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Minister of Social Affairs on
Programs for the Vulnerable.
Page 3.

Promoting Tourism in
Aden.
Page 7.

Deciphering Yemen's
Past at Leiden Univ.
Page 10.

Gibran: In Honor of an
Arab Poet.
Page 12.

Effort to Shake up Investment Stagnation:

Central Bank of Yemen Cuts Interest Rates

The Central Bank of Yemen (CBY) slashed deposit interest rates by 5% last week, in a clear effort to encourage investments and entrepreneur borrowing. From an average of 26-27% per annum, the rates have come down to around 22%. Businesses received the news with a sigh of relief, although they await another cut. One industrialist explained that a reasonable rate which could support the economic conditions

and still hold inflation at bay is 17 to 18%. Bankers who are stuck with large deposits also applauded the CBY decision. The Assistant General Manager of the International Bank of Yemen, Mr. Ahmed Thabet, said that it is now going to be easier for investors to borrow. "In the past, any investor who borrowed to part-finance a project, had to expect an annual return on the investment of around 50% to make it worthwhile," he said.

« من يعلّق الجرس ؟ »

Yemen's Water Crisis!

The National Water Resources (NWRA), in collaboration with the World Bank, is organizing a 3-day water management seminar at the Sheraton Hotel on December 9th. Local and foreign specialists will present studies on various aspects of the water situation in Yemen. They all, however, focus on the irresponsible depletion of the underground water reserves, collected over tens of thousands of years. This issue presents a pressing challenge which the Yemeni authorities have been unable to address, so far. Time and again, experts have

warned of the consequences if present trends continue, but the government has done nothing about it. The most officials do is attend seminars and they themselves speak of the gravity of the situation. The question is, 'If senior government officials cannot do anything about the situation, who can?' There have already been several seminars reminding us of the gravity of the water crisis. Every government official who attended such seminars nodded his head with approval! There is a folk tale in Yemen

about some mice who had a problem. Menaced by attacks from a vicious alley cat, the mice finally found a solution. It called for hanging a bell around the cat's neck, so that when it approached, the bell would alert the mice. But a question remained, "Who would hang the bell on the cat's neck (من يعلّق الجرس)?" Today, a similar problem exists in resolving the water crisis of Yemen. There is agreement that the solution lies in stopping farmers from depleting the reservoir. But who will make them?

More on page 12

EMC to Launch 2nd Phase

The General Assembly of the Elections Monitoring Committee is expected to meet soon to discuss the General Secretary's financial and technical report on the EMC for the first stage (June-November 1996). The agenda also include discussion and approval of the EMC Report on the Registration Phase of the Election process, and discussion/approval of the plan of action for the 2nd/final stage (December 1996 - June 1997). The Secretary-General's report shows that all the EMC expenditures of the first stage were met totally from local sources. The expected changes include the formation

of an advisory board to be made up of representatives of the political parties. While this board has no executive powers, it will give the parties access to the work of the EMC. This issue plus the wording of the first report are subjects of heated debate and is leading to polarization within the EMC. Some members are demanding a hardline EMC position. Otherwise, they threaten to walk out! At another level, several Western ambassadors have visited the EMC headquarters in Sanaa in order to have a first-hand look at the work of the NGO and to increase cooperation. Continues on page 5

THIS WEEK, LAST CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

YT Person of the Year

The last chance to nominate a person for the 1996 Yemen Times Person of the Year will soon be gone. The committee in charge of making the selection has already received several nominations. The deadline for sending in nominations is 16th December, so as to allow for screening. The person selected for Person of the Year will be announced in the first week of January 1997. The two criteria for nominations are:
1. Success in Personal Life:
This means a happy (married) life and success in career.

2. Service to the Community:
This means that the person nominated must have rendered distinguished services to the public at large. Individuals are advised to rush with their nominations if they are to be considered. Nominations mailed after 16th December will not be considered. The people selected as Yemen Times Person of the Year are Dr. Tareq Abu Luhum (1993), Eng. Ahmed Al-Anisi (1992), Mr. Ali Mohammed Saeed (1993), Dr. Abubakar Al-Qirby (1994), and Dr. Wahiba Fara' (1995).

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OUR VIEWPOINT

When the Public Complains, the Authorities Must Listen

In Yemen, public complaints do not get a positive response from the authorities. This is a definite proof that the supervisory bodies like the ombudsman's office in parliament, the control and audit organization and others are not performing their jobs. In fact, the public best describes the attitude of the authorities as "The citizens and media shall complain as they want, and the officials shall do as they please."

The Republic of Yemen badly needs a system which will enable citizens to hold government officials, army/security officers, and judicial personnel responsible. Most of the times, violence erupts because the citizens feel that their rights are not protected, thereby feeling a strong urge to take the law into their own hands. What can be done? I offer some suggestion below:

1. Presidential Complaints Office:

The President can establish an office which receives complaints directly from the people, and then orders investigation and proper action to redress the damage. Some will say, the president already receives complaints, but the focus is not on correcting grievances.

2. Media Follow-up:

The Prime Minister's office can set up an office to follow citizens' grievances aired in the media. The office, without a direct request from the persons involved, can follow up to verify the facts and take action. Many times, a newspaper may carry a story about incriminating action by people in government. The prime minister's office should follow on them.

3. Parliamentary Ombudsman:

The present parliament has virtually no role in supervising the behavior of the executive branch of authority. This is one of the reasons why it is in such low esteem in the public eye. Parliament members are busy with politics, and at best, with their own needs.

4. Interest Groups:

Various interest groups can be formed as NGOs or other lobby and pressure blocks. These can be formed under different names and with variable focus. Consumer Protection is one, Upholding the Law is another, Protecting Teachers' Rights is a third, etc.

In short, one of the features of a working democracy is that the voice of the people reaches the people in authority, and they cannot simply ignore it. They must feel an obligation to respond. This is one of the most important checks and balances of democratic systems.

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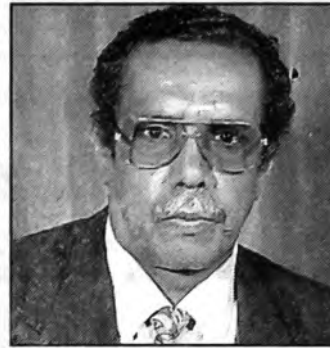
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The International Court of Arbitration Invites a Yemeni Lawyer to Attend Its Meeting in Paris

Ambassador Alain Plantey, President of the International Court of Arbitration (ICA) for the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in Paris, sent an invitation to Mr. Awadh Abdulla Bahamish to attend the ICA meeting under his chairmanship for the Arab Arbitration Group. This group is especially devoted to the development of arbitration practices in Arab countries. This is the first time that the International Court of Arbitration



has invited an International Lawyer from Yemen. In fact the invitation comes at suitable time since Yemen has an International Arbitration case with Eritrea over the Huneish islands. The establishment of the Free Zone in Aden and the increase in international investment, commerce and trade in Yemen, in general will definitely be included with the international arbitration to solve all issues and disputes.

Mr. Awadh Abdulla Bahamish, who is from Hadhramaut Governorate, holds a masters degree in law (LL.M) from the University of Wales Cardiff - Great Britain. He is at present the legal

advisor of the Ministry of Transport and the Environment Protection Council consultant. Also he was a lecturer of the Maritime Law and The Law of The Sea at Sana'a and Aden Universities. He wrote many articles and had many interviews on the maritime and environmental laws issues in the international and local newspapers including the Yemen Times. He wrote a two part article in the Yemen Times under the title "The Legal Regime of the Marine Space of The Republic of Yemen, It is a problem of Management" Mr. Bahamish left Sana'a for Paris on Sunday 8th December to attend the meeting.

Stronger Yemeni-Indian Cooperation

The Indian firm, Consulting Engineering Services (CES) snatched one more contract on Sunday, December 8th. The firm, which has been doing business in Yemen since 1976, has a good reputation and standing in the country. It has successfully executed nearly sixty projects in housing, roads, hospitals, water and sanitation projects. "We are proud of our association with and service in Yemen," said

Mr. S.S. Chakraborty, Managing Director of the company.

At another level, a Yemeni delegation headed by Dr. Mutahhar Al-Saedi, Vice Minister of Planning and Development, concluded a visit to India by signing agreements aimed at enhancing cooperation between Yemen and India in the fields of petrochemicals, agriculture, energy, mining, health and culture.

Yemen Formally Applies to GCC:

The Republic of Yemen has formally applied for membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council. A letter from President Ali Abdullah Saleh to Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifah Aal Thani, Emir of Qatar and the Chairman of the coming Summit (7th Round) of the GCC, carried the formal request.

The letter was hand-delivered by Mr. Abdullah Ghanim, Minister of Legal Affairs.

The Emir of Qatar expressed his country's support for the Yemeni request, and promised to lobby for a positive response.

The GCC leaders will have to respond to the Yemeni request in their Summit to be held in Doha next week.

New US Company Explores for Oil

An American company, Kerr-McGee Corporation, signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Oil and Mineral Resources on Thursday 5th December. According to the memorandum, the Oklahoma-based company will explore for oil in three large concession blocs (50, 51, 54) in Hadhramaut. The Middle East Representative of the company, Sheikh Mohammed Farid Al-Awlaqi, told the Yemen Times that the company will spend US\$ 30 million in the exploration phase. "This company is a large one with interests in the Gulf of Mexico, the North Sea, China, Indonesia, Thailand, and of course, the Arab Gulf states," he indicated. Sheikh Al-Awlaqi and the initial company teams will return to Yemen in February 1997.

JICA Team Arrives in Sanaa

A delegation from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) arrived in Sanaa on a visit to Yemen lasting for a few days. The Japanese team will participate in the periodical meeting for combating tuberculosis due to be held in Taiz during 14-17 December. The delegation will also evaluate the services provided by the agency in Yemen. JICA is the execution agency for Japanese assistance.

French Food Aid Arrives in Aden

A shipment of 5840 tons of flour arrived in Aden on Saturday 7th December. The French embassy announced that the aid shipment is part of the agreement signed by Yemen and France last July. The island of Socotra will receive 500 tons of flour to be delivered by two French navy boats. The rest of the shipment will be sold to help finance some social, cultural and development projects in Yemen.



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The Minister of Social Affairs, Pensions & Labor:

“We are executing a plethora of projects targeting vulnerable segments of society.”

In the traditional government power structure, the Ministry of Pensions and Social Affairs was categorized as one of the marginal ministries. As conditions changed, this ministry has become one of the key institutions in countries like Yemen. Two of the main reasons for this change is the role social safety net programs play in a country undergoing structural adjustment and economic reform, and the rising role of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Thus, the responsibilities of the Ministry of Social Affairs have grown dramatically, and its reach now encompasses a substantial part of the population.

A reform package incorporates many programs funded by hundreds of millions of dollars to soften the burden on the vulnerable segments of society. Bilateral and multilateral programs are now fully underway, and various funds have been created to cushion the crunch. At the same time, NGOs are established in various fields at a pace that neither the Ministry nor the institutional structure can cope up with. Hence the work on a new law for NGOs.

