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Inside:



9
Bin Laden threatens
Israel with holy war
over Gaza



12
Digital heritage project to help
improve Yemen's image around the
world



14
Sexual harassment deters
women from outdoor
activities

Hundreds of thousands demonstrate in support of Gaza

By Mahmoud Assamie

SANA'A, Jan. 17 — Following Friday congregational prayers, hundreds of thousands of Yemenis demonstrated in protest against the ongoing Israeli assault on Gaza and the genocide being committed by the Israeli army against its civilians.

Most preachers criticized the passive attitudes of Arab and Muslim leaders towards the "Israeli massacre and destruction of defenseless civilians in the Gaza Strip". They called on Arab leaders whose countries border Israel to open passages to help the Palestinians. Demonstrators marched from the mosques into the streets of Sana'a and gathered in Al-Sabaeen area.

They chanted slogans expressing their support to Hamas and their opposition to Israel. They chanted the slogan "Ya Qassam Ya Habib, Iqsef, Iqsef Tellabib [O beloved Qassam, bomb Israel]" and criticized the Arab leaders' attitude to the crisis with "Ya lala'ar, ya lala'ar, Ba'au Gaza Biddular [Oh shame, shame, they sold Gaza for a dollar]".

The demonstrators demanded Arab leaders allow their people to go to Palestine to fight jihad. They carried dummy-rockets and were dressed in

uniforms imitating those of the resistance forces in Gaza.

Head of the Popular Society for the Support of the Palestinian People Sheikh Sadik Al-Ahmar spoke to the gathering and congratulated the whole of the Palestinian people on the death of Saeed Siam, the former Interior Minister in Gaza, as martyr of the Israeli war and congratulated them on their other martyrs.

"All Yemeni people, in different parties, have the same attitude towards the Palestinian issue," he said. "Today, we are in an uneven battle. The citizens of Gaza do not represent a country. They do not have jets, tanks and arms to defend themselves, while the occupation uses the most deadly weapons banned internationally," he said.

"We must do our best to support the resistance in the territories and to ensure its continuity."

Islamic scholar Hussein Al-Awadah delivered the speech of the Palestinian resistance. He affirmed his solidarity with the resistance in the Gaza Strip and insisted all factions pursue victory despite shameful Arab silence.

"We bring good news to the Islamic nation of the martyring more than 1,000 martyrs topped by Saeed Siam, the Interior Minister of the deposed

Hamas government, and Nizar Rayn, the Hamas militant leader and other heroes of the resistance and of the people," he said.

He called on the Islamic nation to continue their marches and activities and to raise their voices to their leaders to open the doors for jihad to support their Palestinian brothers. He affirmed that jihad in Palestine is at this time worthier than in any other place in the planet.

Sheikh Abdul-Majid Al-Zindani, who spoke on behalf of the demonstrators, demanded the Arab and Islamic nation as well as the international community work for a quick stop to the Israeli aggression against Gaza and the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip.

International reactions

Last week, Venezuela and Bolivia expelled the Israeli ambassadors from their countries, calling the Israeli onslaught on Gaza a "holocaust" and a "genocide".

Qatar and Mauritania also announced their closing Israeli trade offices, thereby severing all economic and political ties with Israel, during the emergency Arab summit held in the Qatari capital Doha last Friday.

On Sunday, Hamas and its allies



Demonstrators came out from all mosques in Sana'a responding to a call from preachers to express their anger and solidarity with the Palestinian people via protesting, as the minimum "Islamic duty". Demonstrators marched from the mosques into the streets of Sana'a and gathered in Al-Sabaeen area.

announced a one-week ceasefire in the Gaza Strip, giving the Israeli forces one week to pull out of its territory. Despite Israel's unilateral ceasefire on

Saturday, clashes continued in the hours that followed it and no Israeli troops had withdrawn from the area by the next day.

Over 1,200 people have been killed and more than 5,300 have been injured since Israel launched its war on the Gaza Strip on Dec. 27, 2008.

Southern Movement protesters clash with security forces

By: Ali Saeed, Fouad Mused & Ridhwan Al-Saqqaf

ADEN, DHAE & LAHJ, Jan 18 — Southern Movement demonstrators have been clashing with security forces in the governorates of Lahj, Aden, and Al-Dhale for almost a week.

The movement is spearheaded by

former military officers from the South, the Military Retirees Coordination Council (MRCC), who demand equal opportunity for Southerners.

One hour after dispersing the protesters in Al-Dhale, a security vehicle was attacked by a grenade which caused at least six injured soldiers. As a reaction the police opened fire randomly and killed a citizen passing by, while another ten were wounded.

"Suddenly I heard the explosion and within seconds the police were shooting in every direction. They thought they were being attacked by an army," said one of the injured citizens.

In Aden, the police broke up the protest in the Al-Sheikh Othman district with tear gas for the second day since the protest started. The protesters were demanding the release of the detainees that the police had arrested on the first day of the demonstration, which was held to mark the 14th anniversary of the 1994 capture of Aden by President Ali Abdullah Saleh's northern military forces, ending a bloody two-month civil war, and to commemorate the third anniversary of the establishment of reconciliation and tolerance groups in the South.

During the demonstration, a policeman fired at the protesters wounding four, one of whom is in critical condi-



Two of the ten injured citizens in Al-Dhale where a grenade was thrown at a security vehicle causing the military to open fire at random.

tion. The injured were transferred to the Al-Naqeeb hospital in the district of Al-Mansora.

The police surrounded the city of Aden to prevent people from the governorates of Al-Dhale, Abyan, and Lahj from entering the city until their identities were checked. The security forces have forbidden people from gathering in front of police stations or in front of

the hospital where the injured are being treated.

In Al-Dhale, protesters blocked the Al-Dhale-Aden road in protest against the security using force against participants in the Tuesday morning demonstrations. The police in the governorate broke up the protesters.

In the Radfan district in Lahj, angry protestors set fire in military vehicle

causing armed clashes, which occurred between the police and armed groups who had been blocking the Sana'a Aden for six days in order to force the government to release the detainees of the South Movement. The road is blocked until writing this news.

The fight led to the injuring of tens from both sides. Tentative reports said that two army cars six army each containing six army men were attacked, each vehicle containing six soldiers.

According to the local people, six of the soldiers were injured while the other six were taken as hostages.

Haidra Haitham, Head of Security in the Radfan district, denied that some of the policemen were captured by armed groups.

"Clashes continued for one hour and half between security personnel and the citizens of the district and resulted in the burning of a military vehicle and some injured from both sides," he said.

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Sa'ada citizens mourn murdered physician

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Jan. 18 — Thousands of Sa'ada citizens last Thursday attended the funeral of Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Hamass, a surgeon, and two of his assistants who were killed on the road connecting the Sa'ada and Al-Jawf governorates after an armed group set an ambush there.

Al-Hamass was considered by some bodies in government to be one of Al-Houthi's medical personnel. They say that he played a major role in treating Houthis who were injured in the five wars between the Houthis and the army between 2004 and 2008.

Thousands of people who attended the funeral of Al-Hamass and his assis-

tants in Dhahian city, Sa'ada, expressed their deep anger toward the crime "committed against the physician who is known for his morals and hard work in his career, as well as the humanitarian role he played in treating those injured in the Sa'ada war without discriminating between Houthis and the army".

The media office of Abdul Malek Al-Houthi reported that the murderers of Al-Hamass follow Khaled Abdul Wahab Al-Sharif, head of the Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum (SCER).

For his part, Al-Sharif denied any involvement in the murder of Al-Hamass. He emphatically denied all the news reports that claimed his involvement in the murder, qualifying this news

as "false and tendentious".

Yet the media office said in a press statement, "We will not remain silent about this heinous crime. We demand that concerned authorities conduct a transparent investigation and work to uncover those who are behind the crime and those who aim to make the situation in Sa'ada explode again."

An armed group set an ambush to target Al-Hamass and his assistants last Wednesday in Al-Ashraf area of Al-Jawf while they were in their way to perform a treatment duty. The armed group attacked their car with firearms, killing Al-Hamass and two assistants and injuring another two.

The Al-Houthi spokesperson called on all human rights organizations and

social figures to condemn the crime and exert pressure on the government to stop the policy of assassination and committing crimes against innocents for alleged relations with the Houthis.

"The assassination of Al-Hamass has created a state of resentment among society members who consider this murder to be one against successful humanitarian personnel who serve society," said the spokes person.

Stability Armed confrontations are currently taking place in the Bani Moath district west of Sa'ada city. That district has both military presence and Houthi supporters.

Local sources in Sa'ada said that security authorities had launched an

arrest campaign against citizens who demonstrated in support of Gaza under the pretext that they raised slogans of such as "Death to America" and "Death to Israel".

Moreover, a new military checkpoint has been set up in Al-Khafji on the road linking Sa'ada with Dhahian, considered the main center for Houthi activity, although there are already six checkpoints on the same road which is 25 kilometers long.

"The existence of checkpoints in such a number hinders the passage of people and increases their suffering. It increases looting and other acts practiced by these checkpoints against citizens," said a local from Sa'ada.

Local citizens have claimed that the

official reports stating that 98 percent of war damages compensations have been dispensed as "absolutely incorrect".

"The government deals with such issues as it did with the relief aid when it distributed them among its supporters including sheiks and individuals in areas where there was neither war nor refugees," said a local source. "News of any alleged compensations is false as it aims only to show a good image of the aggression against citizens."

Earlier towards the end of last year, the Sa'ada Reconstruction Fund reported that 7,180 house, 1,421 farms, 94 schools, 8 clinics, 4 police stations, 3 courts, 3 public buildings, 267 mosques and another 90 houses were recorded as damaged during the fighting.

Illiteracy as a major concern to Yemen and the Arab world

By: Ismail al-Ghabri

SANA'A, Jan. 17 — Reports and statistics issued by the Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education Systems show that the total number of Yemeni male and female students in these systems has reached a total of 128,465 students. The number of students in various skills improvement centers reached a total of 8,531 students, of them 8 thousand female students.

The head of the Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education System, Mr. Ahmed Abdullah Al-Aothali, asserted that the number of classrooms in the various Governorates has increased over the past year, reaching a total of 5,588 classrooms available for both elementary and follow-up courses. A number of projects have also been completed, including construction of their new center in Sana'a. This center cost a total of \$200 thousand dollars and was funded by the Islamic Development Bank. Administration buildings concerning illiteracy eradication were also recently established in the Governorates of Shabwa and Sa'ada.

A statement by the Illiteracy Eradication System clarified that in spite of their efforts made to increase the number of students in the adult edu-

cation centers, the number of illiterate people is expected to rise during the next five years. This means that the current figure of illiterate people, estimated at roughly five and a half million Yemenis, may reach more than seven million people over the next several years.

The situation might worsen if no solution is adopted to address the obstacles that impede the functioning of the illiteracy eradication administration. Such obstacles include a lack of teachers, the scarcity of financial resources, and the operational costs of its branches in a number of Governorates across the country.

The real situation is reflected in statistics issued concerning illiteracy rates in our country. According to the population census of 2004, the illiteracy rate decreased from 56% to 45.7% among the targeted population for Yemenis above ten years of age. According to an updated report, illiteracy rates decreased in urban areas to 25.8% while in rural areas it decreased to 54.3%.

The report added that the decreasing rate of illiteracy reached 20% in the Governorates of Hadramout and Abyan, followed by a rate of 10 to 15% in Sana'a and Aden.

Conversely, the illiteracy rate rose to

50% in the Governorates of al-Jawf, Sa'daa, Hajja, and Raymah, followed by a rate of 40% in the Governorates of Amran, Almahweet, Dhamar, al-Hodeidah. Some of the lowest rates of illiteracy were between 30 and 40% in Lahj, Ibb, Sana'a, Shabwa, Taiz, Albaida, Aldalea, Mareb, and Mahra.

As stated by the report, the reason behind this variation is due to the existing financing gap between urban and rural areas as well as general poverty levels in Yemen overall.

On the other hand, the statistical report issued by the Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education System indicated that adult education witnessed some positive developments in the past five years, as the number of students enrolled in their literacy programs reached 66,000 students in 2000. This figure increased to 71,000 students throughout the past five years.

Based on the general census of the population for the year 2004, the illiteracy rate among the population aged 10 years and over was 45.7%, with a significant disparity between male and female. Males had an illiteracy rate of 29.8% as opposed to females, 62.1% of which are illiterate.

The census also showed that the proportion of people who are literate reached 31.7% of the total population,

which makes more than three-quarters of the population below the level of basic education.

The Third Human Development Report of Yemen stated that illiteracy in Yemen is the product of a long legacy of deprivation and backwardness.

It is estimated that the number of children who are outside of the educational system is around two million boys and girls. These children represent a renewed source of illiteracy.

A specialized report of the education indicators in 2007 issued by the Supreme Council for Educational Planning denoted that despite the increase in literacy and adult education enrollment numbers, the spread of illiteracy negatively impedes the development of society and hinders its pace of progress. This is also despite the increase of training classes and education centers created especially for women.

It is worth mentioning that January 8th is considered the Arab Day for the Eradication of Illiteracy. This day has been sponsored by the Arab Organization for Education, Culture, and Science for more than thirty years and has been taken as an occasion to review all the efforts, activities, and events relevant to this issue in the various Arab countries.



Students learning about human anatomy in the biology class.

Regulating chop shops



Many consumers prefer to buy used original parts for their cars because they are cheaper by up to a third than new original parts.

By: Khaled Al-Hilaly

SANA'A, Jan. 18 — Cars stripped for spare parts to be sold separately are a common business in Yemen. But when car thieves take advantage of chop shops to hide their theft or evade customs, it poses a problem.

Nasser Karat a mechanic in a chop shop on Khawlan Street said that people prefer to buy used but original parts for their cars because they are cheaper than new original parts.

"The prices of spare parts in chop shops are about one third of what they are worth new," said Karat. "There are cheap brand-new parts, but they are not original and are easily damaged three or four months after their day of purchase."

"They closed our chop shops for about ten days to count and check all the cars' engines and spare parts. They asked us to provide them with all the information of operations performed in our shops," Mansour Al-Selwi an owner of a chop shop in Sana'a said.

Al-Selwi says that the Criminal Investigations Department (CID), rather than the Traffic Administration, should regulate the car dismantling business because he thinks they are not capable of regulating the trade.

"The campaign was a positive action by the CID to investigate offenders,

however closing all the chop shops for more than ten days has affected our business," said Hussein Al-Sayani.

"The CID ordered us not to receive stolen property or buy cars without documents. We should have a license for each car we want to strip. This license has all the car information and it must be approved by the CID before we take any action," said Musa Al-Majthoub owner of a chop shop.

Last year, 933 vehicles were stolen across Yemen. Security recovered 611 of them. The capital came first in terms of stolen cars with 694 vehicles, 468 of which were recovered. The governorate of Shabwa came second with 34 vehicles reported stolen, 26 of which were recovered. In governorate of Tamar, 29 vehicles were stolen of which 23 were recovered, according to the Ministry of Interior.

"The campaign against chop shops is carried out in cooperation with the Traffic Administration and Public Prosecutor. It was part of stepped-up efforts against car theft and customs evasion all over the country," said Brigadier Abu Bakr Saed, general director of the Criminal Investigations Department.

