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# YEMEN TIMES

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## OUR VIEWPOINT

### The Role of Values and Strong Beliefs in Development

As a student of economics, it is my job to analyze the necessary conditions of what has been termed a "take-off" in the development process. It is interesting to note that what makes it tick is whether society has a certain value system in which it strongly believes.

Time and again, history shows that when there is a strong commitment to a certain belief, individuals are willing and able to attain very high levels of productivity. For example, when Prophet Muhammad implanted in his followers a strong belief, a bunch of nomads created one of the most wonderful of human civilizations. At other times, a strong belief in the enterprising capitalism (with the aim of self-enrichment), has allowed many a backward nation to rise to prominence. It could be an ideology, which in many countries has motivated people to achieve spectacular results. Sometimes, it is just a feeling of being faced with the danger of extinction that propels societies to move ahead.

What all this means is that if society has no driving force, often in the form of a feeling of destiny or strong beliefs, it is very hard to achieve any meaningful strides in the developmental process. This is the factor that makes a real difference.

Coming back to Yemen, society does not possess a force that could be the power machine driving people to achievement. Even personal ambition is defeated because people can get rich without earning the wealth. Why should people work hard, when they can make it without the hassle.

Only strong individuals can build nations. Strength here refers to the values that give people the self-esteem and confidence badly needed to participate in the development process. For this purpose, our society needs to embark, not on an indoctrination process, but on giving individual Yemenis their rights and respecting them when they exercise them.

The Publisher  
عبدكريم

### تعزية:

تتقدم أسرة صحيفة «يمن تايمز» بأحر التعازي والمواساة إلى الأستاذ علي سالم البيض بوفاة والدته أسكنها الله فسيح جناته والهم أهلها وذويها الصبر والسلوان وإنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون.

### CONDOLENCES

The Yemen Times management and staff present their condolences to H. E. Mr. Ali Salim Al-Beedh, on the passing away of his mother. May God have mercy on her soul.

## At Final Count, 2.7 million Yemenis Have Registered for Elections, Including Half a Million Women

Well, Phase One in preparing for elections is over. The one-month long registration process ended on Friday February, 19th, 1993.

At final count, there were 2.7 million registrants, including almost half a million women. The leadership, senior officials, the SEC, the diplomatic community in Sanaa, and even foreign observers expressed a sigh of relief. The number was gratifying and acceptable. It is almost 20% of the population base, and just about 50% of the number of eligible voters. Let us analyse these results more deeply.

#### A: The Security Aspect:

According to Colonel Ali Mohammed Selah, Commander of the Operations Center, there were some (62) security-related incidents, most of them marginal. "We have resolved most of them in an administrative way, and we cannot really call them violations," he said. He mentioned that shots were fired on thirteen incidents, but there were no casualties. "The most serious security problem arose when time was up and we wanted to bring home our teams. People who did not register until then wanted to hold them

up until they register, but we simply told them, 'Time is up' and we brought the lads out; in several cases, by using armed protection," he stated. During the registration phase, four persons from among the work teams were killed. Three in a car accident, and one from malaria.

#### B. Female Participation:

Yemen Times learnt at least of five cases of wives having been divorced and dozens of cases of beatings because women insisted on exercising their rights to register for the elections.

Continues on page 8

### The Final Number of Registrants for the April Elections

Name of Governorate	Total Registrants	Total Female Registrants	Governorate's Share in Total	Governorate's Share in Female Total	Average # of Registrants per Seat
Taiz	423,916	97,586	15.8%	19.6%	9,859
Ibb	315,986	41,845	11.8%	8.4%	8,315
Hodeidah	310,802	52,429	11.6%	10.5%	9,141
Sanaa	289,999	24,805	10.8%	5.0%	8,055
Sanaa City	205,599	41,780	7.7%	8.4%	11,422
Hajjah	168,780	14,743	6.3%	3.0%	7,338
Dhamar *	160,335	18,005	6.0%	3.6%	7,635
Hadhramaut **	154,460	42,289	5.8%	8.5%	9,086
Aden	133,653	47,376	5.0%	9.5%	12,150
Lahj	127,046	45,405	4.7%	9.1%	10,587
Abyan	83,755	30,829	3.1%	6.2%	10,469
Al-Baidha	71,098	11,355	2.6%	2.3%	7,110
Saadah	66,299	1,949	2.5%	0.4%	7,367
Al-Mahweet	60,407	3,007	2.2%	0.6%	7,551
Shabwah	51,099	13,890	1.9%	2.8%	8,517
Marib	32,204	5,469	1.2%	1.1%	10,735
Al-Jawf	14,838	310	0.5%	0.06%	7,419
Al-Maharah	14,555	4,590	0.5%	0.9%	7,278
TOTAL	2,684,831	497,662	100%	100%	8,920

Notes: \* = Report on one polling center missing  
\*\* = Report on one constituency missing

Source: Supreme Elections Committee, Internal (Secret) Memo.



The Cowboy Bring to Yemen Country Music p. 4

The UNHCR Tries to Cope with a Rising Refuge Problem p. 5

The YCB Starts Operations in Full Force. p. 14

Permanent Features:

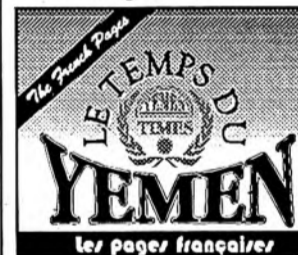
• Review of Local Press: p. 6



• Letters to the Editor: p. 8



• French Pages 10 + 11



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### New UK Ambassador in Sanaa

On March 15th, Yemen is going to bid farewell to one of its senior foreign diplomats, UK ambassador Mark Anthony Marshall who arrived in Yemen on November 23, 1987. The designated UK ambassador to Sanaa is Mr. Gordon (Robert) Douglas, 56, who comes to Yemen from Georgetown, Guyana, in the north of South America, where he has been serving, since 1990, as High Commissioner as well as non-resident UK Ambassador to Surinam. Yemeni-British relations have seen considerable ups-and-downs following the Gulf Crisis, although they are now improving. Mr. Douglas had served in several Arab countries before as a member of the UK embassy staff. Notable among these are Amman, Jordan (1958-61), Abu Dhabi, UAE (1961-63), Kuwait (1966-69), and Doha, Qatar (1973-76). In addition, Mr. Douglas had been ambassador to the former PDRY, and then Consul-General at Aden after Yemen's reunification before he was transferred to Georgetown.

### ICRC Satisfied with Yemeni Progress

The International Council of the Red Cross, issued a short memo on the results of the visit to Yemen by five ICRC delegates during the first two weeks of February, 1993.

"The delegates carried out visits to the central prison of Sanaa, Dhamar, Ibb, Taiz, and Hodeidah, as well as other detention facilities," the 17th February memo reads. The group also met with various Yemeni officials relevant to the prison system. Yemen Times learnt that the ICRC is satisfied with the progress made in the prison conditions, though much more still needs to be done.

At another level, the various visitors from Europe and the US who observe the country's steady progress towards the April 27th elections, stated they were impressed by the firm Yemeni genuine desire to get it right.

### Bin Hussainoon Carries a Letter from President Saleh to King Fahd

Mr. Saleh Abubakar Bin Hussainoon, Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources, concluded a two-day visit to Riyadh this week. The Minister carried with him a letter from President Ali Abdullah Saleh to HM Saudi King Fahd Ibn Abdulaziz. Yemen and Saudi Arabia are slowly working to get to terms with the fall-out of the Gulf Crisis and its impact on the bilateral relations.

### EXXON/Hunt Propose a US\$5.5 billion Gas Project

Mr. Karl F. Swenson, President of EXXON, who completed a swift visit to Yemen, told the Yemen Times that the Exxon/Hunt partnership has proposed a US\$5.5 billion proposal to develop and exploit the immense gas finds in the Marib/Al-Jawf region.

"There is a window of opportunity that lends itself to Yemen, at the moment. A revenue-sharing system has to be arrived at with the government as soon as possible, maximum within a few months, and preferably, within weeks," he said.

Mr. Swenson explained that the first phase will be the use of natural gas in producing energy for local consumption, especially in electric generation, and also to provide energy for the large industries, such as cement plants. "The savings from the use of gas in electricity generation, alone, amount to over US\$ 3 billion over the next fifteen years," he said.

He also indicated that the Exxon/Hunt partnership has the technical know-how and the capability to raise the financial requirements of the project. It also has the ability to secure the market. But an agreement for this long-term association has to be reached rather soon.

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**JAPAN MAKES NUCLEAR PROPOSALS TO PAKISTAN**

Japan has made proposals to Pakistan about non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in South Asia and will make similar suggestions to India, a Pakistan foreign ministry spokesman said last week.

Japanese and Pakistani officials discussed the proposals in confidential talks in Islamabad. The discussions followed an announcement by Japan last year that Tokyo could refuse a country development assistance if it produced weapons of mass destruction.

"The discussions followed an announcement by Japan last year that Tokyo could refuse a country development assistance if it produced weapons of mass destruction. The Japanese side expressed certain ideas for enhancing the objectives of non-proliferation in South Asia which we have promised to examine very carefully and with interest."

The spokesman said the Japanese delegation, led by Tokyo's ambassador for arms control and disarmament, Mitsuro Donowaki, was also planning to visit New Delhi. During a visit by Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to Tokyo in December his Japanese counterpart Kiichi Miyazawa questioned him about whether Islamabad had developed nuclear weapons. Miyazawa suggested that Pakistan should sign the international nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

Pakistan says it will not make nuclear weapons through it has developed a "technical capability". It has refused to sign the NPT unless the treaty is also signed by India, with which Pakistan has fought three wars since 1948.

Pakistani officials told the Japanese delegation that the treaty of nuclear proliferation in South Asia arose primarily because India had enough plutonium to make nearly 200 bombs.

"India has also crossed the non-proliferation line prescribed in the NPT by exploding a nuclear device in 1974," he said. "Therefore... its nuclear program would obviously need to be rolled back."

Pakistan had received 50 billion yen (\$406 million) in aid from Japan in 1991 and another 50 billion yen in 1992. Last December, Tokyo promised \$100 million in emergency loans to help Pakistan's economy recover. The United States cut off all military and fresh economic aid to Pakistan in 1990 on suspicion that Islamabad was making nuclear weapons.

**NATO WORRIED BY NATIONAL DEFENCE CUTS**

As Western countries slash their defence budgets in search of the fabled "peace dividend," Nato planners are worried they won't have enough troops left to police a still-troubled Europe.

Officials of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, for four decades the bulwark of Western defences, expressed concern last year when Belgium and the Netherlands announced deep cuts in military manpower levels. But concern turned to alarm last week when Germany, seeking extra cash for reunification, signalled new reductions in troop levels that could take the level from a current 430,000 to as low as 300,000.

Nato Secretary-General Manfred Woerner was quick to warn that such national moves could undermine the 16-member alliance's credibility as it sought to re-fashion itself into Europe's post-Cold War peacemaker. With the treat of a super-power confrontation gone, Nato announced in 1991 plans to slice its 1.2 million-member main army nearly in half, leaving it with a 100,000-strong rapid intervention force and several multinational corps.

As planners and politicians mull over the equation, here is a rundown of the military budget in Nato countries.

**United States:** The Clinton administration is reportedly seeking to cut up to \$10.8 billion from the \$267 billion defence budget for 1994 put up by its predecessor. US troop levels in Europe would go from 314,000 in 1990 to about 75,000 by 1997.

**Germany:** The 1993 military budget was cut by nearly 4% to \$31 billion and Bonn has since moved to save another \$530 million by freezing new arms purchases. Manpower levels were due to go from 430,000 to 370,000 by 1995 but new cuts could take them to 300,000 afterwards.

**France:** the 1992 budget totalled nearly \$35 billion or 3.26% of gross domestic product and the government hopes to cut the figure to 3.1 to 3.2 % of GDP by 1997. Manpower would go from 540,000 to 480,000 in 1997. All plans could be reviewed if Conservatives win next month's elections.

**Britain:** London wants to cut its \$35 billion military budget by \$1.45 billion in the next 2 years. It planned to reduce its army from 156,000 to 116,000 this decade but raised the target to 119,000 because of troop commitments overseas and in Northern Ireland

**Italy:** The \$16.7 billion 1993 budget was relatively un-

changed from the year before. The government wants to reduce the 214,000 conscripts in the army to 123,500 in five to 10 years and take on 50,000 volunteers for rapid intervention brigades.

**Canada:** The government planned to cut \$4.75 billion from the military budget between 1988 and 1997. The current level is \$10.14 billion. The armed forces had more than 80,000 men last year but Canada is closing its two German bases and will withdraw from Cyprus peacekeeping.

