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President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan welcomed at Al Mushrif Palace in Abu Dhabi Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, who was visiting the UAE. The President and Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai H. H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum were at hand to shake hand with Her Majesty upon arrival at the Palace.

Sheikh Khalifa conferred on Her Majesty the Order of Zayed, the United Arab Emirates’ highest civil decoration. He also bestowed the Order of Federation to both Prince Andrew, Duke of York, and Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. In return, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth presented Sheikh Khalifa with the Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, GCB. The Most Honourable Order of the Bath is a British order of chivalry founded by George I on 18 May 1725. The name derives from the elaborate medi?val ceremony for creating a knight, which involved bathing (as a symbol of purification) as one of its elements.

The Queen also honoured Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai H. H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and H.H. Gen. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, with Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, GCMG. Her Majesty confeered these orders in recognition of the deep historic relations of friendship between the UAE and UK.

Holds talks with President of India

President H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and President of the Republic of India Mrs. Pratibha Patil held talks at Mushrif Palace in Abu Dhabi. Sheikh Khalifa welcomed the Indian President and her entourage in her first state visit to the UAE, adding that the visit reflects the depth of cooperation, friendship and historic links between the UAE and India. “The visit will open more avenues for cooperation between the two countries in the best interest of the two peoples”. The UAE President stressed the role of India in achieving peace and security in the Indian Ocean and East Asia zone, highlighting the India’s contribution to realisation of the security at international arena. Sheikh Khalifa hailed essential contribution of the Indian community to the UAE development projects.
Mohammed attends graduation ceremony at Dubai Police Academy

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, this morning attended the graduation ceremony of post graduate students who obtained a masters degree and the 18th batch of Cadet Officers at the Dubai Police Academy.

The function was attended by H.H. Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai, H.H. Sheikh Rashid bin Saud bin Rashid Al Mu’alla, Crown Prince of Umm al-Qaiwain, H.H. Lt.Gen.Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, H.H. Sheikh Majed bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairman of Dubai Culture and Arts Authority, H.H. Sheikh Mansour bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Lt. General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Commander in Chief of Dubai Police, along with a number of sheikhs, senior police officers, dignitaries and members of the consular corps in Dubai and parents of graduates.

Attends UAE Government Excellence Awards

The Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai H. H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum has underscored that the excellence of government in delivery services is an integral part of the UAE prominence in all domains.

Attending the award-giving ceremony of the Sheikh Khalifa Government Excellence Programme at Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Mohammed added, “Government excellence is a core curriculum in the school of President H.H. Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and serves as a key driver for the federal government action.” Sheikh Mohammed congratulated outstanding winners and performers of the first edition of the Programme, reiterating that the homeland is the winner as all outdo and outshine in its service and glory.

He urged the other entities to follow in the steps of the winning bodies and benefit from these results to identify points of strength and opportunities for improvement in their entities in order to better serve customers, improve work environment in the government sector and contribute to realising strategic objectives of the federal government.
Mohammed Bin Zayed meets Palestinian President

H.H. General Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, has met President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas and members of the accompanying delegation at the Yas Hotel, Abu Dhabi. The meeting discussed the latest developments and the direct Palestinian-Israeli direct negotiations, stalled over Israeli stubbornness.

Underlined pushing forward peace efforts and resuming direct Palestinian-Israeli negotiations away from practices that undermine efforts to establish just peace that would eventually lead to comprehensive regional stability and security.

Hosts dinner for F1 VIP guests

H.H. Gen. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, hosted a dinner banquet at Yas Hotel in honour of kings and presidents and VIP guests who were visiting the UAE to attend the final leg of the F1 Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi Grand Prix at Yas Marina Circuit. The banquet was attended by HM King Juan Carlos of Spain, President James Michel of the Seychelles, Prime Minister of Swaziland Barnabas Sibusiso Dlamini, former French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, Sheikh Sultan bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, Chairman of Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority, and a number of members of Abu Dhabi Executive Council, senior officials, diplomats and dignitaries.
Lt. General H.H. Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister led UAE’s delegation to the 29th meeting of the GCC interior ministers which opened in Kuwait under the chairmanship of Kuwaiti Interior Minister Sheikh Jaber Al Khaled Al Sabah.

Sheikh Saif commended in a statement the efforts made by the GCC countries to bolster security cooperation.

Orders provision of logistic support to media at scene of incidents

The Deputy Prime Minister, Interior Minister Lt. General H.H. Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan has ordered provision of logistic support to media in the scene of incidents.

This came during the inspection tour of Sheikh Saif of the media patrols launched by the Security Media Department of the Secretariat General of the Office of Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior. The media initiative launched by the department is the landmark initiative intended to cover Abu Dhabi Island round the clock.

Equipped with the-state-of art equipment and cadres, the media patrols will provide instant media materials to media persons. First Lt. Mohammed Humaid Al Daraei, head of the field archive section at the department, said the mobile media patrols will monitor and film events and incidents such as fire across Abu Dhabi Island. He added that the media patrols will receive reports from the central operations room of the General Headquarters of Abu Dhabi Police.
MoU signed by Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development

The Ministry of Interior has signed a memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development, aimed at strengthening cooperation ties and relationship in culture, community development and security fields. Lieutenant General Saif Abdullah Al Shaafar, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior, signed the MoU on behalf of the ministry, while Afraa Mohammad Al Sabri, Executive Director of Institutional and Support Services at the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development, signed the document.

The MoU focuses on enhancement of cooperation, coordination, exchange of expertise, studies and research, participation in programmes and initiatives in order to achieve the desired aims and making use of available resources. It also includes the initiation of projects and studies related to security, culture and community development, as well as cooperation in publishing material related to security, culture and community development. Support of libraries and information fields are included.

The MoU encourages the setting up of a joint working committee to prepare and implement joint programmes and activities, in addition to the follow up and evaluation of these programmes. Lt. Gen. Al Shaafar said: “The MoU is an important step in community work and it boosts joint work to achieve remarkable goals for the country. It also enhances the partnership with federal and local ministries and authorities and serves the federal government objectives. It represents our belief in joint work and support of serious initiatives which contribute to community service, and coordination with the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development as part of strategic principles which the Ministry of Interior adopts to achieve its vision and future aspirations”.

Afraa Al Sabri expressed her thanks and appreciation for His Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior for his support. She also thanked Lt. Gen. Al Shaafar and the working Team for their cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, which culminated in the signing of the MOU between the two parties.

‘Comfort Fund’ discusses support to prison inmates

The Board of Directors of the Comfort Fund, aimed at providing assistance to prison inmates, held a meeting under the chairmanship of Major General Naser Lakhrabani Al Nuaimi, Secretary-General of the Office of His Highness the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, and Head of the Board of Directors of the fund. The meeting was attended by Lieutenant Colonel Ahmed Saeed Al Badi, Director General of the fund. The meeting, which was held at the Union Hall at the Ministry of Interior, discussed several topics including the setting up of a website for the fund and organising a workshop on the fund’s strategy. Officials also discussed several suggestions on promotional activities during the Eid Al Adhda.

Officials also reviewed various reports including the mechanisms adopted to honour supporters of the fund as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR). “It is very important to continue to consolidate the spirit of social cooperation as that is part of the teachings of Islam and a guarantee to provide decent living to the families of people serving hail terms”, said Maj. Gen. Al Nuaimi.

He underlined the importance of strategic partnerships with various parties and enhancing efforts aimed at raising the level of services and performance quality.
Civil Defence Organisational structure in the making

The committee tasked with the implementation of the new organisational structure of the General Directorate of Civil Defence has stressed the importance of intensifying media awareness about the functioning and roles of the new structure. The committee recently held a meeting, headed by Major General Khalil Dawood Badran, Director General of Finance and Services at Abu Dhabi Police and Head of the committee, to discuss the implementation process. The meeting further discussed job descriptions and strategy management reviews and mechanisms to develop performance at the Civil Defence General Directorate and the sections falling under its jurisdiction.

“I want to stress the importance of intensifying media awareness campaigns in the coming phase”, said Maj. Gen. Badran., who was briefed on the introductory booklet about the organisational structure implementation. Captain Fawaz Ali, Head of the Media Support Section at the Security Media Department, said: “The booklet provides a vision about the organisational planning of the General Directorate of Civil Defence. He reiterated that the media plan will in the coming phase focus on print and broadcast media.

