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"It was definitely an inside job," he said. Ahmed Al-Anisi raised his hands high, as if he was reaching out to God. He was in shock, and total disbelief and disgust. The old man was there the night the Grand Mosque was looted. Mohammed Al-Tair is in charge of the outer library of the mosque. He is now a worried man, though 'his' library was safe, this time. "Our officials have brought us to this. They do not care, and they would even assist in the plunder if they were to profit from it," he added. Another by-stander said that the whole operation was too well-planned to be the work of common thieves. "Influential people linked to international markets for ancient scrolls and manuscripts must be in on this. Otherwise, how can you explain this?"



Broken down door & debris at Grand Mosque

Accountability, law and order, and other modern values and morals are not the rule of the day in Yemen today. Hence the prevalence of crimes. There is a general feeling among the Yemeni public that their present, and even their future is being compromised. Recently, there has been a new twist. The past is being stolen as various ancient scrolls, manuscripts, statutes, and other relics of the nation's heritage are looted and sold in foreign lands.

The Grand Mosque has five main gates. These lead to an open space or compound, on one side of which is the altar and praying area. At the center of

the compound's open space is a small store-room with a dome. Its top floor houses some of the most precious scrolls and manuscripts. That was the target of the thefts last week. The daring nature of the operation has left many people puzzled. It happened in the early hours of Wednesday - March 31st - around 2:00 a.m. The thieves 'opened' the eastern main gate, and locked it from inside. They crossed the open space and headed for the store-room, which has a double door - one wooden on the outside, and then bolted and supported by a metal door. The thieves literally broke down the two doors, and went about their business.

As was expected, the authorities set up a joint committee to investigate. It is made up of representatives from the Ministry of Endowment, which has jurisdiction over the Grand Mosque, the Political Security Organization, and the Criminal Investigations Department. Yemen Times attempted to collect more details. A joint committee was set up to investigate the crime. The committee was working hard to keep information from the media. It exercised a black-out on information. One PSO officer even tried to expel the YT journalists. However, he and his gang quickly discovered that trouble was coming their way. They decided to leave the YT journalists alone, for a while.

Continues on page 5

Family Budget Survey... Dismal Picture of Economic Troubles

The results of the third annual family budget survey released last month by the Central Statistical Organization offers a detailed picture of the economic hardships in the Republic of Yemen. "The monthly expenditure per capita was YR 4,866 (=US\$ 32.44) in urban areas, and YR 3,572 (=US\$ 23.81) in rural areas, yielding a national average of YR 3,865 (=US\$ 25.77)," the report states. That is less than a dollar a day. Most of the money goes to buy food - an average of 65% of the total. Even then, it is not

enough to ensure adequate nutrition. For example, the per capita meat intake is 690 grams per month. The survey, based on 15,120 random samples covered many parts of Yemen. It was taken during July-September 1998. More on page 7

"Come fly with me!" Yemen Buys 12 Czech Planes

Aero Vodochody of the Czech Republic, with a 25% ownership stake by American Boeing, is concluding a deal according to which Yemen will take possession of 12 L-159 light fighter planes. The details of the deal were worked out during a stop-over in Sanaa by Czech Foreign Minister, Mr. Jan Kavan, during 2-3 April, 1999. In an interview with Yemen Times, the Czech official said



that his government was eager to build up cooperation with Yemen in all fields. The Czech Foreign Minister was received by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Prime Minister Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, in addition to his talks with Foreign Minister Abdul-Qader Ba-Jammal, as well as many other civilian and military officials. Sources at the Aviation College and Air Defence Forces told the Yemen Times that the planes will be used to train airforce pilots. They also indicated that the planes, with their ability to land and take off quickly from small fields, will come in handy to engage in tribal skirmishes, especially those associated with cases of kidnapping.

Text of interview on p. 2

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OUR VIEWPOINT

"Thank you" Yemen Times Readers

I spent a few hours last week going over the print-out of the analysis on the readership profile questionnaire offered by Yemen Times a few issues back. We got some 1720 responses - both online and in hard copy. Yemen Times will print the detailed readership profile next week. I must say that I was immensely gratified by the feedback. More specifically, it was a learning experience, as follows:

A: Who Are the YT Readers?