The campaign counted 174 chop shops in Sana'a, in the seven districts of Shaob, Al-Safiah, Al-Sabeen, Ma'een, Al-Thawrah, Azal and Al-

Wahdah, and the process of databasing them is in progress, according to Ahmed Siraj Deputy Director of the Criminal Registration Unit at the CID.

"After receiving all the information pertaining to the vehicle offered for dismantling, such as identification of the number of the body and engine, we give permission for stripping the vehicle. Customs declaration, vehicle ownership documents and vehicle number plate are taken by the CID before any dismantling," said Siraj.

"We gave instructions for chop shop owners and employees to avoid stripping vehicles in places other than the ones identified in the permissions to strip them, to avoid buying vehicles without documents or with fake identification numbers, to inform us about any suspicious vehicles. In addition, we instructed them to provide the CID and Traffic Administration with weekly and monthly reports of dismantling operations in their chop shops," he added.

The Ministry of Interior closed 140 car chop shops in the capital for more than ten days in November last year, following an inspection campaign to regulate the vehicle-stripping business. During the campaign which included all the governorates, an inventory was carried out to verify data on vehicles and parts.

By: Mahmoud Assamee and Salah Al-Worafi

SANA'A, Jan. 18 — Although the price of wheat has dropped almost 60 percent on the international level since early 2008, Yemeni importers and wholesalers are creating price hikes to increase their profits, say retailers.

Last week, the price of wheat witnessed an unjustified increase. In two weeks, the price of a 50-kilo sack of wheat has increased from YR 4,200 to almost YR 6,000, four times its price in 2007. People accuse the government of carelessness and of not taking strict measures against powerful merchants who play with the price of this important commodity. Whereas four decades ago Yemen produced enough wheat to feed itself, the country now depends on imports for 90 percent of the wheat it consumes. In remote villages, the high price of food has led families to regularly skip meals and spend over two-thirds of their income on food, forcing some to pull children out of school because they cannot afford it, according to a recent assessment by the World Food Program.

Economist Mustafa Nasr, director of the Center for Studies and Economic Media Center, explains that wheat prices have decreased globally because of both the decrease of the price of oil and the great production of wheat after the global food crisis in 2008.

"What is going on in Yemen is that importers do not release high quantities of wheat onto the markets, which increases its price," he stated.

"Those who have the monopoly on this commodity raise its price, and the government turns a blind eye," said a trader with inside knowledge of the market.

Retailers blame wholesalers of holding a monopoly on the commodity and of raising its prices at will.

"Increases of wheat prices are because of wholesaler's monopolization of food commodities such as wheat, flour and sugar," said Hamid Al-Ruzaqi, foodstuff retailer.

He explained that the price of a 50-kilo sack of sugar has risen from YR 4,700 to 5,500 now it is 5,200, while the price of a 50-kilo sack of wheat has

risen from 3,700 to 6,200 now it is 5,500 and the price of a 50-kilo sack of flour has therefore increased from 4,100 to 5,500 now it is 5,200.

"The best kind of wheat, the Australian one, is withheld from the market so that its price can be increased," he stated. He accuses the state of not controlling the markets.

"The country is careless because it does not fix suitable prices for commodities and does not punish merchants who play with prices," added Al-Ruzaqi.

"The hike in the wheat prices is mostly tied to the very cold weather conditions as many areas in the world where wheat grows have witnessed snow," said deputy chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Sana'a Mohammad Salah.

The price of wheat will return to its previous low levels and maybe less, he said. He warned consumers not to buy great quantities of wheat because its price will decrease during the forthcoming days.

Salah indicated that the Ministry of Industry and Trade is closely following up domestic and global prices of wheat, assuring the coming agricultural seasons will bring good news.

For their part, wholesalers directly blame importers for fixing high prices in order to better sell the grain.

"The main reason for increasing the price of wheat is people's ignorance. Powerful merchants exploit people's unawareness by creating crises in the markets and raising the price of [wheat] so that they rush to the shops to buy in fear of further increases," said Abdul-Galil Uqbah, wholesaler.

"The price of cooking oil for example, despite being low internationally, sometimes also fluctuates [in Yemen] to sell it faster," he added to illustrate how the same tactic is sometimes also used to better market other commodities.

"We sell the sack of the wheat for YR 5,200. In the past, after the prices had dropped internationally, we were selling the same sack for YR 3,900," he said.

Despite these disturbances in the price of wheat, all merchants expect the price of wheat and other foodstuffs like rice to drop in Yemen.

"The price of wheat is expected to decrease during the forthcoming weeks," said Ali Al-Soudi, owner of grocery store in Al-Sitteen.

"I expect the price of wheat and flour to decrease because larger quantities of these commodities will enter the markets," affirms Uqbah. "Even other staple foods like rice will witness a gradual decrease these days."

Wheat donation from the UAE

Last week, the first shipment of a United Arab Emirates' wheat assistance consignment to Yemen arrived at the seaport of Al-Salif in Hodeidah.

An estimated 70,000 tons of wheat - about 13 percent of the total 500,000 tons donated by the UAE to Yemen - were received.

The wheat will be distributed to about 1.5 million people registered with the Social Welfare Fund and residents in the eastern provinces of Hadramout and Mahara affected by recent floods.

"The distribution will be supervised by the local authority to ensure that the UAE's aid is given out to the needy," said Minister of Industry and Trade Dr. Yahya Al-Mutawakel.

President Saleh met with Prime Minister Ali Mujawar and Vice-Prime Minister Rashad Aleimi last August and they agreed that the aid should be distributed to the unfortunate registered with the Social Welfare Fund.

The aid of 500,000 tons of wheat will be contained in approximately 10 million sacks and each Yemeni registered with the Social Welfare Fund will receive on average almost half a sack of the grain.

Last May, UAE President Khalifah Bin Zaid Al-Nahyan ordered to send 500,000 tons of wheat to Yemen as a gift from his people to the Yemeni people. This comes after Yemen was affected by the global food crisis that hit earlier last year.

The UAE have also started to donate one million tons of wheat to Egypt and 500,000 tons of wheat to Syria.

In 2006, the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization reported that 37 percent of Yemen's population was undernourished, receiving less than 2,200 calories a day.

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In Brief

SANA A

Talks held to improve Yemeni universities

Minister of Higher Education Scientific Research Saleh Ba-Surrah discussed on Saturday with board chairman of Saudi Al-Rashid Foundation for Information Technology Ahmed al-Hamdan needs of Yemeni governmental universities to improve information technology, education and electronic libraries.

The minister reviewed developments in the Yemeni higher education in different areas, noting that Yemen government universities contain more than 240 thousand students and more than 5 thousand teaching staff.

For his part, al-Hamdan affirmed keenness of his foundation to reinforce and improve relations between the two countries and exchange expertise as well as implement development projects in the field of education technologies in the universities with a Gulf-Yemeni finance.

Louvre museum to restore two Yemeni archeological statues

Chairman of General Organization for Antiquities and Museums (GOAM) Abdullah BaWazir said on Saturday that the two Yemeni antiquities would be shipped to Paris for restoring in Louvre museum.

The move is in accordance with the

agreement signed between the GOAM and the French museum last October.

The two objectives are two bronze statues of lions, BaWazir said.

He added that it is scheduled that Yemen would get back the two statues by end of this year after showing them in the museum.

The two statues would be transported by the Yemenia airway to Paris.

Doha Insurance Company to invest in Yemen

The Doha Insurance Company has announced it has planned to set up an insurance company in Sana'a in cooperation with strategic investors in the country.

In a statement published on the Doha Stock Exchange website, the company said it had agreed on all details of the establishment of the company with support from its partners in Yemen.

The statement noted that the company is currently finalizing the foundation documents to be submitted to the relevant authorities in Yemen for approval.

The Doha Insurance Company will provide technical leadership and consultancy to the would-be company in Yemen.

Training course for lawyers concluded

A training course on reinforcing capacities for 30 lawyers who are still

under training was concluded on Friday in Sana'a.

The course was organized by Yemeni Lawyers Bar, Sana'a branch.

The course aimed at providing the trainees with legal knowledge on the legal practice as well as introducing legal profession law No. 31 for 1999 and conditions of proxy in the proceedings.

Head of Yemeni lawyers Abdullah Rajih affirmed that the syndicate has qualified 600 lawyers inside and outside Yemen since 2001.

Workshop on AIDS national strategy held in Sana'a

A workshop on the National Strategy for Protection from AIDS and combating it for 2009-2015 was held in Sana'a on Saturday.

The workshop, organized by the National Program in cooperation with the United National Program on AIDS (UNAIDS), comes within the frame of introducing the national strategy for combating AIDS and represents an extension to prior steps achieved during the last years for modernizing and developing the national strategy.

The Undersecretary of Ministry of Public Health and Population for First Health Care Majed al-Jonaid pointed out that the strategy, which was prepared in participation of the main partners, donor organizations, and civil society

organizations with studied plans, represents a sole reference for all parts who contribute in combating AIDS in Yemen through different activities and it is a launching point for reducing AIDS.

Al-Jonaid also stressed on the significance of gathering all efforts of concerned authorities, international organization, and donors to make the strategy an extensive work plan and assessing it constantly.

For her part, coordinator of Joint UN Program on AIDS in Yemen Dr. Fauziah Gramah pointed to the importance of highlighting the three principles of asserting the national response for combating AIDS in the country which includes providing a unified planning frame basically for the participation and support of all partners depending on the national priorities, assuring the significance of promoting the national response, the political obligation and the social dialogue and strengthening human capabilities and the accurate understanding for this epidemic.

Demining approves 2009 plan

The National Committee for Demining NCD approved on Saturday its plan of action for this year.

The meeting also discussed issues associated with helping victims of landmines and spreading knowledge about risks of landmines.

The committee also discussed level of

carrying out its central plan for last year at different phases of survey, clearance and awareness.

It also reviewed obstacles facing its activities.

ADEN

Free zone customs increase at 32% in December

Revenues of the Aden Free Zone (AFZ) customs reached YR2 billion at an increase of YR491 million in December 2008 compared to 2007 at a percentage of 32%.

Director of AFZ customs Abdul-Malik Ghashim told Saba that the amount of Yemeni exports through Aden Containers Port has reached YR2.1 million.

He noted that 3,385 goods containers have been marketed in the domestic market for local consumption.

Ghashim referred this increase in the volume of revenues to the growing navigation activities witnessed by Aden Port.

Pirates kill Yemeni fisherman

A Yemeni fishermen was killed and other two injured due to clashes in Aden Gulf with Somalia pirates on Tuesday, media center of interior ministry said.

The center said that a boat of the Yemeni coastguard found three injured Yemeni sailors on board of two fishing

boats- close to a Russian frigate in the sea.

One of the three injured was died and other two have received first aid in the frigate and then have been transported to the Aden seaport

According to the center, the authorities started to investigate to know the circumstances of the incident.

HODEIDAH

Workshop on girl education

A workshop for 20 workers in Technical Council for Coordinating Support for Girl Education in Hodeidah and Hajjah governorates was opened on Saturday in Hodeidah city.

The workshop was organized by the Girl Education Department at the Ministry of Education in cooperation with the UNICEF.

According to the organizers, the workshop aims at enlightening the participants about the bylaw of the council and its capacities to use database and indications in field of girl education in order to evaluate condition of girl education.

The participants would receive lectures about planning and implementing activities of the council in coordination with the concerned bodies as well as preparing reports associated with the council to determine problems facing its activities, the organizers said.

Their News

ARTICLE 19 Statement about Gaza

In an escalation of Israeli attacks on media professionals, a missile or shell hit a Gaza tower block home to Reuters and other international media organizations on January 15. The 13th floor of al-Shurouq Tower struck the offices of Abu Dhabi television injuring one of its journalists and a Reuters cameraman.

ARTICLE 19 also strongly condemns Israel's detention of two Palestinian journalists working for the Iranian Al-Alam television station in Ramallah on January 5, 2009. Hadir Shaheen 34, and Mohammed Sarhan, 26 were arrested in Jerusalem on charges of broadcasting information on the deployment of Israeli soldiers into Gaza which was subject to 'military censorship.'

More than 1000 Palestinians have so

far been killed and more than 5000 are injured. Among the killed, more than 300 are children and hundreds more are wounded.

The continuous ban of foreign media entering the Gaza strip and the severe attacks on media personnel in Gaza is evidence of the Israeli authorities' determined attempts to control and manage the news coming out of Gaza. "The denial of access to Gaza for journalists prevents the important circulation of essential information on the plight of those most in need" said Dr. Agnes Callamard, ARTICLE 19's Executive Director.

"History and experience have stressed the importance of protecting a free flow of information about conflict situations so as to expose any abuses

that may occur and create a climate in which the conflicts may be resolved. Media freedom must be respected, not restricted, if peace is to be won" added Dr. Callamard.

Media workers benefit from the full protection granted by international humanitarian law to civilians, in both international and non-international armed conflicts. Journalists are considered civilians under Article 79 of Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions, provided they do not do anything or behave in any way that might compromise this status. Any deliberate attack on a journalist that causes death or serious physical injury is a major breach of this Protocol and deemed a war crime. This protection under the Geneva Convention was reit-

erated by Security Council Resolution 1738 concerning the protection of journalists and media personnel in conflict zones.

ARTICLE 19 supports urgent international calling for a UN-led investigation into a range of attacks in which civilians were killed or injured, and civilian buildings were destroyed. ARTICLE 19 in particular calls for the international investigation to include the targeting of media professionals in Gaza and the shelling of media buildings. A19 calls on the international community to implement UN Human Rights Council resolution (A/HRC/S-9/L.2) adopted on January 12, 2009, which, among other matters calls for "Free access of media to areas of conflict through media corridors" into Gaza

Poll about Gaza war

Go to this site to vote
www.israel-vs-palestine.com/gz/?home

ply download the paper-based application form and send it to us, with copies of

your qualifications and any other relevant information by registering yourself online at <http://www.milc.org.uk/pages/register.htm> or directly contacting at undersigned address. Our Student Counseling Officer will shortly contact you.

Lebanese American scholarship opportunity

The Young Women Leaders (YWL) program at the Lebanese American University in Beirut announces a scholarship opportunity for 20 women rights activists from organizations in the Arab Gulf countries to participate in its two

summer leadership training modules in Beirut, offered during the first two weeks of August of every year (2009 and 2010) and is intended to advance the leadership skills of women activists in the Arab Gulf countries.

Interested candidates should fill in the application (available on the website www.ywl.lau.edu.lb) and submit it to YWL before January 31, 2009 by email, or fax, or mail.

Email: ywl@lau.edu.lb

Fax: 961-1-867-098

Mail: Dr. Nabelah Haraty

Young Women Leaders Program

Lebanese American University

P.O. Box 13-5053

Beirut 1102-2801 - Lebanon

Selection of candidates will begin in February, 2009 and successful participants and their organizations will be notified by email in March, 2009.

Flex Airways launch flights between Mukalla and Taiz



Flex Airways Company launched last Friday direct air flight between Hadramout and Taiz governorates. The flight carried on board Saleh Al-Awaji, head of board of administrators, and Salem Al-Khanbashi, governor of Taiz from Al-Rayyan Airport in Mukalla to Taiz Airport.