Uzbek delegation briefed on Abu Dhabi Police development strategy

Brig. Ali Khalfan Al Dhahiri, Director General of Abu Dhabi Police Headquarters Affairs, has met a visiting Uzbek delegation headed by Major General Mukhtar Niyazov, Deputy Chief of the Uzbek National Security. The delegation was briefed on the Department of Security Inspection as well as the Firearms and Explosives Division at the General Department of Security and Ports Affairs at Abu Dhabi Police.

During the meeting, both sides discussed ways to boost cooperation. The meeting was attended by Brig. Ahmed Nakhira, Director of the Department of Human Rights at the Ministry of Interior, Lt. Col. Jamal Habash, Director of the Department of Security Inspection, Lt. Col. Salem Hamod Salem, Deputy Director of the Department of Firearms and Explosives, and a number of officers. Brig. Dhahiri briefed the visitors about the strategy of Abu Dhabi Police linked to the strategy of Abu Dhabi government, the strategy of the Ministry of Interior and the strategy of the Federal Government to update human and technical resources, especially in the areas of training and development. He highlighted the importance of efforts to develop the skills of staff through holding advanced training and the introduction of latest technologies.

The Uzbek delegation attended demonstrations conducted by specialised security inspection teams in detection of contraband material and explosives. The teams defused explosives from the firearms and explosives department. Two teams demonstrated their skills in dealing with explosives in a cargo village inspection scenario, and the detection of explosives in a suitcase, using the sniffing dogs.

The visiting delegation also watched the demonstration of K9 search and rescue by using trained sniffing dogs regarding skills of searching and rescuing victims.
Dubai Police initiatives to protect the environment and curb air and marine pollution started early, and the last three years saw a 30 per cent increase in green patches at police facilities, said Lieutenant General Dhahi Khalfan Tamim, Commander-in-Chief of Dubai Police.

“Green patches increased to five million square feet… and this shows the constant attention given to horticultural projects and to the enhancement of environmental initiatives in line with the efforts of environmental agencies”, Lt Gen Dhahi said.

He said other projects by Dubai Police include the use of treated sewerage water in the irrigation of green patches. The green drive enhances the aesthetic look of police facilities and supports environmental initiatives, he added.

The Dubai Police Chief recently launched a joint environmental initiative with a number of government agencies and environmental institutions, aimed at planting one million trees in various parts of Dubai within four years. A total of 250,000 trees will be planted annually.

Cooperation channels were discussed recently in a meeting between Major General Mohammed Al Marri, Director of the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs in Dubai, with His Excellency Eric Giraud-Telme, the French consul general in Dubai and his accompanying delegation.

Maj Gen Al Marri reviewed the advanced electronic services launched by the directorate recently in accordance with the strategy set to find mechanisms to catch up with the advancement pace in the country. A particular stress was laid on active communication with UAE nationals, expatriates and visitors at a high level of efficiency.

The French delegation visited the various sections of the directorate and were briefed on the functioning and services of the sections. The visitors were also briefed on the functioning of the call centre (toll free 8005111) that receives inquiries from the general public and the mechanisms adopted to simplify procedures and save time and effort.

Graduation ceremony in Sharjah

Major General Hamid Mohammed Al Hadidi, Director General of Sharjah Police, attended the graduation ceremony of 19 officers who completed a training course on the preparation of strategic plans and measurement of key performance indicators (KPIs).

“These courses reflect the keenness of Sharjah Police on developing human resources and enhancing the skills of employees to enable them to handle their tasks in accordance with the strategic plan of Sharjah Police that is part and parcel of the strategy of the Ministry of Interior”, said Maj Gen Al Hadidi in the opening speech. The ceremony was attended by Colonel Dr. Mohammed Saeed Al Humaidi, Director of the Officers Institute of the Abu Dhabi Police College.

Meanwhile, Sharjah Transport has fixed posters on 120 buses and taxis carrying the official slogan of a traffic safety campaign being organised under the banner ‘Traffic Safety Is Not A Coincidence’. The campaign is being implemented by Sharjah Police this year, and aimed at inculcating the principles of traffic safety in the minds of young people.
Ajman Police Chief in security cooperation discussions with US

Brig. Ali Abdullah Alwan, Director General of Ajman Police, discussed security cooperation with the United States in a recent meeting. Brig. Alwan met Michael Zivkovic, Country Attaché, Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), at the US Consulate in the country, his deputy and accompanying delegation. They discussed security matters of mutual interest. The meeting was attended by Col. Majid Salem Al Nuaimi, Director of Criminal Investigation and a number of Ajman Police officers.

Corporate performance management lecture in Fujairah

A lecture on corporate performance management was organised as part of the training plan of the General Directorate of Fujairah Police. It was presented by Dr. Jalal Al Nuaimi and held at the Union Hall of Fujairah Police headquarters. The training plan is aimed at explaining to police staff the requirements of strategy implementation and the means to align the strategy of Fujairah Police with that of the Ministry of Interior. The lecture was attended by Brigadier Mohammed Ahmed bin Ghanim Al Kaabi, Director General of Fujairah Police, Colonel Mohammed Rashid bin Yana, Deputy Director General of Fujairah Police and a large number of officers and police staff.

Preventive security lecture in Umm Al Quwain

A lecture on preventive security was organised by the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs in Umm Al Quwain recently. The lecture explained the role of preventive security in spreading security awareness. The lecture was attended by Colonel Ibrahim bin Abdullah Al Mualla, Director. It was presented by Lieutenant Khalifa Eisa Al Gharbi from the Preventive Security Section. “These lectures have an effective role in enhancing awareness in police officers and other police staff in all areas related to information security”, said Col Al Mualla. The lecture was attended by a large number of police officers and staff.

Ras Al Khaimah Police honours distinguished employees

Five Ras Al Khaimah Police employees were honoured recently for their excellent performance. They were given accolades by Colonel Jamal Ahmed Al Teir, Director of Administrative and Financial Affairs at Ras Al Khaimah Police. Col. Al Teir said: “Ras Al Khaimah Police have always been keen on honouring employees of distinguished performance as that has a very positive effect that can serve as an incentive for quality improvement and creativity”.

A grand ceremony was held recently to mark the 40th anniversary of 999 at Al Raha Beach. It was attended by high ranking officials and senior officers as well as senior members of the media.

At the beginning of the ceremony, HE Staff Major General Khalifa Hareb Al Khaili, Assistant Undersecretary of the Ministry of Interior for Resources and Support Services, conveyed the congratulations of His Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, to all the employees of 999, the social and security culture magazine issued by the Ministry of Interior, on its 40th anniversary.

The ceremony was attended by HE Major General Khalil Dawood Badran, Director General of Finance and Services at Abu Dhabi Police and Head of the 999 magazine’s Development Committee, as well as a number of senior police officers and journalists in the country.

“999 magazine has been performing its security media role in the service of UAE society, and it has over the last years achieved impressive progress in terms of content and form”, said Staff Major Al Khaili.

Major General Khalil Dawood Badran lauded the support given to the magazine by the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, and now by President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan and His Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, to enable the magazine to succeed and catch up with the march of progress at the Ministry of Interior.
and the General Headquarters of Abu Dhabi Police.

“The success attained by the 999 magazine Development Committee and the magazine’s team has transformed the magazine to become one of the most specialised police magazines in the country and the Arab world”, said Major General Badran. The wider scope of security media and advanced levels of press freedom have taken 999 magazine new horizons never reached in the past, thanks to the policies of His Highness the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, said Lieutenant Colonel Thani Butti Al Shamsi, Director of Training at Abu Dhabi Police and Member of the 999 magazine’s Development Committee.

“His strong belief in the mission of the media and keen interest in protecting media freedom have been instrumental in bringing about the achievements in security media. His Highness the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior has always believed in press freedom as a benchmark for the freedom of society, and 999 magazine has been readying itself to become an open space for ideas that believe in the future of humanity that is characterised by peace, cooperation and understanding”, added Lt. Col. Al Shamsi.