One of the most startling facts I discovered was the skewed readership base. Within Yemen, the two major blocks of readership base are either the affluent or powerful, or the students. The online readers are more diverse, made up of the Yemeni diaspora, the travel industry, or various foreigners who have academic/business/political interests in Yemen. Within Yemen, the average income of the readers - excluding the students, is over YR 800000 per year or some US\$ 5,340. That is well above the national per capita average income of US\$ 260.

The top readership base includes a hefty 30% which makes more than US\$ 50,000 a year.

Of course, the other side to the equation is the students, who do not, as yet, generate much income.

What is disturbing is that the Yemen Times does not have a middle class readership base. Come to think of it, this is logical. There is no middle class in Yemen, though there could be a muddle class.

B: What Do Our Readers Want?

By and large, the readers gave Yemen Times high marks. We do have a satisfied customer base.

One point that repeatedly came up was the need for more local news. Apparently, our readers want our page 2 (Local News Briefs) to be expanded. We will oblige.

One point that came out was in terms of style. Our readers noted too much emphasis on interviews leading to less room for analysis. While we will try to balance things out, I would like to mention that the reason for depending more on direct quotes is simple... There isn't much printed material on Yemen.

The government does not produce many statistics or reports. The private sector does not. The foreigners do not. In fact, the very opposite is true. Information is held back on purpose and is released only with difficulty. Therefore, to get information we are forced to interview people and quote them.

C: Reliable Source:

The main comment that kept coming time and again is that the Yemen Times has become the most widely used source on current information in English on Yemen. The accuracy and objective reporting have made the paper the "most reliable" source on Yemen.

But it is not just that. It also has to do with the broad-based coverage. The Yemen Times does stories on law, diplomacy, business, culture, social issues, health, environment, sports and many other aspects of life in Yemen.

That does give a comprehensive and balanced view of the situation.

The Publisher


Another Human Rights HORROR

He was held on charges of theft. A common man from Al-Mahweet. The Director of SEcurity applied all kinds of interrogation tactics. The man finally died in their hands as they applied their torture.

For a few days, they tried to hide the incident and approached the relatives in order to strike a deal. Now, Yemen Times has found out about it. "We are putting together a file by piecing the facts. The security people are putting a black-out on information, but we will pursue the truth," said Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Chief Editor of the Yemen Times.

The Attorney-General's office remains tight-lipped about the incident. The Ministry of Interior is also refusing to provide any information.

Next week, Yemen Times will spill the beans.

Emigrants Hearings to Start on 10th

The Consultative Council, in collaboration with the Ministry for Emigrants' Affairs, is going to hold a 3-day hearing on Yemen's diaspora. The formal title is "Emigrants Are the Main Force for Yemen's Development". There are four major panels, as follows:

- History of Population Flows;
- Economics and Investments;
- Media, Cultural and Sociology;
- Board for Emigrants Affairs.

Dr. Ahmed Al-Bishari, Minister of Emigrants Affairs and Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, indicated that over 40 papers and studies will be presented.

DED General Manager Arrives in Sanaa

Mr. Juergen Willhelm, Director General of DED, arrived in Sana'a last night, Sunday, April 4th. Mr. Willhelm is here to participate in the annual general assembly of DED to be held during 10-11 April 1999.

During his visit, he will meet the prime minister, Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, several ministers, World Bank officials and NGO representatives. His agenda also includes a visit to a hospital in Amran governorate, and meet the officials there, he will also have a one day trip to Hadharmaut.

Ethio-Yemeni Talks in Sanaa

Ethiopian Planning & Development Minister, Mr. Girma Birru, is scheduled to arrive in Sanaa next week to head his country's delegation. The advance team will arrive on the 8th.

Yemen and Ethiopia will hold the next round of joint bilateral talks starting on April 15th.

Yemen Times Weekly Opinion Poll

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

Question

Do you think that the Government should declare Thursday as an official non-working day (for schools, government offices, etc.)?