Ms. Ahlam Al-Mutawakil of Yemen Times spoke to Mr. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Batani, Minister of Pensions, Social Affairs and Labor, and filed the following interview. Excerpts:

Q: What are the main programs of the Ministry in combating poverty and unemployment? And what are the sources of funding for them?

A: Acting on presidential directives, we have established good links with the World Bank, international organizations and NGOs for the purpose of establishing a social safety net program. This has now been translated into a fund. We hope that this fund will help in alleviating people's suffering, offer better health and educational services as well as retraining in order to reduce unemployment. The Ministry has been negotiating for almost a year with the World Bank to establish a fund for social development. The expected capital for this fund is \$80 million. The money will come from the World Bank (\$30m), the European Union (\$25m), the Netherlands Government (\$6m) and the balance from many other donors.

Q: When was this fund established?

A: The fund was established last October in accordance with article 31 of the Social Care Law of 1996. Due to the rapid economic changes taking place in the country, this fund was established to combat poverty and help the most vulnerable families, especially the ones negatively affected by the financial and administrative reforms.

Q: How does the Ministry determine the families which are most affected?

A: After the enactment of the Social Care Law, and according to presidential directives, the Ministry formed many teams for social field investigations. These teams, at the end of their extensive surveys, have successfully concluded their mission by specifying and locating 50,000 needy families.

Q: Now that you have this list of 50,000 families, what are the main characteristics of this population group?

A: I cannot group everybody into nice blocks. However, let me say that the Fund aims to help widows, divorced women, old-age people with no income, the families of imprisoned breadwinners, ex-prisoners, and the handicapped.

Q: If I understand correctly, this is a monthly assistance.

How much will each family receive?

A: The Fund's executive board has agreed to award a minimum assistance of YR 500 per month, and a maximum of YR 1000.

Q: Is this sufficient for fighting poverty?

A: This assistance represents emergency aid. It is the first step in helping poverty-stricken people. A more advanced stage will include, in cooperation with the not yet established Development Fund, helping able bodied people to find proper employment or to provide them with money to launch small businesses.

Q: You indicated that money came from various foreign donors. How much money has the Government of Yemen contributed to this Fund?

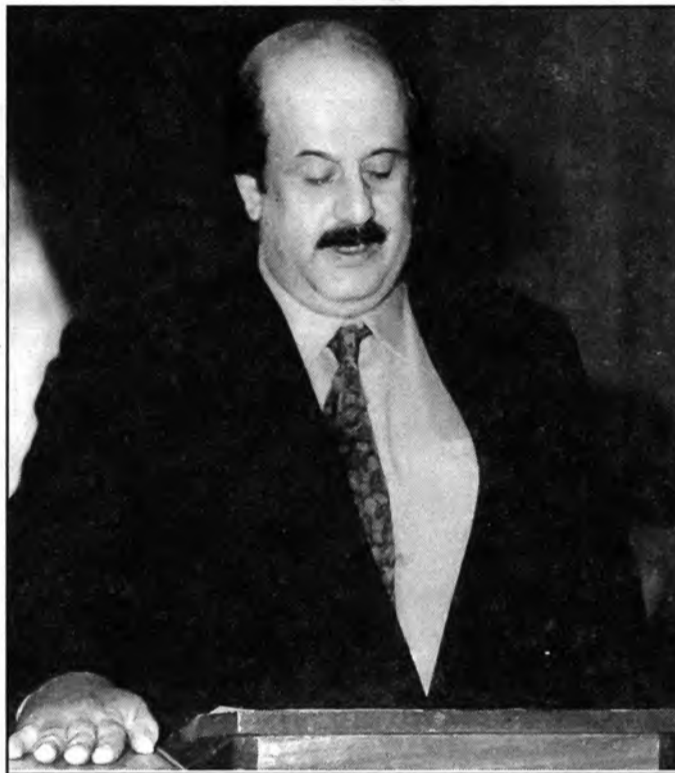
A: The amount allocated in the Government budget for 1996 is YR 1000 million. This covers 96,000 families included within the Social Security Umbrella. In addition, an initial amount of YR 6.5 million was provided for field researchers. This money went to cover the fees and costs of 261 researchers in all governorates, and took 20 days to complete. We are now in the process of reviewing the final draft of the report. There will be a second stage which will cover another lot of families. Again, the Government will put up YR 6.5 million for research work.

Q: How about other social programs?

A: There is a plethora of social programs carried out in conjunction with numerous bilateral and multilateral donors. The thrust of all of them is humanitarian and with the purpose of integrating the segments of society left out due to socio-cultural pressures or due to market mechanisms. Let me mention a few.

1. We are working on a number of projects targeting the handicapped. Some 12% of the Yemeni population suffers from one form of handicap or another, and the physically handicapped represent a good portion of these. We are constructing several centers for the handicapped which become training grounds for them.

2. We have several projects targeting women. One of the important ones is Women Development and Integration Project which involves model activities in six governorates.



3. We have the Poverty Eradication Project in collaboration with the UNDP. At a cost of US\$ 35-45 million, this project seeks to assist the poorer segments of society.

4. Then there is the population awareness program. At a cost of US\$ 1.46 million, this is an effort to help increase awareness among the poorer population regarding family planning.

5. The food support offered by the World Food Program which provides flour, oil, milk and other basic foodstuff to girls in schools, women in clinics and farmers in

public works programs.

6. There is also some \$ 25 million to finance small-scale labor intensive projects. This covers things like repairs of public buildings e.g., schools, clinics, construction of roads and small dams, etc. The idea is to create employment and income generation in the countryside and in poor urban slums.

7. There is also the Social Fund for Development and Labor with an initial capital of \$ 25 million. This fund will provide small entrepreneurs with the initial seed money they need to launch their

projects. We do not have any fixed criteria, but we are looking at projects that need a few thousand dollars as an initial cash injection. This fund, however, requires good management as it is necessary that only viable projects are financed by the fund.

As you can see, there are a number of projects, all of which aim to alleviate the suffering of the vulnerable segments of society, especially as a result of our present reform efforts.

Q: Your ministry is also responsible for licensing Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Although the number has been rising, the performance has been less than satisfactory?

A: Yes, we supervise the work of NGOs, without interfering with their activities. We have, of course, different kinds of NGOs, depending on their objectives and what kind of work they do. There are some 1,000 NGOs, and probably a similar number of unions, syndicates, etc.

The importance of NGOs is growing worldwide, and the same is true in Yemen. But it will take some time for Yemeni NGOs to make an effective contribution to the development process.

The Ministry has just prepared a draft law regulating the work of NGOs. This has been publicly discussed, and is on its way to the cabinet for approval before it is passed to parliament to be enacted.

Q: But the issue is the politicization of NGOs?

A: This has been an inevitable development as political parties seek to expand their power base. Many have encroached into civil society organizations like NGOs, unions, sports clubs, etc. Provided these organizations adhere to the law and work by their own charters, we have no need to interfere. Mostly, the interaction is really in mobilizing people to vote in certain direction rather than in influencing the activities of the NGOs. We can live with this.

Still, I have to say that we are all going through a learning phase. It will be some time before we will strike a correct and comfortable balance in dealing with these new organizations.

Q: Let us turn to labor issues. How many foreign laborers are there in the country now, and is the policy in this regard?

A: This subject will be discussed extensively during the upcoming Labor Council meeting. In fact, there will be two major topics under discussion: Imported labor and forming a High Committee for Health and Safety. So, in a short time, you will get all the statistics and policy information.

Q: How about vocational and technical training for Yemeni labor?

A: As you know, this has become a priority issue for the government. In collaboration with Germany, the Netherlands, Japan, Algeria, the EU, the World Bank and other donors, we are putting together a package for training. Already DM 24.7 million and US\$ 54.05 million have been earmarked for this purpose.

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Western Diplomats Express Support for EMC: Ambassadors Briefed by EMC

At the invitation of Ms. Shadha Mohammed Nasser, Assistant Secretary-General for Technical Affairs of the Elections Monitoring Committee, several ambassadors visited the EMC head office last week.

On Tuesday, December 3rd, the Ambassador of the United Kingdom, the Honorable Douglas Scafton, and the Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. David Pearce, visited the organization. The British diplomats were received by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Secretary-General, Ms. Nasser, Mr. Yassin Abdul-Razzaq, Director of the Legal Department, Dr. Mohammed Al-Maitami and many lawyers working for the EMC.

On Thursday, December 5th, Mr. Giovanni de Vitta, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Italian Embassy, visited. He was received by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Ms. Shadha Mohammed Nasser, Ms. Salwa Ahmed Qassim Dammaj, Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Affairs, and Mr. Ahmed Al-Soufi, Director of Internal Volunteer Mobilization Department and other officials.

On Saturday, December 7th, the Ambassador of the United States of America, the Honorable David Newton, accompanied by Ms. Margaret Scobey, DCM, Mr. Adam Erel, Information & Cultural Attache and Director of USIS, and Richard Jarvis, Political Attache, visited. They were received by Mr. Mohammed Al-Rubayi,



Chairman of the EMC, Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Ms. Shadh Mohamed Nasser, and Yassin Abdul-Razzaq, Director of the Legal Department.

On Monday, December 9th, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Honorable Arend Meerbrug, visited the EMC. He was received by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Ms. Shadha Mohammed Nasser, Dr. Ahmed Abdul-Qader, Director of the Foreign Relations Department, and several other officials.

The visiting diplomats were briefed on the work of the EMC and its various branch offices, the report on the Registration Phase of the Elections Process, and the plan of action for the future.

There were many questions about how the work was going and the positive contribution of the EMC to the elections process and the democratization effort. All diplomats, without exception,

expressed support for the work of the organization and indicated interest in continued contact and exchange of information.

Yemen Times learned that other ambassadors are planning to visit the EMC and share views with its executive board - all members of whom are working on a free and voluntary basis.

At another level, a consultant delegation representing the European Union is expected to arrive in Yemen this week. This delegation will hold talks with the Supreme Elections Committee, the Elections Monitoring Committee, and other relevant organizations. The purpose of the talks is to finalize arrangements for ways to channel EU support for these bodies.

By: Anwar Al-Sayyadi,
Yemen Times.



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Common Sense

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

Ending Cultural Impotence

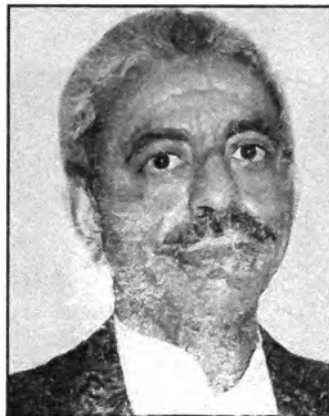
Nations are marked for greatness by the achievements of their people over time. Great achievements are those that leave an imprint on the overall civilization of humanity. They are the consummation of individual efforts at taming humanity to live at peace with itself. Achievements through military action have seldom given a nation any real standing in the development of man as a whole. Seldom have wars occurred through popular consensus. To the contrary, wars have been a deterrent to human progress.

