



# PINNACLE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ACTIVE MINDS TOASTMASTERS CLUB

AREA 62, DIVISION I, DISTRICT 20, STATE OF KUWAIT

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DECEMBER 2011

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## TRIBUTE TO "THE DON"



*Don Prades, Active Minds Club mentor and one of the founding fathers of Toastmasters in Kuwait (among other things), cuts his birthday cake during one of Active Minds' meetings held in his honor.*

## Why Join the Toastmasters?

Why join the Toastmasters? Why indeed? Because it is an outstanding opportunity for you to sharpen your skills in listening, thinking and speaking under intense pressure in front of people. Toastmasters develops your ability to make a quick response, present coherent arguments and successfully sway your audience according to your way of thinking. These skills will help you later in the real world wherever your career may take you.

Studies show that employers, colleges and universities are always hunting for people who can express themselves well, people who have good oral communication skills -

and Toastmasters is based on honing these skills. Studies also show that people with good communication skills are identified as "leaders" and experience tells us that these people get promoted faster on the job. We are cognizant of the fact that Toastmasters isn't for everyone, neither is it only for people who are interested in public speaking. But Toastmasters is for anyone who cares deeply about professional development and career advancement. It offers you the opportunity to develop your leadership abilities. Through service in club offices, you can learn and practice sound management techniques. It also provides you with hours of fun and enjoyment. You will have fun as you learn new skills in a social atmosphere. You

will meet new and interesting people and form friendships that can last for a lifetime. You will improve your speaking skills and conquer your fears of public speaking in a supportive environment.

This is an open invitation to all the members of our community to join the Toastmasters movement. Improve your communication skills and win the respect and admiration of people around you, your colleagues, co-employees and most especially your boss and make them wonder what you did to change. Join now. All skill levels are welcome.

DON PRADES



**From the Editor**

At this precious moment, with bottomless pleasure, let me take the privilege in presenting the second issue of "The Pinnacle". It is a remarkable year for all of us in Active Minds Club in celebrating our 200th meeting. We are climbing the ladder of success in producing quality leaders and speakers through the educational materials available from TMI. I would once again encourage our members to share their thoughts and ideas by sending their articles to ActiveMindsClub@yahoo.com with the challenge to make the coming issues more interesting and awaited. Special thanks to our mentors Don Prades and Ildone Galvez who helped to make this second issue possible, to the EX-COM and to all members who contributed articles.

Enthusiastically yours,

TM Emy Badiang

**WHERE LEADERS  
ARE MADE**

# Be Different

Ayan Rand said the following: Throughout the centuries there were men who took first steps, down new roads, armed with nothing but their own vision.



**WHAT DOES BEING DIFFERENT MEAN?**

- Not being afraid to challenge the norm
- Being willing to take a

chance

- Asking why
- Charting your own course and destiny
- Being the person that you were meant to be

Most people think once they have a qualification that's it. They have arrived. Is it any wonder they don't grow? They are stagnant. Therefore, you have the choice to be different.

**BE DIFFERENT AND JOIN ACTIVE MINDS TOASTMASTERS CLUB!!!**

Toastmasters is an eye opening journey that will uncover your hidden abilities, unleash your inner energy and share the key to accomplishing your goals. You will hear a wealth of

new ideas, workable tactics and useful tools that when you practice, will make a considerable impact in your professional and personal life.

You will be buzzing with excitement and motivated to make a difference. You have an abundance of potential within you...Toastmasters will bring it out to fruition. WHY?

Because...

**YOU'RE DIFFERENT!**



## 2011-2012 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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## AUK Student's TM Experience 1 - "From English 108 Classroom to the Toastmasters Club Meeting"

To begin with I would like to apologize for one thing, I only have one set of eyes and one set of ears with which to gather information from one point of view. In spite of the limitation in only having that one point of view, I would like to share with you what I observed when I attended a club meeting with the members of Toastmasters. There are twenty-four different Toastmasters clubs in Kuwait, but I visited only three of them on 3 different occasions, "Al-Koot", "Kuwait" and "Active Minds". I visited each of these clubs once; these clubs are similar in their meeting format, organization, and they serve one purpose, "to provide a mutually supportive and positive learning environment in which every member has the opportunity to develop communication and leadership skills, which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth." My Public Speaking teacher, Mr. Don Prades, a member of the original team that brought Toastmasters International to Kuwait 12 years ago, advised my class to visit any of the Toastmasters club meetings. One of his stringent requirements to get an 'A' in his class is to speak outside the classroom. No one gets an 'A' unless the student has delivered a speech outside the classroom. He made that very clear during the first day of class. So attending and speaking in the Toastmasters meeting satisfies his requirement that's why a lot of my classmates paid the Toastmasters a curious but productive visit.

