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## Tentative Parliamentary Election Results: The PGC Leads, But Does Not Overwhelm!

On April 27th, 1997, the elections of the Republic of Yemen were concluded peacefully, successfully and on time. The 200 or so journalists gathered in Yemen were somewhat disappointed as they could only report a normal election.

A journalist friend, who filed a long story back home, was told his story would be dramatically cut back in size, because 'nothing happened'. To Yemen, the main happening or event is a peaceful and normal election, and not the extra-ordinary that journalists keep looking for.

Meanwhile, the vote-counting has been completed in most constituencies. In some con-

stituencies, especially where the results were close, re-counting is in full motion. The tentative election results show that the People's General Congress (PGC) - as expected - leads in the polls by a wide margin. But, the PGC was not able to dominate the scene, thank God.

Many friends of Yemen were stiff worried that Yemen would end up with election results that give one party, or even one person a preponderant dominance. Some elections in the Arab World have yielded victory results to the ruling party or person of 99%. Thank God, this did not happen in Yemen.

Continues on page 2

### EMC Assessing Voting Process:

## "Reasonable adherence to the law and highly transparent."

The Elections Monitoring Committee, a private non-governmental voluntary initiative with 7,200 observers all over the country, issued two statements on the elections process.

The first dispatch was based on reports from its observers in 642 polling stations from 12 governorates.

According to the EMC, 91.9% of the polling stations opened for business sharply at 8:00 a.m. as required by the law.

In 67.9% of the polling stations, the security contingency was stationed outside the voting room, and out of the way of directly impacting the voting process. Only 41.7% of the polling stations had signs along the main roads guiding the voter to them.

In 95.3% of the voting centers, the ballot boxes were placed in a visible place at the center of the room.

In all polling stations (100%), the head of the elections sub-committee started the voting process by opening the ballot box, raised it high to show it was empty, then closed and sealed it. Then the committee members and representatives of the candidates signed over the seal of the closed box.

In all polling stations (100%), the list of voters and other required material for voting was available.

The EMC concluded that the voting process started with a reasonable adherence to the law.

The second report was based on reports from 4,618 observers in 1367 polling stations.

The EMC stated that voting in 72% of the polling stations ended at 6:00 as stipulated in the law.

It also indicated that in 88% of the polling stations, the ballot boxes were peacefully transported to the central center and tallying started immediately.

The EMC report indicated that violence leading to death occurred in four polling stations, while lower-level violence occurred in many other centers.

As the elections were concluded, the EMC concludes that the process was highly transparent and open allowing observers, journalists and candidates to move freely.

The EMC and other local and international monitoring NGOs will issue their full assessments shortly.

## Yemen Pledges to Protect Habitat

The Swiss Consul in Sanaa, Mr. Alain Desvoignes, confirmed to Yemen Times having received on Saturday morning, April 26th, 1997, the ratification document of Yemen's accession to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

"This document was already sent to Berne," he confirmed.

Speaking about the same subject, Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, Foreign Minister, signed the document. "I hope that Yemen's accession to the

CITES will be ratified by the organization very shortly," Dr. Al-Iryani indicated. He also stated he expected Yemen to be invited to meeting of the CITES at Harare that will start on June 9th.

Sources at the Environmental Protection Council (EPC) disclosed that experts are finalizing a report for WWF, TRAFFIC and CITES on the trade and use of rhino horn in Yemen. Yemenis use rhino horn for jambias, a dagger adult males put on. The report will be ready in May, and it

will be presented by the sponsors to the international community.

Yemen has been trying hard to live up to its responsibilities to a world increasingly conscious of the environment. During 1996, Yemen acceded to the Convention on Climate Change, the International Convention on Biodiversity, the Montreal Protocol and Vienna Convention to Protect the Ozone, the Basle Convention on Hazardous Waste, and the International Convention on Desertification Control.



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## OUR VIEWPOINT

### Shedding Light on the Islah:

Many international observers and followers of Yemeni politics are intrigued by the Yemeni Congregation for Reform party known popularly by its Arabic name, Islah. In part, this is due to the shortage of information about it, and in part because of the inherent bias against Islamic parties in the Western (international) media.

#### So What Is the Islah?

The Islah is a moderate Islamic party which can live and co-exist with parties of other colors. It has proved it can adapt to many situations, even those which are not ideal to it, based on its principles.

Yes, the Islah is a party which seeks to implement Islamic laws in the country. And that is not a problem. To further sweeten the approach, the Islah is actually approaching the matter in a gradualist way and with a lot of pragmatism.

#### Islah's Rapid Growth:

We can say that Islah is really the fastest growing party in the Republic of Yemen. Prior to 1990, the Islah was an underground party. Until the April 1993 elections, it was an opposition party. Then it joined the government as a junior party, along with the larger People's General Congress and Yemeni Socialist Party. Since the summer war of 1994, it was a coalition partner with the PGC in managing the affairs of the state in a visible way.

With this kind of growth pattern, one can see the rise of Islah.

#### Relations with PGC:

Both Islah and PGC leaders have often described their relations as strategic and strong. This was true in the past. The reason is that both PGC and Islah had other more pressing rivals to worry about. Thus the growth of both of them has come, in the past, at the expense of others.

In the future, however, the growth of either of them will definitely have to come at the expense of the other. Islah growth in the future will only come at the expense of the PGC, and that is the source of the friction.

#### Future Prospects:

Future prospects of Islah look good, but much will depend on its relations with the PGC. The fact that the PGC and Islah will be direct rivals, is not, in itself, a major problem. The problem is how to regulate and manage this rivalry. If it is done within the law and peacefully, then there should be no worry. In a society that is full of hot-heads, and armed ones at that, and where the law has limited power, a peaceful rivalry may be a difficult thing to achieve. This is worrisome.

In the final analysis, the PGC should refrain from projecting the Islah as an enemy or a bad group. The Islah is a party that the PGC cannot ignore. It may be a wise idea to work out correct relations.

*The Publisher*  


## Cont'd from page 1: ELECTIONS...

As this paper went to print, the results of only 108 constituencies have become clear. Of these, a solid 57.4% went to the People's General Congress, 18.5% went to the Islah, and the rest went to the independents and the small parties.

Other parties that have already secured a presence in the coming parliament include the Yemeni Socialist Party, Nasserite Unionist Party, the Ba'ath, and the Nasserite Democratic Party.

At least two women have also made it to parliament.

The tallying of the votes continues in many constituencies. Final and conclusive results will be announced only on Thursday, although partial and temporary results will be released earlier.

Of the total population base, some 8 million are eligible to vote. Of these, 4.6 million have registered to vote. And of these, 3.4 million have collected their voting cards.

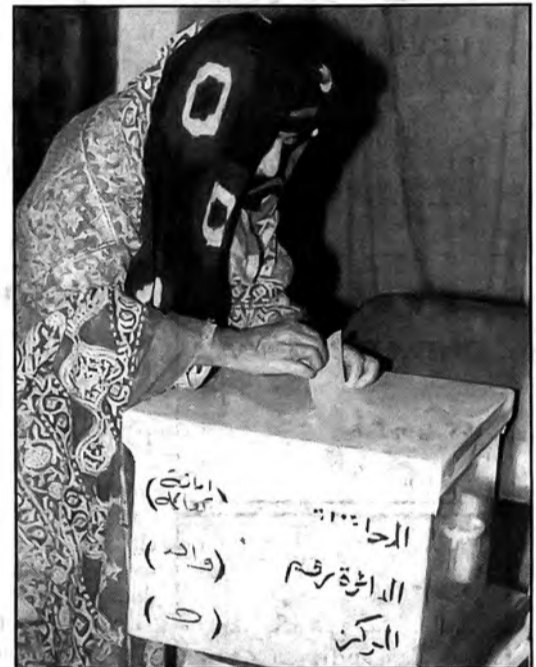
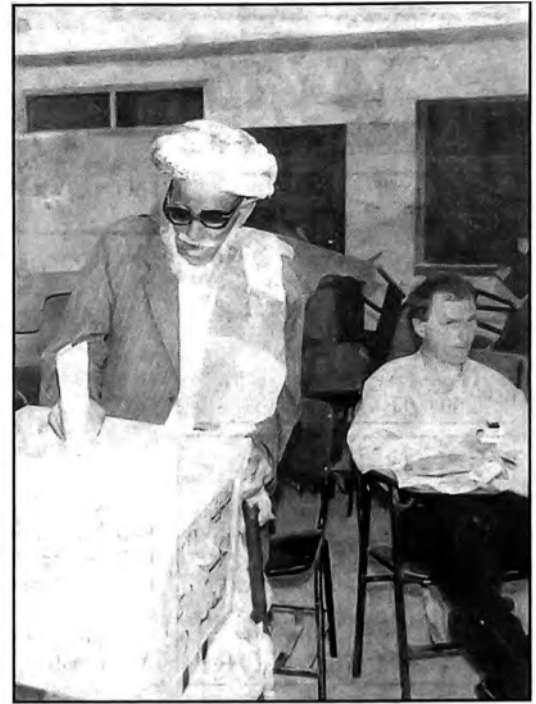
The number of people who went to vote is estimated at 2.44 million or 53.5% of the eligible population base, and 72% of the people who collected their voting cards.

The elections of Yemen are important for many reasons, as follows:

1) The elections are important for Yemen's smooth relations with the world. They allow for the rehabilitation of Yemen's image. This is critical to attract foreign investors and to continue to receive foreign aid.

2) The elections are important for Yemen internally. They allow for some breathing room and space for all political parties and groups. It is an arbiter of power and a mechanism for competition.

The present elections, and the results they are expected to result, will definitely strengthen the hand of the president and his party in the future. How he uses this new strength will determine the harmony and future prospects of Yemen.



### Exhibition of Iraqi Artist

Iraqi artist Rashad Selim will show his products on May 3rd. The exhibition will take place at his residence. Dr. Helga von Strachwitz, Ambassador of Germany, is the sponsor of this exhibition.

Rashad, a resident of Sanaa for the last few years, is an accomplished artist who has shown his work in various parts of the world.

### Elections Anecdotes

Many in Yemen have developed jokes about the elections, one way or the other. But more importantly, there are some actual incidents which are anecdotes, like the following:

1. Four women gave birth while waiting in line to exercise their right to vote. They have two boys and two girls.
2. Two women, wives of a candidate, decided to vote in favor of other candidates - they could not agree on one. But they did agree not to vote for their husband candidate. "We know him better," they told the crowd.
3. The residents of Zuqar, one of the islands which is being contested by Eritrea, exercised their rights and joined the rest of Yemen in voting.

### Elections Observers and Journalists

The number of regional and international observers, representatives of NGOs and journalists who are covering the parliamentary elections is around 500. Most of these visitors will be leaving the country over the next few days.

Most of them have given the elections high marks, notwithstanding the sporadic incidents.

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**Hussain Aideed:**

**“Ethiopia has undertaken a mission to undermine Somalia.”**

The situation in Somalia is gradually being normalized, as a new generation of leaders is taking charge. Key among these individuals is General Mohammed Farah Aideed's son and heir, Hussain.

Hussain Aideed today leads an interim government that brings together most of the factions in the country and is working hard to bring normalcy to his country. The main tool he is using now is to talk to the other factions, notably the 16 groups which are part of his government. He has also been visiting countries of the region to explain the situation and his efforts. Aideed's government controls today most of Somalia, and is steadily working to bring an end to the chaos and unrest. One major problem faced by the government, according to Aideed, is a hostile Ethiopia.

“Regional and international geo-politics and religious bias have interfered to frustrate and delay the achievement of our goals.”