It is by culture that nations shape their identity and add greater value to life itself. Culture - reflection of human endeavor to combine aesthetic values and knowledge with practical use and self satisfaction - is the climax of human achievement. Culture is what separates man from animals. Culture is the proof that instinct, by itself, is never sufficient for human fulfillment. Culture is the nearest thing to peace of mind; it defines it and nourishes this peace with an innovative spirit coupled with ambitious legitimate aspirations.

While many nations have had their fair share of wars and conquests, the cultural achievements are the ones that stand out to be scrutinously studied and evaluated even after the collapse of the entity which adopted the culture.

What exactly is culture and why is it important? Culture is that element in the life of a nation which must be continuous and expansive for life to have meaning. The absence of culture in a society could mean the absence of life itself in that society. Culture is all those activities of a society which enrich the minds and provide channels for creativity. Culture is creativity that is catching to the eye and beholding to the mind. It is the work of men who strive to bring joy, happiness and pleasure to other men who share the same cultural background or to those who have yet to absorb any cultural appeal, but are susceptible to implementing cultural strides made by other peoples.

Culture is science and all that knowledge which helps man to relate better to the world around him.



Actually science is an element of culture, which helps man understand the material world around him and induces the innovation of methods by which this material world can be of maximum use to man. It is a quest for the hidden mysteries in life which lie in the vast realm of the unknown - a quest left for men of greater visions who realize that God has endowed men with the ability to scrutinize and analyze to arrive at a stronger command of knowledge that should inevitably bring men to closer terms with the magnificence of the All-Mighty's splendid design of the universe. Culture is also art - the appreciation of human creativity in the world of the aesthetic. Culture is also taste and the refinements in attitude and behavior by which men interact with each other. Culture is an appreciation of beauty in all its manifestations.

Thus, culture is indeed a very important part of a nation's image. It provides a scale of measurement of the advances a nation has made, and which can be seen and appreciated, not just by the people of that nation, but by other people of the world.

The Republic of Yemen has been the home of a natural environment which induced creativity and innovation, far beyond that which the present situation in the country might reflect. The many and various geographical settings of the country offer a splendid background for setting the mind to wonder and think - to understand that beauty is really what we make of it.

The Republic of Yemen, however, is also a victim of historic misfortune and chronic instability that lasted for a thousand years, at least. This continuous social unrest has been a barrier to thinking - an obstacle to relating to the changing world at large. Moreover, Yemeni society was overwhelmed with chronic civil strife, tension and fear amongst the people at large. Thus, cultural infusion from the outside world was seldom a catalyst for cultural enhancement. Cultural activity remained static.

Scholarly activity centered almost exclusively on religions, philosophy, literature and history up to the middle of this century.

The southern part of the country had limited infusion of outside culture, but mainly in the area of administration which was more obvious in Aden than any other part. That is because Aden was the only real part of the country which the British cared about. Since most of the country was, realistically speaking, under the control of despotic tribal chiefs or local land barons, who probably saw any cultural enhancement as a threat to their own power, it was obvious that intense cultural activity would not be encouraged.

The 26th September Revolution (1962) was intended to tear down the barriers to economic, social and cultural development. The 14th of October (1963) struggle for independence was intended to relieve Yemeni territory from foreign occupation and thus lessen the weight of the regional sultans who prevented cultural development from spreading in their regions of authority. Of course, the political implications of a united Yemen freed from despotic or imperialistic control, also helped.

While on the surface, a lot of changes have indeed been introduced in both the political and cultural sectors since revolutionary fever hit the country, one cannot be convinced that a real cultural transfusion has been injected which inspires creativity and innovation. Even on the political front, one gets the feeling that developments have mostly been inspired by accommodating regional and international influence rather than to fulfill national popular aspirations. While the political considerations have been given or allotted exaggerated attention, cultural activity has yet to reach the required depths of Yemeni society.

In fact, one may even surmise that there may have been more meaningful cultural output prior to the revolutionary era, and in the early post revolutionary period, although in scattered lots due to the absence of appropriate channels through which such output could have generated mass popular appeal. It was not necessary for the ruling regimes to create culture or to try to set the acceptable cultural frameworks.

Culture is a by-product of individual initiative. The ruling regime should thus encourage individual cultural initiatives by creating the appropriate environment. On the other hand, the major effort of the regimes should have been to overcome the educational deficiency of the overall population - not just by an increased literacy rate, but by creating a society where knowledge has motivated a strong sense of intellect and reason. These, in turn, should provide the appropriate directions for the country as a whole needs to head for politically, socially and

culturally. If progress in the first two seems to have been far from expectations, then for the third - culture - the expectations have not even been defined from a national stand point.

This can be clearly seen as Yemeni talent has been forced to explore its capabilities in other lands or sink in the hard life of achieving sustenance or to seek recognition from any of the foreign entities that operate in Yemen: diplomatic, private business, philanthropic. Thus it seems like the country will be the last to take advantage of its own talent and intellect to provide cultural leadership and momentum for the nation to come out of a long entrenched cultural impotence.

When added to the increasing reactionary tendencies disguised as religions fundamentalism - the road to a cultural rejuvenation becomes crowded with explosive mines. Culture becomes inaccessible - rejected. Religion itself becomes associated with intolerance, cultural and social retardation and violence which, as far as Islam in concerned, are not in tune with the expressed convictions of respect, freedom of thought and expression and freedom from fear and ignorance that Islam implores on the worshipper.

Thus we can see that Yemen's cultural impotence needs to be dealt with serious efforts at first of all recognizing that Yemen's overall development must be preceded by a clear concise plan for the overall cultural development of the country. This can only come through a planned educational system that fully understands what it has to produce, in terms of knowledgeable citizens in those fields that will improve their economic lots as well as blend in with a dynamic culture mix that appreciates intellect and creativity, rather than steps on it or ignores it until it rots in the background of a retarded culture - the culture of violence and the warlords!

Yemen needs to get out of this state of cultural impotence. The only way that can happen is if a bigger chance is provided for Yemeni talent and intellect to influence our planning towards cultural enhancement. The alternative is continued cultural impotence. Even more, it could be loss of the valuable cultural traditions which were inherited from the past - a society without an identity to cling to. Yemeni intellect would serve the national aspirations of cultural enhancement much more effectively if given a chance to do so.

Cultural enhancement is not a political threat. On the contrary, it could boost political stability and elevate patriotism and national pride. A serious look at culture is warranted by all sectors of society and the time is right to overcome narrow-minded approaches in order to advance our cultural horizons. This is a political decision, nonetheless.

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- Diploma in electrical or mechanical.
- Minimum 3 years experience in Services Operation and Repairs.
- Ability to read and understand electrical wiring circuit diagrams.
- Good understanding of Electronics repair.

3. PERSONAL COMPUTER (PC) SUPPORT TECHNICIAN

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- Very good understanding of English language written and spoken.
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- Good knowledge of Electronics, Modems, LAN networks etc.
- Good knowledge of PC software packages such as Windows 95, Excel, Word, Microsoft Project etc.

All applicants will be Yemeni National and should meet the qualifications laid down against each vacancy.

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YEMEN INTERNATIONAL TELECOMM. COMPANY (LLC)
P. O. BOX 168
SANA'A
REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Promoting Tourism in Aden

The first Consultative Meeting for Revitalizing Tourism in Yemen was held in Aden between 25-28 November.

The participants - mostly businesses in the travel and tourism industry and the relevant government officials - stressed the importance of tourism in Yemen while focusing on Aden. They agreed to hold additional meetings every 4 months. The next meeting will take place in Hodeidah.

The participants had an audience with the President who assured them of "government commitment to support tourism, as it is one of the very important economic sectors". The President called on the General Corporation for Tourism to encourage investments in this field, and to benefit from the experience of neighboring countries. He also urged it to review the tourism laws and regulations. He indicated that exotic tourism in Yemen could include Socotra and other parts.

At the end of the meeting, a number of recommendations

were adopted by the participants. These include:

- 1- To review and develop investments in tourism, to support the Tourism Revitalization Fund and to develop tourism programs.
- 2- To form a special tourism police unit to protect tourists and guarantee their safety.
- 3- To encourage marine tourism.
- 4- To review issues related to currency exchange.
- 5- To adopt the recommendations of the 15th Regional Conference of the International Tourism Organization.
- 6- To support the General Corporation for Tourism and to demand financial and administrative independence for it in order to be able to efficiently carry out its activities.
- 7- To establish a tourism support council and provide the necessary funds for its activities.
- 8- To revive the activities of the Tourism Supreme Council.
- 9- To start awarding plots of land for tourism attraction sites, especially at beaches.

10- To review the financial policies of unfinished tourism investment projects and to withdraw the allocated sites from failed projects.

11- To encourage tourism in Aden, by developing its port and airport, and re-routing some tourist trips to Aden's airport during peak season.

12- To improve the services of Yemen Airlines.

13- To emphasize the importance of private sector participation in developing tourism.

14- To encourage and develop internal tourism in order to help save hard currency.

15- To protect the environment from pollution and destruction.

Ali Al-Imad, General Manager of the Tourism Bureau in Aden, responded to the following Yemen Times questions.

Q: What did you achieve in this meeting?

A: We met to review and discuss tourism capabilities in Yemen. I think we achieved that.

The participation of tour oper-

ators and travel agents from all over the country helped us to view matters clearly and from all angles. We have made some new decisions, e.g tourism investments, planning, advertising, tourism police, and a special paper for Aden.

Q: How do you view Aden as a tourist destination?

A: Aden is different from all other governorates in that its surrounded by the sea, and has lovely beaches. Its status as an international port has opened it to many cultural influences which make it a cosmopolitan city. Aden today is the commercial and economic capital, and a Yemeni major gateway.

Q: What do you expect to achieve, realistically?

A: The sector of tourism is like a train connected to many wagons. It has to flow harmoniously for the smooth operation of the train. After all, tourism is associated with many sectors.

By: Ridhwan Al-Saqqaf,
Head of Aden Bureau, YT.

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In addition to condition mentioned above, candidate should have:

- A. Minimum 5 years experience in technical training, industrial training (preferably oil field and mechanical related).
- B. Ability to read and write business level English.
- C. Ability to read and understand technical manuals and brochures.
- D. Ability to work with multi-national work force.
- E. Good health and physical condition.
- F. A university degree in Mechanical or Electrical Engineering.

All candidates must be YEMENI NATIONALS
If you meet the above requirements, please forward your resume and a photograph to:

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Att: Personnel Department
P. O. Box: 481, Sana'a
Republic of Yemen

Islamic Banking Conference:

An Impressive Gathering of Islamic Bankers

By: Hassan Al-Haifi,
Yemen Times

From the 16th to the 18th of December 1996, Sana'a will be crowded with Islamic bankers from all over the world. They will be here to attend the first major international conference on Islamic Banking to be held in the Republic of Yemen.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh will inaugurate the conference, most of which will be held at the Sheraton Hotel. It is expected that important government officials in the economic and financial sectors of the country will participate in the conference. In addition, leading trading and investment houses in Yemen will also be represented.

