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YEMEN TIMES

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Yahia Zabarah on Fishing Potential in Yemen. Page 3.

Regime's Policy of Frustrating the Growth of Civil Society. Page 5.

The NCTEVT Gathering Concludes Successfully. Pages 7.

Yemen Times Readership Questionnaire. Page 12.

US State Dept on Human Rights in Yemen:

"Violations continue unabated"

There is increasing worldwide criticism of human rights violations in the Republic of Yemen. Although the authorities continue to state their commitment to respect for human rights, the practice is a totally different matter. The problem seems to be the "inability and/or unwillingness of the top politicians to control the security officers, especially those working in criminal investigations and political security," according to the annual human rights report for 1998 released by the US State Department on Friday, February 26th, 1999. Meanwhile, Amnesty International, the London-headquartered world organization, which has also expressed concern over the human rights situation in Yemen, will soon be sending yet another fact-

finding mission to the country. It will discuss the implementation of its previous recommendations with Yemeni officials, and will monitor the situation here closely. The Middle East division of Human Rights Watch, the New York based international organization, is also planning to send a delegation to Yemen. It too will assess the development of the human rights situation in Yemen. The US State Department report lists a number of serious human rights violations in Yemen during 1998. The full text of the report can be read online at <http://www.state.gov/> The Yemen Times reproduces its main sections on pages 8-9.

Committees for Presidential Elections

The Supreme Elections Commission (SEC) of Yemen continues to hold meetings with the various political parties, public figures, and other individuals and groups. "The purpose is to agree on the formation of the committees that will supervise the presidential

elections to be held in October, 1999," explained Dr. Abdullah Barakat, SEC Chairman. "We are trying to ensure that all political organizations and people with interest in the process are represented," disclosed Mr. Mansoor Ahmed Saif, Head of the Media Department of the SEC.

Yemen Goes Nuclear!

In its weekly cabinet meeting on 24/2/99, the Government of Yemen decided to establish the National Nuclear Energy Agency charged with the task of obtaining and developing

nuclear energy in Yemen. The cabinet also appointed Dr. Mustafa Bahran, the Science Advisor to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, to head the agency.

The cabinet emphasized that nuclear energy will be used for peaceful and development purposes. NNEA will also monitor levels of radioactivity in imported goods.

Emerging Democracies Summit Set for May 24-26

Yemen Times learned that the "Emerging Democracies Forum: A Political Leaders Summit" to be held in Sana'a is now scheduled for May 24-26, 1999. The conference will bring together leaders of democracies - from government, political parties, business and civil society - from a dozen or so democratizing Third World countries. In addition to Yemen, these include such diverse nations as Benin, Georgia, Guatemala, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Mozambique, and Nepal. The gathering is partly sponsored by the US State Department and is organized by the

National Democratic Institute (NDI). Mr. Les Campbell, Middle East Regional Director at NDI, is planning a visit to Sana'a in mid-March to iron out final details of the meeting. The Republic of Yemen, as one of the emerging democracies, has offered to host the forum, and contribute towards its local expenditures. The objective is to strengthen the commitment of these countries to democratization, especially in light of major hurdles in the transformation process. It will also be a good opportunity to share experiences and views.

Yemen to Normalize Relations with Israel?

According to the daily electronic news bulletin "Yemen News" put out by Eric Watkins from London, Prime Minister Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, held secret talks with the director-general of Israel's Foreign Ministry, Mr. Eitan Ben-Tsur, last week. The two sides openly discussed "opening interest offices in each

other's countries as a first step toward establishing official ties". The source quoting Yediot Achronot, added: "As a first step toward expanded ties, Yemeni officials will allow up to 10,000 Israelis of Yemeni background to visit Yemen, and will allow Israeli companies to invest in Yemen".



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OUR VIEWPOINT

Vocational Training in Yemen: Hitting the Nail on the Head

On Saturday, February 27th, an international conference on vocational training and technical education was concluded in Sanaa. The various local, Arab and world experts discussed several ways to upgrade and improve the quality of skills that are to be passed on to Yemenis. It was an important effort aimed at the future development of the nation.

There are three important guiding factors that I thought were well thought out in the conference. These are as follows:

1) Market Oriented Skills:

The skills and training that the young men and women will be given are those that are demanded by the market. In other words, the programs will impart employable skills to the young trainees. This is wise because, although technical education is important, not all kinds of skills are needed in Yemen today. Some skills may be too advanced and will not provide adequate jobs for the graduates. Some skills may have a more visible linkage effect and will feed the growth of other businesses and activities, thus enabling the economy to grow faster.

2) Learning from Others:

The philosophy of learning from the experiences of other nations is often given lip service in the development efforts of Third World countries. However, this conference made a genuine effort to study the cases of several relevant countries. On top of this list were Jordan, Tunisia, and Morocco, which have made important strides in vocational and technical development. Far beyond the region, the experiences of Germany and the USA were brought into the picture.

3) Reducing Flow to Universities:

The idea of the conference is to create alternatives to university education for secondary graduates. As a result, the country will be spared the agony of university graduates who have no real skills and thus make no tangible contribution to economic development.

On this basis, the goal is to increase the number of trainees enrolled in vocational and technical education by tenfold from its current low level of less than 10,000.

4) Long-Term Planning:

The conference also called for long-term planning. The thrust is to prepare for a full decade for investments in this sector, based on future needs of the country. As a result, the analysis runs all the way to the year 2008.

The hope is that the ambitious master plan to be drawn up will not just remain on paper. It will see the light in terms of implementation and execution.

The National Conference on Technical Education and Vocational Training was indeed a bright spot in these frustrating times. The Minister of Labor and Vocational Training, Engineer Mohammed Al-Tayeb, and the team of young men and women deserve our appreciation and support for their fine work.

If there is any word of advice that I may want to give, it has to do with gender. Most Yemenis see vocational/technical training as a man's domain. It should not be. Women also deserve to be involved in this sector.

The Publisher


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The State Courts Marib and Adjacent Governorates

Three key ministers were sent on a three-day courting mission to Marib on Sunday, 28th of February, 1999. Mr. Hussain Arab, Minister of Interior, Mr. Mohammed Dhaifallah, Minister of Defence, and Mr. Mohammed Al-Khadim Al-Wajeeh, Minister of Oil, were in Marib in order to assess the needs of the people of Marib, Al-Jawf and Shabwah. The group is to be joined today by Staff-Lt-Colonel Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar, the regime's strongman.

The idea is to pacify the tribesmen of these regions by paying attention to their development needs. This is a wise step on the part of the authorities to bring more security and safety to the nation.

Al-Shoura Is Blocked

The Minister of Information has issued a decree to outlaw the issuance of Al-Shoura newspaper, mouthpiece of Itihad Al-Qiwa Al-Sha'abiyah (Federation of Popular Forces). The reason quoted in the minister's decision was that there were two parties issuing the same newspaper under the same name.

"Until they agree, both have to stop coming out."

But that logic, the genuine group in the party complains, is an excuse to put their newspaper out of business. They further accuse the state of having masterminded and financed the issuance of the twin copy.

The editor of the real McCoy, Mr. Noman Kaied Saif, had been imprisoned by the authorities and was later released.

Al-Qadhi: Back in Prison

Mr. Showqi Abdul-Raqeab Al-Qadhi is back in prison. The pastor of a mosque in Taiz, had been in the Political Security Organization's prison for three days last week, and was later released. He is now back in prison for criticizing the regime. To add insult to injury, Showqi was actually kidnapped by three armed but unidentified men who were later found to work for the PSO.

Mohammed Al-Maqaleh Reports Threats on His Life

Mr. Mohammed Al-Maqaleh, the well-known opposition columnist told the Yemen Times that an officer who works for the Political Security Organization (PSO) approached his family and left behind threats on the writer's life. "The man identified himself, and said that Mr. Al-Maqaleh will be eliminated in a well-planned car accident," he reported.

Yemen Times Weekly Opinion Poll

Yemen Times Weekly Poll question is placed at: <http://yementimes.com/#poll>

Last Week's Question

Many Yemeni politicians today blame the Gulf War for the difficult conditions Yemen is going through today. Do you still think that the leadership made the correct decision in not supporting Kuwait?

Result

- I still think that the leadership made the correct decision, no matter what the consequences, as it is a matter of principle! (28%)
- No. The leadership was wrong in its position, and should have defended Kuwait and its allies. (20%)
- No. The leadership should not have made the decision. It should have preferred its people and not risking the economy for its principles. (25%)
- The leadership should have stayed 100% neutral in its position, and should have implemented the "wait and see" strategy. (27%)

More Progress on Al-Habbari's Giant Grain Milling & Packing Project at Al-Salif

On Monday, February 22nd, the *Henry Navigator*, arrived at Saleef Harbor, carrying the second shipment of the equipment for the silos, milling plants, and other parts of the factory of the Yemen International Food Industries Company, an affiliate of the Al-Haj Ali Habbari & Sons Group of Companies.

The ship was carrying 436 containers and other large boxes in which many parts of the plant were packed. These include suction equipment, milling parts, and the bagging plant. All the machines were shipped by the German company Buhler.

An earlier shipment of 196 containers had brought the first shipment of the plant parts will arrive next April.

On February 16th, 1999, Mr. Yahia Ali Al-Habbari, Chairman, had signed a contract with the Arab Contractors National Company for ground levelling and civil engineering works on



The Henry Navigator unloads the plant equipment

the site of the project, which takes up 173,600 square meters. "We expect civil engineering work to be completed by December this year," disclosed Mr. Yahia Al-Habbari.

This giant project, located at Al-Salif Port, 62 kilometers north of Hodeidah, is expected to increase the food reserves and storage capacity of the Republic of Yemen.

Journalists Scramble for Solutions

A number of journalists are involved in a frenzied search for solutions to their predicament. The Journalists' Syndicate is in a fix, because of the inability of journalists to agree to hold their conference. Some are demanding corrective measures, since that there were major violations of the charter of the syndicate. This is because some parties are trying to control the syndicate.

As a result, a group is trying to create an alternative syndicate, free from the control of the ruling or opposition politicians.

New Price Hikes to Coincide with Eid Holidays

The government is planning to phase out the final parts of the subsidy removal within the framework of the reform program which seeks to eliminate price distortions in the Yemen market. The two products to undergo price hikes as a result are diesel and wheat - both with far reaching impacts on the cost of living among the people.

Many observers believe these actions could lead to violence. Hence the desire of the state to introduce the measures over the Eid holidays, in one month.

National Workshop for Information and Education on Population Growth

On Saturday the 27th of Feb. The inauguration of the National Workshop for Information and Education on Population Growth took place. The workshop will continue to run until March 4th. Yemen's population has a 3.7% annual growth rate and is expected to double in size every 19 years. Fertility levels are amongst the highest in the world, with 7-8 births per women, even though child mortality and deaths while giving birth are extremely high.

Inaugurated by the Minister of Development & Planning Al-Jazeera Information Technology & Communication Exhibition 99 NOW OPEN

Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Soufan, Minister of Development and Planning, yesterday morning inaugurated, the Al-Jazeera Information Technology & Communication Exhibition 99, sponsored by Apollo.

The exhibition is taking place at the Expo exhibition center. The Expo exhibition center, which is the largest in the whole republic, is provided with facilities and enhancements that can match international standards.

28 company agents for 80 international specialized brand marks in Information Technology are participating in the exhibition, which will continue till the 4th of March 1999.