He is now in Sanaa on an official invitation from President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Accompanying him is a large delegation which includes Jama Mohammed Ghalib, Foreign Minister; Mohammed Qanyare Afrah, Interior Minister; Abdul-Rahman Farah Ismail, Minister of International Cooperation; Mohammed Warsame, Ambassador at Large; Somali representative in Kenya, Abdulatif Mohammed; and Omar Hussain, Somali Representative in Yemen.

M. Bin Sallam of Yemen Times talked to him and filed the following report.

Excerpts:

**Q: How is the situation now in Somalia?**

**A:** The situation has improved since the establishment of a government 21 months ago. There is more security and stability now. We were able to achieve this after the departure of the UN forces from the country.

In a meeting held in Nairobi in March, 1994, 16 Somali factions decided to hold a national reconciliation conference in Mogadishu. After seven and a half months of intense negotiations, the current 16-faction government [another faction joined up in June, 1995] was established, and national reconciliation was achieved. Two regions controlled by Egal and two in the north eastern part (Bossaso) did not join the current administration.

A comprehensive political, security, economic, and agricultural program was adopted by the government. Under this program, food was delivered to 13 out of the 18 regions constituting Somalia.

**Q: Ethiopia has recently tried to mediate among 27 Somali factions. What happened?**

**A:** The conference of Sodere is an Ethiopian conspiracy against Somalia. There are no 27 factions existing in the whole of Somalia. In a conference organized by the UN and held in Addis Ababa in January of 1993, it was decided that the number of Somali factions should not exceed 16 - including the northern National Somali Movement. All these factions have successfully participated in the government. In Sodere, Ethiopia created many one-man factions.

The Ethiopian government wants to influence the Somali issue for its own ends. This was clearly demonstrated when Ethiopia tried to put down the initiative of the Kenyan president to find a solution for the Somali problem. To spite the Kenyan president, Ethiopia called for the Sodere conference.

Ethiopia has provided different groups in Somalia with a plethora of weapons. Mogadishu alone got more than 10 tons of ammunition. Thus, Ethiopia aims to re-ignite the war in the capital. It has also attacked and occupied part of the Gedo region in the west of the country. This was a revenge attack against the faction that joined the government last June. It is very well known that

Ethiopia wants to have a presence in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean through Somalia.

When we complained to the UN, Ethiopia alleged that an Islamic organization in Somalia has been attacking its territories. However, the Ethiopian aggression was quite unwarranted.

**Q: There were reports that Islamic extremists were operating in Somalia. This was what invited the Ethiopian attack. How do you respond to that?**

**A:** Honestly speaking, there is no extremism in Somalia. Those reports were referring to Al-Itihad, which is an Islamic organization mainly involved in relief and rehabilitation programs. The West keeps throwing these accusations at Muslims while at the same time engaging in an aggressive proselytizing campaign. For example, there are today more than 62 international Christian missions (please refer to box) with the purpose of promoting Christianity at the expense of other religions.

This drive led to intolerance and dogmatism. Western money is spent heavily among the poor simply in order to change their religion and culture. We see today a resurgence of Ethiopia's historical culture of religious intolerance, which has always been the case in successive Ethiopian regimes over the centuries.

**Q: Can you tell us about your current official visit to Yemen?**

**A:** I have come to Yemen in response to a gracious invitation from my brother, President Ali Abdulla Saleh last September. I could not come then due to the internal circumstances of Somalia. I would like to thank the President for his enormous efforts for the good of my country. I sincerely expect him to help me like he helped my father before. I also call upon Yemen to strongly work to preserve the unity and integrity of Somalia. I shall frankly and honestly present the actual situation in my country to President Ali Abdulla Saleh when I see him.

**Q: Are you seeking financial or military support from Yemen?**

**A:** Military-wise, all Somalis are quite experienced in this field. The seven-year war has made sure of that. Somalia, however, needs a lot of



assistance for its economy, educational system, and the repatriation of the tens of thousands of Somali refugees. Security in the country is now better established, but there is a great need for the return of Somali workforce.

We speak to you as brothers and family from deep within our hearts. We do not specify a particular field of cooperation between Yemen and Somalia.

**Q: What is the current status of the Somali embassy in Sana'a?**

**A:** After many years of internal strife, we have started to direct our attention to our embassies abroad. Many of these embassies are still staffed by people from the era of the former president, Mohammed Saeed Barre. Most of them belong to groups working

against us. We are now in the process of preparing and qualifying new diplomatic staff.

**Q: What is the specific role of Yemen in mediating in the Somali conflict?**

**A:** I would like first to emphasize the strong fraternal links joining Yemen and Somalia. So Yemen has an open role to play in assisting our country, in any way it sees fit. Yemen is one of a few countries from which we are ready and open to receive advice and suggestions. We are certain that the interests of Yemen are those of Somalia and vice versa. Yemen can also help to re-instate Somalia in regional and international organizations such as the Arab League and the UN. We need this political support badly.

**A Major Proselytizing Drive: Some of 62 Christian Missions in Ethiopia**

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- Baptist Mission of Ethiopia, POB 5539, Tel. 711671;
- Catholic Relief Services, POB 6592, Tel. 653591;
- Church of Christ, POB 3147, Tel. 710981;
- Emmanuel Baptist Church, POB 30042, Tel.:
- Ethiopian Catholic Secretariat, POB 2454, Tel. 550300;
- Ethiopian Evangelical Church, POB 2087, Tel 553722;
- Ethiopian Orthodox Church, POB 503, Tel. 119661;
- Faith Mission, POB 30073, Tel. 120484;
- Feed the Children Int'l Ministries, POB 5683, 511548;
- Hope Enterprises, POB 30153, Tel. 710628;
- Jerusalem Memorial of Ethiopian Believers, 3430, 119150;
- Jesuit Relief Services, POB 30105, Tel. 162234;
- K.H. Church Development Program, 5829, Tel. 515844;
- Lutheran World Federation, POB 40132, Tel. 553288;
- Mennonite Mission in Ethiopia, POB 70367, 203684;
- Norwegian Church Aid, POB 1248, Tel. 512927;
- Society of Int'l Missionaries, POB 127, Tel. 552348;
- St. Matthew's Church, POB 109, Tel. 112623;
- Swedish Philadelphia Church Mission, 529, 516830;
- Swiss Evangelical Nile Mission, POB 30732, 120465;
- World Vision International/Ethiopia, 3330, 611704.

**Q: Will you make an official request in this regard?**

**A:** Yes.

**Q: Let us now talk about your visit to Cairo and your meetings with Arab League officials?**

**A:** We have succeeded in refuting many of the malicious rumors and dispelling the doubts regarding the true situation in Somalia. We presented a wide and comprehensive view of the circumstances in Somalia to our brothers at the Arab League.

We asked the secretary-general to send an envoy, under our protection, to Somalia to see the facts as they are on the ground.

The same facts were presented to the Egyptian officials. They became convinced of the true situation in my country. Our visit to Cairo came in response to a visit by an Egyptian delegation last June, while my father was still alive. Egypt has played a great and active role in bringing about the independence of Somalia.

The Egyptian government has promised to provide Somalia with much needed educational assistance. We hope to consolidate this assistance and move on to new fields.

**Q: Your visit to Sana'a comes when the Yemeni parliamentary elections are in full swing. What do you think?**

**A:** We highly admire the democratic process in Yemen. We hope that similarly fair and free elections will soon be held in our country without any foreign interference.

The most important message we would like to send to the rest of the world is to let the Somali people deal with their own internal affairs. We are not hostile towards anyone, and we certainly do not welcome any hostility towards us. We consider the Ethiopian-backed Sodere group illegal and should not be supported.

We ask the international community to provide us with economic and technical assistance so as to be able to rebuild our country.

The Somali transitional government has put a program of reconstruction. Somalia is rich with many natural resources. It requires the assistance of the outside world in tapping these resources.

The Somali provisional constitution stipulates the adoption of free-market economy.

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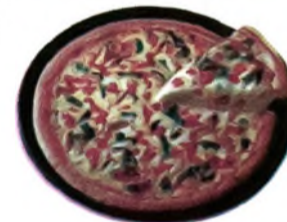
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ditional Thin N' Crispy. All our pizzas are baked fresh to order and contain only Halal ingredients. But that's not all; we also offer delicious starters, mouth-watering desserts, wholesome salads and a whole host of beverage from pots of tea to ice cold Pepsi.

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Mr. Saeed Ali Maiteb, the Food Services Manager of Al-Qimma Food Co., Ltd., the franchise owner of Pizza Hut Restaurants International in Yemen, says that the first Pizza Hut restaurant in the country was opened in Aden, on October 1995. The second unit located inside the Sabaeen Park, in the capital city of Sana'a was opened on April 24. This second unit has a bigger seating capacity and more facilities for entertainment of families like playground and bigger parking area. The Pizza Hut unit is a part of a four-restaurant food and entertainment complex that will include a hamburger, chicken, and that the company intends to build in the near future. The company plans to open a third Pizza Hut unit in Sana'a by the end of 97 and branches in other govern- orates like Hodeidah, Taiz and Hadhramaut.

More than 80% of the raw foodstuff and packaging materials is brought from abroad and the rest are sourced locally. Meat toppings, cheese, spices, flour, and other essential pizza ingredients are imported from France, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and other countries chosen by Pizza Hut International

according to strict international standards. Kitchen equipment and furniture are imported from Pepsicola Food Services, which supplies all Pizza Hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and Taco Bell restaurants worldwide.

Al Qimma is also involved in other food business activities such as poultry production, catering for sea vessels, airlines, seminars, conferences, food & beverage production, etc. The Pizza Hut restaurant in Sana'a is an architectural mixture of Yemeni and western features which make it distinct from other Pizza Hut restaurants in the world. Mr. Scott Wilson, the general manager of Pepsicola Restaurants International for the Middle East who flew in for the Grand Opening said that "Pizza Hut is the first multinational restaurant chain to open in Yemen and we intend to grow over the country under the umbrella of Al Qimma Food Co." Mr. Wilson is very impressed with the restaurant and company facilities and he believes that the business will expand fast in the future.



# Malta - a small but dynamic country

Malta is a small island state situated almost in the center of the Mediterranean sea between Southern Europe and North Africa. Perhaps well known for its sandy beaches and outdoor activities, Malta is also a profitable place to do business. In fact, the economy of Malta is continually growing, with real GDP forecasted to increase by about 5.0% during 1997. Unemployment stands at only 3.8% and inflation at a low rate of 4.1%.

levels, have expanded rapidly in recent years with exports to Yemen more than doubling between 1994 and 1996 reaching about US\$ 1.5million in 1996. Products currently exported from Malta to Yemen include mostly foodstuffs as well as toiletries, household goods, building materials and other goods.

In spite of the small size of the country and population of about 360,000, Malta has a remarkably strong export potential. Malta boasts one of the highest per capital in the world reaching about US\$8000 in 1996.

The Malta External Trade Corporation, Malta's national export promotion organization, is leading a group of twenty-five manufacturers and exporters from Malta on trade visit to Yemen. The main purpose of this trade delegation is to assess the potential of Maltese products in this prosperous market and to establish sales contacts with potential importers, distributors, retailers and wholesalers in Yemen.

The Maltese companies offer excellent business opportunities and this is attributable to the high quality and competitive prices of their products coupled with reliability and flexibility to customers' requirements. The excellent sea and air links existing between the two countries also present regular and efficient transport connections.

