single man and was able to establish a great nation in the history of mankind. No doubt unity was the main reason for this success.

We know the old story of the bundle of sticks. The old man's sons could not break the sticks tied together in a bundle.

But they broke each stick, when separated, quite easily. Thus the old man taught them to be united. If they lived together united they would be strong. If they quarreled among themselves, they would be weak. His lesson was 'union is strength.'

To be strong, a football or a hockey team must learn team spirit. If each member plays his own game, the entire team will lose the match. In more recent world history, Napoleon divided the friendly countries. Then he easily attacked them one by one.

This point leads me to talk about the tragic situation taking place nowadays in Yemen. Some people know but only one language: the language of violence. If they want to demand their rights, they raise no flag but the flag of war, the flag of separation. Why? What has made those people think negatively like that? We are supportive to those who demand their rights, but we all will take a hostile position against those who look for something else. I am sure that separation will bring nothing but great loss to the

people who are looking for it. They will never get it, and if somehow they do achieve their separation, they will merely discover a ball of fire which can never be extinguished.

People who go against their religion will surely be losers at the end. Yemeni people, as Muslims, are governed by the religion of Islam. If not, they are not really Muslims, and when it comes to this point, they already know their destination. As such, the Holy Qur'an urges us to stay united and to never be separated. Allah Almighty says, "And hold fast, all together, to the rope of ALLAH and be not divided;" yet some people in Yemen are looking to do exactly that.

Those people must know that we are in a very critical situation and do not need more problems. They should also know that independence is the worst and most impossible solution. They can demand their rights peacefully and will find all people of Yemen ready to support them. So let's protect our unification and peacefully demand our rights, because 'united we stand; divided we fall.'

Through

The Mind's Eye

By: Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy
maged_thabet@hotmail.com



A pointless threat to Yemen's unity

The recent news has disturbed the minds and the hearts of all Yemenis and Arabs, not because of personal interests that one may lose, but because it is about something dear to most, if not to all, Yemenis.

The news was about riots in some southern cities, with a call to fight the government, and people from northern cities like Taiz, Ibb or Sana'a, and a call for fragmentation.

Of course, there are reasons for that, but are such behavior requires good reactions to reach good solutions for the country as a whole.

As a way of expressing their fury, some groups of people in the southern cities have formed what is called "Southern Movement," which calls for riots, fighting the governmental forces, and expelling the people from the northern cities who are working there.

They rioted in some towns like in Radfan in Dhale'e, Al-Habeelain in Lahj, and Mukalla in Hadramout. They fought the government forces in such areas. They also burnt down some shops and beat some sellers who are originally from cities like Sana'a, Taiz, and Ibb.

They did all these not only to attract the government's attention and push it to accept their demands, but also as a call for separation, which is considered as something prohibited in the logic of most of Arabs and Yemenis.

From one point of view, I find such people are right. Yes, one could accuse the government of

corruption, insecurity or bribery, for example. Such practices are common to those who are in power or hold high positions, and seeing this does really make every one of us reject the situation. I am, or we are, really convinced that there are many things wrong in the country that must be corrected.

But, the difference between us lies in how we react to the situation. What happened in Al-Habeelain, Lahj, can be taken as an evidence of how not to react. They burnt the shops of the people from the northern cities of Yemen! Is that a solution, or is it a good means to reach to settle the problem.

What have these sellers and laborers from the northern cities done? Are they not innocent people working there to provide for their families and children?

They have nothing to do either with the government or the "Southern Movement." They are not there to take advantage of the people or resources of the southern cities, but to work just like those from the south who work in the north.

We may consider them to be doing something good for the nation because the government has not dealt seriously with matters concerning the people. It ignores the people's demands, instead paying attention to other issues in which only some authoritative persons have interests.

The people have been crying out about corruption in all the fields of life for several years, but the government has largely ignored their

demands, sometimes even encouraging corrupt individuals to widen their activities.

But taking action in the style that the called Southern Movement has only creates more problems and disturbs not only the government, but also the people themselves, the investors, and the foreign organizations. It makes the situation worse.

Despite the reasons outline above for the outburst against the government, such responses are negative. They destroy the unity of the nation, kill innocent people, and defame Yemen's reputation worldwide.

The current situation needs to change, but how? It will not happen by killing people, disturbing the peace, or separating the country which has been a symbol for the whole world.

The Southern Movement calls for the separation of Yemen, bringing it back twenty years. Their cry shakes not only Yemenis, but also all Arabs who consider Yemeni unity to be the first step towards the unity of the Arab and Islamic world.

