



World Bank assesses the state of Yemen's education

By: Salma Ismail

SANA'A, July 5 - Although public spending for education increased by up to 125 percent between 1997-2007, it seems that support for the vital sector will dwindle in the future, according to the World Bank's county status report on Yemen released today.

The country has made significant strides in education, in terms of girls' enrolment and quality, but lags behind on a regional and international level.

"Education is the business of everybody," stresses Benson Ateng, World Bank country manager.

The government's spending has shifted from education to other sectors, according to the report. In relation to GDP, total education expenditure dropped from 6.8 percent in 1997 to 5.3 percent in 2006, before a slight increase to 5.8 percent in 2008

Moreover, the country's oil resources, which largely fund the public budget, are widely expected to run out by 2017.

"The purpose of the report was to spark a debate by putting the numbers in front of us," said Ayesha Vawda, Senior Education Specialist in the Human Development Sector of the World Bank in Yemen. The rationale of the report is to provide information for the government's vision for education, and to uncover the most important areas for its policy development.







Basic and secondary education account for the largest proportion of public education spending, but their shares declined between 2000-2007.

"If education is improved, the state of the whole country will improve," said Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training Ibrahim Omar Hajri.

The labor force is growing by 3.5 percent which is equivalent to 200,000 job seekers annually, according to the World Bank. However, demand for labor is low. Unemployment has continuously increased during the past 15 years, especially among educated youth and women, leaving an oversupply of over educated workers.

"At this period of time, it is imperative that Yemen focus on the sectors that will have the most economic benefit," says Susan Ayari education donor coordinator from USAID. "This is an opportunity to see so much information in one place."

"There is definitely a problem with education, partly due to higher demand and rapid population growth," said Hajari. "This report is the cornerstone to solving the education problem in Yemen," Ali

Gasim, deputy minister for the Ministry



Yemen that address education, not enough is being done to address the education woes of the country. The World Bank calls for more coordination between the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Technical Education and Vocational

Although there are three ministries in

Three ministries for education

Training and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The three education ministries differ in their mandates and experience, but they share important constraints in exercising their core functions, according to the report. Authorities have suggested merging the three ministries into one, although discussions are ongoing between researchers and policy makers as to how to solve the issue.

"If three ministries can't meet the demands of education, how can one ministry do so," asked Al-Hajri. "Demand for education is increasing and something needs to be done to address this."

"There's evidence that there is no coor-





Despite the government's compulsory basic education policy, 1.8 million children on basic education age were still out of school in 2005.

suggest merging the ministries, but a bigger minister only means bigger problems.'

"There needs to be coordination inside each ministry, consolidating the three ministries is not the solution," said Vawda. "There are examples in many countries where this has failed."

"The government has held many meetings regarding the issue of three ministries to try to solve it, says Hajri, who agrees that there should be one government vision with regard to education.

Brain drain vs. brain gain

Unlike many countries in the Middle East and North Africa suffering from a brain drain in which skilled workers leave the country, Yemen enjoys a brain gain, because possibilities of emigration push more youngsters to complete higher education. Those that do not make it abroad, are better qualified members of the work force in Yemen.

Under the worst case scenarios, skilled

"We study the job market in Saudi Arabia to expand our chances of employment," said Mazin Al-Ashraaf, who studies telecommunication engineering at the private Science and Technology University in Sana'a. "I know people who studied in Yemen and now work in Saudi Arabia in positions with good salaries."

Many Yemeni skilled graduates make up to 3-4 times more money than they would if they worked in Yemen.

"Yemen is overeducated and over skilled for its economy. Yemen pays low wages for expatriates and it turn it gets low productivity. There's a system that is producing employees but there's no way for the national economy to absorb its skilled labor," says Professor Zafiris Tzannatos, a former advisor to the World Bank

"The problem isn't limited to the education system, but also includes an economy that cannot absorb its skilled workers," said Tzannatos.

"Yemen does not have a brain drain, it has a brain gain. Because people strive to become more educated, so that they can leave," Tzannatos adds.

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Around the Nation



Truck plows into market, killing six and Injuring 11

By: Imad Al-Saqqaf

TAIZ July, 5 - Six people were killed and 11 others injured when a truck loaded with wheat sped down a hill and out of control into the Najd Qusaim market last Saturday, 20 kilometers west of Taiz.

Six cars were also destroyed in the third accident of its kind since 2006, according to the Taiz Traffic Administration, which estimates YR 13 million in damage.

The Najd Qusaim market serves residents of the Jabal Habashi and Al-Mesrakh districts. The truck crashed into a shop in the morning when the streets were crowded with shoppers and cars.

The scene horrified witnesses who saw the bodies of the three male and three female victims, including a woman in her forties who was pulled out from under the tires of the truck. The initial investigation indicates that the truck lost control because of break failure.

Two similar accidents killed or

injured dozens in the same market in 2006

Most of the markets in Taiz are on steep mountain slopes and or sidewalks. A month and a half ago, a truck rolled down a slope, and crashed into the B'er Basha area, killing two people and destroying six cars.

These accidents raise questions about the role of the traffic administration and the absence of traffic safety procedures, particularly in regards to the location of markets, truck maintenance and weight limitations.

After the last accident, Taiz residents in Najd Qusaim demanded that the government build another road to avoid more accidents, and move markets from public roads to alternative locations in secondary cities.

According to statistics from the General Traffic Administration, accidents are steadily increasing due to poor driving standards and mountain road hazards. The statistics reveal that car accidents claimed the lives of more than 2,800 people, and left more than 20,000 injured in 2008.



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Saudi Arabia to build a border security system

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

SANA'A, July 5 – The construction of a high-tech security system covering both sea and land borders of Saudi Arabia was announced on Tuesday in Riyadh.

It has been about two decades since Saudi Arabia started considering a security system around its borders. The first appearance of the project was after the first Gulf war in 1991. The security system aimed to allow the early discovery of any attack on the northern border of Saudi Arabia by the Iraqi regime which had invaded Kuwait.

Saudi Arabia is particularly concerned about its 1,300 kilometer border with Yemen, especially in the mountainous areas. Hundreds of illegal immigrants from the Horn of Africa and Yemen enter Saudi every day via this porous border area. Besides smuggling narcotics and weapons across the Yemeni-Saudi border, Al-Qaeda militants are taking advantage of the area to infiltrate Saudi Arabia. This has become the main concern to the Saudi government, especially after the announcement of Al-Qaeda Arabian Peninsula in January.

Along its borders with Yemen, Iraq, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan and Oman, the Saudi government will set up a security fence to support its border guard in protecting the country from attack and preventing illegal immigration as well as the smuggling of narcotics and weapons.

International companies have been competing for several years to win the contract of setting up the surveillance system until it was finally won by the Defense and Security division of the European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company (EADS). Al-Rasheed Trading and Contracting, a Saudi company, will help EADS with the construction. The project will be carried out over the next 5 years.

The French weekly Le Point reported that the value of the contract has

been estimated at 2 billion euros, or USD 2.81 billion.

EADS said it will provide an alert system for about 9,000 km of Saudi borders across mountains, deserts and sea, using radar facilities, coastal detection centers, telecommunications networks, cameras and reconnaissance aircraft.

"It will ensure border coverage is visible and managed at the sector level while simultaneously providing situational awareness at the regional and national level," said a press release from EADS.

"We are committed to dedicating all our capacities and capabilities to completing this program on time," said Stefan Zoller, CEO of EADS Defense and Security.

EADS Defense and Security is a systems solution provider for armed forces and civil security entities worldwide.

In 2008 the company achieved revenues of euro 5.7 billion from its Defense and Security division alone. EADS had started building a security system using physical fencing and high-tech monitoring along Saudi Arabia's border with Iraq since the 1990s. However, with increased concerns over infiltration into the country by Al-Qaeda members and a rise in illegal immigration around the region. the Saudi Interior Ministry expanded the scope of the system to all the country's borders. In June 2000, Yemen and Saudi

Arabia signed an international border treaty after more than 60 years of border disputes. The 2000 border treaty has eased tensions between the two governments, but controversy still remains over the illegal flow of immigrants, weapons and other goods across the border.

Saudi's defense spending was USD 38.3 billion last year, and this is expected to rise to USD 43.5 billion this year, according to Jane's Defense Budgets.

Unidentified Hodeidah epidemic contained

By: Mahmoud Assamiee

HODEIDAH, July 5 – An unknown epidemic that killed four people and infected dozens in the Hais district of the Hodeidah governorate two weeks ago has been contained according to the Ministry of Population and Public Health

Three of the victims were from Hais, and the fourth was a Somali refugee visiting the area.

The disease causes intense vomiting

er sanitation

Dr. Najeeb Abu Ghanim, the Head of Parliament's Medical Committee said the main reasons for the spread of the disease included heavy rains that mixed human waste with drinking water, and lack of sanitation and health services. The locals in the Hais area on the

border of Mocha Port on the Red Sea use open wells as their main source of drinking water, which also facilitated

the outbreak.

"Absence of medical teams in the

in the area. Since last week, no new cases have been reported.

Abu Ghanim suggested three solutions to contain the epidemic. Health institutions should provide clean water for drinking, adequate sanitation to get rid of human waste and quick treatment of the infected to limit spread of the disease.

"The disease has been contained and fought, and there are no new infected cases during the past week. There are only four death cases registered in the beginning of the disease, which happened in the first two days," said Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Health and Population for Health Care Sector Majed al-Junaid. "Field teams are working very hard and specialized units and medications

have been sent to the area," he said, adding, infected cases are receiving treatment. Concerning further questions about the disease, he asked to be called back and then switched off his phone.

"The disease is ordinary diarrhea and has been controlled," said the Director of Epidemic Surveillance Department at Hodeidah Health Center cation.' Sultan al-Maqtari. "We are handling this disease very seriously," he added before refraining from commenting any he said. Although teaching materials and further. Thabet Baggash from the Health education facilities have been Office in Hais said that public panic is improved, they are still not adecausing more stress on the hospital's quate. With only seven percent of already limited resources. "Now anyschools equipped with a library, one with diarrhea thinks he or she has reading material is hard to come by. the disease, and rushes to the hospital."

Oil pipeline exploded in Shabwa, foiled in Khawlan

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A July 5 - A source in the Ministry of Oil and Minerals said that an oil pipeline exploded in the Shabwa governorate, in southeast Yemen last Thursday, causing a large oil leak.

The source said that the explosion caused a fire in the Al-Sieq area that continued for more than 10 hours. Media sources reported that the explosion was set off by remote control, after the perpetrators dug a tunnel to get near the pipeline.

The explosion damaged 160 meters of pipeline owned by a South Korean oil company, which produces 10,000 barrels of oil a day.

Head of Maifa'a district Abdulla A'ateq Ba Audha told media last Friday that authorities were investigating the incident. He accused leaders of the Southern Movement, and said that the initial investigation points to their involvement in the operation.

Observers of security issues in Yemen said that the explosion bore the hallmarks of Al-Qaeda because it is similar to an attack Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for last December in the Khawlan area, 30 kilometers east of Sana'a. Al-Qaeda has threatened to target government and foreign interests.

The Ministry of Interior also added two names to their "black list," after they were caught attempting to dig near a pipeline in the Habab Valley. They are suspected of planning an attack on a pipeline in Khawlan.

A statement issued by Ministry of Interior's Media Center said that the accused are banned from traveling outside the country, and that their names have been circulated to all land, air and maritime ports.

In addition to kidnapping, tribes are also known to explode oil pipelines to exert pressure on the government to release prisoners, provide services or protest price hikes.

A member of Khawlan tribe in 1995 carried out the first pipeline attack in the Surwah area of Marib. Since that time, there have been 43 similar incidents, the last of which took place last Thursday.

The damage is estimated to cost USD 100,000 to USD 500,000 and stop production for up to 12 hours. Pipeline explosions can also cause 500 to 2000 of barrels of oil to leak per hour.

Continued from page 1

World Bank assesses the state of Yemen's education

Quality of education

The quality of education is affected by a number of factors, including the lack of teaching material and teachers that have excellent credentials but do not know how to teach or interact with their students.

"There is a demand of 5,000 teachers a year, but almost 75,000 teachers are produced. They do not know how to teach, or how to get the message across to the pupils," Vawda said.

"Almost 135, 000 teachers in Yemen still need training," said Muthhar Al-Abasi deputy minister Planning andInternational of Cooperation for Development Plans.

The rate of students to a computer at university level stands at 400:1. For technical education and vocational training institutes, the lack of updated facilities and the scarcity of equipment pose a challenge in producing well-qualified labor.

"We are looking into this issue," says Ibrahim Omar Hajri, Minister of Technical and Vocational Training. "The government has allocated more that 20 percent for edu-

"We all have children and families affected by the education problem,"

tality rate.

The girls' enrollment rate of Yemen is the lowest in Middle Eastern countries, and there is huge disparity between boys and girls, and between urban and rural areas. The low girls' participation in education is attributed to several sociocultural factors. The tradition of early marriage in rural areas hinders girls' schooling and leads to high drop out rates. Negative social attitudes towards girls' education and a lack of female teachers contribute to low female enrollment. "There is a need for more female teachers," Vawda said.

"The rate of illiteracy has halved by 95 percent in just 20 years. There are no villages where girls haven't gone to school, even at least one time," Vawda said.

The World Bank in the report recommends that the one year wait rule for university enrollment be abolished

It also calls for removing the maximum age of 20 for technical education and vocational training.