Major Awad Saleh Al Kindi, Editor of 999 magazine, said the support given to the magazine over the last 40 years has yielded great success in the development of the magazine, enabling it to become a leading social and security culture publication in the UAE as well as in the Arab world.

“The support was augmented in March 2009 when the working team members...
of the magazine were honoured by His Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan for their efforts in relaunching the magazine”, Maj. Gen. Al Kindi added.

He called upon all members of the 999 magazine’s team to continue their efforts in implementing the directives of His Highness Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, under the supervision of HE Major General Khalil Dawood Badran, to keep up the good work.

Media men and women attending the event spoke on the occasion. They included Habib Al Sayegh, advisor at Dar Al Khaleej, Butti Al Falasi, Director of Security Media at Dubai Police and supervisor of Al Amn magazine, Abdullah Rasheed, bureau chief of Gulf News in Abu Dhabi and Muna Abu Samra of the UAE Journalists Association. They wished 999 magazine further success in the future.

Poems were read on the occasion by poet Major Nasser bin Jarwan Al Niadi from Abu Dhabi Police and young girl Aesha Al Naqib. The person owning a copy of the oldest issue of the magazine was honoured. Prizes were also given to attendants in a raffle draw. The Abu Dhabi Police brass band also participated in the event.

HE Staff Major General Khalifa Hareb Al Khaili and HE Major General Khalil Dawood Badran, in the presence of Maj. Al Kindi, honoured the following sponsors and presented them with a plaque:

**Celebration sponsors:**
- Silver sponsor: GET Group, Dorsch Gruppe.

**Speakers:**
- Habib Al Sayegh
- Butti Al Falasi
- Abdullah Rasheed
- Muna Abu Samra

**Local security magazines:**
- Al Ain Al Sahera (Ras Al Khaimah Police)
- Al Shurti magazine (Sharjah Police)
- Police and Society (Ajman Police)

Certificates of appreciation were also given to other publications.

**Newspapers and magazines:**
- Al Bayan
- Akhbar Al Arab
- Emarat Al Youm
- Zahrat al Khaleej
- Emirates Business 24/7
- Al Ittihad
- Al Zafra
- Al Manara
- Al Mara Al Youm
- Barq Al Emarat
- Among others...

Certificates of appreciation were presented to a number of writers and columnists in the magazine: Colonel Abdul Malik Jani, Director of the Police Sports Federation, Dr. Faleh Hanzal, Dr. Adel Al Kardoosi, expert at the Decision-Making Support Centre of Dubai Police, and others.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, HE Major General Khalil Dawood Badran presented a plaque on the occasion to HE Staff Major General Khalifa Hareb Al Khaili, the patron of the event.
What distinguish us .......
our electronic services

The first electronic website of almsgiving in Arabic & English language.
The first service to pay almsgiving electronically.
The first electronic forum specialized in almsgiving duty.
The first electronic service in calculating almsgiving of the commercial companies.
The first electronic service in calculating almsgiving of the industrial companies.
The first specialized course in doctrine and accountancy of almsgiving.
The first electronic service in replying to your inquiries through the service of "Asking you about almsgiving".
It may sound odd, but little children below two years of age are in prison because their mothers are serving jail terms. Prison officials say children above that age cannot continue to be with their mothers in jail as prison environment could affect their psychology and disturb their upbringing.

Lieutenant Colonel Fawzia Al Mulla, Director of Women’s Prison at the General Directorate of Punitive Establishments of Dubai Police, said: “The Directorate is in the process of establishing a special nursery for the children of women convicts, away from prisoners’ areas. We are also seeking to be pardons for women with little children”.

She said that the law of punitive establishments and international laws allow little children below the age of two years to be with their imprisoned mothers. However, children cannot stay with their mothers beyond that age.

“Pregnant women or women with little children are informed about these laws so that they get prepared to perform their duties towards their children in prison, and to prepare also for the care of their children after the little ones complete two years of age. Some 95 per cent of the women prison inmates are non-UAE nationals… we had only one Emirati woman who had her child with her, and the child was taken later by her family to look after him”, said Lt Col Al Mulla.

Dubai Police have allocated a special section for children to be with their mothers. The section is equipped with all necessities, including beds, toys and clothes, as well as diapers, milk products and other items. “Once the child comes with his mother to the prison, medical records are opened for him or her and vaccinations are administered. The children undergo periodical medical checkups by specialist doctors. Medical care is given to both mother and child round the clock”, explained the police officer.

A woman looking after a child is given special treatment. Lt Col Al Mulla added: “A pregnant woman is not assigned to perform any jobs that affect her pregnancy, with the exception of cleaning the place she stays in. Some women get depressed after delivery and the prison administration provides psychiatrists for them to get them out of depression. There are also training courses for new mothers to educate them on how to look after their children properly. Mothers are also trained on handicrafts so that they can have some earning to help themselves financially”.

Innocence behind bars

Children below two years of age are allowed to be with their mothers serving jail terms

By Rasha Fikri
When the child of a non-UAE national woman prisoner completes two years of age, police coordinate the repatriation process of the child with the embassy of the prisoner’s home country, to be handed over to the woman’s family or that of her husband. Other arrangements can be made in coordination with the embassy.

If the woman has no one to look after the child or in the case she does not want to have the child sent to her home country, the embassy starts looking for an appropriate hosting option till the woman is released from jail and ready for getting deported to her home country.

“Before being sent away from their mothers, the children are prepared psychologically and social for that phase so that they do not get a shock. We provide the mothers with telephone calling cards to make phone calls every week to inquire about their children. We also coordinate with embassies in the country to ensure that children who are four years old do get their right to education in their home countries”, said Lt Col Al Mulla.

Women serving short jail terms, who give birth during their prison terms, are given food and clothes as well as prams when they leave the prison, in addition to air tickets and cash to help them in the initial period after their arrival in their home countries. The prison administration also coordinates with embassies to ensure that the women are received by their loves ones when they arrive in their homelands.

The police official said most of the children were the result of adulterous relations, and some mothers refuse to look after their children. “We keep a watchful eye on these mothers to ensure that the children are not harmed. If we sense any danger, the child is taken away immediately from the mother.

“Likewise, some women prisoners refuse to take their children with them after serving their jail terms. The law of the land does not allow that and these women are asked to take their children with them to their home countries”, said Lt Col Al Mulla.

She said future plans include the establishment of a nursery at a section away from the prison areas.

Lt Col Al Mulla also disclosed that the prison management is currently studying the possibility of bringing the children of foreign women prisoners on visit visas to see their mothers, and providing them with air tickets and proper temporary accommodation.

The official said eight mothers received pardons last year from His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to be able to look after their children properly.

“We conduct periodical reviews of the files of these mothers, particularly those who served half of their jail terms, to submit their cases to the higher authorities to consider granting pardons for them”, she pointed out.
What are we supposed to do when a family member falls prey to addiction?

By Lara Al Zarasi

Falling prey to addiction is a serious development in the family, and there are many questions as to how to deal with a family member who is addicted to drugs or alcohol, how we react when we discover addiction in the family, who would provide assistance to addicts and how effective would treatment be.

The Abu Dhabi Rehabilitation Centre has dealt with serious cases and now has quite a number of successful treatment cases. Dr. Hamad Al Ghafiri, Director General of the centre, said that there are three types of addiction: addiction to alcohol; addiction to drugs and addiction to sedatives. He said each patient requires his or her own treatment plan.

“The treatment plan begins with taking the poisons away, and this is a phase that takes a week to 10 days, using the most advanced international treatments.

“In the second phase, which takes six to eight weeks, the treatment is divided into two sections – the first focusing on individual rehabilitation and the second on group rehabilitation. In that phase, family treatment starts so that we can support the patient on the way to recovery.

“The third phase is when the patient is discharged and the continuation of treatment with weekly and then monthly sessions to ensure success of the treatment”, he said.

The centre received 135 patients so far in 2010, and 47 per cent of them were drug addicts and 25 per cent were addicted to alcohol. Some 35 per cent of them were in the 17-26 age group, another 35 per cent in the 27-36 age group and 23 per cent in the 37-46 age group.