On the other hand, prominent international Islamic banking dignitaries from the whole world have been invited to attend including Sheikh Saleh Kamil, Chairman of the Barakah Group of Companies, Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Ali, Chairman of the Islamic Development Bank, Al-Haj Saeed Lootah, Chairman of the Islamic Bank in Dubai and Suleiman Abdulaziz Al-Rajhi, Chairman of the Saudi Exchange and Banking. The list goes on to include bankers from Qatar, Bahrain, Sudan, Egypt, Dubai, Kuwait, Jordan, Malaysia and several other countries.

Locally, the banking community has been mobilized, including the Central Bank of Yemen.

Various specialized working papers will be presented to the conference. These are written by experts in banking and finance in universities and practitioners in the field.

The Republic of Yemen has recently witnessed the establishment of two giant Islamic banks - the Islamic Bank of Yemen for Finance and Investment, and the Tadhamon Islamic Bank - both with major foreign holdings. A third bank, Saba Islamic Bank, is being established. These

banks together form the launching pad for Islamic banking in Yemen.

It is hoped that the conference

will boost the investment possibilities for Yemen as Islamic banks (with worldwide assets totalling over US \$ 60 billion)

will be invited to participate in Yemen's development program, especially, given the tax incentives.



Vacancies in Engineering & Project Division

Yemen International Telecommunications Company (LLC) has 4 vacancies for the post of **TECHNICIAN**.

Qualifications and Experience:

- BTEC DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENT (BASIC COURSE).
- TWO YEARS EXPERIENCE AS A SWITCHING OR EARTH STATION TECHNICIAN.
- GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF SWITCHING AND SIGNALING SYSTEMS.
- GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF TRANSMISSION SYSTEMS INCLUDING CELLULAR.

All applicants will be Yemeni National and should meet qualification and experience mentioned above.

Please send your application with supporting documents within 10 days from the date of this advertisement to:-

MANAGER HUMAN RESOURCES
YEMEN INTERNATIONAL TELECOMM. COMPANY
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P. O. BOX 168
SANA'A
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MICRONUTRIENT MALNUTRITION:

800 Million People Around the World Still Cannot Meet Basic Needs for Energy and Protein

Much of the sickness and death attributed to the major communicable diseases is in fact caused by malnutrition which makes the body less able to withstand infections when they strike.

In developing countries today, malnutrition causes 174 million children under five years of age to be underweight, and 230 million to be stunted in their growth. Such figures represent deprivation, suffering and wasted human potential on a scale that is unacceptable from every point of view. Whether in terms of humanitarian concern, common justice or development needs, the figures demand a response, both from national governments and from the international community.

World organizations such as WHO and other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations are focusing on major crippling forms of malnutrition: protein-energy malnutrition, iodine deficiency disorders, vitamin A deficiency, and iron deficiency anaemia.

At the end of January 1996, 98 countries had national plans of action for nutrition and 41 countries had one under preparation, in keeping with their commitments made at the International Conference on Nutrition in Rome in December 1992. The global situation, however, remains grim. Over 800 million people around the world still cannot meet basic needs for energy and protein, more than two thousand million people lack essential micronutrients, and hundreds of millions suffer from diseases caused by unsafe food or unbalanced diets. It is now recognized that 6.6 million out of the estimated 12.2 million deaths annually among children under-five years - or 54% of young child mortality in developing countries - is associated with chronic malnutrition.

In addition to the human suffering, the loss in human potential translates into social and economic costs that no country can afford. In 1990, only 53 developing countries had reliable data on the number of young children underweight; by 1995, 97 countries had such data, nearly all of which included information on stunting and wasting.

In some regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia, stagnation of nutritional improvement combined with a rapid rise in population has resulted in an actual increase in the total number of malnourished children. Currently, over two-thirds of the world's malnourished children live in Asia (especially south Asia), followed by Africa and Latin America.

Various types of micronutrient malnutrition are important causes of disability in themselves and often underlie other types of morbidity. Their prevalence is even more widespread than that of protein-energy malnutrition.

In sheer numbers, iron is the most prevalent micronutrient deficiency, with nearly 1990 million people being anaemic and 3600 million iron-deficient. Iron deficiency is present when body iron stores are depleted. While lack of iron is the main cause of this deficiency, lack of folate, ascorbic acid, riboflavin and various minerals also contribute to anaemia.

Mainly women of reproductive age and children under five are affected by iron deficiency, with prevalence hovering around 50% in developing countries. Among various regions of the world, it is south Asia which is hit hardest with prevalence reaching 80% in some countries. In infants and young children, even mild anaemia is associated with impaired intellectual as well as physical development. In older children and adults, iron deficiency reduces work capacity and output. It also leads to increased absenteeism and accidents at work. During pregnancy, maternal anaemia aggravates the effects of hemorrhage and sepsis at childbirth and is a major contributing factor to maternal mortality. It also increases the incidence of

low birth weight, anaemia and protein-energy malnutrition among infants.

While there is no single remedy, a combination of several preventive approaches is believed to work best. Dietary improvement includes consumption of iron- and vitamin C-rich foods and foods of animal origin, and avoiding drinking tea or coffee with or soon after meals. Iron fortification of foods, particularly of staple cereals, is practiced in a growing number of countries. Iron supplementation is the most common approach, particularly for pregnant women.

Another major problem is iodine deficiency disorders (IDD). Iodine deficiency remains the single greatest cause of preventable brain damage and mental retardation worldwide. WHO estimated in 1990 that 1,570 million people, or about 30% of the world's population, were at risk of IDD. In 1995, WHO estimated that the number of people with goiter was 750 million. Insufficient intakes of iodine in pregnancy and early childhood result in impaired mental development of young children. Even marginal deficiency may reduce a child's mental development by as much as 10 intelligence quotient (IQ) points.

The goal for the year 2000 is that at least 90% of edible salt consumed should be adequately iodized, including salt used for animals and salt used in the preparation of commonly eaten staple foods such as bread. A number of areas, particularly west and central Africa, will require additional support to achieve this year-2000 goal.

An assessment of IDD prevalence has now been made in 106 developing countries with a population of over one million people where IDD is recognized to be a public health problem, or would be one, if salt iodization programs ceased. Despite the magnitude of this global problem, there is a visible growing momentum and measurable success in reducing IDD in many countries. No country has yet been identified in which universal salt iodization has been demonstrated to be impossible or less cost-effective than any other alternative.

The third major micronutrient deficiency is vitamin A. A deficiency which is officially recognized in 76 countries as a major public health problem. The number of children under five affected clinically is estimated at 2.8 million, with 258 million being diagnosed as having a biochemical deficiency. The highest prevalence and numbers are in South-East Asia.

Depletion occurs when the diet contains too little vitamin A to replace the amount used by tissues. The consequences include night blindness and eventual blinding xerophthalmia and destruction of the cornea. Vitamin A deficiency is the most common cause of blindness in young children. Where clinical vitamin A deficiency is a public health problem, young child mortality rates are raised by 20% to 30%.

There are several tried and tested ways of preventing and treating vitamin A deficiency, including improved production and consumption of foods rich in vitamin A or carotene, especially dark-green leafy vegetables, orange-colored vegetables and fruits, and liver, eggs and milk products if available. Fortification of fats (margarine) has been successfully introduced in industrialized countries while the same technique using sugar proved to be equally successful in Central America. Another useful strategy is supplementing with large doses of vitamin A every 4 to 6 months for children of pre-school age and lactating women.

VACANCY

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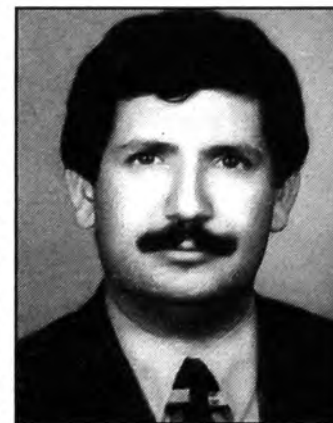
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Al-Umm Hospital: The First Effort by an NGO to Offer Medical Services to the Public

Dr. Hameed Ziad (M.D.) is the General Secretary of the Charitable Society for Welfare and president of the local council in Sana'a. He graduated from Damascus University in 1983. He is now a lecturer of Toxicology and Forensic Medicine at Sana'a University and also at the Higher Institute of Police. Since 1993, Dr. Ziad has been supervising the establishment and operation of Al-Umm (Mother) Hospital. The hospital is managed by a new set of regulations. It does not offer a free-for-all service, like government hospitals used to, and it is not out to make profits, like the private hospitals and clinics. It operates on a cost-recovery plus a margin basis. This approach has enabled the hospital to maintain a certain minimum standard of service, while at the same time, remain affordable to the public. Ismail Al-Ghabyr of Yemen Times visited the hospital and talked to Dr. Ziad.

Excerpts:



hospital in an exemplary condition with regard to hygiene, cleanliness and a cordial atmosphere. Some inevitable mistakes do occur as part of our daily work, and we are open to any criticism and suggestions. We have allocated a complaint box which we open weekly in order to discuss the problems.

Q: How do you compare, as a doctor, the services of this hospital with others?

A: I can with all honesty say that our services compare very favorably with those provided by other

Remember, we have to pay staff salaries, repair/buy equipment and generally maintain the hospital in a good functioning order.

Q: How large is the hospital's budget?

A: We had a budget of YR 40 million last year which is relatively modest. At the start of the project, our annual budget used to be provided by the Social Welfare Society. Now we rely entirely on our own income in budgeting. I'd like to take this opportunity to call upon on people of benevolence and charity to extend their support to alleviate some of the misery of their less fortunate fellow citizens.

Q: Do you have any future plans for opening other departments in addition to the maternity wards?

A: We have equipped a dental clinic managed by a well trained and experienced female dentist. We are also introducing new services such as the gastroscope, endoscope and leatherscope which allows an entire operation



Q: Could you give us a brief overview of Al-Umm Hospital?

A: It is a hospital that specializes in gynecology, obstetrics and pediatrics. Since the hospital caters to female patients, it is staffed entirely by women, including the administrative staff. We have a complete range of women specialist doctors, including some from other countries such as Britain, Germany and Sudan.

The idea of the hospital came from the General Assembly of the Local Council. At the time, this hospital, managed by the Sanaa Local Council, was in a dilapidated condition, it was also a financial drain. We offered to take over.

As you can now see, the hospital works well, there is no subsidy, and the public receives an adequate service.

Q: You speak of adequate services. Can you elaborate?

A: We try to keep our doctors well informed of the most recent advances in medicine. We have established a comprehensive library, a lecture hall and we subscribe to international medical journals and periodicals. We have a well equipped and well staffed laboratory, an intensive care unit, incubators for premature births, a unit for curing jaundiced children with Ultraviolet rays and other facilities for the newly born that are not available in other hospitals. We take great care keeping the

hospitals, and I am very satisfied by their high standards. Attached to the hospital is a plastic surgery department in which doctors perform operations like split lip/chin repair for children, treating burns, congenital deformities, breast and face beautification.

You can compare the demand on this hospital with others. This, by itself, is an indicator.

Q: How many doctors do you have working at the hospital?