Once mentioned, the first question that probably comes to mind is "What is Toastmasters?" Well in short, Toastmasters International is a U.S. based organization where one can learn and practice the art of public speaking. The Toastmasters International brochure says, "The Toastmasters will show you how to listen effectively, think on your feet and speak confidently. You will learn valuable leadership skills-all in a supportive, non-intimidating environment." The art of public speaking is a tool that is used to connect with and in short, market ideas or information to an audience. And at many points in our lives, we will have the opportunity or obligation to speak to a group of people whether it's for work or to our families.

I got to see people giving a speech in the Toastmasters club whom I might not have ever guessed would be good at it. Sometimes one's appearance can be deceptive until that person starts speaking. There was one man who might otherwise be described as very unexciting, but once he started talk-

ing about aerobics, his appearance completely changed for me. With his skill at using the tools of public speaking, the eye contact, the gestures, the body language, the connection with the audience and good delivery, my lackluster opinion of him improved to the point of wanting to not just know who he was but to know him more.

I also noticed how a person who is good at the art of public speaking can make what would normally be a subject that I would not be interested in suddenly engaging and interesting. There was another person who gave a short speech on rap music. Under normal circumstances I would not have chosen to listen to a speech on this subject. But when this person started speaking, she captured the attention of the audience with a story about her struggle to become a successful rap singer and suddenly everyone was interested in that subject.

You may think there is no difference between giving a speech in a class and giving a speech in the Toastmasters club; but there is a difference between them. Giving a speech in a Toastmasters club meeting gives you the opportunity to get expert feedback from the members, learn from your mistakes and many more while enjoying your time amidst a hearty applause of appreciation for delivering your speech. The success of the club is largely due to the comfortable atmosphere and friendly members who always encourage you to visit and join the club. Everybody makes you feel welcome and comfortable and wants you to do well.

Even just one visit to the Toastmasters club was an education for me. I would recommend at least visiting once should you get a chance and take notice of what I noticed. And perhaps, if we meet up after your visit, you can share with me more observations that I may not have noticed. Of course, if you're in Professor Prades' Eng. 108 class it's a must do activity. Who knows, maybe one day we will both be listening to each other as members of the Toastmasters club ourselves? How cool could that be?

**Hanan M. Al-Harran**

### Upcoming Active Minds Events:

- February 3, 2012  
Table topics and Humorous Speech Contests
- February 17, 2012  
Evaluation and International Speech Contests

*Venue: Rumaithiya SPCL-HD Hall  
For more info, please call any EXCOM member.*

### New Members:

1. BIJI S. GITTENS
2. OMAR A. AL-HOSN
3. ELIZABETH ISHMAEL
4. GHULAM ALI
5. SHITTAL SONI
6. MILTON DANA

*For info on membership, pls. call Maha Al-Sumaiti, VP Membership or any EXCOM Member.*



# Active Minds Toastmasters Club Home of Area Governors

*For 5 of the past 6 years,  
the Area Governor of  
Area 62 has come from  
Active Minds TM Club.  
We're proud to present  
them here.*



**Henelyn "Babes" Collis**  
July 2006 — June 2007



**Don Prades**  
July 2007 — June 2008



**Bader Al-Sarraf**  
July 2008 — June 2009



**Mohammad Mohammad**  
July 2009 — June 2010



**Stephen Erasmus**  
July 2011 — June 2012

## Tribute to Abdulla Al-Madhi

To Our Respected Saidi (CD), Abdulla Al-Madhi:

WE, the members of Active Minds Toastmasters Club pay tribute to your kindness and generosity for the free and unfettered use of your wonderful facility that has inspired us in our quest for excellence in communication and leadership training the Toastmasters way.

