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# YEMEN TIMES

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**Boom Boom Johnson Bombs Out**

## NAZ Cult Grows Worldwide

He swayed and swerved. He stood still making threatening eye-contact and measuring his opponent. He moved again. He thrusted and recoiled. His feet kept jumping - up and across, making swift and dizzying turns. Then he stopped again. He measured again. He moved again. He hovered and slid. His body seemed to move in different directions. Then he stood still. It was a fascinating display of physical motion and balance. All the time, his attention was focussed. He was totally self-absorbed in his moments and concentration. Again he was dancing in the ring, moving in and out of the beam of light, casting long shadows against the crescendo of noise in the background. The crowd cheered at the boxer and his dazzling movements. But Prince Naseem Hameed (NAZ), all the time, kept his focus, and his distance. In Round 3, he delivered a devastating blow. The American stood his ground, and

fought back. In Round 7 the Prince delivered another direct hit. Johnson staggered, but completed the round. In Round 8, NAZ went for the kill. Bam. Bam. It was over. He brought down Tom "Boom Boom" Johnson, of the USA, and holder of the IBF World Featherweight Championship in a knockout. NAZ is an extraordinary boxer. At 22, the boy from Sheffield can look forward to a glorious career. He can do 56 punches in just over 8 seconds. That is shorter than it takes you to read the next sentence. To further confuse the enemy, he would make 10 different foot movements dancing around. "He reminds me of Muhammad Ali in his youth. He is awesome. You can't keep up with him with your eyes, let alone protect against his stabs," said the TV sports commentator. That is the Prince. In London on Saturday, 8th February, he was crowned King.



The Prince Punishes His Challenger

More on page 19

## French Snatch Contract for Radar Surveillance System

The Republic of Yemen has been discussing - on and off - the purchase of a radar surveillance system for better surveillance of the airspace, for some time now. France's Thomson, and Britain's Marconi had made offers. In 1996, Bratt & Whitney of the USA came into the picture with an additional offer. The deal finally went to the French. The American offer had one major problem,

according to senior sources. It was based on a phased plan, starting with the civil aviation equipment, and gradually moving into the military cover component. This decision gives the French, who are already heavily involved in the civilian and military communications systems, a virtual monopoly. "But they respond to our needs," is the way it was justified.

## "Yemen's Commonwealth interest will be addressed later this year."



Sir John Coles disclosed that Yemen's interest in joining the Commonwealth of Nations will be discussed at the Heads of States Summit scheduled for October, 1997, in Glasgow. "This matter was raised during my talks with Yemeni officials," he said. Speaking in an exclusive interview with the Yemen Times, he said plans for the visit of President Ali Abdullah Saleh to the UK, were under way and that such a visit will take place following UK elections, which will happen latest in May, 1997. "We anticipate the visit to be arranged some time in the second half of this year," he disclosed. Sir John Coles showered praise on the tremendous Yemeni achievements over the last few years. He especially pointed to the economic and political transformations.

### Minister of Electricity to Go Back to Work

In a letter to the Yemen Times, Mr. Abdullah Al-Akwa', Minister of Electricity and Water, disclosed that he will go back to work after the Eid holidays. He indicated he had not resigned, and that he was not running for parliamentary elections.

### Dr. Iryani Leaves on a European Tour


Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, Foreign Minister, left Sanaa on an extended journey that will take him to Belgium, Germany, Hungary and Romania. "It is one more effort to strengthen relations with some of our traditional friends and partners," he said.



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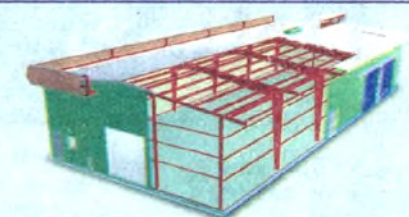
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## OUR VIEWPOINT

### Yemen & Sudan: Knowing the Limits

Let me start by explaining the special bonds and ties that exist between Yemen and the Sudan. The two peoples feel a special connection between them, given the geographic and historic relations.

In terms of geography, only the Red Sea separates the two countries. Over the years, the Red Sea served more like a bridge than a divider. Many Sudanese tribes trace their ancestry to Yemen. In recent times, especially during the first half of this century, Sudan played very much the same role as Saudi Arabia was destined to play in the second half of the century - playing host to large crowds of Yemenis.

In terms of history, the two countries have been allies and partners. In most regional conflicts, the two countries were on the same side. During the 1994 civil war, Sudan played an important role in the victory of the unionist forces.

That is why many Yemenis feel strongly about the Sudan. A poor population finds in itself the generosity of affording to send plane-loads of assistance to "brothers in need". Yemenis feel the Sudan is being cornered/trageted in an unfair way.

Having said all that, it is important to know the limits of what one can do for a friend or a brother. It is in this light that I advise Yemen not to be entangled in another untenable position that could cost us dearly. Let me be specific.

1. The Sudan government's position is, at best, intransigent, and has alienated a growing number of its own people. The idea that one person or one group is an embodiment of the true interests of a nation, at the exclusion of others, is absurd. But, when that individual or group has the fantasy of moulding the whole nation according to a vision in their mind, the situation becomes dangerous. This is nearly the case in Sudan. The regime of Omar Al-Bashir needs to make room for other ideas and thoughts, and allow them to compete in a pluralist system. This is a good advice from a friend and a brother.

2. War is not a good means to settle differences. Neither the rulers of Khartoum nor the opposition stand to gain from the bloodshed. The victims are the Sudanese people. To start with, the Government has to understand and accept the opposition politicians and fighters are no less patriotic than itself, and that calling them traitors, agents, or whatever, does not help. Both sides must realize that as the war continues, they will have less and less control over the turn of events.

3. Yemen does not have the resources to make a difference in the war. Whatever assistance is provided - and that at a private level from the general public - will be marginal. However, if any assistance is to be given, it must be of humanitarian nature and should be directed towards the displaced civilians.

My advice is for the Sudanese Government to take the initiative and show flexibility, before it is too late for both sides. My advice for Yemen is to simply stay out of it?

**The Publisher**

## YEMEN TIMES

An Independent Economic & Political Weekly



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### Journalist Refused Exit at Aden Airport

Mr. Abdul-Rahman Khubara, an Aden-based journalist and Rapporteur for the recently-formed Independent National Social Bloc, was refused exit of the country at Aden Airport on February 6th, 1997. Mr. Khubara is a leading activist against the regime in Sanaa and one of the loud voices calling for boycotting the elections.

"I am sick and I need to travel abroad for medical treatment," Khubara said in a telephone conversation with Yemen Times. "The Political Security Office is blocking my departure and is thus jeopardizing my health."

Yemen Times called PSO, which though neither confirmed nor denied the incident, stated that Khubara is one of those individuals who are abusing the country's openness and democracy. "He is in touch with politicians outside the country who are working to sabotage the system," PSO claimed.

Even if the PSO claim is correct, the thing to do is to take Mr. Khubara to court rather than take action against him at whim.

### YEMENIA Hits New Low in Non-reliability

Yemen Airways (Yemenia) has hit new highs in its unreliable flight schedule. You can literally expect your flight to be several hours late or even simply cancelled.

On the 8th of February, many individuals - invited to attend the 15:00 UK-Yemeni symposium on the Royal Yacht the Britannia in Aden and thus were booked on the 12:30 flight from Sanaa to Aden - found themselves in an awkward situation when they were told the previous night, that their flight was going to be delayed until 16:30. Many made last minute arrangements to make a dash to Aden by car, starting off early in the morning. Others simply cancelled the trip and the participation.

As one frequent traveller put it, "You can never plan your program based on Yemenia travel schedules. They would certainly let you down."

### 500 Riyal Bills Hit the Market

New 500 Riyal denomination bills have hit the Yemeni market. The bills come as a relief to most people because of the bulky nature of cash carried by shoppers.

At the moment, the highest bill in circulation is the YR 100 one, although a limited amount of YR 200 bills are also available.

It is worth noting that the exchange rate is YR 120-125 per US dollar. In other words, the new bill is actually just 4 dollars.

### New Postal Stamps on Rare Wildlife

The Postal Corporation of Yemen has issued three new stamp sets oriented towards the environment. The first of these carries the beautiful pictures of birdlife. Ornithological groups have documented 13 endemic birds, not found in any other part of the world. This set presents seven of these birds.

The second set focuses on wild plants. Five stamps presented in this set offer rare plants including dragon blood plant and many others.

The third set offers pictures of beautiful and colorful marine life, mostly fishlife. They include rare fish species in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

The stamps are available at philatelic sections of the post offices.

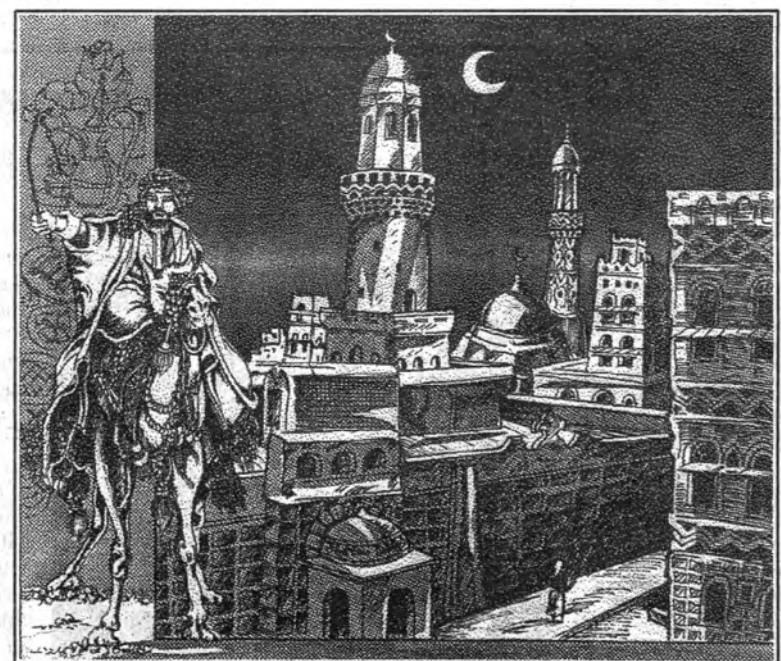
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**Foreign Minister Iryani:**

**“The PGC has a responsibility to ensure the success of the country’s political evolution.”**

Yemeni politics is at a threshold, in more than one sense. The country is preparing for elections. The healing process of the wounds generated by the 1994 war is going to cross a meaningful turn. PGC-Islah relations are at a new turn. Relations with the neighbors, notably Saudi Arabia and Eritrea are uneasy, etc. At the center of all those processes is one man - little in size, but really giant in vision and influence. He is Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister and the Secretary-General of the country’s most important political party - the People’s General Congress (PGC). Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Editor of the Yemen Times, spoke to him on a number of issues, as follows.

**Q: The PGC has just concluded a cooperation agreement with Islah concerning elections. Can you tell us about it?**

**A:** The agreement finally reached with Islah aims at clearer and stronger coordination in the coming elections. That is something common in European democracies, for example, although uncommon in America. This agreement essentially restricts the scope of complications between the two parties by limiting the competition between them. As a nascent democracy, widespread and steep competition between political parties is not really practical. Perhaps this will be so true in future, when all sides learn what it means to compete, but more importantly what it means to lose. So, the agreement aims to minimize friction and the number of people frustrated by losing. I believe this is in the interest of democracy.

**Q: Are the PGC and Islah negotiating similar arrangements with other parties, or is this done at the exclusion of others?**

**A:** The same arrangements are negotiable with other parties. As a matter of fact, there is a commitment from Islah and the PGC to coordinate activities with other parties. At the moment, we are negotiating with the two opposition blocs - the Supreme Coordination Council of Opposition Parties and the National Council of the Opposition. Islah and PGC have been holding joint meetings with them. I think we finally have reached an agreement with the National Council of the Opposition and we will issue a statement in this regard in the very near future. Most opposition parties think the PGC-Islah coordination will deprive the smaller parties of the chance to effectively participate in the elections. We are trying to work out against any potential negative effects of that kind.

**Q: This agreement does call for candidates of the two parties not to compete against each other and to jointly mobilize supporters in certain specified constituencies?**

**A:** While this is true, we did not eliminate open competition. The two parties are at liberty to support other candidates in the open constituencies. There are also constituencies in which neither Islah nor PGC will field candidates, thus essentially leaving them to the opposition candidates and independents.

**Q: Allow me to pin you down. It looks like we have four sets of constituencies. One, in which Islah and PGC will team together; Second, in which Islah and PGC independently will team with others; Third,**

**free for all constituencies; and Four, constituencies in which Islah and PGC will not compete. Can you give us numbers for the constituencies of those sets?**

**A:** I think that there will be at least 30 constituencies in which neither Islah nor PGC will compete. I think there are 17 to 20 constituencies in which the two biggest parties will each team up with others. Then there are quite a few free for all constituencies. The numbers are not really firm, and they could change. Let me tell you, however, that the Islah and PGC have a commitment to make sure that the number of parties represented in the coming parliament will not be any less than the number in the present parliament. options as for the other parties compete with each other. Islah may coordinate with one and say I recommend my supporter or The PGC to do the same.

**Q: The Supreme Elections Committee wrote a letter to President Saleh expressing its concern over these arrangements. What is your response?**

**A:** I was really surprised how our arrangement was understood. In my opinion, that letter is an expression of misunderstanding for there was no reason to criticize the agreement in that way. The President of the Republic has instructed the Vice President and the Minister of Legal Affairs to look into the matter, and block any agreement that contradicts constitutional rights. I think both the SEC and the Presidential Office have found that the agreement does not contradict any constitutional rights of anybody. I think, once the agreement was better explained, they are now satisfied.

**Q: What kind of target has the PGC set for itself in the elections?**

**A:** We hope to win in 200 constituencies?

**Q: What is the minimum you would be happy with?**

**A:** We hope we do not drop below 160 members of parliament.

**Q: The PGC is increasingly being projected as a bully. What role do you see for the PGC in all of this?**

**A:** It is on the shoulders of the PGC to lead the political transformation process, and to make it succeed. We are the navigator. Sometimes, we have to push in directions that this or that party does not like. It is politics, and it is a responsibility.

Let me tell you that the PGC is an embodiment of the most tolerant and liberal elements in our society. None of the other parties will show the tolerance and flexibility that the PGC has shown in interacting with others.



**Q: Is the PGC blocking the licensing of some of the opposition parties it doesn't like?**

**A:** No, not at all. Already, eleven political parties have been legitimized. Two more, a new Baath Party and the Itihad Al-Qiwa Asha'abiyah are on their way. I believe thirteen political parties will nominate candidates for the coming elections. In addition, of course, to independents.