Dr. Al Ghafiri said 35 per cent of the patients were married and 62 per cent jobless. A total of 71 per cent of the patients had the high school leaving certificate or a lower education level.

Dr. Al Ghafiri stressed that success of the treatment depends on the will of the patient to overcome his or her crisis and to return to normal life.

“The strong will is the key to success. Some people think that drug addiction is more difficult to get rid of. But from our experience, we can say that addiction to alcohol is more difficult”, he explained.
Each patient, said Dr. Al Ghafiri, is treated according to his or her own requirements. “That is why we have taken care of treatment plans to ensure success. There are teams of doctors, psychologists, sociologists and others who play their roles in the treatment plans and help overcome all the difficulties encountered by patients during the treatment period at the centre”.

The Abu Dhabi Rehabilitation Centre focuses on the role played by the family in the treatment of addiction. Dr. Al Ghafiri said: “Each patient has a family and a certain social and economic standard that is different from the others. We do not offer just medical treatment… we do not just deal with the tip of the iceberg; we dig deeper to reach its base to ensure the patient does not go back to addiction again. In the lives of addicts, there are problems that lead to addiction and we try to bring back psychological stability to the lives of these people”, explained Dr. Al Ghafiri.

He said families that cooperate in the treatment process contribute effectively to the treatment. In the case of families that do not cooperate, the patient gets disappointed and the process becomes hard to deal with. “That is why the role of the family is very critical”, stressed Dr. Al Ghafiri, adding that “the role of the wife has been very positive in getting the husband out of addiction”.

### Three success stories

#### Case 1
A 33-year-old married man, who has two children, was addicted to heroin for more than 20 years. He obtained only a high school leaving certificate. Addiction made him different from others and he rejected dealing with society in any shape or form. He deserted his job and gave his wife a hard time. His only concern was to find money to buy heroin. At one point in his life, he realised that he had to do something about his life as he lost his relations with all his extended family and even his own father stopped talking to him after he was jailed several times after being convicted of drug addiction. What made him voluntarily seek the centre’s help was his wife who was persistent in bringing her husband to his senses and to the right track in life. Specialists at the centre were pleasantly surprised to find him very cooperative. He passed the medical treatment phase successfully as well as the psychological and group rehabilitation processes. His wife was the actual supporting partner for him who led him to the shores of safety. However, he was always afraid of not talking to him. Thanks to the efforts of the centre, the father was invited to centre’s offices to see his son who has successfully passed through the treatment process. The crying father hugged his son who has returned to him. The man now has a job and visits the centre’s outpatient clinic every now and then.

#### Case 2
Bad company has led the 20-year-old young man to drug addiction. He was sentenced by a court of law to attend treatment sessions at the centre. The young man was willing to stop addiction and rejoin society as a good citizen, and to pursue higher studies as well. After the success of the treatment, he joined university and worked hard to obtain a degree. Specialists at the centre followed up his condition and gave him all support. He got the degree he wanted and invited the centre’s specialists to attend his graduation ceremony. The specialists were so proud that the young man had returned to normal life.

#### Case 3
A 40-year-old man working as a financial expert in a major company was addicted to alcohol for over 20 years. Alcohol addiction ruined his life. At one point, he found himself without a wife, children or friends. He sought the assistance of the centre, willing to receive treatment and regain his wife and children. He completed all the treatment phases successfully in three months.
‘if’ no more…

A wise man was once asked: “What really surprises you in people’s nature?”.

He answered: “Children get bored and want to quickly become adults. When they attain adulthood, they wish to return to childhood!”.

“They ruin their health to make money, and then spend the money to regain good health!”.

“They worry about the future and forget the present; they fail to live present day and the future!”.

“They live as if they will never die, and they die as if they never lived!”.

The wise man took a moment of silence, and was asked again.

“What do human beings have to learn?”

He answered: “They have to learn that they cannot make any one love them. What they can do is to make themselves lovable. They need to learn not to compare themselves with others. They need to be tolerant and forgiving. They need to know that they could cause deep wounds in people they love in a matter of minutes; but they may need years to heal the wounds. They need to learn that the richest man is not the one who has got the most, but is the one who needs the least.

“They should learn that there are people who they love but they do not know how to express their feelings to them. They must learn that two persons can look at the same thing but see them differently. They should learn that it is not enough that one forgives the other: they should forgive themselves as well”.

The wise man gave his audience the chance to ponder his words. We all need to think about these words to see how we run away from facing ourselves and how we unconsciously commit crimes against ourselves as we participate in this marathon that we call life, without seeing the wisdom of what we live and witness.

If we realise as we live childhood that it represents the sweetest years of our lifetime and the purest, most innocent and pleasurable, we could have lived that phase with our best powers and wished we had never departed it.

If we knew that health is more precious than money, we could have spared ourselves the hot pursuit after money that will be used to regain health.

If we knew that the future would not be what we like or want, we would not have wasted a moment in our present or spoiled pleasures in waiting for something that could never come.

If we knew that death is the other side of life, we could have extended bridges of love and solidarity.

If we knew that love cannot be taken by force from others, we could have made ourselves magnets of others’ love and admiration.

If we knew that some wounds, that we thought won’t leave any deep scars in those we love, we would have never thought of causing such pain.

If we knew that contentment is the real wealth, we could have trained ourselves on restricting our needs at least, because the richest are not necessarily the happiest.

If we knew that there are different angles to each image, some of which we cannot see, we could have expanded our scope of visibility, so that we won’t have made enemies of those with whom we differ.

If we knew that tolerance is the biggest virtue, we could have purified our hearts, and that our life could have become more accommodating of others.

If we could get rid of the word ‘if’, we could have saved ourselves the trouble of looking for answers to all these questions that keep us busy thinking, from the cradle to the grave.

If we knew how to free ourselves of the fetters of being human, which prevent us from reaching transparency and purity, we could have given the wise men the peace of mind and relieved them from the burden of finding the answers that are easily accessible.
To cheat is human; betraying a friend, a homeland or a spouse. In the case of emotional cheating between married couples, the causes are many, ranging from revenge to a feeling of boredom and wanting to break free.

Emotional cheating is not restricted to one society or a set of societies; the incidence of such behaviour is less in one society compared to another depending on value systems and religious preclusion. No matter what excuses a spouse may raise for indulging in emotional cheating, this behaviour exists in all human societies.

A survey conducted recently in the UAE has showed that 14 per cent of UAE nationals and expatriate couples, in marriage or emotional attachment, have cheated their partners. Six per cent of the women who participated in the survey admitted having cheated their partners, while 19 per cent of men betrayed their women. A total of 700 people participated in the survey.

“There are various reasons behind emotional cheating”, said Dr. Saad Salman Al Rifai, a psychiatrist. “These causes include weak religious belief in people behaving in that way. (In our society), this is the most important cause, as religion provides a deterrent against adultery”, he added.

He said reprehensible upbringing is another cause, as those engaging in this behaviour might have had watched pornographic material in their early age or experienced improper actions by one of or both their parents, so the behaviour becomes something normal for them. Bad company is also another serious cause.

Dr. Al Rifai said the media had contributed to this, as movies and drama portrayed emotional cheating as a simple act rather than exposing it as a disgraceful act.

“There are other causes like partners wanting to take revenge by committing the same act… there are also drawbacks in the social system”, said Dr. Al Rifai, adding that society should not be tolerant with the issue of emotional cheating and laws should be promulgated to punish offenders.

The psychiatrist said there are factors that contribute to increasing sexual desire to abnormal levels. This is seen in schizophrenic and sexual hallucination cases.

“Age, cultural and intellectual differences sometimes contribute to the problem by creating gaps between partners, to the extent that this deviation occurs. The cause in these cases is poor sexual performance by a partner. These cases are more prominent when the husband is older than the wife – particularly when an old man gets married to a young woman. Some men, however, engage in emotional cheating for experimentation, influenced by the media that portrays the act as a simple thing”, explained Dr. Al Rifai.

Dr. Moza Ghubash, a professor of sociology, describes emotional cheating as “a very serious social evil”.