Results

- Yes.** Two non-working days a week is standard for most countries and should be in Yemen. (56%)
- No.** I think that Thursday should stay as it currently is, a half-working day. (8%)
- No!** On the contrary, more work should be done. Thursday should be a full working day. (14%)
- Yes.** for schools and universities, but No for the rest, especially government offices. (22%)

Al-Shuabi's book translated to English "Yemen: The Natural Phenomena and The Archeological Marks"

The English version of Mohammed Al Shuabi's book, "Yemen: The Natural Phenomena and the Archeological Marks" will be released soon. An Arabic edition of this tourist book was published two months ago by the well-known historian and researcher of the Yemeni Study and Research Center, Mr. Mohammed Al Shuabi.

The Arabic version of this book gained wide popularity, selling 5000-copies in record time for a new book.

The book represents a collection of information that filled a cultural gap concerning Yemen, answers to some questions like the beginning of life in Yemeni territory, creation of natural

phenomena, geological and geo-physical structures. It also discusses the discoveries and innovations of ancient Yemenis in the first millennium BC, based on modern discoveries and findings. Many of those ancient theories are still accepted up to today's date.

The study is divided into two main sections; the first focused on the task of discovering ancient man existing in Yemen over 30 million years ago. The development of his artistic and architectural skills as in the fortresses and citadels, worshiping places, folkloric crafts, foundation of irrigation systems in Aden, Mareb and Binon, excavation works on gold

and silver metals, and the construction of civilizations cities as in Hadramout, Mareb, Sarwah, Al Gawf and Ghaiman are also covered.

The second section of the book concentrates on the natural phenomena of the earth. These include the mineral water sources, and their chemical factors and benefits to sick people.

In conclusion, a brief thanks to the hard sincere efforts of the government represented by scientists and researchers protecting this wealth and developing methods of investment in both natural therapy and tourist aspects.

Continued from page 1

Yemen Buys 12 Czech Planes

Q: Would you please introduce yourself?

A: I am the Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic. I took charge of the foreign minister office in July 1998. Following the elections in which my party won. Since we did not have a majority to form the government, we had to form a coalition government with one of the major opposition parties. So to have a period of stability, and the major parties had agreed not to disturb the government, in order to have four years of stable government. In other words we are a minority government.

In the sixties I was active in what was known as the 'Black Spring' which was crashed by the Oslo pact in 1968. In 1969 I was forced to immigrate to United Kingdom, and I lived there for twenty years trying to help the Czech opposition from London by sending literature and finances. I was running a press agency, where we were printing and publishing materials on the situation back home and made it available to the International governments and media. In November 1998 I was one of the first Czech immigrants to return. I was elected as a member of parliament.

Q: What is the purpose of your visit?

A: The main purpose was to send out a clear signal that the Czech Republic would like to renew the traditional friendship and collaboration with Yemen. We have relations that started a long way back, to be more precise in 1938, when we signed the Friendship Treaty. Beside the political signal, we also want to improve the economical cooperation between Yemen and the Czech Republic, which had subsided a bit in the last few years, partly because of my predecessors had not paid sufficient attention to countries outside Europe, which I think was psychologically understandable after the collapse of the communist government, but politically unwise, and I want to make clear that we are now back on the road of having a good relationship with our traditional partners in countries outside Europe.

We appreciate the Yemeni government's economic reforms, and the stability Yemen achieved. The talk I had yesterday with Yemeni businessmen and some of the Yemeni graduates from the Czech who had stressed the significance of improving cooperation. Also the Yemeni Foreign Minister had suggested to have an agreement to renew the Czech-Yemeni joint economic commission, and we have draw a draft which I am taking with me, and I'm sure my government will agree to it, so that the ministry of Industry could finalize the agreement, which can be signed later this year.

Q: What was the outcome of your meetings with the Foreign Minister and the Prim Minister?

A: One of the main outcome was an agreement to proceed with setting up of the joint commission as I have mentioned earlier. Within this commission there is a number of concrete trade possibilities e.g. Cars, trucks, offers in cooperating with your energy industry all the way to offers even on our own visibility studies, which several years ago we gave as a gift to Yemen if there is a sufficient interests to make use of our experience in drilling. We also discussed the possibility of mature tourism and the framework the commission. We also welcomed the recent agreement we reached for Yemen to buy 12 of our light aircraft and some other concrete contracts have been agreed upon in

principal. We want to maintain good relations, and this will be expressed by appointing a new ambassador. The new ambassador will also bring an invitation from my prim minister to the Yemeni prim minister to visit the Czech Republic.