**Netherlands:** The \$7.5 billion budget for 1993 will be rimmed to \$7.3 billion annually for the next four years. The armed forces will shed more than a third by 1998, from a current 105,000 people to 70,000.

**Spain:** The 1993 budget of \$6.57 billion is 3.85% lower than last year. The Spanish army plans to trim its officer corps and take on more volunteers to create a 180,000-strong force in 10 years, with half of them professionals.

**Belgium:** The defence budget has been frozen at \$3 billion through 1997, equivalent to a real 3% annual drop. Forces are being cut by half to 40,000 troops but a reserve of up to 30,000 men will be created to satisfy Nato.

**Denmark:** the budget of \$2.54 billion for this year will be pared by \$159 million 1994. The armed forces will be cut by 12,000 men to 60,000 and a 4,500-strong international brigade will be created to take part in peace-keeping operations.

**Norway:** The 1992 budget of \$3.4 billion was cut by a real 2.4% this year in what officials called a one-time effort. Norway will reduce its conscript army of 26,000 soldiers and 12,000 civilians by 400 people annually for five years.

**Greece:** Despite continued tensions with its neighbor Turkey, defence spending for 1993 was set at \$2.4 billion off 2.6% from last year. Greece plans to cut its troops from 165,000 to 158,000 by the end of 1993.

**Turkey:** No cuts are projected in the budget but Turkey plans to slim down its 500,000-strong force to 400,000 men by the end of 1993.

**Portugal:** The \$1.6 billion budget has declined in real terms in recent years because of inflation. Portugal plans to send into early retirement 40% of its officers and junior officers, who make up nearly half of the 60,000-strong military.



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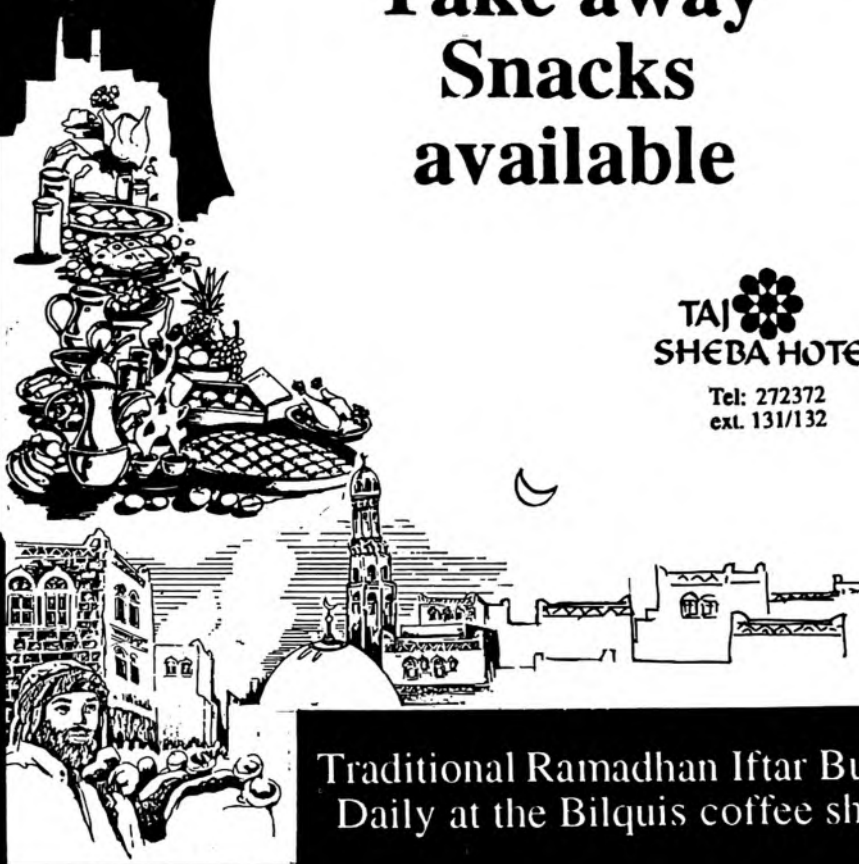
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**GOVERNMENT PROMOTES INSURANCE BUSINESS**

The Government of Yemen has decided to apply most forms of insurance coverage to all its ministries, public and mixed sector corporations and institutions. In a clear reversal of an earlier decision (No. 256 of 1992) which had given the Aden-based Insurance and Re-Insurance Company, a full monopoly over all government insurance business, the new decision, which carries No. 29 for 1993, assigned the business to be assigned to the Sanaa-based Marib Yemen Insurance Company, in addition to the Aden-based company. The government controls a majority share in both companies.

While the government insurance business is technically assigned to the two government companies, the Yemen Times learnt that the two companies will pass on part of the business to the other national companies.

The government's decision is expected to increase the volume of the insurance market in Yemen.

The insurance companies are also trying to localize a rising portion of the oil-sector insurance business. In a meeting with the insurance sector, the Prime Minister has promised to help achieve this objective



## FIVE DAY WORKSHOP IN THE OIL SECTOR

By Fatmah S. Rawah.

A workshop was held during the 13-17th February, by the Baroid Drilling Fluids Company office in Sanaa. The company has been engaged in carrying out lectures and training programs for drilling engineers.

Mr. Greg Morrice, Baroid General Manager - Yemen Branch, said, "Engineers from different oil companies and the Ministry of Oil and Mineral Resources participated in this workshop." Mr. William T. King, supervisor of technical training, told the Yemen Times that such a seminar was the first in Yemen, although Baroid has conducted many others in different countries. The company operates in about 40 countries all over the world.

The seminar was set up by Baroid primarily for the Yemen Hunt drilling engineers although engineers from the ministry and other oil companies were also enrolled. "We plan to conduct a similar seminar once a year in order to pass on our expertise and experience in advanced technology to the Yemeni engineers," said Morrice.

According to Mr. Morrice, Baroid has a contract with Yemen Hunt to train drilling engineers for approximately two years,

or whenever the trainees prove themselves to be capable of handling the job. "Baroid people are today the main engineers on the rig. The trainees will then become Baroid engineers, replacing the experts. So it is a part of a Yemenization Program," Greg said.

Apart from the seminar, Baroid is planning to send four Yemeni drilling engineers for further studies in Houston, Texas. They have already interviewed some engineers from the Ministry of Oil and from different oil companies. The suitable candidates will be named shortly to take part in the six-week course to start on March 22nd in Texas.

Mr. King, who flew into Yemen just for this workshop, said, "Learning is based upon the level of information of the trainees. We start with general background information so that the candidates can share a common base of knowledge, and so they can ask good questions about the latest technology in drilling fluids. I'm glad to say that the engineers who are here have asked a lot of good questions and they're eager to learn more."

Among the participants was Eng. Fadel Saleh Askar from the Sun Oil Company. "I'm happy to

have this chance to learn about drilling fluids. This is a new technology and is useful for my company, myself and my country," he told the Yemen Times. Eng. Abdullah Thabet Taher from Ministry of Oil and Mineral Resources (MOMR), Department of Petroleum Exploration and Production Board said, "As I work in the oil board, it is very important to know more about drilling fluids. It is a good opportunity for me to learn more through such a workshop. It is the first in Yemen and I hope more seminars like this will be provided by other companies so as to improve our technical standard."

Eng. Ahmad Abdul-Majed from Yemen Hunt told Yemen Times, "For me, it is very important to keep up with new technology in drilling fluids. I compare fluids in the drilling system to blood in the human body. I would like to use this opportunity to thank: my Manager (at Hunt), Mr. James Stefanic, who made arrangements for my training, and to Baroid for a very useful workshop. It will be noted that the Yemen Hunt Oil Company is one of the few companies that undertake important training programs for their local staff. I hope that the Ministry is well aware of this.

## The Cowboys Were Here!

By: Fatmah S. Rawah,  
Social Editor,  
Yemen Times.

The Sons of the San Joaquin are a three-part harmony western music singing group based in Fresno, California. The group is made up of brothers, Joe and Jack Hannah, and Joe's son, Lon.

Interestingly all three men work in the field of education. The Hannahs are dedicated to teaching, but their recent popularity is beginning to suggest a possible career change may be in order.

The Sons of the San Joaquin...the name itself conjures up images of The Sons of The Pioneers, a western group that launched the career of Roy Rogers and found a home in the Country Music Hall of Fame, back in 1930s. "Our dad became a fan of The Pioneers way back. During those days, he'd sing a lot of these songs, and we learned our first ones from him. So, we became great fans of theirs, too," said Jack. Their love of the cowboy lifestyle started not long after 1935 when the Hannah family moved to the foothills of the Sierra Nevadas. "There were some prominent cattle ranches there. That's where our romance began," recalls Jack.

"We're all horsemen, we



have our own horses and we ride a lot. We drive cattle occasionally when the opportunity arises. We are not cowboys, but we like the cowboy lifestyle. We're recreational cowboys; we enjoy it; its fun," added Jack.

Lon deserves credit for the group's formation. He encouraged Jack and Joe to join him in a trio, and The Sons of the San Joaquin gained a needed break after Lon met singer, Gary McMahan, at a Western Music Association convention. From that meeting, the Sons received an invitation to perform at the Elko Cowboy's Poetry Gathering in 1989, where they ended up singing on stage with Michael Martin Murphey. Murphey later invited them to join him on his Cowboy Songs album, and along with Joey Miskulin he's produced The Son's first Warner

Western album A Cowboy Has To Sing, which was released in 1990. On this album, The Sons of The San Joaquin employ the same bright, cheery tempos and tight, rollicking harmonies that became Pioneer trademarks.

The Sons of The San Joaquin are now performing in many places. "We never thought we'd get the response that we have. We are all thrilled," they said. The group is in the Middle East on a seven-week tour that took them to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Emirates, Oman, Pakistan, and, of course, Yemen.

"The real aim of this tour is to share our culture with our Eastern friends. The cowboy is one of the folk characters in American history," said Joe. He pointed to a lot of similarities in values between the tribal culture of Yemen and the cowboys."

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# The Learning Years of the UNHCR: Can a UN Bureaucracy Deal with Emergencies?

A United Nations bureaucracy involved in emergency operations may seem like a contradiction in terms, but it has become an increasingly common role for the UN high commissioner for Refugees.

In northern Iraq and ex-Yugoslavia, UNHCR staff members have found themselves doing everything from distributing blankets and baby food to organizing airlifts and planning and leading road convoys.

This hands-on role has sparked considerable debate within UNHCR as well as in the humanitarian relief community at large. As one senior staff member puts it: "We at the UNHCR are a bureaucratic organization trying to be as operational..." as possible. Others add that UNHCR must take a more active role - the very nature of humanitarian emergencies demands it. Lives depend on it. Of all UN agencies, UNHCR is probably the most operational. But it has not always been this way.

Created in the aftermath of World War II, UNHCR's governing stature did not foresee direct assistance to refugees. Instead, the office's role was defined as "searching for lasting solutions" to refugee problems, and its operational role was limited to "facilitating the coordination of the efforts of private organization who deal with the welfare of refugees."

In "classic" refugee situations, the actual work on the ground has been the responsibility of either host governments or non-governmental organizations (NGOs). UNHCR's traditional role has been to fund some or most of the assistance, to supervise the program, to control the finances and to provide technical advice.

However, as refugee situations became increasingly complex and dramatic, UNHCR was compelled to become more operational. Over the years, with political upheavals in Africa, Asia and Central America forcing whole communities into flight, UNHCR has had to adapt to situations in which food, water and shelter had to be provided quickly to people in remote areas. Often, these refugees were perceived as security threats by the receiving countries, thus even further complicating UNHCR's work.

The crises that prompted UNHCR to set up its first emergency unit were the influx of Cambodians into Thailand in late 1979, and the boat people's exodus from Vietnam. Initially, a three-person team, the

emergency unit drew up preparedness guidelines for emergencies, including the Emergency Handbook, and created training programs for staff.

But UNHCR's experience in Central America in the 1980s was a turning point in its operational capacity. With entire communities fleeing massive human rights abuses and settling precariously in remote and hostile border areas, UNHCR offices in the region had to be bold and imaginative in carrying out their work. Protection, the cornerstone of that work, became actual, physical protection as UNHCR field officers established a 24-hour presence in the camps, often under very trying circumstances. For the first time, UNHCR established an office in the country of origin to better monitor the fate of those who chose voluntary repatriation. Returnees were accompanied by UNHCR staff as they made their way home.

In both Central America and Southeast Asia, the keys to success were flexibility and adaptability to changing situations.

Thanks to a flexible mandate, UNHCR was able to become more operational as the situation warranted. The end of the Cold War brought calls from the international community for UNHCR to become even more operational.