The company, which is considered the first interior company in Yemen, considered the launch of Mukalla-Taiz airline "a positive step that will be positively reflected on the economy of the two governorates.

Hamoud Al-Soufi, governor of Taiz, received the plane which contained a media group from different media institutions in Taiz International Airport.

Al-Awaji said in a statement to media outlets in Taiz airport that the company is glad to connect two important governorates, "which will be positively reflected on the economy of the two governorates and safety of passengers."

"We encourage citizens to use our planes and also encourage mass media to show their notes to contribute to improving our services," said Al-Awaji. He pointed out that the company will join two more airplanes to its airways by the end of next February.

Flex airways which launched its air services for the first time last October owns currently two airplanes,

Canadian-made "Bombardier", which contains 74 seats.

According to Al-Awaji, the Flex airways will consist of eight airplanes, confirming that the company is determined to carry out regional flights during the current year 2009 to Dubai in UAE, Salalah in Oman, Saudi cities and some capitals of countries in the African Horn.

Hadramout governor considered that the new direct airline of Flex airways between Hadramout and Taiz "will enhance bonds of affection and intimacy among citizens of the two governorates. It will also create deep partnership between the different trade, industrial and tourist sectors in the different fields of life.

Taiz governor said that partnership "represents one of the most courageous investments that will no doubt provide new job opportunities for the youth". He expressed his pleasure with "this qualitative development of flex airways to offer its services more widely."

The company which is owned by the Saudi Development Islamic Bank, 75 percent, and the Yemeni Airlines, 25, percent organizes regular daily flights from Sana'a International Airport to Aden, Taiz, Mukalla, Hodieda, Sayoun, Al-Ghaidah and Soqatra. Over 100 employees, most of whom are Yemenis, work in the company, whose budget amounts to \$ 80 million.

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Girls running away from home

By: Yemen Times Taiz

The number of girls running away from home has increased relatively of late according to police stations reports. Because of the conservative Yemeni culture parents usually do not report that their daughters have run away because of the shame this brings to the family.

Yet, many reasons have prompted girls to renounce all social norms and traditions and leave their houses to go away especially if with their boyfriends, in spite of the consequences that awaits them.

Social studies show that the reasons behind the elopement of Arab girls are similar. Only little differences occur according to the conditions of every society. They indicate that this phenomenon is aggravating and that it should be dealt with as a social problem, not through secrecy. The studies revealed that the outstanding reasons of elopement are poverty, disintegration, weak religious faith, and negligence of family and school.

A Yemeni governmental study conducted by the National Center for Social and Criminal research in 1990 on boys and girls who leave their houses without knowledge of their families showed that boys constituted the majority at 91.6 percent, with girls totaling 8.4 percent.

Cases in Yemen confirmed that some girls attempt to be enrolled in girls associations after they elope instead of returning to their families. Another Yemeni study also conducted by National Center for Social and Criminal research in 2005 showed that the number of girls running away from home is continually increasing and called on families, schools, and concerned bodies in the government to pay attention to the problem.

For example, in August 2008, nine girls aged between 10 to 40 years old – three of them sisters aged 18, 20, and 22 – eloped on the same day. In December of the same year, the study registered 20 elopement cases. One of them was a 20 year-old married woman who ran away due to oppression by her husband, whereas the others were aged between 11 to 25 years old.

These are some registered cases that concerned bodied were informed about, but the real number of Yemeni girls who run way is likely to be much higher. This is particularly given that Yemeni society is conservative and families don't make their daughters' escape public knowledge, as they believe that such a problem will bring them disgrace.

The Yemeni governorates that witnessed the highest number of girls' run away are Raimah, Hajjah, Aden, and Ibb. Girls eloped to other governorates, but they are found very often in hotels and dance clubs. Intelligence sources confirm that some girls begin elopement within the same governorate accompanied by their female friends; sometimes, they come back home. But if they had been away for a long time, they refuse to come back to



their families.

A statistical study conducted by Saudi Arabia Ministry of Interior indicated that elopement of girls has seriously increased, as the ministry registered 850 cases in 2007. Egypt witnessed the highest number of girls' elopement as over 7 thousand eloped, according to the latest statistics the same year.

Awadh Al-Radadi, Saudi Deputy-Minister of Social Affairs, attributed the reasons of elopement to several social and cultural variables that Gulf societies, particularly Saudi Arabia, witness. He said that these variables lead to the elopement of girls from their houses. In addition, families don't understand the psychological needs of their daughters. He further said that some daughters are subjected to pressure inside their families. He pointed out that the pressure families exert on their daughters or, on the contrary, giving them excess confidence, are among the major reasons behind the phenomenon.

Traditions between different Arab societies are similar. They are characterized by being conservative, particularly in case of problems concerning their daughters. Therefore, the reasons of elopement are similar in the Arab societies, including family disintegration, violence against the girls or harassment, influence of friends, imitation of what is broadcast in satellite channels, weak role of schools and lack of home monitoring on the girl's behavior.

A twenty year-old girl of Sana'a said that she was subjected to harassment by her step father. As a result, she began looking for a young man who

can provide her with affection.

"That was how my story started. Then I eloped from my mother's house to Aden and lived in a house where youth, both men and women, live together without any restrictions," she said.

Another girl said that she eloped from home because of her father who treated her in a harsh manner, even though she knew from the very beginning the consequences of such an act on the whole family. A seventeen year-old girl said that she eloped along with other boys and girls to Aden due to the unstable life of her family after her father, who stayed at home without looking for work, divorced her mother who worked to provide the family with living. She confirmed that she "purchases her father's silence for the money she gives him in order to allow her do what she wants."

Aden dance clubs can be permanent shelters for run-away girls. A security man in Aden said that most of the girls who elope to Aden come from Ibb and Taiz, and that they are aged between 17 and 30 years old. He confirmed that they live in Aden dance clubs and beaches where they are attracted through an organized net that collects girls from different governorates. He added that agents in different governorates coordinate with girls to attract them to those dance clubs, noting that some families don't know that their daughters are there in the clubs, whereas other families do know.

A girl disclosed that she eloped from her family after she was subjected to rape by her father. She confirmed that when her two brothers discovered that their father raped their sister, they

wanted to share with him in the evil act. What shocked the girl is that when her mother learned about the matter, she didn't show any objection and gave them the green light. She says she eloped from home and prefers to live the life of a stray rather than to stay with her family.

Another victim says that her father raped her for many years. When he learned that she informed her mother about the matter, he tried to kill her. Her mother tried to protect her by

force. While they were quarrelling, the father shot a gun at her but the bullet went into his own chest.

A fourteen year-old girl narrated her story. "I left home in Taiz and travelled to Sana'a with my two little brothers due to violence that my stepmother practiced against us. We begged for some time and at that time we would sleep in the yard of a small hotel. The landlord told me to practice adultery with his customers who came to the hotel. I became accustomed with the

matter and started to practice prostitution everywhere until I was caught.

Most of the girls who elope live a life of prostitution, but some of them elope to marry. While a mother was shedding tears for her daughter and the father was wondering why she didn't come back home, a phone rang. When the father answered, his daughter said, "Sorry father! I eloped to marry the young man who proposed to me, but you refused."

The story of Laila, 24, is different from the above stories. She was accused of prostitution and theft. "Ten years ago, I got to know a female neighbor who convinced me to smoke. Then she taught me theft," said Laila. After that, Laila left home. Once she thought of coming back home, she discovered that her parents are divorced. She lived alone and continued to practice robbery until she was caught.

Dr Abdul Razzaq Al-Haiti, professor of sociology at Taiz University, confirms that the phenomenon of elopement is extremely dangerous as it touches the dignity of the Yemeni and Arab families, as the findings of research shows.

He says that Yemeni families shouldn't deal with girl elopement as they deal with boy elopement, as many families kill their daughters who elope.

"Unfortunately, families reserve to their daughters' elopement. Therefore, while conducting research, the answers of the families whose daughters eloped were conservative, particularly about their destination when they eloped," said Al-Haiti. "I resorted to records of police stations and discovered that some girls were caught in prostitution places, others were raped after they eloped, and some others were entrapped by prostitution agents who attracted them for the sake of gaining money from their customers." He revealed that police stations receive at least one or two notifications about the disappearance of family members: half of them are girls.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Yemen Red Crescent Society (YRCS) and the German Red Cross, Yemen (GRC) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position with its Health project.

Post title: Full time project assistant for Health Promotion Project in Saeon branch of the YRCS

General responsibilities

The full time project assistant will be responsible for the development, management and implementation of a plan of action for "one-priority" area project in line with the YRCS strategy in Saeon sub-branch. The PA is responsible for the day to day management of the project. S/he provides support and supervision to volunteers working in the project.

Specific responsibilities

- Responsible for the management of the development and implementation of a volunteer-based project in Saeon sub-branch.
- Responsible for the management of the voluntary working team in Saeon including health focal coordinator in Saeon branch.
- Responsible for developing a functioning team of volunteers/ members with a good team spirit to develop and implement a plan of action for the sub-branch volunteers' activities under "one priority area" in line with the YRCS strategy.
- Ensure accountability of human, material and financial resources related to the project at the sub-branch level.
- Responsible for tenders and procurement related to the project
- Responsible for initiating and supporting the preparation and implementation of a plan of action in project area
- Ensure that project implementation is in accordance with the YRCS, and GoY policies and guidelines.
- Develop a database for the volunteers which should include among other information the volunteer performance appraisal and level of participation.
- Undertake regular and frequent support and monitoring visits to the project activities and participate in periodic reviews and evaluations.

Technical qualifications

- Health / social or socially related background, preferably a master degree.
- A minimum of 3 years working experience with community based development.
- Proven experience of project development and implementation through needs assessment, community involvement and volunteers' participation.
- Proven experience in financial and narrative reporting.
- Fluent in Arabic and English.
- Excellent computer skills (excel, word, access, power point).

Duty Station: Sana'a city with very frequent travel and overnight stay in Saeon.

Duration: six months only

If you meet the above requirements please send your motivated application including your CV to: IFRC Yemen Office, Sana'a, P.O. Box: 5456

You can also submit your application by fax: 01-293228 or by mail: mahbshii@yahoo.com,

Or shafik.mahbashi@ifrc.org

The deadline for receiving applications is 25 January 2009

Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

The Red Cross/Red Crescent is a humanitarian organization. The Red Cross/Red Crescent expects its employees to show an attitude in line with the principles of the Organization and to have appropriate behaviour at all times and in all places. The Red Cross/Red Crescent principles are: neutrality, universality, independence, impartiality, humanity, unity and volunteerism.

Invitation for Bids

Tender Advertisement no. (2) 2009]for 1st Time
(One Envelope System - Technical + Financial)

The **Yemen Gulf of Aden Ports Corporation — Port of Aden** here announces its desire to invite bidders to Tender no. (2) for supplying **One No. Twin Screw Fast Pilot boat for Port of Aden** which will be financed from: **Government sources.**

Bidders who are willing to participate in this Tender have to submit written applications to [Tender committee Secretary] to receive Bidding Documents for an amount **150 USD** non-refundable. Bidders have to apply during the official working hours at

Yemen Gulf of Aden Ports Corporation — Port of Aden- Tawahi
Tel : 00 967 02 200168
Fax: 00 967 02 201541
YGAPCplanning@y.net.ye

The deadline for selling BDs will be on **18th February 2009**

Bids must be submitted in sealed envelopes addressed to the **Chairman of the Board Executive Charirman**. The following documents must be contained in the bid:

- A Bank Guarantee for a lump sum **(60.000 USD for one pilot boat) (Sixty Thousand American Dollars.)** Bank guarantee has to be valid for not less than **150 days** from date of Bid Opening. Bank guarantee may be substituted with a payable cheque.
- Valid tax certificate *(A foreign bidder who is not already doing business in Yemen may provide a copy of the appropriate VAT*

registration document from his home country.)

- Valid Insurance Certificate. *(Insurance certificate is required only from firms with employees in Yemen who are entitled to benefits from the Public Enterprise for Social Security in Yemen)*
- Valid registration and classification certificate. *(In the event of an award of contract if the successful firm is not already registered it will be required to evidence registration with the concerned Entity in Yemen as a requirement for contract effectiveness.)*

A foreign bidder may provide the equivalent documents indicated in 2, 3 and 4 from its country of registration as appropriate. The Dead line for submission and bids opening will be (Sunday) at **[11:00 Am] on 22 February 2009 J**. Bids received after this deadline will be returned unopened. Bid Opening will take place at **[the Office Chairman Executive — Headquarters]** and at the same time mentioned above, in presence of bidders or their authorized representatives. Potential bidders may inspect BDs before purchasing during working hours for a period **27 days** starting from advertisement.



Invitation for General Bid No. (3) for the year 2009

The TV and Radio General Corporation declared its interest in inviting for general bid number (2) for the year 2009 for:

Importing, installing, licensing, testing, guaranteeing and delivering a mobile Satellite Transmitting Station SNG (Satellite News Gathering) with all its peripheries to the Eman Satellite Channel.

All the interested importers and specialized companies must apply with their written request for this bid during the official work time to the following address:

**The TV and Radio General Corporation
General Administration for Projects
Tel: (01/ 230752)**

Cost for buying the bid documents (\$200) non refundable.
The deadline of selling the documents is: 11/2/2009.

The bids must be presented in a red wax sealed envelopes t the bids and tenders committee's secretariat at the corporation. The names of the bidding company and of the project along with the tender number and the bidder's name must be written on the envelop, which should contain the following documents:

1. An unconditional bank guarantee of (US 7,500\$) valid for 120 days as of the date of bid opening or a cashable check.
2. A copy of valid tax certificate for the year 2009 (feign bidders with no existing business activities in Yemen may furnish a copy of equivalent VAT registration document from their home countries).
3. A copy f valid insurance certificate for the year 2009 (insurance certificate is required only from firms with employees in Yemen who are entitled to benefit from the Public Enterprise for Social Security in Yemen).
4. A copy of valid registration and classification for the year 2009.
5. A copy of valid Zakat certificate for the year 2009.
6. A copy of valid commercial registration valid for the year 2009.
7. A copy of valid profession license certificate for the year 2009.
8. A copy of valid sales tax registration certificate for the year 2009.

The deadline for receiving the proposals is at 11:00 am on Sunday 15/2/2009 at the corporation's main premises.



Building a Better World

Job Vacancy

Program Assistant, CHF International Yemen, ACCESS-Plus Program

Program Background:

The immediate goal of the ACCESS-Plus Program (Alternatives to Combat Child Labor through Education and Sustainable Services) is to withdraw /prevent children from the worst forms of child labor and enroll them into educational programs; advocate for the implementation of better policies and practices concerning working children; research the situation of working children; build capacity of institutions/persons working with (former) child laborers; create awareness about child labor; ensure the sustainability of these efforts

Location: Sana'a plus regular travel to Hajja, Taiz, Aden and Hudeida Governorates

Position Summary:

CHF International seeks a Program Assistant to provide support to ACCESS-Plus on a national level, in coordination with the Program Director, Education and Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist.