A: There are two specialists in Paediatrics, two in internal medicine, seven in gynecology and obstetrics with long experience, one anesthetic doctor, two doctors and one (male) plastic surgeon whose clinic is outside the hospital. As for the nursing and other staff, there are about 20 nurses, 7 midwives, one anesthetic assistant, 12 receptionists and 13 charladies.

Q: People often complain of very high fees. How do you respond to that?

A: This is not a private hospital. It belongs to a charity and local councils. So the turnover returns to the people and their welfare. Profits, if any, are used for the maintenance of the hospital and medical equipment. We price the services on a cost plus margin basis. In other words, our fees are far less than they are in private hospitals. Some people complain about our costs when they compare us to government hospitals. But the service standard is not the same.

to be performed from outside the body.

Q: Are there ideas/plans for establishing mobile clinics?

A: We already have 23 such clinics that travel the width and breadth of the country. We started about 3 years ago in Hodeidah where we provided basic health care to people who had returned injured as a result of the Gulf War. After the civil war (1994), our mobile clinics conducted extensive medical surveys in the southern and eastern governorates.

Q: There is some talk about the charitable society being an election propaganda arm of the Islah Party. Is this true?

A: Not at all. Our charity is a totally independent organization. If we were a partisan society, we would never have achieved this success. For example, we started a hospital for insane women. What support would they provide in elections? We have successfully relocated the mentally disturbed women from the Central Prison in Sanaa to a more suitable place. So far, we were able to treat 1200 of them. This is clearly not an election hype. We are also planning to do the same with male psychiatric patients who are still languishing in the Central Prison under sub-standard conditions. We do sometimes engage in publicity. But the purpose is to mobilize funds, for the charity, not for elections.

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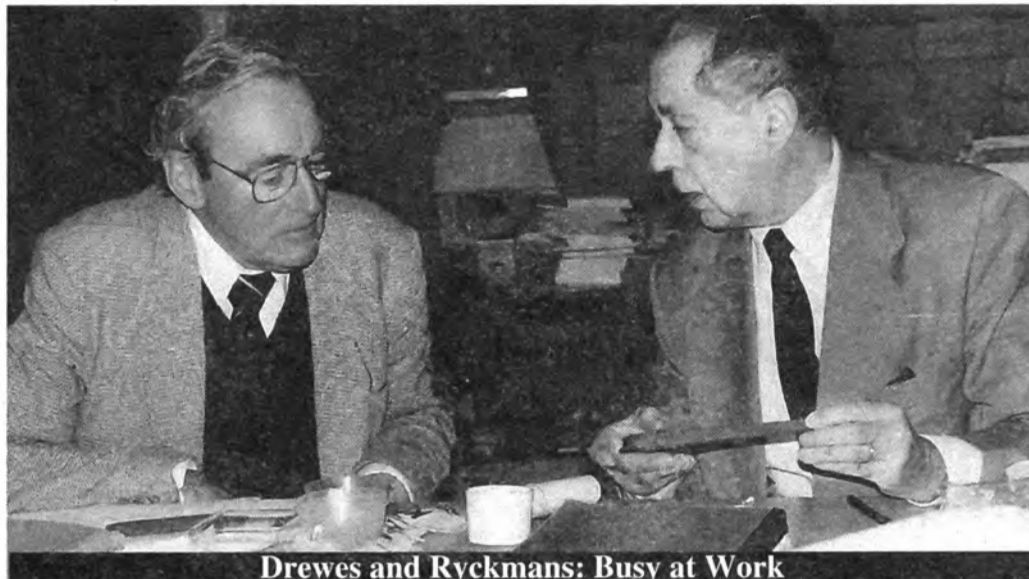
By: Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,
Chief Editor, Yemen Times

Two old men have been at it for nearly two years. And they are still far from unlocking the secrets of ancient times.

Professor A. J. Drewes of Leiden University and Professor Jacques Ryckmans of Universite Catholique de Louvain - both retired - spend long hours together trying to decipher the language of ancient Sheba. "The language is called Al-Musnad Al-Tahiri. It pre-dates the language that we already know. We have now put all the signs (letters) in 22 columns to study and learn their evolution," explained Ryckmans. The transformation of the shape and style over time is clear. "To accelerate the process, we have computerized all the writings - of course in Roman script. Then we will convert the whole thing back into Sabaean," added Drewes while showing pages and pages of computer printout.

The two professor are working with about 200 sticks which carry scripts in the ancient language. These were discovered only a few years ago, and how they got to Leiden is anybody's guess. Still, they are safer over there. Nobody can yet read this language. "If we discover how to read this language and understand what it says, it would be like the Rosetta Stone Discovery," said Drewes with enthusiasm.

Hidden in one of the chambers of the University Library, they patiently continue their work.



Drewes and Ryckmans: Busy at Work

"We expect to be able to tell the world a little bit about this in the later part of 1997," indicated Ryckmans.

The two professors are sharing their information and coordinating with other researchers in the field in Germany, France, the UK and the USA. "We are also in touch with Professor Yusuf Mohammed Abdullah, Chairman of the Archaeology, Manuscripts, and Libraries Authority in Yemen. He has himself researched and written extensively about it," Ryckmans said. A joint effort may speed up the discovery. That is the direction of events as a number of specialists from various universities are planning a seminar on this field of study in 1997.

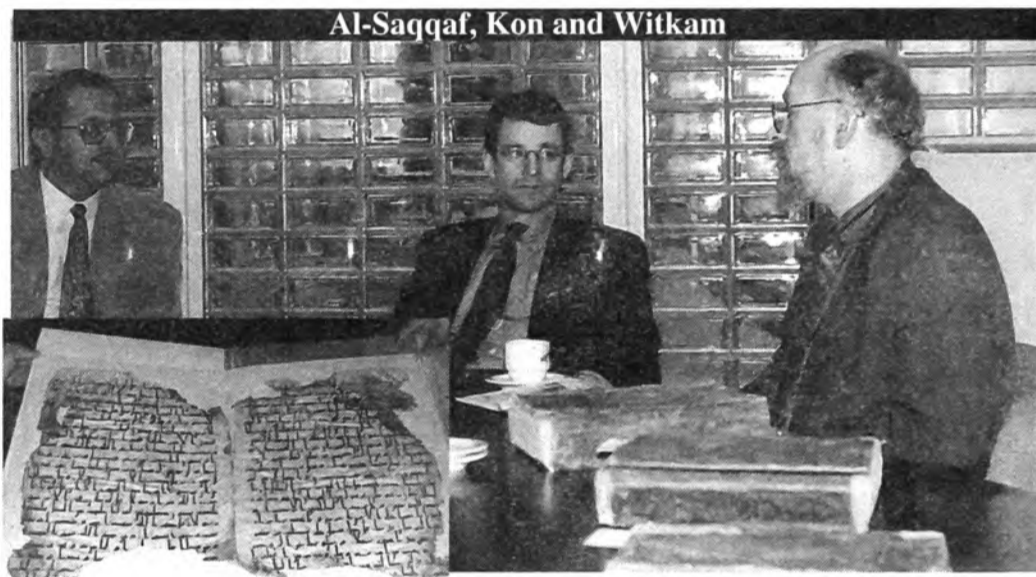
Leiden University Library also boasts a rich collection of Islamic Yemeni manuscripts. Many of the 200 or so documents go back to the 2nd Hejira calendar (7th and 8th centuries) - among the oldest in the world. The most recent ones date back to the 13th and 14th centuries.

"We continue with our annual acquisition of manuscripts," explained Dr. Jan Just Witkam, Curator of the Oriental Collections at the library. Proudly displaying some of the manuscripts with care, Witkam indicated that the contents of these masterpieces vary from legal explanations, to philosophy, astrology, Quranic texts, medicine, poetry and literature, and to many other topics.



At another level, Dr. Ronald E. Kon of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, pointed to the rising interest in studying Arabic. Himself an Arabist, Dr. Kon indicated that modern and ancient history of the region is a field that is steadily attracting first-class Dutch students.

Leiden University is, of course, one of the distinguished schools of Europe. Founded in 1575, it is the oldest in the Netherlands. Carrying the motto of 'Praesidium Libertatis' - Bastion of Liberty - it is indeed a school of free intellectual exchange and excellence in research.



Al-Saqqaf, Kon and Witkam

THE SANAA ORPHANAGE: Struggling to Satisfy Minimum Needs !

The Orphanage of Sana'a - originally a boarding school - was established towards the end of Ottoman rule of Yemen - earlier this century. Many political leaders studied in this school. Today, it has more than 300 resident children. They are mostly orphans or come from broken homes. The school tries to care for these orphans, and offers them primary and secondary level education. It is limited to male children. There is no orphanage for girls. Ms. Ahlam Al-Mutawakil of Yemen Times interviewed the Principal, Mr. Abdulmalik Mohammed Al-Wadei, and talked to some of the children.

Q: What sort of facilities does the school provide to orphans?

A: We try to provide, as much as our limited resources allow us, such as food, shelter, medicine and schooling facilities.

Q: What are the main activities organized for the benefit of the children?

A: Despite all the difficulties we face and the lack of human and material resources, we organize many activities necessary for developing the children's abilities by filling-up their free time. There are carefully scheduled cultural, artistic and sports activities. The children's time is usefully divided by allocating specific periods for studying, rest, meal-times, prayers, etc.

Q: You have more than 300 small children at the school. They require recreational facilities such as toys and games. How do you deal with these needs?

A: Unfortunately, the children are deprived of many facilities suitable for their young age. We sent lists of our needs and requirements to many charities and NGOs, but received no positive response. The school suffers from lack of clothing, especially in winter, medicine, school textbooks and stationery, and many other essential items. The ever escalating prices of such commodities put increasing burdens on the school. The children have to be provided, as much as possible, with a proper family atmosphere. Every child is an independent



individual in need of special care and treatment according to his personality and character. This cannot be achieved with our present meager resources.

We provide little or no recreational facilities or games.

Q: What are the major troubles faced by the school?

A: There are many pressing problems, starting with providing school textbooks but also problems with bathing and personal hygiene. The adults are allocated 7 bathrooms with water heaters to wash up. The younger children are sent to public baths once a month!

The absence of female nannies, teachers, and social workers adds an extra burden. Little children need maternal care that cannot be possibly provided by male staff.

There is also the problem of incessant electric blackouts which usually takes place from 6 to 7 or from 7 to 8 pm while the children are having their evening meal. So this necessitates purchasing expensive battery or gas lanterns. The school also

suffer from shortage of beds, mattresses, blankets, bedsheets, etc.

There is no doctor or medical staff at the school, only a volunteer from the Red Crescent. The same also applies to workers and support staff. Due to the low wages, we have a high turnover of personnel.

Another problem is the difficulty in repairing and maintaining equipment, appliances and furniture which are all old and crumbling.

I call on all charities and philanthropists to provide this important establishment with some assistance and aid to keep it operational in serving the orphans. Any donor, whether private or public, is invited to visit the school and oversee how their donations are used.

What do the children have to say about their present conditions, and about their hopes for the future?