Donor states became more worried about North-South problems, such as massive migrations, than about East-West tensions. "As governments substitute humanitarian intervention for political action, we're being called upon to be more effective than we've ever been before," says Eric Morris, Deputy Director for the Division of Programs, Support, Budget and Finance.

In 1989, the member states of UNHCR's Executive Committee urged the organization to step up its early warning activities, and improve emergency staffing and stockpiling procedures. A year later, the Executive Committee recognized that the High Commissioner required more flexibility to ensure funding in emergencies. In February 1991, it approved an increase of the Emergency Fund from \$10 million to \$20 million. It also authorized, within that new ceiling, up to \$6 million for any one emergency effort.

Although UNHCR had been confronted with major refugee emergencies since the late 1970s, the Kurdish crisis in the spring of 1991 was unprecedented both in scope and

international interest.

According to many observers inside and outside the organization, UNHCR staff often arrived on the scene of the emergency too slowly, in insufficient numbers, and with inadequate experience.

UNHCR's own review of the operation noted: "In the Gulf Crisis, UNHCR's capacity to act quickly and decisively was limited by the absence of structures, systems and procedures designed to meet the specific needs of an emergency."

Previous proposals to set up emergency procedures were not implemented. But the magnitude of the Kurdish emergency prompted newly appointed High Commissioner Sadako Ogata to forcefully push for the implementation of concrete proposals aimed to achieve the quick mobilization of funds, of personnel, and the prepositioning of relief items. In short, she called for the mobilization of the entire organization for more effective emergency response.

The old emergency unit was revamped. The new unit, renamed the Emergency Preparedness and Response Section, became operational in February 1992. Its role is to develop resources and tools to enhance the capacity of the Regional Bureaus to respond to emergencies.

While the new Emergency Section represents a major step forward, it is only one element of the overall response. Its range of action is sandwiched between the political decision-making process (the first phase of emergency response) and the longer-term emergency operation itself (the third phase). The Emergency Section is not meant to have control over the first or the third phase.

The section's most important innovation was the placement of specific staff and resources on standby at all times. As Janet Lim, chief of the new section, put it, "Before, we had no bodies on standby to send to the field in an emergency. Now we do."

These "bodies" include five newly appointed Emergency Preparedness and Response Officers (EPROs) at the senior level who act as a "fire brigade." Each is responsible for a particular geographic area. In the event of an emergency, they are deployed immediately to the field as leaders for the local Emergency Response Teams. They are responsible for setting up the structures and systems to ensure the smooth running of the

emergency operation. Some 20 staff members make up the teams. Team members, although assigned to posts in various locations, are always on standby for emergency missions. Another 40 staff members are part of an Emergency Roster that can be drawn from when required. Specialists in logistics, nutrition, health water, sanitation, site planning and other areas are also on call in the initial stages of an emergency. With UNHCR's human resources overstretched, there is also a provision for the supplement of external personnel. One successful innovation has been a standby arrangement with the Norwegian and Danish Refugee Councils, used for the first time in the Gulf Crisis. It provides for the rapid deployment of large numbers of experienced technical staff within 72 hours of an emergency.

UNHCR also maintains a computerized roster of over 500 technical consultants who can be called into an emergency when national technical experts in the host country cannot be found.

UNHCR has also entered into an agreement with the Swedish Rescue Services Board (SRB), the civil defense branch of the Swedish army. SRB personnel can be transferred to UNHCR on very short notice for a period of three to four weeks to set up living, transport, office communications and medical facilities for UNHCR staff, freeing them to deal with the job at hand.

UNHCR is also working on an agreement with the United Nations Volunteers to make specialized staff available for emergencies.

Regarding stockpiling, UNHCR has established a centrally controlled emergency reserve to provide basic relief supplies to 50,000 beneficiaries at short notice. Supplementing this reserve system are standby agreements with NGOs and inter-governmental organizations which give the UNHCR priority access to relief supplies whenever needs exceed the capacity of the central emergency stockpile. Items chosen for stockpiling are usually those that require a long lead time between the placement of a purchase order and arrival in-country, such as tents, tarpaulins, plastic sheeting, blankets, kitchen sets, water and sanitation equipment, communications equipment, and Rub Hall warehouses. Items with shelflives of less than a year are excluded.

Contingency planning is another important aspect of emergency response. How many refugees will cross the border? Where will they cross? How many staff will be required? What kind of assistance, and how much, will the refugees need?

While answering these questions may merely involve a set of mathematical assumptions, many of the best contingency plans are doomed from the start because governments, particularly potential host governments, are reluctant to listen to, let alone *PLAN*, for bad news. "It's like a patient on his deathbed," said one staff member. "He'll refuse to write a will for fear that it will make him die sooner." In practice, the entire emergency package is seldom if ever used in its entirety. Each emergency is different and only some elements of the package are chosen, like goods off a shelf in a supermarket. One exception was the recent Kenya-Somalia cross-border operation, where practically the whole package was used, including for the first time, the logistical support of the Swedish Rescue Services Board.

The agreed definition of an emergency is a "life-threatening situation where existing resources can't cope." But exactly who interprets all of the early warning signs and actually determines when existing resources aren't enough is open to question. While people in the field would seem to be in the best position to judge that things are getting out of hand, they often are too absorbed in the demands of their daily work to recognize the telltale signs. Sometimes they are reluctant to admit that the situation is getting out of control. The same goes for headquarters. Daniel Belamy, head of desk for Central and Eastern Europe says, "In UNHCR, we don't think; we act. That is because our staff is too tied up with daily tasks to have time to think ahead. We need to free some of our staff to do just that: think. But how do you explain that to host governments?"

All too often, UNHCR finds itself reacting to outside pressure, usually via the media, before declaring an emergency.

Other cases are identified internally - sometimes too late. In February 1991, for example, Bhutanese refugees began arriving in Nepal many in extremely poor health. By the spring of 1992, their numbers had reached 50,000, but the world was preoccupied

with emergencies in ex-Yugoslavia and elsewhere and largely ignored the brewing crisis in Nepal. Only after UNHCR's Geneva-based technical and program staff learned of exceptionally high mortality rates among the refugees was Nepal placed on the emergency agenda in mid-April, 1992. Unfortunately, by the time UNHCR's senior epidemiologist was sent to the field, it was early June and between 1,200 and 1,500 preventable deaths had occurred.

The tragically late response in Nepal points to the need for managers to pay more attention to technical reports produced by UNHCR's Program and Technical Support Section, especially those issued by the water, sanitation, medical and nutrition specialists.

It often takes time for UNHCR to declare an emergency because such policy decisions must sometimes be coordinated with donor governments and/or the Secretary-General's office in New York. Moreover, there is the problem of the time-lag between the declaration of an emergency and actually sending in the emergency teams.

Every day the Emergency Section is exploring new ways to enhance UNHCR's response capacity. It has already built up, along with the Evaluation Unit, an impressive body of lessons learned. Areas which need improvement include the availability of staff for emergencies and better living conditions in the field. Too often, it is difficult to get supervisors to release Emergency Roster staff, and junior, inexperienced people are deployed instead. It is also difficult to find experienced administrative staff.

Can a UN bureaucracy deal with emergencies? One is tempted to answer: IN PRINCIPLE, no. But UNHCR is more than a UN bureaucracy. As a recent Washington Post article noted: "UNHCR stands out from the rest of UN agencies because it deals with life-and-death situations." The very nature of UNHCR's work over the years has forced it to become ever more flexible - to make the rules as it goes along, so to speak.

UNHCR's revamped Emergency Section is simply one more step in that direction. More should follow.

**By:**  
**Sylvie Girard,**  
**Staff Writer,**  
**Refugees**





**WHAT KIND OF DEMOCRACY ARE YEMENIS PURSUING?**

Undoubtedly, the kind of democracy which our rulers talk about does not mean the people get to choose/elect their rulers, because the current rulers do not believe in the peaceful transfer of authority. Thus, the democracy in their mind is something unique. The democracy we know means that society has the right to choose the most suitable candidates for the parliament's membership. Respectively, the newly-elected parliamentarians have to choose the most suitable rulers to run the country. This is the essence of true democracy, whether our rulers accept it or not. The other problem we have with our rulers is that they believe that Yemen owes them a lot of gratitude for having unified the country, and for the semblance of democracy that we have. We are all waiting for the 27th of April, 1993, which is Yemen's Day of Democracy.

**RAAY, Sanaa, 16/2/1992**

**WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF THE OFFICIAL MEDIA?**

It is a known fact that the official media operates in the service of the ideology of the rulers of the state - whether religious: Islamic, Christian, Jewish; ideological: liberal, closed, open; econo-socio-political: communism, capitalism, etc. Thus the media's function becomes to promote and propagate the ruling group. Therefore, the role of the media in capitalist countries is to actively serve cap-

italism, democracy and freedom. The same thing is true in Muslim countries, where the media promotes the doctrine of Islam, its culture, and values. The same thing was also true in the former socialist countries where the media's role was focused on educating the masses about the virtues of communism. Finally, let us come to the role and function of the official media in Yemen. We want to know its role? What are its goals and objectives? Who is it serving? Who is directing it? I feel that there is no clarity of purpose or vision concerning the role of our official media.

**By: Salwa Albasha, AL-ESLAH, Sanaa, 15/2/1993.**

**MARGINAL PARTIES**

The ruling party's relationship with the opposition parties is characterized by illegitimate interventions in the affairs of certain targeted parties in order to divide and weaken the opposition. Often, the ruling parties also create puppet "opposition parties" which they use as Trojan horses in opposition camps. It is evident that the need of the authorities to resort to such illegitimate and immoral means became more clear after the emergence of a strong national opposition; especially within the framework of the National Conference, which is capable of saying "No" to the authorities and which works to expose the ruler's excesses. The authorities' efforts, which involved the payment of large sums to some dishonest and weak personalities, did not, by and

large, succeed. Let it be known that such puppet "opposition parties" are marginal and irrelevant to the workings of the opposition bloc and the evolution of democracy and pluralism in Yemen. What happened to Rabitat Abnaa Al-Yemen is likely to happen to any other of the credible opposition parties. Such efforts are a distortion to democracy. It is certain that any opposition political group put in place by the authorities is naturally illegitimate, and the governing authority itself has no legitimacy.

**By: Abdullah Mehdi Al-Haddad, AL-HAQ, Sanaa, 14/2/1993.**

**BE CAREFUL**

The capital city, Sana'a, and some other provincial capitals witnessed violence and riots during December 1992, which are condemned by all. The causes which triggered these events are believed to have been the deteriorating economic conditions, especially the continued rise in prices, the high rate of unemployment, the corruption. Following those sad events, the government made many resolutions to rectify the situation and meet the requirements of the citizens, but without implementation. Today, we are approaching the holy month of Ramadhan and it is to be noted that the merchants are accustomed to raising prices during Ramadhan, which might possibly lead to some more violence. It is possible for certain groups to act, through democratic practices, to impede the electoral process.

Hence, we demand earnestly of the relevant authorities to take the necessary measures as a precaution. We tell the government to be careful and on the alert during Ramadhan for any hike in prices, because they will bring chaos to the country. The central bank also bears responsibility for its foreign exchange rate policies which makes the dollar price rise forever.

**AL-BALAGH, Sanaa, 16/2/1993.**

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Most of our problems come from negligence and indifference, not only from ordinary people, but from senior officials who lack concern for, interest in, and interaction with the issues at hand. The most essential points in this regard are accuracy, control, leadership and the full adherence to all of the rules and regulations. What we suffer from these days can be summarized in the following shortcomings: First, 90% of the victims of the recent floods suffered because the officials lack discipline, good planning, and reasonable control/accuracy in the application and planning when implementing any project.

It is true that the inadequate designs of the buildings which fell down in the floods are partly responsible for what happened, but that does not mean that the state authorities are not responsible for the whole disaster.

Second, the process of registration showed a slow response in the first two weeks. It has to be noted that the media was also very slow, indifferent, negligent

of the registration effort. Even some leading members of the political parties were late/slow in registering their names so they were bad examples for the other citizens. Third, on the 20th of January (the first day of registration), I paid a visit to three centers in Sana'a.

By checking the list of registrants, then about sixty names, I noticed that only three of the names were of government officials.

Fourth, I paid visits to many ministries and institutions (between the 21st Jan - 4th Feb) and intentionally asked a lot of officials about their registration. The reply was often that they did not know where their centers were.

Some even replied by saying that they still had time to register from now until the 27th of April. What an attitude of indifference and negligence! By the way, the president registered his name on 27th Jan, the vice president on 28th January, and the prime minister on 11th of February, 1993.

