

it will cost him to pay for his workers' wages, his own labour and profit, and the time needed to finish the job. In commuting, he also has to add transport costs. In most medium-sized and small projects the deal is made over the cost of the assignment while the time needed to finish it (within a certain range) is not relevant to the Israeli contractor. But it is crucial from the point of view of the Arab mu'alleem.

A mu'alleem thus has to be very careful in calculating his expenses to ensure a reasonable income for himself. Here is how Hussein, 29, calculated his expenses for a Tel Aviv assignment which required three months work (February 1979):

Transport from Ras el-Tin to Tel Aviv and return for 7 workers: 750 pounds per week (since they sleep on the site during working days). Of the seven passengers, his cousin and member of his clan (hamula). He pays them an average of 180 pounds each per day (200 for "seasoned workers"; 150-160 for "beginners"). From this amount he deducts 80 pounds each (per week) for transport, and all food expenses, including tea -- which are included in the team expenses. The four of them take turns in preparing meals, using firewood.

Thus while the workers receive daily wages from Hussain, he works by commission and it is in his interest to finish the assignment as quickly as possible. The usual working day is 10 to 12 hours long, with liberal breaks for tea and coffee. Hussain's net income during an average month amounts to 12,000 to 14,000 pounds (1979); workers in his team net an average monthly wage of 5,000 I.L., from which nothing is deducted since they are not registered workers. This should be compared to the salary of a school teacher in the West Bank holding a B.A. degree which amounted during the same period to 4,000-5,000 pounds per month.