Companies in Yemen are encouraged to avail themselves of this business opportunity by meeting the Maltese company representatives during their visit to Sana'a on the 17th and 18th of May 1997 at the Taj Sheba Hotel in Sana'a.



**Mr. Stephen Sultana**  
General Manager  
Malta External Trade Corporation

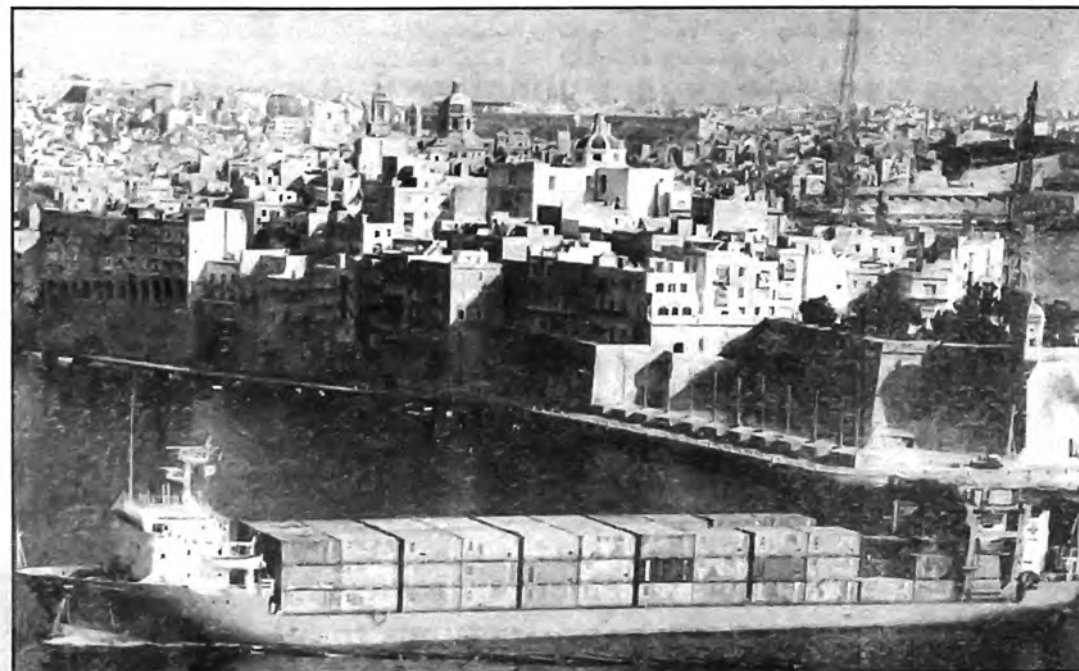
Malta has embarked on a free market economy for the past decade, with the role of the private sector greatly increasing. The tourist industry also provides a large percentage of foreign earnings with over one million tourists visiting Malta each year. Transshipment operations, ship-repair, international banking and financial services all assisted in creating a healthy economic situation.

In many areas, Malta may be classified as an advanced nation with its industrial base concentrated primarily on manufacturing for export. Electronic and high-tech products are the main export sectors, where many international European and American companies have established subsidiaries. Malta's main export markets are the European Union, the Middle East and North America. The European Union accounts for about 76% of Malta's total exports with Italy, France and Germany being the three main trading partners. Exports to the Middle East countries have also increased substantially with the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia receiving most of Malta's exports to the Gulf.

Malta's trade with Yemen, although still at low



**Mr. Dennis Vella**  
Manager, Export Marketing Division  
Malta External Trade Corporation



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For more information, please contact:

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Tel: (+356) 448-186/7/8; Fax: (+356) 496-687, 448-401  
Attn: Mr. Joseph Galea

or

**SANAA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY**

Tel: (01) 232-461, Fax: (01) 232-412

or

**AIR MALTA OFFICE IN DUBAI**

Tel: (+971) 4 319-990 Fax: (+971) 4 319-760  
Attn: Mr. Sam Portelli

Trade Mission organised by METCO (Malta's national trade promotion organisation) with the support of the Federation of the Yemen Chambers of Commerce industry, the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce & Industry and AIR MALTA, Malta's national airline.

# Common Sense

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

## What the People Say on the Elections...



Mixing with the general public provides interesting insights regarding the democratic experience in our second parliamentary elections since democracy and political pluralism were introduced to the Republic of Yemen upon its birth in 1990. This becomes especially significant during the last few days just before the election. This observer would like to share with the readers some of the observations that seem to show that democracy might have just found a place to plant its roots here and that its future prospects might be good.

These are the observations:

1) The most noticeable thing was that there were people who do realize the importance of voting, and that they want to exercise this right. A taxi driver whom this writer has known for quiet some time on the Rawdha to Sana'a route, assured all the passengers that he was definitely going to exercise his right to vote. For this driver who is registered in his home village, this would mean lost revenue that could reach YR 10,000, which is a large sum for a taxi driver to give up. He had cancelled his eid holidays at home so he can make enough money to and remain at home for the elections. He was speaking very sincerely when he said, "This is a right that tells me that I can choose the person I want to speak for me in the government. Thus the burden is on the voters to choose those who will really show that it is time to have some honest and serious government officials managing the affairs of the country. Let us hope that this time we choose people who are not going to be as boring as the last lot we had in parliament."

2) In one of the Sanaa City constituencies, the candidate who ran under the Islah party ticket, and who was a member of the last parliament, gathered some of the constituents to give a campaign speech. As he spoke, one of the constituents got up and started to speak his mind about the poor performance of the last parliament. He then remarked, talking to the candidate, "We voted for you the last time hoping that something will come to the district, in one form of another, like steady electricity, better roads, more efficient garbage collection, etc. I know it is not your job, but we saw a lot of members of parliament trying hard to do something for their districts and they in fact succeeded. But, for four years, we never saw your face in this district, or even in the big mosque in Ramadhan or on Fridays. Now that the election is here, you ask us to vote for you again. Even when we want to find you, we are not familiar with your location or whereabouts. Now you come and distribute provisions to the widows. You fooled us once." The citizen who spoke was not affiliated to any party. He was a farmer, who has always been outspoken whenever there was a gathering or meeting of the citizens of the area.

3) In the taxi, a woman remarks, "Why is it that these people become so kind and charitable whenever they have these elections. They come to our homes and give us canned milk and flour and even invite us to attend what they call political meetings." Another passenger advised her, "Look, you should keep what they give you, after all you can be sure that it is from public funds. But do go and vote, and be sure to vote for the ones who does not think that you are so cheap that they can buy your vote with these items they give out. Personally I think anyone who does not have a party to give away crumbs would be more serious about making sure that the citizens of the country never have to be in such a condition that they would be willing to sell their votes!"

4) On a mini-bus, the man who just entered opens the paper issued by the Islah Party, called the Islah. There is a big red headline which all the passengers can read, "Fight Against the Centers of Corruption!". The man sitting across him just could not help noticing the headline. Shaking his head, he said, "Oh no! They do not really think that the people are that naive. These people have been given ministries and institutions of the government to manage and run as they wish. Yet, in the past four years, we never heard of anyone from these ministries or institutions going to the prosecutor, let alone get punishment for being corrupt. I was one of many voters who thought that the Islah was really going to change things, because they spoke openly during the last election about ending government corruption, and they promised to do this and

to do that. Now they come back to us singing the same songs again. Are we going to be stuck with these people forever!"

The passenger next to this writer pointed out, "When our Islahi Minister first took over, we really expected some good changes to come around. All the changes that the guy did was appoint people from his party to as many key positions as he could. That would have been fine, if the old staff were corrupt or incompetent. But I know some of the staff. Quite a few of them were honest and fairly competent. In fact, some of the replaced staff had M.A. degrees, and were replaced by people with High School Diplomas. Work almost came to a standstill, because the employees had a hard time trying to figure out who is what in the organization. When that happened, we realized that we are going from bad to worse!"

The bus driver, who seemed to be a supporter of the People's General Congress, judging from the posters of the candidates that were on the bus backshield, said, "Then we should make sure to save the country from getting worse, by voting for the PGC." The last passenger corrected, "I am not trying to say that. What I wonder is how can you choose between 2 parties that have been basically running the show for 20 years together, but without having to worry about the reaction of the audience, despite their chronic failure."

"The driver said, "Believe me, the PGC going it all alone, will be your best bet."

The man with the paper said, "I think the driver has not been around all these years. I am going to try someone else this year, even if I know he will not win. At least I will not give my vote to any of those who will make us losers again, and again."

5) A well known religious leader (non-partisan) was asked to endorse the candidacy of the Islah nominee for the district. The man apparently was put into a tight corner for the endorsement. The man wrote a No-Objections type of endorsement, which the candidate was displaying all over the place. The PGC candidate was not about to be outdone. He went to the same religious dignitary and inquired why the support to the other candidate, when he is already the member of parliament for the district and that he is far better than the other candidate. Again, our poor man was put into a tight corner. However, the religious man was not pleased at having his previous endorsement misconstrued. He issued another endorsement insisting that he never endorsed the other candidate as the most fitting candidate for the job. He also included praise for the PGC man and confirmed him also to be suited for the voters' confidence on election day.

6) The Imam who conducts the Friday sermon, in the Rawdha Mosque gave perhaps the most eloquent speech that could be made regarding the elections. He reminded the people that they are now responsible for any failure by the government, unless they choose the people they know to be honest and good law-abiding citizens. He suggested that the voters should ask the candidates how much taxes they have paid and to see if their car papers are in order. He also asked them to check, if the candidates have armed guards with them, and whether the guns were registered. If the candidates are unable to provide positive proof of their good citizenship and adherence to the law, then they might as well look for the candidates who are better examples of good citizenship. He asked the worshippers to make sure that their votes are not sold to the highest bidder of crumbs or handouts passed out by the candidates or their parties. He reminded them that they can change things now if they use their votes properly.

One could not help but notice that there was a lot of activity by the candidates to try to plug all the votes. At least that was the case of the candidates from the ruling parties, the Islah and the PGC. As for the opposition parties, this time regretfully, their activities are hardly noticed in the capital. Public reaction to all the last minute campaigning humdrum seems to be very mixed. The intellectuals and the more informed tend to see the PGC in a more confident stand and seem to believe that the PGC will wrap up the election, though many were not comfortable by that result. The Islah campaign seems to be somewhat nervous and somewhat clandestine, with a strong effort to show that they are the underdog in the elections and that the PGC has reneged on their agreements with them. The agreement to work out the division of the constituencies

between the two buddies-enemies-buddies-enemies - the PGC and Islah - both say is no more effective. Some are saying that the pact is operative, but both parties are staging that it has collapsed to give the elections more authenticity and some "heat", and to show that the money being spent is really worth it.

The 1993 parliamentary elections were a lot more tense, thanks to the presence of the YSP, with all its former machinery of power, now forever lost, it seems. There seemed to be a lot more last minute push and shove, with regards to the candidates who threatened the positions of the coalition members. Maybe this time, this push and shove is not apparent, because the candidates running in Sanaa, despite their large number, are not the caliber of Mohammed Al-Fusayel or Mohammed Al-Muta'a and others who were told to forget about continuing their candidacies and who had proven that they can really speak for the public interest. There were a lot of independent candidates, which would spread the votes, giving the ruling coalition a greater chance of getting the small edge they need.

Yet, it is refreshing to see that people are beginning to realize what this voting is really all about. It is regretful that the opposition parties are not in tune with the people's moods properly and could advantage of the chance to really take their case to the people and sell their candidates. They have a big opportunity, because the people would be more inclined to consider an alternative to the coalition, if this alternative would just explain himself to the voters. Because of the lack of enthusiasm among the opposition, it is difficult to see how they can build up any momentum in future rounds and in the expected elections for local councils, if they ever materialize!

