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INSIDE ▶

Ms. Engad on the Lot of the Handicapped. Page 3.

Arab/Islamic Officials Give Lip Service to Human Rights. Page 5.

FEMALE CIRCUMCISION: Horror That Still Lives With Us! Page 8.

Establishment of Yafea College Financed by Philanthropist. Page 12.

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The World Condemns US-UK Attacks on Iraq

The Pounding Is Over

For four days, American and British forces pounded Iraq in what has been a one-sided war. As the world watched with shock and dismay, the much superior US military might punished Iraq by destroying existing and potential military capabilities as well as basic infrastructure including roads, bridges, refineries, seaports, hospitals, universities, research centers, buildings, etc. In Yemen, like in many other countries, people spontaneously demonstrated to protest the attacks. There were several thousand of them. Starting on Friday, December 18th, large numbers of Yemenis took to the streets to denounce the senseless attacks. The banners they carried stated: "Stop the Barbarism", "The People of Iraq Deserve Equal Protection Under International Law", "We Stand With Our Brethren in Iraq". Officially, Yemen condemned the US-UK four-day attacks on Iraq carried out during 17-19 December. The show of power under the pretext of "insufficient cooperation on the part of Iraq with UNSCOM (UNSCOM)" led to the death of about 100 people and enormous damage to property and infrastructure.

"The attacks are intended to cripple the Iraqi people and undermine their ability to build their nation. It has nothing to do with the UN resolution," stated a Yemeni Sanaa University professor who participated in the demonstrations. International diplomats blamed that UNSCOM personnel who offered justifications to the US-UK actions. The 5 justifications offered by Mr. Butler to conclude that there was no adequate cooperation by Iraq include:
1) two refusals to meet demands that Iraqi officials accompany UNSCOM 'consultants' to do inspections on Friday, a holiday;
2) a delay of 30 minutes before jumping in with UNSCOM 'consultants' to go for inspection as they headed for a guest house, which was carried out anyway;
3) refusal to help with a survey of undergraduate students at Baghdad University;
4) refusal to allow a visit to a branch office of Baath Party. The silver lining to the bombardment is that it has mobilized the world to stand up to the injustice being inflicted on the people of Iraq. They may also pave the way for concluding the UNSCOM business.

American politicians may have concluded that there was no cost to killing Iraqis or to destroying their property. But they may have just miscalculated. The twisting of facts by US officials was driven home by Mr. Sandy Berger, National Security Advisor to President Clinton. Speaking to CNN's camera, he said that the casualties in Iraq were caused by the Iraqi anti-aircraft artillery which fired at in-coming missiles. "As the residue from the artillery fell back to the ground, it caused the damage." Eight years have passed since the penalties on Iraq were put in place. During this time, 6,000 inspections were made, and the UN Security Council resolutions were generally fulfilled. It is time that UNSCOM is wrapped up. The first step in this direction could come from Tehran. Iranian President Mr. Mohammad Khatami is working on a meeting of the Conference of Islamic Organization to address this matter. If the CIO decides to ignore the sanctions and reha-

bilitate Iraq, it will open the door to end the UNSCOM. Meanwhile, the Russian bear has been jolted and awakened by the senseless attacks. Russia has made it clear that it will not stand by and watch American muscle being used on a unilateral basis in international issues. The feeling in Moscow is reminiscent of the Cold War, in spite of how much Washington thinks needs it. The Chinese reaction has also been strong. In most of Continental Europe, and even in the USA, there was visible disapproval. However, France sat on the fence, which has been a hallmark of French politics in this century, was again on display.

Here in Yemen, many groups are now planning tangible action, beyond the demonstrations and condemnations. Groups outside the regular political parties are toying with ideas, including violence against American interests in the country. The government boosted security around US and UK installations in anticipation of the visibly higher risk. At the end, let us ask what was achieved. The chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff announced the mission successful because it "degraded the capabilities of Iraq". That is not a good assessment. The attacks would have been successful if they advanced the cause of bringing Iraq back to the fold.

رمضان مبارك
Merry Christmas

Berliner Zeitung Correspondent Arrested 4 Germans Still in Captivity

There is a new development in the case of the four Germans kidnapped by the Bani Dhabyan tribesmen. Mr. Sadek Hamaiel, correspondent/photographer of Berliner Zeitung, was able to get through the security siege and interview the four hostages and their kidnapers on Wednesday, December 16th. On his way back, the next day, he was stopped by government security check-points. As his car tried to get away, there was an exchange of fire in which one of his escorts was hurt. Mr. Hamaiel and the wounded escort were arrested. He is in the custody of the Ministry of Interior. Meanwhile, there was a show of force by the

government on Wednesday, as the deadline the President had set for the release of the hostages went unheeded. Tribesmen say that their villages were shelled. Sheikh Ahmed Obad Shuraif, sheikh of sheikhs of Bani Dhabyan, invited key notables of his tribe to discuss a way of out of the dead end. "Many of my tribesmen filled up my house in Sanaa as they flee government forces trying to arrest them. The government has decided to arrest anybody who belongs to this tribe," he told the Yemen Times. The kidnapers forwarded a 4-point list of some 20 demands for releasing the hostages.

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OUR VIEWPOINT

Moral Strength Solves Many Problems

The month of Ramadhan is perceived by Muslims as the holiest of times. There are many reasons for this, and I am not here to explain why. The simple fact is that most Muslims tend to become more devout and more pious at this time. I suppose, this would include our politicians.

This is interesting because character development and moral strength are two elements which would help the regime grow out of its many problems. If our rulers and their proteges were to show more self respect and dignity in their interaction with the public and the nation's resources, I believe more citizens would accept their authority.

In the recent past, we have had more disturbing violence. More explosions, more kidnappings, and more shoot-outs. It is very clear from this continued violence that the state has lost much of its ability to reign in the violators. Putting it differently, more and more citizens find it possible and acceptable to defy the authority of the officials and the state they represent.

The "law-breakers" give simple answers. Those who should be upholding the law - government people - are also among the first to break them. Thus, the authorities are in no position to play the "holier than thou" game since they do not command a higher moral ground vis-avis the violators. One friend explained it like this. "Do you know why junior clerks and ordinary soldiers openly ask for bribes, steal government money and openly break the law? It is because they know that their superiors cannot hold them accountable, because they are bigger crooks."

The same applies, for example, to the kidnapers. In part, they kidnap innocent people - foreigners, businessmen, etc. - and use their hostages to blackmail the official authorities or other people. One main purpose is to make money, although the kidnapers also bring up other demands such as implementation of development projects, employment of local cadres, etc. Government officials cannot look these people in the eye and tell them: 'You are thieves.' I remember an interesting episode during the visit of the Minister of Interior to Marib in his attempt to release hostages earlier this year. The kidnapers told him they wanted money in return for the release of the foreign hostages. "You mean the purpose behind your efforts is to get money illegally?" he asked them. They whisked back, "Yes, just like you."

President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime cannot address these problems unless it employs clean and capable people. There are plenty of these, although the President has consistently gone on the record for choosing the worst available personnel.

I want to repeat for the hundredth time. Leading a nation or even a company requires a certain legitimacy. It involves a contract. The leader has to command certain moral authority in the way he/she behaves. If this moral authority is eroded, the ability of that leader is badly undermined. That is why many Yemenis who can defy the authorities do so. Many more would have done the same if they knew they could get away with it or they could withstand the backlash of the authorities.

The Publisher
عبد العزيز الساققاف

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An Independent Economic & Political Weekly



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Yemenis Honored

At the end of the seminar on Yemeni-Egyptian relations, held in Cairo on December 14 and 15, several figures who contributed to promoting these relations were honored. Vice-Chairman of the Consultative Council Mr. Mohsin Al-Aini; Yemeni Ambassador to Cairo, Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Luqman; Rector of Sanaa University Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh; Yemeni Ambassador to Austria Dr. Hassan Makki, were among those honored.

Committee Against Unemployment

A committee consisting of several Yemeni university graduates who couldn't get jobs since their graduation was formed on December 14. The Ministry of Civil Service suspended recruit new public servants, because of the deficit in the state budget which cannot offer salaries for any new employees in the civil service. On the other hand, the private sector doesn't offer enough work opportunities for young university graduates. The committee members are trying to join hands with other public and private establishments to find solutions to the problem of unemployment.

50th Anniversary of Universal

The Aden Movenpick Hotel Administration celebrated the 50th anniversary of establishing Universal Company on December 13. The event was attended by Mr. Abdullah Ibrahim, general director of the governorate and Mohammed Al-Maflahi, general manager of the Arab Company for Trading and Investment. Presents and rewards were distributed to active employees and workers of the company by Mr. John Vouillamoz, the Aden Hotel general manager.

US \$6m to Fight Malaria

A center for fighting malaria will be opened in the near future. It will be highly equipped and will be connected to a network of health sectors and health affairs offices in the governorates. The project aims at formulating plans and implementing programs to get rid of this disease. Donors promised to support the project with \$6 million, while the Yemeni government allocated YR 40 million.

9th Geographers Cultural Program

The 9th cultural program organized by the Yemeni Geographic Association will be held during Ramadhan (December 23 to January 4, 1999). Lectures on marginal groups in the Yemeni society, description and analysis of the process of urbanization in Yemen will be delivered by some academics and specialists. The last event will be an evaluation for the Forum for Arab Geographers.

14 Projects By European Mission

From January 1996 to August 1998, the European Mission had contributed to launching 14 projects to re-operate many water wells in different governorates including Ibb, Abyan and Lahaj. The European Mission had supported UNICEF projects concentrated on health care, water supply and primary education in Yemen with nearly ECU1497,300.

YT Weekly Poll

Yemen Times Weekly Poll question is placed at:

<http://yementimes.com/#poll>

As a Yemeni father/mother, how many children do you have?

Result
2 or less : 26%
3, 4, or 5 : 50%
6, 7, or 8 : 10%
more than 8 : 14%

Book About Poverty

A book on poverty was recently published by Aden University, Faculty of Economics and Administration. Consisting of nearly 390 pages, the book deals with the problem of poverty in Yemen, its dimensions, and the strategies to solve it.

Al-Jawi's Anniversary

The Yemeni Writers Union will celebrate the first anniversary of Al-Jawi's death this week. The occasion will be attended by Yemeni writers, journalists, public figures and a group of his friends and relatives.

13 Million Poor In Yemen

A seminar on poverty held at Aden University from December 5 to 7 came out with the conclusion that there are nearly 13 million poor in Yemen. According to the UN 1998 annual report, Yemen occupies the 151st position among 174 countries in the level of personal income. About 80% to 90% of the Yemeni population are low-income people, of which 22% are on the poverty line. A field survey done by one of the participants in this seminar indicated that the monthly income of 50% of Yemeni families does not exceed YR 5,000 (US \$ 36).

Islah's Projects in Ramadhan

Al-Islah's Charitable Society will execute different projects during the holy month of Ramadhan. They will offer meals for fasting people in some mosques. In addition, they will distribute food and Eid clothes for poor children in all governorates. About 53 families and more than 83 thousands persons will benefit from these projects. During last year, about 2,506,986 persons and 186,830 families benefited from such projects, and about 141,680 children received Eid clothes.

YEMEN INSURANCE FEDERATION OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED

The Yemen Insurance Federation was formally launched last week at Hadda Hotel. The event was attended by Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Kumaim, Minister of Supply and Trade.

The Executive Board of the YIF is made up of Mr. Ali Mohammed Hashim, Chairman of Mareb Yemen Insurance Company; Mr. Tarek Abdul-Wassa Hayel, General Manager of United Insurance Company; Aqil Al-Saqqaf, General Manager of Aman Insurance Company; Mr. Daoud El-Khatib,

General Manager of Trust Yemen Insurance and Reinsurance Company; and Mr. Munim Al-Khafaji, General Manager of Yemen General Insurance Company.

The other 5 companies included in the YIF are Arab Insurance Company, Al-Watania Insurance Company, Yemen Insurance Company, Yemen Insurance and Re-Insurance Company, and Saba Insurance Company.

The Federation is temporarily located at Mareb Insurance, but plans independent premises.

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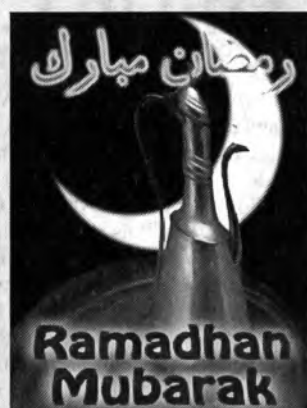
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Ieman Hashem Anqad:

“Yemeni society is not considerate enough towards the handicapped.”