To all of us who have known you all these years, no honor, no medal, no

award or fortune can repay the generosity and kindness you have always accorded us. We believe that the only true recompense is for us members of the Active Minds Toastmasters Club to live by your passion, vision and love for the Toastmasters.

Shuk'ran CD and we wish you and your family love, joy and peace.

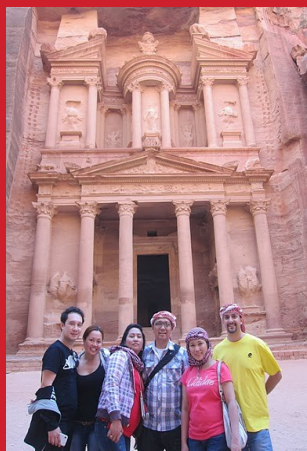
**Active Minds Toastmasters Club**



## AUK Student's TM Experience 2 - "From English 108 Classroom to the Toastmasters Club Meeting"



Active Minds Executive Committee and members attended District 79 Annual Toastmasters Convention (DTAC) in Jordan last May 2011. After the convention, the group decided to go around different beautiful places in Jordan and one of the places they visited was Petra, a world wonder.



Left to Right - TM Ildone L. Galvez, TM Kay Espinana, TM Emy Badiang, TM Macky Pintado, TM Rhea Usman & TM Khaled Al-Hashem

On a regular day at the university and a regular day in my Public Speaking class, my professor, Mr. Prades, announced that a guest speaker would come to our class within the next week. I was excited because I might learn more ideas about Public Speaking, which I highly enjoy. Then the day came and Mr. Prades introduced Mr. Abdulla Al-Mahdi, founder and CEO of SPCL-HD, a local consulting firm that specializes in communication and leadership training. Mr. Abdulla Al-Mahdi had set up a wonderful power point demonstration on communication skills and human development that led to the introduction of "Toastmasters" and the whole class was invited to attend their meetings to discover for ourselves what Toastmasters is all about. Not only did we learn a lot from his presentation, but also we were invited to Toastmasters and participate in their meetings.

Mr. Prades had mentioned that attending and participating in the Toastmasters would put a good impact on our grades. He has a well-defined policy about getting a solid 'A' in his class. When the semester started, he gave us his rules and policies. One of them says, "to get an 'A' you have to deliver a speech outside the classroom." It could be accomplished by speaking in the Academic Showcase or any other venue. Since we did not have the showcase this semester, he urged us to attend and participate in the Toastmasters meetings which we did. I did care about that, but mostly I just wanted to try something new. I became nervous when I first attended the Toastmasters together with some of my classmates but once I went inside I felt a sense of comfort. Although there weren't many people, the meeting went well. When table topics (impromptu speaking) was introduced, I decided to go for it and spoke outside the familiar confines of the classroom. I felt confident but a little terrified because it was my first time to perform in front of the Toastmasters members. But then the professional evaluations from the members turned out to be great and I was proud of myself. After speaking for the first time at the Toastmasters, the sense of comfort began to build up and the members were very friendly. That meeting went very well and turned out to be a lot better than I thought it would be. Not only was I going to attend Toastmasters again for my class, but also attend to build up my skills in public speaking and seek more opportunities for self-development.

After missing more meetings at Toastmasters due to a heavy schedule I had at the university, I decided to make time to attend another meeting. My second time was even more exciting

because there were more people and there was more enthusiasm. Being a "veteran" already, I felt even more confident to speak at the table topics competition and won the "Best Table Topics Speaker" award and I have the Toastmasters certificate to prove it! The meeting was another great experience and everyone who spoke at Toastmasters that night made a wonderful job. I then kept thinking to myself, "I'm going to do my best to keep attending the Toastmasters meetings".

The next time I attended Toastmasters for the third time was much more of a learning experience even though there weren't many people. I did a power point presentation and used the same one that I delivered in my Public Speaking class. Unfortunately, I didn't do very well and my confidence level wasn't one hundred percent there. I felt that my presentation was presented a lot better in class. I then realized that whenever you perform any type of presentation for the first time in a different setting and in an unfamiliar environment, it makes you a lot more nervous than what you can ever imagine. Although my presentation didn't go as well as I thought it would, I learned a lot from the Toastmasters expert feedback and I was very glad that I did it because I know in the future I will be presenting these types of presentations. One of the members of the Toastmasters told me that the best way to do well in a new environment is to come early and rehearse so I'll be able to pick up the feel of the atmosphere and help increase the level of my confidence.