Program Responsibilities:

Assist with the organization and implementation of all CHF program activities under ACCESS-Plus, in particular:

- Coordinating with local partner NGOs, line Ministries and other partners
- Participating in and contributing to meetings and working groups on child labor and child trafficking on a national level
- Preparing press / advocacy and awareness materials around child labor and child trafficking
- Assist in the preparation of reports and fundraising proposals
- Translation of relevant project documents
- Assist with the maintenance of records to feed into performance monitoring and evaluation plan
- Other program related work as deemed necessary.

Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree with 2-4 years of working experience, preferably concentrating on social issues.
- Knowledge and experience with NGO development programs, working with international organizations, and grants programs;
- Knowledge and experience in document development (both in English and Arabic); and
- English and Arabic fluency required (spoken and written).

Duration: one-year contract with possible renewal

Submission Guidelines:

Applications should be submitted to info@chfyemen.org. Applications submitted after 31/01/2009 will not be considered. Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

Application should consist of a one page cover letter and detailed CV. Cover letter should include the applicant's earliest date of availability to begin work with CHF.



Invitation for General Bid No. (1) for the year 2009

The TV and Radio General Corporation declared its interest in inviting for general bid number (1) for the year 2009 for:

Importing, installing, licensing, testing, guaranteeing and delivering mobile cameras with their peripheries to the Eman Satellite Channel.

All the interested importers and specialized companies must apply with their written request for this bid during the official work time to the following address:

**The TV and Radio General Corporation
General Administration for Projects
Tel: (01/ 230752)**

Cost for buying the bid documents (\$200) non refundable.
The deadline of selling the documents is: 11/2/2009.

The bids must be presented in a red wax sealed envelopes t the bids and tenders committee's secretariat at the corporation. The names of the bidding company and of the project along with the tender number and the bidder's name must be written on the envelop, which should contain the following documents:

1. An unconditional bank guarantee of (US 12,500\$) valid for 120 days as of the date of bid opening or a cashable check.
2. A copy of valid tax certificate for the year 2009 (feign bidders with no existing business activities in Yemen may furnish a copy of equivalent VAT registration document from their home countries).
3. A copy f valid insurance certificate for the year 2009 (insurance certificate is required only from firms with employees in Yemen who are entitled to benefit from the Public Enterprise for Social Security in Yemen).
4. A copy of valid registration and classification for the year 2009.
5. A copy of valid Zakat certificate for the year 2009.
6. A copy of valid commercial registration valid for the year 2009.
7. A copy of valid profession license certificate for the year 2009.
8. A copy of valid sales tax registration certificate for the year 2009.

The deadline for receiving the proposals is at 11:00 am on Sunday 15/2/2009 at the corporation's main premises.



Invitation for General Bid No. (2) for the year 2009

The TV and Radio General Corporation declared its interest in inviting for general bid number (2) for the year 2009 for:

Importing, installing, licensing, testing, guaranteeing and delivering a variety of mobile equipment with wireless montage units their peripheries to the Eman Satellite Channel.

All the interested importers and specialized companies must apply with their written request for this bid during the official work time to the following address:

**The TV and Radio General Corporation
General Administration for Projects
Tel: (01/ 230752)**

Cost for buying the bid documents (\$200) non refundable.
The deadline of selling the documents is: 11/2/2009.

The bids must be presented in a red wax sealed envelopes t the bids and tenders committee's secretariat at the corporation. The names of the bidding company and of the project along with the tender number and the bidder's name must be written on the envelop, which should contain the following documents:

1. An unconditional bank guarantee of (US 7,500\$) valid for 120 days as of the date of bid opening or a cashable check.
2. A copy of valid tax certificate for the year 2009 (feign bidders with no existing business activities in Yemen may furnish a copy of equivalent VAT registration document from their home countries).
3. A copy f valid insurance certificate for the year 2009 (insurance certificate is required only from firms with employees in Yemen who are entitled to benefit from the Public Enterprise for Social Security in Yemen).
4. A copy of valid registration and classification for the year 2009.
5. A copy of valid Zakat certificate for the year 2009.
6. A copy of valid commercial registration valid for the year 2009.
7. A copy of valid profession license certificate for the year 2009.
8. A copy of valid sales tax registration certificate for the year 2009.

The deadline for receiving the proposals is at 11:00 am on Sunday 15/2/2009 at the corporation's main premises.

Montessori House celebrates end of term

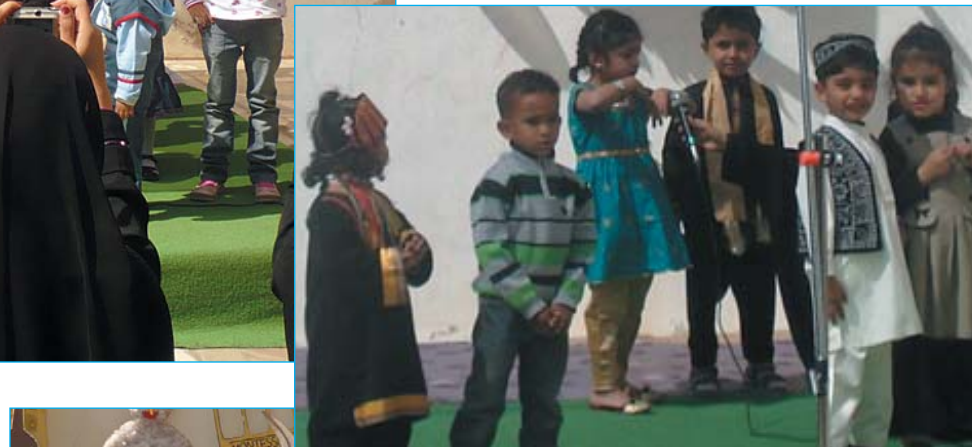
Montessori House School celebrated the end of academic term with the students and their families last week. The children in classes

one, two, KG1, KG2 and nursery gave delightful performances including songs, poems, acting and a fashion show.

The prominent children from all classes were rewarded by the school principle Jalila Jahaf who

commended them on their good work. As a side event there was a small exhibition of the students' art crafts and paintings.

Finally, the day was concluded by an open buffet, playing and face painting for the children.



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Over 400 international awards and over 100 destinations worldwide. Fares are subject to change without notice. Valid for Economy Class round trip tickets booked and purchased for outbound travel on or before 31st January 2009. *Additional restrictions apply. All taxes and charges are excluded. To see full terms and conditions and for further information, contact Emirates on Tel: 01 444442 or visit emirates.com/ye

Words of Wisdom



If more meaningful change is to be made in respect for human rights, the daily violations against the rights of ordinary citizens have to be addressed. This means introducing new values through education and re-education. One clear target is to train law-enforcement agencies and officers on the rights of citizens and how to respect them. Another has to do with re-training of prison wardens and personnel.

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

OUR
OPINIONCivil society and
policy change

The Network of Civil Society Organizations for Development is the first network of its kind in Yemen. It includes large and small civil society organizations from around the republic that all share a vision for a better Yemen. The network, which is funded by Oxfam and headed alternatively by a member organization, has already been involved in several activities on the policy level. These activities indicate the civil society's readiness, to a large extent, to participate in national policies.

The latest activity – which I believe is one of the most courageous and most advanced in the whole region – is reviewing the national budget and identifying loop holes and issues that need revision. The network considers itself closer to the people and in a better position to identify and report the priorities of the people. The network also questions issues such as gender responsive budgets, transparency, and good governance. This is a natural result of this network being a project supported by Oxfam's good governance program.

All sounds good until we realize how the result of the network's study was taken by both the officials and by some of the civil society organizations. The result exposed error in allocating budgets and vagueness in various budget lines such as unidentified expenditure, duplication of allowances, and so forth. When questions were raised, the whole financial circle of the state went mad and demanded an apology from the civil society network. "How dare you question the integrity of the government and its various financial and development instruments?" the state's officials demanded, especially those bodies whose budgets were questioned.

The civil society network ended up omitting sections from the report where they discovered conflicts, and issued a letter of apology to the concerned agencies.

What's even worse is that some of the civil society organizations within the network turned against the study and against each other. Their interests were at stake, and being associated with such a daring move would mean losing funding, positions, or some other kind of support. In fact, some of the member organizations have already been given regret letters, as funding for previously agreed projects was cancelled. The indirect message was "this is what you get for crossing the red line."

The good news is that the network, or at least the network's executive management, was not deterred by the feedback they received. They just concluded another study on the national education strategy and budget. This will also be discussed and hopefully will receive more support and be embraced by the decision makers rather than rejected. The network will annually tackle various budget lines of the national sectors one at a time. Hopefully the repetition will enable them to be more confident and capable of handling the wrath they will surely receive.

This network of civil society organizations deserves all the support it can get. Yemen needs this right now, and needs such activities to continue, because if there is one thing Yemen currently lacks it would be accountability. The knowledge that someone is reviewing their work would hopefully make decision makers think twice before they do away with the few resources our country has.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Two years of reconciliation
and forgiveness

By: Ali Nasser Mohammed

By the advent of January 13th 2009, two real years would have been passed since the call for reconciliation and forgiveness was made by the Radfan Charitable Society. Judicious men from the governorates of Aden, Al-Dhalea, Lahj, Abyan, Shabwa, Hadramout and Al-Mahra proceeded on the Forgiveness Day to the society's hall. Their call was also appreciated by all philanthropists and noble men in Yemen.

The revolution of spirits and hearts for the sake of eliminating malice and hatred, but spreading love and peace instead, is not less important than a revolution to drive occupiers off one's homeland. So, it is not strange to hear that Radfan constituted the starting point of outbreak of the revolution against British occupiers more than 40 years ago. Two years ago, the same area proved being the starting point for embracing the call of reconciliation and forgiveness.

Revolution is a title for people's liberty. Likewise, the call for reconciliation and forgiveness is a title for peace and love among all Yemeni people without an exception. On this occasion, I present my greetings to all Yemenis who responded to such a humanitarian call and lived up to the historical responsibility, as well as

manifested the noblest pictures of national unity.

Educated peoples are those, who transfer failure into success by admitting their own mistakes and then building up their victories. Self-monitoring is very great and has positive influence on advancement and prosperity that depend on experience to overcome any obstacles and proceed forward toward good community and good governance.

People from the various political parties and currents and social figures demonstrated seemingly homogenous feelings. They reached a consensus that reconciliation, forgiveness and solidarity are the only way for peaceful actions. They opposed all the calls instigating malice, seditions, vengeance and hatred.

Reconciliation and forgiveness advocates were not excused from those irresponsible practices, as they paid the highest price for promoting reconciliation and forgiveness. Some of them were martyred or wounded while others were dismissed from their jobs or arrested. Why does this happen? The patriotic reconciliation and forgiveness advocates didn't instigate seditions and the culture of hatred. They only promoted the culture of forgiveness and love among Yemenis following consecutive events and developments experienced by the south part of Yemen since the National Independence.

All of us committed mistakes and all

of us are responsible. But what is more important these days is that we should leave the past behind, take only the useful lessons from it and inspire for a better future.

We are in need for reconciliation and forgiveness more than we were in the past. We need a serious national dialogue to get rid of the current crisis experienced by the homeland and people instead of threatening each other.

Threats only imply absence of the rule of law and disrespect for the constitution and contradict the democratic principle. Threats are not in line with the peaceful transfer of power. Therefore, our pressing problems must be treated through constructive dialogues and generalization of the language of reconciliation and forgiveness to overcome malice and hatred and drive homeland forward toward peace and safety.

As we regretted all the wrong explanations that were machinated by some of us to transfer the idea of "reconciliation and forgiveness" into an article for mocking others in a way contravening the humanitarian call, we at the same time pinned hope that wrongdoers make use of the wills of strugglers and forgivers to forget about the past and restore the present as part of our collective effort to progress toward a prosperous future.

Source: Al-Tagheer.com

Scandal of appealing to
UN War Council

By: Abdullah Al-Shuaibi

The Arabs didn't know that the UN Security Council (which should be rather called as UN War Council) with its long history, never does justice for them. However, the Arabs resort to this council and appeal to it to provide solutions to their own problems. By Lord of Mankind, it is a global miracle for the Arabs to understand lessons throughout history. The problem doesn't lie in the council. Instead, it lies within us the Arabs who beg their natural and legal rights.

Having supposed that the Arabs attacked Israel, a state that is difficult for one to coexist with due to its aggression and barbarism, the whole world, led by the U.S. and other European states, would uprise to defend Israel and sanction the Arabs. But, when Israel assaults the Arabs, this is seen as normal as if Israel is entitled to do so.

The Arabs must abide by international conventions while their blood is the cheapest worldwide. If this is not seen as a real fact, why doesn't Israel join the Arab League in order for the Arab world to gratify Uncle Sam?

Unlike the Arab's, the American, Israeli and European bloods are expensive. Israel may force the world uprise if a single person is hurt. So, why we don't attempt to understand the lesson and read history contemplatively aside from emotions, particularly as an Arab national never has a value inside or outside his homeland.

Whether we accept it or not, the UN War Council is actively operating

against Arabs. The council is not concerned with Arabs while we still appeal to it in order to grant us our natural and legal right. We still pin hopes in this council after 60 years of its inception. We cheer while dancing on its tables so that it may have mercy on us and sympathize with us, however, in fact, we admit that they will never sympathize or have mercy on us.

The UN War Council remains to be 100 percent Zionist while stupidity of Arabs continues, and congratulations to Israel for these facts.

Anyway, the entire world is satisfied with the existence of the Zionist State within the Arab body because it has got red of their concerns and problems. What is faulty if the Zionist State exists at the expense of the Palestinian people? In the Zionists' eyes, the Palestinian people affiliates to a submissive, coward, weak, kind and simple world. The Zionists have tested the Arabs when they occupied them for centuries and still are occupying them now. In the eye of Arabs, the Palestinian people seem to have come from another planet and are unrelated with them.

Homeland liberation must come first

The Gaza Strip and the entire Palestinian nation may collapse for the sake of power with no attention being paid to people and their issue. As I hold the Palestinian factions, most notably the Fatah and Hamas movements, accountable for what happens to their homeland, I sincerely urge both movements to quit politics since they mostly rely on the Arab support, on the one hand, and because they conflict over power at the expense of their

homeland liberation, on the other.

The past experience confirmed authenticity of their failure and the impossibility of their unity and consolidation for the sake of liberating their homeland. By logic, both movements are responsible for the Palestinian bloodshed.

This is an urgent appeal from an Arab national who is concerned about what happens to the Palestinian people to both main movements in the Arab land. If both movements are loyal with their people and homeland, they will not continue their conflict over power lacks will and sovereignty.

The author is a Yemeni researcher
Source: Marebpress.net

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By: Samer

SILVER LINING

Attack on physician....
Attack on civic values

I guess it is only in Yemen where physicians are attacked and where hospitals are not away from the lawlessness of tribesmen. Several days ago, tribesmen with cold blood attacked Dr. Derhim al-Qadasi at Science and Technology hospital; they passed by the guards and used their daggers or Jambias to attack the physician because he called to condole and tell them that their father passed away in the hospital.

It is a complete chaos and lawlessness. This brutal incident which invited the resentment of many people across the country demonstrates complete indifference to law and order if they do really exist in our life.