Fifth, the implementation of the program of reform/construction was postponed as were the remedies and resolutions of the cabinet. Everything in Yemen is subject to postponement.

It is this philosophy of postponement, negligence and indifference on the part of our senior officials that is driving this country aground, and causes all the problems. As a citizen of Yemen, please just think of all these lapses and then contemplate what kind of future awaits us.

**By Abdul Wahab Al-Muayyad, AL-MITHAQ, Sanaa, 15/2/1993.**

**SCARED OF THE UNKNOWN**

The current situation and the near future are two subjects which worry the media, the political parties, and the general public, because the whole scene is unclear. What is going on behind the scenes in the political parties regarding the elections are also unknown and unclear. The public's hesitation does not reflect a refusal or an escape from democracy, but it does reflect a crisis of credibility. There are also the facts that women have participated in the process of registration and the president's, vice president's, and other senior officials' wives have still not registered.

How about the ministers' wives, did they register? How can our top officials urge Yemeni women to register when their own wives and other female relatives have not done so?

Honestly, the low response to the registration process is due to the campaign of intimidation and violence that our political scene has witnessed. There is also a conspiratory effort against the opposition parties aimed to confuse it.

All in all, the situation points to deliberate attempts aimed at splitting the opposition parties in order to distort our democracy. This has left many people frightened of what could happen.

However, to break out of this situation, we should choose the candidates with strong personalities who prove to be the most suitable and honest for the parliament.

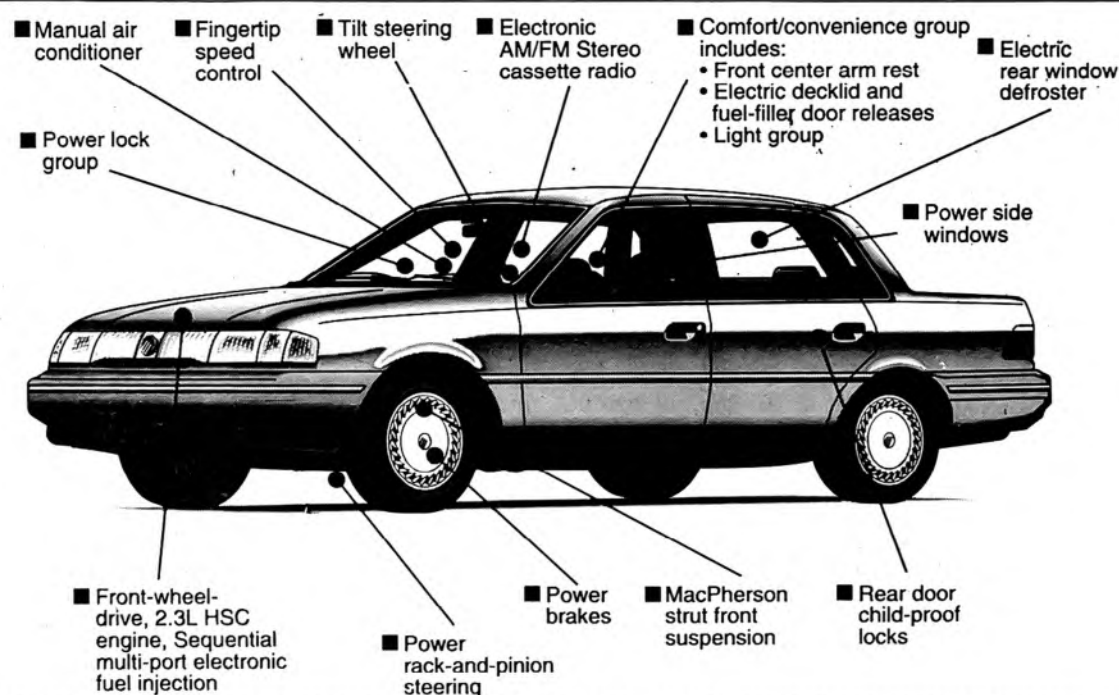
**By: Lutf Al-Ma'abari, AL-TASHEEH, Sanaa, 15/2/1993.**

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# DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER

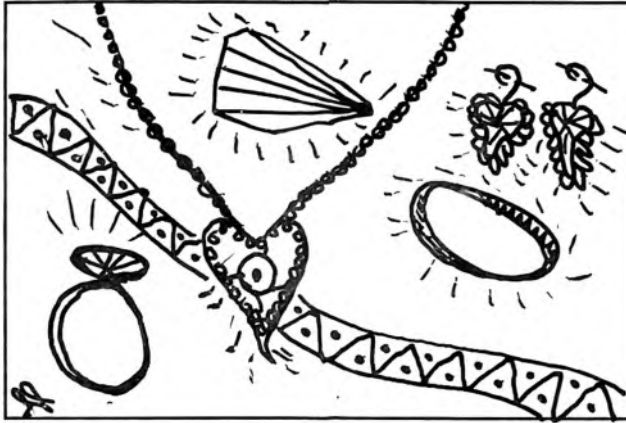
By: Amjed Abdul Hamid, Science Editor, Yemen Times

Diamonds have always been the queens of gemstones. Lustrous and sparkling as they are, no poet, singer, alchemist, or even scientist could escape from their spell. Of course, poets and lovers don't like to believe that diamonds are made of that sooty material carbon; especially since the most common forms of carbon, graphite and coal, are ugly, whereas diamonds are anything but. Besides, diamond is one of the hardest, strongest substances known, while graphite is soft and slippery. In 1797, the Englishman, Smithson Tennant, burned a diamond in pure oxygen and ended up with carbon dioxide. This convinced scientists of its sooty nature.

The differences between diamonds and graphite stem from the different ways these carbon atoms are assembled. In graphite, the atoms are spread out in flat, two-dimensional sheets, and they can slip and slide easily on the parallel sheets above and below, while in diamonds; the carbon atoms are arranged in five-atom pyramidal shapes known as tetrahedrons. Each tetrahedron has a three-carbon triangular base, a one-carbon apex and a carbon atom in the middle holding them together. A finished diamond is composed of networks of these structures and almost nothing else.

In nature diamonds are made when carbon is squeezed at a pressure of 530,000 kgm per square centimeter, causing the loosely structured atoms to rearrange themselves into the cramped configuration characteristic of earth's most precious gem. That fact led the General Electric Research Laboratory in 1955 to try to produce synthetic diamonds. The GE researchers used a large hydraulic press to squeeze graphite at a pressure of 70,000 atmospheres (about 72,000 kgm/sq. cm.) and a temperature of 1400 degrees centigrade. After several minutes under these conditions, the graphite was transformed into diamonds, each only 2-3 millimeters across.

However, during the 1960s, ideas began to emerge of yet another way to produce diamonds, by assembling it one atom at a time using a low pressure process called chemical vapor deposition, where solid molecules are precipitated from a vapor. A common example is the buildup of lead on the valves of engines. It is a process similar to condensation, except that a chemical reaction takes place so that the solid molecule that precipitates out is chemically different from the gaseous molecules that existed before. So if one could get a gas rich in carbon, heated enough to separate into its constituent elements and let the carbon atoms precipitate on a template, one could probably get



diamonds. Indeed, the first process of chemical vapor deposition was described and experimented by an American named William Eversole, who developed diamonds with a low-pressure process by heating carbon monoxide gas to 1000 degrees centigrade.

Based on the above work, John Angus used methane gas (CH4) heated to 1,100 centigrade. The bonds between carbon and hydrogen broke up, leaving the carbon to precipitate onto a diamond seed. He reported an increase of 20% in the size of the seed.

In 1969, a Soviet Boris Derjaguin achieved the same results, but these breakthroughs didn't attract the attention of the big corporations and the money necessary to continue, because the diamonds produced by these techniques weren't the kind that could be shared by lovers. They were of poor quality and they can only be seen under

an electron microscope. During the 1970s and 80s, scientists began to look into the question: Why produce diamonds and not diamond films for industrial purposes to bring the investments into this field? That question was the turning point. Diamonds films or diamond like phases could be produced by electrifying methane to excite the molecules and drive off their electrons, thus leaving positively charged molecules. An electric field accelerates these charged atoms (ions) towards a metal surface cooled by water. When they hit the metal, they form a sheet of chaotically arranged atoms that is very clear and hard like a diamond, but non-crystalline, like a ceramic.

Anyway, whether growing crystalline diamonds or diamond coatings, the prospects of utilizing this super-strong and superhard material are very promising. Diamond coatings could be used in armoring the ends of drills, mining equipment, machine tools, kitchen knives that never need sharpening, razor blades that last forever, wear-resistant ball bearings and artificial joints. Not only machine gear teeth could be coated with diamonds but human teeth could be coated with diamond, making them immune to cavities.

There could be diamond-coated eyeglasses, and window glass that won't even scratch. In fact, diamond reinforced composite materials could be used for everything from automobiles to spacecraft. Diamond is also a great electrical insulator, but when combine with the proper elements it can even become an electrical semiconductor, superior to silicon and even gallium arsenide for speed. Because diamonds are also extremely thermally conductive, heat escapes them easily. This means chips could be packed more densely without overheating, which could lead to smaller computers.

It looks like that hit "Diamonds Are Forever" that was once sung, could take an addition from our scientists. The new song could be "Diamonds Are Forever and for Everything." We could be poised for the era of diamonds. Hold on to your seats.

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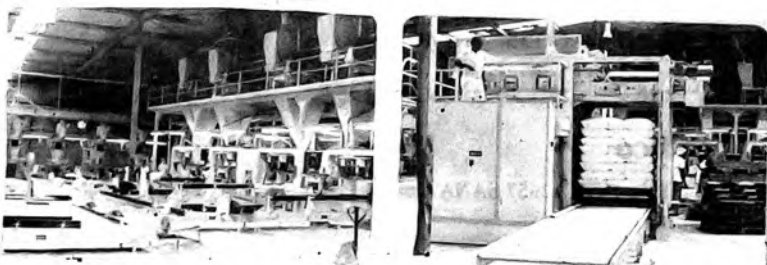
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الحديدة ت: ٣/٢٣٢٤٦٠ تلكس: ٥٦٦١ اوجبة يمن فاكسميل: ٢١١٥٥١ ص ب: ٤٠١٥  
الخرطوم ت: ٧٤٥٦٩-٧٤٦١٠-٧٤٥٦٢ تلكس: ٢٢٣٦٩ سبحان فاكسميل: ٧٤٥٦١ ص ب: ١٩٢٦  
بورسودان ت: ٢٦٣٠-٢٩٧٩-٤٤٦٥ تلكس: ٧٠٠٧١ يارن ص ب: ١٦٠

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## Letters to the Editor

### SALAAM TO THE STREET URCHINS

Salaam to the land of PEACE;  
"Baab-al-Yaman" weary remnant of glory.  
A rusty anchor creaking in turbulent seas of change;  
In a world where posterity wears borrowed robes,  
Ancestry walks alone in rags'  
The tattered heritage unclaimed baggage;  
in LOST PROPERTY;  
In a Transit Lounge mesmerized we wait;  
who knows where, millions rush to and fro.  
Too much action too little time;  
Tomorrow is another day the Sun must shine;  
Cast its fierce glow on the naked streets of LIFE.  
Caught in a Giant Web hands unseen from here and there.  
Dollars a Quack's thermometer;  
Like a Colossus holding ransom, our breaths,  
for the high price of Air;  
Here men jostle each other, for a mere drop of rain;  
Women ever sweating in the winding alleys of Toil;  
Children yet unborn, already late for the QUEUE;  
in a world of plenty, but only for a few;  
At the Cross-roads, we all stand, gambling with Fate;  
While the wheel of Fortune, turns.  
Faces chasing us in the back alleys of deprivation;  
street urchins who will cast their votes?  
Only hope and promises on empty, growling bellies;  
Different drums beating to unfamiliar tunes;  
Oh, hearts gone so cold, with too much fire, and too much loss.  
They laugh at us, those adults in child bodies;  
Our feet firm on the ground, holding conference;  
while theirs shake, on shifting sands;  
"Look, says I, to the street urchins;  
These lines I write, these words will give you a future;  
With glazed eyes, they look ears mute  
with too much sound too many words;  
In barely a whisper, to me, louder than Thunder;  
"I want to eat, I want new clothes for Idd, I want to be a CHILD  
Tears blinding me, the books the agenda fell, unheeded;  
into harsh valleys of Reality;  
From the Summit of self-deception, I descend,  
though the long, dark tunnels, I helplessly search;  
for the distant ray of light the answer to give;  
to the children without CHILDHOOD;  
The FUTURE without a future.