Caring for the handicapped in Yemen is still subject to private initiative. Very little support, if any, is provided by the government. This demanding task is often left in the hands of a few determined and dedicated individuals, who persevere in their efforts to help those unfortunate enough to be disabled in a society unable to cope.

Miss Ieman Hashem Anqad is one such caring and considerate person. She is the Director of the Ieman Institute for Special Education and Speech Therapy and Chairperson of the Society for the Friends of the Mentally Handicapped.

Although born into quite a conservative Yemeni family, Ieman was not only able to finish her studies, obtaining a BA and MA in psychology from Jordan, but also open a successful educational institute for handicapped children.

Ismail Al-Ghabiry of Yemen Times talked to Miss Anqad about various issues concerning the handicapped in particular and women in general.

He filed the following interview.

Q: Could you briefly tell us about the Ieman Institute?

A: The beginning was in 1992 when I started working at a psychiatric care home for women. Then I did not have much knowledge about handicapped children. The experience I gained at that home enabled me to be more in tune to the needs of handicapped girls.

Handicapped girls in Yemen suffer a lot, along with their families. Society in general is just not considerate enough. The idea to open an institute for girls with special needs came to me when I came across the tragedy of an 11-year-old mentally handicapped girl. She was raped. Her family could barely cope with this catastrophe. I was with them, helping their daughter overcome her predicament.

I believe the Ieman Institute to be my small contribution towards helping mentally handicapped children and making society more aware of their needs. I aim to make the families of handicapped children understand that their sons and daughters can be trained to become active members of society.

Q: What sort of problems did you face opening the Ieman Institute?

A: I first talked to the director of the psychiatric care home where I worked. My idea was completely rejected. Many people thought that it was a useless exercise trying to teach mentally handicapped people. I was often told that it is OK to train physically

handicapped people, by the mentally incapacitated were hopeless cases.

My farther also rejected my proposal as a phase I'm passing through which I'll soon outgrow. He advised to do something else. I persisted. My mother and elder brother were totally against it. My brother in particular resented my going out to work and driving a car.

The only solution open for me then was to sell my gold jewelry to raise some of the required funds. I borrowed the rest.

Q: When was the Ieman Institute first opened?

A: It was opened in a small building on November 28, 1992 - my birthday. Very shortly afterwards, people started bringing in their handicapped children. On January 1, 1993, I moved to a larger building due to the increase in children's number at the Institute. Parents could not contain their happiness at seeing their children going to school everyday carrying their bags and books. I had to have more rooms built to care of the increasing number of students.

Q: How many students are there now and what departments does the Institute consist of?

A: There are 300 students, male and female, taught by 55 teachers in 32 classrooms. The Ieman Institute caters for children with all levels of mental



here, one mentally disturbed boy tried to stab a girls with watchman's jambia. He has now recovered and does simple tasks around the place. Another handicapped boy now operates a computer.

Q: How do you see the status of Yemeni women now?

A: From a psychologist's point of view, about 99% of mental problems among women in Yemen are caused by spousal violence and parental repression. Women are still, to a large extent, regarded as inferior by Yemeni society. They are second-class citizens.

When I'm driving, for example, men drivers would either want to break into my lane, smash into my car, or do other childish behavior. At petrol stations, men often jump the queue if a woman is ahead of them.

I once heard a particular MP boasting that he and some of his colleagues withdrew from a parliamentary sessions just because it was headed by a woman MP!

disability. Moreover, we have a special department for children with cerebral palsy, the only one of its kind in Yemen. Special physiotherapy is provided in this section.

Also, we take care of the deaf and dumb and those with speech impediments.

Q: I understand that there is a reason for your refraining from marriage. What is it?

A: Yemeni society is still backward. Not many men would agree to their wives going out to work. I don't think that I'll find a man who is ready to understand the nature of my work and my dedication to it.

I now have a little handicapped boy living at home with me. He was rejected by his family in the village. Do you think any husband can put up with a strange little boy living in his house? I'm not the least sorry for not getting married. I find a lot of happiness taking care of these children. The progress some of them make is extraordinary. Upon first arriving

Q: How is the Ieman Institute funded?

A: Our funds largely come from the fees paid by parents. However, not all people pay the same amount. Less well-off people sometimes pay nominal fees. Children from poor families are taught free of charge. Free clothes and medical care are also provided. Fees only amount to about YR 400,000 a month; while, the Institute's monthly expenditure is around YR 600,000.

Some of our donors include the German institute DED, the Fund for Social Development and the Society of American Women in Sanaa.

Q: The word Ieman - (religious) faith in Arabic - has some political connotations. Is the Ieman Institute associated with particular political movements?

A: Ieman means faith in the potential ability of handicapped people. It also means having the courage to help these people integrate within society. Thirdly, it indicates a limitless faith in handicapped people as human beings like the rest of us, with the same rights and responsibilities.

Ieman never means any political affiliations, as some people may wrongly think. Anyway, the Institute had different name when it was first opened - the Enchanted World Institute. I believe that the world of handicapped people is a magical one, many people thought the name quite odd. So I had to change it to Ieman - my first name.

Q: Does the Ministry of Social Affairs assist in any way?

A: The sole part played by Ministry of Social Affairs includes sending out inspectors to look into our work. Very little financial aid is provided by government agencies. We used to get YR 240,000 a year from the Ministry, now we only receive half of that amount. The funds we receive are barely enough for the day-to-day running of the Institute.

Q: Does the Ministry cooperate facilitate your work?

A: Government agencies are not quite cooperative, I'm sorry to say. The Ieman Institute is almost totally ignored, as far as training courses and seminars are concerned, say. Lack of services is a wholly different matter.

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“Yemen can be the first Arab state to sign the Arab Human Rights Charter.”

Our duty is to introduce international and regional human rights thoughts and philosophy. Through these conferences we can expand, strengthen and protect human rights in the countries we visit.

Q: What is the next step to consolidate human rights?

A: Awareness goes side by side with the formation of NGOs to protect human rights. This means a group of human rights activists working together to ensure actual implementation of the international and regional covenants signed by the country. The main objective is to alert and educate people about the importance of protecting their rights, convey any violations of these rights to the officials, overcome these violations and get back to the right track to create a respectful situation.

Q: How can we promote conditions for successfully observing human rights?

A: There is notable lack of information regarding human rights documentation. There should be a special page in local newspapers about human rights. Organizing such conferences and advising the government to sign and ratify international covenants regarding human rights is essential.

I hope the Yemeni public will appeal to the Yemeni government to endorse the Arab Human Rights Charter which was promulgated in 1994. Unfortunately no Arab country has signed this declaration. If Yemen ratifies it, it will be the first Arab state to do so.

Yemen ratified the two human rights international covenants and the child rights covenant.

Q: How do you explain that Arab states have signed some of the international covenants but not the Arab Human Rights Charter?

A: This reflects the double-standard of Arab governments concerning human rights. In international forums, Arab representatives project a great interest in this issue. They make every effort to prove their good intentions and concern about human rights protection to the international powers. When Arab officials meet on their own in regional meetings, they express much criticism and dismay with human rights thoughts and tend to delay acceptance of human rights covenants.

Q: The Islamic human rights declaration was released by the Conference of Islamic Organization (CIO) in 1991 in Cairo. Why do we need an Islamic human rights?

A: It seems that the CIO was trying to show that Islam respects human rights and they are part of its teachings, which is a fact we don't doubt. It was trying to draw the attention of the international community to this point.

As we all know, this declaration has only morally force, but is not binding to anyone. The CIO's endorsement was a mere show of good intentions. It has helped many members of CIO to be on the safe side in international arenas, since they have signed none of the international human rights covenants.

I personally feel there is no need to have an Islamic covenant. We are talking about a universal value. It is enough to sign/ratify the international covenants and implement them fully.

Korean Ambassador:

“I leave behind strong bilateral relations.”

On the 28th of this month, Korean Ambassador Pak Hi Joo leaves Sanaa for good. He has the sad distinction of being the last ambassador of the Republic of Korea in Yemen. On this occasion, Hatem Ba-Mehriz of Yemen Times talked to him. Excerpts:

Q: This is a sad moment, I see you have cleared up your office. How was the decision to close down your embassy in Sanaa taken and why?

A: I am sorry the office is messy. We are packing up. As you may know, the Korean government made a decision to close down twenty embassies worldwide, including the one in Yemen. The reason is purely financial.

We have economic difficulties in my country. Starting one year ago, we began facing very difficult financial and economic problems. So we are trying to reorganize ourselves and our activities.

I did not want to take the bad role as the last ambassador here, but I have to follow government instructions. It is very sad that we have to close the embassy, but I am sure when our economy recovers, we will be back.

Q: Meanwhile who is going to take care of business here?

A: Our ambassador in Saudi will serve as a non-resident Korean ambassador to Yemen. Two weeks ago, I went to Riyadh and discussed the work of our embassy and the Yemeni-Korean relations. In a short time, there will be more visitors from our embassy in Riyadh to Sanaa.

Q: I also understand that you

have appointed an honorable consul?

A: Yes, my government has nominated a prominent Yemeni businessman as our honorary consul. He will definitely enhance the understanding and cooperation between our two countries. That person is Mr. Nabil Hayel Saeed, General Manager of Natco.

Q: As you leave, how do you assess our bilateral relations?

A: The relationship between our two countries has been excellent. The Yemenis are famous in Korea because of your reunification. We too are trying to re-unify our country, and we have been studying all reunification models.

I tried to enhance economic relations, but that was difficult. Yet, there are some success stories. My country started to make small donations to Yemen in such fields as medical supplies, sports, etc. We now have a very big project. Korea will provide a soft loan of US\$ 50 million to finance telephone line expansions. Already, a US\$ 200,000 donation has been allocated to carry out the feasibility study.

Q: What about the cultural relations?

A: We have tried but not successfully. Frankly speaking, difficulty in cultural cooperation exists not only between Yemen and Korea, but between the whole Arab World and Korea. We need to work on this.

Q: I am sure there is room in sports?

A: Taekwondo is a Korean martial art and it is popular in Yemen. Every year, the embassy



used to sponsor a nation-wide championship in taekwondo. Last year a taekwondo coach came to Yemen and stayed for more than one month to training Yemen athletes.

Q: Where is your new post?

A: I am going as ambassador to one of the Latin American countries (Peru). A Yemeni friend told me “You are moving from one historical country to another.”

Q: What is your impression of Yemen?

A: Firstly, I want to express my appreciation to the kindness of the Yemeni people and the good cooperation I received from the Yemeni government. I spent three years of my life in Yemen were very unique and an enriching experience.

When I first came here, I was a little bit worried because this was the first time for me to serve in the Middle East. Now I am happy as I successfully complete my mission. I like Yemen and the Yemeni people. You can count on me as a friend of Yemen. I will do my best to increase the understanding and interests between our countries.

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Over the Last Three Decades HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN YEMEN



By: Architect Kamal Haglan
Ministry of Construction, Housing & Urban Planning
MA in Architecture and Housing Studies
University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, U.K.

ments following the 1962 revolution. After Yemen opened up to the outside world, the construction sector witnessed a rapid increase to meet rising demand. Most houses in our cities and much of the residential countryside were constructed since the seventies. Many factors are responsible for this phenomenon, above all the population increase, rural-to-urban migration, and a higher level of income. The main construction boom occurred during the 1970 and part of the 1980s, when the Yemeni bread winner's relatively high income at that time enabled him to save money for use in real estate investment. At first, citizens depended on local contractors and material. But later, foreign contractors and material came into the picture.

Role of the Public Sector
At the same time that the private sector invested in construction, the Yemeni government's rising level of revenue - from local and external sources - enabled it to invest in building infrastructure, as well as offices, schools, hospitals, and other buildings. Services and utilities needed for private residences, company offices and industrial development became more available. The construction of an asphalted network of roads facilitated the import and movement of building

materials such as cement, steel, wood, etc. The public sector played an important role in determining urban land uses such as types of streets and location of necessary services such as schools, mosques and clinics. It provided the people with building permits and furnished necessary infrastructure to existing and new suburbs. However, it did not keep up with the rapid increase in construction which was manifested in the acute shortage of water, sewer drainage, electric, telephone and other connections. Furthermore, the public sector launched a number of housing projects for low-income government civil servants with financial and technical assistance from regional and international organizations. In some projects, the government provided the land, infrastructure and plans and then left responsibility of building to the beneficiaries. In certain cases, the Housing Credit Bank either directly contracted out the construction process, or provided soft loans to those citizens. Examples of such projects are the Sawad Sawan in Sanaa and Ghalel in Hodeidah. The number of beneficiaries, however, is still very low compared to the people who are in desperate need of housing facilities. In what used to be called the PDRY (South Yemen) before the 1990 reunification, the govern-

ment, that took total control over real estate ownership following the 1967 independence. All kinds of property and lands were nationalized. The government shouldered responsibility of providing housing for each and every citizen. It ostensibly pledged to construct housing units and provide them to the people as tenants and not owners. Unfortunately, due to high costs, scarce sources and lack proper management, the government was not able to meet the increasing demand. As a result, not much construction took place.