**Q: Is it fair to hold up the assets of the YSP and then ask it to compete in the elections?**

**A:** We are discussing about the party's property, and what is the state's. You see, in the former PDRY, the state and the party were the same, or almost the same. So, the YSP cannot claim all state assets to be its own. We are now disentangling the properties. I believe, we have reached agreement that three major assets, including the

Ma'alla headquarters, will be reverted to the YSP. I believe this will happen in a matter of days. But so far, the YSP has not made any commitment to participate in the elections, although we want them to. But that is their decision.

**Q: There are certain individuals and groups who have decided to boycott the coming elections. This is especially true in certain pockets in Aden and Hadhramaut. How are you handling this?**

**A:** I don't think I need to handle anything. They are free to decide what they want and nobody is going to be angry. If they have very strong reasons to boycott the elections, we are ready to talk about them and even support them, if they make sense.

**Q: But what are the political ramifications of this boycott. What does it signify?**

**A:** I think it signifies external influence. No doubt about it because you know certain people outside the country try to smear the democratic process and would like to wreck it. A few people here responded to them.

**Q: You just visited Saudi Arabia. It seems this is a no-win situation for Yemen. We are back to a crisis relationship.**

**A:** To call it a no-win situation is to simplify the problem. The problem is not that simple. It cannot be resolved in a few visits. It is a very complex problem. Don't forget it is sixty years old. You remember, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding two years ago to re-demarcate the points specified in the Tayif Treaty. Well, until today we are still in disagreement as to where the first point is on the coast of the Red Sea. Why is it that difficult? Because nobody took the coordinants of those points sixty years ago. So, you can imagine how complex the problem is.

**Q: Let me ask a blunt question. Do you think Saudi Arabia really wants a solution? Do you think they have a complex or paranoia that will obstruct any solution, no matter how much Yemen gives in?**

**A:** Well, that is a legitimate question from you. But, let me tell you that they ask the same question about us, for them they ask the same question.

**Q: Yemen's position started with the 23 degrees North parallel, and has dropped south a lot since. What is the border we are proposing?**

**A:** We have changed much since then. Saudi Arabia sees our position as untenable. That is our legitimate starting point. We also believe their position to be unten-

able, but it is also their legitimate starting point. That is how negotiations start. If both sides start from the tenable, the problem would be resolved quickly.

**Q: How far have you come in resolving our differences?**

**A:** I think may be we have come 40% of the road to resolve it.

**Q: Even as you meet, are the Saudis encroaching steadily on Yemeni territory?**

**A:** Well, you see we are talking about a vast territory where few people live. If you talk about the desert, there are no boundaries. One day, we will find ourselves in one place that the Saudis say "Why did you come here?" Another day we find the Saudis at a place, and we ask them, "Why did you come here?" So we complain to each other as we negotiate.

**Q: But we are doing most of the complaining?**

**A:** Yes, that is true. Territorial disputes are most dangerous in relations among neighbors. Both sides should act in good faith and with wisdom and far-sight.

**Q: Are we helping Saudi opposition individuals or groups?**

**A:** Categorically not. I can loudly say we have never helped Saudi opposition groups in any. We will never do that. I have read some media claims which are wild and are absolutely incorrect. We have never given any refuge to Saudis, nor handed any over. We are committed not to give any refuge to Saudi politicians. It is a matter of principle.

**Q: Do the Saudis follow that principle vis-a-vis Yemeni opposition politicians?**

**A:** (big smile). No answer.

Continues on page 15

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## UK Deputy Foreign Secretary: “The UK gave Yemen documents on the disputed Hunaish Islands.”

Sir John Coles, Deputy Foreign Secretary in the UK, and his wife, Anne, concluded a one-week visit to Yemen on 6th February. Yemen Times talked to him on the occasion. Excerpts.

**Q: This is your second visit to Yemen. What is the objective?**

**A:** Yes, this is my second visit. My first visit some years ago was a private one designed to acquaint myself with places of interest in Yemen and Yemeni history. But this visit is an official one to carry out certain objectives.

I wanted to discuss with the authorities relations between Britain and Yemen; its present condition and its future prospects. I also wanted to exchange views on regional and international issues. And I wanted to inform myself about the progress being made by this country towards political democracy and the free enterprise economy.

**Q: How did the visit go?**

**A:** It has been a very rewarding visit. The authorities have been most generous with their time. I was able to spend two days of my visit in Wadi Hadhramaut which I have never seen before. I was greatly impressed by the beauty of that area, the sense of history and the evidence of an old and flourishing civilization. In the last two days in Sana'a, I had a series of conversations

with ministers of the government of Yemen. Yesterday I had the privilege of being received by the President. We had very warm, friendly and constructive talks. (Sir John also met, prior to his departure, with the Prime Minister.)

**Q: Yemen - UK relations are in an upswing. How do you see Yemeni-UK relations evolving?**

**A:** I think the prospects are good, perhaps mostly because of the changes that are taking place in Yemen. It is for Yemenis to decide for their political system and on their economic system. But the international community watches these trends with interest.

There is a worldwide trend towards political democracy and free enterprise economies. When we see these developments in a country like Yemen, we give them our encouragement. I think this is an important moment in the bilateral relationship.

I detect a new interest amongst British businesses in Yemen because of the important achievements in the economy. At this moment, there is in Yemen an important British business delegation. They will be meeting some Yemeni businessmen at a symposium in Aden on board H.M. Royal Yacht.

I think it is obvious to all observers that there is much (UK) political interest. We had our Ministers for Foreign Affairs and for Trade visit here recently.

And I come as head of the diplomatic service. We look forward to further visits in the future.

**Q: There were media reports that Yemen is interested to join the Commonwealth. Was this raised in your meetings?**

**A:** This subject was discussed during my visit, and not for the first time. We had contacts before. As I understand it, the government of Yemen is in direct touch with the secretary-general of the Commonwealth about the necessary procedures. I think we will see in the course of this year what progress is to be made in this regard.

**Q: Is the UK government supporting Yemen's application?**

**A:** It is important to understand that admission of new members is a decision for the 53 countries of the Commonwealth. The fact is that the Commonwealth, quite independently of Yemen's interests, has recently been studying the criteria for the admission of new members. That report will be available later this year before the Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Scotland. I am sure that this (Yemen's application) will be a subject of interest at the meeting.

**Q: Yemen and Eritrea have established an arbitration tribunal sitting in London. What input do you envisage.**



from left: Editor of YT, Sir John Coles, UK Ambassador Scrafton

**A:** Arbitration will be an impartial process which both sides have supported. It happens to be sitting in London. Certain technical assistance will be provided by the British government, but the ruling of tribunal is a matter for the impartial arbiters.

**Q: Has the Yemeni government approached yours for documents regarding these islands, given your government's historic involvement with the region?**

**A:** That is what I was partly referring to when I mentioned technical assistance. We have given help of that kind.

**Q: Your government is in good standing with Saudi Arabia and Yemen, who are at odds on border issues. This is a bilateral matter, but is there any input that you can envisage by the UK government?**

**A:** I think this really does have to be a matter for direct bilateral negotiations. The British government, like many governments, wishes to see the settlement of this very long outstanding issue. We certainly support the principle of negotiations. But I do not envisage any direct British involvement.

**Q: President Ali Abdullah Saleh, in response to an invitation from the UK, is planning an official visit to London during 1997. Was this matter discussed in your meetings?**

**A:** Yes, it was discussed in my meeting with the President. You know we also have elections in the UK, some time between now and May. I expect that the visit will take place after our elections.

**Q: What are your impressions from your visit to Yemen?**

**A:** It is an enormous pleasure to come back to Yemen. It has been 7 years since I was here. The progress since then has been admirable.

The economic change is very significant. Major political change has also taken place. We support Yemen in its transformation.

The world will be watching Yemen's elections in April as a new stage in the development of political democracy. It is UK intention to send observers. I think other countries will be doing the same at the invitation of the Yemeni government.

I am greatly impressed by the hospitality of the authorities and people. They have made a wonderful program for my wife and myself in Wadi Hadhramaut. I have been charmed by the kindness we have received here.

I feel our countries are headed towards closer and mutually beneficial relations in the future.

## NABORS Yemen Ltd

presents its heartfelt felicitations and best wishes to  
the political leadership headed by General Ali Abdullah Saleh,  
President of the Republic, the Government and People of Yemen  
on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak.

Many Happy Returns to all.

## شركة نيبورس اليمن المحدودة

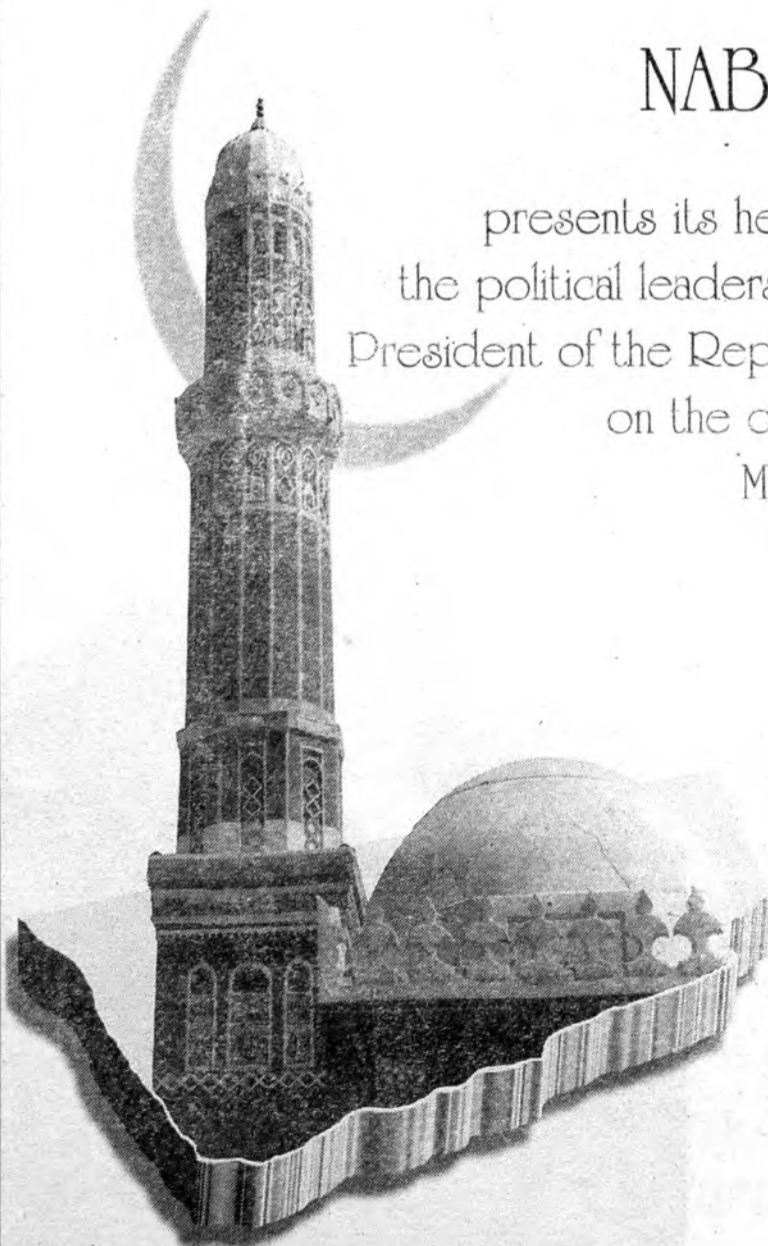
تتقدم بخالص التهاني القلبية وأطيب تمنياتها

للقيادة السياسية ممثلة بالفريق علي عبدالله صالح - رئيس الجمهورية

وللحكومة الرشيدة والشعب اليمني

بمناسبة عيد الفطر المبارك، أعاده الله على اليمن بمزيد من الإستقرار والتقدم

# Happy Eid



## Common Sense

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

### ON ECONOMIC LIFTOFF: Start by Uplifting Self-Confidence and Human Dignity and Values

The economy of the Republic of Yemen though gradually improving, has yet stabilize with the appropriate framework of sound productive factors that provide continuous employment for its labor force. In the present a situation, the economy is continuously threatened by severe jolts, due to even the slightest circumstantial disturbance.

In the pre-Revolution and early post-revolution era (during 1950 - 1970), the Yemeni economy was almost totally rural-based, with 95% of the active labor force engaged in traditional agricultural activities. Society was self-supported, although living at a subsistence level.

Even city dwellers engaged in some agricultural activity such as raising chickens and livestock for dairy products (cows and goats) on a widespread basis. Fishing was still mainly confined to providing for the nutritional needs of those in closest proximity to the sea.

People who lived in those days often allude to the fact that the government had a large stockpile of grain and other commodities which were collected as zakat and other levies and the government used to pay in kind to its staff and the military. They also relate that Yemen used to send food relief to Saudi Arabia on a number of occasions.

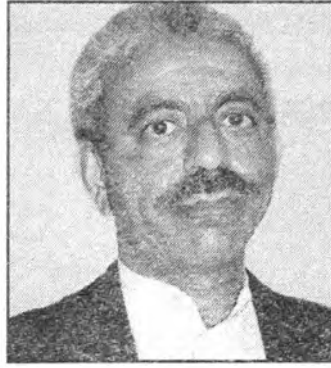
For all practical purposes, one could state that Yemen had, pretty much, a self-sustaining economy with little external input. The economy managed to fulfill

the needs of most of the people of the country.

By the 1950s, Yemen had begun interacting with the world to a limited extent. The first shipment of imported wheat probably came in the mid-1950s. Other commodity imports included grains gasoline, sugar, textiles, etc. Almost all the imports to the north, as well as to the south, came via the former British Crown Colony of Aden. By the late 1950s, the imports have increased to the north, in terms of amounts as well as variety of goods. The goods have come to include some mechanized equipment such as water pumps, engines, mills, trucks and a handful of automobiles.

Moreover, demand for consumer durables, such as electrical fixtures (lights, wiring components, etc.) began to have a noted presence in the market. In the same period, infrastructure oriented work began to surface as well - electricity, telephones, asphalt roads (Sana'a-Hodeidah), the Port of Hodeidah, and crude airfields able to handle DC-3 and DC-6 type.

On another note, Yemen entered into its first arms deal with the Soviet Union. But the economy, on the whole, saw little or no effect, from these early inroads into modernization, and remained basically dominated by its traditional agricultural characteristics. It is worth mentioning that industrial activity was limited to very small handicraft skills, highly dependent on traditional manual



methods inherited from centuries back. The Industrial Revolution has not yet called on Yemen.

The 1962 Revolution brought with it the first real changes of significance to the economy. The ensuing Civil War (1962-1968) in the north and the War for Independence in the south caused a decline in agricultural activity, especially in the areas of fighting. Moreover, a more open trade environment brought in increased foreign imports to the Yemen Arab Republic directly coming via Hodeidah Port.

Many of the trading houses that had operated in Aden for several decades set up shops in the North, in response to the socialist policies of the newly independent South Yemen. Ironically, many of these trading houses are actually of northern origin, to start with. Thanks to the move to the North, most of the trading establishments were able to avoid total bankruptcy, as all their assets in Aden had become nationalized. With the very unstable, and often bloody political situation in the south, the south witnessed a near-total economic stagnation.