Mr. Tawfiq Al-Nihmi, the General Manager of Apollo International Exhibition Company, indicated that his company aims to make exhibitions like this one (JETCOM99) an annual event. He also mentioned that the exhibition will demonstrate the latest information technologies available today, especially now that the world is witnessing a boom in the fields of software and hardware. He also stressed that the exhibition is also expected to include the latest networking technologies for video conferencing, which will be shown for the first time ever in Yemen. Mr. Tawfiq concluded that this exhibition will be a milestone in the

technology and exhibition businesses in Yemen, and will help Yemen prepare its technology for the next millennium.

Expo Center is considered the first exhibition center in the country to enable company agents to demonstrate their products through seminars. As a matter of fact, JETCOM99 will include a number of lectures and seminars, which will explain some company products and services along with universal technology problems such as the Y2K.

It is worth mentioning that Expo Center will continue to launch many other exhibitions aiming to revive the business movement in

Yemen, and to introduce the latest various products to the Yemen public. This also is aimed at showing the world that the developments in Yemen are quite promising and the situation is stable in all aspects.

Future exhibitions planned to be held at the Apollo Expo Center include the International Health Exhibition for Medicine and Medical Equipment from 23rd to the 26th of May 1999, plus other international exhibitions.



Tawfiq Al-Nihmi,
GM of Apollo



Yahia Ali Zabarah:

“Our marine wealth can help us overcome many of our current economic problems”

The Republic of Yemen has a coastal stretch of nearly 2,500 kilometers, extending from north of Meidi on the Red Sea all the way to the Yemeni-Omani border on the Arabian Sea. In addition, the country's sovereignty extends to many islands, which further expand the territorial waters of Yemen.

Because of their location in the tropics and the currents off of the coast, the coastal areas are enriched by upwelling processes which allow marine life to grow rapidly. As a result, the maritime resource potential of the Republic of Yemen is indeed enormous. The sector has received much attention due to its potential as a source of food, its importance to foreign exchange earnings through exports and employment of manpower, and its part in other important economic activities.

To discuss these issues, Yemen Times spoke to Mr. Yahia Ali Zabarah, Deputy Minister of Fisheries. Mr. Zabarah, a native of Sanaa, was educated in Sanaa and Cairo. He joined the government services in 1962 at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. He gradually rose through the ranks, and since 1990, he has served as the Deputy Minister.

Ismail Al-Ghabiry filed the following interview.

Q: The starting point is Yemen's territorial waters and zone of control. What are the facts about these areas?

A: As most people know, Yemen has a long coastline of over 2,500 kilometers. In addition, there are over 150 islands that fall within the nation's sovereignty. Therefore, the potential usefulness of our coastal waters is very large.

Q: How much of its potential is being used at this time?

A: I am afraid our take is less than 30% of the sustainable production capacity. Our annual catch is only around 350,000 tons. Also, we are only catching the close-to-surface, close-to-shore species, like sardines, because our fishermen do not have proper equipment. We estimate there are over 400 varieties of marine life that could be fished on a sustained basis. You will note that the number of fishermen going out to sea every morning is more than 42,000 persons. In addition, there are many people who are engaged in the packing, transportation, freezing and marketing of the fish products. In other words, this is a large and important sector.

Q: What is the volume of our fish exports?

A: Let me first say that there is no ceiling on the volume we can export. Market demand is high. The limitations are our own capacity to catch, pack and

export fish.

At the moment, we export around 30,000 tons a year, which is less than 10% of our catch. Most of it goes to Jordan, Egypt and a few Gulf countries.

Q: What exactly is exported?

A: Most of the exports are lobster, prawn, shrimp, squid, octopus, and a few varieties of fish.

Q: What is the local market structure for marine products?

A: In the past, fish products were limited to coastal communities. Today, these products are marketed more and more into the mountain areas inland. But still, most of the Yemeni public only eat fish, not the other marine animals like octopus, squid, or even shrimp. I think, with time, the consumption pattern of Yemenis will change to include a higher amount of marine life. In addition, improvements in transportation and refrigeration will add more marketing options.

Q: There are reports of piracy as well as illegal and destructive fishing by large foreign ships. Can you give us details?

A: Indeed, because Yemen does not possess an effective marine patrol system, a number of intruders fish in our territorial waters without proper licensing. Some also engage in illegal practices like blast-fishing or fishing for endangered species, etc.



We prepared files on these matters for the government and asked for measures to control this situation. In December 1997, the government issued a number of decisions, including the following:

- 1) Large foreign vessels will be prohibited from fishing within 6 miles of the shoreline.
- 2) Around the islands, fishing can only take place beyond a five-mile limit.
- 3) Penalties for breaking the law have been increased. They start at US\$ 100,000 and can go as high as one million dollars, depending on the violations.

This problem of large foreign vessels doing illegal fishing in our territorial waters will not go away. It deprives local fishermen of their livelihood, and deprives the country of an important resource.

Q: What are the plans and actions the Ministry has taken to develop this sector?

A: Our target is to achieve a 9% annual growth in fish production. Towards that end, we have allocated adequate funds for investing in this sector. The gov-

ernment financed infrastructure, research, and other needs. In addition, it provided fishermen with 820 fishing boats free of charge which made a difference in the lives of 4,000 families. The government has also financed the construction of 6 ice-producing plants in the governorates of Al-Maharah, Hadhramaut, Shabwah and Aden.

The European Union and the World Bank have also supported the growth of this sector. For example, the EU has contributed US\$ 16 million, and the World

Bank (through IDA) US\$ 3 million towards the Fourth Fishing Project which has a total cost of US\$ 39.5 million. The money went primarily for packing facilities and plants.

Q: According to our information, the Ministry of Fisheries does not have full control over the sector. How do you respond?

A: Of course, we do not have full control over everything. When it comes to our maritime resources, a number of governmental bodies are involved. Refugees come from here, so the Ministry of Interior has to be involved. We may have disputes over sovereignty, as was the case with Eritrea over the Hunaish Archipelago. Therefore, the Ministry of Defence has to be involved. There may be pollution considerations which brings into play the Environmental Protection Council.

As a result, the cabinet has established an inter-ministerial committee to present proposals as to how the relevant ministries can coordinate their work.

Q: You mentioned pollution. How bad is it, and what can be done?

A: Pollution is an international problem. For Yemen, which lies along the path of one of the busiest naval routes, it is important to patrol the coastal areas. Many tankers dump tar and other pollutants as they clean up their hull. This is against the law. There is now an on-going project to study pollution in the Red Sea - GEF, based in Hodeidah.

Q: There was talk about privatization of the Mukallah Fish Packing Plant. What happened?

A: The Mukallah Fish Packing Plant has undergone two stages of modernization and upgrading, and the third stage is about to

start. It now produces 12 million cans a year, and is expected to double its capacity after the third phase of modernization. It has received many prizes worldwide. The second plant, at Shuqra, in Abyan, has also resumed work after a short interruption. The Ministry is working hard to upgrade both facilities.

Q: Donors and local observers complain of bureaucratic nightmares in your ministry. What is happening?

A: Well, all government agencies have bureaucratic difficulties. Inefficiency is a general phenomenon. We are trying our best. I think that law number (43) of 1997 has improved performance.

Q: Any final comments?

A: I would like to make three comments.

We are all well aware that our marine wealth can help us overcome many of our current economic problems. This is especially true in light of the fact that our oil production is falling, and tourism has now been badly hit. I feel marine resources can offer a lot to this nation. Therefore, it is only logical that our government and society should focus on this sector as it offers comparative advantage in our socio-economic development and in solving our present difficulties.

Second, this is a sector in which responsibilities overlap. This is normal. But what is not normal is for any of the involved partners to block the possible progress of other players. What I am saying is that all agencies involved in this sector should support each other to achieve more, each within their respective responsibilities.

Finally, I would like to thank the Yemen Times for constantly addressing issues of vital concern to the nation. This is the real job of the media - to alert and educate the public.



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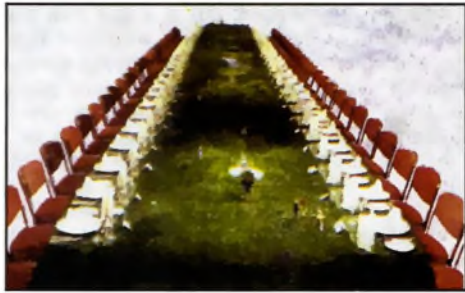
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PASSION FOR CHILDREN

From all walks of life children and parents mostly Yemeni's watched and enjoyed the latest movie "Lion King Part 2" which was held on 18th-19th February and 25th-26th February 1999. This event was successfully organized by PR Executive & Recreation Coordinator Ms. Ruth Sabry of Sheraton Sana'a Hotel and was sponsored by NESTLE.



Ministry of Tourism Meeting was held at the Sheraton Sana'a Hotel discussing the steps taken by the government to support and save the Tourism Industry. Participants were from the travel agencies.

Sheraton Sana'a Hotel recently conducted intensive training for "Starwood Preferred Guest" thus offering our guests better benefits and service. Mr. Fuad Hamid, Deputy Director of Sales & Marketing conducted four days training session with the assistance of the training Manager for all the staff of Sheraton Sana'a Hotel which was held on February 11,14,15 and 16, 1998.



Representatives from the Sheraton Africa, India and Middle East (AIME) from Sales, Front Office and Reservations were sent for training for "Starwood Preferred Guest" Programme in Sheraton Soma Bay Resort and Sheraton Miramar Resort in Egypt from January 30, 1999 - February 7, 1999.

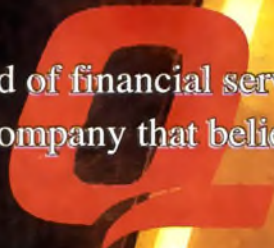
Sheraton Sana'a Hotel participants were Mr. Fouad Hamid, Deputy Director of Sales & Marketing, Assistant Manager Front Office Mr. Abdullah Mubarak and Reservations Manager Mr. Din Mohammed Sheikh. Present in the midst of the participants was Mr. Manuel Garcia, Vice President, Sales & Marketing for Middle East and Africa.



Farewell luncheon was hosted by Palestinian Ambassador at the Sheraton Sana'a Hotel 12th of February 1999 in Honor of the outgoing German Ambassador to Yemen, Dr. Helga Strachwitz.



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The Policy of TAFREEKH Prevails in Yemen:

Civil Society's Struggle Against Domination by Politicians

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam, Yemen Times.

It has become a bad habit. Our ruling politicians are unwilling to allow any semblance of a plural power base in the country. The rulers control most power bases. Those that resist their control, are disrupted, marginalized or even destroyed. This policy has been successfully applied to political parties, newspapers, non-governmental organizations, sports clubs, etc. The artificial reproduction of political parties, NGOs, newspapers, guilds - planned, financed and executed by the authorities - is a direct result of this policy. Thus, the Arabic word - tafreekh (meaning giving birth in rapid succession) has found a prominent place in the political culture of Yemen.

The continued problems of guilds and unions is also primarily due to this policy and approach by the rulers. The outcome is eternal in-fighting among aspiring members of the said organizations who find in the rulers' drive to control the organizations an opportunity to promote their own ambitions. The result is a distorted evolution in Yemen's civil society movement.

The Teachers' Syndicate is dysfunctional as two or even three

organs compete for legitimacy. The medical doctors' union is not functioning properly because of the same political interference. The lawyers' bar association suffers from the same disruptive symptoms. The Guild of Engineers has gone through a period of hibernation for the same reasons. The Journalists' Syndicate is paralyzed because of visible and continued interference by the politicians.

On the 26th of February, 1999, the fight to control the Federation of Yemeni Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FYCCI) took a new twist. Now, there is an open war between businessmen who represent the politicians and the Political Security Office (PSO) on the one hand, and the professional businessmen on the other.