The Nineties
By the late eighties and early nineties, the economic and social situation in the whole country started to deteriorate dramatically as a result of many factors including external and internal changes. On the national side, reunification of Yemen became possible in 1990 followed by big demographic movements, then political tension, and the 1994 civil war which greatly affected the country's development prospects by shifting financial resources to military uses. On the regional side, the second Gulf war had a strong negative impact on Yemen's economy when some one million Yemeni expatriates returned from the Gulf countries, especially the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The returnees used to pump almost two billion U.S. dollars in remittances to the country. Furthermore, Gulf assistance of almost 250 million a year, stopped immediately as a result of Yemen's position on the war. These factors led to acute decline in the annual income. The demographic factors such as a high birth rate, 3.7% - one of the highest in the world - further complicated the situation. If present population trends persist, it is estimated that the population of Yemen in 2020 will reach 27.5 million. The average size of the Yemeni family per dwelling increased from 5.8 persons to 7.2 persons.

That means that more family members will share the same house leaving less space for its occupants who will suffer from overcrowding. Amidst such hard circumstances, securing adequate housing became a very difficult task particularly for low income groups. Prices of land soared due to speculation in the large cities, the capital in particular. The increase in prices of construction material, especially of those imported, along with the difficulties of acquiring loans, added to the difficulty of building one's own house. Another complication was the continuing migration from rural to urban areas. As a result of such factors, many families, especially in the low-income category, resort to building in unplanned areas or they illegally occupy public lands. Thus, the squatter settlement phenomenon arose in Yemeni cities. In most cases, the construction process of these squatters take place over a short period of time to avoid harassment by the authorities. Most of the building material is simple and cheap. More often than not, the family members move into the poorly constructed dwelling before full completion of the house. Windows, doors and other extension works, in many cases, are installed at later stages. Of course, there are no electric, water, sewer or other services. There has been a visible increase in the number of such squatter areas around Yemeni cities, particularly after the return of the workers from the Gulf war. Evidently, the housing conditions of such areas negatively affect the health of inhabitants especially children and women.

Conclusion
It is not only in Yemen that low income people face the difficulty of obtaining a house. This is a problem in most developing countries and it is expected to continue in the near future. The Yemeni society will be burdened with the rising demand for

housing units and the associated demand for complementary infrastructure and utilities. Many individuals will now have to depend on their ingenuity for acquiring their own dwellings. There are already several social consequences to the housing shortages.

- 1) Many young men and women delay their marriage plans. The average marrying age has moved from the late teens, to the early 20s and now to the mid-20s.
- 2) Many newly-married couples find themselves forced to live with their parents, thus giving up some degree of privacy.
- 3) Many husbands have decided to take back the wife and kids to the village. In other words, a certain level of urban-to-rural migration is in shape.

That is why the government has lately encouraged the private sector to engage heavily in solving the housing problem. One of the main areas which needs attention is ways to resolve differences over real estate ownership. The ways deeds are registered, proper enforcement of the law, and other steps are important factors in this process. Even then, it is important to adopt a comprehensive housing policy which is, so far, absent. It is important, when preparing such a policy, to take into consideration all aspects of the housing problem. New regulations and legislations must be introduced to remove the constraints that hamper the private sector's contribution in this field. The recent experience has shown that the private sector implements high or medium standard housing projects, which are oriented towards the needs of foreigners. Thus, such projects they will not be suitable to the majority of Yemenis. Thus, the private sector should be encouraged to invest in housing projects for low income groups making use of local material. One way to do that would be to offer public land and tax breaks to investments in low income housing.

Introduction

Housing is considered, in all countries and over the centuries, as one of the most important and basic priorities in life after food and clothes. The people of Yemen have been famous since a long time for their skills as builders - building houses, dams, terraces, etc. - with locally produced material. Our towns, filled with old buildings, are the best witness to that fact. Our ancient dams and impressive terraces adorning mountain-sides are additional proof. The availability of land, especially in rural areas where almost every family owns land, the participation of family members, relatives and even neighbors in the construction process in addition to presence of local building materials were amongst the factors that made housing construction easy and affordable.

The Seventies and Eighties

However, this situation started changing as a result of political, social and economic develop-

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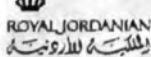
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شركة الألبان والأغذية الوطنية

More Job Opportunities for Yemeni Women! HOW?

The Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training organized during 6-8 December, 1998, a seminar on the Right of Women to Work. The overall theme was 'Toward Greater Female Participation in the Development Process.'

Beyond the media fanfare, I want to discuss the substance to this important topic. Let me start with questions: What is society doing to involve more women in the modern sector? What are the real opportunities for career women beyond certain traditional sectors like nursing, teaching and secretarial jobs? What has the government done to empower women? How can we improve the legal and social environment for working women? What is the impact of the many projects financed by bilateral and multilateral donors in this field? How can our society break the grip of some elitist women on the whole women's movement?

Those questions and many more are at the core of this issue. As many speakers noted, "It is hard for any society to make real progress if half of it is side-stepped".

One solution is the high visibility approach. The state decided to gradually appoint women to high visibility posts. So we have some half a dozen deputy ministers. The choice of jobs is also intended for the consumption of foreigners, because the ministries chosen for these women are such



as Ministry of Information, Ministry of Planning and Development, etc. But the approach can work, if it were to develop roots. The high visibility women can play important role models for our younger women. Of course, urban-based facilities such as day-care services will help. This is especially true if the laws makes such services compulsory in large establishments, companies, ministries, etc. More public awareness is another tool. Television programs, plays, articles, radio talks and public debates will go a long way in

helping create a better environment for career women. The persistent ridiculing, intimidation, and slander associated with the modern work environment discourages a lot of women. The legal and cultural environment must be adjusted.

First and foremost, education for girls is the greatest tool in empowering women. That is why the few elitist donor projects are a waste of resources, while more than 65% of all young girls cannot even attend primary school. This fact alone shows how far the nation has to go!

NEW RAMADHAN MENU: Economic Trappings of a Holy Month

By Ghassan Al-Adhal, Yemen Times.

It is supposed to be a holy month. People are supposed to be more pious; meaning less greedy. But what is happening to the cost of living in Yemen is unbelievable. Prices during Ramadhan shoot up. Here is the story.

There had been a visible increase in most prices of basic foodstuffs in Ramadhan. As shown by the table below, the rise in prices averaged more than 10% in just a few days until the first day of Ramadhan.

Low-income families usually find such new expenses problematic as they compound an already difficult situation. The higher cost of living is complicated by a high unemployment rate. Many young graduates are unable to find jobs at all, et alone in their respective fields.

The rise in price levels in Ramadhan are just the beginning of the new expenses. At the end of this month comes Eid Al-Fitr holidays which bring with them huge expenses. It is traditional for Yemeni families to buy new clothings, eat better food, and indulge in sweets, cakes and other 'luxuries' for the average family. I have noted many a bread-winner who is haunted by this upcoming requirements. Indeed, while Ramadhan brings blessings, it is also a source of financial headaches.

Ramadhan also brings with it a new lifestyle, including new dishes and menus. Meals usually differ from traditional ones because of their higher content of fluids and calories.

There are usually two meals in Ramadhan. The iftar meal takes place at sunset, which is around 5:50 pm these days. At this time, people eat dates, shafoot, and porridge, along with sambousa and other delicacies. A large quantity of juices or water is also consumed. This is followed by the Maghrib (sunset) prayer. Most people go back for a full-fledged supper.

After that, it is qat time. Sahour meal is eaten between 3:00 and 4:00 am in the early hours of the next day. Often, people planning to fast prefer large and filling dishes to sustain



them the full day until the next sunset. These are basically 'aseed, fatta, khobz, and other similar dishes.

Fish meals are essential plates in coastal areas, while the mountain people eat meat more often. In Ramadhan, fruits are popular. Consumers prefer oranges, bananas, water-melons, sweet melons, papayas, apples, and other juicy fruits. Consumption of vegetables also increases which unfortunately leads to inflationary pressures on the price levels.

The many exhibitions in large cities through which producers and whole-salers directly sell to consumers have helped dampen the inflationary pressures on the price levels. Alas, even that, however, has not stopped the prices from rising.

FOOD ITEM	VOLUME	PRICE LEVELS in RIALS	
		Before Ramadhan	In Ramadhan
White flour (milled)	50 kg/sack	1300	1400
Red flour (milled)	50 kg/sack	1300	1400
American or Australian wheat	50 kg/sack	1150	1200
Yemeni wheat (Tihama brand)	50 kg/sack	1300	135
American Rice (1st class)	45 kg/sack	4200	4300
Basmati Rice (1st class)	45 kg/sack	4100	4200
Chinese Rice (1st class)	50 kg/sac	290	2950
Quacks white oats	500g/tin	200	230
Cooking oil	3 liters	480	480
tomatoes	2 kg	200	200
potatoes	2 kg	250	250
onions	2 kg	200	200

Female Trade Unionists in Yemen

The Trade Union of Yemen's Workers organized a workshop at its headquarters in Sanaa in cooperation with the American Center for International Labor Solidarity on woman's role in syndicate organizations.

The workshop, carried out during December 7-10, 1998, discussed a number of issues related to protecting the rights of career women. The participants listened to a number of speakers who many relevant issues all dealing with Yemeni women in the labor market. Special emphasis was put

on women working in odd hours and night shifts.

The papers further addressed the need for women to participate in organization of syndicates. In order to enhance female participation in syndicate decisions, a committee was formed.

Other papers debated difficulties facing working females at their place of work and at home. The papers showed the double burden of career women.

Anwar Al-Sayyadi, Yemen Times



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Female Circumcision: A HORROR THAT STILL LIVES WITH US!



Female circumcision, widely known as female genital mutilation (FGM), is a term used for a variety of surgical operations carried out on female genitalia. These operations are practiced on healthy female children for traditional reasons backed by great social pressure. The operations may lead to immediate health risks and, sometimes to long term health damage.

The practice of female circumcision is prevalent in parts of Africa and the Near East. In Yemen it is believed to be limited to certain areas. In the 1991-92 YDMCHS, respondents were asked whether they approved or disapproved to female circumcision. The data indicated that 21% of respondents approved female circumcision in some governorates. No information was collected on the prevalence of female circumcision or reasons for respondents' attitudes toward female circumcision. The questionnaire in the 1997 YDMCHS included a series of questions on female circumcision. All respondents were asked if they had heard of female circumcision. Those who had heard of the practice were then asked if they had been circumcised and if any of their daughters had been circumcised.

If any of their daughters had been circumcised, the respondents were asked the daughter's age at the time of circumcision, the person who performed the procedure, the place where the procedure was performed, and the instrument used in the procedure. Information was also collected about any complications due to circumcision that the daughter suffered. Attitudinal questions on female circumcision were included for respondents who had heard of the practice.

Questions were asked about attitudes towards female circumcision in general, and about reasons for supporting continuation or discontinuation of the practice. Currently married women were also asked about the perceived attitude of their husbands toward female circumcision.

Knowledge and Practice of Female Circumcision

It was shown from the practical study that slightly more than half of respondents (51%) have heard of female circumcision. Knowledge is lowest among women 15-19 (43%) and ranges from 50 to 53% among other age groups. Knowledge of female circumcision is much lower in rural areas (45%) than in urban areas (70%). By region, over 90% of women in the coastal region and around 40% in the other regions know about female circumcision. The proportion knowing of female circumcision increases with level of education, reaching 86% among those who have completed secondary education or above compared with 47% among illiterate women.

Prevalence of Female Circumcision:

The same studies show the percentage of women who had been circumcised. Nearly one-fourth of Younger women (23%) have been circumcised. Younger women (age 15-19 years) and rural women are slightly less likely to report being circumcised than women age 20-49 years, and women residing in urban areas. The prevalence of practice by region varies substantially; 69% of women living in the coastal region were circumcised, compared with 15% in mountainous region and 5% in the Plateau and Desert region. The prevalence of female circumcision is almost the same among literate and illiterate women. However, the higher the level of education, the higher the level of prevalence among respondents. Only 21% of illiterate women are circumcised, compared with 35% of women who have completed secondary or higher level of education.

Prevalence of Female Circumcision:

Respondents who had one or more daughters at the time of the survey were asked whether any of their daughters was circumcised. The studies indicate that nearly 1 in 5 respondents who had daughters reported that a daughter has been circumcised. Overall the prevalence of female circumcision among daughters (20%) is slightly lower than the prevalence among mothers (23%). However this does not necessarily indicate a decline in the practice because some daughters may still be circumcised later in life.