Even foreign-financed projects were mainly limited to Soviet technical assistance implemented at exorbitantly high prices and with visible inefficiency. The power station at Khormaksar, Aden, costed almost four times the cost of the Ras Katenib Power Station, although the total power generating capacity was almost the same in both.

The economic picture in the north got a jolt, in the right direction, as the Gulf states provided an opportunity for Yemeni labor to participate in the construction boom that characterized the area during the second half of the 1970s and 1980s. Moreover laissez-faire economic policies in the north had given the country (The Yemen Arab Republic) an attractive image that created a favorable trading and investment environment.

More important, the remittances that flowed in from the one million or so Yemeni emigrant laborers working in the Gulf states (principally in Saudi Arabia) provided enormous purchasing power to the detriment of sustained growth in the long-term. All of a sudden, consumption patterns changed, farmers left their farms for the higher paying employment in the Gulf, and a poor. More devastating was the factor distortion as capital became cheap and labor expensive in a capital-short labor-abundant society.

The economic transformation was formidable, but unfortunately non-sustainable. By the early-1980s, the boom had tapered off and the economy began to run out of steam. In fact, the country was beginning to reach into its savings to finance an unsustainable consumption pattern. Yet, the government was oblivious to the 'new' negative trend.

In May 1983, a young economist at Sanaa University, Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqaf - (Yes, the very editor of this paper), wrote a long article in the official newspaper - Al-Thawrah outlining the negative trend, warning against the coming collapse of the exchange rate of the Riyal, and called for measures to adjust the policies. The government response to the article is telling. Dr. Saqqaf was dragged to the PSO office, hassled, told he was an agent working for God knows which country, etc. Al-Thawrah was instructed not to publish any more articles for him.

The government, however, was forced to recognize the new situation, but only in the late 1980s, given the visible collapse of the exchange rate of the local currency. The healthy balance of payment position of the 1970s was no more, the foreign reserves were wiped off, and the US \$ 1 = YR 4.55 was no longer tenable. The US \$ 1 first jumped to YR 5.25, and it was officially put YR 12.0 by 1990. Even then, the government refused to let the market name the exchange rate and fixed the rates itself. The logical outcome was the growth of a black market, in which the rate of One US dollar had climbed to YR 18.

Oil exports by Yemen Hunt Oil Co. had cushioned the blow, enabling the country to reduce the economic difficulties. By this time, the World Bank had sent a team of experts advising the Yemeni government to consider an adjustment program. There was no interest.

The next jolt came with reunification of North and South Yemen. The unification was bound to mean that much economic restructuring was called for in order to harmonize economic activities of the two formerly separate countries. Rather than try to at least maintain a more manageable position, from an economic standpoint, political considerations dominated the scene leading to further economic deterioration. Yemen's unhelpful position vis-a-vis the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait sent home close to 1,000,000 Yemeni workers from the Gulf states. This was a major disaster as it meant not only the loss of the most important source of foreign exchange, but even more destructively, the rise in the unemployed workforce. At the peak moments, the unemployment rate climbed to nearly 50%. People fell back on whatever savings they had accumulated.

But the overwhelming majority had no savings or any form of livelihood which can support their livelihoods.

The political situation was not helpful either, as the power struggle between the two blocs that made the unity, each of which still possessed the machinery of sovereign states, notably an army. That resulted in the 1994 civil war, which was the final blow to the economy.

After the war, the government tried to face up to the economic deterioration, but it was evident that even with the addition of the Maseela oil, the revenues for the government were not enough. There was a negative economic growth rate, the war had created new burdens, etc. There was an emergency situation.

In early 1995, the Republic of Yemen started an economic reform package, with help from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as donor countries. This was probably the first responsible position by the government in addressing the economic issue.

In retrospect, it is easy to see that human development had been the biggest victim of neglect in all economic measures which the government pursued. Education lost much of its soul, health services were bad, and social values crumbled. The Yemeni individual was the main victim. Even government employees saw their salaries dwindle down to less than 5% of their values ten years earlier.

The point to be made here is that with everything else allowed to float in cost, the value of the human resource and individual self-esteem and dignity has fallen. Any meaningful change in our society should address this matter immediately.

It goes without saying that continuously reducing the value of human input in economic activity will not make any other efforts worthwhile and surely cannot be expected to turn any of these efforts to any success. The obvious fact is that the deteriorating standard of living will have a serious impact on the social order of the nation and will compromise our values.

## مجموعة شركات عبدالله حسن السنيدار وأولاده

تشارك الشعب اليمني وقيادته المظفرة ممثلة بالقائد الوحدوي

الفريق علي عبدالله صالح

رئيس الجمهورية

أفراحه بمناسبة عيد الفطر المبارك

وكل عام وأنتم بخير



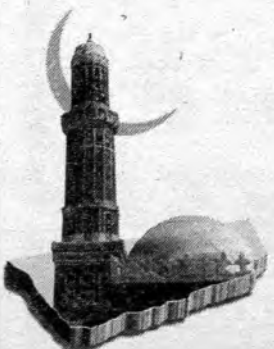
### ABDULLAH AL-SUNAI DAR GROUP OF COMPANIES

present best wishes & congratulations to the Yemeni People and the Leader

General Ali Abdullah Saleh, President of the Republic,

on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak.

*And Many Happy Returns!*



# Happy Eid



## Abdul-Wahab Thabet:

# “The fact that investors are increasingly embarking on projects indicates their assessment of the Yemeni economy.”

The Thabet Group is one of the respectable and large business holdings of Yemen. It also has sizable interests abroad.

The Group owes its origins to the enterprise of Mr. Abdo Thabet who started a business in Aden in 1925 bunkering ships. The company rapidly developed into a major stevedoring, clearing and forwarding service.

Responsibility for the business was taken over in 1956 from the father by the eight Thabet brothers under the chairmanship of the eldest, Abdul Wahab Abdo Thabet. The brothers form the Group's Board of Directors. Together, they form a unique blend of individual and collective decision-making which can only be possible with the ties that exist within a closely knit family. Today, the Thabet Brothers' business base is at Hodeidah, where it has been since 1969.

The Thabet Group's diverse activities are organized on a divisional basis, each section being managed by a team of experienced executives, at the head of which is one of the brothers. Although each division enjoys a considerable degree of autonomy, the Group Board of Directors controls corporate and financial policy thus enabling all resources to be mobilized as new opportunities arise.

Abdul-Wahab Thabet is a Board Director and heads the team in Sanaa.

Abdul-Wahab, B.Sc. (Hons), E.Eng., M.I. Mech. E., is a graduate from the University of Salford in Manchester, UK.

In addition to the hard work and long hours he puts in, Abdul-Wahab has found to enjoy field tennis and other sports. He is also involved in a number of voluntary activities and NGOs.

The Yemen Times seized this opportunity and filed up the following excerpts of the interview.

**Q: Could you give us a brief summary on the Thabet Group and its business philosophy?**

**A:** The Thabet Brothers' Group of Companies has a long and successful business history. This is rooted in a fundamental principle, which is to view the positive involvement of the private sector as an important factor in the achievement of development and growth of the national economy.

It is this approach and philosophy, combined with the dedication and endeavors of the founders and management, the Group's business achieved growth from a small stevedoring enterprise to its present diversified stature as a business Group able to cope with the modern economic demands, imposed on business. What has not changed is the Group's commitment to the fundamental principle upon which it

was founded. The growth orientation principle has allowed the Group to keep pace with the economic changes and opportunities as well as the associated socio-cultural Yemeni private sector.

The strength of the Group, fortified by this principle and the confidence in the national economy, has permitted its diversification through integrated sectoral investments that cope with the ever changing taste, preferences and habits demanded by the market.

The Group's participation in creating employment opportunities that would enhance development of domestic human resources in various skills and specialties is also visible. Currently, the Group employs over 3,000 persons.

Finally, the Group is heavily involved in domestic social development programs through philanthropic grants and assistance.

In commemoration of the Group's 72 anniversary, I use this occasion to pay tribute to the vision and hard work of founding father, and to the shoulders that continue the mission.

**Q: How do you evaluate the year 1996 regarding your Group's performance?**

**A:** The year 1996 has generally been a satisfactory year. It had a pessimistic start, but ended with a very encouraging and optimistic outlook.

The year 1996 witnessed many changes of vast ramifications in the country. Economic realities have changed such that Yemen moved from a relatively closed and isolated economy to one of an open doors policy. The key word is integration and cooperation with the rest of the world.

**Q: How do you view these changes, and specifically, the government reform package?**

**A:** I must say I am very optimistic. As a result of more stability and the discovery of additional oil and large reserves of gas, the future of Yemen appears to be very promising. We in our Group completed feasibility studies for several new projects to be implemented during 1997 & 1998. This is an indicator about how confident we are about the future of Yemen.

The government has been very successful in its bold measures to correct the economy. The achievements are quite obvious from the stability



of the Riyal against the US dollar as well as the very visible drop in the inflation rate and the prices of certain commodities, in particular the basic ones.

**Q: You mentioned several new projects are under consideration by your Group. Is any of them in the Aden Free Zone?**

**A:** As regards Aden Free Zone we are still awaiting the launching of this project, especially the infrastructure. We are positively disposed, and we are waiting for the right moment.

**Q: You are a leading member of the Yemeni-British Friendship Association. How do you assess rising British interest in economic and commercial cooperation with Yemen?**

**A:** There is an encouraging British interest in commercial and economic relations with Yemen. It suffices that during the last four months, we had visits by the British Foreign Secretary Mr. Malcolm Rifkind, followed by the British Minister for Trade Mr. Anthony Nelson. At this moment, a large British trade delegation as well as the Permanent under Secretary, Sir John Coles, are visiting.

This is all crowned by the visit of The Britannia, His Majesty's Yacht to both Hodeidah and Aden. I am sure that as a result of these visits, trade with the United Kingdom will increase. I also believe this will lead to more cooperation, especially in foreign assistance. Above all, the visits will lead to better understanding between our two nations.

I think the prospects and opportunities are very good, and we have old friendships and ties to build on. I am optimistic.

## كل نفس ذائقة الموت

نتقدم بأحر التعازي وعظيم المواساة إلى الشيخ عبدالسلام شمسان واخوانه وأبناء عمه وجميع الأهل

في اليمن والمملكة العربية السعودية، لوفاة الشيخ محمد شمسان.

سائلين المولى القدير أن يتغمد الفقيد بواسع رحمته، وأن يسكنه فسيح جناته، وإنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون.

الأسيفون:

د/ عبدالعزيز السقاف، إسماعيل الغابري، محمد سلام الأصبحي، العزي الصلوي، أمين نويصر

وكافة منتسبي الصحيفة

رئيس مجلس الإدارة الدكتور احمد علي البشاري وجميع الموظفين والعاملين في

## الهيئة العامة للمعاشات والضمان الإجتماعي

يتقدمون بخالص التهاني والتبريكات بحلول عيد الفطر المبارك

إلى رئيس الجمهورية وراعي ديمقراطيتها وحامي وحدتها وباني نهضتها الفريق علي عبدالله صالح

وإلى الحكومة الرشيدة وكافة أفراد الشعب اليمني وخصوصاً المتقاعدين منهم

وكل عام والجميع بخير

## The General Authority for Pensions & Social Security

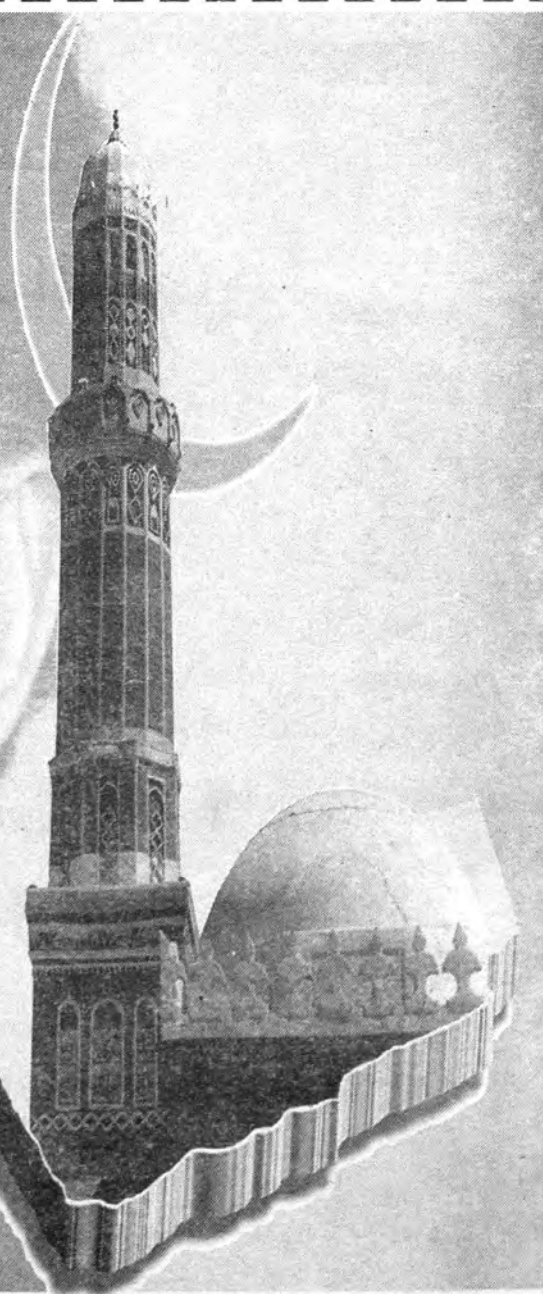
presents

its heartfelt felicitations

on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak

to General Ali Abdullah Saleh, the Government and People of Yemen and especially to all retired persons and pensioners.

Many Happy Returns to All



## The Last of 5-Part Ramadhan Dishes: In Tihama, It Is Fish and Meat without Prejudice

By: Al-Izzy Katib,  
Public Electricity Corp., Sanaa.

If some regions of Yemen have been able to take the forefront of attention in the press and the media, the region of Tihama, has surely been the victim of neglect. The Tihama region is that long stretch of coastline that literally encompasses the entire western coastline of the Arabian Peninsula. As far as Yemen is concerned the Tihama region starts from Bab Al-Mandab and goes all the way up to Haradh, which is adjacent to the Yemeni-Saudi border.

The principal cities in the region are Hodieda, Mocha, Midi and Salif. Hodieda has become the second most important seaport of Yemen after unification and Salif represents the outlet for the export of oil out of Yemen. The

region is generally tropical in climate by the coast and slightly moderate to tropical towards the interior as one starts the climb towards the central highlands.

The Tihama region contains some of the most fertile valleys in Yemen such as Wadi Surdud and Wadi Siham. The people of the region are generally peaceful and easy going, most of them favoring a carefree life that gives pleasure and leisure high priority in their scheduling of the day.