By: Samira Ali BinDaair

### ENGLISH & FOREIGN WELCOMERS

In response to Mr. Yahya Dahami, personnel view (education in the faculty of education, Yemen Times dated Feb17/93), I have so much to say. But to cut it short, you have westomania in your way of calling for further expansion in use of English language in Sana'a University. You also mentioned about 10% English occupies your Arabic language subjects. First of all, 10% is good enough. What else do you expect, English language is basically used in third world nations as a language of communication. Don't extend it to your daily movement. You have a lot to learn about yourself as a Yemeni origin and to what extend your ancestors were and what you real is. Your issue is pure administrative problem. and I don't think Sana'a University is not capable of handling the need if it does represent the interest of the majority. Secondly, I would like to comment on UN multinational forces in Somalia by Mr. Sayyid Hassan Sherif Abdullahi, some editions back. Basically, the way of expression reminds me of Mr. Yahya Dahami but Mr. Abdullahi is more towards international issues and was encouraging foreign settlement in Somalia, you never gave any value to the people back in Somalia, or the

Arabic Islamic Community I think if there was no foreign intervention in the first place. Somalia would be in peace not pieces. That is my personal view.

By: Jamal A. Z.  
Sana'a.

### APPRECIATION

I have been reading the Yemen Times starting from your issue that came out on 25th of May 1991. I have learnt so much about Yemen from your newspaper. I also use this opportunity to thank the Yemeni people and the government for the nice way they treat us. On behalf of all my colleagues, thank you for this moral obligation and for the good hospitality.

By: Joseph-Kassa,  
Ethiopian refugee  
stationed at Nagd-qussaim  
Camp, Taiz.

### I Have an Idea:

I was reading your editorial in the November 11th, 1992 (Issue No.46/93) in which you mentioned the waste/plastic bottles thrown all over the roads and highways. This is an international problem that results from our new way of life. It is not peculiar to Yemen.

At the same time, let me mention that I think all these wastes can be reused after recycled. If any of your readers is interested I can set up a joint venture, with any interested Yemeni investor, for using these water bottles/plastic bags for manufacturing new plasticbags. This will help in cleaning your country and also save precious foreign exchange.

By: Satish Bhasin,  
New Delhi, India.

### A MENACE TO WORLD PEACE

After the end of the "Desert Storm," the Iraqi regime was subjected to an economic sanction. At the same time, the Rabin government has been granted seven hundred million U.S. dollars and sophisticated modern aircraft. On 1st October, 1992, a month before the US election, Yitzhak Rabin acquired from the U.S. a confirmation that the US will demand of the Arab states to initiate economic cooperation with Israel as a price for continuing the peace talks, not for delivering anything. Furthermore, the restrictions of the Middle East peace overtures are skillfully planned to maximize the extortionist Israeli demands on the Arabs. Can we then trust American impartiality and mediation?  
By: Mohamed Ali Shidle  
"Afgoie", Taiz.

Continued from page 1:

### Final Results of Registration

There is no doubt that half a million female registrants is already a good number. It represents some 50% of the adult literate women of Yemen.

The next step is for all sides to cooperate that as many of the registrants will make it to the polls. Can we make it our objective to ensure that at least two million make it to the polls?



# U E A

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The Deputy Health Minister:

## “Insufficient resources and politico-administrative paralysis have been the two major factors which hindered progress in health services.”

Dr. Ahmed Makki, Deputy Minister of Health for Medical Services, is specialized in immunization and preventive medicine. He worked under various capacities, and is one of the outstanding public figures of the country. Yemen Times staff writer Yahia Y. Hodeidi interviewed him last week.

Excerpts of the interview follow:

**Q:** Could you tell us about the coordination efforts with international organizations concerning health services?

**A:** We work closely with UNICEF, Peace Corps, the Red Crescent, Doctors Without Boundaries, and other humanitarian organizations. Unfortunately, most of these organizations target only children for their services. So our cooperation is limited to immunization and preventive health care.

**Q:** Don't you think that most of our government hospitals are lacking in many ways?

**A:** It is true that the health situation is deteriorating rapidly due to shortages in qualified personnel, lack of medical equipment and medicine. In addition, very important facilities are missing. All in all, the whole situation needs drastic measures if it were to be salvaged.

And let point out here that, had it not been for the important input of the voluntary NGOs and international organizations, the situation would have been much worse.

**Q:** What is the potential for improving the rural medical centers??

**A:** In order to improve rural medical services, it is necessary to have qualified staff who are technically capable. They should understand the modern methods in helping out in different cases - whether urgent or otherwise. In addition, these centers need to have resources at their disposal in order to function properly. This is almost always not available.

In this regard, two policy options are critical. First, it is necessary to focus on preventive health services, which our government is rightly doing. It is much cheaper, more cost effective, and makes much more sense given our needs and resource potential.

Second, it is of extreme importance to train women in first aid programs, hygiene, sanitation, nutrition, etc. The input of women is of maximum significance if our society is to make any real headway in providing health services for a larger base of our population.

**Q:** Do you see that happening?

**A:** With better education and awareness, it is bound to happen. But we can prolong or shorten the time span required to achieve this objective.

In this regard, I think a more decentralized administrative system would go a long way to help speed up the process. Today, the bureaucratic barrier alone is a headache by itself.



**Q:** What is the rationale for providing unneeded drugs, whereas the drugs which society requires most either unavailable, or too expensive?

**A:** Protective drugs are subsidized by the state and some are offered by international organizations. The state, according to the reform/development program, helps also in certain cases such as high blood pressure, heart failure, and chronic diseases, etc. Drugs needed by such patients have to be made available, even if the majority of us do not need them.

Regarding the cost of drugs, we all know they are related to the price of foreign exchange. Our currency continues to depreciate thereby forcing up prices of imports.

**Q:** What policy you think will help in this situation?

**A:** For the time being, we are encouraging the private sector to establish private hospitals in Sana'a, Aden, Hadhramaut, and Hodeidah. I think the main thrust is to let the private sector get on with the job.

**Q:** If you were to pinpoint one over-riding factor which hinders progress in health services, what would it be?

**A:** In my opinion, there are many problems. The availability of resources is a principal one. Another factor, is the political and administrative paralysis that has plagued our system recently. I would say those two factors are major problems at the moment.

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Les pages françaises

LE TEMPS DU  
YEMEN

The French Pages

Au cours d'une marche très pacifique dans les rues de la capitale

## Succès mitigé d'une manifestation contre l'embargo sur l'Irak à Sanaa

Voilà trente-et-un mois que l'Irak est soumis à un embargo international multiforme, imposé en août 1990 par le Conseil de Sécurité de l'ONU. Les autorités irakiennes ont diffusé de nombreuses images par voie de presse de la "misère" qui règne aujourd'hui dans le pays, notamment celles de bébés en mauvaise santé ou souffrant de malnutrition par pénurie de lait en poudre. Si la plupart de ces "reportages" sont exagérés, il est évident que la population irakienne dans son ensemble souffre de l'embargo aujourd'hui, embargo qui ne doit pas concerner, théoriquement, certains produits alimentaires de base et les médicaments. N'est-il pas opportun, aujourd'hui, d'en discuter, sinon la levée, du moins un assouplissement, afin d'éviter l'effondrement total de l'économie irakienne dont le premier à souffrir ne serait pas le régime mais bien le peuple ?

Ils étaient relativement peu nombreux - tout au plus 2.000 à 3.000 - à répondre à "l'appel de l'ensemble de la population yéménite" à manifester contre l'embargo économique contre l'Irak. Saddam Hussein ne semble plus "faire recette" comme au temps de la crise du Golfe. Il y a des signes qui ne trompent pas, comme le fait remarquer un diplomate arabe en place à Sanaa: "lors de la visite de M. Tarek Azziz (vice-premier ministre irakien, bras droit de Saddam Hussein), en août dernier, tout s'est passé à huis-clos; il n'y a eu aucun bain de foule, pas le moindre contact avec la population... Le même diplomate fait remarquer qu'au moment où le Yémen, étranglé économiquement, tente de renouer des relations avec les pays du Golfe, sa position lors

de la mini-crise du Golfe de décembre dernier (bombardement alliés sur des sites militaires) s'est limitée à un simple "nous déplorons"...

### Chants et danses mais pas de violences

Cette "désaffection" est elle aussi visible dans la population. La manifestation organisée jeudi dernier 18 février à Sanaa contre l'embargo, malgré un grand effort d'affichage - la ville s'était couverte, la veille, de ces affiches sur lesquelles les bandes bleues du drapeau américain symbolisaient les barreaux d'une prison derrière lesquels on aperçoit deux enfants -, a été plutôt l'occasion d'une petite fête populaire, qu'une grande manifesta-

tion de mécontentement. La foule qui a quitté le stade du Martyr Al-Zarafi, près de Tahrir, vers 11h30, après un discours du Cheikh Moujahed Abou Chawareb, chef du Parti Baas Yéménite, pro-irakien, était composée essentiellement d'enfants et d'adolescents et de nombreux vieillards "kabili", c'est-à-dire des hommes de tribus venus à Sanaa pour l'occasion, sans doute également pour soutenir leur Cheikh, M. Abou Chawareb, l'une des figures tribales qui comptent dans les hautes sphères du pouvoir (il est également premier vice-premier ministre). Tout ce monde dansait, la djambia au clair, et chantait au son des tambours et la marche qui a suivi la réunion du stade était tout sauf agressive. Aucune violence n'a été enregistrée, même contre les

rars occidentaux qui se trouvaient là, malgré les mises en garde affolées adressées à leurs ressortissants la veille par certaines ambassades. Cette petite marche pacifique a été vite dispersée une demi-heure après, à l'heure de l'achat du qat.

Il est vrai que les slogans pouvaient laisser croire à une manifestation anti-occidentale: le comité de soutien à la population irakienne - qui se donne le titre de Haute Commission Populaire pour la Victoire de l'Irak et de la Communauté Arabe et Musulmane - est en fait financé par le Parti Baas. Il avait appelé dans un tract largement diffusé à une marche de solidarité "avec les problèmes de la communauté arabe et musulmane et pour lutter contre les attaques coloniales oppressives, pour lever l'embargo imposé à l'Irak et à la Libye, (...) pour aider la révolution palestinienne et les expulsés des terres arabes occupées, pour condamner l'extermination des Musulmans de Bosnie-Herzégovine et pour la victoire des droits de la communauté arabe". Mais l'on s'est contenté de brandir quelques portraits des présidents Saddam Hussein et Ali Abdallah Saleh et des photos qui montrent la souffrance du peuple irakien.

E.G.

### Grève des magistrats pour protester contre l'insécurité et l'impunité des crimes

Plus de 2.000 juges et magistrats ont observé, la semaine dernière, une grève de plusieurs jours pour réclamer une réforme de la justice et une meilleure sécurité dans le pays, après une attaque armée contre l'un des leurs près de Sanaa. L'attaque a été perpétrée dimanche 14 février contre le président du tribunal de la ville de Khamer (80 kilomètres au nord de Sanaa), M. Ahmed Hanache, dont l'épouse a été tuée dans l'attentat.

Dans un communiqué, l'Ordre des juges yéménites a réclamé le renforcement des mesures assurant leur sécurité et des réformes garantissant "l'indépendance de la justice vis à vis du pouvoir exécutif et la restructuration des instances juridiques du pays".

S'il n'obtiennent pas satisfaction, les magistrats ont menacé de ne pas se saisir des recours des citoyens contre la présentation d'un candidat aux élections législatives, dont la liste doit être constituée en mars. (AFP)

Radio Monte Carlo Moyen-Orient émet en français sur 1233 KHZ.- RMC Moyen-Orient diffuse des bulletins d'actualité en français sur 1233 KHZ-Onde moyenne. 13h30: Titres. 14h30: journal français. 18h30: Synthèse de l'actualité. 21h30: Journal Français. 22h30: La presse française.

## Les souffrances d'une population après trente-et-un mois de blocus économique

"Dans ce pays où mendier est illégal, c'est par nécessité que les parents retirent leurs enfants de l'école et les jettent dans la rue". Ce triste constat est dressé par M. Seifeddine, responsable à Bagdad de l'organisation humanitaire britannique OXFAM. Du jamais vu dans ce pays, jadis aisé; avant la guerre du Golfe: des enfants en haillons vendant des journaux dans la rue se précipitent pour essayer les vitres des Mercedes ou autres voitures américaines rutilantes conduites par des commerçants qui se sont soudainement enrichis depuis la guerre du Golfe, grâce à la hausse des prix et au commerce au noir (récemment, un décret a instauré des peines très fortes, jusqu'à la peine capitale, pour certains actes de commerce illégal, notamment sur des produits de luxe importés en fraude).

