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## Muslim charity helps Jews celebrate Passover

By: [Khaled Al-Hilaly](#)

SANA'A, April 12— In a kind gesture of religious tolerance, the Muslim Charitable Society for Social Welfare (CSSW) provided Yemeni Jews in Amran with clothes and gifts on the important Jewish celebration on Passover last Wednesday.



Yemeni Jewish children playing in their front yard in Raidah Amran.

"During Muslim celebrations, the society donates clothes and food," said Mohammad Al-Qubati, the general manager of the CSSW. "Jews are part of Yemeni society and we are trying to reach all of society's needy groups."

The CSSW provided about 50 Jews living in Raida with new clothes and gifts for Passover, most of whom are orphans, widows and other less fortunate.

On the occasion, Rabbi Yahya Yussif in Sana'a wished wellbeing and protection for all Yemeni people: "On behalf of all the Jewish community, I thank the President for his constant care of the Yemeni Jews," he said.

Passover is the most important Jewish celebration. Jews eat only unleavened bread made from sorghum during the holiday. They do this in remembrance of the raw dough that their ancestors hurriedly grabbed to take with them into the desert when they fled enslavement in Egypt, according to the Torah.

Before they fled, the Jewish believe that God sent seven plagues on Egypt to encourage the Pharaoh to free their ancestors the Israelites.

The last of these was the slaughter of the first born of both man and beast in his lands.

To avoid the Israelites' children being harmed, God told Moses to make sure that they marked their dwellings with lamb's blood so that the plague would "pass over" them, which is where the celebrations name comes from.

During the days leading up to Passover, Jews clean their houses and dust their furniture in anticipation for the event. During the holiday, which lasts for a week, the families who celebrate sacrifice lambs, wear new clothes and visit each other.

Last week, President Ali Abdullah Saleh ordered to provide Yemen's Jewish families with all Passover celebration requirements like lambs to sacrifice and clothes.

This is the first Passover since the murder of Moshe Al-Nahari, teacher and well-known figure in Yemen's Jewish community in Amran in December last year. This is the first year his father, wife and nine children will be celebrating the holiday without him.

"Killing is forbidden in all religions," said the Rabbi Yussif. "In Islam, if anyone kills a person, it

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is as if he kills all people."

Up to 270 Yemeni Jews are estimated to live in Amran and Sana'a. About 110 of these are expected to be evacuated to the U.S. immediately after the Passover

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