By Khalid Al Dhanhani

Empty rooms

The motives behind emotional cheating vary; from revenge against an erring partner to an eerie desire for change
She said: “Emotional cheating destroys the family. This phenomenon increases as societies continue to develop; this is because this development goes in the materialistic direction, and as (this kind of) development increases, values decrease. It is a phenomenon that we find in weak persons”. She said that emotional infidelity has many adverse psychological effects, and the effects that influence children could create destructive individuals. “This phenomenon started to surface as societies became complicated after the development of production techniques. In UAE society, we cannot deny the existence of this phenomenon which resulted from the rapid transformation that brought about too many ideas and beliefs”, Dr. Ghubash stressed. The causes behind this phenomenon, she said, do vary. “Marriage gives psychological stability, and any blemish could lead to physical unfaithfulness”, she explained. Dr. Ghubash said emotional and intellectual suitability is very important for couples. “On the emotional side lies the sexual relationship in which an imperfection could lead to divorce or unfaithfulness. Financial stability is also an important factor and any drawback in this respect could generate pressures and consequent submission to temptations. There is no denying that the internet provides an easy access to temptations that drive partners to emotional cheating”, she underlined. The phenomenon is aggravated in the UAE, said Dr. Ghubash, because of the imbalance in the demographic composition, as “this imbalance carries with it many ideas and codes of belief that proliferate this behaviour”. To curb the phenomenon, Dr. Ghubash said, a return to Islamic values will “defeat any evil or social disease”. However, she said we should not ignore the awareness role that must be played by the institutions of society before marriage to deal with any issues related to suitability of partners and counselling after marriage to avoid emotional cheating. Most divorce cases in Arab societies result from emotional cheating, according to lawyer Fayza Al Mousa. “However, most of these cases are not looked into by courts of law, as it is hard to prove the betrayal of a partner. (In Islamic jurisprudence), the Shariah evidence is to bring four witnesses who should state they have actually seen the act of unfaithfulness in their own eyes. That is very hard, if not impossible”, said Al Mousa. Cases of emotional cheating in the UAE, said Al Mousa, are “very limited”. One case she handled as a lawyer is that of a UAE national husband who engaged in the act of unfaithfulness openly in front of his non-Arab wife and their children. “The husband brought a woman with him to the apartment in which he lived with his wife and children, taken her to a bedroom and stayed with her all night… the wife called the police, but policemen did not enter the apartment after finding out the apartment’s rent contract was not in the name of the husband. The complaint, however, was lodged with police and the wife later called me to file a court case and prove the incident. We were not successful”, she said. In another case, an Arab expatriate husband saw his wife sitting with a man at a shopping mall. When confronted by the husband, the woman claimed he was a colleague and when the husband asked her to come with him to their home, she refused. He sought police help, but the police officer on duty refused to open a case as sitting in a public place is not a crime, especially that the woman claimed the man she was with was a colleague. “There was no proof of unfaithfulness”, Al Mousa said. Brigadier Najm Abdullah Al Hosani, Director of Social Support Centres at Abu Dhabi Police, said the centres...
Men and women made their confessions to 999 on why they were physically unfaithful to their spouses.

- **Ibrahim (National of an AGCC state):** “I was married to a woman older than me. She was beautiful, but we had little in common. I tried to create commonalities, but I failed. She was too cold and she did not perform well as a partner. Problems started, and I could not control myself; I started seeing women and sometimes behaved like a crazy person chasing women. Friends told me that was because of the sexual suppression that I suffered from. My wife asked for divorce after she discovered that I cheated her”.

- **Meriem (National of an AGCC state):** “I am married and have two children. My husband is good and generous, but I discovered that he had known another woman. He called her daily since the beginning of our marriage. I confronted him and he told me she was a colleague and he had to be in contact with her on a daily basis. I ignored the problem but discovered later that he had an affair with another woman. He claimed that woman was the wife of his friend and that she had a domestic problem that he should solve. The same was repeated with other women and I was angry with his cheating and carelessness. The urge of revenge was overwhelming; I had an affair with a man for around 18 months. I ended that affair after returning to my senses”.

- **Sami (Arab expatriate):** “When I was a university student, I knew many girls and relations. When I got married I could not stop this habit. My constant travels helped me in continuing the old habits… old habits die hard”.

- **Umm Firyal (Arab expatriate):** “I got married at an early age. I have been married for 10 years and have three children. My husband is stingy as he belongs to the so-called limited income group. I started dating a young man from an AGCC state and I loved him; he was generous with me, giving me a monthly amount of money and buying me anything I needed. The affair lasted five years, but it ended six months ago because of some circumstances. Currently I live in emotional emptiness, and I always ask myself whether I cheated my husband because I loved the young man or because of my materialism. I do know”.

“Social Support Centres contribute to social work… and we seek to solve simple cases that do not need legal procedures and are resolved in an amicable manner. We also uncover...”
crimes within family environments that are not brought to the notice of police stations; these cases require the support of psychiatrists and sociologists”, he said.

Last year, the centres dealt with 412 cases. In the first half of 2010, 440 cases were examined by the centres, and included cases of emotional cheating.

One of the cases dealt with by the centres is of a woman who was seeking divorce because of her husband’s many extramarital relations. “She feared diseases and she eventually refused to allow him to near her or her children”, said Brig. Al Hosani.

The woman said her husband had very positive traits like loving his children, not ignoring his financial obligations towards the family and always seeking to apologise to her.

The dispute got worse at one point and the husband started beating his wife after she got angry with him on the discovery that he engaged in an extramarital affair again.

The husband admitted having relations but promised in a meeting with the centres’ officials that he will not repeat his mistakes. However, the husband said he rejected his wife’s way of treating him and the children, insisting that her continuous anger led to quarrels.

The centres’ consultants gave their recommendations and stressed that dialogue and respect between couples represent the road to avoiding quarrels and violence. They also explained the health, psychological and social effects of the husband’s relations.

Brig. Al Hosani said another case was of a man married to woman for nine years and has children.

He said: “The husband discovered that his wife had an affair with a man. She insisted that it was just a relation on the phone. The problem was solved, but because of the man’s continuous suspicion and inability to trust his wife, the couple lived a life full of quarrels. The husband declined to delve into details of the relationship with his wife in the meetings with the centres’ consultants. After sometime, he called the centre and told them he had divorced his wife, thinking that was the best option to avoid further troubles”.

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Higher education ‘kiosks’ a sham

Emirati professor says only reputed and high quality institutions should be granted permission to set up campuses in UAE

By Lara Al Zarasi
The education crisis in the UAE requires transparency so as to confront it and uncover drawbacks, as what a prominent Emirati university professor calls ‘higher education kiosks’ mushroom in the country and offer substandard options.

Dr. Hisa Abdullah Lootah, associate professor of mass communications at the Faculty of Human and Social Studies, UAE University, told 999 in an interview that the main hurdle in education is blurred vision. “The causes are interwoven and collective efforts are needed to solve this issue”, she said.

Excerpts:

Q. What do you think of the many international universities setting up campuses or branches in the UAE?

A. We have to be aware of all the aspects of university education, as universities represent the cradle of future leaders. Breaking the doors open in front of international universities should be studied carefully and planned in a clear way, so that we can benefit from these institutions. Our target should not be to open the education market to any institutions so that universities become kiosks claimed to be providing learning facilities. There must be a comprehensive study about merits and demerits before granting permissions for such institutions to enter the UAE education market. Unfortunately, there are substandard private universities that do not provide genuine programmes. The UAE University has attained the fourth position in terms of quality education in the Middle East; that is why I think the solution to get out of the current crisis is to support national universities to enable them to become competitive and win the education race.

Q. But some people defend these new comers as they provide a service to students and the country; instead of travelling to the US or Europe to pursue higher education, students can achieve their objectives in the country. What do you think?

A. I prefer the option of travelling to the US or Europe, rather than opening campuses of foreign universities in the UAE. I have several reasons to defend this viewpoint: during the student’s study, he or she can learn foreign languages perfectly... and that means we will have multilingual graduates; travelling (to study) has many benefits giving students more experience and widening their horizons, teaching them to be self-dependent and enabling them to get to know other cultures. These experiences will enable our students to co-exist with others and to adapt to new environments.