"We are not against the regime or the politicians. We are, in fact, loyal citizens. But we feel that the chamber of commerce and industry should be managed along professional business lines, and not along political lines," explained Mr. Jamal Al-Mutarreb, one of the young entrepreneurs who is fighting to dislodge the proteges of the politicians inside the FYCCI.

On 26th February, seven elected members of the FYCCI - all of them well-known and highly

reputed businessmen, wrote a letter to Mr. Hussain Al-Watari, Chairman of the FYCCI over the last thirty years. He and his assistant, Mr. Sharhan, have the support of the regime and the PSO, and refuse to step down or even reform and re-activate the organization. The chairman even refuses to submit to the elected board of the FYCCI annual financial statements, periodic reports, plans, etc. "In spite of repeated requests over the past several years, you have intentionally refused to provide budgetary reports or statements by chartered accountants since 1990," the letter states. Another bone in the dispute is the 0.01% revenue the FYCCI collects on the value of all imports into the country. "We all had agreed, including yourself, to abrogate this levy on imports. But it continues to be levied, and there is no accounting where the money is going," says the letter addressed to Mr. Al-Watary.

Many businessmen would like to see a new leadership at the FYCCI. "There is a lot of room for activity and interaction. At a time when the state is giving the private sector a more important role to guide our society's growth, the business community needs to come together and hold up the country's progress and evolution," Jamal said.

Political Parties Series # 6

Federation of Popular Forces

اتحاد القوى الشعبية

Starting with issue number 4 of January 25th, 1999, Yemen Times is running weekly profiles of the political parties of Yemen. We print the information as received from the parties. The aim is to inform the public - local and international.

The Federation of Popular Forces is a moderate Islamic-oriented party that considers itself part and parcel of the international Islamic revivalist force in peaceful ways. It "represents the interests and aspirations of the great Yemeni people and our glorious Islamic nation." The PPF is a voluntary grouping of a number of intellectuals for the sake of "elevating the immortal Islamic values".

ORIGINS:

Yemenis were experiencing defeat and despair following the failure of the 1948 revolution led by Ibrahim ben Ali Al Wazir, Mohammed Abdul Wase' Al Wase'i, Col. Taha Mustafa and Col. Ahmed Al Garmouzi in addition to others. Those who fled from imprisonment did not know what to do. Suddenly, there was a ray of hope represented in two developments:

First: The formation of the League of Right and Justice which was the first political organization to be established after the 1948 revolution's failure. Second: The issuance of Al Salam newspaper in Cardiff, Britain, by Sheikh Abdullah Ali Al Hakimi which inspired hope in the nation.

Ten years passed by. Then, Ibrahim ben Ali Al Wazir proposed in Cairo in 1959 the amalgamation of all national forces in one united front and as a nucleus for that front he named this grouping the "Federation of Popular Forces".

The PPF's basic system, including its goals, means and organizational structures that were later published in a brochure and distributed inside and outside Yemen. Thus, the PPF was, in part, a continuation of a long struggle couched on the experience that crystallized its elements of democracy, shoura and social justice. However, the PPF's current structure was announced in 1960 after the first communiqué was initialized.

FPF'S MAIN GOALS:

The Federation's main goals are worded in its basic system issued in 1960. These are:

1- Liberation:

Liberating the land from colonialism and reactionary forces through dislodging colonialism in the southern areas, and changing the Imamic dictatorial rule in the north. The two systems are to be replaced with a constitutional, republican, popular and shoura rule that ensures freedom of opinion, speech, belief and equality in rights and duties.

2- Unity:

To attain Yemen's unity within its natural borders and in the framework of a united Arab Nation.

3- Justice:

To work for an economic system that elevates people's living conditions and guarantees to every citizen work that meets with his/her abilities and competence; in addition to rights of education, nutrition, housing, treatment and rest.

DOCTRINES:

The PPF is based on five doctrines that emanate from Islam's five main pillars:

1- Truth:

This is represented by the belief in that there is no God but Allah and that Prophet Mohammed is His Messenger. This liberates Man from being a slave to his brother, guaranteeing equality among all.

2- Benevolence:

This leads to harmonious relations between Man and his Creator and his environment. Man should not be selfish or short-sighted in his behavior.

3- Justice:

This is represented by generosity to others and society at large, which guarantees every person's rights to shelter, food, clothing, education, medication, formation of families through marriage, and guarantees at old age.

4- Peace:

This is represented by Man controlling his will and not to become a slave for his desires.

5- Shoura:

This is represented in the right of the people to choose their ruler and to exercise control over his behavior through accountability.

HOT NEWS:

As this paper went into publication, this party and its mouthpiece, Al-Shoura newspaper, were under pressure from the state, which decided to close down the newspaper and sponsor a party splinter group under the policy of tafreekh. Read more about this policy on page 5.



MEANS:

(1) Freedom to All:

All citizens should be free to organize themselves and express their ideas in any form they wish (societies, parties, syndicates, unions, etc.), and in execution of their various political and social rights.

(2) Dialogue:

Peaceful dialogue is the way to implement Allah's words for spreading Islam through call (proselytizing) and peaceful dialogue.

(3) Strong Yemeni Citizen:

The society of Yemen should be nurtured in accordance with Islamic teachings and through education to protect rights and democratic institutions.

(4) Asserting Democratic Behavior

This is achieved by means of:

- a- Promoting stable democratic principles, respect for others' opinions and avoiding ideological fanaticism and aggression against other parties.
- b- Respecting constitutional legitimacy and peaceful transfer of power through elections.
- c- Establishing a state based on institutions, separation of authorities & independence of the judiciary.
- d- Preserving national unity and cohesion of the internal front and fighting racism and sectarianism.
- e- Keeping the armed and security forces neutral in the internal political competition in their capacity as two national institutions concerned with protecting constitutional legitimacy, democracy and the nation's interests.
- f- Keeping state funds beyond the reach of political parties, including the ruling party.
- g- Avoiding exploitation of the state media and any bias in favor of any party.
- h- Avoiding the use or threat of violence.

THE FUTURE:

The Federation first goal of ending royalist rule in the north and colonialism in the south and establishing the republic was realized. The second goal of achieving Yemen's unity was also realized. The PPF will continue to work towards its other targets of securing a just rule that will liberate the nation from dictatorship, and achieving social and economic justice to enable the nation to move on with modern scientific advancement. Social justice will remain the party's main goal in all future plans. The integrity and competence of the judicial system is another prime goal for the future.

The PPF promotes an economic system that balances between the interests of the individual and those of society.

Education should be reformed in accordance with the following:

- 1- Strengthening the students' sense of belonging and loyalty to their country;
- 2- Linking between the type of education and the country's needs.
- 3- Combining between theoretical education and practice.

The press is the people's means of expressing their opinion, views and constructive criticism. It also represents a precious tool for popular contribution to public issues and people's participation. It further furnishes ways for spreading public awareness and information to get acquainted with world developments. For these reasons, the press should be totally independent and free. This entails that every citizen has the right to issue a newspaper or a magazine as long as he/she shoulders the responsibility for what he/she publishes without any need for a permit or censorship.

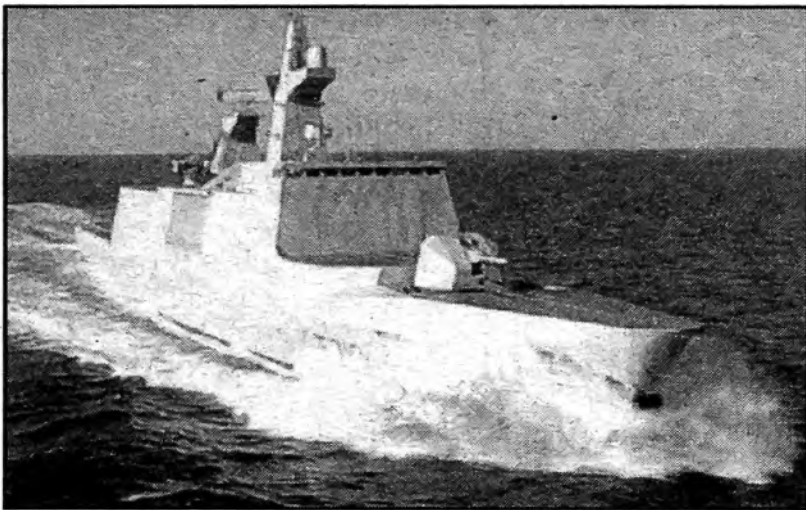
Women are half of society. They are actually the half that raises the other half. Their importance to society is never doubted. But as long as women remain backward, society at large will also remain backward. Therefore, an initiative must be launched to help women so that they can assume their role in building the society.

Islam gave women rights that are even better than those granted to European women, but the Islamic society does not apply them. Work opportunities should be opened to women especially in fields of education and health.

Stealthy French Frigate Calls on Hodeidah

The French Frigate COURBET, its commander Captain Pierre-François Linares, and his 143 crew members, will call on the Yemeni port of Hodeidah on the 4th of March, 1999.

The frigate will be moored at Hodeidah from Thursday March 4th to Monday the 8th. Over the last several weeks, the ship has been calling on ports at the eastern shoreline of Africa, starting from South Africa. Its call on



Yemen is a routine visit that serves to maintain the ongoing co-operation and friendly working relationship between Yemen and the French Navy.

The COURBET is a stealthy top class frigate with a very low acoustic and electronic signature, a modular design and a high automation level - all designed to meet the requirements of a combat ship capability and a peace-time low-cost surveillance vessel efficiently. Therefore, it can be part of a naval/air force group, and ensure the support of an intervention task force or the protection of commercial traffic, as well as execute special or humanitarian missions.

Several Yemeni officers from the Navy, Airforce and Army have been invited to go on board to inspect the highly modern ship, which weighs 3,600 tons, and is 125 meters long. According to a French embassy source, the frigate came into service two years ago - on March 24th, 1997.

Good News

The University of Science and Technology (College of Management Sciences) announces the opening of the Management Development Consultation Center on Tuesday, March the second 1999.

This center will definitely be one of Yemen's most important landmarks in the development.

The center will have many services in various scientific fields.

Some of them are as follows:

- Implementing research and studies related to the business development
- Providing consultations, professional services, and experts for all kinds of different projects
- Making economical and developmental feasibility studies
- Developing educational programs and skills for schools and educational institutions
- Arranging seminars, conferences, and various training sessions
- Cooperating with Arab and international organizations

For more information, please contact us on

Telephone: 227074
Sanaa - The Republic of Yemen



This is an **OPINION** page.
Every week, a different intellectual writes a **FOCUS** on a pertinent issue!

YEMEN TIMES: Eight Years and Progress Continues

Abdulaziz Al-Saqqa,
Publisher & Chief Editor, Yemen Times.

visited many well-known world newspapers. These included The New York Times, the Herald Tribune, Le Monde, and others. Then I visited much smaller papers within the region.

I finally spent several weeks with The Star, a weekly newspaper coming out of Amman. I engaged Osama Sherif, the editor and publisher of the paper, in a contract to do technology and information transfer. Thus the Yemen Times was born.

Our first location was a two-room old shack made of corrugated metal plates and cardboard. It was located in the northern outskirts of Sanaa.

We had two small classic SE Macintosh computers, which are still with us today. The total Yemen Times team was three persons - a typist/page setter, a guard/messenger, and myself. We did all the financial and administrative work. We did everything from interviews, to news-writing, to pagination to supervising printing of the paper, to distribution.... At first, we only produced 1,500 copies.