The report stresses the need to view the private education sector as a partner, not competitor, in education development.

Cooperation for the future

Yemen has a heavy reliance on oil and gas revenue and a limited domestic production. This combined with the global economic crisis, are cause for concern for Yemen' future. In recognition to these problems, the government has laid out an ambitious "Strategic Vision 2025" which focuses on economic growth. For the education sector, six strategies are laid out to address educational development strategies.

and diarrhea, which can be fatal if untreated. Physicians were unable to diagnose it, but medical teams are investigating and sending test samples to Sana'a laboratories. The disease appears to be caused by a water-born bacteria spread because of lack of prop-

patients with HIV/AIDS and reduce

The proposed law, which was draft-

ed in July 2008 by parliament member

Abdul-Bari Dughaish, contains 51 arti-

cles that aim to reduce the stigma asso-

Its articles also guarantee HIV/AIDS

victims the right to lead normal lives

by prohibiting discrimination against

people who are HIV positive seeking

Dughaish emphasized that people

living with HIV/AIDS in Yemen face

multiple forms of discrimination and

"The adversary is the disease not the

"If this law is approved it will be an

important step towards eradicating

misconceptions surrounding the dis-

During the parliament discussion of

patient, so we must acknowledge the

that their rights should be protected.

accommodation and services.

patient's rights," he said.

ease," he added.

discrimination against them.

ciated with HIV/AIDS.

By: Amel Al-Ariqi

beginning to treat the disease turned it into an epidemic," said Abu Ghanim, who first reported the disease to the parliament two weeks ago. Currently as many as 50 people who appear to have the disease have been admitted to the Hais Rural Hospital, the only hospital

An untimely book distribution is also a problem cited in the World Bank report, an issue questioned by Professor Zafiris Tzannatos.

Citing an example on how distribution should not be a problem he said, "You go to any village in Yemen and you can find Coca-Cola, but you cannot find books."

"The most important problem in Yemen is education," said Ali Gasim, deputy minister for the Ministry of Education. "We have a lack of data and not enough statistics that we can base decisions on."

"If there's no quality in education, our graduates cannot enter the local, regional or international job market," Ali Gasim said.

"The report is very timely and will help to plan for the future of the education sector," he adds.

Education uplifts society

More education is not only associated with less poverty, but also population growth. In Yemen, this is vital because with the current rate of population growth, it is estimated that the population will double in just 17 years

When education from grades 1-6 results in solid outcomes, it provides great benefits to society.

In particular, it reduces the number of early marriages, which in turns help keep down the child mor-

"Despite many strategies, one coordinated vision for education is missing and needed," noted the report.

The six strategies try to expand through the public budget which depends on unreliable oil prices, Vawda explained.

"There needs to be one vision of what the education sector in Yemen should look like. The six strategies need to be more coordinated and they cannot depend on the public budget," added Vawda.

"In the future stages it is hoped that the recommendations of the report will be addressed," said Mutahhar Al-Abasi. Yemen's education problems are not unique to the country, the government's effort for education started in 1962 when the Yemen Arab Republic was established.

During 1970s, Yemen saw the expansion of basic education, however, there was certain disparity between North and South, and they adapted very different education policies before its unification in 1990

Since then although the sector has substantially improved, much more remains to be done.

the bill, some members said that the parliament could not impose rules on SANA'A, July 5 - Yemen's individuals that force them to accept Parliament has debated and is soon to HIV/AIDS patients. vote on a law to protect the rights of

"AIDS is still one of the sensitive issues in Yemen, and some parliament members reflect society's lack of knowledge about the disease," commented Dughaish. "It's normal to be important to educate society as well as decision makers."

The law would commit the Ministry of Health to educating people about HIV and how to prevent it. The law includes adding information about HIV and AIDS in Yemen's school curriculum.

Parliamentarians to Prevent HIV/AIDS, said that the law would prohibit the dismissal of workers based on their HIV status.

"An employee who is HIV positive should be paid full sick leave until his health condition is stabilized, but if medical tests prove he cannot continue working, he should be granted leave with full salary until he retires with a

pension," Dughaish said, quoting the draft law.

> ing with HIV/AIDS will have access to no-cost health care, public health facilities, financial support and free psychological care.

been violated would have access to legal advice and help in pursuing legal action. Medicine and medical equipment used to combat HIV/AIDS would be free of taxes and customs duties.

The law also provides for the establishment of a government fund in cooperation with the private sector to support people living with the disease as well as their families.

"The law aims to treat people with HIV the same as people with other chronic health conditions who need medical care," said Dughaish.

The proposed law also mentioned that a child living with the virus would have the right to education and could not be excluded from school.

The latest statistics issued by the National Program to Fight AIDS in May 2009 revealed 2,651 registered

Health Organization suggests that for every reported case, 20 to 30 go unreported. The first case of HIV/AIDS in Yemen was recorded in 1987, accord-

cases in Yemen so far, but the World

ing to the program's statistics.

So far there are many voluntary HIV/AIDS counseling and testing centers in both Sana'a and Aden. While there is no available treatment, some clinics give free medicine and provide pre-test and ongoing post-test counseling.

These same services are now being offered in testing centers in other governorates, and the government has launched large scale awareness campaigns in schools, universities, prisons, factories, youth sport clubs and refugee camps.

Yemen would be the third state in the region to approve such a law after Djibouti and Sudan.

"I'm optimistic that the law will be approved, especially as it has passed through all constitutional procedures and specialized committees to edit and fix the articles," said Dughaish.

Under the proposed law, people liv-

Draft law to protect rights of HIV/AIDS patients

afraid of something you ignore, so it's

Dughaish, who is also chairman of

Moreover, those whose rights had



Around the Nation

In Brief

SANA'A

Traffic accidents killed 67 persons last week

Some 67 persons died in 281 traffic accidents across the country last week, according to a report of the traffic department.

The report also said that 225 persons were seriously injured in the accident and other 127 simple wounded. The department estimated the material losses at YR 50.1 million.

The report said that the main reasons behind these accidents were over speed, ignorance and the technical defects.

Saudi company desires to build housing city

The board chairman of al-Faisaliah Company for Investment and Real Estate, Prince Faisal bin Sultan bin Abdullah al-Fisal voiced on Saturday desire of the company to invest in field of real estate in Yemen including a project of a housing city in Sana'a capital at be \$ 120 million.

During his meeting with the Director General of General Authority for Investments Marwan Faraj Bin Ghanim, the prince said that his visit to Yemen comes to have a look at the lands of the project, which would be determined by the Yemeni government.

He also said that Yemen has big investment opportunities in various arenas.

For his part, Bin Ghanim highlighted level of the relationship between Yemen and Saudi Arabia in all fields, especially in domain of investment, pointing out to the successful Saudi investments in Yemen such as Saudi German Hospital, Boqshan Group.

He also reviewed facilitates and features of the Yemeni law of investment as well as system of window to do investment easy.

Bin Ghanim also indicated to the comprehensive reforms in investments sector to meet requirement of the growth of the national economy and a plan of the authority to better the investment climate in the country.

Up to ¤ 20 thousands to each family of Yemenia airplane's victims

Chairman of the Board of the Yemenia Airway company Abdul-Khaliq al-Qadhi announced that the company will give a preliminary compensation amounted to ¤ 20 thousands

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Grade: NO-C

ment

for each family of its plane crash's victim.

In a press conference held on Wednesday at Sana'a International Airport, al-Qadhi said that Yemenia aircrafts will transfer a passenger from each family's victim to Moroni City in order to follow-up the search and res-

cue efforts for their families. He also reaffirmed that the crashed aircraft had no technical faults and undergone maintenance before taken off Sana'a airport as well as had been checked two months ago under the supervision of technical team from the manufacturer company.

Yemen Airways company always conducts careful maintenance for all its aircraft fleets, for this reason it has been free of any such incidents over the past forty years and what has been circulated by the mass media are falsified information, he added.

HAJJAH

Workshop on reproductive health issues launched

A workshop on the coordination of awareness campaign of reproductive health issues launched on Saturday and implemented by the Public Health and Population Office in Hajjah province.

The two-day workshop, which is financed by Yemeni-German Reproductive Health Program, targets 20 participants of the public opinion leaders.

It aims to get the participants acquainted with the importance of reproductive health as well as raise community awareness on it and establish the appropriate mechanism to spread reproductive health concepts via the different mass media.

The workshop dealt with the significance of raising the knowledge of family planning methods and its positive impacts on the family from the economic, health and social aspects.

Director of Public Health and Population Office Adel al-Mu'ayad made clear that mortality indicators resulting from closely-spaced births reached 365 cases death out of 100,000 births all over the country as well as the fertility rate reached 7.6 percent and growth rates 5.3 percent in the province.

TAIZ Pirates fail to hijack

two Yemeni oil tankers

Yemeni marine forces have foiled a pirate attack against two national oil tankers near the Bab el-Mandab strait.

Head of the Marine Forces and Coast Defense Uwais Abdullah Ali Mujawar said the forces saw two pirate boats approaching the two tankers, prompting a quick action by marines who intercepted the boats and clashed with pirates onboard.

Yemeni marines tried to hunt the pirates after the attempted attack but they could run away.

The forces resumed their duties combing the regional waters to foil pirate attempts which have recently soared.

Last month, a Yemeni oil tanker escaped a pirate attack off the Makha port in the Red Sea.

Somali pirates intercepted the tanker and tried to take over it, but the crew managed to flee the pirates.

Informed sources said that the pirates pursued the tanker, but it sent a distress call to the Coast Guards in the area who immediately offered help.

The tanker has arrived in the port safely.

In April, three Somali pirates were killed and 12 others seized after Yemeni marine forces rescued oil tankers which were attacked off the pirate-plagued Gulf of Aden.

Yemen has received a number of pirates who were arrested by international forces patrolling the Indian Ocean on anti-piracy mission. Some have gone on trials.

HADHRAMOUT

Two foreign drug smugglers arrested

Security forces in Hadhramout province has arrested two foreign persons accused of drugs selling, according to Interior Ministry.

The Information Center of the Ministry said on Thursday that the drug suspected smugglers, a Kenyan man,45, and a Tanzanian,40, were arrested at Shehr district in the province while they were trying to sale drugs to Yemenis.

The Security authorities has seized

the drugs and referred the accusers to the concerned authorities.

Over 44 drug cases have been prosecuted between January and May of 2009, which involved 64 local suspects and 73 foreigners. The quantity of confiscated drugs this year is 19 tons more than the last year, when only four tons were confiscated.

The best way to smuggle drugs is through the Yemeni coastline because it is 2000 kilometers long. The smugglers prefer to use big ships rather than small boats because they can hide drugs in small places such as oil tanks and under the boat.

Last May, Yemen destroyed a stockpile of drugs seized over the past 16 months – 4.5 tonnes of hashish and more than 6.3 million amphetamine tablets with a total market value of US\$ 38 million.

Yemen believes that the neighbouring countries are the main target for drug traffickers.

Drug trafficking is active in Yemen's border provinces, including Hadhramaut, Sa'ada, Shabwa and Mahara.

A Yemeni official has said that his country was being used as a transit point, pointing out that the increase of drug trafficking through Yemen to the Gulf countries was due to a rise in demand for drugs from the Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia.

Interior Ministry registered an increase in drug-related offences from 45 crimes and 86 suspects in 2005 to 140 crimes and 226 suspects in 2007. It also said more than 500 people were charged with drug dealing in the

country in the last three years.

Awareness on ADIS launched An awareness course on AIDS definition was launched on Thursday attended by 25 women of NGOs in Aden governorate.

The course was organized by the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS in collaboration with Social Welfare in Aden.

During the course, the participants will be introduced on the awareness of AIDS and its healthy consequences and ways of its transmission and avoiding



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doubled.

Some Yemenis blame neighboring countries for the spread of AIDS into Yemen, and use past statistics to show that as the number of refugees entering Yemen has grown, the number of those infected with the virus has risen.

Experts at the National Anti-AIDS Program believe that as many as 12,000 people could be infected countrywide, with ignorance and a fear of social repercussions hindering many people from getting themselves tested.

The National AIDS Program surveillance report shows that the cumulative number of HIV/AIDS cases reported by the end of 2004 stood at 1,600.

According official statistics, the number of AIDS-infected people, by the end of last April, was 2493.

Their News

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fellowships that fund the cost of attending an Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) meeting.

The latest study on AIDS awareness

in the country, conducted by Health

Ministry, concluded that only 34 per-

cent of females in rural parts of the

country are aware of AIDS, compared

The high level of awareness among

urban women shows that public aware-

ness campaigns have been effective,

but the government's efforts to spread

awareness in rural areas are still too lit-

Yemen carried out during the 2002-

2006 period a national anti-AIDS pro-

gram and established many centers for

fighting AIDS in several cities of the

But since the start of the National

Anti-AIDS Program in 2002 the num-

ber of AIDS victims has more than

to 95 percent of urban women.

tle.

country.

As you know, the IETF is the Internet's premier standards-making body, responsible for the development of protocols used in IP-based networks. IETF participants represent an international community of network designers, operators, vendors, and researchers involved in the technical operation of the Internet and the continuing evolution of Internet architecture.

Full details on the ISOC Fellowship to the IETF, including how to apply, are located on the ISOC website at: www.isoc.org/educpillar/fellowship

Fellowship applications for both IETF meetings are due by 31 July 2009. The Internet Society formally launched the ISOC Fellowship to the IETF program in January 2007 after successfully piloting the program during 2006 at IETF 66 in Montreal and

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ADEN

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3) Fostering integration and team

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work

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Applicants must be nationals of Iraq.