## A Tragic Year for Arab Journalism

The death of Mustafa Amin, the former editor-in-chief of Akhbar Al-Youm in Cairo, signals the second big loss to the Arab press this year. It had earlier mourned the death of another giant among Arab journalists - Mr. Ahmed Bahauddin, the celebrated



former editor of Al-Arabi, who was renowned for his perception and comprehension of regional and international political scene. Last week's death of Mustafa Amin, ended the professional career of an outspoken critic of totalitarianism and oppression of the press and the people. He is especially important in that he had to give 9 years of his life in prison for insisting on his right to print what the people should know and not what the leaders want them to know. He was also a strong supporter of Arab causes, especially towards the end of his career.

He was often victimized under the accusation of being pro-West. Yet, he was last reported as saying, with regards to peace in the Middle East, "We will never regain our rights (as Arabs) except by war, this being said not out of love for war, but because this peace just will never give us back all our rights. Any peace that does not fully give back your rights, is weak, and will be blown away with the wind."

A man who says stuff like that just cannot be one to fit the role of a CIA agent, as his torturers claimed! Although partially rehabilitated under the late President Anwar Sadat, Mustafa Amin was never really given the recognition he deserved. Now after his death, there are flowery writings about his courage, vision and talent. God bless Mr. Amin's soul, for no one wrote about democracy and paid for his views like Mustafa and his late twin brother Ali Amin. The worry is that for now, there does not seem to be any replacements.

### ألف مبروك

أطيب التهاني والتبريكات نهديا لكل من

أحمد صالح الحيدري

صنعة علي أحمد

وذلك بمناسبة زواجهما.

تمنياتنا لهما بحياة زوجية سعيدة،

وبالرفاه والبنين.

المهنؤون:

فؤاد محمد الجلال

عبدالعزیز، علي، وأنور الصيادي،

وجميع الأهل والأصدقاء.

## المنطقة الحرة - عدن

تهنى القيادة السياسية بزعامة ابن اليمن البار  
الفريق علي عبدالله صالح - رئيس الجمهورية  
والحكومة الرشيدة، وكافة أبناء الشعب اليمني  
بمناسبة عيد الأضحى المبارك

كما تتقدم بخالص التهاني القلبية للقيادة السياسية  
والشعب اليمني بمناسبة نجاح الانتخابات النيابية.

## Aden Free Zone

presents

its heartfelt congratulations and best wishes  
to

President Ali Abdullah Saleh

The Government

and the whole Yemeni population

on the occasion of Eid Al-Adha Al-Mubarak

Aden Free Zone also presents its heartfelt  
congratulations and best wishes to the president  
and Yemeni People on the success

of the elections process.

Many happy returns to all.

الأستاذ عبدالله عبدالواسع البركاني - رئيس مجلس الإدارة  
والإدارة العليا وجميع الموظفين والفروع في

## بنك التسليف التعاوني الزراعي

يتقدمون

بأحر التهاني الصادقة والتبريكات القلبية إلى  
رائد التنمية وراعي الديمقراطية في اليمن

### الفريق علي عبدالله صالح - رئيس الجمهورية

وإلى كافة أبناء اليمن

بمناسبة نجاح الانتخابات - هذا العرس اليمني الكبير

وإلى مزيد من العطاء بما يرفع إسم اليمن عالياً بين الأمم

بنك التسليف التعاوني الزراعي : ركيزة أساسية للتنمية اليمنية الشاملة

**Abdullah A. Al-Barakani, Chairman of the Board,  
the Top Management, All Employees, and Branches of the**

## **Agricultural Cooperative Credit Bank**

present

their heartfelt congratulations and best wishes

to

### **President Ali Abdullah Saleh**

and the whole Yemeni population

on the success of the elections process.

**We join you as you raise Yemen's name high among nations.**

The Agricultural Cooperative Credit Bank:  
An Important Pillar for Yemen's Comprehensive Development.





# GHADIR & NUSHOOR IN YEMEN: Zaydistan Votes for Imam Ali

It is a good thing that none of the international elections observers were in Sa'ada or Shihara on Friday or, even worse, in Rayda on Saturday morning. Had any of them been around, there would have been terrified reports of violent clashes involving thousands of men using weapons ranging from the usual kalashnikovs, M-16 and G-3 up to RPGs, bazooka and Sam-7 missiles. Even though it sounded as loud as war, all these men congregating in various parts of the tribal Zaydistan were simply commemorating the defeat of their candidate Ali.

But Ali was not running for a seat in the Yemeni parliament. Ali's full name is Ali bin Abi Talib, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). And the position he was running for - Caliph - was that of successor to the Prophet after he passed away in 632 AD. As is well known, Ali lost the first time to Abubakar al-Siddiq. Then he lost to Omar ibn al-Khattab, then to Uthman. The latter's murder in 656, finally allowed Ali to take his turn. But even then, he remained challenged until he himself was also murdered in 661. By then, Mu'awiya, the designated rival Caliph by those who are known today as Sunnis, was already in charge. Partisans of Ali (Shi-at Ali (Shiites) = Ali's party) feel he should have been the first Caliph to succeed the Prophet. They also believe that the caliphate should be reserved to the descendants of the Prophet, the Hashemites - belonging to the clan of Hashem a third-generation ancestor of Muhammad (pbuh). The Shiites are themselves divided into a number of branches according to the number of imams they recognize. Yemen became a Zaydi stronghold after the arrival of the founder of the imamic regime, Imam al-Hadi ilal-Haq, in the 10th century. The reason why so many ammunitions were wasted through the Northern regions of Yemen last Friday and Saturday is because, to this day, the Shiites commemorate the day of Ghadir, also called Ghadir Ali.



In Lebanon, Ghadir celebrations have been started in recent years. In Syria too, the local Ismaili communities commemorate Ghadir Day and it would seem natural that the Alawites do something special on that day.

With its more pious or political atmosphere, the Ghadir is less embarrassingly bloody and primitive than the Ashura, another important Shiite festival commemorating the murder of Hussein, one of Ali's two sons. Interestingly enough, the Ashura is not celebrated in Zaydi Yemen, thereby confirming the original nature of Zaydism which is often considered the fifth jurisprudential school of Sunnism. Isolated as it is from other Shiite communities, Zaydi Yemen has developed its own traditions. According to a local chronicler, it was Imam al-Mutawakkil Ismail who started the Ghadir celebration in 1663. He thus aimed at strengthening the legitimacy of imams who have to fulfill 14 conditions to be designated, one of them being descent from Ali and his sons Hassan and Hussein.

But whereas all Shiites agree on the special importance of Ghadir, the Yemenis have mixed it with tribal traditions. Zaydi Yemenis tend to confuse Ghadir Day, also called Ghadir Ali, with the Nushoor. Yet, Ghadir is on the ninth day after the Feast of the Sacrifice, 18 of Dhul-Hijja in the Islamic calendar, and the Nushoor is the day after. Both celebrations were much more important under Imam Yahya (1904-1948), less so under his son Ahmad (1948-1962), and almost forgotten since the September 1962 Revolution. Nushoor Day was both a celebration to honor members of the house of the Prophet and a ceremony during which representatives of the tribes, judges, towns-people and other descendants of the Prophet would renew their pledge of allegiance to the ruling imam of Yemen.

The meaning of the term Nushoor itself is unclear. It is related to resurrection or diffusion or extending outwards. In Sanaa, like in Sa'ada - the birthplace of the Zaydi kingdom of Yemen where al-Hadi ilal-Haq is buried - people hold their celebrations beyond the town-walls. To add to the confusion there is also a wadi Nushoor north of Sa'ada and it is one of the places in the governorate where celebrations take place. At any rate, Nushoor seems to be specifically Yemeni, although the fact that Ghadir Khumm is away from any town and was also a junction of several roads leading to Mecca might point to an etymology referring to a place out of town.

The Dhulayma tribe of Hashid has its gatherings on Ghadir Day at the village level and then a tribe-wide meeting for the Nushoor the next day in its capital of al-Habur. In al-Ahnum and Shihara, people only talk of the Ghadir. The Ahnumi tribesmen celebrate it by slowly climbing to the top of the mountain overlooking the village of Dari, dancing all the way up, and singing their zamils with improvised political lyrics. Once on the flat top of the mountain, part of them pray the noon prayer in the open and then listen to the preaching while the rest of the participants engage in shooting games before going down the mountain with more zamil-singing. In Shihara, where Hashemites are numerous, the celebration is more religion-oriented and the preaching makes specific reference to the meaning of Ghadir.

In Sa'ada, Ghadir Day reflects the tense relations of the inhabitants with a republican regime that toppled the imamate. For years, the celebration of the Ghadir was confined to remote places where rebellious tribes and nostalgic royalists would keep the tradition alive despite the obvious lack of a ruling imam to pledge allegiance to. Since the 1980s, the influence of the Shiite revival, reinforced by attempts on the part of Iran's twelfth Shiites to link up with Zaydis, allowed for the

return of the Ghadir close to Sa'ada, but also in Jabal Razih, close to the Saudi border.

Another element which may explain the return of the Ghadir is the spread of the puritanical doctrine which aggressively rejects and condemns pilgrimages to the tombs of saints and any mark of deference toward Hashemites. Repeated destruction of tombs and derogatory preaching could have created a counter-reaction whereby people rediscover their Zaydi/ Yemeni traditions as a way

to protest a puritanical propaganda that originated in other parts of Arabia. An extra element in favor of militant Zaydism was the proclamation of unity involving Southern YSP leaders who were also descendants of the Prophet (Ali Salim al-Beedh, Haidar Abubakar al-Attas).

The Yemen Arab Republic's discrete anti-Hashemite stand was thus weakened and allowed space to express Zaydi ideas without risking the charge of being a royalist. But some officials were not happy with that and, in 1993, a few weeks after the elections, a number of prominent Zaydi figures

who had participated in the Ghadir were arrested in Sa'ada. Tribes of the region have now made it clear that they would react if such religious repression was to take place again. In 1996 and 1997, thousands of inhabitants of Sa'ada and its surroundings participated in the two meetings close to the city.



The religious element is quite secondary for most of them. On the eve of Ghadir Day, they already start shooting on various targets, rocks or simply in the air. Others dance or engage in tribal poetry contests. On Ghadir Day itself, they meet again in greater numbers attracting all sorts of traders and craftsmen for a short-lived open-air market. Due to the heat, men of religion will only preach during the early morning before leaving the tribesmen do more shooting. Students from the new Zaydi institutes attend the Ghadir, carrying banners that proclaim Ali's merits. The most striking element is the return of participants inside Sa'ada, totting their guns and even shooting in the air which is strictly forbidden but apparently tolerated on that occasion. In that sense, the Ghadir has now become a public display of tribal re-assertion of a socio-religious ritual and Zaydi tradition.

Closer to Sanaa, the Nushoor of Rayda is impressive because of the huge number of participants and because of its almost complete tribal nature. No one is able to explain why, but the Nushoor takes place near the green and white tomb with cupola of Imam al-Mahdi Hussain bin al-Qassim who was killed in 1013 and who originated from the overlooking village.

Nowadays women or spectators sit on the rocky slopes of the mountain to observe the gathering. The tomb provides a sanctuary status to the place preventing violence between participating tribesmen. Very few of them know who is buried there and fewer bother to get near the tomb. Some even believe it is the tomb of Hussain, the son of Ali who is buried in Kerbala in Iraq.