PROGRESS:

Four months down the road, we had our first advertisement. Then a few more. We employed a fourth person on the team to attend to advertising. By the end of 1991, we were selling 3,000 copies. By mid-1992, we moved into the city. We rented a flat behind the Central Bank of Yemen. At that time, we employed three news editors, on a part-time basis. We employed two clerks to help with administrative and financial affairs. Momentum was building.

By the end of 1992, our revenue from advertisements had surpassed revenue from the 5,000 copies we were selling.

We purchased three more Apple machines - Power Macintosh 4400/200s.

MORE PROGRESS:

By mid-1993, we were caught in the power struggle between the People's General Congress and the Yemen Socialist Party. The PGC did not take kindly to the Yemen Times.

Our landlord was forcing us out because of outside pressure. This was to become our problem for the next four years. As soon as the paper's one-year lease expired, it could not get an extension. Thus we were forced to move from one location to another.

The third location was a two-storey building behind Mujahid Street, facing what is today the French Embassy. Then we moved to the basement of a large building on Haddah Road, where today Emirates Airlines is located. Finally, we moved to our present location, which we first rented, and finally purchased.

In the meantime, the Yemen Times bought newer and more advanced equipment.

The most important jump came in 1994, when the newspaper bought a number of Quadra 700, then Quadra 840 Macintosh machines. These were followed by PowerPC Macintosh 8500/150 and 9600/233 machines. These are now to be followed by G3 and iMac machines.

In the meantime, the number of journalists and employees of the newspaper had jumped to over

30 persons, with branch offices in Aden and Taiz, and stringers in six different cities of the republic. Circulation and advertisement rose to phenomenal levels.

SERVING THE WORLD:

The Yemeni diaspora was the first international target of the paper. Therefore, the Yemen Times embarked on simultaneous printing of the paper in London and New York. This ambitious effort was very costly.

As the internet became available, the simultaneous printing was discontinued, and the Yemen Times went on-line in 1997.

The number of visitors to the Yemen Times homepage address <http://www.yementimes.com/> has risen to high levels. Over the last 3 months, there were 1,350,000 visitors.

The visitors are mostly from the West - the USA, the United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, and other countries. But there are also lots of on-line readers in India, Southeast Asia, Turkey, etc.

Diplomats assigned to Yemen, donors and other partner agencies continue to tap in. Business interests are also among the regular readers. Yemeni students abroad as the opposition in exile have been kept informed through the Yemen Times. "It is our lifeline," one said.

HONORED:

The newspaper is honored by the commitment of its readership base. A survey of our readers indicated that the paper's policy of "calling the shots as we see them" has gained it the respect and sympathy of the Yemeni public.

It is often cited by the international media and visiting journalists and delegations as the most credible and reliable source in Yemen.

In addition, the Yemen Times and its chief editor were honored

by the Washington DC-based International Press Club with the International Freedom of the Press Award for 1995.

The Yemen Times was also the main partner of the UNESCO and the UN in organizing the Arab region's media conference of 1996, leading to the Sanaa Declaration on Independent and Pluralistic Media.

It also made it to the short-list of the UNESCO's Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Award for this year - 1998/9.

Even though the Yemeni public and the international community express their support, the Yemeni authorities have not seen the paper's work in the same light.

Between 1994 and 1997, the chief editor of the Yemen Times was imprisoned seven times, albeit for short periods of time because of the public uproar. The editor was beat up twice. The paper was shut down once, and it was subjected to various forms of harassment. These included cutting off all communication lines, electric lines, tapping telephones, censoring mail, intimidation, name calling, accusations ranging from national and high treason to being agents of the USA, Europe, Saudi Arabia,

etc.... Advertisers were discouraged openly, and the state media has embarked on many verbal assaults.

Kuwait, etc.... Advertisers were discouraged openly, and the state media has embarked on many verbal assaults.

THE FUTURE:

The Yemen Times, after securing and expanding its own premises, now has plans for expansion on three fronts. These are:

1. Al-Aswaq:
The paper plans to issue an Arabic magazine called Al-Aswaq. Preparations for this are in full progress. Al-Aswaq will focus on economic issues.

2. Printing Press:
The Yemen Times has started negotiations to purchase its own printing press. This is a costly investment, but necessary for continued progress. This is a project that will mature before the end of this year.

3. Yemen Times FM:
Our final investment is a radio station. Application has already been to the Minister of Information last year. He says that some legal adjustments need to be made in the laws to allow the private sector to own radio and television stations. We hope this project will see light by the year 2000.

The legal and political environment needs to improve steadily for the Yemeni media to continue to make progress. The obsession of the politicians to control every journalist is a danger that could jeopardize our democratic transformation and multi-party political structure.



This week, the Yemen Times moves into its ninth year. The first issue came out on February 27th, 1991. In the short history of the paper, it has become an important factor in the democratization and transformation process of Yemen and the Yemeni people.

WHY IN ENGLISH?

One of the questions that I have been repeatedly asked is "Why do you produce a paper in English?" I have tried to answer this question in several ways.

First, English is the language of the world, and it is the language of our present civilization. If it is not your first language, it should be your second.

Second, when the idea of the paper was developed in the second half of 1990, Yemen had a problem with the world. Given its position on the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Yemen needed a channel to explain itself. We thought we would spread the word in a language that the world understands better than Arabic.

Third, there were at the time over a hundred Yemeni newspapers and magazines. So, it was difficult to see how one more Arabic paper could add anything.

THE BEGINNINGS:

As the idea was developing, I



اللجنة الفنية لمواجهة مشكلة عام ٢٠٠٠ Yemen Y2K Committee

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To visit our stand No. C-4 at Al-Jazeera Information Technology & Communication Exhibition JITCOM 99 in Sana'a Expo Center between Feb. 28th & Mar. 4th, 1999.

- Do you know what is the year 2000 problem (Millennium Bug)?
- Is it going to touch you personally?
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- Have you got any idea of the scope of disaster that could be caused by the problem?
- Did early scientists, engineers, and designers forget to consider such a small problem that could cause a global disaster?

To answer all these questions (and more), the committee is giving out helpful valuable information about the millennium bug.

In addition, the committee is conducting seminars about this subject by specialized and technical experts. Visit the Y2K committee's Stand to learn about the latest news and activities about the Y2K problem and to get help from committee members to solve your own related problems.

لزيارة جناحها الخاص في معرض الجزيرة لتقنية المعلومات والاتصالات (حتكوم ٩٩) بمركز أكسيو صنعاء خلال الفترة من ٢٨ فبراير ١٩٩٩م إلى ٤ مارس ١٩٩٩م.

- هل تعلم ماهي مشكلة عام ٢٠٠٠م التي يواجهها العالم أجمع؟
- هل ستؤثر هذه المشكلة عليك شخصياً؟
- هل تدير منشأة أو منظومة تعتمد على التكنولوجيا الحديثة؟
- هل تدرك مدى حجم الخسائر التي قد تسببها هذه المشكلة؟
- هل أغفل العلماء والمهندسون والعباقرة مسألة بسيطة قد تسبب كارثة عالمية؟

للإجابة عن هذه التساؤلات، تقوم اللجنة من خلال جناحها الخاص بنشر مواد توعية عن مشكلة العصر أو مايسمى بمشكلة عام ٢٠٠٠م إضافة إلى عقد ندوات علمية خاصة عن هذا الموضوع من قبل فنيين ومتخصصين.. تفضلوا بزيارة جناح اللجنة للإطلاع على آخر المستجدات في هذا الشأن والإستعانة بأعضاء اللجنة الفنية في حل مشاكلكم المتعلقة بعام ٢٠٠٠م خلال المعرض.

ANNOUNCEMENT

A UN funded program is seeking a national individual, organization, institution, or company capable of acting as local Technical Service Provider (LTSP) for a microcredit program.

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Attention Eng. Nabil El-Shami,
Executive Director

Requests for Terms of Reference should be submitted prior to March 7, 1999

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ANNOUNCEMENT

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Further details available at school's office.

NCTEVT Successfully Concluded



The National Conference on Technical Education and Vocational Training was successfully concluded on Saturday, February 27th. The delegates adopted a communique - given below - which is expected to serve as the guideline for future development of this sector.

All participants - local and foreign, private or government, seemed satisfied with the results. Hatem Bamehriz of Yemen Times talked to some of them, and reported as follows:

"We have been supporting the NCTEVT for about 20 years. Every year we train 10-15 trainers. The idea is that they come after completion of our 2 years course, and help to improve the quality of teaching, and to train others because we can only train a limited number in Germany. We have trained about 200 trainers, with an investment of \$60,000 per trainer. Humans are the main factor and the real resources, that's why we give them great importance. At the same time we have German experts here to help develop the institutes," said Mr. Herbert Burk, Director of the German Foundation for International Development.

"This is the first time for me to see the result of our training in Germany. Frankly speaking I think the result is a little bit mixed. These people are good in the technical field and methodology, but our expectation goes beyond the actual teaching. The fact that they have not passed on their knowledge and skills to other trainers is making us rather feel sad, it seems that there were no plans to utilize these people in order to train others. Also the relation between the vocational training and the labor market needs to be more organized and coordinated," said Mr. Burk

Dr. Reihard Klose of DES added, "Many of our trainees who are teaching now are working here in Yemen, some are in the ministry of labor, some with the GTZ, some are self-employed. The technology given to students in Yemen is more or less the basic technology. The modern technology needs more, so we should rise to higher technological levels, in other words raise our technology to modern levels."

Dr. Michael Guder, Government Advisor on Vocational Training Sector, German Development Cooperation, indicated, "During the period of 20 years, the German Government financed many activities in vocational training in Yemen. These include the VTCs in Sanaa and Aden. It also provided assistance to the Ministry of Labor and GAVTT. Also many trainers were trained in Germany. We now have some new ideas like the promotion of small and medium size enterprises," said Dr. Michael Guder

Mr. Rainer Freund, Head of the Technical Advisory Office of the European Commission in Sanaa, said, "The vocational training systems in Yemen are at crossroads. Previously, not everything was done right, and resources might not have been adequately used to qualify people that are really needed by the market. I think the current government and Minister Al-Tayab have recognized the need to change that. He involves the most important employers in revamping the system. We do have some instruments with employers participation, like the Skill Development Fund, where private employers co-finance special vocational training forces, and they will contribute to more efficiency in more market orientation of the system, and this is a very important step forward."

Mr. Freund went on to say, "We are trying to focus on areas where we can have a quick impact, like tourism. We are focusing on training in tourism, hotel business, catering, and oil and gas services, etc. Oil and gas is the most important sector of the economy in terms of foreign exchange earnings, and also in terms of employment."

The World Bank participants also expressed enthusiasm. Mr. Vasilios Demetriou is the Task Manager for the on going vocational and technical education project in Yemen. He is also the Senior Implementation Specialist, Human Development Group for the Middle East and North Africa at the World Bank. Of the vocational training effort, he said, "We have \$ 24 million dollar credit for this project. We are now in our second year of implementation, we are steadily making progress. In collaboration with the ILO, we are consolidating the existing system which is in a very bad state in terms of physical, and educational aspects such as the material and linkage with the labor market," Vasilios concluded.

Another World Bank official, Mr. Qaiser Khan, who is based in Sanaa, added, "We provide the technical inputs by commenting on the plans, providing global prospective, and giving financial support.

"The major problem in Yemen is the lack of economic growth in the first place. Economic growth is slow. The falling oil prices made it worst. Unless economic growth takes up, whatever else you do will never work out," he explained.