The Ramadhan menu for Tihama is a combination of many of the foods eaten all over Yemen plus some of Tihama's own specialties.

The sunset breakfast is a hearty one with Tihaman dates, Sanbousa, soup, lemon juice, or apricot nectar, fruits such as grapes, watermelons, bananas or oranges.

After that the faithful rush for the sunset prayers, after which they have a strong cup of Yemeni coffee.

The Tihamans of Hodieda and the western coast are not in a rush to go for the main supper meal as of yet. They wait for completing the midevening prayers and the Tarawih prayers (voluntary prayers for extra credit). Now the Tihamans are ready for their big dinner. They hid home after the prayers to land on the following menu:

- Shufoot: pancake with buttermilk, leeks and a Tihaman addition cheese.

- Rice

- Meat (Fish, Chicken, lamb or beef any of which is either fried or roasted).

- Vegetables, such as squash, potatoes and others.

The Tihamans tend to be very sociable and enjoy large gatherings. Thus after the big Ramadhan dinners they meet in several groups and each group begins to enjoy its leisure pleasures, such as reading scholarly works, reciting poetry, playing cards or any other group activity. Unlike most of the areas in Yemen, the people of Tihama enjoy their Suhoor or Pre dawn meals just before the Muezzin calls out for the dawn prayers.

The suhoor meal consists of the following:

- Maize bread with Milk or buttermilk  
- Koshari (lentils and macaroni -

home made small strands of wheat, or lentils with rice.

- Sahawig (A homemade tomato sauce with spice, ground with stone on stone.

- Firan (bread minced together with ground meat or eggs dried in butter on atone pottery.

The Tihama sun does not scare the Hodeidans from enjoying sweets with their suhoor and a little baklawa or any of the sweets that are popular in the other areas of Yemen.

While most Yemenis rush to sleep right after the dawn prayers, the Hodeidans and other Tihamans head to the sea for fishing or just to enjoy the cool sea breeze and to witness the rising sun that ascends from the heights out on the eastern horizon. With that feeling, they go back home to get some sleep.

### NOTICE:

THE BRITISH COUNCIL wishes to indicate that registration for the new courses will be during 16-20 February, 1997, and not as previously conveyed in the Yemen Times.

Applicants are invited to process their registration during the said days.

### Corrections to Interview with COCA Chairman

In our interview with COCA Chairman, Ahmed Al-Iryani, certain facts were added from other interviews as explanatory notes to the text. The following information which appeared in the interview, although factual, were not direct quotes from the Chairman in our interview.

- In the 1997 budget, COCA allocations are YR 813.8 million, up from YR 632.3 million in 1996, YR. 412.9 million in 1995, and YR 207.9

million in 1994. This shows the rising attention it gets from our political leadership. COCA enjoys the full support of the political leadership headed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

- During 1996, we have transferred over 500 files of criminal investigations. Our responsibility stops there.

- During 1996, 505 cases were transferred by COCA to the prosecutor-general and the

other bodies. What happens to these referrals is not our job.

- Can you name some of the organizations and persons that were referred?  
I am not at liberty to do that.

Much of the information given above were attributed to the COCA Chairman, which were used to complement the Yemen Times interview.

None of the above facts are contested by the COCA interview, but he says he did not mention them in this interview.

رئيس مجلس الإدارة الدكتور محمد السعيد

ومدراء الفروع والمهندسون والموظفون والعمال في:

المؤسسة العامة للمياه والصرف الصحي

يتقدمون بالتهاني والتبريكات لفخامة رئيس الجمهورية

الفريق علي عبدالله صالح

والحكومة والشعب اليمني ولكافة عملاء المؤسسة

بحلول عيد الفطر المبارك

أعاده الله على بلادنا بالرخاء، وكل عام والجميع بخير

Top Management, Branches, Engineers and Workers in the  
National Water & Sanitation Authority

present their felicitations to the President of Yemen,

**General Ali Abdullah Saleh,**

the Government, and people, as well as clients of the company  
on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak.

Many happy return to all.



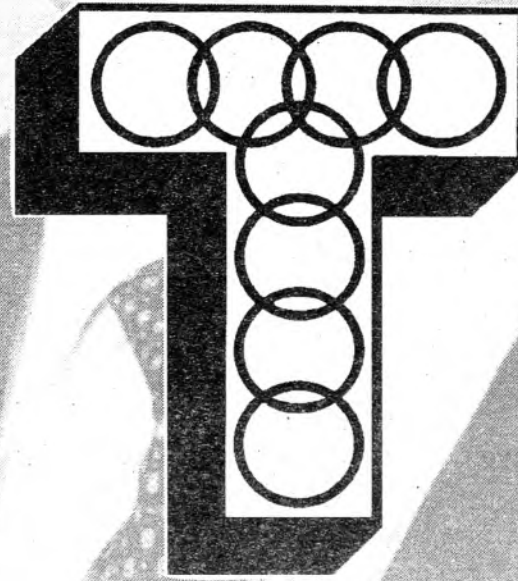
Happy Eid



# مجموعة شركات إخوان ثابت

تهنيء

قيادتنا السياسية بزعامة ابن اليمن البار الرئيس علي عبدالله صالح  
وحكومتنا الرشيدة وكافة أفراد شعبنا اليمني الأبني  
بأفراح عيد الفطر المبارك، وكل عام والجميع بخير



## Thabet Brothers Group of Companies

present felicitations

to General Ali Abdullah Saleh, President of the Republic,  
the Government and People of Yemen  
on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak.

We wish many happy returns to all.

## Several Big Deals Already in the Offing:

# Spectacular Success in Yemeni-British Business Symposium

By: Abdulaziz Al-Sagqaf, Chief Editor, and Ridhwan Al-Sagqaf and Ibtisam Qudar, from the Aden Bureau



Dr. Ahmed Al-Bishari, Chairman, Pensions & Social Security Fund

Ms. Laila Shehab, Representative, Lawyers' Guild

Mahfouz Ali Mohammed Saeed, Businessman, Hayel Saeed Group of Companies

Mr. Dirhem Abdo Noman, Chairman, Aden Free Zone

Haj Mohammed M. Adhban, Chairman, Adhban Group of Companies

Dr. Rasheed Ba-Rabba', Deputy Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources

Abdullah Ali Al-Sunaidar, Vice Chairman, Federation of Chambers of Commerce & Industry

Abdul-Karim Al-Mutairi, General Manager, Supreme Investment Authority

They did business. They even had fun. That is the story of some fifty Yemeni and British business who rubbed shoulders on the Royal Yacht, The Britannia, on January 8th. In a symposium entitled "Invest in Yemen: Your Partners in Trade", many speakers made a case for investing in Yemen.

Mr. Dirhem Noman, Chairman of the Aden Free Zone, explained the progress made in this important project. "The British are taking a leading role, as they are already involved in the free zone. We hope that this meeting will evolve in tangible deals," he said. He disclosed that dredging of the Ma'alla harbor will start on February 20th. "We have several zones already well evolved, especially the bunkering, the ware-housing, and the industrial area," he added. He has lined up several meetings to discuss details and solid proposals.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Bishari, Chairman of the Pensions and Social Security Fund, is himself a potential investor. He gave a brief description of the reform package presently being implemented by the government. "Phase One is already successfully over, we are now in Phase Two. The reform program has realigned the economy, reducing price distortions and bottlenecks," he indicated.

Dr. Rasheed Ba-Rabba', Deputy Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources, disclosed new finds in the mineral sector. He specifically mentioned copper, zinc, cobalt and gold as some of the minerals which are vigorously pursued based on the preliminary results. "Yemen will be producing some 400,000 bpd of oil later in 1997. New fields are going to be added, thus boosting oil production," he said. He then pointed to the recent deal to upgrade and modernize the Aden refinery, as well as the gas deal signed with Total, Hunt, Exxon and Yukong. "One field in which we encourage you to invest is building refineries," he said.

Ms. Laila Shehab spoke of the commercial laws of the country. "While they are good, they need constant improvements and amendments in order to keep up with changing circumstances," she said. She said that many lawyers, experts and government officials are now working together to bring about the changes needed in the commercial laws and court system.

Mr. Abdullah Ali Al-Sunaidar, Vice President of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and a leading member of the powerful Sunaidar Group, urged the British visitors not to let this meeting be just another round of talks. "We can get out with tangible results. We have the interest and resources, and we are willing to do business," he said.



Mr. Mahfouz Ali Mohammed Saeed, representing the international Hayel Saeed Group - with large interests in the UK - said that the prospects have improved a lot. "I can see several fields in which we can tie up business deals in the very near future," he indicated.

Haj Mohammed M. Adhban, Chairman of the Adhban Group, expressed gratitude for the efforts exerted by the Ministry of Supply and Trade and the UK Embassy in Sanaa to bring Yemeni and British businessmen together. "Now that we have come together, it is up to us to make use of the opportunities," he said.

Mr. Abdul-Kareem Mutair, General Manager of the Supreme Investment Authority, pointed to the many incentives which Investment Law No. 22 of 1991, and its amendments as per Law 14 of 1995, offer to investors: "Over and above all that, there are now preparations to re-structure the authority in order to make it more amenable to the needs of investors, and to respond more swiftly," Mr. Mutair disclosed. He finally assured that his office is open to all investors at all times. "Try us and you will see that we will respond to your needs," he added. "Risk is part of doing business. But it is our business to make sure that we minimize the risks so that they remain within acceptable scope," he said. Several questions were raised from the floor. Notable among them was a question by Hussain Al-Suffari on the free zone, and another by Ahmed Al-Aini, General-Manager of the Public Electricity Corporation, on barter investments in return for oil/gas shipments.



Presiding Panel (from left): Aden Governor Taha Ghanim, Minister Othman, Ambassador Scrafton



UK Ambassador in Yemen, Douglas Scrafton, said that already three UK companies were negotiating potential deals. "These are in transportation and airline fields," he said.

The ambassador was upbeat about the prospects as he visibly urged the businessmen to study the full potential for joint ventures and commercial ties. He indicated that London was in full support of closer relations with Yemen, and that the UK embassy will do its utmost to help in this regard.

The Yemeni side showed its full appreciation for the British efforts in strengthening bilateral cooperation. On the morning of February 8th, President Ali Abdullah Saleh personally visited the yacht and met with Commodore A.J.C. Morrow, the crew, and the businessmen. His visit was aimed to provide the seal of approval and support for the meeting.

A British Petroleum representative who participated in the meeting said that BP is interested in resuming business with Yemen. The company had left the country during the difficult of 1994. Another British company, British Airways, which had also left Yemen during the difficult times, is discussing resuming flights to Yemen.

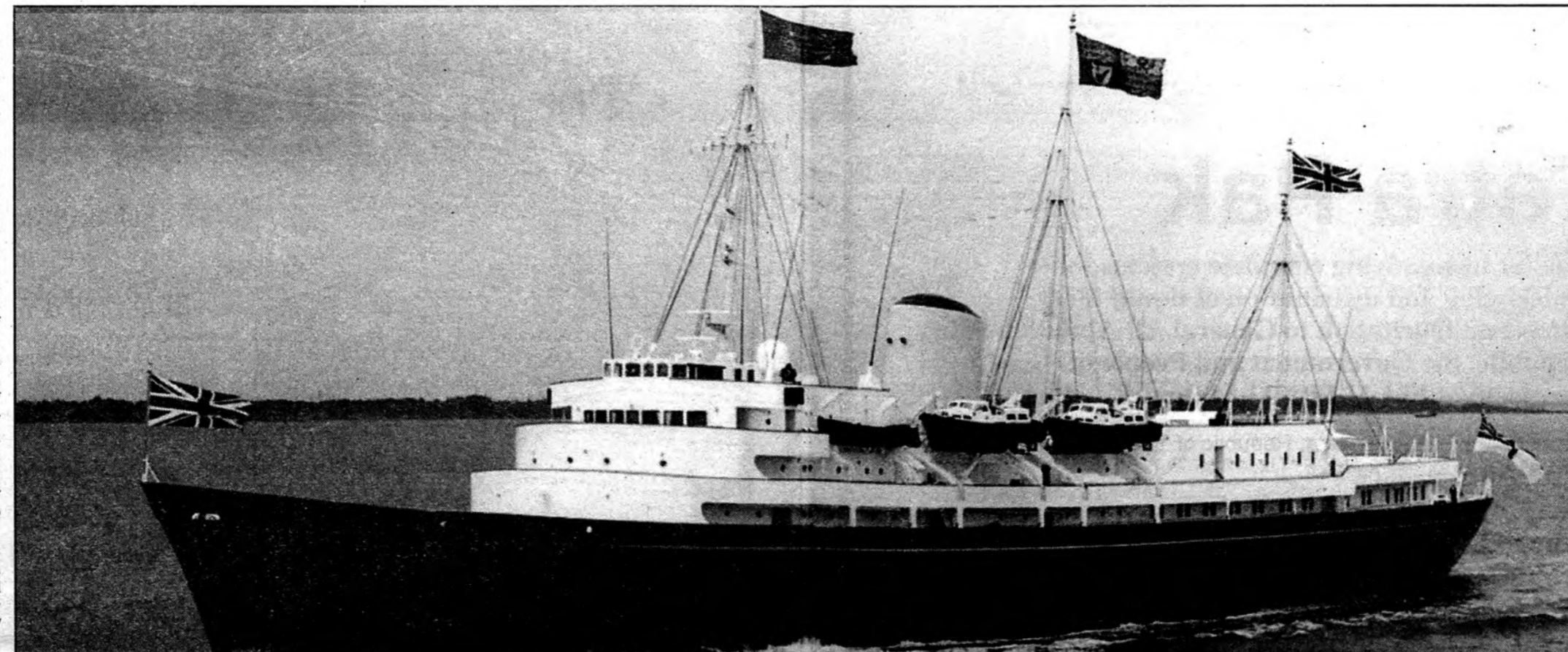
Numerous Yemeni businessmen are already deeply involved in talks at various stages of development. Many of them involve joint ventures. "We are not interested in just serving as agents for British companies. We want to get into real partnership with them," stated Mr. Abdullah Al-Sunaidar.

Mr. Mutahhar Al-Wazeer, another prominent Sanaa-based businessman, indicated that he is now discussing various projects with several British companies. "They have shown interest and we are very interested. Together we can form a good partnership," he said.

Mr. Ahmed Al-Aini said that the Public Electricity Corporation is planning to invest over YR 1,000 million over the next three years. "British companies have been associated with power-generation projects in Yemen for over two decades. We see more opportunities for cooperation in the future," he added.

Dr. Mohammed Al-Saeedi, Chairman of the National Water and Sanitation Authority, indicated that water and sewer related infrastructural investments in Aden are underway. "We have DM 75 million to spend on improving and expanding the network," he stated.

The meetings may have started on the Royal Yacht, but they are destined to continue. "It is clear that 1997 will be a watershed in business relations between the United Kingdom and Yemen," concluded Minister Othman.