Selon des experts économiques étrangers, la paupérisation est générale et touche les Irakiens à revenu fixe (employés, fonctionnaires et même professions libérales). Leur salaire, variant entre 200 et 300 dinars (moins de dix dollars au taux parallèle), ne suffit pas à nourrir une famille de trois membres. Même ceux issus des grandes familles traditionnelles ont dû vendre leurs biens pour acheter de la nourriture.

Alors que les salaires ont seulement doublé en valeur nominale depuis 1989, les prix ont été multipliés par dix durant la même période, selon un expert. Pour certaines denrées essentielles importées, telles que le sucre et le thé, les prix ont été multipliés par cent, voire par mille ! Aujourd'hui, nombreux sont ceux qui exercent deux métiers, dont l'un au noir, pour joindre les deux bouts, une situation

bien connue au Yémen car quasiment généralisée. Or, l'Irak, contrairement au Yémen, est loin d'appartenir à la catégorie des pays les plus pauvres du monde.

Après avoir épuisé ses réserves en denrées alimentaires, l'Etat a commencé à s'approvisionner auprès des commerçants (favorisant ainsi l'enrichissement de certains et le trafic) pour assurer à la population la livraison des produits rationnés. Certains ont donc largement profité de l'embargo économique pour accroître leurs gains.

Au niveau des recettes de l'Etat, l'Irak a enregistré des pertes et un manque à gagner de plus de 44 milliards de dollars entre août 1990 et juin 1992 dans le secteur pétrolier, de loin le premier poste de ses exportations.

Le gouvernement veut aujourd'hui négocier la levée de cet embargo au Conseil de Sécurité

de l'ONU, ce qui semble expliquer les récentes tentatives de l'Irak de réchauffer ses relations avec la nouvelle administration américaine du président Clinton.

(D'après AFP)

Dans le cadre du réchauffement des relations avec l'Arabie Saoudite

## Le ministre du pétrole en visite à Ryad

Le ministre yéménite du Pétrole, M. Saleh Aboubakr Ben Hussein, s'est rendu samedi dernier à Ryad pour une visite de travail, selon l'agence de presse yéménite SABA.

M. Ben Hussein doit évoquer avec les responsables saoudiens les relations entre les deux pays qui se sont récemment améliorées après une période de grave crise qui a succédé à la Guerre du Golfe, crise matérialisée notamment par la résurgence d'un vieux conflit frontalier, dans des régions pétrolières spécialement (lire nos éditions précédentes).

Le ministre yéménite a transmis un message du président Ali Abdallah Saleh au roi Fahd d'Arabie Saoudite portant sur "les relations fraternelles entre les peuples des deux et les moyens de les développer".

Dans une déclaration citée par l'agence SABA, le mini-

stre du pétrole a indiqué qu'il évoquera avec les responsables saoudiens "le renforcement de la coopération bilatérale dans l'intérêt des deux pays, dans cette période importante de l'histoire de la Nation arabe". Il n'a pas donné plus de précisions.

Cette visite fait suite à celle effectuée en janvier dernier par le ministre d'Etat yéménite aux Affaires étrangères, M. Abdelaziz al-Dali à Ryad, la première d'un haut responsable yéménite depuis la guerre du Golfe (M. Al-Dali avait même été reçu personnellement par le roi Fahd, symbole de détente au moment où la crise entre les deux pays avait atteint son paroxysme. Le ministre de l'Education saoudien avait déjà visité Sanaa en septembre dernier mais les relations ne s'étaient alors pas améliorées pour autant, et les comités mixtes d'experts se sont succédés.

A ce moment là, les deux

pays avaient entamé des négociations sur le tracé de leurs frontières communes. Il y a environ un an, sans aucun doute pour pénaliser le Yémen après la crise du Golfe et pour freiner un processus de démocratisation que le régime monarchique du roi Fahd redoute au Yémen, les Saoudiens ont réveillé un vieux conflit frontalier en estimant qu'une partie de l'Hadramaout et du Jawf yéménites leur appartenait, en adressant des menaces aux compagnies pétrolières occidentales opérant dans ces régions. Le Yémen a aussitôt riposté en refusant de reconduire l'accord de Taëf de 1934 entre les deux pays, qui porte notamment sur les provinces de Najrane, d'Assir et de Jizzane, actuellement contrôlées par les saoudiens et que Sanaa revendique. Aussi bien ces provinces que les territoires yéménites réclamés par les Saoudiens, recèlent du pétrole.

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*Un mois de jeûne pour les Musulmans du monde entier*

# Le Ramadan, quatrième pilier de l'Islam

**Le Ramadan est sans doute l'acte religieux le plus important pour le fidèle musulman et le plus respecté, avec le pèlerinage à la Mecque, même par ceux qui négligent les quatre autres piliers de l'Islam, notamment les cinq prières quotidiennes. Tous les Musulmans, même ceux qui ne pratiquent pas le reste de l'année, s'abstiennent donc pendant un mois de manger, boire, fumer, avoir des relations sexuelles et... au Yémen de mâcher du qat... du lever au coucher du soleil: le mois de Ramadan est, pour l'Islam, le plus propice pour expier ses péchés: les portes du paradis sont ouvertes au croyant pendant un mois.**

Ramadan est le neuvième mois du calendrier lunaire islamique. L'acte de jeûner (Saum) pendant ce mois est, lui, le quatrième des cinq piliers de la foi islamique (les cinq obligations du croyant, la première étant la profession de foi en un dieu unique - *Shahada* - que le fidèle doit prononcer au moins une fois dans sa vie: "Je porte le témoignage qu'il n'y a de dieu que Dieu et que Mahomet est son envoyé"; le second pilier est la prière rituelle - *Salat* - (cinq par jour), le troisième le pèlerinage à la Mecque - *Hadj* -, et le dernier, l'aumône légale - *Zakâh* -, (charité obligatoire en fonction des revenus disponibles après avoir subvenu à ses besoins essentiels).

L'origine du jeûne du Ramadan remonte à la période préislamique (avant l'an 622 du calendrier chrétien): les chercheurs spécialistes de l'Islam pensent même que les influences judéo-chrétiennes qui avaient, avant Mahomet, encouragé à chercher la foi en un dieu en adoptant un mode de vie d'ascète, ont marqué profondément le Prophète. On estime généralement que c'est après avoir observé, à Médine, les pratiques juives, qu'il a ordonné à ses disciples de jeûner le Jour de l'Expiation (*Ashura*), identifié comme le 10 de *Muharram*, le premier mois de l'année musulmane. Peu après, les relations entre le Prophète et les tribus juives se dégradant, au cours de la seconde année de l'Hégire (*Hijra*, départ de Mahomet de la Mecque pour Médine, en 622 après Jésus-Christ, commencement de l'ère islamique), une révélation a aboli le jeûne de l'*Ashura*, le remplaçant par une obligation de jeûner "un certain nombre de jours" pendant le mois de Ramadan.

## Expier ses péchés

Ainsi, pendant quatre ou cinq ans, les Musulmans ont continué à suivre les pratiques juives de jeûner un seul jour du crépuscule au crépuscule, avant qu'une nouvelle révélation ne modifie cette tradition en prescrivant: "... mange et bois jusqu'à l'aube, jusqu'à ce que l'on puisse distinguer un fil blanc d'un fil noir. Après, continue de jeûner jusqu'à la tombée de la nuit". Puis la pratique a été étendue aux 29 jours du mois de Ramadan.

Ce mois a été choisi, à l'origine, parce que l'on pensait que c'est à ce moment de l'année que "le Coran a été envoyé sur terre", ou plus précisément que la première Révéla-

tion est survenue pendant le *Leilat al Qadr* (Nuit du pouvoir), identifiée comme étant celle du 27 de Ramadan. Le Coran décrit cette nuit comme "meilleure que mille mois", les anges et les esprits descendant sur terre: "C'est la Paix jusqu'à l'aube".

Le Ramadan est une période d'expiation des péchés et de pardon. La tradition musulmane dit que, pendant ce mois, les portes du Paradis restent ouvertes, celles de l'Enfer fermées, et que les diables sont enchaînés. Ceux qui observent le jeûne avec foi obtiendront, toujours selon la tradition, la rémission de tous leurs péchés. Il ne s'agit pas de la seule période pendant laquelle un Musulman peut expier ses péchés mais on dit que le Ramadan est "trente fois meilleur que n'importe quelle autre période".

## Réfréner sa colère et ses passions

Or, se contenter de jeûner, ne suffirait pas, si l'on prenait à la lettre les textes et la tradition. Le *Muflirat*, le corps qui énonce tous les incidents susceptibles de rompre ou d'invalider le jeûne, inclut par dessus tout "l'entrée dans le corps de toute substance matérielle". Ainsi, avaler de la nourriture ou du liquide, fumer, et même avaler sa salive ("s'il est possible de la cracher"), sont interdits. Même chose pour l'injection de toute substance dans le corps, même prescrite par un médecin. Heureusement, la pratique a largement assoupli ces obligations.

Celui qui jeûne doit aussi éviter des actions qui peuvent déclencher sa colère ou sa passion, ou celle d'un autre. On remarque souvent, lors d'une querelle entre deux personnes dans la rue, que d'autres viennent s'interposer en répétant le mot "Ramadan". Si possible, la personne qui jeûne doit pratiquer l'*Trikaf*: elle doit se retirer le plus souvent possible dans une mosquée, spécialement pendant les dix derniers jours du Ramadan, pendant lesquels, probablement le 27, le *Leilat al Qadr* est survenu. Les prières et la récitation du Coran doivent occuper ces périodes de retraite. Le *Saum*, qui comprend le jeûne et toutes ces obligations, est considéré comme un moyen très puissant de défaire Satan. Car les passions sont les armes favorites du Diable. Combattre l'ennemi de Dieu est aider Dieu. Et "si tu aides Allah, il t'aidera à son tour".

En outre, le Prophète a lui-même défini cinq actions qui pouvaient rompre le jeûne: le mensonge, la médisance, la calomnie, le faux serment et l'accès de passion. Il faudrait, selon ces préceptes, s'abstenir de tenir des propos indécents, d'adopter une attitude hostile ou d'être hypocrite. Il faudrait également "se concentrer sur le nom de Dieu et l'action de réciter le Coran est le jeûne de la langue".

Evidemment, l'application à la lettre des principes du Ramadan varie selon les pays (lire notre encadré). Il existe aujourd'hui une différence bien normale entre les obligations les plus exigeantes et la pratique. Au Yé-

men, le respect du Ramadan est pris très au sérieux et, contrairement aux idées reçues dans la communauté étrangère, même les Musulmans les moins assidus pour les autres rituels comme la prière, observent scrupuleusement le jeûne. Rappelons que le mois est propice pour expier ses péchés...

Seuls les enfants en bas âge (moins de douze ans généralement) sont autorisés à ne pas jeûner, ainsi que les personnes très âgées, les malades, les femmes allaitantes ou enceintes, ou bien ayant leurs règles, et les gens qui voyagent. Cette dernière exception avait été accordée en raison de la pénibilité des voyages en caravanes dans le désert; aujourd'hui, quelques Musulmans fortunés qui veulent appliquer la tradition à la lettre prennent l'avion régulièrement pendant le Ramadan et rompent en toute quiétude le jeûne!

La période de jeûne commence le lendemain de la nuit où apparaît le premier croissant de la nouvelle lune, au début du mois de Ramadan. C'est pourquoi, le début du jeûne peut varier d'un jour entre différents pays: la fixation du début du jeûne n'est pas aisée car les mois lunaires (bases du calendrier islamique) ne sont pas précis puisqu'on n'est jamais sûr d'apercevoir le premier croissant de lune. C'est une explication possible au fait que l'Arabie Saoudite et le Yémen ne commencent jamais le Ramadan ensemble...

## Le premier croissant de la pleine lune

En fait, selon la tradition, une personne fiable doit rapporter son témoignage sur la forme de la lune au Qadi. Le début du Ramadan doit ensuite être annoncé au peuple, selon les coutumes du pays; par un coup de canon ou par des lampes placées au sommet des minarets. Cette année, encore une fois, le *Saum* a commencé le 21 février en Arabie Saoudite et dans les cinq autres monarchies du Golfe qui ont créé pour l'occasion un comité officiel mixte pour surveiller la lune, et le 22 février au Yémen! Au Yémen, la période de Ramadan est un moment traditionnellement chargé d'émotions qui rapprochent les gens dans une sorte de grande fête le soir, de connotations symboliques et spirituelles. Le matin, l'appel du muezzin, vers 4h30 indique qu'il faut prendre un dernier repas avant la prière et le lever du soleil. En fin d'après midi, on attend l'appel de la mosquée en s'exhortant à supporter l'épreuve du *Saum*. A ce moment, et particulièrement au souk de Sanaa, on assiste à des scènes presque irréelles: les gens sont assis par terre autour de plats encore fumants, le pain à la main, figés dans cette attitude, prêts à manger dès que retentit, vers 18h30, le coup de canon les autorisant à rompre le jeûne!