Engineer Abdel-Basit Saleh, a curriculum development specialist working in Yemen for the last six months in a project funded by the World Bank, noted, "The project aims to develop curricula for short term training courses in different occupations, mainly in the mechanical, electrical electronic, and construction fields. Later on, the Yemen authorities added tourism, agriculture, and other fields."

"The old curricula related to the above occupations have a lot of deficiencies. First, there was no clear policy or basics according to which curricula are developed. Second, the contents of these curricula are very poor, by mainly emphasizing on the syllabus. Third, there is no mechanism to introduce change in the old curricula," Mr. Saleh explained.

Dr. Naji Al-Mahdi is the Director of Bahrain Training Institute and Advisor to the High Council for Vocational Training in Bahrain. Here is what he had to say:

"Vocational training is the same all over the world, because at the end of the day what you are trying to achieve is to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes to individuals. The main differences between Yemen and Bahrain is the economic characteristic and the social conditions. You will find that in Bahrain, there will be need to certain skills, which might not be relevant in Yemen. The differences are also in the interactions and linkage between the educational system, training programs, and employment opportunities. Yet, in a way, I think we all face similar problems. That is because with our limited resources, we have to try and get maximum efficiency and effectiveness within the framework of our systems, and make the system as relevant as possible to the needs of our societies and industries," said Dr. Naji.

Mohammed Abdo Saeed, a well-known businessman and Chairman of the Social Development Fund, agrees. "Markets change faster than everything else, so our job is to catch up with market needs by producing relevant skills. The catch word is employable skills. We have to make sure that the graduates of our educational and training programs possess qualifications that are relevant to the market," he disclosed.

In commenting about the conference and the experiences of other nations, he added, "Of course, it is important to learn from the experiences of other countries. We do not have the luxury of trying to re-

invent the wheel. Therefore, we have to find our own solutions. You see, you and I have different sizes. If you wear my suit, or I try wearing yours, we will feel awkward."

But his harshest comments were about the meaning of an expanded training program when there is no economic growth. "The fact that the private sector is involved in the training is fine and good. The fact that training is oriented towards market needs is also fine and good. But what is the point of all of this, and the purpose of graduating young skilled people if there is not new investment and no adequate growth in the economy. The starting point in all of this exercise is strong economic growth," said the keen-eyed businessman.

The final words went to Eng. Mohammed Al-Tayeb, Minister of Labor and Vocational Training. "Yemen is a developing country, and we need well trained people in all fields - agriculture, oil, tourism, industry, services etc. We need to grow in all these

fields in a scientific, and well designed manner. We will try not to leave room for failure or accidents," he said. "The government has made vocational training and human development its priority concern. We can see this through the many relevant political decrees, and sincere efforts they put into organizing this and other conferences. You can see the number of ministers and other senior officials who have actively participated with us over five days. We are trying to pin down the mistakes of the past, and then find solutions. I am full of confidence that the government will try to implement all the recommendations of this conference," he added.

On the issue of the place of women in vocational training, he indicated, "Unfortunately, our society looks down on women. It is not impartial. But social and economic changes now force both men and women to change their attitudes. This fact compels our society to accept that women work. We took this into consideration and we have created many training opportunities for women."

The Final Communique of the Conference:

The conference has reached the following recommendations as a basis for developing a national strategy for this sector with the purpose of optimal exploitation of its human resources in meeting market demand. But, first, the following needs have to be addressed:

1. There is need for a comprehensive macro-planning for manpower development in order to maximize return based on market demand.
2. There is need for putting together comprehensive educational policies in general, and for technical and vocational training in particular. Such policies must take into consideration people's skills and inclinations, and at the same time the overall needs of Yemen's development process.
3. There is need for mobilizing funding for educational and training financing and investment, at the local and international levels.

Addressing those needs requires focus on the following priorities:

1. The establishment of a supreme council to plan manpower development whether in education in general or in technical/vocational training. Such a council should include in its membership private businesses and other relevant parties.
2. To revise employment and remuneration policies in order to encourage enrollment in technical and vocational training.
3. To re-structure the vocational/technical training program into a more wholesome pattern, and to provide adequate financing and other resources to increase its absorptive capacity through cooperation with Arab and international partners.
4. To put together flexible mechanisms to develop and change curricula to adapt to changing market needs and technological progress.
5. To develop information as relevant to market conditions and technical/vocational training.
6. To diversify types and patterns of vocational/technical training to meet localized economic needs.
7. To expand the role and participation of the private sector in planning and executing vocational and technical education and on the job training.
8. To develop the regulations and procedures of the National Fund for Financing Technical/Vocational Training to maximize returns.
9. To set up a promotional hierarchy in technical training compatible with the educational pyramid to encourage its members towards self-development.
10. To pay adequate attention to the teachers and trainers and to continue training them through periodic upgrading and by adjusting their remuneration.
11. To initiate programs for training for employment of the private sector, as well as for small enterprises. Relations on small and medium scale enterprises and the institutions of vocational and training must be strengthened.
12. To prepare and execute a national plan to guide the students, trainees and their families, and those in search of employment.
13. To introduce a system that will allow trainees in vocational/technical training to continue with their education in the various educational opportunities.



The Minister



Mr. Burk



Dr. Klose



Dr. Guder



Mr. Saeed



Mr. Demetriou



Dr. Al-Mahdi



Eng. Saleh



Mr. Khan



Mr. Freund

Role of the Artist Balfaqih in Modernizing the Songs of Folklore in the Arabian Peninsula

The expatriate Yemeni artist Abu Bakir Balfaqih is a renowned singer in Yemen and the Gulf area. After the death of artist Mohammed Juma Khan, Balfaqih shouldered the responsibility of spreading the Hadhrami songs abroad.

He carried out the mission very efficiently and successfully. Today, the Hadhrami songs are not only famous in the Gulf, but also in the whole Arab World. Balfaqih moved from his home town of Tarim, Hadhramaut governorate to Aden in the late forties to teach in its schools. He carried with him his love for folklore songs which he used to sing wherever he went.

In the fifties, the artistic movement in Aden witnessed a surge in its activity and the Aden musical league was formed in 1954 bringing together many young singers. Abubakar frequented that league where he met Ahmad Qassem who encouraged and supported him.

In the late fifties, Balfaqih maintained a strong artistic relationship with the famous poet Lutfi Aman and together they presented a number of famous songs.

He then sang distinctive Hadhrami songs through cooperation with the poet Al Mihdhar in the early sixties that heralded a new birth for Balfaqih. No doubt that period greatly refined the talent of Balfaqih who described it as that of strong youthful enthusiasm. He said that in the mid seventies his voice grouped a mixture of old and modern tunes and matured.

Balfaqih emigrated to Saudi Arabia in the early sixties in a bid to further carry the Hadhrami



song to new frontiers. It was from there that he spread it to the outside world in what was described as the first stage in his artistic march.

He renewed those songs through introducing new musical compositions and recorded the new productions in Lebanon. The songs were largely welcomed in Yemen, the Arabian Peninsula and even in the Arab World.

In the second stage, Balfaqih returned, following a long interval with Gulf folklore songs in the mid seventies. As usual he was successful and his music was received with resounding applause.

Our singer, in addition to being a distinguished singer, is a poet.

His poems were sung by famous Arab singers such as Walid Tawfiq in Lebanon.

During the third stage, Balfaqih played a major role in modernizing the Sanaa folklore songs and spreading it outside the Yemeni borders. He introduced various musical instruments into those songs that were used to be played with only one instrument, largely the lute.

He said that tackling the Sanaa folklore songs was an adventure for him, since he was not originally from that area but indulged in the experiment despite his fears and concerns. He, as usual, was a success and managed to modernize that art that was known in the Sanaa region for more than 500 years.

Balfaqih excelled in his new Sanaa songs during the 1984 festivities of the 26 September revolution anniversary which witnessed a massive audience.

We still expect more and more from that refined artist who merges the traditional with the modern in a unique way that bought him fame across the Arab World.

By: Saleh Abdulbaqi,
Art Editor,
Yemen Times

The Aftermath

Chewing qat is one of the most common and deeply-entrenched past-times in Yemen. A high number of people are addicted to it. They feel that it fills them up with energy and vitality. In fact, it has developed into a psycho-

logical belief; "No Qat, no energy, and hence no work, study or whatever else."



logical belief; "No Qat, no energy, and hence no work, study or whatever else."

Qat is the power house of energy and activity. This is because it contains some intoxicating matter. It is noticeable that this habit is not merely restricted to men, for women and young boys chew. In some places where qat grows considerably even children chew.

Mawali'a

People addicted to qat chewing are called "mawalaee", the plural form of "mawali'a". They chew qat for its own sake. Some people feel that qat can help them a lot in concentrating on their work or study. But some do it for the feelings it brings. Qat for them is a necessity. Some even give it priority over food. They manage to eat anything, but with qat, they don't want food. To put it another way; qat for them is even more important than food. This is the extreme form of qat chewing. Far away from the merits or demerits of chewing, the state of affairs overwhelming the chewer of qat is my concern here.

The place where a number of chewers gather in is known as 'makyal' and their session is known as 'kailah'. The first post of the kailah is remarkably marked with the cracking of jokes and cheerful spirits warming the session. Their intoxication from the qat increases, the whole place becomes as silent as grave. Now, everybody crouches by himself in a corner, shaping and building

their castles in the air. They can do wonders under the impact of qat. Some become political, social or economic analysts; some became scientists, experts or whatever else.

Mr. Ali Nassr (clerk) says, "What qat has done to me is unspeakable. However, I like it and it becomes my primary concern after leaving my job. Food is not as important as qat for me. My

It all happens after Qat

As a matter of fact, what some people do after chewing Qat is quite interesting, amusing, funny and saddening as well. Of course, the quality of the Qat being chewed makes a large difference in determining the state of the chewer after chewing. Some Qat makes one feel gleeful and joyous, but some creates ripples in mind and can bring havoc; it makes one feel being in a rat's alley.

Let me now record the plights of some qat addicts which they told me about in interviews. Some of them asked me not to have their names published.

Mr. Hussein X says that his favorite thing to do after Qat is to gnaw at his finger nails. One feels shocked and appalled when seeing the remnants of them. Actually, the situation becomes worse when the qat is of low quality. Sometimes, his fingernails start bleeding. He frankly confesses that he has tried his best to give it up, but to no avail.

But Mr. Ali Ahmad (driver) has got another story to tell. He says that after chewing qat, he feels that his electronic appliances are not working well and hence have to be fixed. Therefore, he shoulders the responsibility of mending them. And because of the qat resultant intoxication, he has damaged many of his electronic appliances. It is a type of madness, isn't it?

predicament after qat chewing depends on the quality of the qat; if it is good, I become so active and feel enticed to read a lot of books or do any other work. But if it is bad, it creates a dilemma in my head. I lock up the door of my room and feel tongue-tied and reluctant to speak or listen to my wife or children.

My head is now burdened with heavy and erratic thoughts. Sometimes I start hallucinating and imagining very odd things. Once I felt like I was pregnant because my belly is a little bit prominent. I was completely caught up in this idea, although it frightened me and made my hair stand on end. Is there any plight worse than this? If I stop it, I will have to meet the 'dukak', a horrible nightmare.

These are only some examples of the victims of this habit. There are actually very odd and strange stories that chewers have after qat. So, if 80.5% of men and 30% of women chew Qat in Yemen, imagine how many stories we could record that result from this bad habit!

In this regard, the government should launch a campaign addressing the harms and dangers of qat. People addicted to it should at least minimize the time spent chewing to Thursdays and Fridays. Is there anybody listening to me?