Sheikh Abdul-Rahman Mohammed Ali Othman, Minister of Supply and Trade, had kicked off the symposium with a welcome note. "This meeting comes as a direct result of the talks I had with Mr. Anthony Nelson, Minister of Trade in the UK, during his visit to Yemen in October, 1996. I am happy with the exceptional interest shown by the British business community in doing business in Yemen. We assure you of our full support."

Mr. Nelson wrote to Minister Othman expressing regret at not being able to join in the meeting in person, but assured of his continued interest and support. "I am delighted that the British business community has shown tremendous interest in Yemen," he wrote.

Sheikh Abdul-Rahman disclosed that the government has instructed his ministry to work out a proposal for the establishment of a stock market in Yemen. "This is part of the reform and privatization efforts. It is important to tap the small savings of all the public at large, and for which we need to establish public share holding companies. Therefore, a stock market will be useful," he said.

"1997 started in a good way. Good news is coming from different circles, not least of which is the joint business meetings between Yemen and numerous of its trade and investment partners. We believe the UK will play a leading role in Yemen's foreign trade and investment relations, and we welcome that," he stated. He then pointed to the good news concerning the achievements of the reform program which has resulted in more stable economic conditions and a better working environment."

*"Looking for Wisdom from the Wilderness"*

# American World Flyer Circles Yemeni Skies This Week

Mr. Tom Claytor is a bush pilot. He is on an expedition around the world. His journey started on December 2nd, 1990 out of Philadelphia, USA. Using his Cessna 180 airplane as a car, an office and a home, he is winding his way around to the seven continents of the world "searching for wisdom from the wilderness," as he put it. He is writing a book and making films for National Geographic, and he has a web page on the Internet sponsored by IBM.

Visiting and sharing pristine, untouched and unique parts of the world represent the ultimate goals of his endeavors and adventures. Tom, 34, is now stopping for a week in Yemen. His small one-engine airplane safely on the ground at Sana'a Airport, he took some time off from his brave and solo quest to talk to Yemen Times.

Excerpts:

**Q: How did you get started in all of this?**

**A:** As a diversion from the demanding academic atmosphere at Colby University in Maine, where I was studying, I worked with Maine bush pilots who flew hunters and supplies into the wilderness. After university, I won a fellowship grant from IBM. For my fellowship, I worked as a pilot in Kenya and in 18 other African countries. I then started flying on different films for National Geographic and Discovery. This is where I learned about the importance of communication.

My dream was to take an airplane, leave the comforts and security of home and to go on a journey around the world. My main aim is to meet, live with, and learn from different people who live in the wilderness, and to try to share some wisdom from



these remote and diminishing parts of our world. I say that I am trying because I know that at any time I could fail. But I know in my heart that I will not quit. That is why I think the concept of "Inshallah," which I first learned in Algeria, is a wonderful one. It protects your soul. It helps you to be humble and to go gently. It takes the responsibility off you to another higher being. It makes life much easier.

**Q: What is the most troubling**

**fear that keeps haunting you in this sort of endeavor?**

**A:** Fear of the unknown is most worrying. I once flew for four hours up the Congo river in the midst of a storm to reach a little village where people believe in the existence of a dinosaur in a nearby lake. I wanted to meet them and to learn about this "monster." When I saw the storm, I didn't know whether to keep going, or to turn around. Fear is the greatest before you make a decision. I carried on, and

I'm glad I did. You find good people in the rough places. I like to go to places where others do not want to go, because I think this is where we can learn the most.

**Q: What brought you to Yemen?**

**A:** I have seen photographs of these beautiful castles of clay on cliffs, the beautiful stonework and the janbia. We are in the modern age and here are people wearing ordinary clothes and modern accessories along with janbia. I would love to understand the culture and history of Yemen, the tribal history, the significance of the janbia and the things that guide the people through life. Many people here go in the wilderness carrying AK 47 rifles. This is not horrible. It is just different. For them it is just like a farm tool.

**Q: How long will you spend in Yemen?**

**A:** I am very grateful to the Civil Aviation Administration here in Yemen for their help and assistance. I sent the clearance from Ethiopia and they swiftly granted me an authorization. I am staying for ten days with my airplane. Through this short time, I will try to see and understand as much as possible in Yemen. I have to find sponsors along the way to keep my gas tank full, and I am hoping that Yemen-Hunt in Sana'a will help with the next leg.

**Q: What are your first impressions in Yemen?**

**A:** My first impressions of Yemeni people is that they are very happy. They smile more and are more relaxed than in other countries. That was wonderful for me, because I travel alone, and it makes me feel welcome.

I have been learning the significance of Ramadhan since have been here.

To stay without food for a long time makes you appreciate the hunger of poor people and appreciate the value of the food itself. I have learned that when you experience extremes - like cold, hunger, fear or loneliness - you stretch yourself away from the normal line of everyday life. When you come back to that line, it will have greater meaning and significance for you.

**Q: What kind of wildlife are you prospecting in Yemen?**

**A:** Socotra is an extraordinary part of the world. It is an island with ancient history and traditions, and beautiful wilderness.

**Q: Were you ever refused entry into a country?**

**A:** Saudi Arabia has not let me go through it.

**Q: What is your next route?**

**A:** From Yemen, I will go to Muscat and then to Dubai where I will do some maintenance work.

**Q: What have you learned in Arab countries?**

**A:** As I go through Arabia, I am very interested to learn about Islam. I have a copy of the Quran, and I am trying to learn Arabic. I want to understand this religion. I do not think you can just come and look at a place without understanding the true soul and beliefs of the people there. In Arab countries, I have learned that you live by your face. If you look someone in the eye, smile and be there for an honest purpose, they will welcome you with open arms and share with you what they know.

**Q: What tasks do you assign to**

**yourself once you are in a particular country?**

**A:** I have four distinct jobs. I fly the airplane and do the maintenance myself. Then, when I get to a place, I become an artist - taking pictures, interviewing people and sometimes making films. The third thing I have to do is to be a bit of a business man, because I need to keep raising money. The fourth job I have, which is the most important, is the vision. That is where to go next and what to look for there.

**Q: Do you have any particular anecdote from your travels?**

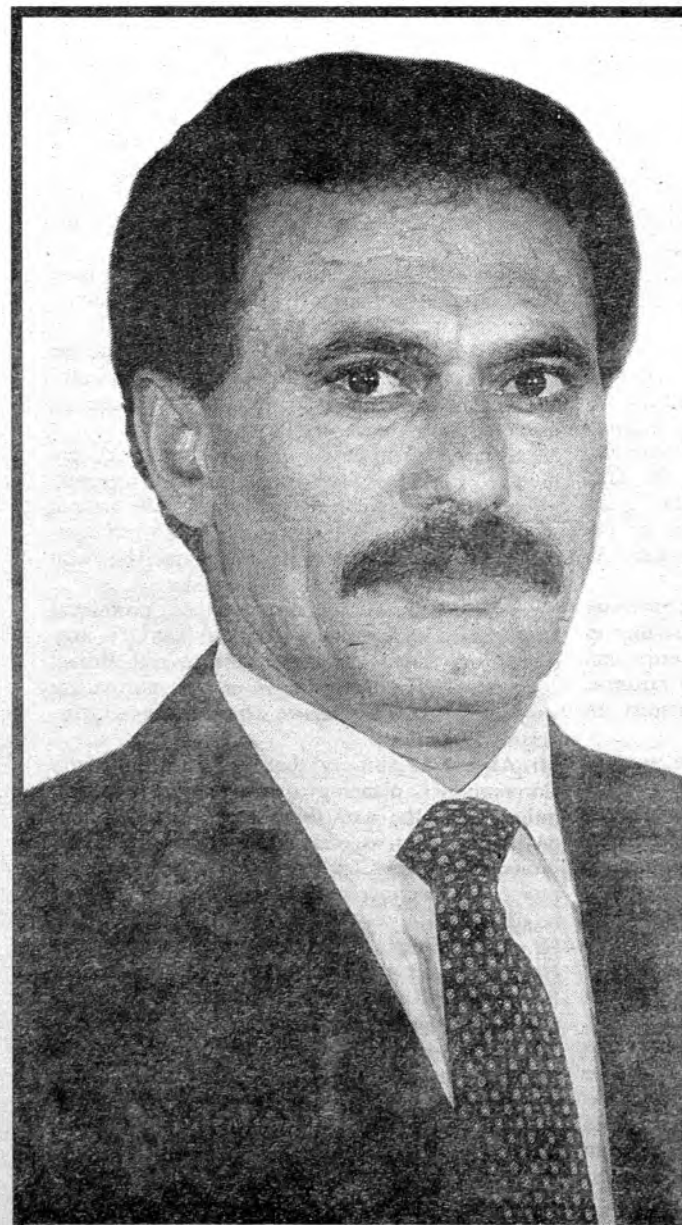
**A:** While in the Kalahari desert of Namibia, I asked a very old and wizened Bushman his age. His answer was, "I am as old as the most beautiful wish in my heart, and as young as all the unfulfilled dreams in my head." This is something very special. Visiting people in other countries very different from your own can change the perspective with which you look at things.

**Q: What sort of work do you do while on your trips?**

**A:** As an example, I was hired by the Bushmen to help radio-track their leopards to find their locations. They are trying to use the leopards sustainably. This interaction with wildlife is better than blind conservation calls.

**Q: Do you wish to add any last comment?**

**A:** The very special and remote parts of this world such as the deserts, jungles, mountains, etc., have become smaller as human beings get more in numbers. We are like a headless snake. We are just reproducing and taking up more land. We need to pause, if possible, and look where we want to go.



# تتراپاك

تर्फ أجمل التهاني وأطيب التبريكات

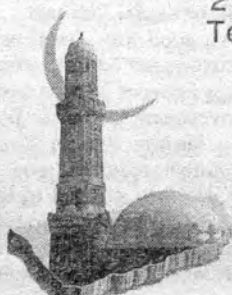
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# Happy Eid





## Iran's Rising Regional Role

Qatar's foreign minister said last week that his country wanted to expand political and economic ties with Iran. "The political will of Qatar's leadership is to expand relations with Iran in all fields, including economic and political," said Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassim Bin Jabr Al Thani. "We attach great importance to Iran's efforts to preserve peace and stability in the region."

Refasanjani, who welcomed better ties with Qatar, accused Western countries of bringing "baseless accusation" against Iran to prevent cooperation between Tehran and the Gulf states.

Rafsanjani said Iran was determined to strengthen relations with its Gulf neighbors. "Iran is ready to provide its neighbors with technical and industrial assistance," Rafsanjani added.

The Iranian leader warned that the "enemies seek to prevent development of ties between the region's countries," in a reference to the USA and other Western allies of the Gulf Arab states.

"By making unfounded accusations against Iran, these oppressive powers aim to justify their presence in the Gulf and control over the region's resources."

The new Iranian success with Qatar and other Gulf states is just one example of many. The Islamic Republic of Iran has had similar success in promoting special relations with Turkey, a country with traditionally strong relations with the West. Over the last few months, and especially since Nejmmedeen Erbakan, leader of Refah, took over as Prime Minister, Iran concluded several economic, social and political deals with Turkey. These developments made the West issue warnings to Turkey.

In a similar way, Iran has seen its influence grow in the Central Asian Republics. It has forged strong technical and financial cooperation with Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kirgizia and Tajikistan. As the majority of the populations in these countries are Muslims, Iran worked hard to promote the Islamic identity of their societies, at the expense of any other issues. That effort has, by and large, succeeded, as new Islamic feelings have been regenerated.

In the on-going civil war in Afghanistan, Iran is a key player and holds one of the main keys to the potential resolution of the problem. In spite of several failed efforts to bring peace to war-torn Afghanistan, Iran continues to hold much sway in the country.

Iran has been able to carve out an important role for itself in the emerging nation of Bosnia. One of the key allies to Sudan has been Iran, which has recently provided badly needed military and economic support to Khartoum. As the regime in Sudan came under fire from opposition groups assisted by neighboring countries, Teheran was one of the first and most important countries to come to the rescue of Khartoum.

Relations between Iran and Yemen continue to grow. Good political understanding and strong economic and commercial relations are the order of the day. Many official visits by senior dignitaries have been exchanged, and large trade deals have been concluded in the recent past.

The regional role of Iran is expanding, even though the West, and especially the USA, have been trying to isolate the country.

## Sudan Prepares for War & Talks

Sudan's government has arrested dozens of opponents suspected of planning a campaign of sabotage and assassinations in the capital, a Sudanese leader said last week. More may be arrested in coming days if the government deems them a threat or suspects them of aiding rebels who launched a successful offensive one month ago, said Ghazi Salah El Din, who heads the powerful National Congress, the country's grass-roots organization.

Sudan's information minister and official spokesman Al Tayeb Mohammed Kheir, meanwhile, repeated charges that Uganda was preparing to attack Sudan from the south. He also warned that Egypt, Sudan's powerful neighbor to the north, was expected to attack from a border strip claimed by both countries.

An opposition rebel group is already in control of a strip of land - about 50 kilometers wide - along the Sudanese northern border with Ethiopia, and also with Eritrea. The rebel fighters get military, logistical and other assistance from Ethiopia and Eritrea - both of which are acting with the stamp of approval from leading Western countries.

To face the military challenge, Khartoum has mobilized a one-million-person army of volunteers, in addition to the traditional/professional army. It has been receiving shipments of military hardware from various sources. In addition, it got much needed economic and moral support from many of the Arab and African countries.

General Omar Al-Basheer, head of state, has spent the last few days travelling from one front-line position to another visiting his entrenched men. His visits, coupled with much needed supplies of food, blankets, ammunition and spare parts, have boosted the morale of the army.

Meanwhile, Khartoum has offered the olive branch for talks with the opposition. "We are willing to negotiate their grievances, provided their demands do not include dividing the country," he said. A message was sent to Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Aal Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, who had urged the Sudanese Government to open talks with the opposition. Sheikh Zayed has strong ties to both the regime and the opposition. Delegates from Khartoum have visited Abu Dhabi twice last month.

The opposition bloc includes representatives of almost all the political parties and military insurgency groups from the Arab North as well as the Christian South. They demand a dismantling of the regime and its replacement with a transitional government which will prepare for elections. The opposition groups also agree that a referendum of the southerners should determine their future - whether to stay within a unified Sudan and under what arrangement, or whether to secede and create their own state. This prospect is totally rejected by Khartoum, which says its territorial integrity is inviolable.

The Sudan claims that its neighbors - actually almost all of them - are conspiring against it. Today, Khartoum is at loggerheads with Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Uganda - its neighbors in the north, east and south. These neighbors complain that Khartoum is trying to export its version of Islamic fundamentalism to them.

## Arabs' Giant Bill for Farm Products

Arab states account for more than half the world's net imports of farm products although they have enough arable land and less than 5% of the global population, official figures showed last month.

The 22-member Arab League imported an average US\$ 18 billion worth of farm products annually over the past five years, 60% of the world's net imports of US\$ 30 billion, the Arab Monetary Fund said.