I saw that performing in Toastmasters isn't that much different from performing in class because in the beginning I was nervous but eventually got better after attending more meetings just like in a regular class. The beautiful thing about Toastmasters is that they understand you, they help you improve your skills, and they show you the beauty of public speaking. Everybody is rooting for you and wants you to succeed. I look forward to attending more meetings, meeting new people, learning more about myself and becoming a more skilled speaker. I recommend Toastmasters to those who love to speak publicly and to those who seek personal development because it is a great learning experience and it includes a great amount of fun. I encourage English 108 students to attend the Toastmasters meetings to hone their public speaking skills or better still to establish our own Toastmasters club at AUK. Any takers?

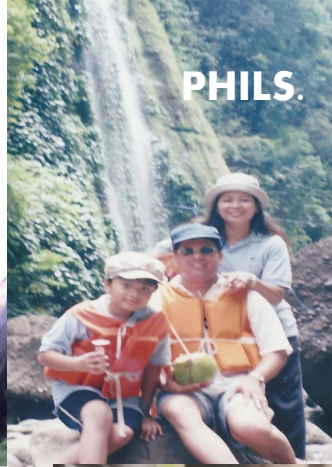
**Nawal T. Al-Adasani**



# Holiday Trips



**USA**



**PHILS.**



**JORDAN**



**THAILAND**



**BANGLADESH**



**USA**



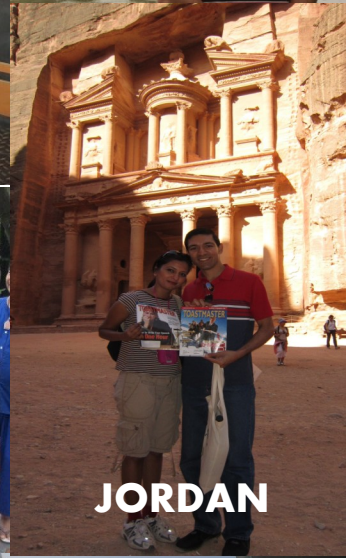
**UK**



**USA**



**THAILAND**



**JORDAN**



**USA**



**USA**



**UK**



**DUBAI**



## The Competent Leadership Manual – the 'What' and the 'How'

Soon after joining Toastmasters, every new member receives a Membership Kit containing an assortment of educational materials and manuals, the most prominent of which are "The Competent Communication Manual" and "The Competent Leadership Manual". If used correctly, these two manuals help a member to learn in a step-by-step manner the basics of both presentation and leadership skills.

I've been a member of the Active Minds Toastmasters Club since November 2010. I joined Toastmasters because I had heard and read about the systematic manner in which a member can learn how to speak in public with confidence and poise. What I didn't know was that one also has the opportunity to learn and develop leadership and meeting management skills by participating in a variety of roles during a typical Toastmasters Club meeting. The big question in my mind was "How could I, a new member, perform these roles without knowing the requirements of each? What do I need to do to prepare for each role? How can I play each role the way it was designed to be played?" The answers to most of my questions lay within the covers of The Competent Leadership Manual (also known as the CL manual, in short).

The first time I opened the CL Manual, I thought "10 projects. Each has 4 or 5 different roles. Where do I begin? How will I ever complete it all? How will I scale this mountain?"

The answer: Three simple steps. SELF-STUDY, OBSERVATION and APPLICATION.

### 1) SELF STUDY

Let's face it. A Toastmasters Club is not elementary school where a teacher will feed us basics while we sit and passively take them in. No worthwhile skill can be acquired in a passive manner. If we are to get something worthwhile out of the Toastmasters Educational Program, we're going to have to do more than just attend meetings every fortnight. We're going to have to invest some time in SELF STUDY.

Actually opening and attentively reading the CL Manual is the first step and will help to answer many of the basic questions we have regarding the various projects and the manner in which we can go about planning and completing them.

Each of the 10 projects in the CL manual focuses on a different leadership skill (Listening, Critical Thinking, Giving Feedback, Time Management and so on). Each project consists of TWO parts:

- a) A short, informative introduction to the skill, and
- b) An assignment designed to provide a member with opportunities to practically learn an aspect of that skill in a Toastmasters Club.