The tribesmen would not have attacked the doctor, if they had known he had a tribe to stand by him; they knew he was from Taiz where people do not believe in tribal feuds but in learning and hard work as their key to a decent life.

It is the tribalization, if I might coin this word, that has marginalized law and order from our life; from the top official including the president to the ordinary policeman or traffic officer, tribal norm is to dominate their daily behavior. The president, the speaker of parliament and most of most of government officials run the country according to tribal norms rather than law and order. It is the tribe and the inability of the ruling regime to tame it that has made our life chaotic.

This attack is not simply incidental but an attack against the values of modernity and civic society represented by the people of Taiz. Yes, this city that has produced many well-educated professionals and civil servants spread all over the country. Taiz was in the 1970s of the last century the beacon of modern life and civic society that everybody aspired to have after the revolution in 1962. However, these values were marginalized since the advent of President Saleh to power; he nurtured the role of tribal Sheikhs and tribal norms at the expense of law and order. He and his people saw in Taiz and its educated people as a challenge to his tribal control and thus, they worked to weaken the modern culture coming from Taiz. As a city representing modern values and modernity, Taiz has been deflowered.

It seems that the government does not respond positively to any incident only when it is blackmailed or pressured. Dr. al-Qadasi does not have a tribe but his colleagues and civil society activists to defend him. They chose a civic means to protest the indifference of the government in arresting the attackers. The weakest ever Prime Minister Ali Mujawar accused the angry physicians of trying to politicize the case. It is a stupid excuse, of course. Again, his interior minister told the protestors that he would ignore the case as they did with Tawfik al-Khameri, a businessman from Taiz, if they made a big fuss about it.

I guess the government wanted the physicians to use kidnapping like Bani Dhibyan tribe to pressure the government to do its job and arrest the attackers. Does the government want al-Qadasi relinquish his civic values and appeal to his people in Taiz to block the Taiz-Sana'a road to get a positive government response?

Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi (mhalqadhi@hotmail.com) is a Yemeni journalist and columnist.

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Yemen Press Review



Al-Wahdani.net, affiliated with the Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO)
Thursday, Jan. 15, 2009

Top Stories

- JMP condemns hysteric official campaign against its leaders
- Doctors hold sit-in in front of presidential palace in protest against colleague's assault
- Ubad begins his electoral campaign by hosting Islamic Herald Amro Khalid

In a step, considered to be the strangest of its kind in the context of campaigning ahead of general elections, Minister of Youths and Sport Hamoud Ubad decided to host Islamic Herald Amro Khalid and declare a symposium in solidarity with the people of Gaza in electoral constituency 194 in Dhamar City, the website reported.

It added that the "early campaign" cars, which drove under the guise of promoting the symposium in solidarity with Gaza, moved only on the main streets and other feeder roads located within the constituency, and didn't reach other streets, which are part of the city since they are administratively affiliated with another constituency.

According to the website's reporter,

the running cars continuously confirmed that the Islamic herald was hosted under the kind patronage of Hamoud Ubad to allegedly stand in solidarity with Gaza.

The solidarity function was approved to be organized by the resigning minister a few days ago at the city's sporting stadium, which is located within the constituency where Ubad is planning to run for its seat in the upcoming parliamentary elections. Some of the potential candidates from the ruling party, who are rivaling Ubad, labeled the action as a an early campaigning practiced by Ubad in an attempt to exploit the Gaza Cause and win feelings of the constituency citizens so that they can vote for him in the upcoming elections.

Those parliamentary hopefuls also denounced Ubad's early movement for the sake of propagating himself in the local community and gaining popularity by alleged and falsified activities misleading citizens.

Hamoud Ubad, who occupied the post of Religious Endowment and Guidance Minister before being appointed Minister of Youth and Sports, is famous for his extremist practices toward Zaidism during the four-year fighting between the government and Houthis in Sa'ada and other governorates. Ubad is betting to win citizens' vote in the targeted constituency.

The man has intense relation with the Islah party since he quit the opposition party and joined GPC late

in the 1980s after the Islamic-oriented party expended hard efforts in preparing and educating Ubad and helping him acquire oratory skills, which subsequently helped him occupy prestigious positions in the ruling party's government.

The most prominent parliamentary hopefuls, expected to contest with Ubad, are GPC Chairman in the governorate Mohammed Al-Alwani, Assistant Deputy Governor of Dhamar Abdulkarim Dha'afan and Manager of Amran Govenroate's Civil Service Office, who is originally from the same constituency, Abdulqader Al-Sofi, plus the GPC Chairman in the constituency.



Al.Motamar.net affiliated with the General People's Congress (ruling party)
Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2009

Top Stories

- Yemeni Jews protest against Zionist aggression on Gaza
- Dhamar-based Election Commission branch: Conducting the elections on time is a non-reversible option
- GPC official: We deal with those JMP realistic demands, JMP must not believe that it represents the whole opposition in Yemen

Assistant Secretary General of the

General People's Congress (GPC) Dr Ahmed Bin Daghr, who is also head of the party's information sector, confirmed on Monday willingness of the GPC to deal with the realistic requests of the Joint Meeting Parties JMP on the 4th parliamentary elections in Yemen scheduled on 27 April this year, the website reported in its main story.

It went on to say that the ruling party's official emphasized the GPC clinging to dialogue as it is the ideal method for sharing opinions and searching for common points for the interest of the homeland.

In statements to 26september.net Bin Daghr said the JMP presents impracticable demands aimed with the intention to postpone the upcoming parliamentary elections. He added that JMP demands include applying the proportional list that needs constitutional amendment, pointing out that time does no longer allow discussing such topics. He attributed floundering of dialogue to internal differences in the JMP.

Bin Daghr added that the GPC leaves the door of dialogue open in order to search for whatever that would enhance the national unity and develop the democratic process. He indicated that the GPC took into consideration demands of the JMP and accepted most of them.

On whether the JMP insisted on boycotting the elections or not, the ruling party's Assistant Secretary General said the JMP forgets that it is

not all the opposition and there are political parties in the arena that did not lose their independence or political decision.

He expects those parties would engage in strong contest with the GPC, in addition to the independents who have taken a big share of parliament seats in all previous electoral sessions. According to Bin Daghr, the problem with the JMP is that they do not recognize others and try to establish the illusion that the JMP is the sole opposition coalition in the nation.



Al-Sahwa.net, affiliated with the Islah Party
Thursday, Jan. 15, 2009

Top Stories

- Yemenis to demonstrate after Friday Prayers to protest Israeli aggression against Gaza
- Sheikh Al-Moayyad and Zayed enter sixth year of unjust detention
- Opposition Parliament member: South Yemen's issue is key to resolving all troubles countrywide

Parliament member Mohsin BaSurra said during a rally held Sunday in Hadramout province that if the ruling party insisted to hold parliamentary elections alone, then, Yemen's upcoming parliament would be

illegitimate, the website reported.

He said that the Yemeni authorities continuously ignored the South Yemen's issue, pointing out that it is key to solving all other troubles. BaSurrah added that the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) welcomed all suggestions aimed at tackling this issue, and stressing the Southerners' rights in sharing resources and political partnership.

Furthermore, Ba Sora demanded the government absolutely end Saada war and address its impacts.

He further talked about the grinding poverty, unemployment and soaring prices Yemen suffers, affirming that the state witnesses a very terrible situation.

On a side note, the website reported that JMP branch in Hadramout approved transfer of the Executive Committee's chairmanship from Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO) to Al-Haq Party with Saleh Ba Yameen as the Chairman man while Yemeni Socialist Party, another JMP member, replaced Islah as Deputy of the Executive Committee Chairman.

During its recent meeting, the opposition coalition's branch discussed the latest series of developments taking place at the local and Arab levels. It strongly denounced a government's measure preventing Hadramout University students to practice their legal and human right to protest against the Israel aggression on the people of Gaza.

Bin Laden threatens Israel with holy war over Gaza

A new audio recording purported to be from Al-Qaeda chief Osama Bin Laden has called on Muslims to wage jihad against Israel over its offensive in Gaza. If verified, the recording marks the first issued by Bin Laden since May 2008.

By: Alexandra Sandels

The 22-minute long audio message, "A Call for Jihad to Stop the Aggression against Gaza," was dated to the current month in the Islamic calendar and reportedly appeared on Islamic websites on Wednesday.

"God has bestowed us with the patience to continue the path of jihad. The question is can America continue its war with us for several more decades to come? Reports and evidence would suggest otherwise," said the voice believed to be that of Bin Laden, in the tape.

It said that Jihad – or holy "struggle" in Arabic – was the only way to reclaim

"Jerusalem and Palestine" and "bring the return of al-Aqsa" – referring to the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem – one of the holiest sites in Islam.

Media reports claim that it is not possible to verify the voice in the message.

Meanwhile, the BBC's Security Correspondent Frank Gardner-one of the few western journalists who have interviewed Bin Laden, told the BBC the voice in the tape "is the same, if sounding a little tired."

"But," Garner said, "The message from the world's number-one fugitive is right up to date. Probably the last thing the outgoing President Bush wanted to hear in his final week in office was the man behind the 9/11 attacks and a reminder that he has never been caught."

The alleged Bin Laden statement aimed staunch criticism towards the governments of Arab countries in their handling of Israel's war on Gaza and warned Muslims not to put their trust in Arab leaders: "...the great majority of whom are allied with the Crusader-Zionist coalition," the tape.

Palestinian medical officials in Gaza said on Thursday that the number of Palestinians killed in Israel's offensive had passed 1,028. Nearly a third are said to be children. Thirteen Israelis, including 10 soldiers, have so far been killed.

"Our brothers in Palestine, you have suffered a lot... the Muslims sympathize with you in what they see and hear. We, the mujahideen, sympathize with you also.... We are with you and we will not let you down. Our fate is tied to yours in fighting the Crusader-Zionist coalition, in fighting until victory or martyrdom." said the voice in the message, purported to be Bin Laden.

The message also called for dona-

tions to finance the fight the holy war – "tithes from any of the great Muslim or Arab traders...for jihad on all fronts."

Moreover, the recording message said Israel's offensive was a desperate attempt to benefit from the last days of the Bush administration.

The Bush administration, on the other hand, has brushed off the tape saying it is a desperate measure. "It appears this tape demonstrates his isolation and continued attempts to remain relevant at a time when al Qaeda's ideology, mission and agenda are being questioned and challenged throughout the world," White House spokesman Gordon Johndroe said.

"This also looks to be an effort to raise money as part of their ongoing propaganda campaign," he added.

The FBI said it did not find a "specific or credible threat" in the message to the inauguration of US President-elect Barack Obama.

Sources: Al Jazeera, BBC, Reuters



Seven years, several wars and untold trillions of dollars spent for the war on terror and Osama bin Laden is still alive according to his latest audio tape released on Al Qaeda's website Ah Sahab.

Don't drink that 'Zionist' non-fat latte

Over the past week, pro-Palestinian activists throughout the world have staged protests outside branches of the popular coffee chain Starbucks, accusing the company of supporting Israel and Zionism. In Beirut on Tuesday, protesters closed down the Starbucks in one west Beirut shopping district, and on Thursday, demonstrators took to the Starbucks branch in Beirut's posh Verdun neighborhood where they were greeted by riot police.

By: Alexandra Sandels

"You sitting in there, I hope what you're drinking turns into poison," shouted a group of about 30 angry Keffiyeh-clad protesters behind the anti-riot fences placed outside a Starbucks branch in west Beirut on Thursday night.

Armed with Palestinian flags and signs denouncing Israel such as, "Thank you for supporting us! Army of IsraHELL," protesters called for a Lebanese boycott of Starbucks.

Demonstrators cheered as one rally-goer taped a drawing of the Starbucks logo with a Star of David over it, reading "Starbucks-Israel's Biggest Fan," over a dark green umbrella in the café's outdoor seating

area.

Meanwhile, security and riot police blocked protesters and journalists from entering the coffee shop. Inside, only one or two people could be seen sipping on what protesters called "Zionist coffee."

Flyers reading, "Starbucks supports Israel. Do You?" were handed out by activists to journalists and curious by-passers.

Protesters of the anti-Starbucks campaign have accused Howard Schultz, the CEO of Starbucks, of being a close ally of Israel, saying that in 1998 he was granted the "The Israeli 50th Anniversary Tribute Award" from a "Zionist organization."

A protest statement read, "The award was granted for his services to the Zionist state in playing a key role in promoting the close alliance between the United States and Israel.



Starbucks protest like this one in west Beirut are popping up all over the world since Israel began Operation Cast Lead. Demonstrators accuse Starbucks of financial support of Israel.

His work as a propagandist for Israel has been praised by the Israeli Foreign Ministry as being key to Israel's long-term PR success."

Starbucks denies Zionist links

Meanwhile, a spokeswoman for the Seattle-based coffee giant, speaking to AP denied the allegations of

Starbucks supporting Israel, saying that the political standing of any of the chain's employees does not affect the company's policies.

A statement released by Starbucks earlier this month read:

"Rumors that Starbucks Coffee Company and its management support Israel are unequivocally false.

Starbucks is a non-political organization and does not support political causes.... Further, the political preferences of a Starbucks partner [employee] at any level have absolutely no bearing on Starbucks company policies."

But activists in Beirut remain suspicious of Starbucks' political

agenda.

Twenty-two year old Mohammad told MENASSAT he is convinced Starbucks is giving money to Israel.

"Starbucks is supporting the Israelis. I think the profit from these past two weeks is going to the Israeli army. I don't get why Lebanon is supporting Starbucks," he said.

Moreover, protesters called for a full boycott of American goods - "Drinks, food, and smokes" - and denounced the Arab governments' handling of the war on Gaza – especially the Egyptian authorities.

Thursday's rally was not the first demonstration against Starbucks in Lebanon. So far at least two out of the country's sixteen Starbucks shops have been visited by groups of protesters.

On Tuesday, around 100 protesters closed down the Starbucks branch located in a bustling shopping street, Hamra, west Beirut.

The demonstrators shouted 'Palestinians are thirsty, your cup is full of their blood,' according to a report by the LA Times.

The group "Boycott Starbucks" has been set up on the popular social networking site Facebook.

By Salma Ismail

High-altitude sickness, also known as mountain sickness, can cause some people to get sick at high altitudes. Sitting at almost 2300 meters above sea level, Sana'a is definitely at a high altitude. The highest altitude in Yemen is Jabal an-Nabi Shu'ayb, which is located in Sana'a Governorate; this mountain is 3,760 meters above the sea. Regions which are around 1500 meters above sea level are generally considered to be at high altitude.

There are no specific factors such as age, gender, or physical condition that correlates with susceptibility to altitude sickness. Some people get it and some people don't, and some people are more susceptible than others.

Less oxygen in the lungs

As altitude increases, the air becomes "thinner," which means there is less oxygen in the atmosphere. With each breath you take, you get less oxygen in your lungs, and the amount of oxygen in your blood declines. This is also known as hypoxia. Symptoms of hypoxia include headaches, vomiting, sleeplessness, impaired thinking, and an inability to sustain long periods of physical activity. All people can experience mountain sickness, but it may be more severe in people who have heart or lung problems. The atmospheres at

high altitudes have a drastically different composition and temperature than the atmosphere at sea level. These differences can affect humans.

Why less oxygen?