The Nushoor of Rayda is basically a tribal meeting, exclusively

Bakil, hosted by the tribe of Iyal Surayh and attended by the tribes living around al-Bawn, the most fertile plain of the highlands. As is usual on such occasions, traders sell hot potatoes, slices of water-melon, religious stickers and fire-crackers, as if the deafening



soundtrack of the guns was not sufficient. For every approaching tribe, which announces itself with its guns, a long line or half-circle is formed. Once the hosts and visitors are close enough, the drums stop beating and speakers in the name of each tribe greet each other and exchange good wishes.

Last Saturday, the elections were mentioned during each of the 5 exchanges and everybody seemed to call for peaceful elections and hoped for a lot of good to come out of the ballot boxes. After the greetings, the tribes will either merge immediately with the arriving group, running to join the swelling ranks of those already present, or they form an immense line and shake hand with the hosts. Historians tell of earlier meetings when poetry and shooting contests were organized with tribal sheikhs and elders renegotiating contracts and alliances. At noon, all debts would be settled, amends executed by slaughtering bulls or offering weapons. A lunch would conclude the meeting and underline, by way of sharing bread and salt, the brotherhood of the participating Bakil tribesmen.

Today, all this has disappeared. Apart from walking around the little market and watching a single pantomime artist telling jokes and playing African rhythms on his drum, most people leave as soon as the last tribe has merged with the others. Once they have returned to their village, some people will also have their single yearly qat-chew in the open, out of their village.

Despite their loudspeakers, the three religious men who try to remind the tribesmen of Ali's misfortunes and keep referring to him as the Commander of the Faithful, are not able to attract more than 20 listeners from among the thousands who attend.

And yet, there remains a function to this meeting. Tribes show their cohesion and also display their wealth by the number of expensive cars and arms they use. On Saturday everybody commented on al-Ghulah's strength, as evidenced by the immense line of its singing members walking across the plain and by the noise of their bazooka and Sam-7 shots. An attendant was not too impressed. After all, as he said, the biggest gun-trader of the region is from al-Ghulah and the few thousands of dollars he spent to honor Ali and show the strength of his tribe represent little for him.

But for most attendants, the Ghadir and Nushoor were just good days for showing off the guns, for singing and dancing, and for enjoying another big meal and tons of fresh qat-leaves. It is just a chance to learn a few new lyrics and zamils.

Religion has given way to tradition, and it is dimension that it makes the crowds come back. The Ghadir and Nushoor are quickly becoming part of the tribal folklore of Zaydi Yemen. It could be a major tourist attraction like the attractions in Morocco and Tunisia. But fewer guns will need to be carried to complete the transformation!

Text and pictures by : Renaud Detalle French Center for Yemeni Studies.



As he felt that his health was declining, and after he became certain that the Revelation transmitted to him and recorded in the Quran was complete, the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) undertook his farewell pilgrimage to Mecca. On his way back toward Medina, he stopped at Ghadir Khumm, the pond or marsh of Khumm. What he said or did not say during that stop remains a matter of contention between Sunnis and Shiites. Some extremist branches of Shiism go as far as saying that on that occasion, the Prophet acknowledged the divine nature of Ali. Most people agree that he said something about Ali bin Abi Talib. There are many sayings of the Prophet that he is supposed to have pronounced in Ghadir Khumm; yet, none of the contemporary biographers of the Prophet mention them for fear of retaliation by any side.

One of the sayings on which Shiites rely is his statement, "To whom I am master, Ali, too, is master". Those words came after the Prophet told his followers he was closer to them than they were to themselves. Which can be interpreted as a claim to know better what was good for them. To further their point some add that Omar ibn al-Khattab then told Ali, "Blessed are you, Ali, because you have become the master of every believing Muslim man and woman". This is somehow contradicted by the fact that the same Omar had no scruples to become the second Caliph afterwards, thereby over-taking the unfortunate Ali.

The Lebanese civil war and the Iranian revolution have sparked a revival of Shiite thought and tradition. In fact, a bibliography about the Ghadir published in Beirut shows that there is a growing quantity of books related to this subject. Two centuries ago, only 4 books were produced on the subject in the full 100 years; in the last century, the production grew to 72 books. Over the last 17 years, already 43 books have been published.

Ghadir Day is now a major celebration of the Islamic Republic of Iran and political leaders are accustomed to delivering speeches on the occasion.



## RABBI URGES TERRORISM AGAINST ARABS

An Israeli lawmaker demanded last week a police investigation into an anti-Arab Rabbi's religious ruling backing suicide attacks by Jews. Meretz party legislator Ron Cohen made the request after uncovering an article entitled "Sacrificing Oneself for God" in the periodical of a seminary linked to an outlawed Jewish supremacy group.

"This is a Jewish Hamas, supporting the methods of Hamas," Cohen said, referring to the militant Palestinian group that has killed scores in suicide bombings in Israel. Rabbi Elitsur Segel of the Jewish Idea Seminary in the West Bank settlement of Tapuah argued under the heading "suicide while killing the enemy" that killing oneself during wartime was permissible, "for the sake of the victory of Israel."

Jewish militants living in the West Bank are armed to the teeth and they believe they are in a constant 'sacred' war with neighboring Arabs.

"In every war there is a need to undertake operations that certainly bring about the death of the doer," Segel wrote. "A man who volunteers for such operations will be called a hero and a martyr," he wrote.

The seminary is affiliated with the Kach Group, an ultra-nationalist movement founded by the late American-Israeli Rabbi Meir Kahane, who was assassinated by an Arab in New York in 1990.

Extremist Jews, who have inflicted much damage on unarmed Palestinian civilians over the last few years, have yet to be penalized either by the State of Israel or the world community.

## ISLAMABAD SEEKS PARIS CLUB'S AID

A four-member Pakistani delegation of economic experts will shortly open three day talks with the Aid-to-Pakistan Consortium, also known as Paris Club, in Paris, seeking US\$2 billion assistance for the next fiscal year, 1997-1998.

Finance Minister Senator Sartaj Aziz will lead the delegation, comprising Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, Dr. Hafeez Pasha, Finance Secretary Moeen Afzal, and Economic Affairs Secretary Javed Burki. An official said that Pakistan was seeking more than US\$ 2 billion in aid from the Paris Club for the next financial year. The Pakistani delegation will unfold economic policy and future programs for the revival of economy.

The delegation would also brief the Consortium about the implementation of economic policies, as majority of the donors were interested in it. The delegation will also proceed to Paris amid a new thrust of the Nawaz Sharif government on relying less on foreign aid. Apart from the donor countries, representatives of the multi-national donors will also be present in these meetings.

## TUNISIA: INVESTMENT ATTRACTIONS

"Our primary asset is our political and economic stability. Our macro-economic indicators are extremely favorable for a country in development. We have managed to maintain and reduce our budget deficit in 1996 to 4% of GDP compared to 6% in 1991. Our growth rate from 1991 through 1996 has averaged around 4.6%. We have as well a very attractive investment code." Those are the words of Fethi Merdassi, Secretary of State for International Cooperation and Foreign Investment.

Moreover, Tunisia has a growing middle class. Tunisia has a qualified, educated work force which is relatively competitive. Since the development of the infrastructure is essential to economic growth, Tunisia invested close to 20 billion dollars in infrastructure improvements and construction from 1992 through 1996.

Mr. Merdassi added, "It is true in today's world, competition for direct foreign investment is very strong, and Tunisia is but one of the numerous countries vying for investment. Tunisia is an emerging country with wealth of assets: a favorable environment, a rich human resource pool of educated workers."

All of the studies conducted by the World Bank and other research groups indicate that within certain sectors, Tunisia maintains a very significant comparative advantage.

## GERMAN FIRMS FACE TRIAL ON IRAQI CHEMICALS

In Germany, court proceedings will shortly begin against 24 German companies reported to have helped Iraq produce chemical weapons during its 1980-1988 war with Iran. Deputy Judiciary Chief Mohammad Reza Abbasi-Farid, said complaints against the companies had been lodged by over 1,000 relatives of Iranians killed or wounded as a result of Iraq's use of banned chemical weapons during the war.

Iraq's arsenal of chemical and its production capacity have since been destroyed under UN supervision.

## UAE Finds Other Side of Development

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has invested heavily in the growth of its fishing sector. Its annual tonnage of catch rose from 64,000 tons in 1967, to 105,000 tons in 1965. During the same period, total number of fishing boats jumped from 1,065 to 14,143.

Yet, the country has now waken up to the possibilities of depletion of fish resources and damage to the habitat. As a result, it is now urging measures to control over-fishing, and to mount studies, research and sharing of information at the regional level.

## Defiant Netanyahu Brushes Aside UN Calls

A delegation representing the UN Secretary-General is finding it difficult to get a response from the Netanyahu government regarding its upcoming visit to Israel. Last week's General Assembly condemned Israel's continued settlement construction program on Arab. During the voting process, 134 countries voted to condemn Israel, 3 opposed (Israel, USA and Micronesia), and 11 abstained. The same resolution called on the UN secretary-general to follow up the matter and report back.

The Netanyahu Government stated that the General Assembly resolution was not only immaterial, but also detrimental to peace. It added that it will not abide by it.

The US Government, which has constantly voted alongside Israel whatever the issue, expressed similar sentiments.

The European Union, however, expressed visible displeasure at Israel's continued insistence of building new settlements, thereby jeopardizing the peace process. This EU position was made especially clear following the Mediterranean Conference held in Malta during 15-16 April, 1997.

Meanwhile, the peace talks have been put on freeze, probably waiting for the Clinton cavalry to come and rescue it. However, it was clear from the Clinton-Netanyahu talks on Monday April 7th, that Washington is unable to make the Israel Prime Minister see light.

New construction at the Abu Ghneim (Har Homa) settlement continues unabated. This settlement will effectively landlock Arab East Jerusalem from the rest of the Palestinian areas in the West Bank. That is why it is seen as a political move, rather than as a settlement issue.

Arab countries which had made overtures to Israel have not frozen all contact. Even countries with which Israel has political relations, have decided to limit contact to the minimum.

## More Drugs Seized in Kuwait

The State of Kuwait is fighting a battle against drug trafficking, which has become a major business. According to official reports, the total volume of heroin seized during 1996 was already double that of 1995, and the upward trend persists.

The country has taken Herculean measures to combat this problem. In 1995, Kuwait passed a law making drug smuggling a capita crime, but no related executions were reported. Other measures include strict airport search methods, and difficult visa procedures.

The drug problem is not the concern of Kuwait alone, it has become a problem for most of the Gulf states, which are an important meeting point for South and Central Asia, East Africa and Europe.

## Iran and Germany at Loggerheads

The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Federal Republic of Germany have a serious problem between them which led to a deterioration in the relations.

The problem started when a German court convicted an Iranian and 3 Lebanese of the 1992 assassination of four Iranian Kurd opposition members in a Berlin restaurant. After three and half years of trial, the presiding judge, Frithjof Kubsch, said, "The background to the crime reaches to the highest levels of the Iranian State."

The differences between the two countries over the affair have resulted in the recall of their ambassadors. To further complicate the situation, the EU agreed to a mass recall of its ambassadors in Tehran.

Demonstrations in Germany demanding action against Iran which they branded as "killer regime". On the other hand, opposite demonstrations in various parts of Iran have been mounted against Germany due to what Tehran calls "baseless allegations". The reference here is to the issue that Iranian top leaders had ordered the murder of the Kurdish opposition leaders.

Iran also threatened Europe with economic measures if any steps are taken to isolate it.