The proportion of daughters circumcised shows no difference by urban rural residence (20% each), but differentials by region are substantial: Coastal region (63%), Mountainous region (15%), and Plateau and Desert region (2%). By level of education, the highest proportion of daughters circumcised is among those whose mothers have completed secondary or higher education (13%). The decline among daughters of the most educated group, is noteworthy, dropping from a prevalence of 35% among mothers who have completed at least secondary school to 13% among their daughter.

Age at Circumcision:

Other studies present the distribution of circumcised daughters by age at circumcision, residence, and region. In Yemen, almost all daughters who were circumcised (97%) were reported by their mothers to have been circumcised during the first month of life. One in five were circumcised before they were 7 days old. Half were circumcised when they were 7 to 10 days old, and almost three fourths were circumcised by the ten days after birth. More than half of daughters were circumcised at age 7 to 10 days in rural areas, and slightly less than half in urban areas.

However in urban areas, 16% of daughters were circumcised during the first six days of life and six% after the age of one month, compared with 22 and 2%, respectively, in rural areas. Eighty-eight% of respondents living in the Mountainous region reported that their daughters were circumcised within the first ten days of life, compared with 69% in the Coastal region and 61 in the Plateau and Desert region.

The median age at which daughters are circumcised is 7.6 days.

Performing Circumcision:

In Africa and the Near East, female circumcision is usually performed by a traditional birth attendant or an experienced elderly woman. Previous studies show that two-thirds of circumcised daughters had the procedure done by a traditional birth attendants (*daya*) and one-fifth were performed by grandmothers or relatives. Only 9% of procedures were carried out by medical personnel (6% by nurses/midwives). Barbers performed a small proportion of circumcisions (5%). Current studies show that only 3% of circumcised daughters had the procedure done in a health facility while 97% had it done at home. While explanatory studies indicate that razorblades were used in 3 out of 4 circumcision operations performed on daughters; scissors were used in 1 in 5 operations.

Many medical complications, immediate and long term, arise from female circumcision. Bleeding is unavoidable since damage to the blood vessels is inevitable. Shock from the loss of blood and pain since the operation is performed without anaesthetic invariably occur to some degree and in some cases leads to death. Infection is a common complication due to unhygienic conditions in which the operation is performed. Tetanus and septicemia also occur and can prove fatal." Advance studies present the complications associated with the daughter's circumcision. Respondents could mention multiple complications. The most frequent complications. Were bleeding (8%), pain (4%), and infection or fever (2%). Mothers reported no complications for 89% of daughters who were circumcised.

Attitudes Toward Circumcision

In addition to asking ever-married women who had heard of female circumcision whether the practice should be continued or discontinued, they were asked about the perceived attitude of their husbands. The results presented in higher studies that almost half (48%) of respondents believe that female circumcision should be discontinued, 41% believe it should be continued, and 11% have no opinion (unsure/don't know). Support for the practice is not affected by age, but there is a strong association between a woman's attitude toward female circumcision and residence, region, and level of education. Rural women are equally divided on support for continuation or discontinuation of female circumcision.

However, support for continuation is lower in urban areas (32%) than in rural areas (46%). Women who live in coastal region (66%) are more likely to favor continuing the practice compared with women who live in the Plateau and Desert Region (13%), or in the mountainous region (42%). By level of education, the highest proportion supporting the practice is among women who have completed the primary level (44%), and women who are illiterate (42%).

In contrast, more than 60% of women with preparatory or secondary or higher education believe the practice should be stopped. Not surprisingly,

support for continuing female circumcision is associated with the circumcision status of the mother and daughter. Nearly 8 in 10 of those whose daughters were not circumcised. More importantly, 17% of women who had been circumcised favor discontinuation of female circumcision. Further studies present the distribution of currently married women who know about female circumcision by their husband's attitudes toward circumcision, according to husband's age and educational level, and respondent's attitude.

The studies indicate that 32% of women believe that their husband support continuation of circumcision, while 21% think their husband would like to see practice discontinued. Forty-five% of women did not know their husband's attitude toward female circumcision. Regarding husband age and attitude toward female circumcision. Regarding husband age and attitude toward female circumcision, there is no discernable pattern. However the higher the husband's level of education, the lower his support is for continuation of female circumcision. Seventy-one% of women who want the practice of female circumcision to continue believe that their husband's shares their attitude. On the other hand, among women who favor discontinuation of female circumcision, only 39% say their husband has the same attitude while 56% do not know their husband's attitude.

Reasons for Attitude Toward Female Circumcision:

Respondents who have heard of female circumcision and stated that they prefer continuation of the practice, were asked about the reasons for their support. They were allowed to give as many reasons as they desired. Looking at the responses presented in these top studies, the most frequently cited reason for continuation of female circumcision was cleanliness (46%). More than one third of women reported "tradition" as reason for continuing the practice, and 33% said that female circumcision was required by religion.

The other reasons in order of frequency are: a "good tradition" (12%), preservation of virginity (6%) and prospects of a better marriage for daughters (3%). By residence, the most frequently cited reason for the continuation of circumcision is again "cleanliness", 40% for urban and 48% for rural areas.

The second most frequently mentioned reason among urban women is "required by religion" (37%); among rural women it is "tradition" (38%). The third reason for continuing circumcision among urban women is "tradition" (30%) while rural women mention, "required by religion" (31%). The other reasons are almost the same for urban and rural women.

Reasons for opposing Female Circumcision

Respondents who have heard of

female circumcision and indicated that they would like to see the practice stopped were asked why they opposed it. Respondents were allowed to mention multiple reasons.

Up-to-date, studies indicate that 68% of women are against female circumcision because they consider it a bad tradition, 32% believe it is against religion, and 12% oppose it, because of the possible medical complications a women might sustain because of it. One in 10 women who opposed the practice think female circumcision is against the dignity of women.

Only a small proportion (3%) stated that circumcision is a painful experience. The order of reasons for opposing the continuation of circumcision, is nearly the same for both urban and rural women. Nearly two-thirds of women, irrespective of level of education, state that circumcision is a bad tradition.

The higher that woman's level of education, the more likely she is to say that female circumcision is against the dignity of women and the less likely she is to say the practice is against religion. Women with secondary or higher education, more often than illiterate women, report that circumcision causes medical complications (22% versus 11%).

By: Dr. Najeeba Abdulghani, Department of Child and Mother Care, Ministry of Health.

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REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Highlighting the Ordeals of Children with Special Needs

The Educational and Vocational Rehabilitation Center for People with Special Needs (EVRC) organized last week a special program to highlight the condition of handicapped people in Yemen. The occasion was the International Handicapped Day - 9th December, though the event took place on 15th December.

The EVRC was established in 1989 through a UNDP/ILO project, in collaboration with the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs. The high point of the program

was a short play performed by the children and teaching staff of the center. The ordeals of this group and how neglected they were by the government and society was

stressed time and again. "I want to belong. I want to contribute to my community," said the lead actor, Mutafa Abdul-Jabbar. Currently the center's enrollment is double its capacity - 241 students in the educational department and 119 trainees in the vocational department. More than

436 on the waiting list. The main beneficiaries are the deaf, dumb, physically disabled and students with mild mental disability.

There are many problems the center is facing, but the main one is transportation. The center is 16 km away from Sanaa and the buses the center is having are old and need lot of repair and maintenance. There are



three buses (two buses owned by the center and the third one is leased from a private company). These are not enough for 360 students in addition to the staff.

The Ministry of Social Affairs allocates a monthly total of YR 18,000 to operate the buses. The actual amount required is about YR 80,000.

Other problems are presented by the buildings themselves. Never maintained since the day they were built in 1989, they are in a bad shape specially from the inside. The paints have almost gone and the walls are cracked. The glass of the windows were long shattered.

The center itself is situated in an isolated spot, 16 kilometers east of Sanaa. Staff and visitors have to drive a long way for the simplest needs and to keep in touch.

There is also a marked lack of teaching staff, and no training courses to prompt and develop their skill.

On Tuesday, 15 December, a Yemen Times team joined the fair, which was organized by the center. The first thing that shocked me was a simple incident. As our bus rolled into the compound, the driver honked for some kids to clear the way. Nothing happened. It was a few minutes before we all came to the realization that we walked into a new world where sound does not exist. For a moment I pondered over the fate of such children if they were to walk in the streets of our cities.

Life is hard for these children. What have we done to make it easier on them.

By: **Hatem Bamehriz,**
Yemen Times



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JAPAN CELEBRATES NATIONAL DAY



With over half a century having already passed since World War II, Japan is now faced with various new challenges of political, economic, and social dimensions. The economy has been in recession since the early 1990s, while domestic politics seems to be under the process of reformation. Meanwhile, traditional family values are becoming shaky. Nevertheless, in the country where sophisticated hi-tech industry is existing along with traditional ways of life, you will find people trying gallantly, and deliberately at the same time, to adjust to the new circumstances. Here, the paragraphs below will provide you with some basic information about how the country in the 1990s looks like as a whole.

Geography: Japan is composed of 6,800 islands, most of which are insignificant, while 4 islands consist of 98% of the total area. Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku, are the largest islands in the archipelago. The land area of Japan is 378,000 sq. km, stretching along a thin curve of 3,500 sq. km. Mountains comprise 68% of the size of Japan, and Mount Fuji is the highest among all at 3,776 m above sea level. A chain of volcanoes in Japan contain hot natural springs, where ebullient water outbursts from the bottom of the earth. Japan has one tenth of the world's volcanoes and has many splendid rivers and lakes. Generally speaking, the climate varies from one place to another, starting from the Hokkaido icebergs in the north to the semitropical islands of the south. There are 4000-6000 local species of plants, 118 species of mammals and various species of birds, fish, and other living creatures.

Population: Ranked by population, Japan is the world's eighth largest country with about 125,600,000 inhabitants (1995 est.). Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya contain 45% out of the Japanese population. Population density in Japan is 332 per sq. km. Many people are living in highly developed industrial areas of the eastern shores. Tokyo, the capital of Japan since 1868, is one of the world's largest urban areas with around 27,900,000 inhabitants or 22.21% of the Japanese population.

Constitutional Monarchy, Government & Politics: By the end of World War II, a new constitution was promulgated, relegating the emperor to purely symbolic status, renouncing the use of the military force, and guaranteeing civil rights for

citizens. Japan became a nation of a democratic rule, which offers the right of voting to every Japanese citizen, male or female, who reached the age of maturity. The legislative power is called the Diet, Japanese Parliament, which consists of two houses (House of Councilors with 252 seats and House of Representatives with 511 seats). All bills of laws are passed through the two houses for full debates. But sometimes decisions are passed through the House of Representatives alone, whenever both houses disagreed.

The executive power is vested in a ministerial cabinet (ministers and deputies in-charge) appointed by the prime minister, who is chosen directly by the lower house of bicameral, elective / legislature - Diet. The judicial authority is absolutely independent. The Japanese state-politics is played by several major political parties; the Liberal Democratic Party, Social Democratic Party, Japanese Conservative Party, Democratic Party of Japan, New Party Sakigake, and Japanese Communist Party.

International Relations & Foreign Aid: Resource-poor Japan cannot survive today unless the world is stable and prosperous. Official development assistance (ODA) contributes to the stability and prosperity of the world community that is growing ever more interdependent. As a peace-loving nation, Japan has a mission to assume a role commensurate with its economic capacity to help sustain world peace and work in the interest of international prosperity.

Half a century ago, immediately after World War II, Japan lay almost in total ruin. And lest anyone forgets, it should be pointed out that foreign aid helped Japan rebuild and lay the foundations for the prosperity it enjoys today.

Japan has been the world's top donor of ODA for seven years running. In 1997, overall Japanese ODA disbursements totaled 1,132 billion yen (\$9.36 billion), up to 10.2% on the 1,072 billion yen level registered the year before. However, in FY 1998, Japan reduced the ODA budget allocation in its general account by 10.4% from the previous fiscal year, reflecting serious fiscal strains.

Today, it seems essential that Japan strive to maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of its ODA allocations and programs to minimize the negative impact posed by its budget cuts. Then Japan can continuously accept the responsibility and costs commensurate with its stature as a major power in the international community.

Japanese Development Assistance To Yemen: Japan started to extend its ODA to Yemen in the 1970s. Since then, Japan has contributed to economic and social development in Yemen through various schemes and programs of its ODA, especially in the areas of rural water supply, health, agriculture, fisheries, telecommunication, TV broadcasting and the environment.