At high altitude, atmospheric pressure is lower as compared to the pressure at sea level. This is due to two competing physical effects: gravity, which causes the air to be as close as possible to the ground, and the heat content of the air, which causes the molecules to bounce off each other and expand.

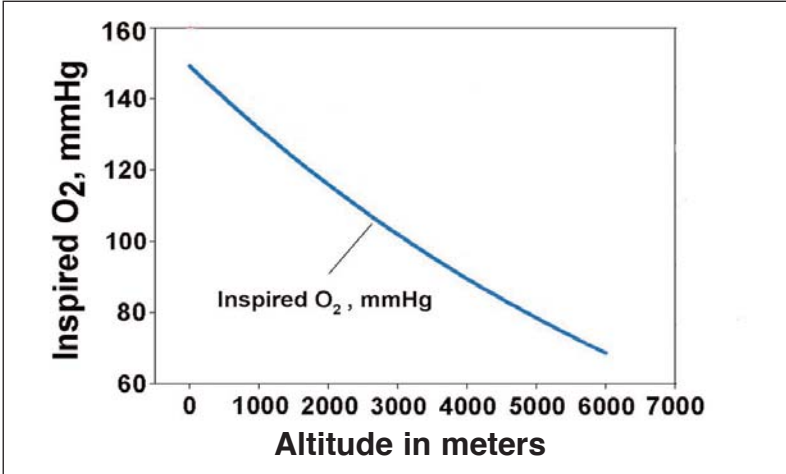
Physiological response to less oxygen

When we travel to high altitudes, our bodies initially develop inefficient physiological responses. There is an increase in breathing and heart rate to as much as double the natural heart rate, even while resting. Pulse rate and blood pressure go up sharply as our hearts pump harder to get more oxygen to the cells. These are stressful changes, especially for people with weak hearts.

At high altitude your blood thickens and your blood pressure rises. This may increase your risk of a stroke because it can cause hypertension or high blood pressure.

Adapting to less oxygen

Acclimatization or adjustment to high altitude is complex and varies greatly between individuals and in different trips for the same individual.



In general, the body becomes approximately 80 percent acclimatized after 10 days at a higher altitude, and approximately 95 percent acclimatized by six weeks. The respiratory rate peaks in about one week and then slowly decreases over the next few months, although it tends to remain higher than its normal rate at sea level. After 10 days, the heart rate starts to decrease.

When we descend, we begin losing our hard-won adaptations at approximately the same rate at which we gained them; 10 days after returning to sea level, we have lost 80 percent of our adaptations.

At a later stage, a more efficient response normally develops as acclimatization takes place. Initially, after arriving at a higher altitude, the

rate of breathing will increase to deliver more oxygen to the body as more red blood cells and capillaries are produced to carry more oxygen. The lungs increase in size to facilitate the osmosis of oxygen and carbon dioxide. There is also an increase in the vascular network of muscles which enhances the transfer of gases.

The heart rate also increases in order to help deliver more oxygen to the body. Fluids redistribute; more blood flows to the brain to provide oxygen, and pulmonary blood pressure increases. If blood pressure gets too high, pulmonary edema, which is the swelling or fluid accumulation in the lungs, can result.

On returning to sea level after successful acclimatization to high altitude, the body usually has more red blood

Altitudes of different areas in Yemen	
Aden	304 meters
Hodeidah	115 meters
Marib	1070 meters
Taiz	1385 meters
Socotra	1519 meters
Ibb	1920 meters
Sana'a	2300 meters
Jabal an Nabi Shu'ayb	3760 meters

cells and greater lung expansion capability than needed. Since this provides athletes in endurance sports with a competitive advantage, many nations train their athletes at higher altitudes. However, the physiological changes that result in increased fitness are short term at low altitude. In a matter of weeks, the body returns to a normal fitness level.

Life threatening conditions at high altitudes

There is no precise definition of high altitude. However, many people feel lightheaded and have other symptoms if they ascend from near sea level to 3000 meters. Some individuals are affected at as low as 2000 meters. Nearly 140 million people worldwide live at altitudes above 2500 meters.

Serious altitude sickness generally develops at elevations higher than 2,400 meters above sea level or when the rate of ascent exceeds 300 meters per day. This problem usually happens to mountain climbers or skiers. The more serious life threatening condi-

tions brought on from exposure to very high altitudes include:

- HACE - High Altitude Cerebral Edema, or fluid buildup in the brain. As the brain swells with fluid, the person's mental state changes. Loss of coordination, coma, and death can result unless the problem is recognized and treated immediately.

- HAPE - Altitude Pulmonary Edema, or high blood pressure in the lungs. This illness occurs when fluid builds up within the lungs, a condition that can make breathing extremely difficult. Usually this happens after the second night spent at a high altitude, but it can also happen earlier or later. HAPE often comes on quickly. If left untreated, it can progress to respiratory collapse and ultimately lead to death. It is the number one cause of death from altitude sickness.

- HARH - High Altitude Retinal Hemorrhage, or small areas of bleeding in the back of the eye.

Coping with high altitude

The simplest cure for altitude sickness is to return to sea level conditions. A person suffering from altitude sickness should drink large amounts of water to rehydrate their blood and reduce the concentration of red blood cells. If possible, individuals should avoid ascending too rapidly, overexertion within 24 hours of ascent, inadequate fluid intake, and the consumption of alcohol or other sedatives.

Al-Thawrah Hospital excessive demand and few resources

By: Mahmoud Assamie

Being one of the best qualified hospitals in Yemen, people from different parts of the country are pouring into Al-Thawrah Modern General Teaching Hospital in Sana'a for better, more affordable healthcare.

The hospital has the capacity to receive 110 inpatients in all medical specializations. Over 100 operations are carried out every day, including complicated ones such as heart and brain operations as well as a number of organ transplants.

The masses of people in the halls, clinics, and yards cannot go unnoticed. Patients and relatives are waiting for medical consultation or treatment. The accident and emergency unit is full of injured and suffering people. There are patients lying in beds in the crowded halls receiving their treatment there, for there are no more beds in the unit's rooms.

Salem Haider, who was injured by two bullets to his thigh, lies in a bed in the hall of the emergency unit. His brother Abdo Haider is waiting for a referral report from the hospital management to transfer his brother to the Military Hospital for free treatment because his brother is a soldier.

Hafez Al-Awadi, 30, suffers from blindness. He travelled from Ibb Governorate in order to seek better healthcare. "I suffer from an old accident to my brain which has caused me blindness. I have been suffering from blindness since 1996, as my medical report says. I came to Al-Thawrah Hospital to undergo brain surgery.

"Because I am blind, the doctors here directed me to go to the Social Care Fund for the Disabled to get a recommendation from them. This will help me pay for the expenses of the operation, because as you see, I do not have money to pay," Al-Awadi added.

Samia Qayed, 15, has a crippled left hand. She came with her father from Hajjah for treatment in Al-Thawrah hospital. Her father says his daughter hurt her hand while she was a child but he could not treat her. He came to the hospital for free treatment.

Heavy work on the shoulders of physicians

Due to the increasing number of patients coming to the hospital and not enough medical practitioners and beds, doctors face intense pressure at work.

Dr. Abdulnaser Al-Absi, general practitioner in internal medicine, says he receives 60 patients each day who come from all parts of the country. "Because this hospital is the only mod-

ern facility in Yemen with improved diagnostic equipment, we receive this great number of patients," said Al-Absi. He declared that the hospital even receives cases from the greatest hospitals in the capital, adding that many of these cases are hopeless in terms of recovery.

Dr. Yahya Attuhaifi from the Urology Unit said that since his section is the only one in the country, "we receive cases even from the southern parts of the country, like Abyan for example. The hospital as a whole receives patients from all the parts of the country because it is the only referral hospital in Yemen." Attuhaifi added that "the operation room is open 24 hours a day."

Dr. Najmuddin Al-Ba'adani, surgeon in the emergency unit, says he receives 15 cases during his work shift alone. "There is pressure on the medical staff, pressure on medical equipment, and pressure on the other health care workers at the hospital," he said.

Reasons behind overcrowding

Dr. Zayed Atef, Deputy Director of Al-Thawrah Modern General Teaching Hospital for Medical Affairs, said that the hospital is overcrowded because it receives cases from across the country, largely for two reasons. The first is that the hospital has medical equipment of the highest level. The hospital also depends on highly qualified medical practitioners.

"The patient can find here what he cannot find elsewhere, whether in the capital Sana'a or in other country's governorates. All cases which do not find treatment at public or private hospitals are cured in Al-Thawrah Hospital," he said.

The second reason is that the hospital includes specialized and specific centers like the heart, kidney, eye, and radiation centers, among others. The hospital is the only one in the country which carries out open heart surgeries, and the only one which performs kidney transplants. Furthermore, there is no diabetic center in the country except in Al-Thawrah hospital.

Dr. Aziz Al-Azani, Director of the Heart Center, said that the Heart Center is the only one in Yemen and provides its services to 23 million people across the country.

"The center includes more than 150 physicians, some of them holding doctorate degrees and are specialized consultants," said al-Azani.

The other heart centers in other hospitals are not as qualified as Al-Thawrah Heart Center because they do not have practitioners who hold the highest qualifications, like those who work in Al-Thawrah's Heart Center.

What the hospital provides to its staff

The hospital is the only one in the country that grants board certificates to graduated doctors. "There are many doctors working in the hospital in order to get board certified," said Dr. Yahya Attuhaifi. These physicians provide help to the hospital, receiving certification in return.

Al-Absi, one of those physicians who are working towards getting certified, said, "We get additional benefits from the hospital helping us in our study such as seminars, scientific sessions, and practical study."

The hospital holds regular scientific sessions and seminars that enable physicians to improve and develop their capabilities. "We have remote education via a telemedicine educational program. We have a link with King Faisal Hospital in Saudi Arabia via this program. For example, for any conference held in a country that we have a link with, we can see and participate in this conference here in the hospital," said Atef.

No need to travel abroad for better treatment

With the improved medical services Al-Thawrah hospital provides to patients, there is no need to Yemeni people to travel abroad for better treatment.

"About 80 to 90 percent of complicated operations are now being carried out in Yemen. This represents a great improvement and is a dream come true for us," stated Atef.

Affordable care

Despite its exceptional health services it provides to patients, Al-Thawrah Hospital receives very lower fees for these services. Inpatients pay only YR 400 a day. This small amount covers residence, meals, free medications, and diagnostic tests.

"We take very small fees from patients. Fees for heart operations and kidney transplantation are paid for by the state, but other operations are required to pay ten percent of the total cost," said Atef.

Emergency cases are treated first, and these patients undergo operations right away. After the operation, relatives of patients pay ten percent of the total cost. If they cannot afford to pay, they are granted an exemption and the state settles all fees. "All medication is free and rarely is a patient requested to go out to purchase medication," he said.

"We provide heart services to patients with little fees as compared to other hospitals," said Al-Azzani. Some cases have medical decisions exempting them from fees. "Those who can pay are demanded to pay only YR 50,000 for diagnostic cardiac catheteri-

zation, while other hospitals demand double this sum. We demand only \$2000 for open heart surgery, while this service is provided in private hospitals for \$8000," clarified Al-Azzani.

What patients say

Some patients approve of what the deputy director said, while others other approve of half of what he has said.

Ahmad Saleh came from outside of Sana'a with his wife Ayhish who suffers from coronary artery obstruction. He paid YR 50, 000 for the hospital to perform a heart operation.

Haj Ali Naser has a relative who suffers from coronary artery obstruction. He said he paid YR 300,000 for a heart operation for his relative. "Private hospitals demanded \$2500 to carry out this operation for my relative. I preferred to come to Al-Thawrah Hospital to conduct the operation," he said.

Gasem Ayash, a patient in the internal medicine section, suffers from an intestine growth. His relatives said he receives some of the medicine from the hospital, while some medicine he has to buy from outside.

Ali Qarash, 18, suffers from renal failure. He came from the Hajjah governorate for the process of renal washing. "We buy half of the medicine from outside the hospital, and the second part is given freely by the hospital," he said.

Some patients cannot get access for treatment in the hospital

With a bed capacity of 868 and cadre of 350 in all specializations, some patients who come for treatment in the hospital can not get access to medical services and are forced to go to other hospitals.

"We face heavy pressure and we try to receive as many patients as possible. However, we have to turn some away because we have a shortage in bed capacity," admitted Atef.

"The Heart Center has a bed capacity of 130 for different cases. Due to this small capacity we are daily forced not to accept some cases," said al-Azzani.

He further stated that "we carry out 12 to 15 cardiac catheterizations on a daily basis. We receive tens of cases of heart patients a day. Other public hospitals have to be activated to receive cases we cannot accept because of overcrowding."

Physicians complain of lower payments

Despite their heavy workload, physicians complain about low salaries that do not cover their living expenses.

"The financial situation of Yemeni physicians is at its lowest level. They are given little money for hard work," said Attuhaifi. He further says the

physician's monthly salary does not exceed \$200, while the salary of an Indian nurse working with him in the same place is more than \$400. "We provide humanitarian service without looking at the wages," he stated simply. "I receive only YR 42,000 a month. This sum is not enough to cover my living expenses. Besides our work at the hospital, we sometimes look for additional work in other places to cover our daily needs," said Al-Absi.

Al-Ba'adani said most of the board students are from outside the hospital. They receive small salaries from the institutions the come from. The hospital gives them only alternative wages, YR 2500 for 24 hours of work.

When the Deputy Director of the hospital, Atef, was asked about the bad financial situation of the physicians and if the hospital has a plan for increasing their salary, he said they can not take money from the hospital's revenues to encourage the medical practitioners because they are asked to give money to the government.

Dr. Ghazi Ismael, Deputy Minister of Public Health and Population for Curative Medicine, stated that Al-



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Arab youth between hope and disillusionment

Toward a New U.S. Strategy in the Middle East

By: Tim Bloomquist
Taqrir Washington

On Friday December 12, the Saban Center for Middle East Policy unveiled a report offering recommendations for the new American presidential administration on improving relations with the Muslim World. The program entailed a presentation of the major issues and recommendations contained within "The Doha Compact: New Directions for the United States and the Muslim World," followed by remarks and a question-answer segment by several panelists.

The panel consisted of Stephen Grand, director of the Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World at the Saban Center; Ahmed Younis, an analyst for the Gallup Center for Muslim Studies; and Saad Eddin Ibrahim, chairman of the Ibn Khaldoun Center for Development Studies.

The Doha Compact has been



signed by 47 leaders and thinkers from across the Muslim world, the U.S. and many other states that hold critical roles in the relationship between the Muslim world and the rest of the international community. The Compact contains four major themes of recommendations that hope to resolve the many issues that currently divide the U.S. and the

Muslim world: A New Style of American Foreign Policy, Addressing Together the Conflicts that Divide Us, Understanding the Role of Islam in the Muslim World, and Educating and Investing in People.

Reshaping American Policy

Grand noted that while many within the Muslim world accept that the U.S. will remain a lasting power on the international scene, they desire a shift from the policy of "imposing its will on the region." Instead, many Muslims, Grand and the report state, look for a new style of leadership "that is less focused on an 'axis of evil' and more focused on building 'partnerships of equals.'" Grand argued that the new president must travel early in his administration to the Middle East and actively listen to the people of the Muslim world as a show of America's openness to productively engage the region.