In contrast their farm exports remained as low as US\$ 5.5 billion per year, a fraction of the worldwide food exports of US\$ 525 billion.

The large gap between their farm imports and exports has cost Arab countries more than US\$ 180 billion over the past 15 years.

Between 1990 and 1995, the cumulative Arab food deficit reached a staggering US\$ 50 billion a year, the Abu Dhabi based fund said in a study, quoting the official Arab Corporation for Agricultural Development.

The gap covered all farm products, with cereals accounting for nearly half despite efforts to increase the cultivated area of such crops.

The report showed the Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) as the biggest food importers in the Arab world, accounting for nearly a half of the total farm purchases.

Experts said the GCC remained heavily reliant on imported agricultural products because of its arid desert land. But the six members have pumped billions of dollars into agricultural projects and subsidies to encourage farmers.

Although they have reported a sharp expansion in their cultivated areas, production still lags behind population growth. Lack of private investment has remained one of the main reasons for the poor performance of the agricultural sector in the Arab world.

"The farming sector still lacks interest by Arab investors as they prefer trade, services, industry and other economic activities," the AMF said.

Self-sufficiency in food has been a slogan that most Arab governments have raised over the last twenty years, but none of them have achieved it. In fact, the dependency gap has increased over the years.

Three reasons are responsible for the failure of policies aimed at food self-sufficiency:

a) The changing consumption patterns, including much waste and a trend away from locally produced hard cereals such as sorghum and millet, to the softer grains, such as wheat, which is mostly imported.

b) A phenomenal population explosion, ranging from about 2.5% in the lowest case, to almost 4% in the higher cases. This population growth rate has outstripped any gains in food production.

c) Low investments in agriculture and even lower productivity. Arab farms produce just over a ton per hectare, whereas productivity in some countries has reached 6 and even 7 tons per hectare.

The Arab food bill will continue to represent a drain and a burden on the local economies. Hard currency generated from oil exports, and soon gas exports, foot the bill. Most Arab intellectuals worry about the prospects of the future if the present trend persists.

Abdullah A. Al-Barakani, Top Management & Staff of the

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بنك التسليف التعاوني الزراعي :

حجز الزاوية في التنمية الريفية اليمنية

Happy Eid

## The Mufti of Yemen:

# On Islam in Politics, Public Life and Tolerance

The role of the fatwa in Islamic society is central. It is the clarification and explanation needed when the tenets are not clearly specified. Each Islamic country has a person - the mufti - who is supposed to provide the fatwa, although other clergymen and religious leaders could also furnish such fatwa.

Yemen's Grand Mufti is the well-respected theologian, Qadhi Ahmed Mohammed Zabarah. At the age of 92, the Mufti - a native of Khowlan - is one of the elders of the country, respected for his knowledge and tolerant views. Mufti Zabarah had recently come under fire for attending meetings of the Unification Church (Moonies) movement. He does not worry about that as he is open to learning and discussing from other religions and views.

Ismail Al-Ghaby of Yemen Times spoke to the Mufti and filed the following report.

**Q: Could you kindly tell us briefly about your early life and education?**

**A:** I was born in Khawlan Al-Tayyal in 1325 (Hejira calendar. This is the year 1417). My father was a Zakat (religious tax) judge for Imam Yahya.

I had my elementary education in Jihana. We moved to Sanaa in 1337 (Hejira) when my father resigned from the judiciary in Khawlan. I studied under the scholars Mohammed Taqi and Mohammed Zaidan. I studied Islamic law (Sharia) at the Grand Mosque.

**Q: Who were the religious scholars of that time (first half of the 20th century)?**

**A:** There were many learned men. The most famous religious scholars are Ahmad A-Kahlani, Ismail Bin Ali Al-Reimi, Mohammad Bin Mohammed Al-Sunaidar, Abdul-Khaliq Al-Amcer, Abdullah bin Mohammed Al-Sarhi, Ali Bin

Hilal Al-Deeb, Hussain Bin Ali Al-Amri, Ahmad Bin Abdulla Al-Kibsi, Yahya Bin Mohammad Al-Iryani, Zaid Bin Ali Daylami, Abdul Wahab Al-Shamah. My father was also among the many prominent religious figures of that time.

**Q: Tell us about your early career?**

**A:** I Taught a lot of students inside and outside Yemen, notably in Sanaa, Taiz and Lebanon.

In Taiz, I undertook the responsibility of the presidency of the Supreme Judiciary. My deputy was Judge Abdul Rahman Al-Iryani, who was a renowned revolutionary figure, and later president of the former Yemen Arab Republic. After the revolution, I was appointed as Grand Mufti of the Republic. I participated in many conferences in the Arab countries, Russia, China, America, Italy, Britain and many other countries.



I taught theology for ten years when the College of Sharia at Sanaa University was established. I also wrote a concise textbook in theology and religious duties.

**Q: How do you view Islam and its use and abuse by politicians and terrorists?**

**A:** There is terrorism in Algeria

mainly because of canceling the elections which were won by the Islamic groups. Tens of thousands of people died because of this violence. There is terrorism in Somalia, Afghanistan, Egypt and many other countries. We ask God to guide the Muslim rulers and their subjects to follow true Islam. True Islam preaches tolerance and not indiscriminant

killing of innocent people, which is terrorism.

There are many references in God's holy book against violence and bloodshed. There is strong condemnation of killing innocent people or by-standers, whatever the excuse of cause. Unfortunately, many Muslims give Islam a bad name by engaging in terrorist activities.

But, let me explain that the Western media has been stereotyping Muslims as terrorists. This is an unfair and biased situation. You know that there are dogmatic and fundamentalist individuals in other religions like Judaism, Christianity, Sikh, Hinduism, and Buddhism. So, it is not correct to pin the blame on Islam.

**Q: What do you think about the tolerance among religions and religious sects?**

**A:** Islam is a religion of tolerance. It is also a religion that accepts and respects all the other teachings brought to humanity by messengers of God who came before the Last Prophet, Muhammad (May God's peace be upon him). God Says in the Quran, "If we believe in God and what was revealed to us and to Ibrahim, Ismail, Ishaq, Yaqoub and Al-Asbat and what was inspired to Mousah and Issah and other prophets without discrimination, we are Muslims," (surat Al-Baqarah). Surat Aal-Umran states, "Those who believed in me and in Mousah and Issah, those who believed in God and Judgement Day, and those who made good deeds

deserve their rewards from God. There is no fear for them nor sadness."

The Prophet (p) recognized the believers in God (of all former religions) at Al-Medina Mosque and treated them with tolerance. As for Islamic sects, each religious preacher is right in his interpretation. The Prophet gives a good example of tolerance and avoiding prejudice which is a mark of ignorance.

**Q: How do you view harmony among religious sects in Yemen?**

**A:** In Yemen, there are two main religious sects of Islam: Zaydis and Shafees. They have coexisted in harmony for more than one thousand years as brethren. The theologians of Sana'a and those of Zabeed exchange religious ideas and views.

Now, due to political pluralism, the Yemeni people have been divided to the extent of fighting each other. We ask God to end this division and fragmentation because our people are rather backward compared to the people of America, Europe or Japan. They cannot recognize the selfish motives of some politicians and others in over-playing the sectarian differences.

All the people in Yemen live as one Arab and Islamic society, but the political parties came and caused many divisions. May God unite the people and remove prejudice from their hearts.

**Q: Any last comments?**

**A:** I wish all Muslims and human beings enjoy the happy eid days.



**HAPPY EID**

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Many happy return to all.



# المنطقة الحرة - عدن

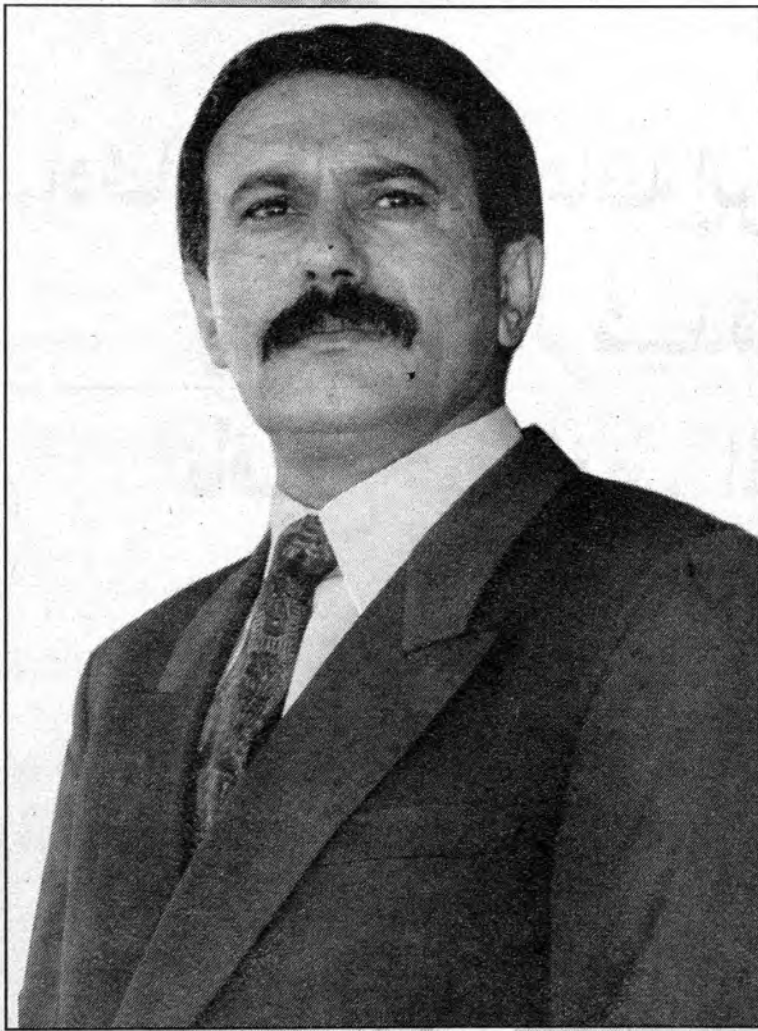
تهنئ

القيادة السياسية بزعامة ابن اليمن البار

الفريق علي عبدالله صالح - رئيس الجمهوري

والحكومة الرشيدة ، وكافة أفراد الشعب اليمني

بمناسبة عيد الفطر المبارك ، وكل عام والجميع بخير



## ADEN FREE ZONE

presents  
its best wishes and congratulations  
to General Ali Abdullah Saleh  
President of the Republic,  
the Government and People of Yemen  
on Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak  
And Many Happy Returns

Con't. from page 3:

### Dr. Iryani's Interview:

**Q:** A Qatari Minister recently delivered the formal response of the GCC to Yemen's application letter to join. What was it?

**A:** The verdict was that Yemen will have a special association with the GCC but not membership. They said, "Let us have a special cooperation, mainly in education, health and some other fields."

**Q:** Will this evolve into an observer status? Or how does it work?

**A:** Actually, they don't have an observer system. Any step to accommodate Yemen will require lots of cumbersome changes of their system. We are not sure, how it is all evolving, but we are optimistic.

**Q:** Sir John Coles (UK Deputy Foreign Minister) was very happy with his visit. Can you confirm we are applying for membership to the Commonwealth?

**A:** In fact, this matter was essentially discussed during the visit of Mr. John Coles as well as with our ambassador in London, who also met with the General-Secretary of the Commonwealth of Nations. We have been discussing the matter in terms of the procedures to apply. How it is done, and other details.

I think after the parliamentary elections, it will be a matter of serious discussion. There has been no application, so far. I believe there is a special committee of the Commonwealth which is presently studying application rights and procedures.

**Q:** How is the arbitration effort with Eritrea proceeding?

**A:** The arbitration tribunal has met in London and the persons involved with the case have been named.

(Read more details on this on the last page).

**Q:** There is a war going on in the Sudan. You want to tell us Yemen's position on the matter?

**A:** Sudan is clearly a victim of external aggression. Nobody can deny that and there is enough proof of it.

Irrespective of any disagreement that we may have with the policies of the government of Sudan, there is no justification for external aggression.

Yemen's position is very clear. We strongly support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Sudan, and we hope for a negotiated settlement to the differences.

**Q:** Are we supporting it?

**A:** We are not supporting them militarily and not officially. Yemen is too poor to help. I wish we could, in which case we would have probably done so.

Sudan supported Yemen and gave us very good material and moral support in our crisis and war. We are both members of the Arab League. We are very close to them and we are as being As more certainty is established that there is external aggression, I think we have the right to support them. The whole world, based on the UN charter, has the right to support them.

**Q:** So you are saying there may be a policy change from our passive support to a more active one?

**A:** No, we don't have much to give them but our sympathy. We are declaring that this is an external aggression. I think that any country which faces foreign aggression on its territory has the right to be supported by the international community. The Security Council is handling this issue with a lot of prejudice and bias. If it had involved any other country, the matter would have been treated quite differently. It is a multiple of standards.

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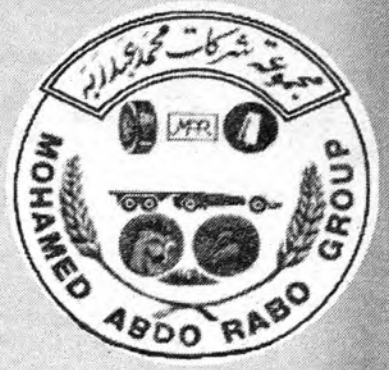
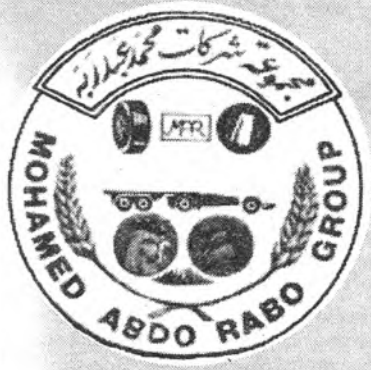
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تهنيء

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وحكومتنا الرشيدة وكافة أفراد شعبنا اليمني الأبني  
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presents warm felicitations to  
**General Ali Abdullah Saleh, President of the Republic,**  
the Government and People of Yemen  
on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak.