Japanese ODA disbursements to Yemen up to 1996 totaled \$477.22 million. Japan attaches much importance to projects relating to basic human needs such as public health, primary and secondary educations, rural water supply, agricultural development. Japanese support of the National Tuberculosis Control Program is a good example of the past cooperation, and has achieved tangible results. This support has been extended for more than 15 years through the combination of the dispatch of Japanese experts, the training of Yemeni

The Imperial Family



medical staff in Japan and the grant aids to construct the National Tuberculosis Institute. In addition to this, Japan has started its cooperation to improve child health, among which is counted Japan's support for the national immunization campaign for polio eradication. Japanese cooperation in the area of rural water supply has a longer history. Japan has extended a soft loan of 3,880 million yen in 1977, and twelve grant aids amounted at 6,489 million yen in total since 1981, which covered 69 sites in various regions in Yemen. Agricultural development is another area of Japanese cooperation with a long history. Japan has extended 17 grants since 1979 to support the efforts in Yemen to increase food production, which amounts to 7,950 million yen in total. It is very important for Yemen to implement economic structural adjustment policies under the direction of the World Bank and the IMF. Japan is ready to continue to support the Yemeni Government to implement this process, believing that it contributes to the enhancement of people's welfare in the long run.

Economy & Development:

By developing the industry, Japan reestablished itself with a modern capitalist economy. Starting from the mid-1970s onward, the balance of trade between Japan and the US weighed heavily in Japan's favor, straining US-Japanese relations. Several times during the 1980s and 1990s, especially when the Yen was appreciating rapidly against the dollar, Japan pledged to take measures to even the trade balance by improving foreign access to its domestic economy. Domestically, Japan in the 1980s enjoyed a very

high standard of living, marred only by the extremely high cost and relatively low quality of housing and by under-investment in the public infrastructure. A real estate boom led prices of commercial property in downtown Tokyo to increase by as much as 200-fold in the span of a decade. This boom extended to the US, where the rapidly declining dollar made Japanese investment there especially attractive. The Japanese per capita GNP in 1995 was US \$39,640. Currently Japan is experiencing economic stagnation after the so-called "bubble economy" in the 1980s has eventually come to an end. In order to make a significant breakthrough, however, the Government of Japan has already announced radical reform measures for the banking sector and ambitious plans for public sector investment in an attempt to stimulate the economy.

The Imperial Family:

The Emperor of Japan is a symbol of national unity. He is a titular ruler who reigns but does not govern. Emperor Akihito was enthroned in January 1989 along with his wife Empress Michiko. The Japanese imperial family is considered the oldest unbroken dynasty in the world.

Women's Status and Promotion of Gender Equality:

Japan is one of the highest developed industrial countries of the world, where woman status has become similar to that of men in society in the past few decades. The former Prime Minister, Mr. Ryutaro Hashimoto, appointed Mr. Kaneko Muraoka a Minister for Gender Equality. The premier serves as the President of the Council for Promotion of Gender Equality.

Efforts are being made to achieve targets for representation of women on national advisory councils and committees. The Law for Gender Equality went into force on 1st April 1997, with the Council for Gender Equality newly established as a permanent body. The council deliberates upon government policies to promote the creation of a gender-equal society and works to ensure that the views of people from all walks of society are reflected in related government policies which affect people's lives.

Rainbow Bridge, one of the famous bridges on the Gulf of Tokyo



Modern concrete architecture, Tokyo



Food & Drink:

Despite westernization in every aspect of social life, many Japanese still prefer traditional food, composed usually of rice, soup of soybean paste (miso), pickles, fish, or meat. Among typical traditional foods are deep-fried food (tempura) and vinegared rice topped with raw fish (sushi). Popular seasonings include soy sauce (Shoyu) and green horseradish (wasabi).

Music:

Many Japanese are enthusiastic about classical music. They have passionately accepted and developed classical music ever since the Meiji restoration in 1868. As a result there are now nine professional orchestras in Tokyo alone, and internationally renowned musicians make Japan a regular part of their concert tours. The three leading Japanese performers (violinists) in the world are Goto Midori, Watanabe Reiko and Suwanai Akiko. Two other Japanese musicians are extremely famous in the West; conductor Ozawa Seiji and pianist Uchida Mitsuko. The opening of Japan's New National Theater in Tokyo recently has given Japanese fans more chances to see opera.

Such enthusiasm about classical music never means the lack of interest in modern pop music among the Japanese youths. New York-based Sakamoto Ryuichi has become a world-famous figure for his marvelous talent for composing and performing fabulous fusion music by using hi-tech synthesizer instruments. Saxophonist, Watanabe Sadao has also established his niche in the world jazz scene by incorporating elements of African music into his performance. Now, as Asian pop cultures are getting more and more 'borderless' and intermingled with each other, some Japanese music groups are not even limited in the domestic market any longer, but they are targeting the audience in the East, or South East, Asian countries, a new trend which appeared in the 1990s.

Painting:

On May 10, 1998, the Tokyo National Museum organized a special exhibition marking the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Japan Art Institute. The Lineage of Modern Japanese Art was seen by approximately 230,000 people. It focused on works presented by the institute in prewar exhibitions, including many masterpieces of modern Japanese art. Spiritually rooted in Tenshin's doctrine, the Japan Art Institute has created a tradition that remains the focal point of modern Japanese art today. Many of Japan's leading modern artists were

Modern wooden architecture (theater), Kyoto



prominent members of the Japan Art Institute. As part of its 100th anniversary celebration, the Japanese Art Institute held commemorative exhibitions in the US and France.

Flower Arrangement:

In contrast to the purely decorative form of flower arranging popular in Western countries, the art of ikebana, or Japanese flower arrangement, seeks

Mount Fuji, the spirit of Japan



to create a harmony of linear construction, rhythm, and color. While Westerners tend to emphasize the quantity and colors of the flowers, devoting their attention mainly to the beauty of the blossoms, the Japanese emphasize the linear aspects of the arrangement. They have developed the art to include the vase, stems, leaves, and branches as well as the flowers. The entire structure of a Japanese flower arrangement is based on three main lines that symbolize heaven, earth, and humankind.

Modern Architecture & Westernization:

One of the important features of modern Japan is the tremendous contrast between Western style buildings in Tokyo and other metropolitan cities, and romantic country roads and small towns away from these highly developed industrial urban areas. The Japanese bear a true love for trees and wood; hence, they use wood in modern architecture along with concrete and metals. A modern

Fresh sea food, a main daily dish



Japanese house is built from wood, because people are fond of its beauty and various unique combination. Today, Westernization is prevalent in modern Tokyo, where new projects of civil developments of concrete and metal cover the whole area. Despite these cultural uniqueness, Japanese cities are almost similar to their counterpart in north-west Europe and the USA in all aspects of urban infrastructure.

Industry & Technology:

Big growth is witnessed by the manufacturing sector, which includes automobiles, electrical and electronic appliances and machinery. The mining sector has been adversely affected by higher costs, falling demand and changing consumer needs. The manufacturing sector, by contrast, has been able to sustain growth by economizing on energy and resource consumption, and by the introduction of leading edge technology. The factors which brought about changes in Japan's industrial structure in the 1980s include greater technological innovation, new patterns of demand, and a shortening of product life cycles. The broad application of electronics technology, new materials and biotechnology have generated a major change in the industrial supply structure; away from the mass production of a limited range of goods and towards a small-scale production of a broad range of goods.

Service sector industries such as those emphasizing knowledge and information are acquiring a higher profile in Japan's industrial structure. Hence, in 1994 primary industries accounted for 2% of GNP, secondary industries 36% and tertiary industries 62%. Compared with data for 1987, the tertiary sector of the Japanese economy

has grown by 7% points, while the secondary sector has shrunk by 6% points.

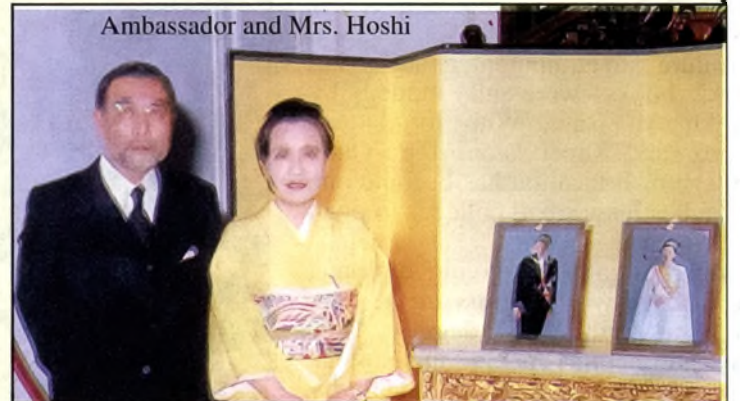
During the period of high economic growth that characterized the 1960s, Japanese industry actively acquired key Western technology. It then applied it to product development and thereby improved its ability to compete in world markets. Total Japanese expenditure on research and development rose from 1.9% of GNP in the 1973 fiscal year to 2.9% in the 1993 fiscal year, bringing it roughly on level with such expenditure in the other advanced economies. However, in sharp contrast to the pattern elsewhere, a full 80% of such expenditure in Japan is borne by the private sector and only 20% by the government. Since it is the private sector which is the main source of research and development, it is not surprising that the primary thrust of this is directed toward product development. Primary research has been relatively neglected as result. However, criticism of Japan's "free ride" in basic research, and the impact of the economic slowdown in 1990, has generated a discussion of the importance for the future of such research. A number of measures such as the Science and Technology Basic Law have succeeded in lifting the government's contribution to research and development.

In terms of technology trade, Japan was a net importer until the 1993 fiscal year. However, technology sales overseas exceeded purchases. The ratio of exports to imports in new agreements on technology sales was in the order of 1.4 in fiscal 1993 and 1.08 in fiscal 1994.

Compiled by:
Ghassan Al-Adhal,
and other Yemen Times staff

Ambassador Hoshi: "Yemeni-Japanese relations continue to grow."

Q: How do you assess Yemeni-Japanese relations during 1998?
A: I feel that in 1998 relations between the two countries developed further. Many senior Yemeni officials visited Japan. I hope the year 1999 will witness more of such visits by leading personalities. In spite of major economic difficulties in Japan, our economic assistance to the Yemeni people will continue to be implemented smoothly. Japan remains one of the top donors to Yemen.



Q: What is the volume of annual Japanese assistance to Yemen and in what fields?
A: The financial assistance to Yemen reaches several billion yen a year. Our assistance is project-related and the financial level has been the same amount over the last few years. I would like to use this occasion to ask the Yemeni side to effectively use this assistance in order to ensure continued support. The focus of our assistance is basically to help the poorer segments of society. We seek to improve the standard of living of the low-income people. That is why we focus on health, education, water supply, basic infrastructure, etc.

Q: Is the Japanese government going to resume its volunteers program in Yemen, which was stopped during the 1994 war?
A: We have a Japanese overseas cooperation volunteers program, which sends young volunteers to developing countries. Many countries have a very good impression of the Japanese youth who devote themselves to their development processes. I hope these volunteers will come back to Yemen. Over the last 15 months that I have been here, I made a lot of efforts to resume this program. But as you know, the present security situation in Yemen does not help. The numerous cases of kidnapping are a major obstacle.

Q: To what extent has Japan's support to small-scale projects in Yemen been successful?
A: We call our small-scale assistance scheme the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects. I feel this is small but very important, as it is cost-effective and has a direct impact on the local communities. These small-scale financing

goes hand-in-hand with the larger projects. We usually finance several small-scale projects every year. I appreciate the efforts made by Yemeni leadership in democratization, and I would like to express our hope that your country will continue on this road of democracy. **Q: What about the economic reform package?**
A: I appreciate that Yemen has embarked on economic reforms which were formulated with advice from the IMF and World Bank. I think you already have stability in the economy in general. I think this is important for the future well-being of your country. It is also necessary for attracting foreign investments, including some from Japan. **Q: How can Yemeni-Japanese ties be strengthened?**
A: Although Yemen and Japan are on opposite ends of Asia, we share a lot of common values. These will help strengthen our ties as we all work together.

Inauguration of Yafea College

A new College of Education - part of Aden University - was opened on Thursday, December 10 in the town of Lab'ous, Yafea, with a donation of more than YR 75 million by the well-known businessman, Sheikh Omar Al-Eisayi. The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Deputy Governor of Lahj, Mr. Mohsin Ali Al-Naqeeb; the Rector of Aden University, Dr. Saleh Ali Ba-Surrah and his deputy, Dr. Abdulaziz Habtour as well as a large number of academics, tribal leaders, dignitaries, and ordinary citizens. Sheikh Al-Eisayi was presented with the Aden University Coat of Arms and had a large assembly hall on the university campus named after him. The University Coat of Arms was also presented to the General Director of Lab'ous.