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Internet Society accepting applications

The Internet Society has announced that it is seeking applications for the next round of the ISOC Fellowship to the IETF program. The program offers engineers from developing countries for

Fellowships will be awarded through a competitive application process. The Internet Society is currently accepting fellowship applications for the next two IETF meetings: IETF 76 being held in Hiroshima,

- Japan, 8-13 November 2009
- IETF 77 being held in Anaheim, USA, 21-26 March 2010

Up to six fellowships will be awarded each IETF meeting. IETF 67 in San Diego. Forty seven individuals from 29 countries have participated in the program since its inception. I encourage you to pass information about this program to individuals involved in your regional operators' groups that have a keen interest in the Internet standardisation activities of the IETF. You also may consider being a reference for the applicant.

If you have questions, please do not hesiate to contact Connie Kendig <kendig@isoc.org> or Mirjam Kuehne <mir@isoc.org>.



JITCOM 2009 in Expo Sana'a for six days

Under auspices of Ministry of Telecommunication and Information Technology, APOLLO International Exhibitions organizes the eleventh session of Al-Jazeera Information & Communication Technology (Jitcom). The exhibition will continue for six days from July 6-12, 2009 at Sana'a Expo Center for International Exhibitions.

Jitcom is considered one of the most important exhibitions held in Yemen particularly given that it is the only annual occasion in this field. Organizing Jitcom 2009 for the eleventh year successively comes in coincidence with the great development that Yemen witnesses in telecommunication and information technology and the doubled number of telecommunication companies and users during the last few years. As Jitcom Exhibition is considered the largest and most famous among exhibitions held in Yemen in participation with largest world companies that present the most recent developments in mechanism of telecommunication technology.

Mr. Omar Al-Nehmi, manager of marketing in the organizing company, says that this technical event shows all products and requirements for all specialists who desire to attain the most recent data of technical knowledge to be able to issue their purchase demands on the basis of their knowledge of what they want to purchase through viewing it in the exhibition.

Therefore, Jitcom has become enlisted within the most important annual exhibitions held in Yemen.

He says that the exhibition was allocated to showing and direct purchase as exhibitors will show their new products, advertise, market, and sell them. A group of new exciting products will be launched. Further, there will be some shows that interact with the most recent rage of laptops, desktops, cell phones, cameras, toys and amusement programs, domestic amusement systems, office operation systems and other products.

He adds that Jitcom Exhibition will include a number of public and private sector institutions that work in this field, offer their services to visitors through introducing information, and offer all public electronic services to facilitate services for all groups of the society. The exhibition will shed light on many other projects related with this

Local and international bodies participate in this exhibition and offer business solutions, solutions to personal use of telecommunication and information techniques, and solutions to cell phones and all techniques and infrastructure related with information technology.

The exhibition will attract senior investors of information technology in the hugest fastest and most open market that attract foreign investment in the region(telecommunication and information technology sector) which is also the most prominent among the bodies that participate in the exhibition. Jitcom exhibition attracted in its tenth session tens of thousands of visitors, representatives of the companies working in the telecommunication and information technology field. In addition to technical products, the exhibition included workshops that targeted providers of technical solutions and their partners. As usual, Jitcom was an important station for meeting of officials and managers of companies with each other in preparation for signing contracts and deals and forming alliances and companies.



Yemen LNG Company Scholarship Programme

In support of the ongoing professional development of the citizens of Yemen, Yemen LNG Company is pleased to announce the launch of its scholarship programme. The programme aims to provide a range of scholarships which will

- e deliver world class university education to recently graduated young high school students
- equip fresh college graduates with additional qualifications such as diplomas and master's degrees
- enhance the skills of professionals already working in occupations which directly benefit the country

The scholarships are open to all citizens of Yemen, and the programmes which will be offered each year are detailed below.

Undergraduate Programme

Majors:

- **Civil Engineering**
- Mechanical Engineering
- Environmental Engineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Electronics & Communication Engineering
- **Electrical Engineering**

Requirements:

- . Yemeni national residing in Yemen and aged between 18 and 21 years
- A certificate from a secondary school in Yemen, recognized by the Yemeni Ministry of Education
- A grade average of 85% or higher -Science section
- Good English language skills and the willingness to undertake additional training to reach the required level
- Commitment to complete a four-year study programme and to return to work in Yemen



Postgraduate Programme

Master Majors:

- Masters of Public Administration
- Tourism Development
- Tourism Management
- Water Regulation and Management
- International Health Care
- Environmental Law and Policy
- Executive MBA
- Finance and Investment Management
- Energy Law and Policy
- International Dispute Resolution and Management
- Mineral Law and Policy
- Petroleum Law and Policy
- Petroleum Taxation and Finance

Diploma Majors:

- Energy Law and Policy
- Environmental Law and Policy
- Finance and Investment Management
- International Health Care
- Petroleum Law and Policy
- Petroleum Taxation and Finance
- International Dispute Resolution and Management
- Mineral Law and Policy

Requirements:

- A TOEFL score of at least 450 in English and the willingness to undertake additional training to reach the required level
- A pre-existing BA/BSc degree with a grade average of at least "good"
- At least one year's postgraduate work. in Yemen
- A clear personal career objective after the completion of the Master's degree

Professional Certificates

Maiors:

- Strategic Management
- Project Appraisal and Management
- Environmental management
- Managerial Control and MIS
- E-government
- Certificate in HR Administration
- Certificate in Recruitment & Selection
- Certificate in Purchasing & Supply
- HR Management
- Contracts Strategy and Management
- Human Resource Planning & Development
- International Diploma in Educational Planning &
- Management Systems for Developing countries
- International Training Programme in **Developing Countries**

Requirements:

- A TOEFL score of at least 450 in English to reach the required level
- A letter from the current employer which must state the professional need for the candidate to undertake this training and the benefit that the individual and the employing Organisation will gain from it
- A reference letter from the current employer, supporting the candidate's application and giving clear reasons for this





The Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights Executive Manager Mohammed Al-Maqtari to Yemen Times: *"We do not receive funding from any political party and the observatory's financial records will be on our Web site for all to see."*

The Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights is one of Yemen's prominent civil society organizations and has been active in supporting rights-based issues since its establishment in 2004. This year, the observatory issued its fourth annual human rights and democracy report for Yemen in 2008. Nadia Al-Sakkaf interviewed Mohammed A. Al-Maqtari, general manager of the observatory.

The observatory has been quite active despite its small number of staff and limited resources? How did this happen?

The Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights is a non-governmental civil society organization that focuses on democracy and human rights issues in Yemen. It is active in monitoring violations against human rights and freedoms in Yemen and issues annual reports on the situation.

A group of four lawyers and activists, including myself, agreed in 2004 that we should create an entity to document and report violations and recommend courses of action in Yemen. We depended solely on our personal financing, as we are established lawyers and professionals and have our own sources of income. The observatory started with a group of six people and we started expanding two years later.

Only then did we start working with donor organizations for specific projects or reports. You must understand that the most important issue any civil society organization can achieve is credibility. And we are proud to say that we have done this despite the accusations from others that we are being funded by this party or that. The hard work of the observatory's staff and friends who support us on volunteer basis are behind the achievements of the observatory.

Although you claim to be a neutral, you are seen by the state as opposition especially with the strong affiliations of members of the board of trusties to the socialist party. How do you explain that?

Why must the personal affiliations of any of the members extend to cover the observatory itself?

People who claim we are not independent fail to understand that the observatory is its own entity, defined by its policies, mission statements, and activities. I challenge anyone who claims this to present evidence of bias. Even the reports on which we deal with state issues such as national strategies are based on official data and analysis from national and international accredited organizations.

I was member of the socialist party until 1983, when I left because of my desire to abstain from political work. At that time the party, was not active and I decided I was better off without it. After the unity in 1990, the party regained some of its momentum, yet I decided I would remain independent. I continued my law career until 2004 until my friends and I decided to establish the observatory.

Today, the observatory's staff, board of trusties and advisory board includes 31 individuals from all political lines and geographical allocations and obviously gender. We maintain a balance to protect our neutrality and objectivity of our work. The board of trusties especially is mostly independent. And we create measures to ensure that the personal political convictions of any of our affiliates do not interfere with work produced in the observatory's name. We do this through cross checking information and creating teams of people with different political affiliations.

If our work was not credible, it would not have been sought after by national and international organizations.

We do not receive any funding from any political party, national or international organization. We did and do not receive any funding from the socialist party, not even one penny. The donor organizations work with us on projects and our financial records are transparent. In fact, they will be placed in our Web site soon, for all to see.

As for viewing us as opposition, that is actually natural considering that we docu-

ment violations against human rights that are mostly committed by the state. In Yemen, it is like you are with me or against me. But we try to stick to the middle path representing the best interest of the people, whom we feel are the main body we should answer to.

How do you maintain the sustainability of the observatory?

After over four years of establishing ourselves, today we find that projects come to us instead of us seeking them. We work on a diverse set of projects whether on local level such as our interest in fighting slavery in Hajja, or national level such as analysis of the presidential and local council elections in 2006. We do our research with the help of academic researchers and volunteers.

We have focal points in 12 governorates, including Taiz, Aden, Lahj, Dhale, Abyan, Hadramout, Shabwa, Amran and Hodeidah.

We also maintain a democratic environment within the observatory and this helps keep staff and volunteers committed. For example, we are regularly expanding the board of trusties and we went from four people in 2004 to seven in 2006. Also the observatory's leadership is designed to be on rotational basis. So next year, there will be an election to select a new director from the board of trusties and, the year after, my position as executive manager will be re-appointed after an election.

We are trying to establish an institutional environment that does not depend on one or a group of persons so that the observatory sustains itself throughout generations.

Which international organizations have you worked with and what were the topics?

We had worked with several donor organ-

izations such as Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the United Nations Development Program, the International Development Research Centre in Canada, the Future Foundation, and many others. We are working with the National Endowment for Democracy on our annual report, which we have been producing since 2006.

The projects include documentation of specific incidents or nation wide reports. It focuses on our field of interest which is human rights and democracy.

An observatory's role is documentation without taking sides, you do more than that. You lobby, you advocate and push for certain directions. Don't you think this affects your credibility?

Well, the truth is that the name of the organization is somewhat narrower than the scope of work, which is defined in the mission statement and objectives. Yes, we are an observatory but we do more than documentation. We do campaigning, advocacy and carry out events to support the country's development and human rights.

On the contrary, this has enhanced our credibility because we have been clear from the very beginning as to what we do. Every year we issue an annual report and produce a set of recommendations on how the situation of human rights in Yemen can be improved. So you see we are not a passive observatory we are rather a proactive kind with initiatives.

And all the information we produce and the reports are available in Arabic on our Web site. We have a library and a database program that processes numbers and transforms them into meaningful tables. We use this program in our annual reports in order to go beyond just documenting statistics to making them into informative tables. But we do not manipulate or control the information, or use it to serve the interest of certain groups.

Considering the observatory's outspoken opinions and strong critical reports, have you or any of your staff received threats?

Our aim from the beginning was to create



Mohammed A. Al-Maqtari

a human rights institution to support the democratic transition, build a state of law through awareness, defend the rights of the people and expose violations in an authentic and credible way. I don't know of anyone who would openly appose to that. I have neither personally received direct or indirect threats not heard of any from my colleagues or staff members.

Our work aims at drawing the attention of the public and leadership regarding legislative problems. We analyze and identify issues in the institutional infrastructure and look at what can be done to create a fair judiciary system. Therefore, we work with all parties, including state institutions and are in direct communication with offices of the government on regular basis. They know what we are doing and we inform them of our findings. And although we don't agree most of the time, at least they know we are credible and have the best interest of the country in our hearts. Perhaps this is why we have been quite successful, and still going strong.

Do you think Yemen's civil society is ready to take up the role that you just mentioned?

Let us consider it this way, there is no

other alternative. The state is always worried about civil society organizations because they challenge official state reports. In other words, our role as civil society is to provide another point of view to what the state is reporting.

Yemen's civil society needs strengthening, and its capacity needs to be built. More importantly, it needs to have confidence that it can create change and derive its strength from the people's best interest.

We need to know that we are strong enough to question any entity does not match the country's interest. There are issues in the country's strategies that we know of because of our work but the people do not.

For example, we know that the state will lift the fuel tax subsidies in 2010, and there will also be an increase in sales tax by 10 percent. There will be a reduction in government employee wages by .6 percent of the GDP. This year, the oil revenue will shrink by 30 percent, and by 2015, Yemen will start importing oil. In 2018 Yemen will stop oil production all together.

It is our responsibility as civil society to make this information public and back it up with analysis and background information.



INSTRUMENT TECHNICIAN Position # 0193 @ CPF/Terminal

Basic Function:

Provides a combined instrument maintenance service on all Instrumentation equipment; includes but is not limited to electronic, PLCs, data acquisition,



hydraulic, pneumatic and mechanical systems. Encompasses instrument fitting, fault finding, troubleshooting and diagnostics on all instrument based systems, repair of business machines and fire protection systems and providing on-the-job training to less skilled technicians and trainees

Job Duties:

- a. Installs, repairs, calibrate, troubleshoot and maintain all instrument control systems in the plant and field facilities. Covers control valves, electronic pneumatic transmitters, electronic flow measuring devices, electronic and pneumatic pressure controlling devices, chemical injection facilities from small to medium size pumps, and PLC/data acquisition equipment.
- b. Provides on-the-job training to instrument technician trainees in any of the areas covered in (a) above.
- c. Troubleshoots and repairs other equipment such as office equipment, fire & gas detection systems, etc. within the scope of skill and training.
- d. Carries out other similar or related duties and preventative maintenance work as deemed necessary to support the Plant and Field activities.