**We wish many happy returns to all.**



# Yemen Hunt Oil Company FIRST NATIONAL EMPLOYEE

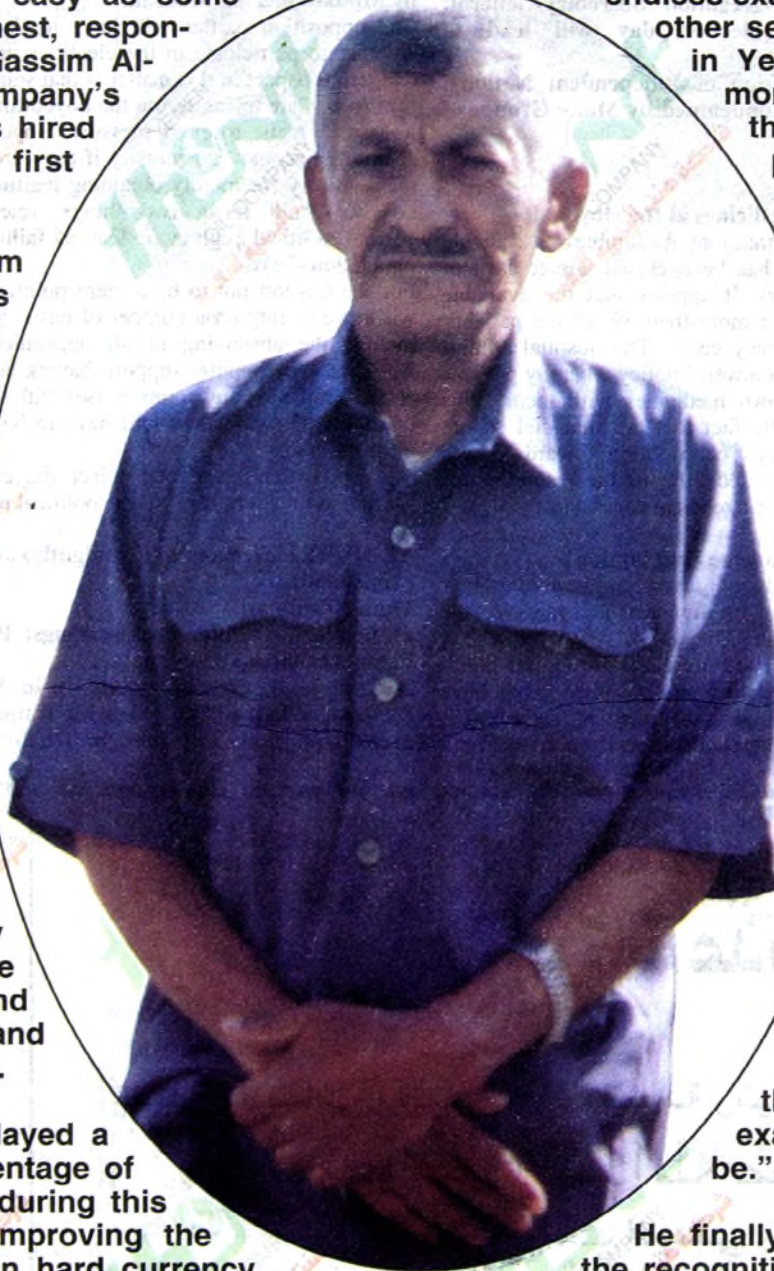
## *Compares the Past and the Present*

Working as a guard is not as easy as some people think. It requires an honest, responsible and alert person. Abdo Gassim Al-Assadi is Yemen Hunt Oil Company's first National employee. He was hired as an office guard for YHOC's first office in Yemen.

Abdo Gassim Al-Assadi, from Hubaish in Ibb Governorate, is about 57 years old, and was hired on November 1st, 1981, to work as an office guard for the Company's main office, which was next to the residence of the Prime Minister, Mr. Abdulaziz Abdulghani. The YHOC General Manager at that time was Mr. Tom Sherman.

"Yemen Hunt Oil Company is a very good company, and it is where I make a living," said Abdo Gassim. "The Company rewards people who work hard. I remember at that time in 1982, we were only five Yemeni employees, and the company had only 3 vehicles. Now the company has grown very big and there are more than one thousand Yemeni employees working for it.

Therefore, this company has played a big role in decreasing the percentage of unemployment in Yemen. Also during this period, it has contributed to improving the national economy by bringing in hard currency, and spending it inside Yemen, such as local purchases and expatriate exchange. I could also give



endless examples, like YHOC brought with it many other service companies that support its work in Yemen. The "subcontractors" helped in more hiring of Yemenis, rental of houses that belong to Yemeni people, and in purchases from the local market. This as a whole helped the economy of Yemen."

Among the things that Abdo Gassim likes about Yemen Hunt Oil Company is that if you are a hard working person, no matter what position you are in - whether a manager or a guard - you are respected by senior staff and management, even if they have left Yemen.

"For example, Mr. Bill Furr was in the past the General Manager of YHOC, when the main office was at the Cinema Hadda Complex. When he comes to Yemen, every now and then for short visits, he comes to see me and talks to me with respect. This is what I like about Yemen Hunt Oil Company," he said.

Abdo Gassim has an advice to all Yemeni employees. "They should all respect YHOC for employing them and for the contribution it makes to the country. Also we should be a good example of how a Yemeni citizen should be."

He finally expressed his deep appreciation for the recognition and respect he got from YHOC as the first national employee of the company.





AL-UROUBAH: Sana'a (Weekly) 2-2-97  
(The Nasserite Democratic Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) US \$90 Million Loans from World Bank to Yemen.
- 2) National Opposition Council Meets Ruling Coalition Leadership.
- 3) American Democratic Institute Organizes Elections Monitoring Courses.
- 4) Financial and Administrative Corruption in Tihama Development Authority.

**Article Summary:**

**[Political Illiteracy]**

by Mohammed Moqbil Al-Azizi.

Political illiteracy can be defined as the inability to read and write the art of politics or properly use the political alphabet. It would not be far from the truth to say that political illiteracy in our country can be as high as 99%. The remaining 1% represents the political and intellectual elite. One of the signs of this type of illiteracy is branding as traitor whomever cooperates with the authority, even for higher national interests. A case in point is the cooperation between the parties of the National Opposition Council and the coalition parties against the secessionists, not the Socialist party. On the other hand, these same opposition parties cooperate equally effectively with the Socialist party in issues concerning the interests of the country and the Yemeni people. Politically illiterate persons could never comprehend such level of cooperation, and will interpret them as political opportunism.

AL-MITHAK: Sana'a (Weekly) 3-2-97  
(The People's General Congress)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) The President Expresses Relief for Results of Brotherly Talks with Saudi King
- 2) Supreme Elections Committee Endorses PGC Election Logo.
- 3) People's Charitable Society is Inaugurated in Dhamar.

**Article Summary:**

**[What Do We Want from Democracy, the Media and Elections?]**

by Dr. Mohammed Abdul-Jabbar.

There are more than 200 newspaper licenses issued by the Ministry of Information. But many of these publications reflect dark and sorry images, both objectively and technically. There are certain limits for freedom of expression that are closely related to national sovereignty and security. Professional standards for press work are repre-



## Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Adel J. Moqbil

sented by the sacredness of news and emphasizing the naked truth. The information and propaganda systems bear a responsibility toward the Yemeni citizens, their noble values and the safety of their minds and intellects. The various information and media systems must be committed to veracity and honesty. Also, all political forces and patriotic individuals must reflect in their work and literature the positive spirit of democracy and freedom of expression. This way, true and proper democracy can be achieved.

AL-TAJAMMU'U: Aden (Weekly) 3-2-97  
(Yemeni Unionist Congregation Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) Coalition Parties' Agreement Forges the Electors' Will and is Unconstitutional.
- 2) Unionist Congregation Secretary-General: "Waiting until election day will lead to downfall."
- 3) PSO Provocation of Independent National Social Bloc are Condemned by Many Groups of Citizens.

**Article Summary:**

**1) [No Medicines at the Hospital]**

The on-duty pharmacy at Al-Jumhuriya Academic hospital in Aden has been closed due to lack of essential medicines. It appears that the available drugs do not cover more than 5% of the patients' needs and emergency cases. The hospital administration will adopt a weird policy whereby patients will bring their own medicines with them! This happens despite the fact that the financial statute for the community's contribution towards health services have allocated 30% of the resources for buying medicines and medical necessities.

**2) [Extreme Humiliation]**

A bereaved family of seven children and their mother has applied for financial assistance to the governor of Abyan. They were rewarded with a grand total of YR 100 from the Development Fund! The "generous" Islahis, on the other hand, have been distributing food to the needy at Jaar mosque. So it seems that the coalition realizes the difficult

living conditions of citizens. However, their media bombard us with incessant talk about economic accomplishments achieved by the programs of various international funds.

AL-SHOURAH: Sana'a (Weekly) 2-2-97.  
(The Federation of Popular Forces Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) A New Round of Electioneering Bargaining.
- 2) PGC-Islah Conflict in Sharaab Leaves 2 Dead and 7 Injured.
- 3) Ruling Coalition Makes Commitment in Favor of Opposition.
- 4) Sudden Outbreak of Diarrhea in Ibb.

**Article Summary:**

**The Opposition and Boycotting Elections by Mohammed Ali Mousah.**

The opposition parties will have to decide soon whether to participate in the elections or not. The dangerous aspect in this matter is that some opposition parties are trying to use the boycotting of elections as a tactic to exert pressure. Boycotting the elections becomes a necessity if they are used by the authority for merely obtaining legitimacy. The boycott could mean two things; rejecting the current political regime or fear of failure on the opposition's part.

For the boycott not to be a mere political folly, it will have to rely on a number of basis. Such basis include the abstaining of all opposition parties, having a wide popular support, having better alternatives, rejecting any compromises with the authorities, and the opposition will have to be solid and un-infiltrated.

The opposition must also reject the concept of sharing as an alternative to true political plurality.

AL-HURRIAH: Sana'a (Fortnightly) 5-5-97.  
(Independent)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) Secret Anti-Unity Pact Amongst Prominent Figures in the South.
- 2) Chinese Worker is Beaten Up in Abyan for Drinking Water in Public During Ramadhan.
- 3) Education Sector Jobs in Dhale' Are the

**Monopoly of One Family.**

**Article Summary:**  
**[When Eid Kills Innocence]**  
by Abdul-Hakeem Obeid.

The demands and needs for the holy month of Ramadhan have become nightmares plaguing the poor citizens. People become debt laden because of the rise in prices toward the start of the month. Greedy merchants are to blame for this sad situation.

The Eid (feast) that immediately follows Ramadhan has also become a sad event and a burden for the majority of people who have limited incomes. Children look forward with much anticipation to this occasion. But their parents cannot provide them with new clothes or toys that represent the whole mark of this feast. It is very sad to see poor children eyeing their more affluent counterparts playing in the streets in their new clothes with their new toys.

Can we call this occasion Eid when it actually kills the innocence in children's souls and takes away their happiness?

AL-WAHDAH: Sana'a (Weekly) 5-2-97.  
(Official)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) British Deputy Foreign Secretary Praises Democratic Developments in Yemen.
- 2) Supreme Council for Economic Affairs Discusses Plans to Develop Aden's Oil Refineries.
- 3) Arab and European Journalists will Witness Next Parliamentary Elections.
- 4) Yemeni Expatriate Businessmen Conference to be Held in Aden Next March.
- 5) Iranian Ambassador: "Yemeni-Iranian relations are strong, historic and distinguished."

**Article summary:**

**[New Developments Between Sanaa and Riyadh] editorial.**

The relationship between Yemen and Saudi Arabia is strategically and politically unique and sensitive. This age-old link cannot and must not be shaken by temporary influences. President Ali Abdullah Saleh and King Fahad have carefully directed the relationship between their two peoples toward a brighter future.

The two countries' mutual understanding of the importance of border delineation has materialized into joint committees assigned this politico-geographical issue. Following the recent presidential visit to Saudi Arabia, great hopes are raised regarding more understanding between the two brother countries.

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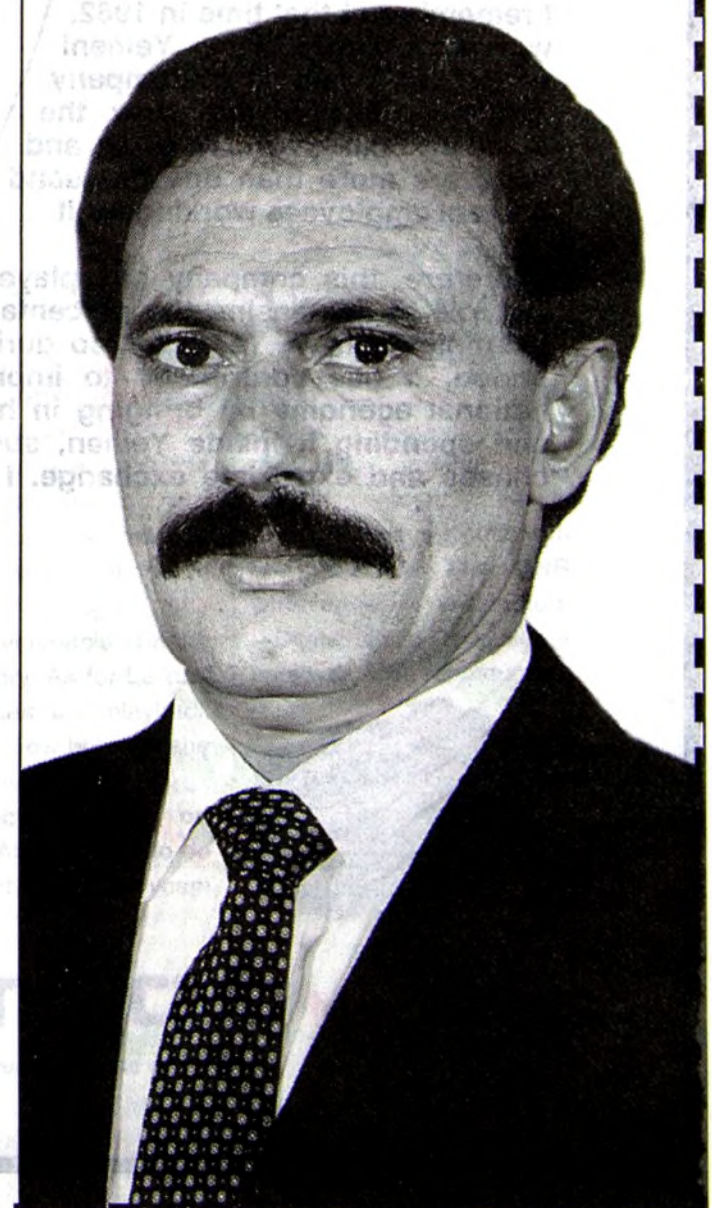
present their felicitations to the President of Yemen,

**General Ali Abdullah Saleh,**

the Government, and people, as well as clients of the companies  
on the occasion of Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak.

Many happy return to all.