This academic establishment is the first of its kind in Yafea, where about 300 male and female students have already registered. The College has several departments, a computer center, and an English-language teaching center (to be opened soon).

Furniture, lab equipment, construction work, books were all funded by Sheikh Al-Eisayi. With the latter's efforts and supervision, the Yafea College of Education has become one of the best new small colleges to open in the area.

Starting initially by giving diploma, the College will progress in the near future to granting BA degrees. "The main aim behind opening this college is to provide good-quality higher edu-

cation to students at the areas where they live," explained Sheikh Al-Eisayi. "This will substantially reduce transportation and accommodation costs as well as, and more importantly, provide more education opportunities to Yafea girls," he added. "Teachers will further benefit by attending refresher courses at the College."

Staff Brigadier General Saleh Obadi Abdul-Karim, Director of Yafea District, was one of the key persons in the establishment of the new College. In a statement to the Yemen Times on the occasion, he said: "The need for this project is because there are many citizens of this region who need employable skills. Even as emigrants in foreign lands, especially in Saudi Arabia, Yemenis are not able to compete in the labor market because they do not have adequate skills. In the beginning, the idea was to establish an educational training center abroad. We talked to Sheikh Omar Al-Eisayi who expressed full support for the idea. Then after

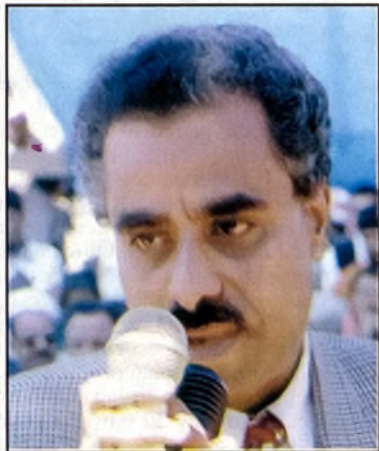
more deliberations, we thought it may a better idea to establish the school in the region of Yafea. "Given the need to qualify the 2700 Yafea teachers, and the other needs, we decided to start with a college of education. In addition, we have about 10,000 young men and women who need re-training in order to compete in the job market of the 21st century. That is how this important project was born. "With an eye to the urgency of the needs, we discussed with the authorities, especially Aden University, the possibility of using existing government buildings and facilities, after renovation and maintenance. Sheikh Al-Eisayi agreed to



provide an initial donation of YR 75 million. That made it possible to achieve what you see today.

"This college is the embryo of a university that will have all specializations. We have started by taking in 300 male and female students. Of these, 240 students live in dormitories, including restaurant.

"We are working closely with Sheikh Al-Eisayi for the development of the region. He has agreed to finance several other projects. These include the construction of an asphalted 33-kilometers linking Mahous in Yafea region to Wadi Bana. He is also considering to finance other infrastructural and service projects." "We are lucky and fortunate to mobilize the interest and positive interaction of Sheikh Al-Eisayi and other philanthropists like him who were unable to help their people in the past because of the regime that had ruled in Aden."



Salih Ba-Surrah, Rector, Aden University



Mohsin Ali Al-Naqeeb, Deputy Governor of Lahj



First Conference on RVAW To Further Ensure Women's Rights in Yemen

Organized by the Arab Democratic Institute (ADI) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the First Yemeni Conference for Resisting Violence Against Women (RVAW) was held during 5-7 December at the Central Organization for Control and Audit in Sanaa.

The opening session was attended by the Minister of Culture, Mr. Abdul-malik Mansoor; the UNDP resident representative in Yemen, Mr. Onder Yucer; the information deputy Minister, Ms. Amatal Aleem Al-Susuwah; the deputy minister of Social Affairs, the Dutch Ambassador in Sanaa, and other officials. Also attending was a large gathering of Yemenis and expatriates interested in the subject.

During the five sessions of the conference, several issues were discussed including revenge, attitude towards violence against

women, violence in the family and at school, etc. Several religious and social elders presented the issue of violence against women from religious and cultural points of view, and the role of social restabliments in fighting violence.

Several intellectuals representing governmental, non-governmental and international institutions and university faculties participated with nearly 20 papers. At the end of every session, there were recaps to the topics discussed.

At the end of its deliberations, the conference called for the following:

1. To revie existing laws with a view to amending them to better serve equality between men and women;
2. To survey hospitals about cases of violence in which women are involved;
3. To promote equal opprtunities among men and women in public

service institutions;

4. To issue the necessary law to prohibit violence in schools;

5. To found a new, independent NGO to look into cases of violence in society, especially against women and children'

6. To give women the chance to participate in social and political life;

7. To issue legal measures to prohibit early marriages (childhood ages);

8. To found a new cultural establishment to activate cultural awareness on women's issues;

9. To take serious efforts towards upgrading the living conditions of women in rural areas;

10. To include issues of human rights, especially women's rights, in school curriculums.

By: *Nadwa Al-Dawsari*
Yemen Times



Rehabilitation Center Opened

In the old days, society viewed the disabled as people possessed by evil spirits. They thought that they brought disease and death. At the very least, they thought that such diseases were a sign of sinful people. Therefore, the handicapped used to be killed in order to make society safe.

Religious leaders and wise came to change such ideas, but their impact has often been short-lived and limited.

In the last few decades, with better understanding and more knowledge, humanity began to take special care of the disable -

opening hospitals, shelters and other institutions. Laws were issued to insure the rights of the disabled to have their own role in societies. In fact, it has been announced that the coming century will be dedicated to the disabled.

On observing the World Disabled Day, Aden city



and a weaving workshop. The event was attended by Mr. Fouad Gohary, representative of the Canadian Development Program in Yemen, which donated the equipment for the physio-therapy section. Other sponsors include Rashad Hayel Saeed, Hassan Ba-Ma'arouf, the UNDP and the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Yemeni government gave US \$8,500 to support this project. The 'Disabled' Rehabilitation Center is located in Al-Sha'ab quarter.

took one more step to live up to its duty towards the disabled. The governor inaugurated a rehabilitation center which includes, among other things, a 3 production-line

By: *Yousuf Al-Sharif*
Yemen Times, Aden

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From the right Mr.Saleh Bathawab &Mr.Ian Muir

ROTHMANS SIGNS NEW LONGTERM AGREEMENT WITH NCM

Rothmans of Pall Mall International strengthens its commitment to the Yemeni market by signing a new Long-term agreement with National Cigarette and Match Industries, Aden .

The signing ceremony was held in Dubai on 9/12/98 .

The agreement covers new areas of technical collaboration and Marketing support for Pall Mall King Size, one of Rothmans international trademarks.

Mr. Ian Muir, the Rothmans Director for the Middle East and South Asia said "this has been a longstanding relationship dating back to 1972 and signals a new era of Cooperation for the benefit of the Yemen Economy and the partners involved".

"Our art culture is regressing." YEMENI ARTISTS CALL FOR HELP

In an exhibition, opened recently in Aden, more than 70 works of art were displayed. This includes oil and water-color paintings, ceramics, graphics, and posters created by 11 different artists from Aden. All the products were exhibited for the first time. The well-known artist and chairperson of Yemeni Plastic Artists Syndicate (Aden branch), Ms. Iahm Al-Arashi told Yemen Times, "Following the founding conference of the Yemeni Plastic Artists Syndicate on December 15, 1997, in Sanaa, branches of this organization were established

in Hadhramaut and Aden. On August 31, 1998, I was elected chairperson of the Aden branch. "I hope to convey the problems and issues of concern of my colleagues to the relevant authorities. I also aim for arts exhibitions to be a constant feature of the Yemeni arts scene. Organizing such exhibitions and other art activities must not be limited to national occasions and anniversaries. "We have long-term plans to follow, organizing our work well in advance for different events. "Yemeni artists sincerely look forward to the relevant official bodies in this country to extend all possible assistance and support, both moral and material. Art culture in Yemen is regressing as visible from the many setbacks. With the Yemeni artists' efforts - represented by the syndicate - it is hoped that our culture will pull through. "We are working to make Aden a better place to live and work. Many new features and landmarks are proposed for the city - murals, fountains, statues, etc. The things that exist now are haphazardly strewn all over the place, without any regard to



esthetics. Beautifying Aden has now become our primary concern now. "Adeni artists can now exhibit their work at a permanent art gallery where people can view and buy the product. This place is situated near the Coast Guard headquarter in Tawahi, just opposite the port's gate. Everybody is welcome."

By: Yousuf Sharif,
Yemen Times, Aden



forward to the relevant official bodies in this country to extend all possible assistance and support, both moral and material. Art culture in Yemen is regressing as visible from the many setbacks. With the Yemeni artists' efforts - represented by the syndicate - it is hoped that our culture will pull through. "We are working to make Aden a better place to live and work. Many new features and landmarks are proposed for the city - murals, fountains, statues, etc. The things that exist now are haphazardly strewn all over the place, without any regard to



Children & the Media

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism sponsored a three-day workshop on children and the media at the Ministry's premises. The workshop included lectures and commentaries in addition to working papers and discussions and concluded by UNICEF's report on situation of children in the world in 1999.

One of the prominent papers tabled at the workshop called for promoting education of females through various means of encouragement. The paper advocated role of the media in elevating percentage of female education in addition to spreading public awareness among Yemeni families of its importance on future of the females.

It called for field visits in the country to study the 83% illiteracy among women, including



meetings with parents and school directors in addition to educated females.

The researcher also called for interviewing illiterate women and shedding light on their negative and positive opinions towards educating their daughters.

The paper then advocated the convening of seminars covered by the press to be attended by

leading officials from the Ministries of Education, Information and Endowments to review reasons for that problem and proposed solutions.

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IBB

University Makes Visible Strides

Although recently founded, the University of Ibb has become a respected center for higher education. Serious research is conducted in many fields by highly qualified academics - both Yemeni and foreign.

Ismail Al-Ghabiri of Yemen Times interviewed Dr. Nasser Abdullah Al-Awlaqi, President of the University of Ibb.

Q: When was the University of Ibb founded?

A: I was appointed a president of University of Ibb in a Republican Decree of September 10, 1996. The University of Ibb was established and founded by June 12th, 1996. Today because of this wise policy we have fifteen universities, seven of them are state-owned and the rest are private. The total number of university students in Yemen may slightly exceed 150,000 this year.

Q: How many faculties are there at the university?

A: We started working in 1996 with the faculties of Education (Ibb), Agriculture, Economics & Administrative Sciences, Arts & Sciences and Education (Nadirah Directorate). In 1998 we added the faculty of Engineering with three main departments: Architecture, Electricity and Electronics. Now, there is a plan to be approved for the establishment of a faculty of medicine by the academic year 1999-2000.

Q: How many students do you have?

A: There are about 8,000 to 9,000 students in the University of Ibb. Most new students apply for education, economics and

administration sciences, arts and sciences.

This academic year (1998/99), 70% of the students were admitted into the Faculty of Agriculture, because of the free accommodation incentives and funds provided to people involved in such fields. Students of agriculture and food technology get practical training at the Hayel Saeed Anam Industrial Group, 40 km. away from the university. Furthermore, the university provides new graduates in agriculture with jobs in the private sector to link modern education to industry and trade.

Q: Do you face any problems, and how do you tackle them?

A: Pollution is really a main problem. The water and sewage-treatment plant, financed by the German government, needs some repair work. In addition to find a solution, the university conducted a workshop on environmental problems. Speaking of the environment, the Ministry of Education along with Ibb University board of trustees, established an intensive agricultural engineering section. Students are trained to deal with desertification, water resources management, etc.

Q: Are there any problems regarding admitting students coming from other parts of the country?

A: The idea of establishing regional universities is to give new students from these areas greater chances for enrollment and to avoid living and travel expenses in Sanaa or Aden. Hence most of our students are from Ibb, but by the next

academic year, we will attract the sons and daughters of Yemeni emigrants, Arabs and foreigners without exclusions.

Q: What is the ratio of Yemeni to non-Yemeni teaching staff?

A: We have a problem regarding attracting Yemeni teaching staff to regional universities. Most Yemeni teachers prefer to be employed either in Sanaa University or Aden University. Hence, we are formulating a new program to attract Yemeni graduates to work in the University of Ibb. They'll be offered scholarships to study overseas.

We have already sent 30 students to prepare for post-graduate studies in food technology and agriculture in Germany, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, India, etc. They'll be working in Ibb University when they come back. Now we have not less than 15 Iraqi professors and only one Sudanese. We approved 20% increase in salaries for all Yemeni staff who work in rural areas, as bonuses and incentives. This is important to solve the labor force shortages in the town of Ibb, and absorb labor force surplus from main cities.

Q: How do you evaluate education in Yemen?