Meanwhile, the US administration which has persistently urged Europe to take stronger action against Tehran is savoring the moment. The Americans' "We told you so" attitude is accepted in Europe which now sees need for some visible measures against Iran.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Republic is sending high-level delegations to other countries with the purpose of building international sympathy and support for it.

## Turkey: In Search of a Soul

The Republic of Turkey is torn these days between its secularism, which is the base of the state, and the Islamic drive which is fast overtaking the country. The showdown is best manifested in the confrontation between the Security Council, which is controlled by army general, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Nejmeddeen Erbakan, who is the leader of the Islamic Refah (Welfare) Party.

But other symptoms of this confusion is also visible in the streets. Two weeks back, former mayor Bekir Yeldiz, was put on trial for staging an anti-Israel demonstration in Ankara. It was not the demonstration itself that irked the Ankara officials, but the participation of the Iranian ambassador in Turkey, Mr. Ali Reza Beghari. Both men, mounted on a stage and demanded the full application of Islamic sharia in Turkey, in addition to expressing support for the Islamic Jihad Fathi Sheqqaqi group in Palestine. This organization is branded as terrorist by Israel, and it is seen as an illegal group by Ankara. In Turkey, the accusation of aiding an illegal group is a catch-all charge often used against civilians suspected of militant Islamic or Kurdish sentiment.

The army generals are worried that if they push too much, they may have another Algeria in their hands. That is why the approach has been a peaceful containment of the Islamic fury.

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Embassy of Japan  
Building No. 2 Street No. 38, off Algier Street  
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P. O. Box 817  
Sana'a

or by Fax: 1-209531

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يتقدم الدكتور علي عبدالرحمن البحر  
رئيس مجلس الإدارة، والإدارة العليا والموظفون والعاملون  
بالإدارة العامة والفروع في

## بنك الإسكان

يتقدمون بأحر التهاني والتبريكات  
لفخامة الرئيس علي عبدالله صالح  
رئيس الجمهورية، وللشعب اليمني الأبني  
بمناسبتى عيد الأضحى ونجاح الإنتخابات  
وكل عام والجميع بخير

### تهنئة

نتقدم بأحر التهاني والتبريكات للأخ  
فائز نور الدين السقاف  
بمناسبة زفافه الميمون، وألف مبروك  
وعقبال البكاري.

### المهنؤون:

خيرى حسن السقاف، نائف عبدالله  
السقاف، وليد عبدالله السقاف، عماد  
أحمد السقاف، رضاء عبدالرحمن  
السقاف.

### عيد ميلاد سعيد

نهني ونبارك للطفل الحبوب  
أكرم علي عبده عبدالله  
بمناسبة احتفاله بعيد ميلاده الأول ودخوله  
عامه الثاني.  
المهنؤون:  
رمانة الحكيمي، جميلة الحكيمي، ناصر الحكيمي،  
مجاهد عبده، جميله عبده، نجيبه عبدالرحمن،  
علي عبدالرحمن، عالية عبدالرحمن،  
هاجرة عبدالرحمن، متوكل شوقي العليمي، مختار  
شوقي العليمي، ملكة عبده عبدالله،  
عائلة منصور الحكيمي، عائلة شوقي الحكيمي.

### ألف مبروك

أجمل التهاني وأطيب  
التبريكات نرفها للأخ  
عبدالمك مطهر  
الشبيبي  
بمناسبة دخوله القفص  
الذهبي.  
تمنياتنا له بحياة زوجية سعيدة، وألف مبروك  
المهنؤون:  
الاستاذ/ أحمد محمد الشبيبي  
عبدالرحمن الشبيبي  
علي أحمد العابد، العزي محمد الصلوي



### تهانينا

نهني ونبارك للأخت العزيزة  
بلقيس أحمد منصور أبو أصعب  
بمناسبة حصولها على شهادة الماجستير في  
العلوم السياسية بعد أن قدمت رسالة التخرج  
بمعونة  
«التخية السياسية في اليمن»  
ألف مبروك، وبشارة للحصول على الدكتوراه  
المهنؤون:  
عبدالقادر أمين، سلوى زماج  
بشير أحمد منصور،  
عائشة زيد مطيع دماج،  
نجله زيد دماج

### تهنئة

نهني ونبارك للأخ  
فواز أمين سعيد السقاف  
بمناسبة عقد قرانه الميمون  
وقرب الزفاف.  
أدام الله السرور، وألف مبروك.  
المهنؤون:  
عدنان فضل السقاف،  
وليد عبدالله السقاف،  
عماد أحمد السقاف،  
رضاء عبدالرحمن السقاف،  
نانف عبدالله السقاف

## QANA: The Bleeding Anniversary

Saad Saleh Khalis

April means a lot in the Lebanese culture, as it marks the spring time which they adore a lot. They always sing about April's glory and magnificence, their lovers worship its divine upcoming, a lot of their artistry circulate around it. It is the time when the green color takes over Lebanon's marvelous mountainous landscape, the great Mediterranean waters get warmer, and the beauty materializes. To this wonder, Khalil Gibran, Michael Naieema, Bishara Al-Khoury, Said Aqal and scores of others have written the best of poetry.

But times have changed. As springs pass leaving behind space for cruel winters. Lebanon's winter - and for that matter, the Arabs' winter - seems to get eternal. April is not the symbol of heavenly beauty any more, it became rather the symbol of pain and agony.

Exactly one year ago and 10 days, namely on April 18, 1996, at 2:10 pm, hell broke loose in Qana. The hell fire was ignited to create one of the most tragic holocausts ever witnessed. In that black afternoon, the whole world stood in shock as TV screens presented the tarnished and charred remains of women and children, so brutally massacred by the blind law of this age. Open heads, torn chests and flung limbs of over one hundred innocent victims who were seeking shelter in a UN base, supposedly meant for their protection, were lying there as evidence to the injustice of our times. Those great people, just like their Palestinian brothers, seemed to become the favorable target for indiscriminate humiliation and annihilation.

This is not a talk in politics. Readers, and writers are well fed up with the this repeated helpless moaning for over fifty years. It is rather a talk of human consciousness at the eve of the 21st century. It is a talk of hope and dreams that scattered around Qana with the remains of the helpless martyrs. A fairy tale of children who died in hiding. Children brought under occupation, raised under oppression, just to be buried young and dismantled under the soil they dreamed will one day be free and dignified just like any other place in the world.

The Israelis, failing again and again to show any sign of intentions for peace, backed by the so-called "Civilized World", committed their crime in cold blood as usual. It has become common in the

politics of these times that a true criminal finds so many parties that are just willing to make excuses and elaborate pretexts on his behalf. That was, and will always be, the case as we have seen with the killing machine called Israel - starting from Kifir Qasim and Dir Yassin, ironically also in April 1948 - up to Qana. All went excused and unpunished by the so-called free world throughout those years of terror and death. Of course, people were shocked with the tragedy. But there are those who were shocked for other reasons. For instance, Madeleine Albright, US ambassador to the UN at the time, was "shocked by the contents of the report made by Mr. Butros Ghali, General Secretary"!! And for that report, Mr. Ghali had to leave his UN job. By the way, that report shyly held Israel responsible for what happened.

As the months passed by, Arabs have almost forgotten. Israel, is back again with settling operations in Jerusalem. They know quite well that they can get away with murder, and that is literally speaking. The US position at the UN are additional kicks on our butts, but there is no reaction from us.

Unfortunately, times never turn back. Our generation, raised in the revolutionary environment of slogans calling for liberation, freedom and justice, longs for those days when such events would turn the Arab masses into a thunder ball rolling through the streets of Arab capitals. I can't imagine how this generation can just sit there and enjoy its time watching shopping festivals and beauty queen contests.

Back to Qana, official reports say that the casualties were 105, others raise them to 175. One eye witness who attended the burial, said that the remains of the victims were so scattered that the exact number could never be exactly defined. The number is not of that importance given the numbers of the thousands killed, wounded, disabled. The importance lies in the symbolic fact those people died while taking refuge in a UN base, a symbol of international protection and justice.

The object of all of this is not to forget. We shall keep alive those sad memories, especially as the other side never seems to care to stop. Sad memories seem to increase constantly in our recent history. So does the magnitude of our pain and agony. One day in the future, this will lead to an outburst of anger and revolt. It shall come!

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## INVITATION FOR BIDS FOURTH FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PROJECT MINISTRY OF FISH WEALTH

- The Government of Republic of Yemen (ROY) has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Fourth Fisheries Development Project and it is intended that a part of the proceeds will be applied to eligible payment under the contract for the construction of FOQUM / RAS IMRAN road project in Aden Governorate.

- Interested eligible bidder may obtain further information and bidding documents form the following address:

The Director general Office  
Project Implementation Unit  
Ministry of Fish Wealth  
P. O. Box: 1299  
Tawahi, Aden  
Fax: 00 967 2 203011  
Tel: 00 967 2 203874

- A complete set of the bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidder on the submission of a written application to the above address and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of USD 500/-.

- Interested eligible bidders may submit their sealed bids according to the following conditions:

1. The bidders must provide evidence to show their past experience with similar projects.
2. All bids must be accompanied a bid security of not less than 2% of the total bid amount and valid for 120 days.
3. Local bidders must furnish tax registration certificate.
4. Bids must be submitted to the above mentioned address not later than 10.00 a.m. on 9/6/1997. Any bid received after this will be not considered.
5. Any bid not responsive to the required conditions, will be not considered.
6. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representative who choose to attend at 10.00 a.m on 10/6/1977.

## اعلان مناقصة مشروع تطوير الأسماك الرابع وزارة الثروة السمكية

دعوة لتنفيذ طريق فقم / رأس عمران - عدن

- تحصلت الجمهورية اليمنية على قرض من مؤسسة التنمية الدولية (ايدا) لتمويل مشروع الأسماك الرابع، وقد خصص جزء من هذا القرض لتنفيذ طريق فقم / رأس عمران في محافظة عدن.  
- يمكن للمقاولين المؤهلين الراغبين في الحصول على معلومات اضافية واستلام وثائق المناقصة الاتصال بالعنوان التالي:

مكتب المدير العام  
مشروع تطوير الأسماك الرابع  
مكتب فرع وزارة الثروة السمكية - عدن  
ص.ب: ١٢٩٩ - التواهي - عدن  
فاكس: ٢٠٣١١ / ٢٠٣٨٧٤ تلفون

- يمكن الحصول على وثائق المناقصة بعد تقديم طلب كتابي للعنوان أعلاه وبعد دفع مبلغ وقدره (٥٠٠ دولار) غير قابل للاسترجاع.  
- على الراغبين من المقاولين المؤهلين تقديم عروضهم المغلقة والمختومة بالشمع الأحمر وفقا للشروط التالية:-

- ١) أن يكون المتقدم من الشركات المقاولات التي سبق تأهيلها لتنفيذ مثل هذا المشروع
- ٢) على المتقدم ارفاق ضمان بنكي أو شيك مقبول الدفع من أحد البنوك العاملة في الجمهورية اليمنية بواقع ٢٪ من قيمة العطاء وبنفس عملة العطاء، على أن يكون ساري المفعول لمدة (١٢٠) يوما من تاريخ فتح المظاريف.
- ٣) على المقاولين المحليين ارفاق شهادة ضريبة سارية المفعول.
- ٤) آخر موعد لاستلام العروض الساعة العاشرة صباحا من يوم ٩/٦/١٩٩٧م إلى العنوان المذكور أعلاه، ولن يقبل أي عرض بعد هذا الموعد.
- ٥) لن ينظر إلى العروض والعطاءات التي لا تتضمن كافة الشروط المطلوبة.
- ٦) سيتم فتح المظاريف بحضور المتنافسين أو من يمثلهم في تمام الساعة العاشرة صباحا من يوم ١٠/٦/١٩٩٧م

# General Safety Award



As a company, YHOC is taking a more pro-active approach to ensure a safe working environment for all employees. Some of the initiative YHOC is implementing as a result of this pro-active and forward thinking, includes increasing the number of safety staff to better support all operations, more safety inspections by supervisory personnel and safety staff, more in-depth safety meetings to ensure all employees have an opportunity to bring to the forefront any individual safety concerns.