Shame on Yemenis if separation takes place! Even if the government or the opposition accepts it, the nation will not. The separation will be strongly rejected. I can proudly say this because Yemenis are united in their hearts.

Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy is a contributing opinions writer from Taiz. He holds a Master Degree of Arts in English and is the former editor of Taiz University's English language magazine.

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Pottery transcends generations in Shabwa

By: Nasser Abdullah Nasser Salah
For the Yemen Times

The divine scriptures of Islam, Christianity and Judaism are remarkably similar and provide much detail about the creation of Adam, the first human being. In Islam, Adam was made from clay gathered from the four corners of the earth.

The Christian Book of Genesis describes Adam as being made from the dust of the earth, and in the Talmud, Adam is described as being kneaded from mud. They all agree that Adam was molded from something akin to potter's clay.

Of the numerous traditional crafts of Yemen, those of Shabwa in particular have existed for a very long time. Not only are crafts the cultural heritage of many Yemenis and provide them with a decent living, but they are for them an integral source of pride and joy.

Molded in creative and beautiful shapes of different sizes, clay is used to make pottery. The interesting shapes attract locals and tourists alike. The cultural pieces withhold their own as interest in modern fashionable



Items come and go

Skillful women mix earth of high quality with water and often the wool of goats, to produce the clay which then molded to make objects such as the cylindrical oven known as 'tunoor' or 'mofa,' which takes between three and five days to make. The oven is powered by firewood and is used to roast meat, a special type of soup cooked during

the month of Ramadan, and bread loaves as well as some kind of cakes which known in Shabwa as 'ka'ak' and 'kobana.' From the same type of clay, a variety of different incense burners are made. In Yemen they are known as 'magmara,' 'maktra' or 'mabkharara.'

Painted in attractive colors and patterns, they are also used as vessel for holding embers that burn tobacco or for the hookah smokers. This is often enjoyed by the inhabitants of Shabwa as they sit cross-legged during qat sessions.

The incense burners are also popularly used at weddings and in mosques. In the past such vessels, especially large ones,

were used as a portable indoor fireplace, known as 'marbakh' in Shabwa. These portable fireplaces kept many families warm during cold winters.

Aunt Sheikhha, an aged woman in Shabwa says that these indoor incense burners, especially the medium sized ones, are not only used to heat rooms but also to burn homemade or even natural incenses and frankincense in them. As women huddled closely together and stretch their hands over the warmth of the ovens, they would enjoy the aromas.

A cage-like stand made of either metal or wooden sticks and decorated with colorful palm-tree leaves, known as 'mashgab,' is used to hang clothes on while an incense burner is placed underneath to make clothes smell nice for hours.

It is well known fact that best incense in Yemen is homemade by families in Aden and Lahj. Other types of incense also used include sandalwood or 'banfa'a' and 'oud' which are imported from Saudi Arabia.

Beside the clay mentioned above, another mixture is also popular. It contains dry grass and is used to make pots for home use called 'thaid.' It is used to make jars and containers to keep water and preserve food, including dates, grains and seeds.

This was especially important in Shabwa during times of tribal conflict when residents were imprisoned in their houses for extended periods of time out of fear.

Other different sizes of pots are used for kitchen purposes. One medium sized pot, known as the 'khazabeh,' is stored on house tops and used to make lohooh. It was put on the rooftops containing a mixture of wheat flour, water, salt, garlic and fenugreek and exposed to the sun, the result of which was a sour liquid, used for making a kind of sour-light-flat loaves of bread cooked on a round piece of metal object called 'towa' to make the lohooh so popular in Ramadan.

Bigger pots called 'gowba' were used for dyeing white cloth a navy color. This was the preferred dress of Bedouins. The smaller pots were useful for bathrooms as well as for keeping honey after being boiled as to isolate wax off.

After God created Adam, he left the earth at his disposal. God created the skies, earth

and water and made them available to mankind to live, cultivate and build.

God also imposed upon Adam the fated death, were mankind is doomed to lie in the same earth which he was created from.

In the Quran, God says, "Thereof we created you, and therunto we return you and thence we bring you forth a second time."

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- Solar Turbines
- FMC Technologies
- DRESSER Masoneilan
- MURPHY
- Euro Contrôle Project
- Enraf
- Score Group plc
- DRESSER Consolidated
- KROHNE
- BIOKUBE
- FMC Technologies
- Honeywell
- MALBRANQUE
- Turbine Overhauling
- SEKO

CALIBRATION & Maintenance Workshop For Flow meters
SGS Certified Calibration System