A: Yemen faces a problem at all scholastic and undergraduate levels. We have 3,500,000 and 150,000 local students in scholastic and undergraduate levels respectively. Compared with the limited resources available to students, the standard showed a very big gap. The five-Year-Plan budget and annual expenditures to education



should increase to raise education standards. New, modern and developed syllabus accompanied with qualified instructors are essential.

If we compare universities in Yemen - a less developed country - to universities in industrial countries, we'll find out that Yemeni officials have a lot of problems to overcome. The political leadership and the government must give more attention and finance to all Yemeni universities, private or state-run to compete with foreign ones abroad and improve higher education in Yemen.

Q: What is the main aim of the agricultural program?

A: The main aim of the university agricultural program is to supply our society with high quality agronomy. As well as extending and improving agricultural productivity, water resources and crop production.

Q: Do you get any assistance from officials?

A: Yes, President Ali Abdullah Saleh provided the university with another new large campus. I also like to thank Governor Abdul-Qader Hilal and my faculty staff members for their fruitful continuous cooperation.

AL-MAHARAH

"Thank-you" note to the Omani Governor of Dhofar

The people of Yemen's Al-Maharah Governorate have sent a "Thank-you" letter to the governor of the neighboring Omani province, Dhofar. The letter signed by Mr. Mohammed Salem Akkoush, member of the Consultative Council and former governor of Mahara, expressed gratitude for repeated supplies of food shipments to alleviate the suffering of the people.

"While thanking you for your humanitarian assistance, we ask you to convey our gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Qaboos for his kind gesture," the letter said. The people of Al-Maharah have been receiving generous supplies of foodstuffs. The Omani government is also financing the construction of a new highway connecting Yemen and Oman across the border.

HODEIDAH

Prizes for Artists During Ramadhan Competitions

The National Youth Culture of Hodeidah announced that it will award generous prizes for young artists. The NYC will organize several open competitions in various clubs during the month of Ramadhan. The fields of competition include oratory, poetry, short stories, and acting, other fields include religious information and Quranic recitals.

The prizes - both cash and in kind, have been donated by the Hayel Saeed Group of Companies, Thabet Brothers Group of Companies, Abdul-Galeel Radman Group of Companies, Salahuddin Factory, Al-Dubayi Perfumery Factory, Yemen Islamic Bank, Bajel Foodstuffs Complex, Overseas Shipping Company, and others.

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ALFA

الوكلاء الوحيدون في الجمهورية اليمنية
شركة ألفا المحدودة



Suzuki Showroom Opened in Aden

Suzuki-Yemen's main offices were recently inaugurated by the Chairman of the Consultative Council, Mr. Abdulaziz Abdulghani; the Governor of Aden, Mr. Taha Ahmed Chanim; the Minister of Trade, Mr.

Suzuki-Yemen presents the best & most modern cars.

sq.m). The three center are very efficiently managed through a modern computer network.

Suzuki-Yemen provides excellent after-sales services



water pumps and Suzuki outboard motors (40 horsepower).

others, help build Aden's infrastructure and enhance its status as Yemen's trade capital."

Ridhwan Al-Saqqaf, Yemen Times, Aden.

On the occasion of the inauguration of the Suzuki-Yemen Complex in Aden, Mr. Abdulghani said: "I'm very pleased to open the Suzuki-Yemen showroom. The capital invested in this project is quite big, indicating more confidence on part of the investors in Yemen's economy.

"I wish the Ba-Maarouf Group of Companies, Suzuki agents in Yemen, all success in their work.

"All such projects, whether trade showrooms or



Suzuki Yemen's workshop



Abdulrahman Ali Othman; the Minister of Emigrants Affairs, Mr. Ahmed Al-Mashari; Chairman of the Ba-Maarouf Group of Companies, Mr. Hassan Ba-Maarouf and a large number of businessmen, financiers, diplomats, and representatives of the media.

by using the most up-to-date equipment and original, high-quality spare-parts.

Cars are not the only commodity on offer by Suzuki-Yemen. Available also are Suzuki electric generators, Suzuki

Suzuki-Yemen is the nucleus of the Ba-Maarouf Group of Companies and a very significant investment project in Aden. Costing a total of \$2 million, the complex consists of three main centers: maintenance center (3,600 sq.m), spare-parts center (2,700 sq.m) and an cars showroom (1,600



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عضو مجموعة باماروف



Though on the rough, yet more civilized around town

The new front and rear 3-link coil spring suspension enhances the Samurai's capabilities on rough road and elevate your all-round comfort, while the redesigned frontal area and interior further refine the unique styling.



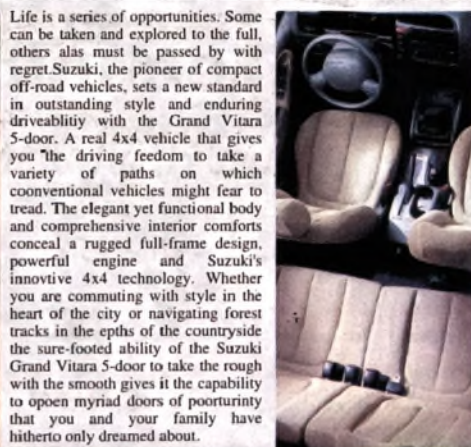
The innovative interior design elevates comfort and convenience to new levels

The interior of the new Samuria engenders the maximum comfort and convenience for drivers and passengers while retaining its original purposeful utility. The three white-faced, over-sized meters set in a redesigned functional layout provide the driver with instantaneous information day or night.

The 3-spoke steering wheel, formed to fit your hands, improves driving ease, while the newly designed offer wrap-around comfort and the convenience of precise individual adjustment. Optional separate folding rear seats allow different cargo and passenger configurations for maximum flexibility. The new Suzuki Samurai features an all-round capability that matches its dual-purpose nature.



Experience a real 4x4 that's designed to shape your character



Life is a series of opportunities. Some can be taken and explored to the full, others alas must be passed by with regret. Suzuki, the pioneer of compact off-road vehicles, sets a new standard in outstanding style and enduring driveability with the Grand Vitara 5-door. A real 4x4 vehicle that gives you the driving freedom to take a variety of paths on which conventional vehicles might fear to tread. The elegant yet functional body and comprehensive interior comforts conceal a rugged full-frame design, powerful engine and Suzuki's innovative 4x4 technology. Whether you are commuting with style in the heart of the city or navigating forest tracks in the depths of the countryside the sure-footed ability of the Suzuki Grand Vitara 5-door to take the rough with the smooth gives it the capability to open myriad doors of opportunity that you and your family have hitherto only dreamed about.



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 - A special silencer ensures a quiet operation.

- SX Group**
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leaking out and air from being sucked in.

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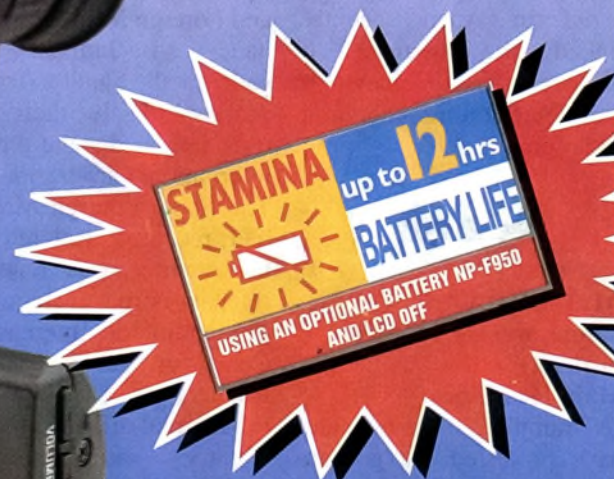
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Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Sameer Farawna



AL SHOURA

Sanaa, weekly 13/12/98
(Federation of Popular Forces)

Main Headlines

-15 persons were killed in a traffic accident last Thursday when a bus coming from Saudi Arabia collided with a Hilux car in Khamees bani Haij.
-Wheat was noticeably scarce in Sanaa in the past few days following news of the near lifting of government subsidy on that material.

-A powerful explosion rocked a suburb of Dhale governorate last Thursday near a military checkpoint in the fifth such incident in four days.

-Economic researchers, in a seminar on poverty organized in Aden recently, linked the increase in divorce cases in Yemen to the deteriorating economic situation.



AL WEHDA

Sanaa, weekly 16/12/98
(official)

Main Headlines

-A number of syndicates have protested the government's plan to increase income taxes in a message to the Parliament Speaker and Members.

-Rector of Sanaa University and head of the teaching staff's syndicate Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh threatened that the teaching staff will escalate the strike which started two weeks ago if the government did not increase their salaries as agreed upon last September.

-The second anti-malaria campaign is well underway in the governorate of Aden in a bid to control the spread of that fatal disease.

-The Yemeni Consul in Bombay said that a number of Yemenis were imprisoned in India on charges of gold smuggling.



AL HAQ

Sanaa, weekly 13/12/98
(League of the Sons of Yemen)

Main Headlines

-The security authorities have recently deported 97 illegal immigrants from Ethiopia, Eritrea and

Somalia.

-An employee of Taiz University has hanged himself over family problems.

-More than 20 people in Abyan governorate were bitten by rabid dogs as citizens in the Derjaj village asked for providing necessary medicine to combat rabies.

-Oil brokers from Tokyo and Singapore refused to buy Yemeni oil shipments for coming January at a price 49 cents less than the Brent crude.



AL BALAGH

Sanaa, weekly 15/12/98
(Independent)

An Article Summary
Yemen welcomes Saudi International Arbitration Proposal

-Yemeni Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Abdullqader Ba-Jammal has welcomed Saudi Arabia's proposal to solve their countries' border dispute through international arbitration.

The Saudi Foreign Minister had recently declared that his country was ready to refer its border dispute with Yemen to the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

Ba-Jammal affirmed that his country had repeatedly declared its readiness to accept any method proposed by Saudi Arabia to settle their dispute.



AL WAHDAWI

Sanaa, weekly 15/12/98

(Nasserite People's Unionist Organization)

Main Headlines

-A member of parliament, Saqer Al-Wajeih has received a threat on his life if he tabled a report on murders in Sanaa from the group that committed those killings.

-An armed group of men early this week stormed into unoccupied houses of Yassin Said Noman, former parliament speaker, and Mohammed Said, former housing minister in Sanaa. Efforts by political figures to stop the seizure of the two houses were a failure.

-Headmaster of Salahudin School in Ibb governorate last Sunday closed the school, sending the pupils home for refusing to pay donations.

-Well-informed sources told AL WAHDAWI that a tribe in Mareb was demanding one million dollars as compensation in return for allowing the operation of oil pipelines maintenance equipment. The source said that the cost of repairing one hole in the pipelines could reach \$100,000.



AL RAI AL AAM

Sanaa, bi-weekly 15/12/98
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-President Ali Abdullah Saleh's visit to France may result in the purchase of advanced French military hardware, according to western observers.

-kidnappers of the four German tourists have tabled a long list of requests in return for their release, all of which include extending various kinds of services to Ra'ad Mountain area in Marib.

-A number of fishermen in Hodeida have appealed to the Fisheries Minister to put an end to foreign ships' illegal fishing in Yemeni territorial waters in the Red Sea which greatly affected last month's yield of shrimps.

-The Education Ministry has opened the door for new contracts with non-Yemeni teachers who receive half their salaries in U.S. dollars, while many Yemeni graduates of various colleges could not work because of the government decision halting all new employments until further notice.

An Article Summary
Change of Sex

A young man was calling on the Parliament in the past couple of days, asking for financial assistance to undergo an operation by which he would change his sex from male to female.

The young man is carrying medical reports from a number of clinics to back up his case. He wants to travel abroad to undergo the operation that could not be done in Yemen.

Observers said that the young man did not only ask for financial assistance but also for MPs legal backing to his bid to change his sex, which if actualized would be the first of its kind in the country.



AL THAWRI

Sanaa, weekly 17/12/98
(Yemeni Socialist Party)

Main Headlines

-Security authorities in Hajja are currently detaining a citizen after he reported the disappearance of his eight-year old daughter. Sources told the paper that when security authorities could not find the girl they detained her father.

-The ruling PGC is launching an enforced fund raising campaign in various governorates without giving any receipts in return for the collected donations.

-The PGC is enforcing its membership on citizens in a number of governorates.

-A YSP Politburo Member has warned that Yemen's unity is facing two dangers, firstly the calls for disintegrating that unity and secondly fanatical practices in the name of defending unity.



AL OSBO'

Sanaa, weekly 17/12/98
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-Yemeni Air Force warplanes Wednesday bombed areas in Mareb where kidnappers of the four German tourists are entrenched as they demanded 40 million riyals in return for their release.

-The Saudi-Yemeni military committee failed to reach an agreement on border disputes and did not set a date for their upcoming meeting.