As a part of shared conciliation method, the Compact asserts that the U.S. should forego its "heavy-handed approach to democratization," while retaining its support for those within

the Muslim world working to bring about reform. In return, the Muslim-majority states should refrain from "using America (and Israel) as an excuse ... to maintain their hold on power" and promote constructive reforms and more accurate depictions of the two states.

One of the main trends in these suggestions were calls for internationalized efforts, to resolve the conflicts, such as bringing together not only the U.S. and Muslim states but the EU, UN, Japan, and non-Muslim states neighboring the Muslim world. The report calls for an internationalized effort to ensure the Mideast Peace Process results in the establishment of an independent, viable Palestinian state through international support, both economic and military.

Additionally, the Compact argues that the U.S. and Muslim states must work together to forge a peace agreement in Sudan by working to unify rebel groups and place sanctions on the Khartoum government. The Compact asserts

that "the international community needs to look forward and strengthen regional dialogue on ensuring stability in Iraq," as well as ensuring that Afghanistan does not "become the forgotten war again."

The role Iran and Pakistan play in resolving regional and international security issues is also stressed by the report, as it calls for increased pressure to convince Iran that "support for violent extremists" hinders opportunities for peaceful relations with its neighbors and ensuring that democracy and educational progress take hold in Pakistan so as to counter al-Qaeda's resurging power.

The report also called for a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue, arguing that the conflict should not "[divide] the world from Islam" and that the new president should make Indian-Pakistani dialogue a priority.

This takes on additional purpose following the late-November Mumbai attacks that have strained relations between the two countries.

The Future of Democracy

"Democracy must come to Muslim societies," Younis asserted, "but that democracy must come organically." He continued by arguing that for the people of the Middle East, the biggest concerns are the problems directing affecting their lives, such as education and economic development.

Ibrahim argued that the new administration has the opportunity to "create real environment for democratization" throughout the Middle East. "[Obama] should schedule his first visit to Jakarta or Istanbul to show support for emerging democracies," he said.

Ibrahim criticized American policies that allowed President Mubarak of Egypt to remain in office for nearly three decades on the belief that he would modernize the country. "Mubarak has been in office for 28 years; how many more years does he need to bring economic development?" he asked. In August 2008, Ibrahim was sentenced to two years in jail for "defaming Egypt."

The Compact calls for the U.S. to reach out to Islamist parties that are willing to embrace democracy and bring about reform, while these parties "need to demonstrate through their actions and not just their rhetoric" their willingness to adopt the democratic ideals of multi-pluralism and equal rights for women and religious minorities.

The prospect of organic democratization holds some elements that "scare the West," Ibrahim conceded, as it would mean the inclusion of Islamist groups. But he asserted that this is a necessary trade-off and the U.S. must be willing to "deal with them equitably," including the Muslim Brotherhood, if it desires a healthy relationship with the citizens of the Muslim world.

Symbolism as a Critical Gesture

The panelists stressed the importance "symbolic gestures" made by both sides would play in improving relations.

"Style matters and the way the U.S. presents itself matters," Grand asserted, noting that the U.S. must promote an image of respecting the Muslim world in order to foster a good relationship. He said that the U.S. must reshape its image and signal that it "is not imperial, but wants to help the region develop."

Ibrahim, founder of the Ibn Khaldun Center for Development Studies in Cairo, called for the establishment of a "non-partisan commission for truth and reconciliation" inside the U.S. to look at how its actions have negatively affected its image in the world. He said that such an action would represent a "symbolic act" to present the U.S. as willing to reengage the Muslim world in a positive manner. Ibrahim stressed that America must "humbly" confront its image and the grievances others hold against its

policies.

Grand pointed out that despite appointments to his national security team, the Obama administration's policies on dealing with "acute conflicts" in the region are not yet clear. He did recommend that while the U.S. should not completely withdraw from the Middle East, as some both in America and the Muslim world desire, but "must signal its lack of intent to remain indefinitely."

Younis, a member of the Advisory Committee on U.S.-Muslim World Relations of the United States Institute of Peace, noted that the many people in the Middle East "do not put acute conflicts above the level of disrespect" they feel has been shown to them. He contended that letting conflicts overshadow people's day-to-day livelihoods allows "the politicization of policies."

Restoring Understandings

The panelists argued the U.S. should focus on promoting agendas that improve people's lives in the Middle East.

The most important aspect of this remains the establishment of educational institutions. The Compact calls for the U.S. to "be a partner in helping create indigenous educational institutions in the Muslim world capable of providing world-class education to their citizens." Aspects of this include a promotion of the liberal arts and other skills critical to engaging successfully in the global economy, as well as restoring the Muslim world's role as a leader in technological and scientific advancement.

Steps have been taken with increased participation between U.S. and Middle Eastern institutions, as Ibrahim referred to education as America's most important commodity. He noted that since September 11 the number of American-style universities has increased from the original two American Universities in Cairo and Beirut to 16.

Improved educational efforts in the U.S. are required to enable the American people to understand the true nature of Islam and "do a better job of differentiating the faithful from the fanatical." Accomplishing this would require regular information sessions with policymakers to educate them about the vastly diverse beliefs and practices of the sects in Islam. Shifts in language choices would be necessitated in order to ensure that proper respect is shown for Islam and its followers, as well as passing these lessons onto the general public.

Isfahani contended that the growing role of what he termed the "great game" – the major policies of states – overshadowed the "quiet game" – the role of families and communities in shaping society. In order to combat this, he argued that the U.S. should understand how the two overlapped and ensure the preservation of both. By focusing on the quiet game, Isfahani said, the U.S. would "gain insight into the realities of societies." Doing so, according to Isfahani, would allow the U.S. to contribute to building up societies and villages from the bottom up.

Arguing that the success of such an initiative depends upon public engagement, Younis said, "This is the right moment of leadership, but only if the American people fold into this message" of regularly conversing with Muslims both here and abroad.

"This is not really about engagement between governments," Grand said, "but about engagement between societies," alluding to the Compacts final recommendation to establish society exchanges between the U.S. and Muslim states to remove the perceptions of "otherness" between the cultures. "We know far too little about Muslims and the Muslim world and that is half the problem."

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Digital heritage project to help improve Yemen's image around the world

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

A group of three young ambitious girls came up with a new idea for their graduation project from the Youth Civic Engagement Program (YCEP). This project was to document the heritage of Yemen in Arabic, English, and eventually other languages. They called it the Digital Heritage Group which will be released in the form of compact discs and will be available for sale.

"We keep seeing abandoned documentations and ancient books talking about Yemen's history and heritage. We wanted to revive this heritage in a modern way so that our past is not forgotten," said Ameena Al-Ajami, manager of the project.

Ameena Al-Ajami and Leena Al-Maqtari were colleagues in the French department at the Arts College in Sana'a University. During their study, they often heard questions regarding Yemen's history and heritage. They realized that interested foreigners could not obtain adequate and satisfactory information on Yemen, which planted the idea for the project in the girls' minds. When they enrolled in YCEP, they decided to create a modern source for interested people on Yemen.

The third partner in this group is Abeer Al-Khashabi, a psychology graduate, who says it is embarrassing that outsiders document Yemeni heritage – not Yemenis themselves.

"Even when foreigners document Yemeni heritage, they do it from their point of view and their perspective. We want to do it as Yemenis," said Al-Khashabi.

The YCEP provides an innovative year-long curriculum with a focus on experiential learning, networking, leadership, and skill building, all intended to prepare young women and men for their next endeavors, mainly as agents of change in the civil society. This program is one of many

development programs that the Youth Leadership Development Foundation offers to Yemenis.

Dr. Antilak Al-Mutwakil, chair of the board of Youth Leadership Development Foundation, said the foundation supported the project because it was a new concept and aims at the country's development as a whole.

"This is the purpose of our work in general, as our aim is to encourage young Yemenis who have a sense of responsibility towards their country," she said.

Challenges

Since they first started designing the project in May 2007, the three partners have been struggling to complete it. The first phase – the documentation of the old city of Sana'a – took much longer than expected and went way past predefined deadlines.

Some of the reasons behind this delay are unfulfilled promises by agencies and individuals who promised to support the project one way or the other. As the girls put it, "the people did not have faith in the project or in our abilities as young entrepreneurs to do something worthwhile."

They also faced difficulties in finding information that could provide details about the history of the old city of Sana'a. They had to get such information directly from the sources and meet with historians, researchers, and even elderly citizens of Sana'a to verify the information. Even the international sources were not taken for granted, as the girls felt some of the documentation did not contain accurate information. It took them seven months to complete the basic heritage information on the old city of Sana'a.

"We planned three months, but because of conflicts between information we received and the scarcity of resources, it took more than double that time," said Al-Khashabi.

She also commented on copyright issues and that some researchers refused to give information, fearing

that their credit would go to the Digital Heritage Group and not to the original researcher. They had to find at least five sources providing the same information to verify that it is correct.

"If there is a will there is a way, and because of our determination we were able to finally gather all the information needed," said Leena Al-Maqtari.

Today all the information in Arabic is completed and translated into English. The multimedia product has been designed and is ready for circulation. The CDs will be available for the public after the project is officially launched next month.

The Small and Micro Enterprise Promotion Service, affiliated with the Yemeni Social Fund for Development and the Tourism Promotion Council, have promised to promote this project in Yemen's exhibition abroad.

The girls hope that cultural organizations such as the British Council, the French and German Cultural Centers, and other institutions will buy a number of the CDs to support the project and to provide their customers with a good source on Yemeni heritage.

About the Digital Heritage Group

The Digital Heritage Group is a corporation which seeks to contribute to restoring and promoting Yemeni heritage both inside and outside Yemen using modern technology. Believing in the motto "Your Future is Your Heritage," the group tries to shed light on the importance of Yemeni traditions which in turn will help promote tourism in Yemen.

The vision is to give Yemeni heritage and civilization more importance through high-tech methods depending on specialized documentation of all the different kinds of Yemeni heritage. This is to be done through documenting and circulating information about Yemeni heritage using modern technology and techniques in order to create awareness of the great importance of maintaining



Digital Heritage Group (www.aljambia.org) is a multimedia product that gives users inside information on Yemeni heritage in an interesting and interactive way.

Yemeni heritage. In return, such projects will contribute towards focusing on Yemeni heritage as we believe that "our heritage is our future."

The project has four objectives:

- 1- Maintaining and revealing the great ancient history of Yemen.
- 2- Circulating Yemeni heritage internally and promoting it in order to attract tourists who will be a good contribution towards the growth of Yemen's economy.
- 3- Expanding the project to cover all Yemeni governorates as well as establishing a tourism company.
- 4- Supporting youth as active members in reviving Yemeni heritage and

preserving it.

About YLDF

The Youth Leadership Development Foundation (YLDF) is a non-governmental and non-profit organization located in Sana'a, the capital city of Yemen. YLDF was founded to support youth in voicing their opinions and needs and participating in Yemen's development, especially underprivileged and female youth. Youth represent a wide base in the demographic pyramid of Yemen, yet they play a small role in decision making processes and have only a minor contribution to the economy.

It aspires to create a Yemen in which skilled, well qualified and active young

women and men play leadership roles in all domains of society, enabling Yemenis to contribute to a better world.

Its mission is "to increase youth participation in social, political, and economic aspects of society through education in vocational, communication, leadership, and life skills in response to the needs of the community and labor market."

4U

To read more about the project go to www.aljambia.org or contact info@aljambia.org
The cost of one CD is only ten US dollars.

"Dialogue is the way to live together in peace," participants in the cultural dialogue said

By: Ali Saeed

In a seminar about the intercultural dialogue between the Islamic and Western worlds that was organized yesterday by the German Embassy on January 13th, participants said that the only civilized way to end conflicts is through dialogue.

Participants in the seminar discussed topics relevant to religious and cultural dialogue, such as the similarities among nations and the principles of Islamic philosophy towards understanding and dealing with the other. Participants also discussed the findings of the 3 day winter school session that took place in Sana'a between university students from Yemen and Germany.

Michael Klor-Berchold, the German ambassador to Yemen, opened the seminar, stating that dialogue is an important instrument for approaching others. He added that dialogue was the method used to unify East and West Germany when it became one country more than 15 years ago.

The speakers in the seminar said that misconception and prejudice are the main factors that lead to treating others poorly or without justice. They added that the right way to approach the other is to look to the similarities and to try to forget the differences.

German and Yemeni students who participated in the winter school showed the findings of their gathering. Dr.Kramer Gurdun, head of Eastern Studies at the Free University of Berlin, managed the meeting of the students during the three days the session took place. He said that "perception is the component that we use to construct our images of the others."

Fateh Afandi, a German student who participated in the winter school, spoke

about the findings and the recommendations of their gathering. He said that results of the winter school can be concluded in the following: first, one should recognize the potential damages that images of the Muslim world and images of the Western world can cause. Second, recognition that there are both similarities and differences between the two worlds is of paramount importance. Similarities mentioned include those that any human beings share, such as emotions and economic interests; differences include those between values, morals, self-culture and other-culture.

Afandi recommended that first we must raise awareness of the importance of dialogue with the other. Secondly, the promotion of such dialogues should start with the students at the educational institutions and universities. Thirdly, media and modern technology should be utilized to promote dialogues, since they are important instruments in achieving such dialogues. Fourthly, it is imperative to reduce conflicts on both international and national levels. Finally, we must not pursue any social or economic dimensions that raise and add to conflicts. He concluded that people have to look at the similarities that they share and forget the differences.

Another Yemeni female student who participated in the winter school said that she and her colleagues became very emotional when they were watching a film shown about getting acquainted with the other. She concluded that this meeting is the first step towards understanding the other.

Another participant in the winter school from Sana'a University said that this gathering was the first experience for him towards really understanding the West. "It is a good step in working towards understanding the other," he

stated.

He ambitiously added that the experience is the beginning of learning to live together in peace.Dr. Ahmed Al-Kibsi, vice rector of Sana'a university, said that when he visited the workshop of the winter school he found that people can break the isolation between themselves through dialogue about their cultures.

Dr.Ahmed Al-Dagashi, associate professor at Sana'a University, briefly introduced research about the principles of Islamic philosophy towards other-perception. He said that he is worried about organizing such an event alongside the current unnatural atmosphere coinciding with events in Gaza, where women and children are being killed.

He stated that the Islamic perception of the other is controlled by various

principles, one of them being the principle of acquaintance of and living amongst different people. He cited evidence for that from the Holy Quran, Surah Al-Hujurat, verse 13: "Oh people! We created you from one man and one woman and made you branches and tribes that you may recognize one another." Another principle is that every Muslim has the right to call the other, and the other is free to response or not. He cited verse 158 from Surah Al-Aaraaf: "Oh men! I am sent to you as the messenger of Allah." Yet another principle is that Islam believes in human dignity and the treatment of other people with justice. He cited verse 70 in Surah Al-Isra: "We have honored the sons of Adam." The last principle Al-Dagashi cited was the human being's liberty in Islam to think and to choose for him or

herself. He cited verse 256 in the Cow Surah: "Let there be no compulsion in Religion."