For most projects, a member can choose from a list of meeting roles to serve in. Some require a member to help their club in other ways.

The new CL manual has a short piece of advice right at the start, which is worth its weight in gold - "It is important that you read each project carefully before you embark on each assignment."

A description of the common meeting roles can be found online at [www.toastmasters.org/meetingroles](http://www.toastmasters.org/meetingroles).

### 2) OBSERVATION

There's a reason why the 'Master-Apprentice' system of learning has been around for as long as we can remember. It's because we learn faster and more effectively when we observe a more experienced practitioner in action and then practice what we've observed.

The next time you attend a Toastmasters meeting, instead of just sitting and passively enjoying the proceedings, observe each role player in action. Watch closely WHAT they do and say, HOW they do it, ASK yourself how they could've done it better and WHAT you can take home from their performance, and use when you perform that role.

By doing this, you will be practicing Listening & Critical Thinking (the first two projects in the CL Manual) and will walk away from the meeting actually having gained some practical insights which you can incorporate the next time you assume a particular role.

### 3) APPLICATION

We can read all the books written about swimming and watch "the greatest Olympian in history" Michael Phelps' record-setting performance at the 2008 Olympics dozens of times, but it won't help us the least bit, unless we actually jump into a swimming pool and put into practice what we've read and observed.

Your self-study and observation will assist you greatly only if you APPLY what you've learnt.

Proper application is preceded by a fair amount of PREPARATION. So actually take some time to prepare what you are going to say and do, and how you are going to go about it in your club meeting. Practice it a few times at home so that you know what you will sound like. By doing this, you can also tweak some areas so that you are well prepared to 'go live' at your club meeting. If all this sounds like too much work, keep in mind that you are investing in YOURSELF as a Toastmaster and will not be disappointed at the 'Return on Investment' that you get in future.

Finally, carry your CL manual to every meeting and request another member to observe your performance and provide written evaluation in the manual at the meeting or immediately thereafter. If you skip this step, you will lose a valuable opportunity to improve subsequent performances in that role.

Completing the CL manual is more than just a matter of 'box ticking' at the end of the Toastmasters year. Nobody from Toastmasters International's Headquarters is going to question whether a member actually performed his/her roles well enough to be given the Competent Leader Award, but we can ask ourselves if we've actually been true to our own selves as Toastmasters.

Taking the trouble to 'work the CL manual' as it is supposed to be 'worked' will not only help us to effectively perform the various meeting roles on our way to being called 'Competent Leader', but more importantly it will help each of us to become a 'Competent Member' of our Club and of Toastmasters International.

Reuben D'Lima

**WHERE LEADERS  
ARE MADE**

# Fire Safety

Every month there are hundreds of calls to the Fire Department. Some fire calls are nothing, they are false alarms. But some are very serious and there is much loss in property and life. People take fire safety very lightly and give it no thought.

I want to share with you a concern I have and that is Fire Safety. I want to cover some Hazards, ways to prevent fires and what to do when you become involved with a fire.

The basic requirements for a Fire are that you must have Heat, Oxygen and Fuel. If you remove any of these you will not have a fire.

But why do we need to worry about a fire? Most of our homes are made of steel, concrete and rock. These things do not burn. There is a term that is used that describes the risk. It is called "Fire Load".

Fire Load is what is present that will burn.

Question: In a fire what often is present that will kill you? It is SMOKE that will most often kill you. Not the fire. A bed mattress has enough chemical to produce enough smoke to kill 400 people.

So, we know now what is needed to have a fire. what a fire load is and what often will cause death during a fire. The Smoke.

This time of the year we use different appliances such as more lights, electric blankets and space heaters.

Space heaters pose a hazard unlike other items. Some have open heating coils that when they come in contact with flammable items can cause a fire. This would include clothing, curtains furniture and carpet.

One of the easiest ways to start a fire is to put a space heater near curtains on a carpet. The wind blows the curtains and hits the space heater. Then the heater tips over on to the carpet. Within minutes a fire starts.

Smoking in bed is also very hazardous. Light up a cigarette, fall asleep and the carpet and the bed can start to burn. The smoke will first lull you to sleep then to a deep sleep then asphyxiate you to death.