By: Mohammed Al-Qadhi
Taiz Office Editor
Yemen Times

تهانينا

أجمل التهاني والتبريكات للأستاذة

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Technical Innovations for Yemen

Alternative Fuel Vehicles

In the second half of the twenty-first century cars will not use gasoline as fuel for several reasons. Gasoline is causing a lot of environmental pollution. The hydrocarbons available in gasoline are needed for the production of petrochemicals and performance polymers. Not much petroleum will be available as fuel, hence it will be too expensive to buy.

Scientists and engineers have already tackled the use of alternative fuel for vehicles. They want to solve this problem before it becomes dangerous. The possibilities are many. Some options will be mentioned here.

Hydrogen is the most attractive option in the light of some recent developments. Hydrogen is available everywhere. It is a clean fuel with minimum environmental pollution since there are no carbon dioxide or sulfur gases produced. Only a small amount of nitrous oxide is produced in the burning process.

The fuel cell car is another option. In this technology hydrogen and oxygen react to produce water and electricity. This is another hydrogen fueled technology. The fuel cell option satisfies the "zero-emission" standards. Actually, this is an electric

car with an onboard electric power source. Its drawbacks are those of electric cars; a low maximum speed of 110 kilometers per hour and a limited range of 240 kilometers.

Mercedes predicts its car, named



Necar II, i.e. no-emission car, will be in commercial production by 2010. Necar II uses the fuel cells technology.

BMW is taking another approach. They are using an available fuel and a well known technology; natural gas. They are marketing their compressed natural gas vehicles and will introduce liquefied natural gas vehicles in a few years. These cars are the

bridge to the hydrogen fuel vehicles. Much of the equipment used for natural gas could also be used for hydrogen.

There are also the solar energy vehicles. These use electric batteries that get recharged by sunlight to keep the vehicle running.



Yemen has to do something to develop solar energy cars and many other solar energy equipped items. If developed, cars and equipment will run for free.

Support research, and you will soon receive the reward.

Future Industries Consultants, Sanaa. Tel: 7916940

Letters to the Editor

Private Education Is it really Ideal?

Education is an incessant process that starts from the cradle and continues to the grave. It is without a doubt the bridge which leads our kids to a bright and glowing future. Of course, the dream of most parents in Yemen is to guarantee a first class education for their children.

Thus they support the private institutions that they find it more fruitful than the public ones. That is why they turn away from public schools and knock at the doors of private schools. They pay big sums of money expecting fruitful results. As fathers, their dream is fantastic and magnificent.

But the question is "Do school principals take this dream into consideration?"

I think not because education for them is a commercial article rather than a service. They find it a profitable job. As a teacher, I have visited many private schools and found them lacking. Only few of them are satisfactory. The majority of these schools are run by people who are brilliant at business. To make my points very clear and objective, I surveyed some teachers who taught at private schools:

Gamil Al-Gwairy

"I taught at a private school last year and I never enjoyed it. Teachers are not treated well and the pay is very poor."

Riyadh Asharabi

"I don't think that private schools have achieved the goals we aspire to. In fact, they consider the student as money and that is why they guarantee his success."

Abduh Ameen Al-Mikhlafi

I was obliged to teach in a private school because I have no alternative job. Not surprisingly, students were taught in a block of flats and used to perform their morning assembly in the street because the building has no got a campus.

Our Ministry of Education should take the matter seriously. It shouldn't grant its license to every Tom, Dick and Harry. It should also evaluate these schools regularly so that they must abide by its requirements and plans.

Ahmed Hamoud al-Kuadi
English Teacher,
Taiz Universal Institute

Smoking in Minibuses: A Troublesome Behavior

Various indeed are the sources of trouble. They have recently become so numerous that troubleshooters stand paralyzed with them. However, smokers are unquestionably among the most abominable troublemakers.

Under no circumstances can smokers be regarded as socially useful citizens. Smokers are a pain in the neck and these troublemakers become much more bothersome when they smoke in public places. What a disgusting sight! My target, to be more specific, are smokers in minibuses.

Non-smokers are always advised to distance themselves from smokers because passive smoking is as dangerous as, if not more dangerous than, smoking. If this is absolutely true about open-air places, what about minibuses?

I was greatly terrified the other day when I got into one minibus. I got off hurriedly thinking that the minibus was on fire, but it eventually dawned on me that two smokers, nothing more, were

in the minibus. One gets into a minibus in search of comfort especially if one has a long way to walk or if it is sunny. However, one is disappointed when he/she realizes that minibuses have turned into smoking parlors. At that day, I fruitlessly coughed several times. All my efforts to demonstrate my discomfort ended up in smoke as those thick skinned people didn't care. It was not just me who was upset, but rather all those who were in the minibus. I wanted to get off as soon as possible but there was a traffic jam. What a day it was! To top it all off, those two smokers did not put out their cigarettes but the cigarette butts burnt holes in passer-bus' shirts. That is intolerable! That sight opened that floodgates of my anger.

It is shameful that in this age of technological advancement, such things take place in our country. I hereby would like to invite the attention of those in charge to consider the disastrous aspects of this social phenomenon. Those in charge are requested to stop this social phenomenon. Those in charge are requested to take the necessary preventive measures to reduce the number of smokers in public places, especially in minibuses. This problem must be nipped in the bud. Let us do something before it is too late.

A Letter About Friendship

I'm a Sudanese teacher and a regular reader of your esteemed international newspaper, Yemen Times. I have chosen it from among many international newspapers due to its fruitful articles. I would be grateful if you read my coming article under the title Friendship makes peace and put it on the suitable page of your esteemed newspaper.

"Friendship makes peace"

The 19th century is about the change. The world still lives in instability, economically, politically and socially. There are wars which harvest many lives every day. Children are deprived of health care and education. The Friendship mechanism has been dismantled by the above mentioned factors. Why don't we insert the fittings to enable it to start strongly?

Friendship plays a pivotal role in peaceful co-existence. If friendship prevails all over the world there will be no wars, no hatred and no envy. Friendship makes the world as nice as the serene sky.

Nowadays the world has become a global village, due to the modern advanced communications. I suggest an International Friendship Organization to regulate friendship and to help poor pen-friends to visit each other. Friendship must spread among male and female, but pure friendship as Islam advised. Thus the world can get rid of destructive weapons which devastate the people and their civilizations. We want peace, religious tolerance and mutual love to be eternal.

It will be very nice if the suggested Organization has its own radio station. The Friendship associations in the different countries should supply the friendship radio with the colorful programs. I think the UN will not be behind in this. It will finance the Organization. As we know the first objective of the esteem UN is to make piece and keep it. Finally this scheme will not see the light unless the people of the same country live peacefully together.

Friendship will not grow without faithfulness as the flowers will not grow without water and air." Thank you..

Siddiq Ahmed El Bashir
Kenany

Your Courage and Honesty Are NOT Going Unnoticed

I was in Yemen in October of '98 and traveled briefly-I was truly amazed at Yemen's scenery and the kindness and friendliness shown to me universally. I am aching to return, but unfortunately the security problems are quite grave, and my plans to bring tours to Yemen are very much out-of-the-question for now! Please accept my deepest respect for your courage and determination to present fair and accurate news in the face of great odds, it's not going unnoticed in the rest of the world, your work would be respected for honesty and integrity anywhere. Also, my personal thanks for listing a classified on your online WWW site. I may be in contact for a source for Yemeni art and handicrafts as I'd hoped to find. With my best regards,

Alan Suits
E-Mail: asuits@stlnet.com
St. Louise
USA

A Prayer

I pray day and night for the day when Yemenis can sleep and get up and prices are still the same. I pray for the day when a middle class Yemeni can afford to send his or her sons and daughters abroad to come back and help in building the Yemeni nation. I pray for the day when those who rule us really deserve the leadership position they hold. I pray for the day when Yemenis will rise to destroy the rusty chain around their necks and their feet. Pray with me, Amen.

Helmi A. Jazem,
E-Mail: [hjzazem@indiana.edu](mailto:hjazem@indiana.edu)
Bloomington, Indiana.
USA

A Letter From a Russian Friend

I always have been interested in life of the Arabian world. There were and are still two reasons for that:

1. In spite of the fact that I live and work now in USA, I was born, raised and educated in Moscow, Russia; I have many friends in many countries of your region who I was studying with in Russia's State Medical University. In fact, right now I'm sitting with my friend Hussein, who also studied medicine in Moscow and he was working in Yemen for about a year as a doctor.

2. I've always wanted to go to Yemen and work there; I'm a surgeon, and I don't think I'm a bad one.

I heard that the Yemeni people are very openhearted and there are even legends about the Muslim world's hospitality.

The condition of the Yemeni medicine is unbelievable; however, I am very glad that the government puts a lot of effort to make things better.

Very impressive is the fact that a lot of health education is in progress among the common Yemeni people.

Another impressive fact is the fight with malaria, but what about the yellow fever?

Andrey V. Lebed
E-Mail: cut@technologist.com
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Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Sameer Farawna



AL BALAGH
Sanaa, weekly 23/2/99
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-A World Bank report indicated that unemployment in Yemen has reached a record 25%.

-The Ministry of Supplies and Commerce has opened the door for those willing to import wheat after the government subsidy was totally lifted.

-The Yemeni embassy in Kuwait is to open soon according to Kuwaiti Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad.

-The environment protection department last month destroyed five tons of expired foodstuffs.

-The Arab Fund has expressed willingness to finance sewage projects in Yemen.

An Article Summary

Saudi-Yemeni Borders Again

Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Abdul Qader Ba Jammal has declared that the opportunity to strike a deal with Saudi Arabia over the border dispute was still open.

He said that we have not reached a dead end so far and the desire of both parties to settle that dispute should be exploited.

No-one in Saudi Arabia wishes to keep the dispute unresolved since such a solution is a precondition for security and stability in the whole region, Ba Jammal emphasized.

He opined that contacts between both parties should be intensified to assert mutual confidence as a prelude to reaching a settlement.



AL SHOURA
Sanaa, weekly 21/2/99
(Federation of Popular Forces)

Main Headlines

-The Presidential Secretariat ordered the Central Bank governor to pay 150 million rials to a local car dealer in return for purchasing 50 Ford cars that would then be distributed by the Presidency.

-Classes have been closed in 17 schools throughout the capital city after their teachers went on strike to protest seven attacks against the teaching staff.

-Yemen buys the worst quality Sri Lankan tea because of its low prices.

-Privatization project would sell the public sector to investors who would lay off its employees.

-TB and malaria are again spreading in the country's southern governorates.

-Another doctor in the cabinet

was stricken by malaria and he intends to travel abroad for treatment.



ATTARIQ
Aden, weekly 23/2/99
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-Acute differences lead to the postponement of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate meeting for an indefinite period.

-A number of tribesmen in Shabwa demand 60,000 rials before returning a Hilux car with government plates which they stole on the Sanaa-Hadhramaut road.

-Medical sources in Hodeida said that 90% of the medicines found in the private hospitals in that governorate are government medicines.

-Citizens are fearing the annihilation of their animal wealth following the spread of a strange disease among the sheep in Shabwa.



AL WAHDAMI
Sanaa, weekly 23/2/99
(People's Nasserite Unionist Organization)

Main Headlines

-A shipment totaling 45,000 tons of wheat had been carried to Sanaa from Hodeida without checking whether it was fit for human consumption, amid fears that it could be leaked to the market.

-A Nasserite Organization official has expressed dismay over the People's General Conference's practices in forcing school students to join that party and forging their IDs in the process.