Q. As an associate professor of mass communications and a media expert, how do you think the media has dealt with the education crisis?

A. The media have enlarged the problem to unrealistic proportions. Instead of uncovering drawbacks and showing the problem transparently and professionally in a balanced way, the media dealt with the education sector in a rhetoric manner and with meaningless phrases. The media ran after sensationalism and left education in the lurch. In that way, the real cause of the crisis was lost, complicating the crisis ever further and opening the door to incompetent people to intrude in the education process.

Q. What do you say about the absence of Islamic identity in some curriculums and the dependence on foreign teaching sources in education?

A. First of all, we have to emphasise the importance of utilising Muslim cultural thought in upbringing and education. Our students represent a big responsibility for us, and Islamic thought is the thought based on a comprehensive vision in the universe and in sciences. Besides, to consider Western thought as the only source of education – as some people believe – will create too many blunders. I believe that the problem of education in the country is giving the role of planning the education process to non-specialists who have no clue about our culture and society or about our language and its importance. Because this people belong to Western culture and have a different language, they deal with Islamic thought as if it were just a religion, ignoring the role of Islam in life, education and upbringing. This people are not aware of Islamic...
cultural and intellectual achievements that can be put to practice in education to ensure a better future for our students.

Q. What do you think of the dialectical issue of language regarding the excessive use of English and the antipathetic attitude towards Arabic?

A. Arabic is the official language of the UAE, and it is our mother tongue. It should be a basic tool in the learning process. If the school teaches the students and evaluates their performance in a language other than their mother tongue, it would be natural for students to oppose that direction as it is alien to society. In addition to that, students would take a longer time to assimilate the second language that would replace their mother tongue. There are also other problems caused by studying in a language other than the country’s native language leading to what experts call the ‘language shock’; when students are not confident in the use of the language, they might get disappointed because of their inability to interact with that language in the desired way. I believe that it is important to reduce the ‘knowledge burden’ on students who study in a language other than their native tongue. Teaching strategies and curriculums should be evaluated, because language is not just voices; it is a vehicle that carries culture, religion and information. As the wise leadership of the country have felt the danger emanating from the crisis and been seeking to boost national identity, we see education in its current conditions moving in the opposition direction and disparaging the status of the Arabic language. A foreign language should not be the basic and lone tool in educational planning, and giving due attention to the mother tongue does not take away from the importance of learning and mastering foreign languages.

Q. What does the labour market require from education specialists?

A. Unfortunately, almost every one blames education for drawbacks… I believe the hitch is in the labour market and not in the educational system. The education sector in its various plans has been focusing on meeting labour market requirements. We have the right to ask: why should we be subjected to labour market conditions? These conditions, I think, are dynamic and not static as some people think, and the global financial crisis has proved that to be true. In the past, young men and women scrambled to study in top specialisations like medicine and engineering, but prevailing economic realities forced them to rush to economic sciences as the labour market required that. Nevertheless, the current crisis has made them redundant! These days, many young men and women study IT, but that trend could create gaps in society as we need sociologists, mathematicians, philosophers and specialists in all fields. In fact, we need to fill the gaps in certain specialisations without neglecting other specialisations. Society is not built on a closed set of professions.

Q. What should we do to solve this issue?

A. There should be proper, long-term and short term planning to deal with shortages in certain professions. If we have a shortage of teachers – as we currently do – we should chalk out an emergency five-year plan to have 500 male and female teachers. In that way, we resort to short-term strategies instead of hiring foreign teachers speaking various foreign languages and belonging to cultures different from ours.
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Statistics show that different types of psychological disorders are invading Arab societies at a pace faster than ever as a result of rapidly changing life styles in these societies over the past four decades and the interaction resulting from being exposed to various cultures. Despite this, specialists and doctors say that the number of people seeking psychiatric treatment is below expectations as a result of various social factors such as the denial of disease in the first place.

In this investigative report, 999 tries to highlight this problem and find answers to the tsunami question. Dr. Saad Al Rifai, a psychiatrist at the Medical Services of Abu Dhabi Police, believes that the most common diseases resulting from different life pressures, particularly physical and work-related pressures, family and marital problems – is pathological anxiety. The cause of this anxiety, he said, is the nature of modern life in which various psychological pressures exist. “Everyone asks about what the future holds for us. This is the question that men ask, while women have problems related to depression as a result of unfairness by men...”, he said.

Second is the Obsessive–compulsive disorder (OCD). It produce uneasiness, apprehension, fear, or worry, by repetitive behaviors aimed at reducing anxiety, or by a combination of such thoughts (obsessions) and behaviors (compulsions). Symptoms may include repetitive hand washing, particularly among women. The third is phobia which is the fear of certain situations, like heights and closed places. It exists in men and women. In the fourth place come pathological fears which we find in hospitals where patients wrongly believe that they are sick.

Psychological immunity
Dr. Al Rifai said adolescence is the period when a human being is exposed to psychological disorders because of the weakness of ‘psychological immunity’. The volume of pressures and the ability to withstand them affect the psychological conditions of people. There are also other disorders like schizophrenia and hallucination that occur in the 17-20 age group. The other phase is middle age, related to physical and mental changes that occur in women as a result of massive hormonal shifts. Dr. Al Rifai said that many societies around the world deal with psychological disorders as if they were something to be ashamed of, and thus transparency and precise statistics do not exist. He also believes that psychological disorders increase in multicultural societies, and the United States has the highest number of psychological disorder patients in the world due to the nature of its society and its demographic structure. Dr. Al Rifai underlined that the cause of...
these disorders is “environmental” and treatment is easy.

Dr. Al Rifai said the family has a big role in helping patients suffering from psychological disorders. Families can also play critical roles in prevention, as some behavioral deviations result from tyrannical treatment and the absence of the language of dialogue. Dr. Al Rifai advised parents to adopt the language of dialogue and persuasion with their children. Television and modern technology, he said, have a big influence over children. “Today’s children represent the generation of technology that does not accept traditional practices. They are masters of the language of dialogue, use technology and deals (with their environment) reasonably and more openly when compared to traditional child thinking”, Dr. Al Rifai emphasised.

Dr. Hisa Abdullah Lootah, associate professor of Mass Communications at the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, UAE University, said the media is not entirely responsible for spreading psychological disorders in children. “The media may have a direct role in upbringing children, but we cannot directly and categorically accuse the media of creating psychological disorders in children”, she said.

Dr. Lootah said the media plays a role in forming awareness. But the psychological side is the result of the child’s relation with the family unit. “Losing the feeling of security inside the family creates fears and various psychological disorders”, she added.

The cause of the increase in the number of patients, said Dr. Lootah, is the result of the failure of psychiatrists in the Arab world in the treatment process. “Most psychiatrists (in the Arab world) still use the traditional approach in treating their patients, like using Sigmund Freud’s theories that are no more used around the world. There are modern theories like cognitive therapy.”, she said. She added that some psychiatrists ignore Islamic psychology that is based on Islamic thought.

The Nuclear Family

Modern societies have been suffering from growing numbers of psychological and social crises as a result of the collapse of the value system and the emergence of alienation, loneliness and poor communications among people, said Dr. Ahmed Falah Al Amoush, dean of the Faculty of Literature and Human and Social Sciences at the Sharjah University.

“These social diseases create a clear tension in societies... seclusion studies have shown that parental supervision is absent, posing the threat of pushing the youths to crime or bitter loneliness that could lead to suicide. Modern societies suffer from weak social relations, leading to the emergence of the nuclear family (bringing the family unit to the level of husband and wife, detached from a wider group as was the case in the past)”, Dr. Al Amoush explained. He said business activities were the main cause in this segregation, in addition to the recent proliferation of technologies, virtual social networks like Facebook.

Dr. Al Amoush said depression was the most common psychological disorder. He said the solution is to return to authentic social relations and to the role of the family in the upbringing process, as well as to seek the assistance of Community Policing, support the spirit of initiatives and build a national strategy based on these tenets.
Helping to put lives back together

Psychosocial support (PSS) is about helping survivors of disasters or crisis resume their regular lives. It covers everything from individual counselling to re-opening schools. We asked people involved in psychosocial work at the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Save the Children, Columbia University, and the Interagency Standing Committee Working Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support to describe what they do, how they determine progress, constraints to delivering this support, and how they measure their success.