Minimum Requirements:

- a) Completion of secondary education (12 years) followed by at least 2 years' fulltime formal training in Instrumentation and 6 years experience related to the Instrumentation trade.
- b) Good knowledge of English, good computer skills with familiarity with Microsoft Word & Excel.
- c) Valid Yemen driving license.

To Apply for this Job please apply to: recruiting _yemsana@nexeninc.com

Applications should be submitted NO later than July 20th, 2009. Faxed

applications will not be considered.

Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

Ken worth Picker truck and trailer up to 10 tons lifting capacity, and forklifts. Ensures their safe and reliable operation. Provides on-the-job instruction to trainees.

Job Duties:

- a. Loads and lifts items of equipment in a safe and efficient manner. Includes lifting generators, power transformers, piping materials, etc. and transferring warehouse materials and mechanical equipment to various locations; up to 7 tons with the picker, up to 50 tons with crane. Operates equipment in a safe and efficient manner.
- b. Carries out daily checks and minor maintenance work on heavy equipment. Includes inspecting wire rope, lubricating, inspecting and lubricating sheaves and hoists, checking tire pressures, testing safety overloads, inspecting for hydraulic leaks, checking engine oil levels and brakes, etc.
- c. Carries out other similar or related duties such as instructing trainees in loading, operating and carrying out minor maintenance work.

Minimum Requirements:

- a. Completion of secondary education (12 years) followed by 2 years fulltime formal training in mechanical trades and 6 years of related experience as a HEO.
- b. Fair knowledge of English.
- c. Valid heavy equipment operator certificate or license.
- d. Valid Yemen driving license.
- To Apply for this job please apply to: recruiting _yemsana@nexeninc.com
- Applications <u>should be submitted</u> NO later than <u>July 20th, 2009</u>. Faxed applications will not be considered.
- Only short listed candidates will be contacted.



The Middle East conflict in the schools The history of the others

In a jointly written history textbook, Israelis and Palestinians attempt to understand 60 years of hostility. Arnfrid Schenk reports on a unique project of reconciliation.

ami Adwan has a story to tell that has a surprising twist. It is his own story. The short version goes like this:

Born in 1954 in a village near Hebron on the West Bank, he spends his childhood under Israeli occupation. He works hard and makes it into the university in Jordan. For a long time he thinks of the Israelis the same way everyone in Palestine thinks of them: "They are the reason for all my misery, for all my suffering." Adwan is still thinking this way when he goes to the USA to study education – he avoids lectures and seminars where he knows he will encounter Jewish students.

At that point, he has never spoken to an Israeli; he doesn't know them at all as civilians, but only as soldiers at the checkpoints. He doesn't want to know them.

A few years later, Adwan is codirector of an Israeli-Palestinian peace research institute and is working together with Jewish teachers and historians on writing an Israeli-Palestinian history book on the Middle East conflict. He is one of the people we like to call a bridgebuilder. But how did he get there?

Unexpected helpfulness of an Israeli

Sami Adwan, professor of education at the University of Bethlehem, continues recounting his story,

and supporting the book project from the start. He is tired, but there is still so much to tell.

He returned from the USA in the late 1980s, taught at Hebron University, became a member of Fatah and was swiftly arrested by the Israelis. At that time, Fatah was still considered a terrorist organisation. During his first week in prison, he didn't know what he was charged with. His image of the enemy was confirmed.

But then the helpfulness of an Israeli made Adwan think again.

Something happened that didn't jibe with his worldview. He overheard two Israeli soldiers getting into an argument over him. It was about a document that Adwan was supposed to sign. We can't force him to sign something he can't read, said the one. Adwan understood just enough Hebrew to realise that a Jew was standing up for his rights, for the rights of a Palestinian. Later he saw an Israeli soldier bringing the prisoners water, although his superior had forbidden it.

A time when peace seemed possible "These experiences changed my life." It became clear to him that not everyone was the same. He wanted to find out more about the Israelis. He wanted to talk to them. When after six months Sami Adwan was released from prison, in 1993, he did everything he could to launch a



The year 1948 means for the Israelis the war of independence and the founding of their state, but for the Palestinians a year of catastrophe, the nakba, or expulsion from their homeland

from Ben Gurion University. Bar-On had caused a worldwide sensation by setting up meetings between Holocaust victims and children of Nazi criminals. Together, Bar-On and Adwan founded the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME) and began work on their concept for Israeli-Palestinian history an textbook.

"What is taught in the schools can either foment conflict or contribute to finding a solution", says Adwan. The hope is that this history book will help to break down prejudices on both sides.

Bar-On and Adwan were not so presumptuous as to try to find a mutual interpretation of the Middle East conflict. They merely wanted to place the Palestinian point of view next to that of Israel This would help to open the eyes of the other side. The texts were to be written not only by scholars, but also by teachers – after all, they are the ones who have to present the material to the pupils.

Palestinian history. This includes for example the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which promised the Jews their own nation, the period of uprisings against the occupiers known as the Intifada, and the wars of 1948 and 1967.

The facts are the same, but there are two ways of looking at them. The year 1948 for example means for the Israelis the war of independence and the founding of their state, but for the Palestinians a year of catastrophe, the nakba, or expulsion from their homeland.

It was not difficult to agree on the dates, but it was hard to accept the others' interpretation of them. "One person's terrorist is another person's hero", comments Adwan. Dan Bar-On, who died in autumn 2008, was interested in the "disarming of Georg Eckert Institute in Braunschweig finally offered neutral ground on which the Palestinian and Israeli teachers and scholars could regularly meet for seminars stretching over several days.

Before work on the content began, the teachers spoke with each other about their everyday lives. Some told of their fear of suicide attacks, others about the humiliations of occupation.

Emotional strain

What motivated the teachers to take part in the project? For example, Maysoon Husseini al Tal, who wears



Like the teacher whose blind cousin earns his living with a kiosk. Israeli soldiers bulldozed the kiosk into the ground. The teacher said: "I can't work with you all anymore; otherwise I won't be able to look him in the eye." Another reports that one of his pupils was shot.

During the latest war in Gaza people on both sides were speechless. All work was suspended, meetings cancelled and conferences postponed. In the meantime, the participants have pulled themselves together again.

A more cautious assessment of the "others"

And what about the pupils? Maysoon Husseini and Yiftach Ron have for the most part had good experiences in their classrooms. Others report that the pupils in Israel often find the Palestinian interpretation of history in the book too emotional, verging on propaganda. Many Palestinian pupils say that, even if they do develop more understanding for the Israeli view of history, it will hardly change anything about their situation.

The evaluation is still in progress, and at the end of July the project is to be presented at an international conference. Adwan remarks that most of the pupils are now less sweeping in their judgements, more cautious in their assessments of the "others". It's a start. "All we can do is hope", he says.

Setting a precedent

Until there is a political solution to the conflict, the project will not be able to emerge from its niche. But the mere fact that the joint project was able to get underway and be successfully concluded, despite escalations in the conflict, is already a promising sign. And it's setting a precedent: Skopje University in Macedonia has published an Albanian-Macedonian history book based on the same principle.

Asked if he thinks the history



LEARNING EACH OTHER'S HISTORICAL NARRATIVE:



Palestinians and Israelis

Peace Research Institute in the Middle East

The Georg Eckert Institute in Germany offered neutral ground on which the Palestinian and Israeli teachers and scholars could regularly meet for seminars

talking fast now. It is a late spring evening in Braunschweig, Germany, and he has had a long day at a conference at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research, which has been advising

dialogue. The Oslo talks between Israel and the Palestinians had begun; it was a time when peace seemed possible.

He met with Israeli academics, got to know the psychologist Dan Bar-On



The "disarming of history": Learning each other's historical narrative is the first Israeli-Palestinian history book on the Middle East conflict

Two ways of looking at the facts

The three volumes now look like this: on the left side is the Israeli view of things and on the right side the Palestinian standpoint. In the middle there is space for notes, room for the pupils' own thoughts. This is how the book treats 20th-century Israelihistory".

The fact that this disarming must begin at school is something Adwan is more convinced of than ever after his analyses of Palestinian and Israeli history textbooks. He notes that:

"There is no acknowledgement in these books of what the others have suffered. No recognition of their rights, their history, their culture. The Holocaust hardly appears at all in the Palestinian books, while the Israelis ignore the expulsion of the Palestinians. In the maps the cities and villages of the other side are nowhere to be seen." No one knows a white headscarf with black anything about the others. "Schooling is therefore part of the problem", says Adwan, "and not part of the solution."

Neutral ground in Germany

"Learning each other's historical narrative": this is the title of the new textbook, designed for upper school pupils. A dozen teachers in Israel and a dozen more on the West Bank are now working with the texts at selected schools. But not during regular classroom instruction, as the history book is not part of the official curricula. The respective ministries ignore it but tolerate it. The project is being funded by American foundations, the EU, the German Foreign Office and others.

It wasn't easy to arrange meetings between the writers – one never knew if all participants would make it Together, Sami Adwan (left) and Dan Bar-On founded the 'Peace Research Institute in the Middle East' and began work on their concept for an Israeli-Palestinian history textbook

ornaments. She teaches history at a girls' school in East Jerusalem. When a colleague asked her if she would like to work on the project, she realised that she had never before spoken with an Israeli.

She hesitated for a long time, she says. Her feelings told her no, you can't do it. But her head said: this is one way to speak with the Israelis, to set something in motion, to change things - go ahead and do it. She joined in, although her husband has a hard time accepting it.

Yiftach Ron, who teaches at an Israeli school, says he has a problem with how Israeli society treats Palestinians. He thought that working on the project was the best way for him to solve this problem. Some of the Palestinian teachers received threats from parents when they found out what their children were learning through the checkpoints in time. The at school. Friendships have grown textbook will ever be part of the regular curriculum, Eyal Naveh, history professor at the University of Tel Aviv, replies: "Not in my lifetime." But that doesn't stop him from pushing for it to happen.

How long the road ahead might still be is demonstrated by the difficulties encountered in trying to find the right location for the final project conference. Some of the people interested in the book were nonetheless not prepared to sit in the same room with Palestinians, respectively with Israelis, Adwan remarks.

And many would perhaps not be able to pass the checkpoints in time. The organisers therefore decided that the conference should be held simultaneously in two places: Ramallah and Tel Aviv, connected by means of videoconferencing.

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Opinion

TEMEN

Words of Wisdom



have lost control, and even a sense of direction. They drift along with the current. They feel uncomfortable with the flow as they believe there is no one in charge. This is because the Yemeni individual is used to an autocratic

The problem is the helplessnes people feel. Most people feel they

system in which things are predetermined and people are given exact roles to play. Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, (1951 - 1999)

Founder of Yemen Times



We've won the battle, but what about the war?

he Yemeni Parliament is still in chaos today with various political groups and sector-driven committees fighting each other, rather than fighting together for the best interest of their people. One look at any live session will show how fragmented and disoriented most of the members of parliament are.

Not only are relevant committees supposedly a reference for the whole parliament on particular issues- very ignorant, but they are also very disinterested. I refer to vital legislation, agriculture, industry and media committees, for example. Only a few members are active and know what they are doing, whereas the rest mostly constitute a barrier to passing great proposals.

The example I have in mind is the case that Yemen Times has lobbying furiously on behalf of for over a year: early or premature marriage. When eventually the age of 17 was set as the minimum age for marriage, some members challenged this law and called for further discussions.

Asking MPs about whether the law today is valid or not, I never receive a straightforward answer.

The law seems to be valid since no alternate law was established after it, but also not valid because there are members of the parliament who have rejected it.

In essence, the law was passed by a majority of parliamentarians present, yet the process was apparently not accredited because it was not announced that the parliament would be voting on that particular law at that time. And so on goes the debate.

When the next vote will happen we don't know.

The parliament's leadership does not apparently include it in its coming agenda, because "the timing is not suitable." Why is the timing not suitable? I don't know. And I don't know when it will be. As it is, members of parliament voted on the law setting the minimum age for marriage to 17 on Feb. 10, 2009, before political parties agreed on postponing parliamentary elections on Feb. 19, 2009.

By: Fred Halliday.

emen is in the news, and for all the wrong reasons. A spate of kidnappings and killings of foreign tourists and aid workers in the first months of 2009 has

highlighted the dangers of a country whose people are renowned for their hospitality. The murder of a group of foreigners, including two German nurses and a South Korean teacher, in the northeast of the country in mid-June 2009 is but one example of a chain of events designed to foment discord, hatred and alienation from this beautiful land. But such incidents, heartbreaking as they are for the families and friends of those affected, are also symptoms of a deeper disorder in

Yemen's polity and society. Yemen is often the source of exotic or disconcerting news, but current trends are especially worrying. The news is bad for the stability and security of the region in which Yemen is located; for the broader regional conflict between radical-terroristic Islamism and its opponents; and, most of all, for the approximately 20 million long-suffering people of the country itself.