-Security apparatus in Aden detains British lawyer Rashad Yacoub for questioning on his residence. Yacoub is defending the British suspects who are accused of planning a number of sabotage operations in Aden governorate.

-The authorities resort to tribal Sheikhs to arrest the murderers of Ali Kherbash who was shot in front of his house in Abyan by a number of known persons that later sought protection with Al Marakesha tribe in that governorate.

-The country's economic hardships did not prevent granting governorate undersecretaries 99 Toyota cars.

-Yemenia declared its need for Yemeni air hostesses and chose only three from scores of applications. However, it appointed a large number of Filipino air hostesses.

An Article Summary

New Price Hikes

The government has raised fees on a number of basic services such as electricity and water as well as telephone bills as of this year without any

official announcement.

Official economic sources told AL WAHDAMI that the price hikes range between 50% and 100% and added that the raise was discussed by the parliament.

Wheat prices have also risen as of early January this year by 70% compared to 1997 and sacks of wheat were sold for as much as 2500 rials per each 50 kilogram sack.

Political opposition sources expressed surprise over the non-declaration of those increases and said that the citizens have nothing else to do except express their rejection of such soaring prices via all available peaceful means.



RAI
Sanaa, weekly 23/2/99
(League of the Sons of Yemen)

Main Headlines

-The government is expected to release Abul Hassan, who headed an armed group and kidnapped a number of tourists in Abyan late last year. The security men's intervention to free the hostages lead to the killing of four foreigners. The Britons, who were detained for planning acts of sabotage in Aden, will be also set free in the deal struck between the government and the jihad group.

-Intensified programs are under way to rally popular support behind the local rule project.

-The Interior Ministry is continuing its campaign against residence violators in the country despite objections by a number of Arab embassies in Sanaa.

-The Islamic Development Bank is lending 25 million dollars for a huge water desalination project in Aden.

-Military police captured a car with military plates, following a chase in the Dhamar city more than ten days ago. The driver of the car and his companions fled, leaving behind a shipment of liquor that will be destroyed publicly within the coming few days.



AL AYAM
Sanaa, tri-weekly 24/2/99
(Independent)

Main Headlines

-Chief editor of weekly Al Shoura was missed by his family a few days ago when he went out to work but did not come home, his whereabouts are not known.

-The Council of Ministers has agreed on a 20% pay raise in the salaries of government employees effective as of this coming April, excluding those of the Health and Education Ministries who had separate

increases recently.

-A new prison will be built in Mukala, Hadhramaut governorate at a cost of 200 million rials to replace the old one that dates back to 1945.

-Families of seven youths have complained that their sons were in custody with the state security police in Al Bida' governorate for the past three months on charges of belonging to the Yemeni opposition abroad. They appealed to the political leadership to try them in court if there were any charges against them or else to set them free.



AL SAHWA
Sanaa, weekly 25/2/99
(Yemeni Congregation for Reform-Islah)

Main Headlines

-A number of members of parliament have asked the Information Minister, Abdul Rahman Al Akwa' to allow all political forces a chance to address the nation through the various media means.

-Parliamentary speaker Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Al Ahmar met with a delegation from the Hamas movement in Sanaa last Tuesday.

-A number of observers have expressed surprise over the closure of the sponge factory in Aden recently, saying that it was an apparent success.

-A checking point in Abyan governorate foiled an attempt to smuggle liquor and unspecified pills last 10 February.

-Islah presents an accurate method to amend electoral lists and formation of electoral committees.

-Soldiers in Zanzibar and Jua'ar, Abyan governorate were apparently so happy at receiving transfer orders that they opened gun fire for more than an hour at dawn last Monday. The incident, however, spread terror among the sleeping citizens.



AL THAWRI
Sanaa, weekly 25/2/99
(Yemeni Socialist Party)

Main Headlines

-28 members of the ruling People's General Conference party have collectively resigned from that party.

-The government begins execution of the new economic "reform" stage without any propaganda.

-Premier Dr. Abdul Karim Al Iryani has underlined that education in Yemen has many shortcomings.

-Salem Balfaqih, director of the paints factory in Aden governorate was kidnapped on his way from the factory to the Goldmoore area last Wednesday.

-The Socialist Party has expressed deep dismay at the arrest of AL SHOURA weekly's chief editor Noman Qaed Saif.



AL UMMA
Sanaa, weekly 25/2/99
(Al Haq Party)

Main Headlines

-For the second time, the Ans tribes in Dhamar governorate executes a murderer without waiting for the states interference.

-U.S. demining specialists are currently in Aden to prepare for the expected visit of Gen. Anthony Zinni, the Commander of Centcom to Yemen.

-Weekly Al Shoura's chief editor Noman Qaed Saif was released from custody last Wednesday. He was arrested the day before for publishing a report on the Presidential Palace's purchase of cars to the tune of 150 million rials.

-Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Abdul Qader Ba Jammal delayed his departure on a recent visit to the United Arab Emirates until the television cameras arrived to take his photo, at his request, in his capacity as the acting Premier.

An Article Summary

Yemen Jews Sell their Homes and Move to Occupied Palestine

A number of Jews in Saada governorate have sold their houses in a village called Gharaz-Al Sahn following the killing of a Jew there more than a month ago.

Sources in the village said that three houses have already been sold and that others are for sale and added that their families intend to immigrate to occupied Palestine.

They recalled that press reports a few months ago had said that there was a deal struck with a Yemeni official to organize the immigration of the remaining Yemeni Jews to "Israel" in return for 50 million dollars.

The village has between 15 to 20 Jewish families and a similar number live in another nearby village called Wadi Amlah.



AL JAMAHEER
Sanaa, weekly 25/2/99
(Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party)

Main Headlines

-Security forces accompanying a group of tourists in Amran governorate foiled an attempt by three gunmen to kidnap the tourists early last week.

-Light and medium arms were used in a tribal fighting between Bani Qays and Bani Amran along the Sanaa-Saada road early last week. The heavy fighting, which resulted in the death of two tribesmen and the injury of several others, was due to unpaid debts.

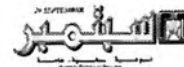
-Well informed sources expected a 20% increase to Yemeni civil servants' salaries as of first of April and a 20% increase on income taxes as of the first of February.

-Deputy Interior Minister Brig. Mutahar Rashad Al Masri has attributed the revival of the revenge phenomenon to the prolonged judicial procedures. -An army captain was shot to death in Lahj last Monday

while trying to solve a dispute between two families.

-Member of Ba'ath leadership in Yemen Yehya Shuja'uldin has rejected any practices that could weaken the country's parliament.

-Head of the General Tourism Authority and member of the Ba'ath leadership Abdul Rahman Mahyoub has said that Yemen will lose 250 million dollars in the upcoming six months as a result of the recent wave of kidnappings.



26 SEPTEMBER
Sanaa, weekly 25/2/99
(Yemen Armed Forces)

Main Headlines

-Jordanian Minister of Industry and Commerce Dr. Mohammed Saleh Al Hourani is scheduled in Sanaa first of March at the head of a high level delegation for economic cooperation talks with Yemeni officials.

-The final date for the convening of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate's general conference is mid March, according to Mohammed Shenaif, the Syndicate's secretariat member.

-The deputy Interior Minister has said that British lawyer Rashed Yacoub, who is defending a group of British nationals suspected of planning explosions in Aden governorate, will be deported within the few coming days for tabling a false statement to the attorney general. He claimed that, one of the defendants, Mohammed Mustafa Kamel was tortured, a matter which turned out to be untrue, the deputy Minister stated.

-The second television channel in Aden has received modern equipment to improve its broadcasting. The equipment, with worth estimated at about one million dollars, are a gift from the Japanese government.

An Article Summary

Ba Jammal in Iran Soon

Yemeni Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Abdul Qader Ba Jammal is slated to visit Tehran in the first week of March at the invitation of his Iranian counterpart.

Ba Jammal is expected to confer with the Iranian chief diplomat and other senior officials on means of boosting bilateral relations in various spheres.

They are also expected to hold consultations on regional, Islamic and international developments of mutual concern.

Meantime, Ba Jammal welcomed Kuwaiti Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad's invitation to him to visit Kuwait.

He said that he will respond to that invitation as soon as it officially reaches him and welcomed Sheikh Sabah's recent statements on Yemen, describing them as a good omen toward restoration of the two countries' friendly relations.

In the Excellent League of Football Tournament

The Chase Continues...

As the 11th week of the tournament comes to an end, Al-Ahli of Sanaa seems to be steadily moving in the right direction, and has no significant obstacles in its path. In its last match, Al-Ahli managed to easily defeat Al-Shihr of Hadhramaut after Al-

Wahdah of Sanaa in a 2/0 win. Al-Wahdah is beginning to lose ground with their loss. Al-Wahdah of Sanaa on the other hand, is living in its most critical days since the start of the tournament. Although Al-Wahda was able to win a close



Shihr's defenders committed two unforgivable mistakes leading the way to Al-Ahli's two goals. Although both goals were in the first half, the second half was also interesting. Al-Shihr worked hard to score in the second half

, but Al-Ahli's defense was too strong for them to get through. In the 10th week of the tournament, Al-Ahli also managed to win an exciting game with Al-Ittihad of Ibb, which, although it is a strong team, could not match Al-Ahli and lost the game 2/0. With these two wins, Al-Ahli boosts its points to 28, giving it a 3-point lead on its closest opponent, Al-Shaab of Ibb.

Al-Shaab of Ibb, which is in second place, was also able to defeat its opponents in the 10th and 11th weeks. In the 10th week, Al-Shaab defeated Shaab of Al-Mukalla 2 to 1 in an exciting match. In the 11th week, Al-Shaab managed to crush last year's league champion Al-

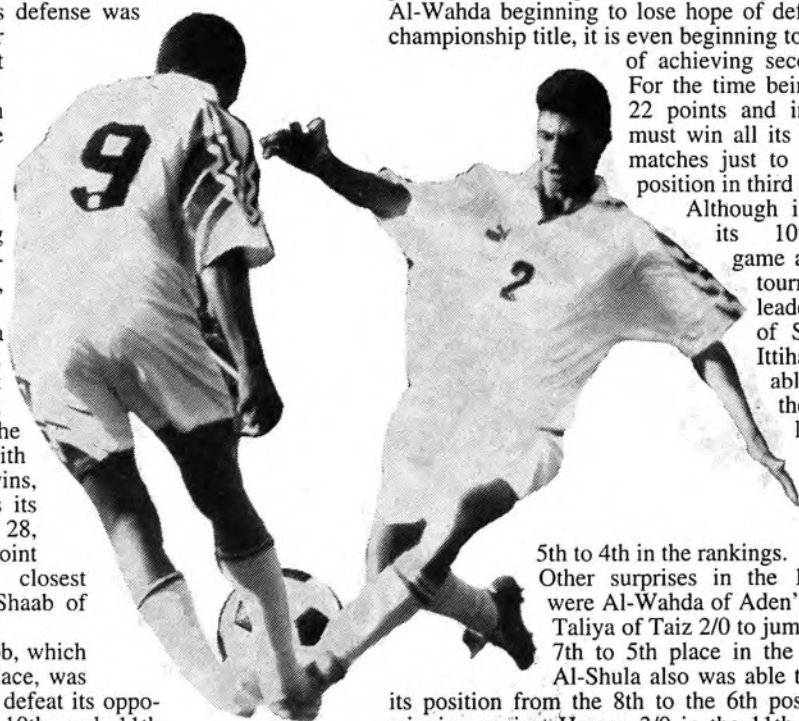
match with the weak team Hassan in the 10th week, its loss to Al-Shaab of Ibb didn't make matters any better. In fact, this loss widened the margin between it and Al-Shaab, who successfully defended their position at second place in the rankings. Not only is Al-Wahda beginning to lose hope of defending its championship title, it is even beginning to lose hope of achieving second place.