Ways to protect you is to limit the use of space heaters. Never use on MAX, set to a lower setting. Never leave it unattended. Purchase more than what you need and set on a lower setting. Also, try to purchase a smart space heater that will automatically shut off when it tips over.

If you are asleep and a fire starts, smoke will rise to the ceiling and is very hot. Never stand up. Roll out of bed and stay low all the way to the door. Get out and stay out. There is nothing inside that is worth losing your life over

Use a smoke detector as high on the wall as you can, preferably on the ceiling. You need all the warning you can get. If the smoke detector is low you will reduce the time you have to escape. Test it once a month. Follow the directions on the use and installation of a smoke detector. It can save your life when used correctly.

In conclusion let me say that electrical appliances do not need to be feared. They do need to be understood and respected for what they can do.

Be safe, live long and prosper.

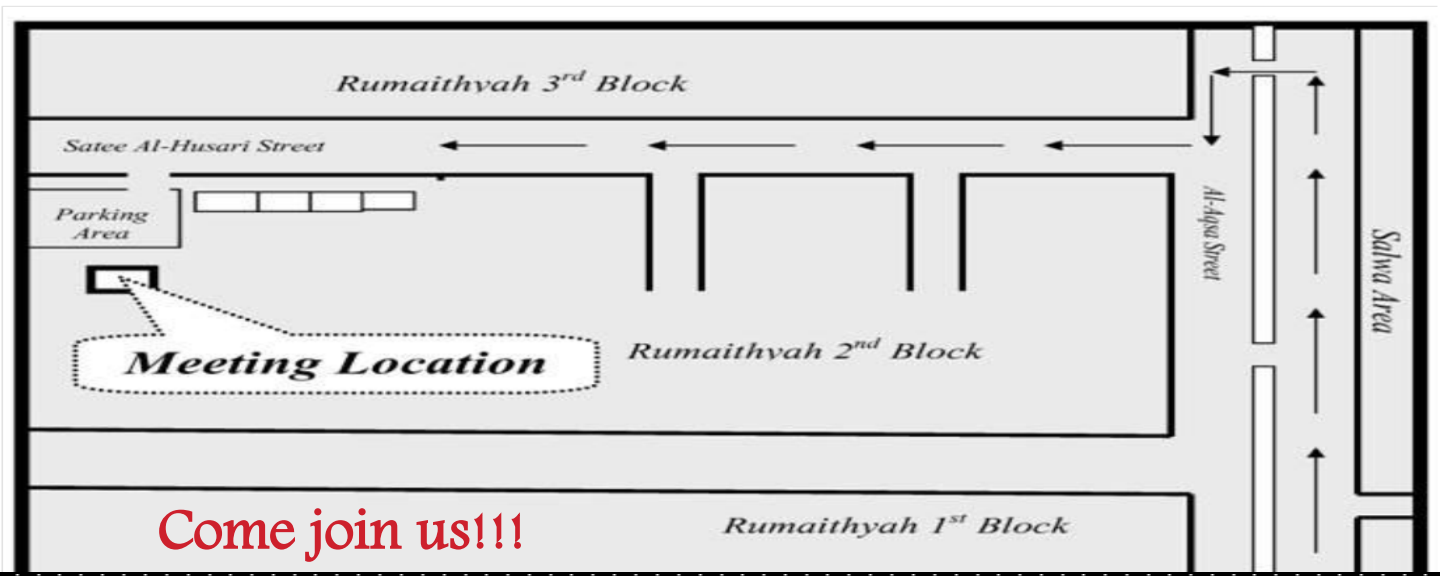
By: Milt Dana



*Did you know that? Active Minds TM Club was founded in 2003. It was first called Filipino Toastmasters Club of Kuwait because majority of its members were Filipinos. Its membership is now mixed with members from Canada, South Africa, India, UK, USA, Philippines, Egypt and Kuwait. The Club will hold its 200th meeting on January 6, 2012.*

## Where and When We Meet

Active Minds Toastmasters Club meeting is conducted every 1st & 3rd Fridays of the month at 6:00—8:00 p.m.



**Come join us!!!**

**Address: Rumaithiya, Block 2 Satee Al-Hussary Street, Next to Abu Tammam School**