**Happy Eid**



February 10th, 1997

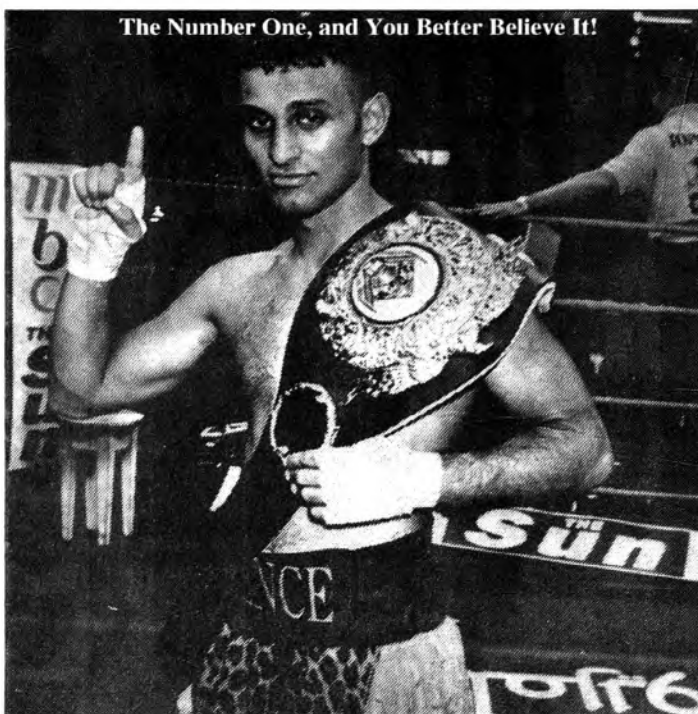
By Jamal Al-Awadhi, Boxer

## NASEEM Rides High EXPLOSION IN THE RING

So the fight was between experience and youth.

Naseem's promoter Frank Warren agreed with Johnson's promoter, Don King, to organize a match between the two champions in London's Arena Hall on February 8, 1997. It was all set. Tickets price ranged from 250 sterling pounds to 50 pounds. The arena was packed with over 20,000 spectators.

"In the third round... baby!!" shouted the Prince at Johnson's face while they were being weighed up, which made the latter go complaining to his promoter. This showed that Johnson was too excited, and was suffering from distress - something Naseem was capitalizing on just before the start of the match.



The Number One, and You Better Believe It!

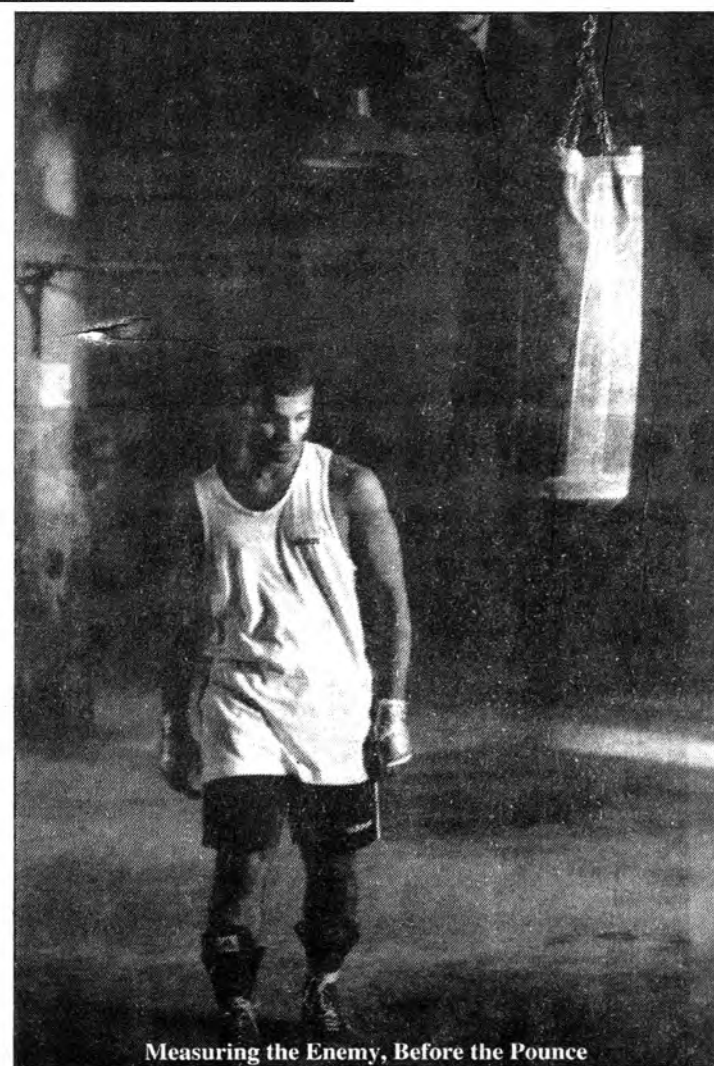
punches were delivered on the face of Johnson. It was swollen and bleeding.

Naseem kept up the pressure as the American stood there helpless. Johnson tried hopelessly to cover his face. The referee did not stop the fight as was expected in cases of incompatibility, but he waited till the end of the round. The fight should have ended there and then. But the referee's decision to prolong the agony and suffering of Johnson.

### Knock-out Round:

Sometimes, boxers win points in many rounds, but they are defeated by a surprise knockout. For a knock is a solitary and powerful punch delivered to the chin causing a blackout for 10 seconds only - the time taken for the final count. That is probably what the American referee was hoping the American boxer would do. But the Prince was alert and ready.

He started the 8th round with



Measuring the Enemy, Before the Pounce

The bell rang, and Round One started for a match destined to last 8 rounds.

### First Round:

This round started cautiously with test punches. Naseem was able to deliver a number of straight punches to his opponent's face. These intensified punches restricted Johnson's movements, and made him go on the defensive trying hard to snatch an opportunity to hit back.

### Second Round:

Naseem started to shed some of his caution and increased his offensive, as he surrounded his opponent with punches from all sides. But Johnson was able to deliver a right-hand hook punch to Naseem's jaw. The Prince sustained that punch just as the bell rang ending the second round.

### Third Round:

Naseem always starts the attack. The fight was getting ugly in this round. In quick succession, Naseem delivered a straight left-hand punch followed by a right-hand hit, and uppercut stabs to Johnson's jaw. The American tried to counter-attack, but was faced with a ghost who moved like a butterfly and stung like a snake.

During the last 30 seconds of this round, the Prince attacked again and again. His punches were like direct missile hits, but Johnson sustained the pain. The American referee could have stopped the fight, but he did not. So Johnson's face remained fair game for the punches of Naseem, until he was saved by the bell.

### Fourth Round:

Johnson superior body weight and muscles made a difference in this round. He recovered his vitalism and made a good comeback based on his coach's instructions. This new approach called for using his body weight to push and shove the smaller Naseem. At one stage, he was able to push the Prince off balance and to the ground.

Naseem got up quickly, and challengingly foiled another similar attempt by his opponent to the wild and excited cheers of the spectators. "It is the same maneuver used by the legendary Mohammed Ali when an opponent tried to shoulder him," said one of the professional who followed the game.

### Rounds Five and Six:

Rounds five and six were rather dull, as far as the spectators were concerned, although the two boxers exchanged stabs. But Naseem was working on his foe. He was tiring him out by pouncing and jumping.

### Round Seven:

Johnson, already tired, discovered to his chagrin that he was fighting an extraordinary boxer. He was faced with a time bomb ready to explode at his face any minute. So, he was forced to keep up.

The usual and known technique in boxing is to use the weaker hand for maneuvering, and to test the opponent's response technique. The stronger arm is usually kept for executing an effective, knockout punches. That was exactly what the Prince did.

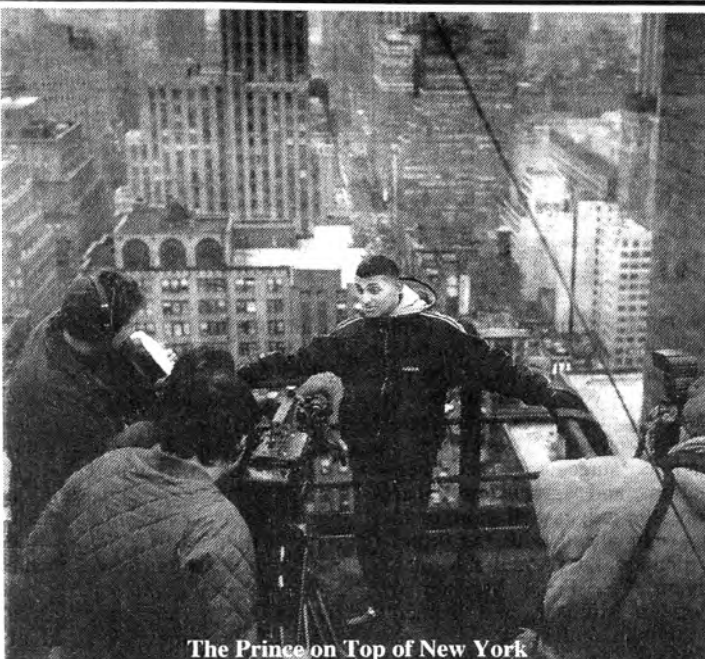
The Prince started delivering the blows, one after another. Johnson was stunned, and was visibly hurt. But the referee did not stop the match. 23 direct

straight left-hand punches and a hook punch. Johnson, staggering, fell on the ropes in a desperate attempt to protect himself. He hopelessly tried to counter attack, but failed miserably.

At this point in time, Naseem decided to end the fight. With an extremely powerful uppercut which exploded on the face of knocking him out. Once fallen on the ground - and totally exhausted - Johnson was unable to get up again.

The celebrations of Naseem's resounding victory started wildly. He cried, "Thank God," he said, "I love him so much." Naseem has finally conquered the USA. Now, they have to come to terms with him. Boasting about his native Britain, he said, "I will bring it all (meaning glory and victory) here to Britain, and to Sheffield."

Naseem, the WBO champion, now also holds IBF title. The power-charged kid is going to fight in America - in their own turf, and "will show 'em."



The Prince on Top of New York

Prince Naseem is riding high. The British featherweight WBO champion boxer proved once again he is number one. Born to Yemeni parents who immigrated to Britain, Naseem has found great opportunities in his new country.

He was trained by the Irish coach Brendan Angel to become a legend - a Mohammed Ali in the making. Due to his skill and iron fist, Naseem is steadily bringing past glories to British boxing. It is no wonder they call him Prince.

But on Saturday, February 8th, the Prince has been hailed as King by his "subjects." He has defeated the highly trained and well experienced IBF champion, the American Tom "Boom Boom" Johnson. Johnson had played 48 matches before facing Naseem; the Prince Naseem had 24 matches to his credit. In other words, Johnson had double the experience.

On the other hand, Johnson was already 32 years old, while Naseem was only 22. In other words, the Prince was 10 years younger.



Bringin Down the Enemy through Fierce Eye Contact

## CAR RALLY IN SANAA: A First in Sports Activities in Yemen

Car racing is regarded a popular sport for a great number of people and it is practiced almost everywhere in the world. It has now come to Yemen.

The year 1996 witnessed the first inauguration of a club for car racing in Yemen under the supervision of the Rally Club. Next month will witness the first car racing in Yemen.

Yemen Times seized this opportunity to talk to Mr. Saeed Al-Su'ad, Manager of the club. Excerpts from the interview.

### Q: Why did you establish a club for racing cars in Yemen?

A: The idea was based on a study taking into consideration that Yemen with its vast chain of mountains and coastal roads and valleys is good for such adventurous race.

On the other hand, the beautiful nature, landscape and historic sites make car racing a colossal fantasy.

Secondary and rough roads are good for racing. To the participants, they form a challenge, and an adventure. We have found

the roads, lands and scenery as something fantastic.

Such races will be a good base for tourism with new taste and adventure. We have decided to launch our project on those basis.

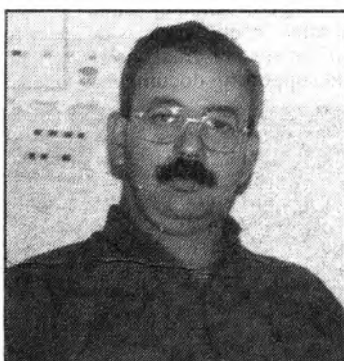
### Q: Have you discussed the program to relevant bodies?

A: Of course, we have discussed it with the Ministry of Youth and Sports after taking the approval of International Union for Car Clubs. We have received a strong support from Minister Abdul Wahab Rawah.

We have also informed other relevant bodies such as the traffic/police administrations. Of course, the whole thing is coordinated with people in the private sector who are interested in this sport.

### Q: Is there a certain type, make or model of cars specified to participate in these races?

A: There isn't any such specifications. Any car can take part in the race provided that some simple changes are made on the machine of the car. For example,



increasing the horse power or adding a turbo machine or using a four plugged head with a golden head instead of the ordinary ones so as to produce a bigger force of electricity. Some sort of power boosting must be done to the combustion room. The purpose behind all of these changes and additions is to increase the horse power and the speed to increase amusement, attraction and adventure.

As for the body of the car, there is a special cage with special technical specifications needed to protect the driver and assistant.

### Q: When is the first racing which the club plans to undertake in Yemen?


A: Currently, we are preparing for a unique race to be held in Yemen. The map which we have prepared for the race is to cover some 200 km around Sana'a city. The event will take place on March 8th, 1997.

### Q: In your opinion, what contributes to the development of this sport in Yemen?

A: I think the commercial sector can play a good role in promoting car racing. A great number of people are visiting the club and registering as members. Yemeni drivers are adventurous. They do require, however, some training. People working in tourism, sports and other fields are responsible for developing this sport.



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*Yemeni Side Happy with Progress, Confident on Results:*

## 5-Person Arbitration Tribunal on Hunaish Dispute Formed

The judges of the Arbitration Tribunal reviewing the Yemeni-Eritrean dispute over the Hunaish Archipelago have now been named. The 5-person panel is made up of the following:

1. Robert Jennings (UK) President,
2. Dr. Mohammed Al-Koshairi (Egypt), named by Yemen;
3. Keith Highet (USA), named by Yemen.
4. Rosalind Higgins (UK), named by Eritrea.
5. Stephen Schwebel (US), named by Eritrea.

Also named to assist the panel of judges is Mr. P.J.H. Jonkman (Dutch) as Registrar, and Bette Shisman as Secretary.

All the judges involved in the arbitration are either directly associated with the International Court of Justice or the Court of Arbitration, both located in The Hague. They also have extensive experience on border disputes and issues of arbitration.

The Republic of Yemen and the State of Eritrea has each deposited US\$ 100,000 to a specified bank in the Netherlands to meet some of the initial costs of the arbitration.

The two countries have also been notified to submit their memorials (version of the story) on the dispute, by August 1st. Three months later, counter-memorials will be exchanged. Another three months later, each side will present its final views and supporting documents.

So far, the Yemeni side is happy with the progress, and confident on the results. "Most of the preparatory work needed by the panel of judges has been worked out by the two countries in various stages of their negotiations and agreements. Therefore, the judges will more or less go right ahead with the issues," explained Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, Vice Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, and Yemen's point man on the case.

Various Yemeni lawyers have been recruited as support staff to assist him in the case.

According to informed sources, the verdict on the case should be dished out in mid-1998. The verdict is final and binding to the two countries.

Yemen and Eritrea are at loggerheads over ownership of a number of islands extending in the southern part of the Red Sea. The dispute also covers the marine borderline between the two countries.

The issue flared up when Eritrea occupied by force the island of Greater Hunaish in October of 1995. France mediated the present arbitration agreement.



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