-The Yemeni authorities decided to deport all political detainees from the Arab opposition elements living in Sanaa with the exception of the Sudanese who were released in return for financial guarantees.

-Tribal mediation efforts, supervised by the Interior Minister, succeeded in securing the release of the son of a Parliament Deputy, who was kidnapped a few days ago, in return for a vehicle and a number of automatic rifles.

An Article Summary
AIDS Cases Increasing in Yemen

International organizations have indicated that AIDS victims in Yemen have reached 900 persons, and underlined that for each one of those there are 50 cases not discovered yet.

Yet the Yemeni Health Ministry retorted that only 500 cases were discovered and that some of those had

caught the virus as a result of blood transfusion.

International officials expressed discontent with the Health Ministry's refusal to reveal available information on the spread of the AIDS virus in Yemen. They warned that such a policy would not assist in combating the disease which was escalating in recent years.

The last official count disclosed that 35 persons died of the HIV virus in 1996 and that the first case to be officially discovered was in 1993.

The presence of more than half a million Somalis in Yemen, most of whom are infected with the disease, leads to the spread of AIDS.



AL UMMA

Sanaa, weekly 17/12/98
(Haqq Party)

Main Headlines

-The alliance of Mareb and Jauf tribes have warned the government of renewed disturbances in their areas if their grievances were not resolved.

-The German State Minister for Foreign Affairs had conveyed to the Yemeni President, during his recent visit to France, Berlin's concern with the deteriorating security situation in Yemen and asked "firmly" for the safe release of the four abducted German tourists.

-Malaria is still spreading in various governorates despite the government's declared combat campaign with reports of deaths still pouring from a number of villages.

-Competing tribes in Dhamar have kidnapped two civilians each from a different tribe over real estate differences.



ATTARIQ

Aden, weekly 15/12/98
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-A rabid cat attacked two women and three children in Shabwa slightly wounding one of the women and scratching the others.

-The country's gas sector might be handed over to a private company, according to special sources.

-A high level PGC official is exerting intensified efforts to solve a dispute within that Party's branch in Shabwa.

-Family of Lt. Nizar Mohsen Baras was still

demanding the release of their son, who was imprisoned by the Military Intelligence more than three weeks ago without any declared charges.

-31 persons, 70% of whom were children, have died in Lahj from malaria over the past two months as 138 cases infected with that disease have been reported in Aden.



AL SAHWA

Sanaa, weekly 17/12/98
(Yemeni Congregation for Reform - Islah)

Main Headlines

-The government is still refusing to pay financial assistance to the 800 students who won scholarships abroad.

-A number of Sanaa University professors and students have denounced the Aden University decision banning female students from wearing veils in the Medicine College.

-The U.N. High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has repatriated from Aden 1,500 Somali refugees to their homeland over the past 11 months, as part of its voluntary repatriation program. -70,000 cases of malaria were treated in Taiz since the initiation of the national campaign to combat that disease.



AL JAMAHEER

Sanaa, weekly 17/12/98
(Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party)

An Article Summary
Attack on Iraq Condemned

The Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party - Yemen Branch - has affirmed its unwavering solidarity with Iraq in face of the American-British aggression.

The Party, in a statement on the brutal attacks on Iraq, called for a Pan-Arab stand to protect that Arab country and its unity.

It called for immediate and collective endeavor of all Yemeni forces, government and opposition, away from marginal differences in support of Iraq to confront the aggressive attacks which target not only Iraq but the whole Arab Nation.

The statement described the attack as criminal and cowardly and called on the Yemeni government to launch speedy and urgent moves via various political and diplomatic channels to end that aggression.

End of 4th Week of Excellent-Division Football Tournament Ahli Sanaa On Top

With the conclusion of its 4th week, the Excellent-Division Football Tournament is now halted momentarily for the Holy Month of Ramadhan. This week's

defeat Wahda of Sanaa, Excellent-Division champion of 1997/98, 3-nil. Shoula team dropped from fourth to sixth position with six points after being defeated by

latter rose to fifth position with seven points. In a match held in Aden last Wednesday, December 16, Ahli of Sanaa defeated Tilal of Aden



Ahli of Sana'a Team,



matches were characterized by Shaab of Mukallah 1-nil. The 3-nil. It

Team	Results:			Goals:		Points
	Won	Tie	Lost	For	Against	
Ahli Sanaa	4	-	-	10	2	12
Shaab Ibb	3	-	1	9	4	9
Hassan	2	1	1	4	1	7
Wahda Sanaa	2	1	1	7	6	7
Shaab Mukallah	2	1	1	3	2	7
Shoula	2	-	2	8	3	6
Wahda Aden	2	-	2	4	5	6
Hilal Hodeidah	2	-	2	7	8	6
Ittihad Ibb	1	2	1	2	7	5
Zohra	1	1	2	4	6	4
Saqr Taiz	1	1	2	6	6	4
Tilal Aden	1	-	3	3	8	3
Tali'a Taiz	1	-	3	2	7	3
Majd Sanaa	-	1	3	2	7	1

excitement and change of results. Some weak teams went up, while few supposedly strong ones went down. Wahda of Aden team, just up from First to Excellent division, was able to

5th week of the Excellent League Tournament

Team	Date	Place
Wahda of Sanaa vs Taleah	Jan 28	Sana'a
Wahda of Aden vs Zohar	Jan 28	Aden
Ittihad of Ibb vs Hilal	Jan 28	Ibb
Shaab of Mukallah vs Saqr of Taiz	Jan 29	Shih
Tilal vs Majd	Jan 29	Aden
Hassan vs Ahli of Sana'a	Jan 29	Abyan
Shaab of Ibb vs Shaullah	Jan 29	Ibb

تم زفاف الاخ
عبد محمد عبدالله الشيبيني
على ابنة يحيى الزلب
وذلك في يوم الخميس
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Sport in Ramadhan

Many people often wonder: Is there a real sport activity in Ramadhan in Yemen? Some people harbor the strange belief that Ramadhan is a month for rest and sleep, when a fasting

person has nothing to do but devour food at Iftar time, stay late at night and sleep till noon. This attitude is reflected on sport activities, among others. Sports clubs become places for playing chess, domino, cards, etc. Very few clubs indeed continue to host more physical sport activities during Ramadhan.

Ramadhan affords obese people a good opportunity to exercise and lose some weight. This idea was taken up by a number now unfit veteran athletes from the Ahli, Wahda and Zohra clubs. They got together and formed football, volleyball and basketball teams. Matches are held two hours before Iftar, the ideal time to burn extra calories and tone muscles.

Some "official" athletes may become unfit due to lack of activity during Ramadhan. This is a grave mistake committed by sports clubs and sports associations in this country.

Sport exercises should never stop, maybe just reduced a bit during Ramadhan. When true religious rites and customs are applied, Ramadhan offers a good opportunity for both physical and spiritual well-being.

It is very important that sports clubs and associations should organize enough sport activities during this holy month. They must never "sleep" like the Ministry of Youth and Sport!

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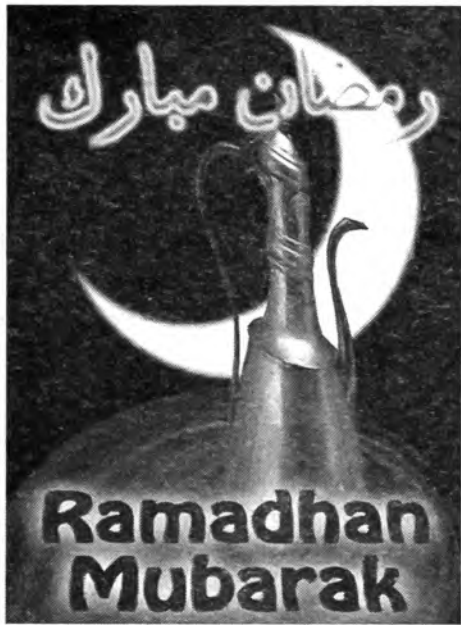


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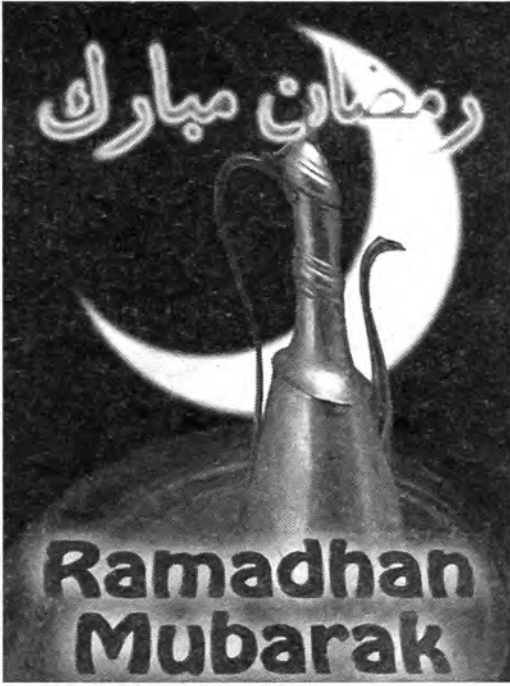
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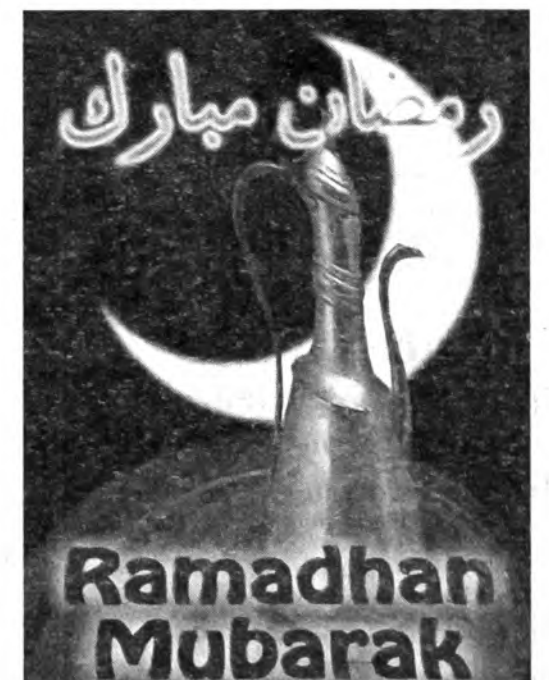
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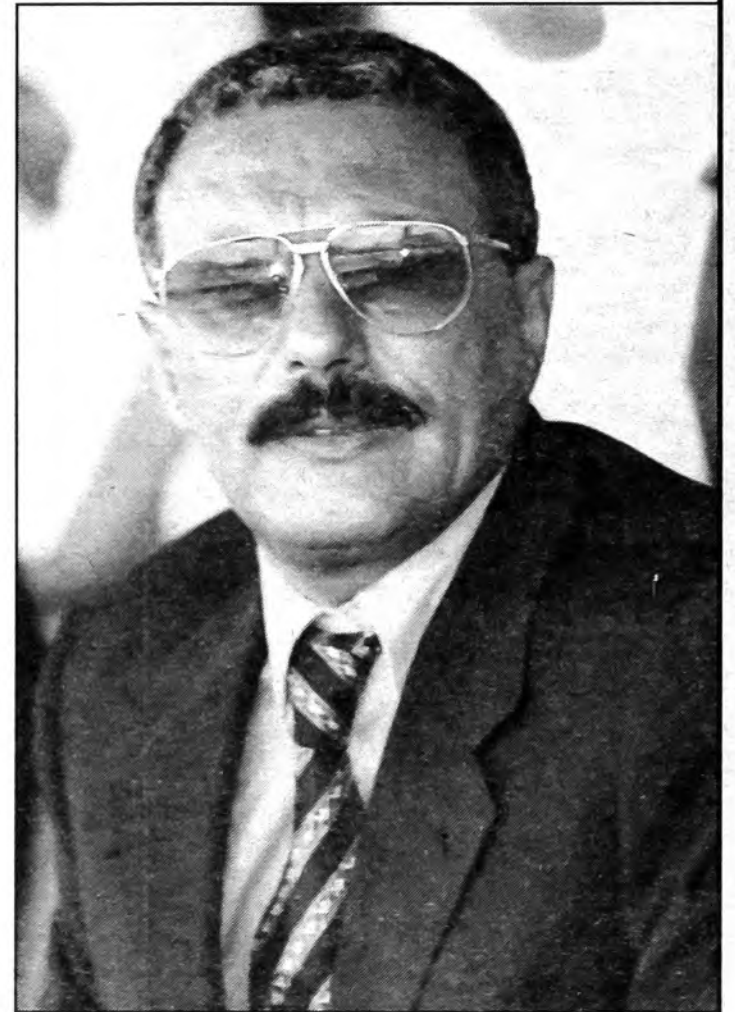
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