All employees of Yemen Hunt Oil recently gathered together to celebrate a significant safety achievement. On January 3rd, 1997, all employees qualified for the general safety award by completing 1,000,000 manhours without a lost time accident and 1,000,000 kilometers driven without a chargeable vehicle accident.

The ceremonies which were organized to celebrate this achievement, had special meaning to employees of Yemen Hunt. This was the first time in the history of Yemen Hunt Oil Company (YHOC) that this company wide milestone has been achieved. Each employee received an attache case in recognition of this achievement.

YHOC is placing a greater emphasis on safety in 1997. It is recognized that in order to have a safe working environment, every employee must be aware of their individual responsibility to make safety an integral part of all their day to day work activities. This achievement clearly demonstrates a sincere commitment of all YHOC employees to work in a safe and responsible manner.

Achieving the YHOC general safety award has generated greater enthusiasm and commitment of employees to work towards a larger objective; achieving a company wide milestone of going one full year without a lost time or chargeable vehicle accident!

All employees are to be congratulated for achieving the general safety award.

**AL-AYYAM: Aden (Bi-Weekly) 23-4-97**  
(Independent)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) **The President: "It is not honorable if the elections take place in an atmosphere of violence and anarchy."**
- 2) **Opposition in Hadramaut Informs Governor of Peaceful Demonstration to Take Place on 26th April.**
- 3) **American Frigate to Visit Aden on 28th April.**
- 4) **Bride Stabs Her Bridegroom on Wedding Night.**

**Article Summary:**

**"Rabita" Condemns Harassment Campaign**  
According to a statement issued by the League of the Sons of Yemen Party (Rabita), security forces in Aden have raided the party's offices on 16th April, and arrested 4 of its members. Several equipment and documents were confiscated. Upon orders by the general prosecutor, the "Rabita" offices were locked and sealed with wax.

Sources at the Ministry of Interior, on the other hand, indicated that one "Rabita" member was arrested while distributing leaflets printed abroad; calling for boycotting the elections and other acts of civil disobedience. The ministry has denied arresting any other "Rabita" members.

**AL-SHOURA: Sana'a (Weekly) 23-4-97.**  
(The Federation of Popular Forces Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) **Mutual Terrorism Between Ruling Coalition Partners for 90, Hotly Contested Constituencies.**
- 2) **The Authority's Stick-and-Carrot Policy Led to Huge Number of Candidacy Withdrawals.**

**Article Summary:**

**Eve Outside Parliament - by Ibtisam Al-Adeeb.**  
Statistics in our country show that women are having an increasingly relegated status in society. During the first stages of the elections, women were allowed quite a space in the media. Leaders of various parties were very generous in their promises to female voters. They have been suddenly changed from being regarded as defective human beings to becoming the "other half of men." However, the truth of the matter is that there are only 18 female candidates in this elections, compared with 41 in 1993. So it seems that most political parties want female votes, but reject their nominations.

The competing parties interfere in the work of women's committees and organizations, trying to

## Yemeni Press in a Week

by: *Adel J. Moqbil*

intimidate women into voting for certain candidates to the exclusion of others.

**AL-WAHDAH: Sana'a (Weekly) 23-4-97**  
(Official)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) **The President, to International Observer Delegations: "We emphasize that the elections will be free and democratic."**
- 2) **101 Arab and International Media Delegations Arrive in Sana'a to Cover Elections.**
- 3) **Envoy of American National Democratic Institute Meets Members of Elections Committees' in Mahweet.**
- 4) **Fierce Elections Struggle in Dhamar with Islah Candidates.**

**Article Summary:**

**The Ball is in the Voter's Court - by Ahmed Muhildeen.**

Despite all the noisy electioneering and political intrigue, the final and decisive word will be that of the voter. The Yemeni electorate has acquired valuable experience from the past elections of 1993, as well as from elections of local and municipal authorities.

The present elections are characterized by the symbols chosen to represent each candidate. These will immensely help to free illiterate people from all kinds of influence that might have had occurred in the past.

The voter will have to realize that a little tick made against a particular candidate's name will have many significant consequences. The success of these elections will prove that the Yemenis are instinctively democratic.

**AL-SAHWAH: Sana'a (Bi-Weekly during elections) 21-4-97**

[Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah)]

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) **Islah Condemns Assault by Minister of Civil Service on Citizens Who Refused to Support his Chosen Candidate in Constituency No. 105.**
- 2) **The Government Stops Funding Development Projects in Al-Jawf to Spite its Islahi Governor.**

- 3) **Random Arrests and Raids on Houses of Islah Supporters in Constituency No. 18 in Sana'a**
- 4) **Armed Groups Attack Islah's Offices in Constituency No. 33 in Taiz**

**Article Summary:**

**Electioneering in Army Barracks**

In a flagrant violation of the Yemeni Elections Law, the commander of the 21st mechanized army brigade and the head of a big party in Shabwa, held an electioneering function at an army barracks in Shabwa. The officers and soldiers who attended the event were asked to vote for an independent candidate named Mohammed Ba-Muslim. The Elections Law strictly forbids the dissemination of elections propaganda among military personnel. The armed forces are regarded by the law as neutral organs. The law also prohibits government officials from using their authority in favor of elections candidates.

The Islah organization in Shabwa has strongly called upon the Supreme Elections Committee to intervene to stop such illegal activities.

**AL-WAHDAWI: Sana'a (Weekly) 23-4-97**  
(Nasserite Unionist Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) **Nasserite Supporters Arrested in Constituencies 4 and 12**
- 2) **Nasserite Leader in Aden Meets Delegation of American National Democratic Institute**
- 3) **Man Ran Over by Military-Police Car in Ibb**
- 4) **Armed Confrontation Between Members of Ruling Coalition Parties in Udein**

**Article Summary:**

**Land Usurping in Aden**

A gang has recently appeared in Aden, specializing in forging British "grant" documents. These documents are brought from India, notarized, and sold later with the addition of extra plots of land. The gang is headed by an army colonel and a real estate agent. Another army colonel has forged a land deed by adding three zeroes to the 3 acres he owns, making them 3000 acres!

Such crimes are met with leniency on part of the authorities, or are solved tribally with the minimum of fuss. The real culprits usually get away with it. Houses and large buildings are not safe from such tricks, either. Powerless citizens are forcefully evicted from their houses by influential people. The Presidents edicts to rectify such matter usually go unheeded.

**AL-TARIQ: Aden (Fortnightly) 24-4-97.**  
(Independent)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) **In a Sudden Development, All PGC-Islah Coordination Agreements are Suspended**
- 2) **Speaker of Previous Parliament, Sheikh Al-Ahmer, Reverts from Withdrawing his Candidacy**
- 3) **Nasserite Reformative Party Attracts New Members in Aden**

**Article Summary:**

**Illusions of Foreign Conspiracies**

**by Dr. Mohammed A. Al-Saqqaq**  
Several accusations of acting upon foreign instructions were heaped on the Yemeni Socialist Party by the official media, when it decided to boycott the elections. Similar accusations of conspiring with "hostile elements" were directed toward Amnesty International and the European Parliament when they criticized Yemen's human rights record. It is very strange and unacceptable that many such accusations were made by government officials and diplomats that are supposed to be "diplomatic" in their utterances. In the case of absence of clear evidence to refute any allegations, it is better to keep reticent. Coming up with silly and inobjective remarks should be reserved for qat-chewing sessions, not in diplomatic and official circles.

**AL-UMMAH: Sana'a (Weekly) 24-4-97.**  
(Al-Haq Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) **Opposition Representatives Meet Delegations of EU and National Democratic Institute**
- 2) **Al-Haq Party Protests Against Violations Committed by Supreme Elections Committee**
- 3) **Sheikh Al-Ahmer: "The PGC employs public funds and state resources to win the elections."**
- 4) **Number of Elections Cards Issued by SEC Increased from about 1,900,000 to Almost 3 Million Overnight!**

**Article Summary:**

**Where is Al-Haq Headed? by Abdulkarim Al-Souswa**

The Imamate in Yemen, with its negative and positive aspects, was closely associated with the Zaydi sect. The two Imams that ruled Yemen bore a certain responsibility in preventing the onset of modernization, in a time of great revolutionary fervor. So revolution was a inevitable. Many now think that the Zaydi principles are reactionary. Many non-Yemeni religious scholars, however, believe that it is very enlightened, tolerant, and flexible. The establishment of Al-Haq party was met with some hostility and accusations of backwardness. Al-Haq's adoption of modern democracy is a clear evidence of its progressive principles, adopted from the true spirit of Islam.

**AL-JUMHORIAH: Taiz (Daily) 28-4-97.**  
(Official)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1) **Wide Arab and International Attention, and Observers Commend Turnout and Impartiality of Elections**
- 2) **The President Emphasizes Democracy as the People's Choice to Build a New Yemen**
- 3) **The President: "We do not recognize the opposition operating abroad because they are outlaws."**
- 4) **Developing Countries Call on IMF to Fund Debt-Laden Countries**

**Article Summary:**

**Reality of Yemeni Women by Hana'a Al-Khitabi**

Yemeni women are taking large steps towards becoming an appreciable part of the work force. There are now female teachers, doctors, nurses, media workers, etc. Even housewives are now trying to gain some education through the eradication of illiteracy schools. Some women, despite their high education, are forced to stay at home by their very strict families.

Several women have been able to conquer the world of arts and literature. But still some of them resort to using pseudonyms in order not to break the traditions that still tightly restrict their full participation in society. Islam calls upon women to attain knowledge and to work - within their natural limits and propriety.

## Gold Mohur Beach: New Tourists Attractions



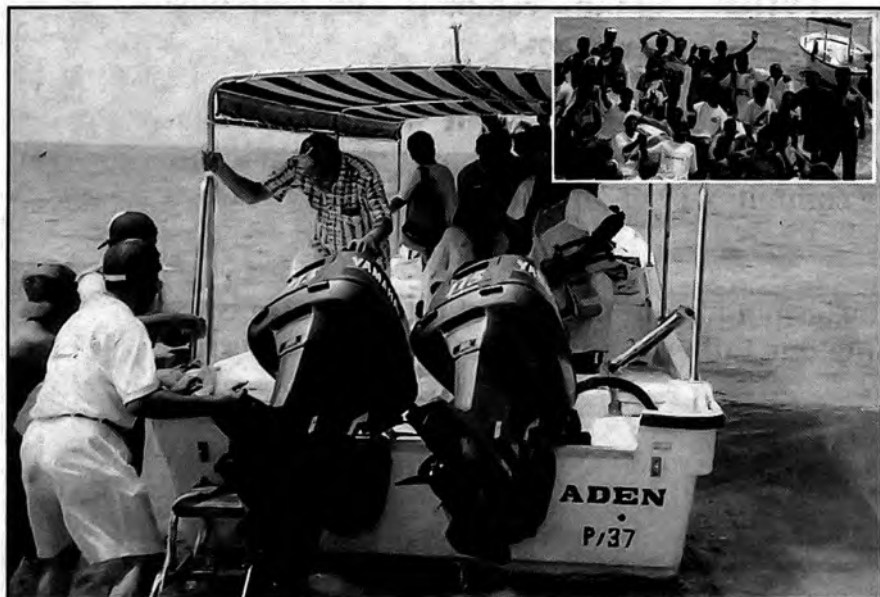
A ceremony to inaugurate a new Aden Movenpick Hotel project, designed to attract more tourists to the golden beaches of Aden, was held earlier this month. The occasion was attended by Mr. Mohammed Abdulqawi Al-Maflahi, Director of the Arab Company for Investments and Tourism, and Mr. John Vouillamoz, General Manager of the hotel, a number of travel agents and tour operators as well as media representatives.