At a time when Yemen's oil revenues, never large (at most 400,000 barrels a day), have started to decline, when tourism has all but come to a halt, and when a zone of insecurity reigns in the waters of Aden and in neighbouring Somalia, mass protests have broken out in the southern part of the country. In the port of Aden demonstrators have been killed, newspaper offices occupied by the army and closed. In the far north of the country, around Sada, a tribal insurrection, led by elements of the al-Huthi family, continues. In a country where political statements are usually chloroformed in formal terminology, a tone of palpable alarm can be heard.

The crisis

The presidential adviser and former leader of the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (Flosy), the pro-Egyptian nationalist movement1960s; years of guerrilla war against the British in the south; and two wars between independent Yemeni states and the inter-Yemeni civil war of 1994. against the British in Aden, Mohammad Basendwah, has declared that the country is now in the most serious crisis he has ever seen. This is a serious warning to the political leaders of Yemen and to their opponents - coming as it does, from a man who has seen a protracted war in the north in the

Meanwhile Sheikh Hamad al-Ahmar, son of the once powerful tribal leader Abdullah al-Ahmar (who, as I learned when I visited him in 1992, had a house in Sana'a that included a private jail in the basement) has called on behalf of the united opposition forces for a change of policy and recognition of the seriousness of the situation. Among his associates are the Yemeni Socialist Party, former rulers of the months later, with the invasion of pro-Soviet south. Al-Ahmar and others Kuwait in August 1990. This provoked

are now calling for the return from exile of YSP leaders who fled the country after the north-south civil war of 1994, in which the north vanquished the south. Chief among these is Ali al-Bid, former secretary-general of the YSP, who has lived, almost incommunicado, in Muscat since that time. The roots of this crisis lie in the

Yemen: Travails of unity

flawed unification of two separate Yemeni states in May 1990, of what were formerly the Yemeni Arabic Republic in the north, and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), in the south. No unification is easy - as the histories of Germany, Italy and the United States remind us - but this one was exceptionally badly planned and executed.

No one who knew Yemen in the 1970s and 1980s, as I did, could doubt the deep commitment to unity which nearly all Yemenis, ordinary people and intellectuals alike, felt (see Arabia without Sultans [Penguin, 1974]. The sense of historic and cultural unity, fragmented in the early 18th century, was compounded by a belief that, once united, the Yemenis would be able to face up to their greatest enemies, the Saudis, and reclaim their rightful place as, with Egypt, the most ancient of Arab lands.

The tunnel

There were two decades of rivalry between the two Yemeni regimes, with their respective capitals in Sana'a and Aden. These included two wars in which one state tried by force to impose their own conception of "unity" on the other - the north invading the south in 1972, with support from Libya and Saudi Arabia; the south invading the north in 1979. Then, in the late 1980s, a gradual rapprochement took place. A number of factors - the lessening of Soviet support to the south under Mikhail Gorbachev, the exhaustion of the PDRY's experiment in Soviet-style socialism, and the prospect of oil revenues that would boost the economy of both - led the two presidents (Ali Abdullah al-Saleh and Ali al-Bid) to commit to unity in May 1990.

The unification process was flawed from the start. The decision to go for unity, and within a matter of months, was taken spontaneously by the two leaders (it is said) while they were being driven through a tunnel in Aden the whole thing without the consent of many of their advisers or any serious thought to implementation. External factors may also have played a part. The respective sides received a green light from Riyadh and Washington (for Sana'a) and Moscow (for Aden), and the two leaders were also greatly encouraged by Iraq; Saddam Husssein, at that time recovering from the war with Iran which ended in August 1988, and looking to build a broad anti-Saudi and anti-Egyptian alliance provided political and (perhaps) some financial support to the two leaderships.

The full import of the Iraqi support for a united - and, implicitly, anti-Saudi Yemen - only became clear some

a major crisis for Yemen: hundreds of thousands of Yemenis were summarily expelled by Saudi Arabia, which (like Washington) cut off all aid to Ali Abdullah Saleh. Yemen was also, to its misfortune, in the international limelight since at the time it held a seat on the United Nations Security Council: in the figure of its long-standing representative, Abdullah al-Ashtal, it abstained in the crucial vote on armed action against Iraq, and in so doing incurred the wrath of the United States (see Paul Dresch, A History of Modern Yemen [Cambridge University Press, 2001]).

The spiral

The years that followed only served further to sour the initial and genuine popular enthusiasm of May 1990. The northern elite around Ali Abdullah Saleh saw unification as an opportunity to take hold of the resources of the south - oil revenues, British colonial villas in Aden, local trade. The negotiated merger of 1990 soon gave way to conflict, and in May 1994 the president launched a war to destroy the military and political presence of the YSP in the south. The "seventy-day war" ended with the occupation and pillage of Aden in July 1994, as the northern army used its superior weapons and numbers, the benefit of surprise and (not least) the support of Islamist militia forces linked to al-Qaida to win a decisive victory.

The story since then has been one of increased tension and mutual resentment between the two former states. Some measures have been taken to disguise this process: a few members of the southern political and military leadership were incorporate into the northern state; periodic, but in effect meaningless, elections were held for parliament and the presidency; gestures of reconciliation and political reform were made to assuage credulous western governments and NGOs. In the south, however, these meant little: southerners came increasingly to resent northern intrusion, referring to northerners as atrak (Turks), a reference to the Ottoman occupation of the 19th century, and as dahbashah (the name of a criminal family in a TV series).

Yemeni regime spokesmen are these days blaming foreigners and enemies of Yemen for the crisis. But the main responsibility for this conflict - and for the squandering of what was, in its inception, an important and positive unificatory initative - must lie with President Ali Abdullah Saleh, his close associates and his relatives. "Abu Ahmad", the architect of Yemeni unity, has also been the person who has done more than anyone else to destroy it.

In an article for openDemocracy published to mark the inauguration of Barack Obama, I sketched six countries in the middle east where he might face difficulties in the months ahead (see ""The greater middle east: Obama's six problems", 21 January 2009). The article concluded:

"The sixth state is one often pushed nervously to the periphery of vision, namely Yemen. The economic and political situation of a people that composes half of the whole population of the Arabian peninsula - and who are proud to call themselves al 'arab al asliin (the 'original' or 'true' Arabs) - is deterioriating. The grip of their president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, is weakening as oil revenues diminish and violence and discontent spread across the land.

COMMON SENSE

An abominable security situation

o person in his right mind would like to see things return to the way they were back in the "Good old days" when sending the Ükfa, or special security police of the Imam to bring any disobedient citizen to justice was enough to bring anyone to their sweat. However, it goes without saying that the current security situation in Yemen certainly is at best not applaudable and in fact almost unbe-



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

lievable. Surely, one can not help but wonder if the ineffectiveness of our highly elaborate and most of all expensive security budgets is still a poor match when compared to the ükfas of the Imam, who singlehandedly were able to drag any violator of public or political perpetrations back to the Court of the Imam without fail, or obstruction. The latter were armed only with a rifle and the uncontested authority of the Imam Ahmed, not to mention the charisma, which the Imam projected among his small security apparatus and the general subjects that pledged allegiance to the "crown" almost gladly, since they were assured the safety of adherence to law and the comfort of the prevalence of stable order throughout the land (Qadhi Abdullah Al-Shamahy, the late famous chronicler and wellknown patriot, made note of this in many public interviews and in his historical writings).

Even the Imam's own troops could not help but fall prey to this feeling of general public acknowledgment of the Imam's ability to insure the safety and will being of his subjects. Muhsin Al-'Ainy is a former Prime Minister of Yemen on several occasions and is also a well known patriot of prominent standing among the revolutionary heroes, whose role in the struggle against the archaic monarchy of the Hamid Al-Din dynasty is without any doubt. The latter could not help but categorically admit in his memoirs, "Fifty Years UnderShifting Sands " that the attempted coup of 1955 against the Imam was not really inspired by a genuine desire to bring down the monarchy (two of the Imam's brothers were hurriedly recruited to join in the coup as a frantic effort to give the coup some hopeful public support). He relates that the coup actually began when some of the troops of the Imam (who then had already made Ta'ez the de facto capital of Yemen, as he made it his permanent abode) went around annoying some of the civilian residents of the Houban area of Ta'ez, who threatened to go and complain to the Imam of this annoyance. The fear of the Imam amongst the troops inspired them to seek the leadership of Ahmed Al-Thulaya to lead them to a coup against the Imam before the latter has a chance to take lawful action against the troops, who were behind the complaints echoed by the people of the Houban area. It goes without saying that the coup of 1955 was quickly and singlehandedly overturned by the Imam Ahmed in the matter of days and his Imamate was guaranteed for another seven years. His 2 brothers were subject to the same repressive justice that was meted out to the other attempted coup leaders, even to the astonishment of the Imam's son and then aspiring Crown Prince Mohammed Al-Badr (who became Imam for just 1 week after his father's death in September 1962). When the latter asked the late Yemeni literary personality, Ahmed Al-Shami how could his father have the nerve to execute his two brothers, the latter answered: "You should know your father by now. Would he accept anyone saying that he did not mete out the justice of law as expected of an Imam? No, your father insisted that people recognize him for the application of law against all, notwithstanding how close they were to him." The latter citation can also be found in the Memoirs of Ahmed Al-Shami "The Years of Turmoil".

The point to be made from all this is to show that the people of Yemen indeed have the right to see the equal application of law on all citizens, not to mention the accountability of all public officials who failed to abide by the most basic of public service ordnances and ethics.

The law was only challenged after the elections' postponement. So what does this mean?

Could it mean that some parties compromised this law for the sake of political interest? Does it mean we have lost the parliamentarians who voted for a law that prevents child marriage? Does it mean that, despite becoming an issue of local and international importance with the world knowing about our Nujood, it simply dies on the doorsteps of the parliament?

What should we do next? How can we further push this issue and win the war, not only a small battle?

Nadia Al-Sakkaf



Barack Obama - and his secretary of state, Hillary Clinton - may at present think that they have no reason to think about Yemen. But it has held surprises before: for its Arab neighbours, for America, and for the world. It may well do again."

Indeed, it has. Yemen is in trouble, and needs the world's constructive and engaged attention as never before.

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While taking note of the above, one should not be surprised at the apparent lack of disrespect at the almost total disregard for the most basic standards of public service, which one sees by the most senior of public officials and military brass and thus it is easy to understand that in such a venue, all kinds of lawlessness would be allowed to characterize this once peaceful land under the most despotic of regimes (the Imamic regime and the colonial rule of Aden and the former South Arabian Protectorates). No one is calling for the return of Imamic rule, but surely the people of Yemen cannot be expected to stand in abeyance while they see the application of Law nowhere near the senior officials, who are getting away with the most heinous of public crimes and literally getting away with murder, as they placate the foreign forces that are now more than beginning to have a dominating effect on directing the political directions the country proceeds on, not to mention their refusal to leave the Treasury and public property intact. The reliance on the motto that the "public be damned" should never be expected to guarantee the longevity of any regime.

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/

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6 July, 2009





Al-Sahwa.net, affiliated with the Islah Party Wednesday, July 1, 2009

Top story

- JMP Spokesman: Arrangements for July 7 inflame sedition

Spokesman for Joint Meeting Parties Naif Al-Qanis said that the ruling party drives Yemen into disaster as it prepares to mark July 7, the day of defeating the South forces in 1994, the website reported.

"The ruling General People Congress's announcement of arranging mass rallies on 7 July provokes internal strife and devotes the perceptions of totalitarianism and arrogance of the winner, as well as highlights the fact that there was a coup on the unification project in 1994" Al-Oanis stated.

"This act hinders any dialogue between the opposition and the ruling party, and overturns the agreement recently signed between the two sides", he added.

Al-Qanis said that Yemeni authorities

excite such acts to impede the agreement signed between the ruling party and the opposition on April Ali Al-Sabri, a JMP senior leader,

expressed sorrow as the authorities insist to not admit its failure and continue pursuing wrong polices.

He wondered that the unification project was defeated on July 7, and the authorities want this occasion to be a national day.

The opposition alliance held the authorities responsible for turmoil erupted on Wednesday in Al-Dhala province in which several citizens were injured and dozens were arrested.

JMP demanded to swiftly release the detainees, expressing sympathy with Aljazeera's team in Yemen which was violated in al-Dhala and Abyan provinces.

Head of the Supreme Council of JMP Hasan Zaid denounced arresting 65 students and taking them from their examinations centers. He expressed JMP's full solidarity and support for all people arrested over the Southern Mobility.

Expressing sorrow for the state's failure to provide food and medicine for citizens, Zaid denounced state's resorting to suppression to silence citizens demanding equal citizenship and other basic rights

Zaid also called for more demonstrations and sit-ins in all Northern provinces to make people in South Yemen know that it is not only them who suffer but all citizens of Yemen.

From his side, Secretary General of Popular Forces Union Party Mohammed Al-Mutawkel asked for preventing wrongdoings and noted this act will help safeguard the unity.

Al-Mutawek pointed out that we cannot safeguard Yemen's unity and stability once we do not work to stop wrongdoings that target citizens all over Yemen.

Other JMP leaders and members called the authorities in Sana'a to give up their suppressive measures and to work for resolving the problems in South Yemen, hinting this could be the first step towards finding tangible solutions to Yemen's existing problems.



Almotamar.net, affiliated with General People's Congress (ruling party) Thursday, July 2, 2009

Top Story

Al-Shami criticizes JMP stance about pro-unity marches

Head of GPC Information Sector Tareq Al-Shami criticized what he described as the crooked logic of JMP's recent stance via its spokesman objecting to the expected festival on the occasion of 7 July, the website reported.