"Psycho" and "social"

PSS, says Loin, has been polarized into two camps said Mike Wessells, a professor at Columbia University in the United States who chairs the Taskforce on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), a global body. The 'psycho' approach based on clinical mental health seeks to address trauma, depression, and anxiety. A more holistic 'social' method tackles the problems people face in emergencies, like the threat of physical insecurity, displacement, not knowing the whereabouts of loved ones, loss of livelihood, and access to school. Some NGOs, such as MSF, combine psycho and social. "Our main objective is to restore functioning on an individual or community level ... we try to unite the individual, community and environment perspectives," said MSF's mental health specialist in Amsterdam, Kaz de Jong. The gap is slowly narrowing as perceptions change. "Mental health support cannot exist without the other forms of support – financial aid, health interventions – if you give people counselling and no livelihood help, it won't take hold," said PSS specialist and psychologist Mirella Papinutto, who has worked for UNICEF, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the Italian poverty alleviation NGO, COOPI. NGOs often focus on the social side. "There is a general feeling that if we can provide recreation, education and community integration [for children], then some psychosocial issues that may later have developed, can be dealt with early on," Save the Children's child protection adviser, Christine McCormick, told IRIN. Children may also be referred to social workers or health authorities for counselling services.

What are PSS activities?

MSF provides one-on-one support to help people reconnect with their families, communities and friends after a traumatic event; trains local counsellors to continue the work when the agency leaves the area; teaches people to manage stress and distress; helps parents deal with traumatised children; counsels the survivors of gender-based violence. UNICEF, IRC and Save the Children help re-open schools or support community schools, and train teachers and volunteers to…
offer emotional support to children. "The behaviour of attending school every day and the establishment of a routine ... supports children's well-being ... [it] brings back a child's sense of identity, it allows them to interact with their peers, and process what they have gone through," said Deborah Haines, emergency education adviser at Save the Children. "PSS is the port of entry," said Papinutto. "It's the system through which you ... follow up, with all referrals from medical to legal, social and economic; it is at the heart of everything."

How do crises affect people?
Examples range from loss of self-esteem, depression, relationship difficulties, the development of phobias or physical problems with psychological roots, to community rejection, said Papinutto. MSF's De Jong noted that mothers sometimes stop caring for their children; fathers can become frustrated and angry with their families as well as other people. Specific groups have their own needs - children associated with armed forces can be stigmatized by their families and communities; they might feel they are spiritually contaminated by the people they have killed; they have fallen behind in their education or lacked schooling; they might be addicted to drugs; girls could have reproductive or sexual health problems, Papinutto said. After the earthquake struck Haiti in January 2010, many schoolchildren were found to be withdrawn or aggressive, some isolated themselves, and some children had "invisible symptoms", said Haines.

Are there minimum standards?
Yes. The IASC guidelines on Mental Health and PSS in Emergencies were drawn up by some 27 partner agencies in humanitarian, clinical and social work, and published in 2007. For the first time, they called for psychosocial support to be integrated into all humanitarian sectors, said Wessells. "When planning camp management, the guidelines ask: Is there enough privacy? Is attention paid to overcrowding? Are the latrines locked and well-lit? Is there a space where people can bury [dead] bodies?"

The blueprint is a pyramid with four tiers: the first covers basic needs like shelter, safety, clean water and sanitation, healthcare and food. The second focuses on people who require community and family support to maintain their mental health and psychological wellbeing. The third covers people who require mental health support from government services, or a combination of counseling and livelihoods support. The top tier represents the three to four percent of people whose intolerable suffering makes daily functioning difficult, and who require specialist psychiatric help.

Is PSS improving?
Practitioners say it is. "There was a more coordinated, systematic and
Sue Dwyer, Vice-President of International Programmes at IRC, said sexual and gender-based violence programmes had attracted "a huge increase in funding ... It still remains insufficient in relation to the needs, but compared to 10 years ago, funding streams have significantly increased."

PSS has also been gaining respect. "Nowadays you see more and more mental health interventions ... and the social side of psychosocial is no longer overlooked," De Jong commented. "The field itself has evolved - in the 1980s you went for counselling when you had a serious disorder, nowadays they [mental health services] are everywhere." Wessells said the 2004 tsunami had turned the tide. "PSS used to be seen as something to do after basic survival needs were met – the tsunami emphasized how mentally affected people are, and support in that realm can be life-saving: if you make people more resilient, they're less likely to engage in high-risk behaviour and be victim to a variety of preventable [problems]."

What are the constraints?
PSS "still has some way to go before the value of education in children's psychosocial wellbeing is really understood," said Save the Children's Haines.

Governments and practitioners often had to be persuaded to take a holistic approach. "A government might put its health ministry in charge of PSS, and the ministry will post a couple of psychiatrists in the field, and you will end up with a purely medical model," said Wessells. The specialized nature of the training meant many psychologists and social workers each took "an inappropriate, silo approach" to providing help. There is a lack of evidence as to what works and what does not. "In the absence of this [evidence] it can be difficult to convince policy leaders to make it [PSS] as high a priority as many think it should be," said Rakotomalala. "People think it is so important to set up toilets, but they don't necessarily take into account how people are feeling." It is not always about money, said Papinutto. Although the sector has received more cash, there is still an absence of good needs assessments on the ground, and despite minimum guidelines, agencies offering low-quality, inappropriate responses are still able to operate.

When is your work done?
Emergency interventions are finite, but psychosocial wellbeing could take years to achieve, and implementing the various tiers of the PSS response takes different periods of time. Haines said emergency education should start as early as possible, because a crisis was inevitably a long-term endeavour. "Communities are not moving on when they are stuck in the past," said MSF's De Jong. "It is like losing someone; you are supposed to feel grief, anger and sadness, but after, say, nine months, you should also want - at least partly - to start to live again."

An intervention was working "When we see a community functioning again, when they are able to direct their energies towards the future, and are able to deal with the issues of the past without revenge or anger," he said. "When they can look after themselves and others, and their caring capacity is restored; when new or old mechanisms of leadership are re-established or re-started - these are some indicators of recovery."
Iron willpower

Despite a complicated medical condition, Rashid Al Naqbi has been able to defeat impediment

By Amani Al Yafei

The story of 27-year-old Rashid Ali Abdul Rahman Al Naqbi with pain started when he just started to crawl at his parents’ home in the town of Khor Fakkah. The parents noticed that his movement was not normal and medical checkups confirmed he had spastic paralysis on the left side of his body.

Doctors’ diagnosis was confusing; some doctors said it was the result of a faulty injection when he received his periodical vaccinations, and others said it was a condition at birth.

Spontaneity characterised his early childhood, and Rashid considers that period to be the most beautiful in his life, despite the suffering he experienced when an elementary school refused to grant him admission.

However, his parents’ insistence to give their child an opportunity to learn succeeded in getting him accepted at a school in which he continued his studies and obtained his high school certificate. Rashid said he had received all support from his family during that period, and his parents never made him feel he was different.

Rashid wanted to become a useful member of the community, and his brother suggested to him that he should join the Interior Ministry’s centres for people with special needs. He hesitated first, but he was soon convinced of the idea.

Rashid studied modern electronic secretarial work and file-keeping. He currently works as a supervisor at Khor Fakkah Municipality’s Technical Affairs Department. He exerts best efforts to deliver his tasks perfectly in a job that has given him the chance to integrate in society and to secure a stable future. He enjoys the respect of all his colleagues.

Rashid received the ‘Ideal Employee’ award at the 2nd Khor Fakkah Municipality Employees Forum.

He loves adventures and confronting challenges. On one occasion, he climbed a mountain in Khor Fakkah with an iron will following a challenge put forward by a friend of his, who could not do it.

“My belief in God Almighty, my love for adventure and strong willpower has helped me defeat impediment without any fear”, he stressed.
Algerian writer Wasini Al-Araj, who won the UAE’s Sheikh Zayed Book Award in 2007, has a mesmerising style and outstanding techniques which he will soon pass on to a new literary project – his autobiography. Al-Araj’s books have been translated into many foreign languages including English, French, German, Italian, Hebrew, Danish and Spanish, among others. He received the Algerian Librarians Prize for his best-seller ‘The Prince’ in 2006. He spoke to 999 in an exclusive interview.