"This project is the first of its kind in Aden. The Aden Movenpick hotel has imported several leisure boats equipped with facilities for fishing, swimming, snorkeling, diving, in addition to the essential safety equipment," explained Mr. Vouillamoz.

A number of water motorbikes were also imported by the hotel. Various camping, recreational and catering facilities are now available to attract more tourists to the enchanting Gold Mohur beach.

"This project is just the beginning of a whole range of new tourist attractions to fully utilize the potential of the area," announced Mr. Ali Al-Imad, Director of the Tourism Bureau in Aden.

"Foreign tourists and Yemeni citizens," he added, "will find a beautiful, pollution-free environment to be able to enjoy themselves and break their daily routine." Projects like this are apt to strengthen the national economy by bringing in much needed hard currency into the country, especially through the Aden Free Zone.



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# Frank and Exciting Opinion Given by Sports Coaches Yemeni Sports Today... and ... Tomorrow



Sports Games in Yemen suffer from lack of steadiness in their levels and attainments during different sports seasons. Some local achievements of some games do not encourage international participation. Some sports were able to achieve some advanced results at the Arab world level. But these results were not steady or stable because the interest and concern for these games is only seasonal! In other words, the concerned people do not show any interest of the game unless a competition involving that game is very near in time. Only then, they start preparing for it.

A player's ambition and desire for winning is not enough for his/her success. This ambition must be associated with some external factors such as long- and short-term training programs and training facilities (equipment, sports buildings, etc.). In addition, there must be a direct attention provided by the respective sports authority for excellent players in order to prepare them for better international achievements. Here comes the question that bugs the mind of every ambitious sportsman or woman: **Will the present situation remain as it is or be improved in future?**

Yemen Times has made an investigation to know the answer of this question. The investigation involves coaches of different sports games who best know about the situation of different sports.

## 1- Rami Abdul hamid Al-duba'i (volleyball coach)

"An observer of the Yemeni sports would find many obstacles and difficulties put in the way to its fruitful future. The pompous language used in press to praise Yemeni sports achievements lacks credibility. In my opinion, this is due to our inability in providing an objective answer for the following question: "What do we want by sports /What is the objective we want to achieve through it?"

This applies to the situation in the Ministry of Youth and Sports which lacks the proper methods of administration and management. There is also the lack of the modern scientific ways of training. There must be a comprehensive and objective strategy which is flexible enough to take the current situation into consideration and improve it for a better future.

In addition, the Ministry of Youth and Sports has a biased attention favoring football among other games. If other sports are given the same amount of attention they would make many achievements.

Another thing that relates to this issue concerns the investment in the sportsmen and women. Let us ask ourselves some questions:

What has the Ministry offered to the excellent sportsmen and women?

Has it supported them financially in order to face the difficult conditions of living and improve their living situation?

There are many questions regarding this issue, but as it goes in the Arabic saying, "He who has nothing can't give anything."

As for the relationship between the Ministry and the different sports clubs and association, it is nothing more than a marginal, official and seasonal one which is never promoted at any time except for the beginning of the competitions season.

## 2- Ali Ibrahim Abdu (A basketball coach)

The future of sports in Yemen will be prosperous provided with one thing. This is finding the way of improving the sports condition in Yemen.

The best way is building sports arenas such as stadiums and indoor halls. Yemen is full of youths who practice many sports but do not find enough stadiums and indoor halls for their training and doing their favorite activities.

I think the basic steps which countries take for a better sports future starts

first with the construction of sports venues. Then comes the next step which consists in planning for programs that take care of the sportsmen.

The current situation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports is very encouraging after the establishment of the Youth Support Fund (YSF). Many Yemeni youths are optimistic about the ability of the YSF in building sports arenas and promoting different sports activities. The government also should allocate more money to the budget of the Ministry in order to build the sports arenas.

## 3- Gaber Al Bawab (A body-building coach)

The current situation of sports is not acceptable for many youths, but surely it will not continue thus. The construction of some sports arenas now makes one optimistic. "Rome was not built in a day": the sports officials can not do all things in an extraordinary speed. They have made many promises regarding building sports places and promoting excellent players and providing them with special care, especially after the YSF which will supply the needed money. But all we can do is to wait and see. The body-building sport suffers a lot because of the lack of the necessary facilities. All the training tools are offered by the players and trainees themselves.

Neither the Ministry nor the sports associations have any thing to do in supporting this game. The current Body-building Association is not in touch with the clubs which practice this game. We hope that the results of the coming parliamentary elections will change the current condition of sports. We need a sports management that comprehensively understands our situation and helps improving Yemeni sports and games in general.

## 4- Abdulkareem Aish (A boxing coach)

The concern of sports in general and of sports which we practice such as boxing, wrestling, basketball, volleyball, etc. which are called "shadow games," is not sufficient, if we could not say there isn't any. All attention is given to football. I think we need to develop the sports situation in general. We need highly-qualified officials in the sports field to contribute in the improvement process of the sports associations administration in Yemen. In addition, we need financial support to increase sports activities which would produce excellent sportsmen who, in turn, would participate in international activities.

## 5- Abdullah Hussein Al Emad (a football coach)

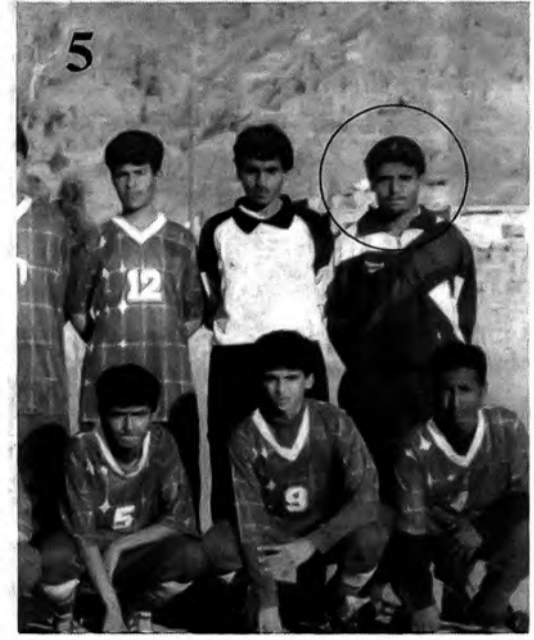
I think the future of sports is promising. This because of the different ways and methods which Dr. Raweh, the Minister of Youth and Sports used. These include many sports projects which were only a pile of proposals or suggestions put aside in the Ministry in the past. He came to revive them and make the Yemeni youths utilize them as well. One of these projects is the YSF which has its recognizable effect in constructing many sports arenas, planting grass in stadiums in different governorates, building the athletics indoor hall, building the High Institute for Physical Education, and Youth Houses. These are all projects which indicate a prosperous future for sports in Yemen. However, there are some shortcomings accompanying these projects. These shortcomings are shown through the management; there isn't any coordination between the Ministry and the sports associations, on the one hand, or between them and the sports clubs on the other. This has led to bad consequences in the Yemeni sports. Had there been an active connection between the Ministry, the sports associations and the sports clubs, these clubs would not have had the bad situation in which they are nowadays. This lack of coordination has led to the low level of sports in Yemen.

## 6- Maid Al Hammed (A weight lifting coach)

I can say that it is only now that the Ministry of Youth and Sports can raise the level of all sports without exceptions. This is due to the YSF which will bring hundreds of millions rials to the budget of the Ministry along with the money allocated by the government. The only thing that remains now is the right choice of the devoted sports officials who can utilize these facilities in the most effective and sufficient way possible.

Thus we see that all opinions given by coaches of different sports have included two main factors to promote the Yemeni sports towards a better future. The first is sports facilities; the second is the qualified specialist official.

The sports facilities factor offers the suitable environment for better sports activities and remarkable performances. The second factor offers the correct planning and scientific training programs in which the facilities can be best utilized for a bright future of sports in Yemen.



## Spotlight

### Sweet Surprises



Our national football team returned last Friday night after a journey to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates which lasted for twenty days. During the journey, the team played many warm-up matches in preparation for the world cup qualifiers. The team played the first qualifying match with the Indonesian team which ended in a tie: 1-1. Our team was also able to defeat the Cambodian team on its home-ground 1-0.

Having gained four points outside Yemen, our team is encouraged to continue collecting points. This is especially so because all the remaining matches will be held in Yemen.

The first one is going to be with Uzbekistan, then with Cambodia, and finally against Indonesia. But the difficult test is going to be with Uzbekistan which is a well-known team in the Asian stadiums. However, our team is known by delivering pleasant surprises which were savored the last time.

The results which it achieved so far are extraordinary, especially when compared with the very limited preparation it had. It seems that the ambition of the players led by their Iraqi coach, Hazem Gasem, was strong enough to overcome the lack of adequate preparation. They have made a good impression about the team's ability in competing in the second phase of the world cup qualifying matches.

What makes us optimistic is the physical ability which our team demonstrated. This, of course, is a result of the training tactics which the team's coach adopted. In this case we could say that the strong will and ambition might help overcome many obstacles which we consider as insurmountable. This is exactly what happened to our national football team. The matches which they have played so far have increased their experience about the opponent teams.

We are waiting for more pleasant surprises.

Sport Editor

## تعزية

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The Experience of Yemen Times with the Internet:

**“Biting more than we can chew.”**

This is definitely the information age. The volume of information that is available is so much that the word inundated and overwhelmed have personal meaning to me. I am saying this because of our predicament at the Yemen Times.

Six months ago, Yemen Times joined the modern world by going online on the world-wide web (WWW). We established a home-page and an electronic-mail address. The level of interaction has been much more than we could handle, with reasonable responsibility. We now receive an average of 60 messages and letters a week by e-mail. That is a lot more than we can read, let alone answer. Hence we have failed to link-back and at least say 'Your message has been noticed'. This sits badly with the people who sent out those messages, and it troubles me. We have a duty to answer back, but can't do it, at the moment.

So what is to be done. I have decided to do two things.

- To announce our willingness to employ new people who will sift through our huge e-mail in-take. If there is any one out there interested in this job, please apply.
- To write this article so that our readers and those who contact us will kindly appreciate our present predicament. This is especially addressed to those who have written to us.

I have been feeling the pressure of too much information for quite a while now. In fact, I have not been able to keep up even with the regular reading. Let me give an example. I used to humor myself in my leisure time by reading comic sections of newspapers. Given the number of newspapers I now devour, I am unable to go through the lot. Reading the news and analysis is, already, a big task.

What is happening to me and the Yemen Times is not unique. The volume of information flow is just enormous for us to continue

in our existing life-style. I am ??????some kind of software needs to be produced to help sift through the mountains of information and categorize them.

I believe there is also need for more specialized and focussed information gathering and distribution systems. School curricula, cultural creativity and professions need to be increasingly more specialized. The result is that people will narrow their focus even more in the future.

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



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