Al-Shami wondered about the JMP logic of considering the peaceful marches expressing adherence to the unity and rejecting secessionist voices as "arousing internal sedition", whereas it gives legality to sabotage acts violating the law such as blocking roads, spreading sense of hatred, provoking secessionist and regionalist tendencies and disturbing public peace in society as well as destabilizing security and targeting armed forces and security personnel.

Al-Shami described that as crooked logic indicating political bankruptcy and proving that the JMP has changed into a sound phenomenon and its main concern is to issue statements and find excuses for whatever targets the homeland, its unity, security and stability.

He has repeated that so far the JMP has not taken a decisive stance refusing and condemning secessionist calls and attempts of instigating sedition. He point-

ed out that JMP works on fabricating justifications to whatever violates the Constitution and other state laws.

The GPC official continued that the homeland was the victor in the war of 1994 summer by preserving the unity and democracy and defeating the secessionist project. All people of Yemen had stood up against the conspiracy, Al-Shami said. It is the right of the people to celebrate the anniversary of defeating that secessionist project and remind of each other of the sacrifices they offered for protecting the unity and democracy.

From his side. Assistant Secretary General of GPC Ahmed Ubeid Bin Daghr stated that Yemen, like any other country, is experiencing a state of unprecedented political action, highlighting interaction among different forces and groups.

In an interview with the Lebanese Al-Mustaqbal newspaper published Monday Bin Daghr pointed out that Yemen is not aside from what is occurring in the region, along with its preservation of its special characteristic in the political life. He said there are no threats posed to Yemen but what is going on in the country is in fact a political action the Yemenis have been accustomed to since the establishment of the unity state in 1990.

Bin Daghr added that what is happen-

ing in Saada and in the southern governorates of Yemen bears no great dangers but there are political ramifications, the larger portion of them are the result of economic difficulties as the country is passing through a transitional stage.

He said "I am not afraid about the unity but rather I do fear that we would jostle in politics and not to contest in solving the economic and social problems in the country. I am afraid of being dragged by the political conflicts in a democratic country to direr situations.

The ruling party member indicated that there are normal problems in some areas of the country, classified as political ramifications, however, the opposition parties exaggerate and magnify them by claiming that there is a crisis in Yemen. There are problems in some districts of Sana'a, Saada and some districts of the southern and eastern governorates but they have not escalated to the level of a crisis and would not reach that level absolutely, he added.

He affirmed that those who take to the streets raising slogans of independence and restoration of the south state do not represent real people of the south.

He commented that there are unprecedented exaggerations by some media outlets with the intention of hurting unity and stability of Yemen.

Iran – time to pull back

By: Dr. Terry Lacey

here are two kinds of history. The history that's gets done to you. And the history you do to other people. If you are Iranian your view of history may depend on what has just happened to you in the events following the June 12th presidential elections.

Iranian election commission figures say Mr. Ahmedinejad won about 62 percent of the vote contrasted to nearly 34 percent for his closest competitor Mir Hossein Mousavi.

Many liberal and urban Iranians cannot believe these results because they saw pre-polls that showed much lower support for Ahmadinejad, amidst high inflation and high unemployment.

The US and Western banking and financial blockade of Iran is having an increasing effect with youth unemployment reportedly at 22 percent and inflation at least at 19 percent.

The country suffers from rural neofeudalism, urban monopolies and widespread corruption. More than 9 million Iranians out of 70 million depend on government social security, even though GDP per capital is about \$11,250 (by consumption) and \$4,732 (nominal).

But the top 10 percent are making a fortune from the corrupt deals and import-export practices that always do well in a siege economy.

Final results from Iran's presidential election were announced by Interior Minister Sadeq Mahsouli, Saturday, who proclaimed incumbent President

Mahmoud Ahmedinejad the victor with 62.6 percent of the vote. (Voice of America).

These results were similar to the much quoted pre-election telephone poll by Ken Ballen and Patrick Doherty auoted in the Washington Post (15.06.09) that Ahmadinejad led by a 2 to 1 margin.

VOA also quoted a Tehran resident who expressed astonishment at the results of the election, saying he was sure that Mr. Mousavi had won, "80-90 percent of Tehrani voters were in favor of Mousavi," he said, but now, he said, he was shocked at the official results.

But the supporters of Ahmadinejad and the Iranian Islamic revolution are equally utterly convinced that they won a resounding victory.

Abbas Barzegar writing in the UK

Guardian (13 and 15.06.09) helped explain that on the face of it Iran has become two nations with two different

perceptions of reality. One nation is poor, religiously pious, less educated, rural or in poorer areas of cities, and in Tehran on the south side. Barzegar explained they gained from the revolution, feel included in it, and remain convinced of its mixture of conservative theology and a degree of modernity. The other Iranian nation is middle class, educated, tired of a poorly run economy, the party line, the political exploitation of Islam and an overly strict enforcement of Islamic dress and behavior, compared to most Muslim countries. In Tehran they live

But it is not as simple as that. Iran cannot be reduced to black and white propositions. There are a lot more shades of grey.

Barzegar says he saw maybe 100,000 Mousavi supporters on the street during the election campaign, but he also saw 600,000 Ahmadinejad supporters trying to get to one enormous rally.

The protestors reportedly also got a million on the streets afterwards. To get a fair view of Iran we need more reporters who will report both set sets of facts and not half of them.

The reality is complex and there is no simple quick fix available.

Iran was severely divided politically before these presidential elections. The protests were backed by high political and clerical figures. The United Front backs the hard line but moderate Broad Front government supporters also seek a new foreign policy and internal reforms, along with opposition groups and independents.

The Ken Ballen and Patrick Doherty phone poll also indicated large majorities, including government supporters, wanted an opening to the West and political and economic reform.

The political reality is that Iran has to bargain with the West to end a Western financial and banking blockade.

Time for both sides to pull back, to try and command events, instead of the reverse.

Lacey is a development economist who writes from Jakarta on modernization in the Muslim world, investment and trade relations with the EU and Islamic banking.

What lies beneath the fear

By: Simon Lawson



people; he knows the common ground between the two outweighs their differences - but that the politicians have messed this up.

that B.I. she enjoyed dining with Arab

certainly not a British half Jewish non-Zionist like me.

All he knew of Jews was that Israel was the self-declared Jewish state that My Aunt Zelda in Tel Aviv emigrated occupied his country. Like his Israeli are kinda ignorant from England 30 years ago. She told me counterpart he was fearful of people he didn't know and just as ready for violent

A tale of two elections

By: Chris Patten

on the North side.

ndividual elections do not always enhance democracy – a useful reminder that the ballot box is only one part, albeit a central one, in any free, plural socithat may encourage this electoral response.

First, everywhere there is a sense of disgust at the way the recent boom seemed to privatize gains while the subsequent bust socialized losses. A few rich individuals appeared to gain and all

easy. There will be no such entity, because there is no European electorate; the electorate remains French, Belgian, Latvian, Greek, and so on. They all vote at the same time, for the same institution. But what does an Italian know - or care, for that matter – about British pol-

fear and fear breeds violence - so watch your ass."

This was the parting shot from a kindly truck driver as he dropped me in a small Texas town, when hitchhiking from Houston to Austin 25 years ago. It was amusing at the time but the phrase stuck. As I began to travel in countries that had been torn apart by violent conflict I realised how profound this stranger's advice to a stranger in a strange land really was.

Ignorance breeds fear and fear breeds violence - this is the first thought that came to me as I started to consider the impact of fear on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

I have made two working visits to Israel and the West Bank in recent years. to run production workshops for MAAN, a Palestinian television network. Through many conversations I had with Israelis and Palestinians the relationship between ignorance and fear was brought sharply into focus. I noticed a difference in attitudes to 'the other' expressed by both Palestinians and Israelis who had experienced adult life before the first Intifada and those who had been too young to remember much before then.

What was the difference? Most people over 40, had friends or business associates from the 'other side' before the Intifada. The very phrase -Before Intifada or B.I. - came to seem to me like a modern equivalent of BC and AD.

Sallah, a potter in Hebron, said that B.I. he had exported pots to Europe with his Israeli friend Shlomo. They dined in each other's houses and did business together for years. But now his only contact with his old friend in Israel was the occasional telephone call.

Sallah has no fear of Jews or Israelis as

friends in Arab restaurants – something unthinkable today. Zelda has no fear of Muslims or Palestinians, but she fears zealots of all persuasions, and for Israel if it stays on the same path.

These examples typify attitudes of the B.I. generation. They do not fear 'the other'; they know they share not just the common interests of humanity – but also much of their cultural heritage.

Contrast this with the ignorance of the Post Intifada – P.I. – generation. Young Israelis and Palestinians, through no fault of their own, have little knowledge of 'the other'. If they encounter each other at all it is across a check-point or during a military operation - situations that don't illuminate their common humanity, but re-enforce ignorance, prejudice and fear. There are hundreds of tourists at Mount Gerizim for the celebration of the Samaritan Passover, a joyous, largely family, affair. A group of young Israelis stands out amongst the mixed crowd. The young men are carrying machine guns. I ask one why he is carrying a weapon. "To protect ourselves", he says, "we have to drive through the West Bank to get here and you never know when these people (Palestinians) will attack us." He was fearful of people he didn't know or understand - his fear led him to carry a weapon and to be prepared for violence. Students at the Al Aqsa University in Ramallah are campaigning vigorously

for their student union elections. A Hamas supporter puts a garland around my neck declaring: "You love Hamas, you hate Israel, you hate Jews yes!" It wasn't a question. "Well no, actually" was my response, as I took the garland from around my neck. This young man had never met a Jew before, not one that wasn't armed anyway, and

retaliation.

With these perspectives people do indeed have reason to be afraid of each other, because, as we know all too well, violence is the day-to-day outcome of these fears.

What hope then of a solution? Not much - unless some real change is brought about.

Youth in Ramallah, Hebron, Tel Aviv or Jerusalem will never get to know 'the other' as individuals, and discover their commonalities, as long as the barriers between them continue to be built and reenforced.

I and some of my B.I. friends believe that the only viable solution will be one in which Muslims, Jews, Christians and others live together as equals, seeing each other as neighbours, acting on their commonalties and celebrating their differences. But one thing is certain, a sustainable solution necessitates continued efforts to dispel ignorance of 'the other' - like this news service.

Simon Lawson is the head of Nomad Productions (www.nomadproductions.co.uk) а London based Production Company that specialises in the use of media for education, development and peacebuilding. He is a former Country Director of Search for Common Ground in D.R. Congo. This article is part of a special series on the impact of fear on the Arab-Israeli conflict written for the Common Ground News Service (CGNews).

Source: Common Ground News Service (CGNews), 02 July 2009, www.commongroundnews.org. Copyright permission is granted for publication.

ety. Of course, there are also magnificent examples of elections that strengthen both the stability and the institutions of a community.

We have just witnessed an example of the second kind in India, the world's largest and greatest democracy, where 420 million voters there returned a Congress-led government with a solid majority. It was in many respects a personal triumph for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. His victory shows that it is possible to succeed in politics through decency, honesty, and high intelligence. Sonia Gandhi and her family should also take credit for putting at the forefront of their campaign a vision of an inclusive society, which rejects divisions on the basis of caste, ethnicity, language, and religion.

The result should help India to continue - not without occasional turbulence - its journey toward becoming a high-growth economy that raises the standard and quality of life for the poor.

I wish we could look forward in Europe to a similarly healthy democratic experience next month when voters throughout the European Union elect new members of the European Parliament. Since 1979, these MEPs have been elected direct rather than indirectly from national parliaments. But turnout for these elections has been falling in several countries. There is a danger that the number voting in June will be lower than ever before.

Moreover, in the current grim economic conditions across Europe, voters who do turn out are all too likely to take the opportunity to punish the major parties and vote for fringe and even extremist politicians.

There are particular circumstances

taxpayers to lose. This has spread a sense of unfairness.

Second, globalization has been the target for populist criticism. It is usually defined to mean everything we dislike - from changes to our traditional way of life to loss of jobs. It is a brave politician who points out how much liberalizing trade and opening up markets have increased our overall prosperity.

Third, in Britain at least, the entire political class has been discredited by a sleazy scandal about the expenses that many parliamentarians have paid themselves. Analogies with pigs, snouts, and troughs fill the pages of British newspapers.

But there is another reason for the lack of interest in the EU elections. The European Parliament has power, but it deals with issues that, while important to voters, do not top their list of concerns

The EU's member states retain power over the most sensitive political issues, including taxes, health, education, pensions, the labor market, and foreign policy. So the questions that dominate national campaigns have little impact on European elections.

The European Parliament deals with the important areas where individual countries have pooled their sovereignty, like trade, the creation of a pan-European market, and the biggest environmental issues. But these are not often the questions that trigger the most passionate interest.

In addition, the European Parliament's detachment from national political debates means that it has less political legitimacy than is desirable. Indeed, those who worry about the creation of a European superstate can rest

itics?

Look at our television programs. We know far more about Europe's football than we do about Europe's politics. "The beautiful game" brings people together more effectively and reliably than the European Parliament is able to

That is no criticism of those who work - often very hard - in the European Parliament. We have created a political body that has power to hold European institutions to account but has no obvious European electorate to which it can itself be held accountable.

A parliament without a people inevitably increases the sense of frustration that many European voters feel about the process of making Europewide policy choices in their name.