**Emmanuel GIROUD**

Sources: G.E. Von Grunebaum, *Muhammadan Festivals*, Curzon Press.

## Les monarchies du Golfe mettent en garde les non-Musulmans

En théorie, celui qui ne respecte pas les principes du Ramadan sur la place publique, peut être mis en prison et avoir à payer une forte amende, ne serait-ce que pour une cigarette allumée dans la rue. En Arabie Saoudite, cette simple entorse au jeûne vaut au contrevenant cinquante coups de bâton sur la place publique et parfois, si la faute est plus grave, une peine de flagellation ou même la mort. Selon la loi dans ce pays, cela serait même valable pour les étrangers non-musulmans!

Cette année, les six monarchies du Golfe, et l'Arabie Saoudite en tête bien évidemment, ont adressé une mise en garde à leurs ressortissants et aux étrangers qui commettraient une entorse publique au Ramadan. La presse de la région a publié la semaine dernière les avis

habituels rappelant aux populations locales et aux étrangers qu'il est interdit de manger, boire ou fumer en public (chacun peut agir à sa guise chez soi). "Nous ne forçons personne à jeûner, mais nous attendons que les sentiments des Musulmans soient respectés", a déclaré M. Joumaa al-Souweidi, ministre des Affaires religieuses des Emirats Arabes Unis.

## Le Yémen beaucoup plus libéral

Les étrangers ne respectant pas ces consignes pourraient recevoir une amende ou être emprisonnés, et expulsés en cas de récidive. L'Arabie Saou-

dite reste le pays le plus strict sur ce plan. Les bars, autorisés dans les hôtels à Oman, Bahrein et dans les Emirats, doivent fermer leurs portes durant le Ramadan.

En République du Yémen, le régime pour les nationaux et les étrangers est beaucoup plus souple. Il est rare que l'on emprisonne un Musulman pour une entorse publique au jeûne. Tout au plus s'exposera-t-il à la colère de ses pairs.

Pour un étranger, contrairement aux monarchies du Golfe, on tolère qu'il mange ou boive en public. Il attirera sans doute des regards et des réflexions, mais ne risquera rien. Mais le respect de l'épreuve que subissent les autres doit inspirer aux non-musulmans un minimum de discrétion...

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# The Trap of Occasional Interest

By: Saad Salah Khalis, Cultural Editor, Yemen Times.

As expected, the Second Festival for Yemen Theater ended quietly. As if it never took place - no TV coverage, no press analysis, and not even feedback or criticism from the general audience was offered. In a country like Yemen, with its rich cultural heritage and impressive future potential, it is rather odd that the cultural movement is falling into the trap of occasionalism.

As philosophers always tell us, culture is one of the basic structures of society, hence an indicator of social development, and thus a social responsibility. However, in nations like Yemen, which suffers an enormous illiteracy burden and lacks a constant and evolving cultural tradition, the state becomes the prime mover of socio-cultural traditions. Yet, pleas for more personal initiative and privatization are justified on the assumption that Yemen is headed towards an open and free (democratic) system. That is why the role of the state, however necessary, cannot and should not be the cornerstone of the cultural evolution of the country.

In this context, and given the dismal results of the second Festival for Theater, I don't think we have much to blame the state for, because its attempts to achieve its cultural plans are promising in the course of attempting to ensure a Yemeni presence in regional and some international demonstrations, like those in Paris, Bonn, and Amsterdam. The ones to blame are the Yemeni intellectuals themselves, in addition to the evolving class of merchants and capitalists who may not know, or not be aware, that no class can survive the inevitable social

contradiction except by creating its own cultural institutions to express its goals and reveal its concept of future society. I'm not calling here for the supremacy of economic culture. I have always been a fan of popular culture, but as Yemenis have chosen the path of democratic hand-ling of power, all classes of society will have no option in the very near future but to clash peacefully; expressing themselves through their cultural activity and creation. Whatever consequences may result, the Yemeni culture would remain the sole winner. Yemeni society is a colorful mosaic of different factors of influence: religious, national and historical, which in addition to the colorful linguistic (dialectic) peculiarity could create a superior culture in the whole region outranking the neighboring cultures. Yet, some may argue that cultural development is a product of social and economic development as a whole.

I agree, but the unified democratic Yemen was an option decided and agreed upon by the decision-makers, in response to a popular demand. I stress that those decision-makers, governmental and private, should carry out steps to speed up the cultural awareness of the newly-formed society to keep up with the increasing political and economic awareness that is constantly increasing.

It is understood as a rule, that the bureaucratic structure of governmental institutions hinders the creative development in any society. I wonder what really hinders the intellectuals, artists, and thinkers from coming into the arena to express their own views of the new society. Where is the Yemeni poetry and novel? Where is the Yemeni theater except for a few government-

sponsored occasions? Where are the cinema attempts?

I don't think that lack of qualifications is an excuse, because they can easily be created since the world is filled with art colleges and institutions. As for creators, they cannot be developed academically. Artistic creation is a gift.

I think Yemen's past and present is filled with what it takes from hours of triumph and glory to those of agony and misery. We are capable of creating generations of novelists, poets, and artists, which are already there, waiting for opportunities to present their creative capabilities. Since no publisher is ready to risk his investment, I think the state should take the lead by forming poetry and novel contests supervised by distinguished Yemeni literary and art personalities. What glory can a young poet visualize being handed a prize by Al-Beradouni or Al-Maqalih on a TV screen, with his product published in magazines and newspapers, followed by his/her tour of the Arab world to take part in poetry festivals and symposia.

Just imagine the magnitude of incentive for this young artist to be honoured by the entire society in the eyes of millions of watchers. What budget would the local television assign for an organized campaign to introduce Yemeni artists to their society, or to organize monthly or seasonal contests covered by radio, television, and newspapers.

Some argue that bread has priority now, and that the main obsession of the Yemeni people is the economic situation, the coming elections, and so on. I contend that the development of body and mind goes together, and that concentrating on one while leaving the other would lead to a cat-

astrophic outcome through creating a population unaware of its position in an era of cultural conflict, as a clear example can be noticed in what happened in eastern Europe, as the main danger to any living society when the people failed to defend a society they once fought for fiercely. Lack of awareness cannot be remedied through continuous political veragosity, but through the creation of rooted cultural traditions by all acting forces of the society, where the media all combine to create a new social outlook towards art and literature. Thus, the art of the finest arts institutions spread all over the country can face the repressive forces to openly impose a new cultural system before it's too late.

Yemen is a country of wide differences and variations, including social, cultural, and historical. These differences make it a very promising cultural force in the area. Its economic potential is promising also and so is the quality of its people; plain folks and intellectuals, with all their cultural background rooted in ancient periods of our history of very enlightened civilization have passed through Islamic periods where Yemeni culture became a subject of proverbs. I'm not mourning the loss of past glories, but I want to stress that the potential is there, and that new generations are of a good degree of readiness to accept deeper forms of culture than they already have. What remains for the state and the economic forces to accomplish is to establish more publishing houses, theaters, movie houses, show rooms, galleries, institutes for academic artistic studies, cultural programs in radio and TV, even if that means assigning an independent TV channel the purpose of concentrating on foreign studies.

## National & International Observers Foster Free and Fair Elections

By: Dr. Ahmed N. Al-Madhagi, Political Editor, Yemen Times.

Yemen's first parliamentary elections scheduled for April 27th are drawing a rising international interest. This is because Yemen could chart a course in holding free and fair elections for the first time in the history of the country, which could also serve as an impetus for other countries in the region to follow suit: The Republic of Yemen is the only state on the Arabian Peninsula which, constitutionally, gave women the right to vote and run for parliament; it is the only country applying political pluralism; and where free press is a reality.

The most important question being constantly put forth is: "Will Yemen be able to go through with free elections according to international standards, or will it be haunted by various 'considerations' and thus fail to meet those standards?"

Several American and European institutions have already sent their delegates to Sana'a, where they met leaders of parties, members of the SEC and several popular organizations. In this regard, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs of the US has become more involved in Yemen's efforts towards its first parliamentary elections.

At the beginning of this week, Thomas O. Melia, Program Director at the NDI made a second trip to Sana'a, in less than a month. During his two-day visit, he held meetings with the SEC Vice-Chairman, with representatives of several political parties and with the staff of the newly-established National Committee for Free Elections (NCFE).

The NCFE, made up of Yemeni volunteers to monitor the upcoming elections, was the focal point

the people that he met were aware of the existence of the NCFE. Second, the SEC officials that he has met were positive regarding the role of the NCFE and foreign media as well as governmental, diplomatic, and private observation missions. "We have nothing to hide," the SEC Vice-President said repeatedly.

During the meeting held at on February 21st between the SEC Vice-Chairman and Mr. Melia, which was attended by this writer (the Executive Director of the NCFE), the NDI's Program Director was told that Yemen welcomes all national and international delegates and volunteers who are interested in observing the elections. He was informed that the SEC officially approved the establishment of the NCFE on February 14th. Two hours later, at the SEC's meeting with foreign diplomats, the Vice-Chairman stated that the Yemeni elections experiment does not belong to the Yemeni people alone, but to the international community.

"We welcome international observers in our elections. We have already agreed to facilitate the NCFE and the NDI's missions," Mr. Mohammed Said Abdullah confirmed.

In my view, the foundation of the NCFE was an important development in Yemen's political and democratic evolution, as the NCFE is destined to play an important role to play in the country's transformation. Its members and field volunteers, who will be trained by the NDI and potentially by other institutions working to promote democracy in the world.

The NCFE works strictly along the lines of objective and neutral efforts. That is why its executive board and volunteers are independent volunteers who are not members of any party; none are they running in the elections.



of the talks of the NDI official. The NDI has agreed to send experts to organize seminars and workshops for volunteers working under the guidance of the NCFE and for observers representing parties participating in the elections. According to the NDI's Program Director, two things were clear. First, all

The President of the NCFE and its official spokesman have expressed interest in linking up with all Yemenis, foreign diplomats and international observers interested in the elections to contact the committee for assistance, advice, data, and any information. The NCFE's phone number is (976-1) 235-810.

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*As Yemen's Highest Capitalized Bank Opens Its Doors*

Dr. Ahmed Al-Hamdani:

# "We plan to make the YCB a personalized and quality-service bank."

Engineer Ahmed Mohamed Al-Junaaid, the Governor of the Central Bank of Yemen, cut the blue ribbon at 10:00 o'clock on Saturday 20th February, the Yemen Commercial Bank opened its doors for business.

The transformation from the BCCI-Yemen to the YCB took almost one and a half years to complete. It was a long and arduous process as the Depositors' Committee, the Central Bank and the bank's management tackled every issue in order to resolve everything.

"At the end, all depositors of the former BCCI-Yemen are being paid in full. Already 65% of the dollar deposits and 90% of the deposits have been paid out. The balance will be paid out by the YCB according to a schedule agreed upon with the Central Bank," explained Dr. Ahmed Al-Hamdani, the YCB Managing Director. Dr. Al-Hamdani was up-

beat about the prospects. "We are now a local bank, and we plan to compete effectively. We have many things going for us," he said. He was referring to the fact that the YCB has the highest paid-up capital among the banks operating in Yemen. He was also referring to the bank's drive to offer a personalized and quality service. "We plan to initiate a double shift customer service which would make us open for business at parallel hours with the main financial centers of the world. We plan to overcome the complications which arise from the differences in time zones in the world," he explained. In addition, he pointed to the excellent team of

management at the bank, and said that they will be further reinforced with a new addition of highly qualified persons. "We will need more people for our new branches," Dr.

Ramadhan. "We have completing negotiations with the Chamber of Commerce of Mukallah to take over the the first floor. The work team is already there to make the

former BCCI-Yemen, said, "The management and staff are gearing up for a worked-out strategy that is based on customer satisfaction. That is our main objective."



Hamdani pointed out. The third YCB branch (The

needed alterations and changes.

The Managing Director, a well-known personality, an efficient administrator, and a former minister, said that that YCB has already linked up with first-class international banks for correspondent services. "We have the international network of Citibank to use for our correspondence banking needs. We also plan to use the national banks and we will work in close coordination and strong cooperation with the local and foreign banks operating in Yemen," he affirmed.