For the time being, having 22 points and in third, it must win all its upcoming matches just to defend its position in third place.

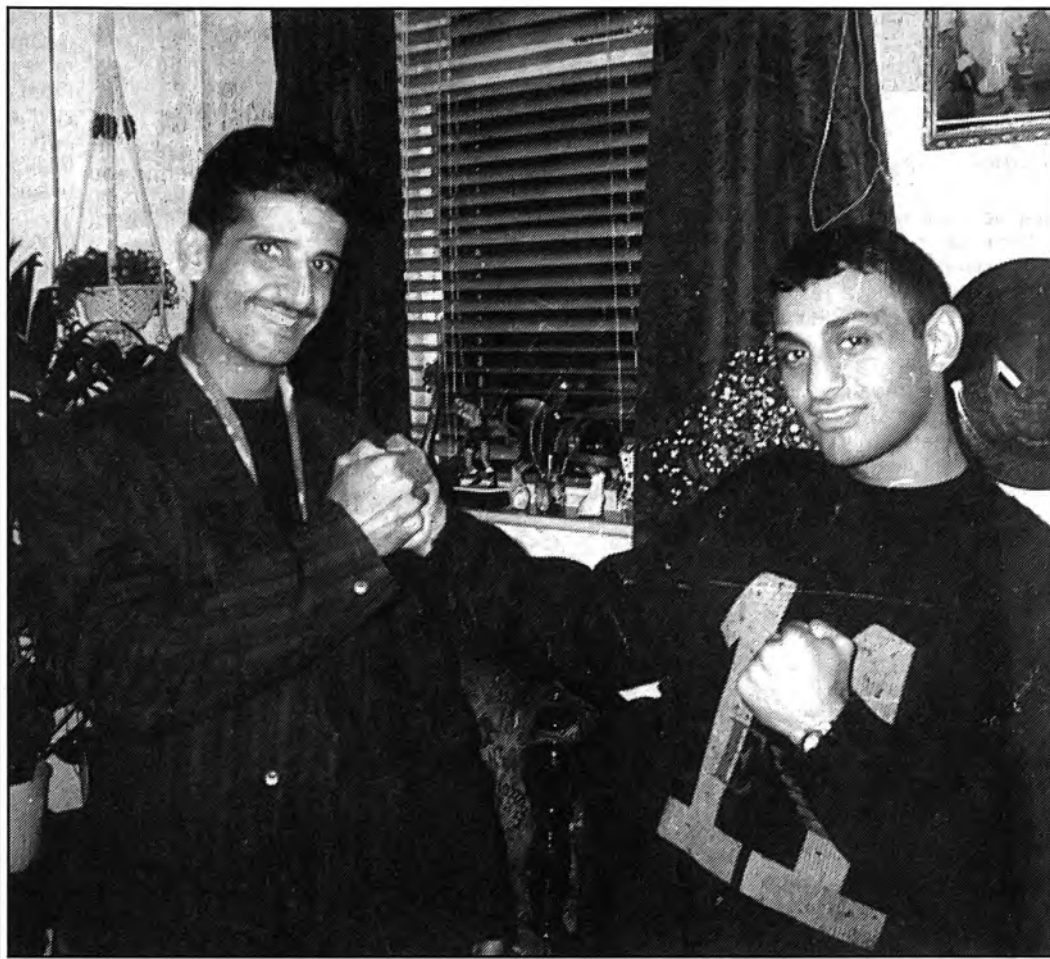
Although it had lost its 10th week game against the tournament leader Al-Ahli of Sanaa, Al-Ittihad was able to rise to the challenge and defeat Al-Majd 3/0 to rise from

5th to 4th in the rankings. Other surprises in the 11th week were Al-Wahda of Aden's win over Taliya of Taiz 2/0 to jump from the 7th to 5th place in the standings. Al-Shula also was able to improve

its position from the 8th to the 6th position after winning against Hassan 3/0 in the 11th week. Al-Zuhra's team was also able to win its match over Al-Hilal 1/0, while Al-Saqr and Al-Tilal could only manage to play to a scoreless draw.



Prince Naseem preparing for his next fight A New Challenge, a New Coach



Naz with Jamal Al-Awadi, the Yemen Times Sport Editor

Prince Naseem Hamed, the current featherweight world champion is preparing for his next match with his Mexican challenger Antonio Ferra. The match will take place in the Albert Hall in London on the 10th of April, 1999. This will be Prince Hamed's 14th fight to retain his featherweight title. Naseem was able to hold tight to his championship belt and defend his title in his last match in Atlantic City last year. The 12-round match between Naseem and his stubborn Irish contender Wayne McCullough was a very difficult one. Naseem barely won the match with a 4 point victory after a very long struggle. In this match, Naseem revealed his strengths and weaknesses more than ever before.

However, this upcoming match will take place under quite different circumstances. This is due to the decision of Hamed to sack his former trainer, Brendan Angel, the man who discovered

his talents in the first place, and who took care of him through the last 17 years of his boxing career. Naseem also lost his former manager Frank Warren who resigned at the end of 1998. Naseem then hired his brother Riyadh as his manager and also as his coach. Riyadh is also the person arranging the upcoming match.

Naseem introduced his brother to journalists and news agencies as the person responsible for arranging a new manager, Barry Hern. Indeed, Riyadh confirmed that negotiations had reached a very advanced level, and they are about to reach a final agreement. If an agreement is reached, Barry will be succeeding Naseem's former manager Frank Warren. It is worth mentioning that Barry Hern was Naseem's manager when he started his professional boxing career in 1992, and he coordinated 4 matches for him.

In a press conference last week, Riyadh mentioned that Naseem

wanted to coordinate his matches and supervise his business himself, especially the match agreements. This was due to the fact that his former manager Frank Warren used to only give a small percentage of the match revenues to Hamed. Thus, Hamed decided to exercise his own right to manage his business for himself. Riyadh also indicated that he had 4 years of experience in coordinating boxing matches. Also, he stressed that Naseem has a glorious history of victories and 17 years of experience in dealing with match coordinators and the boxing business.

Naseem also announced that as he was the world champion with 31 victories - 28 of them by knockout - and with no defeats since his beginning in 1992, he was being offered opportunities to box in many countries such as Argentina and Brazil. He indicated that he is currently studying all these offers.

US\$5000 in Financial Aid From IAF to YAF

The International Athletic Federation (IAF) donated financial aid to the amount of US\$5000 to the Yemeni Athletic Federation (YAF), to support the 1999 activities of the federation. Mr. Fuad Al-Kumaim, the president of the YAF also sent a letter of gratitude to the president of the IAF. In his letter, he thanked the IAF for the aid, and stressed the fact that Yemen is among the countries that continuously send updated information and reports of its activities to the IAF. He also explained that the YAF was able to secure the financial resources that support the federation and add to its effectiveness. He indicated that the amounts of money in dollars had reached the US\$25,000 mark, this besides the assets kept in Yemeni Rials. Mr. Fuad also confirmed that there would be extensive YAF athletic activities locally and internationally.

Athletics are considered one of the most widely known fields in Yemen. Many Yemeni athletes regularly compete in international and local competitions, and they have been remarkably successful in international events. This is partially due to the attention and help they receive from the YAF.

A Brazilian Coach to Train Yemen's National Football Team

The secretary of the Yemeni Football Federation confirmed the news that the Asian Football Federation has nominated the well-known Brazilian coach

Joseph Roberto Fernandez to train Yemen's national football team. He also added that the federation is currently engaged in intense discussions regarding this issue. The Asian Football Federation had previously shown its cooperation with the Yemeni Football Federation in sending a coach on short notice to train the national football team.

Coach Joseph Roberto Fernandez is one of the best coaches in the area, and he is famous for his experience with Arab football because he used to work in the Arabian Peninsula and in some Gulf countries. He used to train the Kuwaiti Al-Salmiye team, the Al-Wahda team of the UAE, and the last team he trained was the Saudi Al-Nasr team.

Ranking of the teams after the 11th week

Team	Points	Goals		Results		
		On	For	Won	Tie	Lost
Al-Ahli of Sanaa	28	4	21	9	1	1
Al-Shaab of Ibb	25	10	21	8	1	2
Al-Wahdah of Sanaa	22	12	18	7	1	3
Al-Ittihad of Ibb	20	13	15	6	2	3
Al-Wahda of Aden	18	12	14	5	3	3
Al-Shulah	17	12	20	5	2	4
Hassan	17	10	10	5	2	4
Al-Shaab of Al-Mukallah	17	11	8	5	2	4
Al-Zuhra	13	16	10	3	4	4
Al-Tilal	12	19	21	3	3	5
Al-Saqr	10	15	13	2	4	5
Al-Hilal	8	18	10	2	2	7
Al-Majd	5	28	13	1	2	8
Taliya of Taiz	4	23	9	1	1	9

وسط أجواء مليئة بالفرح والسرور احتفل الأهل والأصدقاء بخطوبة الشاب الخلاق المحامي ناصر منصور السقاف على الأنسة الفاضلة الدكتورة شذى فؤاد الشيبانكي.

فأف مبروك، وعقبال الفرحة الكبرى.

المهنؤون
عائلة زبير أحمد علي عيد
عائلة الصوفي

Inauguration of Mohammed Ahmed Jumaan Corporation *maj* New Building in Aden



Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Jumaan, Chairman

The Mohammed Ahmed Jumaan Corporation, with its 37 year-journey of continual operations, continues its drive towards achievement of its goals. Its larger goal is to contribute to development and growth of the national economy.

Towards that end, last week witnessed yet one more milestone in the evolution of the corporation. It inaugurated a huge building, which is going to serve as a major commercial and residential complex in Aden, on February 20th, 1999. The occasion was attended by Mr. Taha Ahmed Ghanem, Governor of Aden, Mr. Mohammed Ahmed Jumaan Chairman of the Board, Mr. Waheed Ali Rashid, Deputy Governor, Brigadier Mohammed Ali Mohsin, Southern Area Commander, and other officials and businessmen. In a statement to mark the event, Mr. Mohammed Jumaan said:

"Inaugurating this new center of Jumaan Corporation is not a simple act in the long experience of our corporation and its accomplishments. It coincides with the completion of work in the Containers Harbor in Aden Port - which is the first phase of the Aden Free Zone. Thus we are contributing towards the resumption of this vital project that represents Yemen's real re-entry into the world business, thus bringing with it economic prosperity."

The Jumaans feel proud that they were the only trade corporation that continued functioning in both Sanaa and Aden during the ugly years of the nation's



artition. The Corporation worked in both capitals since its foundation in 1962.

"Here we resume one more time. From our first station in Aden, ready to launch our business into the future," said Khalid Mohammed Juma'an, General Manager.

Khalid added that the achievements of Jumaan Corporation during the last 3 and a half decades have been the result of a continual chain of projects and hard work. "We are looking forward to developing and enhancing our skills and abilities so we can cope with the technical revolution in the fields of agricultural equipment and electrical machines." While pushing ahead with technical expertise, the corporation is not forgetting human relations. "We are also promoting mutual trust between individuals, government, and private businesses in all parts of Yemen."

The Mohammed Ahmed Jumaan Corporation specializes in various kinds of agricultural equipment, household appliances, transportation machines, and other durable goods. "We only trade in first class products for which we are well-known," Chairman Jumaan concluded.



Khalid Mohammed Ahmed Jumaan, General Manager

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