If the Lisbon Treaty is ratified later this year, one of the changes should result in national parliaments becoming more involved in European decisionmaking. But we need to look countryby-country at what else we can do to tie Europe's own parliament into national politics.

Unless we do that better, fewer people will vote for MEPs, more of them will be elected simply on a protest vote and represent Europe's murky extremes, and the whole practice and principle of European democracy will be discredited.

Chris Patten is a former EU Commissioner for External Relations, Chairman of the British Conservative Party, and was the last British Governor of Hong Kong. He is currently Chancellor of Oxford University and a member of the British House of Lords

Reportage



MTN Yemen Organizes The Third Group Wedding For 32 Employees



significant change has been introduced to the image of Commercial Organizations in our modern days. These Companies besides focusing on delivering services and generating profits, they tend to aim at making positive and effective contributions to their societies.

It is well known that one of the major obstacles that stand in the way of the young generation in Yemen is to start a family life. This obstacle is represented in the high cost of weddings. MTN Yemen, being one of the major telecommunication companies, in which a large number of young men and women are working, and being conscious of its obligations towards the society, has in an attempt to pave the way of its employees to start their family lives with the least burdens possible, organized an annual event in which a large number of its employees are given the opportunity to celebrate their wedding night with their family members, friends and colleagues in a festive large group wedding.



On June 26th the third Group Wedding was organized at one of the biggest halls in Sana'a. The event was attended by over four thousand invitees. A number of Government Officials attended the wedding.

Mr. Raed Ahmad, MTN Yemen Chief Executive Officer, headed the reception committee and in his speech at the event, paid tribute to all those who participated in making the event a success. He extended his congratulations to the Grooms and wished them happiness and prosperity. He also thanked all those who attended the event and encouraged all other companies working in Yemen, especially in the private sector, to organize similar events which would have an impact on the community as a whole."We encourage all bachelors to seek their happiness and welfare as they have now approached the beginning of their new lives with their partners, we will provide our support by all means available with regards to your marriage" said CEO of MTN Yemen.



Mr. Ali Abdelwareth, MTN Yemen Deputy Chief Executive Officer, directed his congratulations to the newlyweds and wished them a prosperous life with their partners. He also added: "Modern Administration calls for investing in human capital to achieve both success and profits." He also emphasized that MTN Yemen recognizes the importance of development of its employees through various effective training programs and sessions.

Mr. Mohammed Nasher, MTN General Manager of Human Resources, also addressed the importance of the issue. He added that MTN Yemen is making incessant efforts to become a leader in Modern Administration; this takes place through the partnership of the company with both its' employees and community.

In order to increase the level of happiness that winged the event MTN Yemen announced special gifts that will be awarded to all the 32 grooms, the gift included an amount of 100,000 YR directed towards the cost of marriage, in addition to the previous gift that was presented to all the grooms at the amount of



100,000 YR.

A honeymoon cannot be complete without a romantic getaway location with a romantic environment; thus, the 32 grooms along with their brides received full accommodations, for the duration of 7 days, at Aden City on the South beach of Yemen.

The glamorous event featured all aspects of Yemeni culture through traditional music, dances and unified traditional Yemeni customs.











إلى الكابتن/ عبدالخالق القاضى رئيس مجلس إدارة الخطوط الجوية اليمنية وكافة موظفيها وإلى أسر الضحايا من طيارين وملاحين وركاب ممن قضوا نحبهم في الطائرة المنكوبة وإلى كافة أبناء شعبنا اليمني بهذا المصاب الجلل داعين لضحايا هذا الحادث الأليم بالرحمة ولأسرهم بالصبر والسلوان الأسيفون: الأستاذة/ نادية عبد العزيز السقاف م/ خير الدين النسور المدير العام التنفيذي الناشر/رئيس التحرير وجميع موظفي مؤسسة يمن تايمز

Culture

Gem science in Islamic and eastern traditions

Throughout history people have been fascinated by gems. The fields of Astrology, Numerology, Gemology, and other related sciences have been dedicated to solving the mysteries and conceptions behind gems and their relation to man's temperament. Dr. Shaikh Abbas Borhany attempts to study and analyze the science of gems in both the eastern tradition and in Islam.

the wearer.

the ruby is a very hard stone and will

not break even if hit with a hammer. A

flawless ruby is more valuable than a

diamond. Rubies are said to change

their color according to the health of

A ruby with the color of dark red

blood symbolizes courage and bravery.

Two centuries ago, Syedi Ibrahim

Saify, the celebrated brilliant scholar of

Muslim sciences, recorded a unique

narration regarding the birth of ruby.

He wrote, "When Adam was placed

down on earth from heaven, he arrived

at Serendip (Sri Lanka) and stayed at

mount Serendip. Due to the blessed

touch of his feet, the ruby was created."

fits of the ruby in his valuable work

'Marefat al Jawahir, writing that the

ruby "prevents blood loss, helps to stop

bleeding and cures blood and heart dis-

eases." According to the Prophet's fam-

wore rubies, which when touched by

bare skin provide energy and courage

in battle. Rubies are also rumored to

stimulate the libido and extend the time

of pleasure. This gem was additionally

thought to attract and maintain love and

The finest Sapphires are deep blue and

fall under the influence of the planet

Jupiter. The wearer of this gem seeks

Arab warriors who could afford to

ily, the ruby negates poisons.

friendship.

Sapphire

Saify also discussed numerous bene-

By: Dr. Shaikh Abbas Borhany For the Yemen Times

istorians of eastern and Islamic history indicate that the science of gems has been of interest to Muslim scholars and rulers since the very beginning. The fourth Caliph Ali bin Abi Taleb discussed fifteen minerals and gems in his writings and the ninth Fatemi Imam Ahmad Al-Mastur discussed more than 900 varieties of mineral in his research on the creation of minerals entitled 'Risalah Takwin al M'adin '

Dr. Robert Frost, a doctor of medicine in Basle, Switzerland, recently studied the scientific properties of gems which revealed their remedial properties in scientific terms. In his clinical research, Dr. Frost revealed that wearing the appropriate gems can reduce pain, prevent allergic reactions, improve coordination and even increase muscle strength.

Ruby

The beauty of the Ruby is discussed in the Qur'an as a blessing: "As though (in good looks) they are like rubies and coral." (Surah Al-Rahman 55, Ayah No. 58)

Rubies have been claimed to remove both poverty and tension. Imam Ahmad Al-Mastur explained that the ruby is the most superior gem, mentioning that



Amber Rosary of 46th Fatemi era during the rule of Mohammad

enlightenment via devotion and wisdom via harmony. Genuine sapphires are said to help ease heart and stomach problems. Under the influence of Jupiter, sapphires give abundance but also warn against self-indulgence.

Eastern literature holds that if a sapphire is put on the chest of someone who is feverish, by the order of Allah, the fever will decrease. Sapphires also turn poverty into prosperity in a short period of time for those who wear them. They additionally provide protection from the evil eye and from illegal sexual desire.

Silver

There are many metals available today such as gold, white-gold, platinum, titanium, steel, silver and many more, but only silver is recommended in Islam for men to wear. Scientific research has proven today that gold can absorb many women-specific diseases and helps them regain the loss of their blood in their menstrual cycle, a point that was mentioned by the Prophet nearly 1,430 years ago.

Wearing fake jewelry was strictly forbidden by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Once a person came up to the Prophet wearing a brass ring. The Prophet told him to take it off immediately, saying that it gave off a negative aura. The man removed the ring and the next time wore a ring of steel. He was given the same warning. The third time, the man wore a golden ring and was scolded yet again. He asked in exasperation what sort of ring he should wear. The answer was silver.

Imam Jafar Assadiq recorded that the Prophet used to wear a ring on his first finger and prohibited wearing a ring on the middle finger. A ring should be worn at the very end of the finger, where it joins with the palm. The ring should be fixed in such a manner that the lower portion of the gem should touch the finger. Rays can thus pass through the gem and enter into the body, giving off its properties and energy.

A suitable gem helps to make positive changes in a person's life and improves his or her situation. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) instructed never to wear a ring on the left hand. He also prohibited wearing a ring on the center finger or witness finger, further stating that a new gem should never be fixed in an old used ring.

Emerald

Emeralds have recently been grown in the laboratory and have begun to appear in the market, causing controversy. Scientifically speaking, manufactured emeralds are identical to natural ones in color, hardness and brilliance. Only a gemologist can distinguish between the two, but while the industry knows the difference, the consumer does not.

Islamic Tradition states that wearing an emerald ring will make a poor person rich, and whosoever wears a ring set with a yellow ruby will never become poor.

According to Ali bin Abi Talib, emeralds eradicate difficulties and nightmares. They also help protect against poison from animal bites and toxic food. Emeralds dispel anxiety and heal leprosy, increase the power of vision, calm tempers and heal disputes.

Pearl

Pearls are associated with purity and motherhood. Some Islamic scholars claim that wearing pearls generates magnetism and psychic development. Pearls are supposed to encourage a sense of responsibility and duty, yet it is warned that one should avoid wearing used pearls as they have the power to absorb the non-healthy influences of the previous wearer.

Coral

Many rosaries are made of coral. Coral is acclaimed to have several benefits,



Well crafted Fatemi era's gold ring inlaid with a blue turquoise.

the chief of which is that it protects against evils. Mothers in the Arabian Peninsula still today place corals on their children's necks to protect them. Those who wear coral send out vibrations of harmony, friendship, beauty and unity. A coral ring cures and protects against heat stroke, increases vision and is helpful for achieving success in whatever the wearer wishes.

Agate, Cornelian

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Historical scholar Hatim Mohiyuddinen wrote that wearing Ethiopian carnelian was fixed in the agate improves the riches of the wearer. The famous Greek philosopher Plato



A two hundred and twenty five years old Yemeni Aqiq necklace.

wrote that white agate helps to increase memory, yellow assists in solving problems and red agate promotes dignity. Jews, Christians and Muslims unani-

mously agree on the spiritual, medicinal and supernatural values and importance of this gem. Historian Syedi Ibrahim Saify wrote that agates have

selor, optimist and idealist. According to several accounts, in the presence of poison, it changes color. According to Islamic tradition, whoever wears a yellow sapphire will never become poor. In eastern literature, yellow sapphires create the power to inspire someone and strengthen self-expresmany benefits, such as that regular use sion. They also boost energy and intel-

ligence.

depression.

Yellow Sapphire

Medicinally, yellow sapphires help to cure skin diseases, particularly leprosy. They also cure blood diseases, particularly cancer, and cure piles of all kinds. Yellow sapphires increase body heat, help decrease the influence of poison, and dissolve kidney stones through urine. For pregnant women, when placed under the tongue, yellow sapphires help ease labor pains.

Mufaddal to wear a ring encrusted with

turquoise gem, saying, "It gives

strength to the eyes, joy to the heart,

improves eyesight and strengthens the

brain and heart." In other writings,

Assadiq remarked, "Those who wear a

ring of turquoise will never become

According to Islamic gemologists,

turquoise protects against magic, evil,

serpents and the evil eye. It also pro-

tects against a miserable death, espe-

cially death from calamities, and pro-

vides protection from assassination.

Turquoise improves vision and protects

against heart problems, malaria and

A true yellow sapphire is golden yellow

and comes under the influence of the

planet Jupiter in its capacity as coun-

dependent or see poverty."

Jasper

In the Bible, jasper was associated with Jerusalem. Some historical accounts provide information about the use of the jasper among Fatemi sovereigns. The famous historian Muqrezi in particular discussed the various items used by Bani Fatemah which were made of jasper, mostly large vessels for drinking.

used to wear it on the smallest finger of the right hand and wore it so that the gem faced towards the palm.

signet silver ring of the Prophet. He

controls anger and calms the temper.

He also wrote that agates provide pro-

tection from difficulties and trials, help

to lessen sorrow, and provide quick

boost one's charm and improve one's

sense of humor. They bring luck when

traveling, strengthen concentration, and

help to heal kidney, bladder and liver

According to Sahih Bukhari, an

Agates have been further reported to

relief from labor pain.

Amber

problems.

Amber is pleasing to the the sight, smell and touch and is light, warm and pleasant to hold in the hand. It was Queen Arwa Al-Suleyhi of Yemen who promoted the use of amber among the people of the Arabian Peninsula after examining its medicinal values. Credit for the usage of the amber rosary in Arabia largely goes to her.

Around the world, Muslims carry rosaries with them. Along with remembering Allah, rosaries are also used for curative purpose. A rosary is a wellliked gift from one Muslim to another, as this gift could be physically and spiritually uplifting. According to Biblical literature, Israeli prophets used it.

According to eastern literature if one uses a rosary made of amber, the user will remain safe from various diseases from the neck to the navel. It also protects from poisons. Wearing amber is especially beneficial in curing headaches, toothaches and rheumatism. More specifically, wearing an amber necklace is said to help goiter sufferers and also helps defend against magic. Amber helps save pregnant women from miscarriage and increases the prestige and honor of the user.

Turquoise

The best Turquoise is sky blue, but is inclined to fade.

According to Islamic tradition, Abi Abdillah Imam Jafar Assadiq advised

Jasper utensils were first crafted for the monarchs of Bani Abbas and later reached the Fatemi Treasury when Fatemi forces conquered Baghdad. Its medicinal value attracted the elites of society to use it regularly. Mughal Emperors in particular used jasper for its therapeutic values. It is noteworthy to mention that in the present era, heart patients use jasper as a cure for cardiac problems in Europe, especially in London.