Basheer Al-Khalidi, 12:

I hope that all children will realize their dreams and receive the care and respect they deserve from adults.

When I graduate and grow up, I want to be a poet and novelist. My teachers tell me I have the gift for writing.

Ghalib Mahdi Rajih, 14:

Yemeni children have rights and deserve more care and attention. They must be given adequate opportunities in health, education and in practicing their favorite hobbies. They must have a bright future.

My father died from a long sickness. I want to be a medical doctor to cure people.

Shayei Ali Shayei, 12:

I wish all kids a happy and peaceful life. I hope that they all get sufficient food, clothes, books, games and the toys they need. We miss some of these things, but then again we are orphans and we have no guardian except this school. I want to be a pilot when I grow up.

Aatif Al-Hashidi, 11:

I have been in this school for three years. I long to spend some time in the park.

We have no toys. I hear about computers. What are they? Can we get to see them. We want to go on picnics and trips.

I think I want to be a teacher. Maybe even with this school to help the orphans.

Hifdhalla Suweidan, 10:

I have been here for two years. I am happy and comfortable. I wish happiness to all children.

In these cold nights, there are no adequate blankets. I want to be an engineer. They say they make enough money to live well.

Abdulkareem Al-Dumeini, 12:

I heard about Children's Rights Agreement. The news said Yemen signed it. I expected our conditions to change as a result. They didn't.

I wish there were more activities such as music, drawing, football, volleyball, basketball.

When I grow up, I want to be a coach and trainer of athletes.





Stronger Japanese Involvement in Arab Oil

Japan has moved its main oil body to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with plans to boost activities in the Middle East oil sector and secure stable supplies, a Japanese oil official said last week.

The Japan National Oil Corporation (JNOC), a government body which oversees operations of Japanese oil firms abroad, moved its overseas headquarters from Bahrain to Abu Dhabi in the UAE last month and the office was officially opened this week, JNOC's Chairman Kunio Komatsu said.

Komatsu said the move would help Japan establish stronger cooperation with Japanese oil companies and governments in the Middle East. "This will enable us to increase our activities in the oil industry in the region. I will exchange views with the Japanese firms and officials in the region on how to increase our involvement in the oil sector," he said. "As you know, Japan relies heavily on the Middle East for its oil requirements. We would like to see stable and secure crude supplies in the long-term from this region to Japan at reasonable prices," he added.

The UAE is the biggest overseas base for Japan's oil presence with four companies from the Far East industrial giant involved in crude production. They are the Abu Dhabi Oil Company Ltd, the Japan Oil Development Company, the United Petroleum Development (Bunduq) and Mubarraz.

Japan's oil investments in the Middle East are estimated at around \$6 billion, of which more than half are based in the Gulf. About \$1.5 billion are invested in Abu Dhabi, the main oil producer in the UAE, and \$1 billion in Iran. The rest is based in the neutral zone. The UAE is also the main oil supplier to Japan, exporting around 25% of its total crude imports. JNOC, which had shifted between Beirut and London before moving to Bahrain, was set up in 1967 to secure stable supplies of oil and natural gas for Japan.

The new headquarters will cover the Middle East and North Africa and its main functions are to provide Japanese oil companies with financial and technical assistance, encourage their oil exploration and development activities, stockpile oil to prepare for emergencies and conduct research of hydrocarbon exploration and development technologies. Komatsu said Japan was importing between 78-79% of its oil needs from the Middle East, mostly from the UAE and Saudi Arabia. He expected such a level to stabilize in the near future after a steady growth in the past. "We believe that this percentage will remain almost unchanged in the near future even though Japan is trying to diversify its oil supply sources," he said.

The Middle East holds more than 60% of the world's accessible oil reserves, around one trillion barrels and produces nearly a quarter of the total global oil supplies. Most of the regional crude reserves are based in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, the UAE and Libya.

Iraqis Celebrate Deal, Turkey Pipeline Ready

Iraqis cheered and danced in the alleyways of Baghdad's neighborhoods as word spread that the government had agreed to go ahead with the UN monitored oil-for-food deal.

The dinar strengthened against the dollar, and money changers disappeared from the market today to wait and see where the exchange rate would settle.

"I do not believe it!" said Samir Mohammed Shaker, 44, a former government worker. "This is the happiest day of my life." Iraq accepted the remaining UN conditions blocking implementation of the oil-for-food deal, and former US Ambassador to the UN, Madeleine Albright, said she expected the sale to go forward.

Iraq had given its approval last May to the UN deal, which will allow Baghdad to sell \$2 billion worth of oil over six months to buy much-needed food and medicine.

But implementation had been blocked because Iraq insisted on restricting the number of observers to monitor the program. To complicate things further, the United States announced in September that the plan was on hold because of an Iraqi military incursion into protected Kurdish areas in the north. Iraq's economy has been deteriorating since the UN imposed sanctions after Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein invaded neighboring Kuwait in August 1990.

The UN ban on oil sales - Iraq's main commodity - deprived the economy of more than \$20 billion a year in revenue. Depreciation of the dinar and rising prices have put even necessities such as food and medicine out of reach for poor Iraqis.

In another development, Turkish officials said last week that a twin oil pipeline from Iraq to Turkey is technically ready for use under the UN oil plan. "We had already made it ready months ago when talk of its reopening was on the agenda in the summer," said a senior oil official, who declined to be named.

He said Turkey's private construction company Tekfen, which originally built the pipeline, had repaired parts damaged during the Gulf War.

Lebanon's Bid to Regain Regional Cultural Role

Lebanon was the cultural jewel of the Arab World for a long time after WW2. This was especially true in the publishing industry. Such a role and position were, however, undermined by the Lebanese Civil War. On Friday, December 6th, Lebanon made a bid to regain its former grandeur. Prime Minister Rafiq Al-Hariri, at the head of a large entourage of dignitaries and literary persons, inaugurated the Lebanese, Arab and International Book Fair. The two-week event hosts 196 publishing houses displaying about 45,000 titles. The exhibition, held for the first time since the end of the war in the center of Beirut city, is expected to attract 350,000 visitors and will generate a sales turnover of a quarter of billion Lebanese Liras.

The aspirations of the Lebanese are not far-fetched. About half of the publishing houses participating in the exhibition are from other Arab countries, which are already negotiating a resumption of old links and contacts.

Wrong Choice of Leader Can Undo Economic Recovery

Contrary to popular perception, it is not the "economic risks" that threaten the resurging economic growth of the Philippines, but the presidential elections in 1998.

Peter Wallace, president of the private group Economic Intelligence Unit Philippines Inc., made the assessment in a paper he prepared as a reaction to an earlier released series of papers questioning the stability of the Philippine economy in the wake of some risks hovering over the country's trade, investment, monetary, labor and agriculture sectors. Wallace said the possibility for an economic crisis happening is virtually nil, mainly because economic reforms which are 'macroeconomics cushions' - are capable of preventing a bust from happening.

"These have already been instituted by the government leaving only one possible source of crisis - political succession," he said.

Choosing the wrong president can lead to a loss of political and economic policy continuity beyond 1998 and thus set back economic growth.

"Perhaps the biggest risk would be an ill-chosen president in 1998 who tries to reverse the economic reforms President Fidel Ramos has put in place. Consequently, the 1998 elections will be a critical watershed where a wise decision is critical," Wallace said.

Sri Lanka Announces Polls in War Zone

Sri Lanka last week announced local elections in the island's battle-scarred northern regions for the first time in 13 years in a bid to revive civil administration in the area. Elections Commissioner Dayananda Dissanayake said nominations will open December 11th to elect members to 27 municipal, urban and village councils in four districts. The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were dominating large parts of the northern province, but the area under their control was reduced considerably following military operations launched last year.

Elections chief Dissanayake said the main council up for grabs will be Jaffna municipality, the main local authority in the north of the country. Tamil Tiger guerrillas were driven out of the area last year.

"These will be the first local elections in the areas since 1983," Dissanayake said. He said balloting was last held in 1987 and since then had been postponed because of security considerations. Under elections laws, the latest vote must be conducted between the end of January and early February and the exact date is expected to be announced December 17th.

The government said that it wants a local Tamil leadership to emerge in Jaffna to take over the rehabilitation of the embattled region where most civilian duties are now supervised by the military. Although the government made the surprise announcement of the vote in the north, local council elections in the rest of the country have been postponed three times till April last year. The government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga last year postponed the local bodies' election by one year with the agreement of the main opposition and later twice by using tough emergency regulations.

Velupillai Prabhakaran, the LTTE leader, today rejected peace overtures from President Kumaratunga and vowed in a speech to fight for a separate state. Prabhakaran told his supporters in a rare address that there was no liberation without death, destruction, bloodshed and sacrifices.

His 4-page speech sent here by the LTTE's London office ridiculed Mrs. Kumaratunga's recently repeated offer of peace talks to end the decades old separatist war that has claimed more than 50,000 lives. Prabhakaran, Sri Lanka's most wanted man, however, said that he was not opposed to negotiations.



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Jamal Mohammed Abdo: "We are in charge, but only on paper!"

The chairman was appointed only late in July, 1996. We cannot really claim to have achieved a lot in this very short time.

Q: There have been so many seminars/workshops dealing with water resources. Do you see any tangible results?

A: You are referring to previous seminars which dealt with the water sector not with the actual water resources. This is the first water resources seminar is being held. The previous seminars dealt with water administration, irrigation, Sana'a water, etc.

There were some good results achieved by past seminars and workshops. There were proposals for dealing with water sector management, to see what efforts need to be exerted for more public cooperation and participation. The Ministry of Electricity and Water will take the necessary steps to implement those recommendations.

This seminar, however, deals with the overall management of water resources. We are hoping that management will be administered by the NWRA. There will be an integrated management approach for water resources.

Q: Many Yemeni cities and suffer from water shortages. What is the situation now? And what are the solutions?

A: It is to only in main cities that a shortage exists. But it is true that Yemen in general suffers

from water scarcity. If the annual rainfall is compared with the extraction due to pumping, one realizes that there is an over-pumping or depletion of the underground reservoirs given the recharge into the aquifers. Let me repeat, however, that shortages are more severe in the main cities like Sana'a and Taiz.

In terms of solutions, continuous efforts are being exerted to find new and alternative sources, but very limited results are achieved. Pumping of water for non-viable uses has to stop.

Q: How does the situation in Yemen compare with other countries in the region?

A: Other countries are very far ahead of us. For instance the overall per capita water share in the world is 7500 m³/year, while in Yemen it is only 120 m³/year. Our situation is very critical. We do not know what the situation will be like in the next 20 years when the population will double while the water resources will stay the same or even dwindle!

Q: How many people are participating in this seminar?

A: We hope that there will be between 250-300. This of course is limited by the capacity of the hall. Many experts will attend. In addition, people from parliament, the water council, donors' representatives, government officials and hopefully ordinary citizens and tribesmen will attend.