That optimistic mood can also be seen with the bank management and employees. Mr. Mahdi Naqvi, a well-respected banker, is the General Manager of the YCB, retained from

The General Manager of the Bank also stated that the majority of the former clients of the BCCI have remained with the YCB,



The YCB General Manager sounded upbeat about the

prospects of the bank, and its competition with other banks. "The Yemen Petroleum Company, a 10th share holder in the bank, is our client. Everybody knows that their average daily revenue is about YR 15 million, and we anticipate most of this will be deposited with us. That will make us the most cash-rich bank in Yemen," Naqvi said.

He also explained that his bank's paid-up capital, YR 125 million, at the moment, and YR 250 million by March 1994, is by far the highest capital-based bank. Other banks are not expected to attain this capital of YR 250 million until the end of 1995. This allows us to entertain the financing of development projects by providing medium/long term credit

are ready to pay 10% within the first month,

another 8% in another month thereafter, and to settle the remaining balance, far ahead of the six-month deadline," he concluded.

Mr. Sikander Mahmood, Deputy General Manager, was similarly optimistic. "In Day One of our operations, 26 new accounts in Sanaa and three new accounts in Hodeidah were opened, including several for foreign firms," he said.

He also pointed out that total deposits with the bank in the first day of business were YR 9.4 million and US\$ 600,000.

"We shall pursue a quality-service-based policy to attain the full satisfaction of our clients. We ask them to come and try us," he said.

The Yemen Commercial



beat about the prospects. "We are now a local bank, and we plan to compete effectively. We have many things going for us," he said. He was referring to the fact that the YCB has the highest paid-up capital among the banks operating in Yemen. He was also referring to the bank's drive to offer a personalized and quality service. "We plan to initiate a double shift customer service which would make us open for business at parallel hours with the main financial centers of the world. We plan to overcome the complications which arise from the differences in time zones in the world," he explained. In addition, he pointed to the excellent team of

bank already has a branch in Sanaa, and another in Hodeidah), will be opened in Mukallah just after



and that he hopes to attract many more new customers. "We hope to show everybody that we cater to the various and personal needs of our clients." Mr. Naqvi pointed out that his bank is studying many novel ideas and services. "We plan to start an Islamic banking unit within the bank to cater to those who would like to do banking with the Islamic tenets. We are studying the possibility of starting an ATM (automatic teller machine), and we plan to start a mobile unit for school (student) saving accounts," he said.

facilities, as well as direct investments," he said. Regarding payment of the balance on the deposits of the former BCCI-Yemen, the YCB General Manager stated that according to arrangements with the Central Bank, the outstanding balance of 10% of Riyal accounts is payable in one month. Customers are welcome to collect their money at once, as we are awash with money. Again according to agreement with the Central Bank, the outstanding balance of 35% on US dollar accounts is payable in six month. We

Bank is already making its presence felt in the banking and business communities. "As Dr. Hassan Makki, First Deputy Prime Minister said in his opening ceremony, the YCB is bound to make its mark immediately." At the same time, the YCB is poised to receive utmost personal care from the Governor of the Central Bank of Yemen, who has been heard referring to the YCB as "my baby." Given all those facts, there is no doubt that the YCB will effectively compete in the Yemeni banking business.



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**LESSON #33  
GET**

Enough! Enough! Prepositions make me crazy, so let's take a bit of a break and look at another one of those many-faced English verbs. Several lessons ago we looked at the verb *take* and found that it has more than ten different possible definitions, not including the many expressions which use *take*. In this week's lesson we're going to examine the troublesome verb *get*.

Here is a list of some of the different ways in which *get* can be used:

1. **obtain**--Mahyoub got the money very quickly.
2. **catch (an illness)**--I get the flu every year.
3. **persuade, convince**--Hussein got Abdullah to come with him.
4. **anger, excite (often with to)**--Racism really gets to me.
5. **harm, kill**--I'm going to get the man who stole my car.
6. **arrive at (with to)**--When does the plane get to Aden?
7. **become**--The baby gets tired very easily.
8. **receive**--Mona got a letter from her pen-friend in Japan.
9. **understand**--You don't need to repeat the question; I got it the first time.
10. **prepare**--Mother wakes up early to get breakfast.

**Practice A** Read these sentences and write the number (from above) of the definition of *get* which best fits the use in the sentence.

1. We got our teacher to give us an easy exam.
2. Ali has a temper; he gets angry very easily.
3. Please speak more slowly; I'm not getting what you're saying.
4. Mahmoud got a new job at the university.
5. It really gets me when you lie.
6. I'll get you someday, Red Baron!
7. You'll get a cold if you don't take care of yourself.
8. The candidate who gets the most votes will win the election.
9. I'll get tea while you rest.
10. How long does it take to get to Hajjah from Sana'a?

Besides having several different definitions, *get* also figures prominently in many expressions. Here is a sampling:

- get about**--travel widely
- get along**--be friendly with
- get around**--find a way to avoid something
- get away**--escape
- get by**--make do
- get down**--be depressed
- get out**--become well known (of news)
- get over**--recover (from shock, disappointment, etc.)
- get through**--1. finish  
2. reach, contact



**Practice B** Read the following sentences and choose the phrase with *get* which best completes each sentence.

1. We tried to telephone, but we couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ to you.
2. Ali likes his cousins; he \_\_\_\_\_ well with them.
3. Sometimes there are so many problems in the world, I just \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Keep quiet! Who knows what will happen if this \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Even though prices are higher, somehow we \_\_\_\_\_.
6. If the police are careful, the prisoner won't be able to \_\_\_\_\_.
7. I will never \_\_\_\_\_ the loss of my brother.
8. Abdu has visited Africa, Asia and Europe. He really \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Don't worry about your answers; just \_\_\_\_\_ the exam.
10. You don't have a visa? This is a problem, but we can \_\_\_\_\_ it.

**Practice C** Rewrite these sentences, replacing the appropriate verb with *get* or a *get* phrase.

1. I will never understand physics; I just want to finish the class.
2. Don't let this depress you; tomorrow is another day.
3. My little brother is afraid a monster is going to hurt him.
4. What can I say to convince you to listen to me?
5. Ali and Ahmed don't like each other.
6. What time do you arrive at the office in the morning?
7. Have you received many calls this afternoon?
8. The children caught the kitten, but it escaped.
9. When Omar becomes older, he will work with his father.
10. If you don't have a lot of money, you must make do with what you have.

**WEEKLY IDIOM GET LOST!**

In usual use this phrase means "to become lost," but as an idiom, most often in the command form, it means "Go away! Leave me alone! Stop bothering me!" It is considered rude.

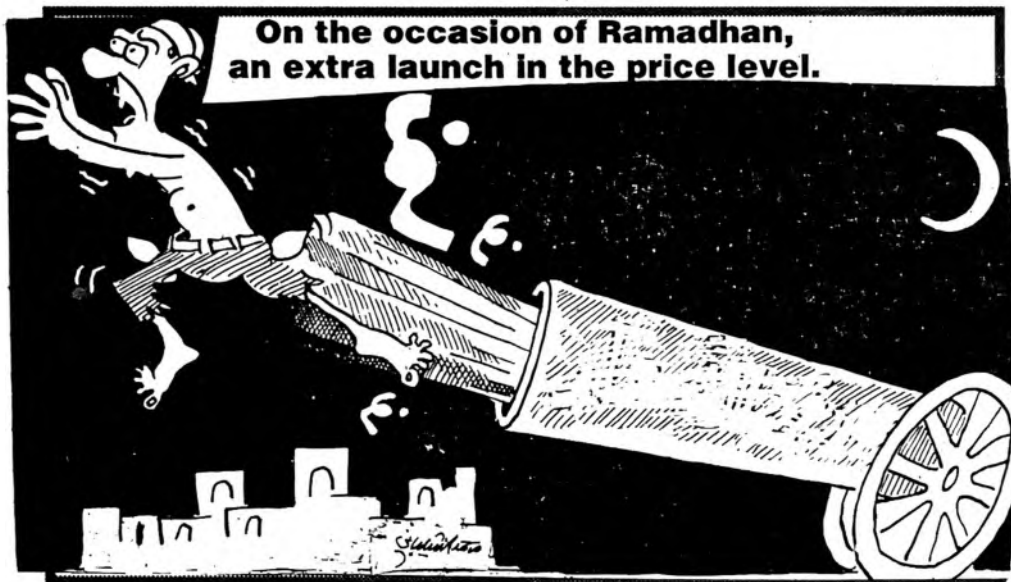


To a man bothering her on the street, a woman might say, "Get lost!"

**ANSWERS Practice A** 1. 3; 2. 7; 3. 9; 4. 1; 5. 4; 6. 5; 7. 2; 8. 8; 9. 10; 10. 6  
**Practice B** 1. get through 2. gets along 3. get down 4. gets out 5. get by 6. get away 7. get over 8. gets about 9. get through 10. get around  
**Practice C** 1. I will never get physics; I just want to get through the class. 2. Don't let this get you down; tomorrow is another day. 3. My little brother is afraid a monster is going to get him. 4. What time do you get to the office in the morning? 5. Ali and Ahmed don't get along. 6. What time do you get to the office in the morning? 7. Have you gotten many calls this afternoon? 8. The children caught the kitten, but it got away. 9. When Omar gets older, he will work with his father. 10. If you don't have a lot of money, you must get by with what you have.



Featuring Next Week



On the occasion of Ramadhan, an extra launch in the price level.

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• Analysis •

**Mr. Jeancourt-Galignani:**

**“Banque Indosuez and I are friends of Yemen and we believe in its future.”**

This week, Mr. Antoine Jeancourt-Galignani, the Chairman and Managing Director of Banque Indosuez, and a first-class banker at the international level, paid a “private” visit to Yemen. During the visit he met with a number of monetary personalities in the country, and studied the economic and financial conditions and prospects of Yemen.

“I am very impressed by the vitality of the Yemeni people. I know there are many challenges facing your country, but it is these challenges that bring out the best in us,” he said in an interview with Yemen Times staff writer Bashar G. Askar.

The French banker referred to the Gulf Crisis and the subsequent difficulties for Yemen and other countries in the region. “The mood is changing, nevertheless. We have to look towards the future. I am optimistic about Yemen’s economic future,” he added.

Mr. Jeancourt-Galignani referred to Yemenis as hard working and possess a good business mentality. “Coupled to that, the oil and mineral resources that are becoming increasingly available to Yemen will inevitably help build a strong economy. I have confidence in the ability of the Yemeni individual and officials to bridge towards better times,” he



said. Speaking about the role of Indosuez, he said that his bank’s strategy in Yemen, as elsewhere in the world, is to offer the best banking services to the clients.

“That mission represents our first goal. The second goal is to help and support the growth of the Yemeni private sector, in general, and the business community, in particular. Finally, our third objective is to contribute to the well-being and prosperity of the Yemeni economy,” said the Indosuez Chairman.

Mr. Antoine Jeancourt-Galignani stated that Bank Indosuez perceives itself as a “bank of the Middle East” in light of its major interests in the region and

presence in the market. “For example, we have been serving the Yemeni market, and our presence in Yemen dates back to over forty years.”

The Indosuez Banque official, speaking about the tourist aspects of his visit,

said that he was carrying beautiful memories and impressions of Yemen. “I personally and my banque consider ourselves friends of Yemen. I hope to come back to Yemen on longer trips,” he concluded.

**WHAT HAPPENED IN TAIZ WITH PARLIAMENTARIAN SAMEYI?**

It happened in Taiz on Tuesday, February 16th. Parliamentarian Sultan Ahmed As-Sameyi was heading towards the city when he was stopped by a military police patrol unit. Apparently, they were waiting for him. They stopped him: the pretext, - no pass or permit for the arms his companions were carrying. He did not have the complete set of passes, and thus,

they told him they will escort him to their commander. He resisted, and in the ensuing exchange of fire, two police men were killed, in addition to a civilian caught in the shoot-out. Sameyi himself is said to be wounded, and so are two of his men.

There are several facts that need to be stressed in this incident. 1- The military police have no business tackling civilians, their job is with the military personnel. 2- Mr. Sameyi, as a member of parliament, has immunity against arrest, until the House of Representatives okays such action. 3- Mr. Sameyi has reacted with minimal respect for and trust in the laws of the country. Since then, the Ministry of Interior, after the approval of the Prosecutor-General’s office, has issued a warrant for his arrest. He is in hiding. The House of Representatives, meanwhile, has formed a committee to supervise the interrogation process in an attempt to pin down the facts. Yemen Times plans to do the same. Next week, we hope to run more details.

**Interviews:**  
Entrepreneur Abdullah Al-Omeri Shares with Yemen Times his Assessment of the Yemeni Business Climate.

**Finance:**  
What is Happening with the Government Budget.

**Yemen’s Health:**  
Dr. Nizar Ghanem’s New Experiment with Voluntary/Free Health Services to the Public.

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