According to eastern literature, if one regularly wears a jasper necklace, the wearer will be protected from brain diseases and disorders. Jasper also prevents heart problems, and if used after heart problems have already occurred, it helps control further cardiac troubles. Jasper can regulate high blood pressure and remove piles. It also helps to cure liver and stomach problems. Jasper can help reduce labor pains in pregnant women and is helpful during the delivery process.

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Yemeni traditions in treating eye problems

By: Ola Al-Shami

lders use potatoes and tomatoes to purify their eyes, women lick eyes that are hurt to cleanse them, and even needles might help in curing eye diseases. Or so some Yemeni traditions say.

People in the past suffered as today from eye diseases and complaints. According to eye doctors, dry eye and eye sensitivity are the most widely spread complaints from Yemenis all around the country.

"Nowadays we cannot say that people from a specific area are exposed to eye diseases any more than others. However, dry eye is widely spread among educated people because of the popular use of computers and the internet," said Dr. Walid Ibrahim Al-Gorafi, an ophthalmic surgeon.

Eye sensitivity is also spread due to air pollution from diesel combustion and dusty winds. However, farmers in particular face eye cancer because of poor farming practices. "Farmers overuse pesticides without recognizing the extent of the damage these pesticides cause," stated Al-Gorafi.

The main causes for blindness and eyesight weakness in Yemen were revealed by the first phase of the National Field Survey for Blindness and Causes of Low Vision in Yemen.

The main causes for blindness in Yemen are cataracts, trachoma,



cataract and glaucoma. Cataracts are the clouding of the lens of the eye which impedes the passage of light according to the World Health Organization (WHO). Although most cases of cataracts are related to aging, occasionally children are born with the condition. Cataracts can also develop due to eye injuries, inflammation, or as a result of other eye diseases.

Trachoma, which is the most common infectious cause of blindness, is caused by Chlamydia Trachoma. Children who have active stages of the disease are the main carriers of the disease while blindness, which occurs after repeated episodes of infection, women from Sana'a. However, there is

primarily affects adults. Trachoma is frequently passed from child to child and from child to mother, especially where there are shortages of water, numerous flies, and crowded living conditions.

Controversies over traditional eye treatment

There are a number of practices that ancient Yemenis used to cure some eye diseases. "When your eye hurts because there is something in it or the like, you can go to a women whose job is to use her tongue to clean your eye," said Om Abdulwase'e' Al-Qadi a local

no specific place to find this woman who licks eyes.

Vegetables also are of great importance, especially among welders who frequently suffer from eye pains. There is a traditional remedy by cutting a potato into pieces after which a welder will open his eyes and put each piece on one eye. "The potato should not be hot. Cold potato pieces purify eyes. Tomatoes can do the same to eyes by cutting it into pieces too," said Ibraheem Sanad, a welder.

Another tradition is that when any one feels an irritating sensation in his or her eye, he or she can go to a woman called Al-Monaqishah who checks his

or her eye using a needle. "When you feel that your eye hurts, you can go to Al-Monaqishah, as we call her. She has a needle and cotton or other soft material handy, and she starts checking your eyes to purify them by using a needle," said Nabilah Al-Khaiat, a house wife. She added that this can be done by any mature member in the family.

However, medicine opposes these traditions and provides many alternative scientific solutions to eye problems. "Using the tongue to pick up strange objects from the eye is not a solution.

It hurts the eye more than it helps," said Al-Gorafi. He added that an irritating feeling in the eyes is not necessarily the result of an object in the eyes.

"Al-Monaqishah can check your eye but can also increase your pain. Moreover, she can bring a new disease to your eyes such as cancer or any other disease because of using a needle which is mainly made to sew clothes, not to check people's eyes," said Mohammed Abdullah Ibrahhim, an ophthalmic surgeon.

Ibrahhim added that even the substances known as 'Kohl,' a black substance, and 'Ethmed,' a brown substance, are proved to include the amount of lead in the body which may cause eye cancer. Ethmed was mentioned in the hadiths, or the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, "Old Ethmed was known to purify the eyes and

strengthen the eyesight, but today's Ethmed is different and includes dangerous substances," stated Ibrahhim.

Although doctors oppose using popular methods, still many believe that they relieve eyes or even purify them. "Ethmed is the best solution when you have any object in your eyes. People also popularly use it to cure eye sensitivity because when your eyes become red due to being sensitive, by using Ethmed your eyes will be cleaned. The more you use it, the more your eyes are purified," said Al-Khaiat.

Kohl is believed to have certain aspects to relieve tired or sensitive eyes as well as make them more beautiful. "Kohl increases your eyelashes and strengthens your eyesight. We use it every day. Also, brides use it to beautify their eyes and increase their eyelashes," said Al-Qadhi.

Nutrition helps poor eyesight

Apples are recommended for poor eye sight because of their abundance of vitamin A. "A lack of vitamin A is the leading cause of blindness," said Al-Gorafi. "Apples aren't just good for the body as a whole, but they also improve and keep the eyes strong, and they may even help with night blindness."

Almonds are also recommended because they include vitamin E which helps in fighting against poor eyesight. It is also a powerful antioxidant that protects cells against damage by free radicals.

Yemen wracked by malaria despite grants

By: Heather Murdock and Khaled Al-Hilaly

en-month-old Younis stared listlessly at his mother as an intravenous tube dripped a clear liquid medicine into his cheek and the sole of his left foot.

Zahara Ahmed, his mother, rubbed his belly softly with her hand. Her baby's eyelids drooped lazily, until she removed her hand and wrapped her arms around her knees. Younis's eyes opened and his right arm pumped in frustration at the loss of his mother's touch.

He released a pained gurgle, and began to breathe rapidly. He did not cry. Zahara, tired from three days on a cot

with her baby at Al-Kuwait Hospital, was hopeful.

"He's better," she said.

seven days on the Ouinine drip.

Adel Nasser Al-Jasari. The government does not know how many patients contract malaria every year, or exactly where they are infected.

As a result, projects designed to prevent or treat malaria, like spraying houses or distributing mosquito nets, suffer from poor planning. Nobody knows the exact scope and location of the problem, so it they don't where to go to fix it.

"Now it's just an estimate," said Dr. Abdul Hakeem Al-Kuhlani, director of combating diseases and epidemic observation at the Ministry of Health, 'We go everywhere."

The current reporting system also does not generate enough accurate information to design successful antimalaria programs.

"It's built," said Al-Jasari, "but it's fragmented.'

Some doctors report that their patients Younis will recover from malaria after have malaria when blood samples have not yet been tested. Others misdiagnose patients, and report other diseases. Many don't report at all. And these flawed numbers don't account for the vast amount of Yemenis who do not have access to modern health care. In the next few weeks, however, the government plans to recruit and train 465 people to collect data from health facilities. The goal is to build an information network that "generates accurate and comprehensive malaria data," Al-Kuhlani said. This project was expected to begin after the Gulf Cooperation Council countries pledged USD 48 million to fight malaria in Yemen in November 2006, according to Al-Jasari. The funds, however, did not begin to become available until March 2009, and the program is scheduled to begin this year. And, he said, despite expectations from the Global Fund and the World Health Organization, the project was delayed because infrastructure needed to be built from scratch.



according to Dr. Haikal Abdualwareth.

But as many as 9,000 other malaria patients may die this year in Yemen, according to government statistics, even though the disease is preventable, curable and practically nonexistent in the rest of the Middle East.

And even though about 160,000 cases were reported in Yemen in 2008, officials estimate that as many as 900,000 people fell ill with malaria. Pregnant women and children under five are the most vulnerable.

problem One major is communication, according to National Malaria Control Programme director Dr.

Peak seasons for malaria transmission:

- Winter: October through April in costal or other areas with elevations below 1000 meters
- Summer: in areas with elevations between 1000 and 2000 meters Malaria is not found in areas with
- elevations over 2000 meters

Doctors recommend that parents with small children in at-risk areas take the following precautions:

- Put mosquito nets over children's beds, and over open doors and windows.
- Kill mosquitoes in the house with insecticides.
- Dump or drain stagnant water in and around the house.
- Bring children that have flu-like symptoms to a health care center for malaria testing.

"When you are living and working in Yemen, it's not easy," he added.

Al-Jasari plans to hold training sessions for the recruits in Aden, Sana'a and Hadramout within in the next few weeks, he said, adding "inshallah, inshallah."

Some experts and families, however say the problem goes deeper than failed information systems.

About 70 percent of the people in Yemen live in the countryside, where only 20 percent of them have access to health care, according to 2006 government statistics. Sixty percent of the people in Yemen live in areas with

Because of stagnated water and unhealthy practices around water sources as many as 9,000 other malaria patients may die this year in Yemen, according to government statistics, even though the disease is preventable, curable and practically nonexistent in the rest of the Middle East.

elevations low enough to contract malaria

Even when care is available, it is often not good, according to Dr. Abdullah Al-Taisar of Sana'a University's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. For instance, labs with overused or dirty slides can make it hard for doctors to diagnose malaria correctly.

And sending medical staff to workshops in the cities does not solve the problem because it takes the work out of context, he said.

"You should go to the labs [in rural areas] to train, and say, 'Look, this is dirty. Or, this is not going to work because of this.' Not to a clean lab in Sana'a, where everything is already perfect."

Rural areas are also largely left out of outreach programs, he added. "I don't see any effort to approach people in remote areas."

Beyond the lack of good, available

treatment, many people also have no idea how to prevent infection. Most people know that mosquito bites cause malaria, but according to Al-Taisar, many people also think malaria can be contracted through breast feeding, missing breakfast, eating uncovered food, drinking contaminated water, or though contact with flies.

"Villagers think they can't avoid it," he said. "How can you protect yourself from flies? Simply, you can't."

As a result of the confusion, people fail to protect themselves against the single cause of malaria infection: mosquitoes.

"Avoiding mosquitoes means avoiding malaria," he added.

Additionally many rural doctors still prescribe chloroquine, he said, even though 56 percent of malaria cases in Yemen are now resistant to the drug. According to the ministry, the drug is no longer recommended or used to treat resistant strains. Rural doctors, however, do not always know about this development.

"No one knows at the local level," Al-Taisar said.

In some parts of Yemen, where avoiding mosquitoes is nearly impossible, the malaria problem is not always a lack of treatment or the kind of treatment given, according to Ghalib Hijjab, the Al-Kuwait Hospital head of inspections and control.

Hijjab grew up in Al-Khebt, a hot and humid village in the Mahwit governorate. Malaria in Al-Khebt is common, and his sister, Fatima, found out she had the disease during a pregnancy test.

Fatima refused malaria treatment because like many of her neighbors, she believed the medicine was dangerous for her baby. Instead she opted to eat bitter leaves from wild dandelions, which are sometimes considered an herbal antibiotic

According to doctors, however, it is dangerous to use herbal remedies alone to treat malaria.

The treatment "may cause harm if patient takes this plant and delays seeking help from doctors," according to Al-Taisar. "Malaria is rapidly progressive and should be treated immediately."

But some villagers still fear the medicines more than the disease.

"There are rumors that malaria medicine kills people," said Hijjab.

But according to Abdulwareth, the baby Younis' doctor, these rumors have no merit. Proper malaria treatments are not dangerous to adults, children or pregnant women, he said.

And for Younis, the treatment is curing malaria while his body and his doctor fight rickets and pneumonia.

"Inshallah, he will leave in good health," the doctor said.

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English-language newspaper



Camping in Socotra

By: Mohammed Ghoath For the Yemen Times

visit to Yemen is not complete without seeing the island of Socotra. Located almost 700 km east of Al Mukalla on the mainland, the island had been isolated for thousands of years since the end of the frankincense trade.

Its people are descendants of the people of the Sabaean and Himyarite kingdoms, and they speak indigenous Soqotri languages unique to the Arabian island.

Small villages bordered by palm groves dot the countryside and violet, every corner. Tourist agencies offer a variety of

activities from hiking up mountains and camping to simply resting on the beach.

Socotra is most famous the dragon blood tree, or in Arabic "shajara dam al ahwain," which means blood of the two brothers, so called after the bright red color of its sap. These trees are widely scattered about the island's high plateaus.

Along with hospitals and roads, government schools have been brought to the island, teaching solely in Arabic, leading to the local language to being spoken less and less.

Aside from its fascinating history, the

crimson beaches seem to be around island offers the modern visitor an equally fascinating world of fauna and flora to explore. An afternoon snorkeling in the turquoise waters just off the coral strewn beach at Dihamri offers a glimpse into only one aspect of the island's diverse wildlife.

The fish are literally close enough to touch, and they come in a spectrum of colors ranging from bright green to lipstick blue.

From Dihamri it is also possible to hire a guide on a hike to see some of the island's famous caves.

Soqotra is thought to have one of the largest cave systems in the world, much of which remains unmapped. A cave close to Dihamri can be reached after

about an hour-long hike up a hillside. A favorite spot for postcard photographers, from the cave entrance, it is possible to enjoy a sweeping view of the countryside stretching to the wide expanse of turquoise sea.

But inside the cave is a world of complete darkness. It is necessary to bring a good flashlight in order to appreciate the stalagmites, both living and dead, which extend across the entire length of the cave. To the modern visitor the island of Socotra can be explored from two distinct perspectives.

To those who are interested in its long and storied history, the remnants of its ancient culture are still established in the distinct languages spoken there.

To those more interested in its legendary beauty, the island offers a number of unique experiences both on and by the sea, on the land itself, and even underneath it.

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