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On the occasion of the seminar on water management, Ismail Al-Ghabyry of Yemen Times interviewed Engineer Jamal Mohammed Abdo, Chairman of the Executive Board of the National Water Resources Authority (NWRA). The NWRA is still a young organization, set up only a few months ago. It is still groping with bureaucratic hurdles to find enough resources to function, let alone handle the tasks it is destined to address. Here is what Jamal said about his Herculean tasks.

Q: The National Water Resources Authority was established to prevent diffusion of responsibility in this important resource. Has this been achieved?

A: As far as regulations, mandates and decrees go, this has

been achieved. Every one realizes that the NWRA is responsible for water. On paper, all water resources are to be managed by the NWRA. In practice, this has not been fully achieved because it has been only a short time since the establishment of the authority.

Q: What are the main topics of discussion in the seminar?

A: Some papers deal with water in cities (like Sana'a and Taiz), and in rural areas. Other papers handle contamination of water due to sewage, agriculture and irrigation. There is also the 'green cover' paper which is submitted by the World Bank representing their view of the water strategy for Yemen.

Q: How did Yemen get itself in this crisis?

A: There were many authorities fighting each other to get a larger share of water. In addition to this, we do not have any regulations to control the drilling activities. Now, we are left with about 45,000 wells distributed over a

limited number of aquifers. This pumping leads to unsustainable annual drops in water levels that we cannot stop. Not only that, we cannot even stop new drilling activities.

Q: What are the objectives of this seminar?

A: This seminar will be a warning to everyone to see how critical the problem is. Secondly, we hope to come up with some recommendations that will be fulfilled by the authorities. It is not enough to recite recommendations; implementation is critical. I hope all authorities, including the media, will cooperate with us in this. Public awareness campaigns are part of our program over the next 5 years.

GIBRAN: A Man of All Times

"For how can a tyrant rule the free and the proud, but for tyranny in their own freedom and a shame in their own pride?"

Gibran, "The Prophet"

I believe it is time to honor our great artists in the same manner that we honor the gangsters we call politicians.

On December the 6th, 1883, at Beherri village - a small plateau at the mountains of Wadi Qadisha in Lebanon - Gibran Khalil Gibran was born to a daughter of a Maronite priest. From that isolated plateau under the holy cedars, the artistry of one of the greatest bi-lingual writers of this century emerged. By the time he died, he had covered the seven continents of this globe.

At the age of 12, Gibran arrived in the New World, which was the Mecca of scores of immigrants from Lebanon and Syria. They were fleeing the tyranny of the Turkish Sultans, dreaming of a new world of freedom and prosperity. Gibran's family was no exception.

He spent two years of schooling in Boston, just to return to Lebanon to finish his studies and complete his deep-rooted education. After four years, during which Gibran visited Greater Syria (which includes Palestine, Lebanon and Syria), he left for Greece, Italy, Spain and France. In Paris, he did more studies and was a colleague of the distinguished sculptor Auguste Rodin. By 1912, Gibran was back in Boston to become one of leading expatriate Arab artists. Gibran Khalil Gibran passed away in 1931 at the young age of 47.

This colorful historical, environmental and educational background has produced the artist we all know. As one of his biographers put it, "The Mystic, The Philosopher, The Religious, The Heretic, The Serene, The Rebellious, and The Ageless." Some critics described his works as dangerous, revolutionary and poisonous to the youth, others compared his wording as "achieving Biblical majesty of phrase". All those contradictions were in one man. How could that be?

Gibran is a son of the Orient. Apart from living near Ba'albek, one of the greatest religious centers of old times, he had toured Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Tyre (Sidon), Tripoli, Damascus, Aleppo and Palmyra. The historical and spiritual impact of those cities was so profound in its effect of Gibran's thought, that its combination with the Western civilization was highly inspirational to him and made him what he was.

In his writings, we feel that this man is the son of Gilgamesh, Eshtar, Ba'al and other Phoenician and Babylonian Gods, as well as being the son of Jesus

Christ's teachings, and Prophet Mohammed's message. He was a student of Averroes, Al-Ghazali, Avicenna and Al Farid, to the same extent that he was of St. Augustine, Voltaire, Rousseau, Nietzsche, Jefferson, Emerson, and Abraham Lincoln. Let us not forget the fertile thoughts of Zoroaster, Confucius and Buddha. He preached love, beauty and freedom. He was also a talented painter whose paintings illustrate many of his books.

In both Arabic and English, his view of the world, God and ethics inspired millions around the world. His masterpiece "The Prophet" (1923), originally published in English, was a world best seller for over 40 years (sold over 1.5 million copies) and was translated to over 20 languages. His other works - in Arabic or English, in poetry, novels or essays - were once and still are, important benchmarks in any respectable library. Almost all Arab intellectuals and their Western counterparts, have at least once passed over "The Prophet, The Processions, The Broken Wings, Spirits Rebellious, Tears and Laughter, Thoughts and Meditation, The Voice of the Matter, Secrets of the Heart, etc.

It is important to mention that Gibran was a devoted patriot. From his voluntary exile in the US, he called upon his countrymen to revolt against the backward Turkish rulers, to rise for sovereignty and independence and to revive their renaissance. He was a devoted lover of his homeland, a dreamer that anticipated its revival, and a fighter for its freedom. Long before the late John Kennedy stated, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country," Gibran had implicated the same concept in his famous article "The New Frontier" addressed in Arabic to his countrymen.

To go in detail over Gibran's literary production would require volumes. To investigate his philosophy would require even more volumes. The accumulation of Oriental mythology, Christian-Islamic theology, Greek, Roman and Arab philosophy and the modern Western thought makes such study a project of years. His romantic language, in both Arabic and English, inspired generations of writers throughout the years. I know that this article will not do the memory of such a man good, but it might be useful to help the newer generations of readers not to forget the great inspiration this part of the globe had bestowed to mankind.

In the age of the take-away, TV culture and the civilization turmoil, let us stop for a while to pay tribute to one great visionary: Gibran Khalil Gibran.

By: Saad Salah Khalis, Sanaa

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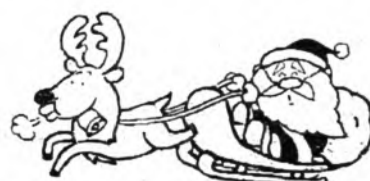
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KPMG YEMEN JOINS 1996 SANA'A WINTER DART FEST!

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It is the perfect opportunity for KPMG Yemen, which joins this annual dart tournament for the first time, to pit their talents against other participants of whom most, if not all, are expatriates working in various companies all over Sana'a. This year's tournament is definitely more exciting because of its new format, not to mention the new teams with excellent dart players who make each game more colorful and exciting.



There's no stopping this team. By convincingly winning all of their first five outings, the morale of these young Filipinos, who, incidentally, were last year's champions, is sky-high! It won't be a surprise if these guys carry KPMG Yemen to its first championship title - but let's wait and see.

Thanks for the unstinting support from the management, especially from the man who brought this team to its present position, Mr. Boy Diaz, a diehard supporter himself and the team manager, and, of course, Mr. Mohammed Zohdi Mejanni, the leader and the man who gives encouragement to the players, so they'll always give their best shot in every game. ALL THE BEST AND GOOD LUCK!!!

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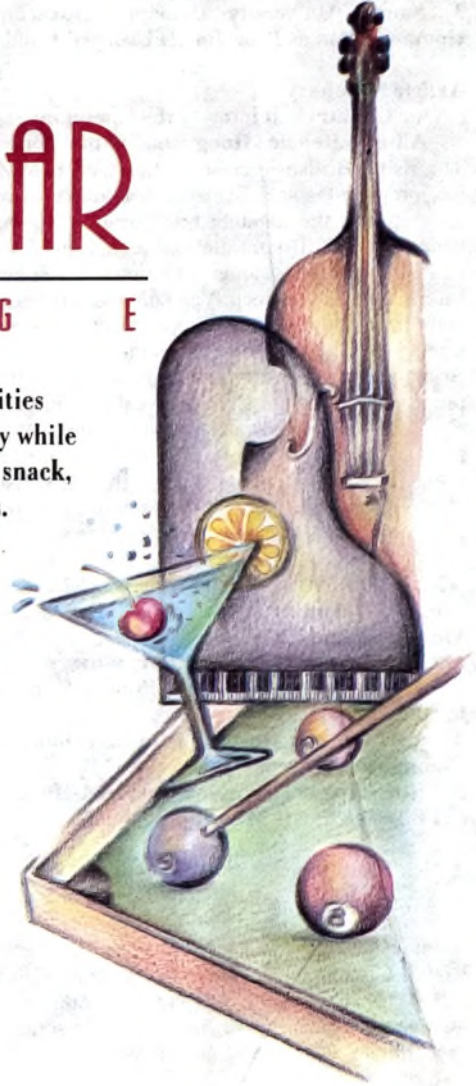


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AL-SHOURAH: Sana'a (Weekly), 1-12-96
(Federation of Popular Forces Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) PGC Strongly Warns Islah, its Coalition Partner.
- 2) The President Calls for Closing the War File and for National Reconciliation.
- 3) Sana'a University Demands Government Compensation as Price for its Usurped Land.

Article Summary:

"Our Country's Joining of the Commonwealth Aims to Replace Hong Kong with Aden."

The rising British interest in the Aden Free Zone has prompted some Yemeni economists to associate it with the handing back of Hong Kong to China in 1997. Britain aims to regain influence in this vital region - along with other superpowers. Informal talks between Yemeni and British officials have touched on the possibility of Yemen's joining the British Commonwealth.

Britain has no authority to accept or reject Yemen's proposal. Joining the Commonwealth is quite complicated. The conditions for admission seem too hard to be met by Yemen at this period in time. It seems that Britain has set their sights on replacing Hong Kong with Aden. But Yemen does not yet know its targets and how to achieve them.

AL-TAJAMMU'U: Aden (Weekly), 2-12-96
(Yemeni Unionist Congregation Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Commitment of the Coalition Government to the Memorandum with the UN is a Guarantee for the Elections.
- 2) Aden General Hospital is to be Handed to a Commercial Group.
- 3) Little Hope in Decreasing Budget Deficit.
- 4) Fishy Auction in the Empty Quarter.

Article Summary:

"A Prisoner Sends His Fingernails as Evidence of Torture."

A message distributed by the Yemeni Human Rights Organization stated "many serious human rights violations are taking place in Amran prison." One prisoner sent two of his severed fingernails to the Human Rights Organization as evidence of torture during interrogation.

"Such abhorrent acts must never be sanctioned. The accused is innocent until proven guilty," said the organization's letter. These violations are taking place in spite of many directives to refer the prisoners to Amran's prosecutor office.



Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Adel J. Moqbil

AL-AYYAM: Aden (Bi-Weekly) 4-12-96

(Independent)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Armed Confrontation Between Islah and PGC Groups.
- 2) The Prime Minister: "Yemen's place is within the Gulf Cooperation Council, not out of It."
- 3) Political Advisor at American Embassy Visits Aden, Abyan and Lahj.

Article Summary:

"The World Bank Housing Project" by Abdulrahman Khubarah.