Attendees who came to the conference questioned the speakers about the massacre in Gaza. Abdulkaraim Al-Eryani, former Prime Minster of Yemen, said 'salaam' to the resistant men in Gaza, stating that the international community has to stop

the bloodshed there. Al-Kibsi added that Arab leaders should care about what is happening and find a resolution; otherwise, they will lose their legitimacy.

The German ambassador said that people should never give up on what is happening in Gaza and should work on dialogue as a means of solving the problem.



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Sexual harassment deters women from outdoor activities

By: Ali Saeed and Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Women living in Sana'a complain of regular sexual harassment on the street, in buses and public places. Ninety percent of a sample of 70 interviewees said they had been harassed in Sana'a one way or another. About 14 percent said they are continuously harassed and around 37 percent said they are harassed physically by men outdoors.

Although the majority of women overcome this intimidation and continue to go about their work outside their homes, some 55 percent would rather cancel their outdoor activities such as shopping or using public transportation than go out without a companion.

Women interviewed identified certain streets they cannot walk in if they are alone because of the men who loiter on their pavements targeting women and girls passing by. Most of these are idle young men who while the hours of the day away sitting in groups on street corners or strolling down busy streets, usually targeting women walking alone or whose faces are veiled.

Social complex

The 17-question survey conducted by the Yemen Times on teasing and sexual harassment in Sana'a revealed that women face sexual harassment regularly and have "lost faith in the society's general moral towards women", as one of the interviewees put it.

"The problem in Yemen in my opinion stems from the sexual objectification of women and a culture that views them as inferior, not only are they physically weaker but intellectually and morally inferior," says a Yemeni women blogger currently living in the UK.

She adds that this is the reason why a woman always needs a guardian in the eyes of Yemeni society: if left alone, she will fall into sexual sin and be the cause of a public "fitna". It is not uncommon in Yemen to see a mother walking behind her 13 year-old son who is her guardian.

Results of the questionnaire showed that around 37 percent of the women are subjected to sexual harassment in the form of degrading insults, telephone calls and text messages. Seventy-two percent of the women said that they were called sexually-charged names while walking in the street and about 20 percent of this group said that they were subjected to such demeaning remarks on a regular basis.

"I get all kind of harassment, verbal and sexual harassment even though I wear the veil and am totally covered every time I go out - sometimes I look as scary as a ghost," said Nahed, a Yemeni girl. "I have been to Cairo too and I was harassed many times."

"Harassment does not occur because of what women wear and Islam does not say that men should harass women who are not dressed conservatively: the issue is about morals and manners. If men harass women, it means only one thing which is that they are disrespectful and were badly brought up at home," she explained.

Using technology

Random calls and texting is common among idle men looking for an opportunity to meet girls.

Analysts attribute this partially to strict segregation in Yemen as it creates lack of interaction and familiarity between the sexes. Curtains are used to separate the sexes when talking to each other, a situation that sexualizes a perfectly normal environment. Any interaction between the sexes is thus deemed to be sexual.

Thirty percent of the interviewees said they had received calls from anonymous men who wanted to chat. Some are persistent and call at odd hours.

"Some boys exchange the numbers of girls they know or come to know by chance. If the girl responds, she becomes the hot cake and her phone never stops ringing," said Fatima Mohammed Qaid, a university student.

Sexual harassment on some occasions can turn physical if the opportunity is available, as some girls put it. Girls in crowded places and queues are likely to be pinched or touched in an impolite manner.

Although this is not as common as verbal harassment,

Harassment of foreign women

The most common difficulty foreign women encounter in Yemen is street harassment, usually in the form of stares, whistles, catcalls, or pinching/grabbing (although this is somewhat less common). Apologists may claim that it is only the rare Yemeni who harasses foreign women, but reports from our students suggest that harassment is nearly as common in Yemen as in most Mediterranean societies, at least in the urban areas.

Perhaps it is wisest to assume you will encounter harassment and develop personal strategies accordingly. Women who have lived in Yemen for long periods, or in other Middle Eastern countries, differ widely on their advice for dealing with harassment. Some advise ignoring such behavior altogether, others suggest publicly berating or embarrassing the harasser, still others advocate punching him!

You will have to decide which course of action feels most appropriate and comfortable for you. Be assured that in public, however, a pinch or grab can permissively be met with a loud and angry response from you; such behavior towards a Yemeni woman is grossly unthinkable, and the same standards of respect apply to your person as well. You can be guaranteed that in such situations, your reaction will immediately draw a crowd to remonstrate the harasser.

More serious forms of harassment, including sexual assault, physical violence, or rape are so rare as to be virtually unheard of in Yemen. Stares are quite common in Yemen, by both men and women, and should be understood as mere curiosity. Eye contact should be avoided, however, as this is often interpreted as an invitation to move beyond curiosity. Sunglasses allow you to look around discreetly. You should be careful in Yemen, but you do not need to be scared or overly sensitive.

around 37 percent of the sample said that had been subjected to some sort of physical harassment and three percent said they always are.

Insecurity

Although most women overcome their fear and go about their work using public transportation and walking in public places, some expressed their genuine concern about being harassed on the street.

Around 43 percent said that they are suffering from fear and insecurity as a result of being harassed. Some have said that their impression of men is negative because of the treatment they receive on the streets. A further 14 percent said they worry about going to public places because of the insecurity they feel when men are around.

The results also revealed that there is no particular day on which harassment is more common. Only 30 percent identified weekends as days when the harassment is more common, while the majority did not see much difference.

Silver lining

Sisters Arab Forum had launched a USD 700,000 worth project funded by the Dutch government to provide better protection for women and children exposed to violence and sexual abuse.

Amal Al-Basha, director of the forum, indicated that a telephone hotline will be set up to receive complaints from women and children exposed to sexual harassment.

"We will cooperate with the Ministry of Interior regarding reported cases. The project will monitor violence incidents reported by the media"

Al-Basha told IRIN, the UN humanitarian news service, there were no accurate data on sexual violence cases, and that one of the aims was to create a database of sexual violence incidents. "During the first year of the program, we will be able to assess the gravity of the phenomenon of sexual violence against women and children."



ual violence against women and children."

In 2007, there were 33 rape cases, including 18 cases against juvenile girls, according to a May 2008 report on the status of Yemeni women in 2007. The report added that a

2003 health survey indicated that 5 percent of married women were exposed to domestic violence, including beating mostly by their husbands, and 21.5 percent of these apparently without any reason.

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A home for the less fortunate



Because of poverty and with half the population below 15 years of age, children are forced into the streets to beg and live in harsh conditions.

By: Enas Ahmed Al-Awami

On a late Monday morning, Rasheed Abdulwahab, 14, whose home had been the streets for two years, went to the Childhood Safety Center and asked to be taken in.

His meeting with the center's director Fadl Moghrem did not last long before his request was turned down. The explanation he was given was that he did not fit the standards.

"He's already 14 and when he reaches 16 he'll leave the center according to our program. We won't have enough time to correct his behavior to reach the center's goals," said Moghrem.

Rasheed is from the village of Jahran in the Dhamar governorate. His father is sick and unable to do anything, and his mother does not live with his father. Rasheed says his family is poor. He moved to Sana'a because his brothers used to beat him and tie him down whenever he refused to go out to work carrying concrete blocks. He tried to escape when he was 12, but his brothers found him. Now he's in Sana'a to start a new life and to join the Childhood Safety Center.

"I heard about the center and I

always wanted to come. One of my friends told me not to come because you hit them and treat them badly. But I decided to come anyway. What's the difference? At least I might find a warmer place to sleep. I'm sick of my family's torment and of having to run away," Rasheed answered when Moghrem asked him why he came.

Like Rasheed, many other teenage boys who live in the streets were not fortunate enough to be admitted to the safety center. The center already has too many applications, as each day at least three boys turn up on its doorstep seeking refuge from harsh street life.

The Childhood Safety Center

The Childhood Safety Center is considered to be one of the main centers specialized in the social and cultural rehabilitation of the homeless children. The center was established in December 2001 and was entrusted to the Al-Saleh Social Foundation for development in July 2004.

The purpose of the center is to protect and take care of homeless children whose families were unable to feed them properly, give them love and attention, and teach them how to interact with their community. The center aims to qualify them socially and vocationally to enable them to

reintegrate into mainstream society.

The center, which contains more than nine bedrooms, two classes and one clinic, is home to more than 35 boys between the ages of seven and 16. If a boy reaches the age of 16 but cannot return home, the center finds him a job so that he can earn a living. Children from very poor backgrounds usually hear about the center by word of mouth, and run away from home to seek refuge there. As for the younger children, they are usually brought to the center by the police or by their own family because they are unable to take care of their child.

According to Moghrem, the center doesn't usually take orphans in, but instead transfers them to an orphanage. They don't keep any children without first informing the family. In the case of those who are forwarded to the center by a police station or a third party, they search for his family until they find them. When they do, the boys' parents do not pay anything to the center.

One of the boys is studying in high school. He spends the morning at school and the afternoon at the center, then goes home to sleep.

As soon as a boy arrives to the center, they isolate him immediately from the rest until they have studied his

case and decide how to help him. The center makes sure that the boy has no infectious diseases, and asks him how old he is, where he is from and why he came to the center. He has an interview with a psychologist who then decides which of the center's three groups he will join and where he will sleep according to his age and situation.

In the beginning, he takes part in the center's illiteracy eradication classes if he is illiterate, then the center enrolls him in school or gives him vocational training so that he may find a job easily in the future.

Four psychologists and one social worker teach the children and follow their progress. There are also female workers - especially to help the younger children who need a mother's touch.

"If they are around, the children can go to visit their family every week and the center provides the transport to get there," said Abdulkhabeer Mohammed Ahmed, one of the center's psychologists.

"The center is working hard to achieve the goals of its different programs in the areas of study, health, skill development, community awareness, religious education, entertainment and sports," he added.

The fortunate ones

Mohamed Nasser Al-Nassabi, 11, has been living at the center for one and half years now. He says he feels



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comfortable, living a more settled life and going to school, after almost nine years of living in the street without a goal.

"I don't want to go back home. They just want me to go out and sell tissues in the street. My stepmother kept beating me and kicked me out of the house," Mohamed said, "I like football. I just want to be like football player Leonardino."

Abdullah Al-Raimi, 13, wants to be a pilot and fly all over the world when he grows up.

"I know that life is much better than we see it," he said. "My father brought me into this life only to work and give

him money. I ran away many times and I don't want to go back to him, or even live with my family anymore."

Most of the children at the center are there because their parents neglect, whether they ran away from home to the center or were brought there from the streets by the police.

As for Rasheed, he has met a bus driver who has offered him a job as a bus fare-collector. Who knows what he will be doing, and what kind of environment he will be living in. Who knows how many boys like Rasheed are waiting for a chance to be saved and given the opportunity of a dignified life.

India: Daughters in the Parent Trap

Despite our best efforts as a women's group, we could be of very little help when families wanted to make the son-in-law accept their daughter back and expected us to convince him to treat her well. This is because we have no way of influencing the behaviour of a man or his family except through moral persuasion. But, in most cases, all possible forms of persuasion and intervention by relatives, community elders or 'biradari' (community) bodies had already been tried. Husbands do not usually respond to women's groups' reconciliation efforts because they see no advantage in doing so.

An extract from 'Zealous Reformers, Deadly Laws: Battling Stereotypes', By: Madhu Purnima Kishwar
Women's Feature Service

Many families had the feeling that organized protest demonstrations would help. Many asked us to approach some government official or some highly placed person in the police to pressurize or threaten the man. But, like most other women's groups, we did not have the government machinery at our beck and call to arm-twist errant husbands, nor did we aspire to perform this task.

Ultimately, the problem is the lack of any bargaining position for women in the present family set-up. A husband can get away with maltreating and throwing out his wife because he knows she is easily replaceable. There are enough desperate parents willing to marry off their daughters to just about any man available. The woman controls nothing in her marital family - not even the dowry. The maintenance laws are so ineffective that only rarely does a man have to part with any money when he throws his wife out. The family property is almost never jointly held nor is any significant proportion in the woman's name. So she can claim nothing as her own when she is thrown out.

The attitude of most husbands is very similar to that seen in a case we came across at the Crimes Against Women Cell. The woman said she had been humiliated, confined to the house, beaten and harassed for dowry ever since the wedding. She finally left the house when her husband beat her up one day and repeatedly told her to

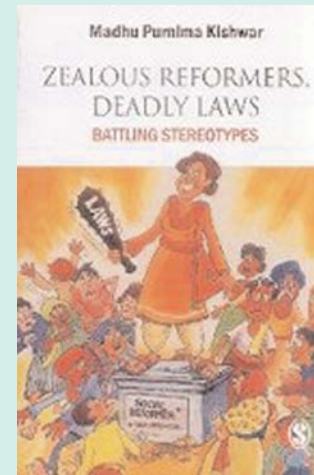
get out. Her mother and brothers were desperate to send her back to her husband on any terms. Her mother said, 'I told my son-in-law not to mention divorce. The word is unknown in our family. I told him I was ready to eat his shit if he would only take her back.' A few months later, when we went to meet them again, they told us the woman had returned to her husband. We visited the husband's house. We were not allowed to talk to the woman alone. Nor did she say a word during our visit except to offer us tea. Her husband lectured us at great length on the faults of her family, her folly and his magnanimity.

He would not let her meet her parents frequently and gloated at her having been forced to return on his terms although she had left with what he called arrogance, 'She thought I would go and plead with her to return. But you must have heard the Sanskrit saying: A mouse after all remains a mouse.'

It was clear that the woman was compelled to return and endure such humiliation because no other place was available to her. Her brothers were not willing to continue supporting her, nor were they prepared to let her take a job, though she is a qualified beautician. They felt that this would damage their family honour.

A woman generally has no leverage to compel the husband or the in-laws to behave reasonably. She can at best try to be a 'nuisance' - to fight back with words, yell, scream and cry.

But she has no power to enforce her wishes in the way that her husband has. If she becomes too great a nuisance, she can always be thrown out. This threat acts as a most powerful deterrent. The only option she has is to walk out. But if she has no parental support, no house of her own, and is



not earning an income substantial enough to support herself and her children with dignity, she cannot exercise this option. This, more than anything else, emboldens the husband's family into riding roughshod over her.

Parents often argue that their daughter must return to her husband because she is incapable of living on her own. They seldom acknowledge that this situation is of their own making. Having disabled their daughter as far as they could, denying her any opportunity to acquire professional skills, confining her to the house and having prepared her only to work as a housewife, they then label her incapable and see her as a burden on them if she is thrown out by her husband.

The woman, already demoralized by the maltreatment she has suffered, needs encouragement if she is to learn to stand on her own feet. Instead, she is repeatedly told by all her family members that she can never survive alone. She has little choice but to accept their evaluation of her. Fearing that she will be a burden on her brothers in whose homes she might be even more humiliated and unwanted than in her husband's, she also repeats that she wants her husband to take her back. This also puts her in a morally 'right' position in the eyes of her family. She is seen as a dutiful rather than a defiant wife. This 'wish' of hers is, however, heavily influenced by all the pressures she faces in her parental home and by a lifetime of conditioning to believe that she is weak and inadequate.

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