Excerpts:

Q. Are you still in touch with your childhood?

A successful writer is the one who fails to sever the links with childhood, says Algerian novelist Wasini Al-Araj

A. If I am asked to define the writer, I’d say he is the person who has failed to end his relationship with his or her childhood. Childhood continues to live on inside the writer. In my childhood lives what I call the ‘wounds of writing’, which means my writings are based on the entirety of these wounds. The first wound – and the deepest one – is the death of my father who worked at a French mine. He returned to Algeria in 1957 to take part in the grand liberation revolution and died a martyr in 1959. When he died I was seven years old. I am overwhelmed by the image of the father though I am not aware of the details of that image. I call it a ‘wound’ and it gave me the sense of feeling things and comprehending them, and to convert

I love the Arabic language, and I worked hard to learn it
that into creativity. The second wound is the death of my grandmother.

Q. Your grandmother?
A. I grew up under her watchful eye. She taught me how to speak nicely and told me stories. She had looked after me. I belong to a generation that learnt French; I started attending school at the age of five, and Arabic was not taught in Algeria during that time. The Quran school was the only school that taught Arabic. My grandmother told me: “If you want to know the history of your grand fathers, you should learn Arabic”. As we belonged to an Andalusia family, the Moorisikion, those who were forced to leave Spain in the 16th century and some of them settled in the Western part of Algeria, my grandmother felt that belonging to Andalusia was belonging to Arabia. I attended Quran schools out of my love for her.

Q. Moving from one place to another, for Wasini Al-Araj, appears to be a habit and a destiny? How was your first journey to Tlemcen?
A. I left the village when I was 10 years old. I attended a boarding school in Tlemcen and teaching there was in French. I discovered that I had lost the value of the village after I became familiarised with the city and its components. Afterwards, I left to Wahran after I obtained my baccalaureate in Arabic and French. At Wahran, I studied literature for four years.

Q. After that came Syria and France. What have they added to you?
A. Following graduation from university, I went to Syria in 1976 to obtain my Ph. D. degree. Syria represents a major source of Arab culture, and I was able to fill gaps in my Arab language proficiency. Before my arrival in Syria, I wrote a short novel in Algeria. But in the Syrian capital, Damascus, I wrote my first long novel; ‘Incidents From A Man’s Pain’. It was published in two parts and was received warmly by critics… I love the Arabic language, and I worked hard to learn it.

Q. How was your return to Algeria?
A. I returned to Algeria in 1986 and applied for a teaching job at Oran University, but my application was rejected. By mere coincidence, I was accepted at the capital’s university… in 1993, heinous crimes started to happen, and I was threatened directly.

Q. How does a creative person live in a special world of writing and creativity?
A. With time, I realised that moments become romantic. A writer, any way, is person in society, and any writer forced to leave his country may be in a conflict with domination. For instance, great German writers who deserted their country continued to write; they were oppressed and they suffered. I always say that we have to learn from the big guys, and I mentioned this condition of hesitation and fear in my novel ‘The Memory of Water’.

Q. You gave water a memory. How was that possible?
A. In fact, there is the apparent and the internal, even in sophism. The apparent does not give you anything; in it, you see the water as it runs and you do not realise that it has memory. When you see the rocks, the valleys and the lines made by the water movement, you can see the memory of water. It is the thing that remains and we have to study
People in all places and all ages reject one another. When some people see a woman with a scarf (hijab), they take an attitude towards her, and the same applies to other people when they see a woman without hair cover... our problem in Algeria is that we have a tendency towards extremism and exclusion, not towards common traits, though there are many common traits. Let’s at least listen to one another. The problem is ignorance; some people classify me as a communist, others as an Islamist and these classifications never end. I have an experience in life... I believe in the culture of difference and dialogue, even with my own children.

Q. Can the novelist live with fanatics?
A. We have to teach people first. 

Q. What is the best prize you have received?
A. The Sheikh Zayed Award has given me pan-Arab and international recognition. I consider this award to be the most important one, as it gives me a very important Arab recognition and is neutral.

Q. What are your future projects?
A. I started writing a new novel about my mother. I discovered that I wrote too little compared to what she has given me, and I decided not to end it. I used what I wrote in another novel on Palestine, describing the relationship between a mother and her son. I also wish to write my autobiography with a title like ‘I lived it as I desired it’.

Wasini Al-Araj

- Al-Araj was born on August 8, 1954 in Sidi Bou Jnan, in the eastern province of Tlemcen, Algeria.
- He is a university professor and a novelist, and teaches at the Central Algeria University and the Université Paris III-New Sorbonne.
- He is one of the most prolific of the second generation of post-independence Algerian writers.
- Unlike the generation that came before his, the works of Al-Araj, who writes in Arabic and French, belong to the new school that does not stay in one stable form. He has been continuing to experiment with new techniques and exploiting the Arabic literary and folk heritage.
- His new experiments were evident in the novel that stirred a lot of critical controversy and which is taught in many universities around the world (The Seventh Night after the One Thousand Night) in its two parts.
- In 1997, his novel, ‘La Gardienne des ombres. Don Quichotte à Alger’ (Protector of the Shadows: Don Quixote in Algiers) was selected as one of the best five novels in France.
- In 2001, he received Algeria’s highest award for novels.
- In 2006, he received the Algerian Librarians Prize for his best-seller ‘The Prince’.
- In 2007, he received the Sheikh Zayed Book Award in 2007.
- Al-Araj’s books have been translated into many foreign languages including English, French, German, Italian, Hebrew, Danish and Spanish, among others.
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A policeman educating a young boy on the safe use of bicycles.

Policemen installing a sign warning people against stray animals on the roads.

Traffic policemen parade during an event in Abu Dhabi.
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Of rock crushers, factories and need for proper planning

The suffering of the residents of areas adjacent to rock crushers in the UAE is common knowledge. People living in those areas have been complaining of the health and environmental impact associated with living close to rock crushers’ sites. Cases of asthma and pneumonia have increased, and these cases have been registered with health and environmental agencies in the country. That situation prompted the intervention of environmental and municipal authorities to resolve this crisis and alleviate the suffering of the residents and eventually solve the problem once and for all; silence on this issue cannot be suitable for a county like the UAE which has achieved great progress or for the ambitions that the country has offered for its nationals and expatriates.

The suffering is not something new; it has been the result of accumulated wrongdoing that started with bad planning from the very outset, when crushers’ sites were not carefully selected to be far from residential areas. Things got worse when no plans were chalked out to transfer residents to other areas to help them avoid the health impact of being close to rock crushers.

Rock crushers and any industrial areas in advanced countries cannot be set up in industrial areas because of environmental and health damage. This is the simplest of human rights that people should have. But we do not want to cry over spilt milk; we would like to emphasise the positive steps taken to rectify the situation. A few days ago, Engineer Ali Qasim, head of the Environment Protection and Development at Fujairah Municipality, said there are no longer homes close to rock crushers in the emirate. Government instructions in this regard have been clear; to transfer residents to other areas and compensate them for the move. All citizens in those areas were given new homes as well as compensation for their farms. Qasim cited a detailed report issued by his department for the third quarter of the current year; he said in July this year, one violation by a rock crusher was registered, when dust came out of the crusher by two per cent. In August, there were two violations causing three per cent pollution. In September, one violation was detected by a crusher that caused two per cent pollution. The department also monitored violations by trucks transporting crushed rocks. A total of 3,051 inspection visits were made in July, 2,365 visits in August and 1,427 visits in September. Work at a total of 285 rock crushers was ordered to be temporarily suspended for violating environmental protection regulations.

The number of rock crushers is on the increase in the country, according to figures released in the report. Latest figures show that the figure has reached 62 in Fujairah. The number of factories is also increasing, and that is a good thing for the advancement of the industrial sector in the country. But what is needed is to ensure proper planning as a priority, and to protect the interests of the people. The safety of people should always be the priority. We are confident that this priority will be adhered to in the coming phase.