Despite the fact that many people in Aden live in hovels, 90% of those receiving lands distributed by the World Bank housing project are not Adenis. Aden's poor people are unfairly given plots of land by charitable societies in areas without basic services. We beseech the President to visit the run-down and overcrowded houses in poor neighborhoods. Adenis have done nothing to warrant this collective punishment. It is a complete disaster if some people believe that unity means annexation. People in Aden have reacted bitterly to this unjust distribution of their lands; and are eagerly waiting for the President to defend their rights.

AL-MITHAQ: Sana'a (Weekly), 2-12-96

(PGC Mouthpiece)

Main Headlines:

- 1) The President Inaugurates a Number of Developmental Projects in Aden.
- 2) The Prime Minister Visits Japan.
- 3) Inaugurating the (PGC) Women's Sector H.Q. in Seiyoun.

Article Summary:

"The Bad Choice." [Editorial]

The efforts which aim to achieve and protect the supreme national interests represent a massive national responsibility. It is not out of arrogance that it is said that the People's General Congress has kept its promises, and adhered to the basic principles of dealing with other parties whether they are

in authority or in opposition. The PGC is still strongly devoted to keeping the ruling coalition intact, despite all the efforts by others to distort it. It is very sad to see the other coalition partner trying to go back on this partnership. This attitude is becoming more pronounced as the election date draws nearer. It can only be understood in terms of selfish and partisan interests. The PGC and Islah must share all responsibility for any failure and success. It is a strange and bad practice to try to be in the opposition as well as in authority at the same time.

AL-WAHDAMI: Sana'a (Weekly) 3-12-96

(Nasserite Unionist Party Mouthpiece)

Main Headlines:

- 1) A Massive Campaign of Arrests in Aden
- 2) The Opposition Decides on Final Position Regarding Next Elections.
- 3) The Continuation of Land Usurping in Mukallah.

Article Summary:

The Ministry of Supplies Refuses to Destroy Seized Quantities of Rotten Flour

New facts have come to light regarding the rotten flour distributed last month in Taiz and Ibb. Out of 103,000 sacks of flour imported from India, 75,000 have already been distributed to various outlets.

According to laboratory reports, the flour is not suitable for human or even animal consumption. Only 2420 sacks (out of 28,000) were seized by health authorities in Ibb. The authorities are shrouding the case with extreme secrecy despite the dangers to human life. There is still disagreement between government bodies as to how to deal with this amount of rotten flour. This scandal erupted when agents of the distributor discovered some inconsistencies in the weights.

AL-SAHWAH: Sana'a (Weekly), 5-12-96

(Yemeni Congregation for Reform [Islah])

Main Headlines:

- 1) Islah Achieves a Landslide Victory in the

Scientific Societies' Elections (Sana'a University).

2) A Parliamentary Committee Investigates Moon's Family Union

3) Talks Continue Between Islah and Unionist Party.

Article Summary:

Suspicious Attempts to Cover-Up Thefts at Fisheries Institute.

The results of investigations, which incriminated the administration of the Fisheries Institute, are being ignored. The case has been dealt with by the relevant economic and security apparatus in Aden. Some powerful individuals are attempting to procrastinate from taking action, and evade the issue. The Fiscal Office in Aden has sent a letter to the institute's principal cautioning him about the financial violations he committed. Apparently, the said principal has received large amounts of money from many sources, and failed to declare them. He also gave out monthly bonuses to employees which exceeded the monthly allowance.

The institute's administration has also failed to submit its annual inventory despite being finished two months ago. The investigating committee discovered an inventory deficit of YR 219,260!

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Letters to the Editor, Letters to the Editor, Letters to the Editor.

Cry My Beloved Child

We mourn the child
for being so sadly crippled,
We shall continue to mourn
every fatal sad end.
Is it poverty, Oh God?
Or is the child carelessly undefended.
About us many young souls fall,
Tired of life, tired of us.
Watching with pleading eyes,
without making any fuss,
In our heart their distress
shall last ruling us far in life.
It is great loss, this great loss,
Our country in the tale of time.
Children need us, can we vow,
to help them survive?
There is a call, heed the call,
from the innermost of a heart
from flesh of our own,
from a spirit of our own.
Can we respond to our own?
Society with no healthy children
has no better future.
For healthy generations to rise
to achieve the goal of the wise,
let us all save the child.
In the list of disease-free states,
Yemen is the first from the end.
And even in worse position,
Than many new-born states.
Why wake up so late,
so late after so long?
After so much warning,
after so much help?
Is there in our veins
pure and true desire,
To create a disease-free home,
travel the countryside and roam.
Bright as the stars of the night,
shall shine thy name and right,
Lest time forsake our realm,
And history shall us condemn?

By: Shakib Mensur Al Maqtari,
Sanaa.

UK Ambassador's Right to Respond:

"Decisions taken by the visa officers of this embassy are not capricious."

The Editor,
Yemen Times.

An unsigned article appeared in the Yemen Times (Issue 49/96) of December 2nd, concerning a United Kingdom visa application.

I cannot, of course, enter into a debate about an individual case, which is a confidential matter between the applicant and this Embassy. I can, however, assure you that I have looked personally into the case raised by your anonymous author. I am fully satisfied that the decision taken by the visa officer was entirely consistent with United Kingdom Immigration Legislation.

Decisions taken by the visa officers of this embassy are not capricious, as your article implies. All decisions to refuse are reviewed by a senior member of my staff. Moreover, in many cases, a decision to refuse may bring with it the right of appeal to an independent adjudicator in the United Kingdom. The right to appeal implies in this case, and the applicant has chosen to exercise it. We will now await the independent adjudicator's decision.

As your article generously acknowledges, the work of visa officers is difficult. It is made no easier by articles such as the one you chose to print, written by authors who do not deem it worth going to the trouble of seeing whether there is a second side to a story.

D. Sraffon,
HM Ambassador.



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Hamid vs. Johnson Opportunity to Make or Break

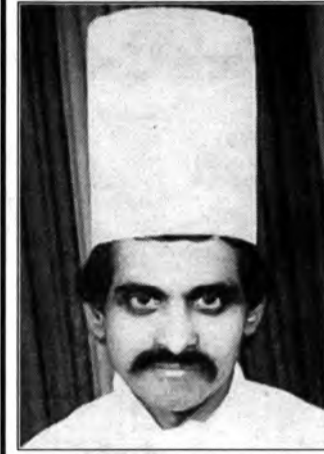
In a short interview with the BBC World Service a few days ago, the WBO World Featherweight Champion, Prince Naseem Hamid announced his upcoming match with American WBF World Champion Tom Johnson. The match will be held on 8th February, 1997.

"I saw confidence and determination in his eyes, but he will come out here to lose," said Naseem after a meeting between the two champions. This match represents a true challenge to Naseem's supremacy over featherweight worldboxing championship. If Naseem wins, a new title will be added to his name (WBF World Champion).

The fight will not be easy. American boxers are renowned for their skills and professionalism. They are highly trained, and possess sophisticated techniques. The match will be organized by the American billionaire Don King who signed an agreement with Naseem's promoter Frank Warren. Will Johnson produce surprises at this game? Will he shake Naseem's confidence? Or will his downfall be the surprise. Wait and see!



Haddh Hotel New Executive Chef



Mr. Issac has been appointed as "executive chef" in Hadda Hotel. 22 years of experience in food, he is one of the experts in Asia who has been awarded with the most precious prizes in the Middle East, e.g. "a remarkable chef". On this occasion, Hadda Hotel management wish him a successful career in Yemen.

End of 13th Week of Excellent Football Tournament

The week started on 25th November in Al-Jaish Stadium in Aden by Al-Shu'lah beating Shamsan 5-nil. On the same day, Al-Ahly of Sana'a beat Al-Wahdah of Aden 1-nil.

An exciting 1-nil victory was gained by Al-Ahly of Hodeidah playing on its home ground against Al-Wahdah of Sana'a last Friday. Also on Friday, Al-Tilal continued to collect more points by beating Hassan of Abyan 1-nil. Friday also witnessed a 3-1 victory by Al-Zuhrah over Al-Shaab of Sana'a.

At the end of the week (Sat. 7th Dec.), Al-Shaab of Sana'a played on its home ground against Al-Ittihad of Ibb and tied nil all.

Al-Tilal is still in first place with 30 points, followed by the title holder Al-Wahdah of Sana'a with 23 points. In third place, comes Al-Ahly of Hodeidah with 21 points.

More surprises are expected in this tournament which will hopefully improve the positions of some teams that suffer from administrative and financial difficulties. The competition is getting fiercer by the day.

Rothmans of Pall Mall International is the sponsor of the tournament.



NAME OF CLUB	No. of Matches	RESULTS			GOALS		POINTS
		Win	Draw	Loss	For	Against	
Al Tilal	13	9	3	1	29	12	30
Al Wahdah (Sanaa)	13	7	2	4	23	12	23
Ahly (Hodeidah)	13	6	3	4	18	32	21
Zuhrah	13	6	2	5	16	14	20
Hassan	13	5	4	4	19	15	19
Shulah	13	6	-	7	27	17	18
Ahly (Sana'a)	13	4	4	5	11	12	16
Ittihad	13	4	3	6	23	22	15
Shaab (Mukallah)	13	4	3	6	13	15	15
Shaab (Sana'a)	13	4	3	6	12	15	15
Shamsan	13	4	3	6	17	20	15
Wahdah (Aden)	13	2	4	7	14	36	20

Good Yemeni Performance in Shooting Championship

Fifteen Arab countries have participated in the 3rd Arab Military Shooting Championship held in the United Arab Emirates. Taking part for the first time and with little preparation, Yemen ended up in 8th place. Observers regarded this as a good achievement for the country in view of the poor facilities and equipment provided for the team.

By participating, Yemen aimed to gain more experience and get to know the new international developments in the field. Members of the Yemeni team did not have the regulation clothes necessary for the activity which represent 70% of preparations. This achievement came despite the lack of attention and delay in travel arrangements for the Yemeni team.



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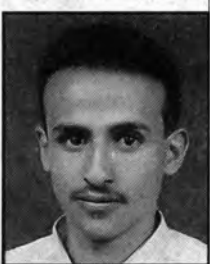
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ISLAH 'Revolts' In Protest of PGC Bullying

The tug of war between the partners in power - the People's General Congress (PGC) and the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah) - saw an ominous twist this week. Heated accusations were exchanged in the government cabinet meeting on Wednesday, December 4th, following which Islah ministers walked out. Islah officials also refused to participate in the government team that went to parliament on Saturday, December 7th, to present the 1997 budget.

Given the turn of events, President Ali Abdullah Saleh summoned Prime Minister Abdulaziz Abdulghani (PGC) and First Deputy Prime

Minister Mr. Abdul-Wahab Al-Anisi (Islah) to Aden to bridge the gap.

The straw that broke the camel's back is the budget for 1997, in which the allocations for the Islah-controlled scientific (actually meaning religious) institutes were lumped with the Ministry of Education. This effectively deprives Islah of one of its most important recruitment and influence bases, which it badly needs for the April 1997 elections.

The open 'revolt' of Islah comes following a long tug of war in which the PGC has worked to downsize the Islah. But the latter would not take it sitting down.



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