Q: What are your impressions of Yemen?

A: I appreciate that the foreign minister made time to meet me during the last day of the holiday. I also appreciate the fact that I could find time in my program to see part of Sana'a city, and it made a good impression on me, it is a very impressive city and I hope you will preserve this beautiful city. Your democracy also is a remarkable achievement.

Q: What is the purpose of your visit?

A: I am here to meet with Yemeni officials and discuss ways and means to strengthen bilateral ties. Yemen and the Czech Republic agree on many regional and international. We are open to cooperation in all fields.

Q: What exactly have you been discussing?

A: We have some pending issues. For example, we are negotiating the sale of L-159 fighter planes. These are small trainer planes. We have discussed and agreed to elevate our diplomatic representation to the level of ambassadors. We are considering joint investments in the Container Terminal. Several options are on the table, including the assembly of Czech cars at Aden. We have some 2,500 Yemeni students in Prague and other cities. These are on Czech scholarships. So, as you can see we have had substantive talks.

Q: Your country has just joined NATO. How do you see this association evolving?

A: Yes, we have just joined NATO. This is normal and logical as my country is at the center of Europe. We hope to play a constructive role in inter-European relations as well as international relations. NATO is an important player in world stability, peace and harmony.

Q: But your government has reservations on NATO strikes against Serbia.

A: That is not correct. We are, of course, unhappy with the human suffering and the war situation, but as part as NATO we support all its moves.

DED

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Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

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On the occasion of 20 years of developmental work in Yemen, the German Development Service (DED) has the pleasure of inviting you to the "Day of the open Door" Open House on the 7th of April. An exhibition of the project-work the DED has done during the years will be on display, as well as practical examples of our concept of development.

The program is planned as follows:

7th of April: "Day of the open Door:" Open House, exhibition of DED-work, practical examples of DED cooperation
Projects:
medical show-room display(s), technical exhibition, videos, slides, photographs.

We hope to see you on the 7th of April
in our office in Sana'a



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Independent Cultural, Economic & Political Weekly



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April 5th, 1999

Good News from the Minister of Culture & Tourism

"Yemen will host a tourist Arab Conference next July"

Like food and water, culture is an essential element in the lives of human beings. It is the base for building a healthy and active society. Even though we realize the importance of culture, it seems that our country is not giving culture its deserved attention. In spite of its richness and originality, Yemen's culture is not well known to the world, for the simple reason that there have been no serious attempts to unveil our fine culture to the outside world and extinguish the unpleasant image of Yemen as a land of kidnapping and lawlessness. On another level Yemenis need to learn how to develop their own cultural background. It is vital for Yemen to have a nation that considers culture vital in coping with the modern ages. Awareness among Yemenis regarding culture is quite weak, and much work needs to be done in this regard. For example, Yemeni culture is not rich in its understanding of modern values of human rights and other democratic concepts.

In this regard, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism is trying its utmost to improve our culture and is struggling to give it its proper place in society after being ignored for so long. The Ministry is hoping to play its essential role in spreading awareness among Yemenis and in making Yemen's culture known to the outside world. On this matter, Ismail Al-Ghabiry filed the following interview with Mr. Abdulmalek Mansour the Minister of Culture and Tourism.

Excerpts:

Q: What do you think of the government's response to kidnappers? How has their response affected tourism?

A: We are quite satisfied on the whole and when we explain that Yemen is a stable country in general, we find many positive responses.

There is no doubt that tourism has been highly affected by the terrorist acts in Abyan, although that was an aberration from Yemeni tradition and culture. The government's current procedure have restored some people's trust in it. Some tour groups are back, but not in as great of numbers as they used to be. The government is extending its efforts, and it really believes in the importance of the tourist sector. The issue of security in Yemen is the same as in other countries, but here everything gets magnified because of a few difficulties. What is required here is objective evaluation of the situation, besides getting good publicity and insuring security.

Q: How should the government protect tourists?

A: The rule of law is the main concern of both visitors and a citizens. Everyone wants to hear that justice has control. It's well known that stable investments, including those based on tourism, need a strong justice system. A strong judicial system that responds instantly to wrong means that we have taken the first real steps.

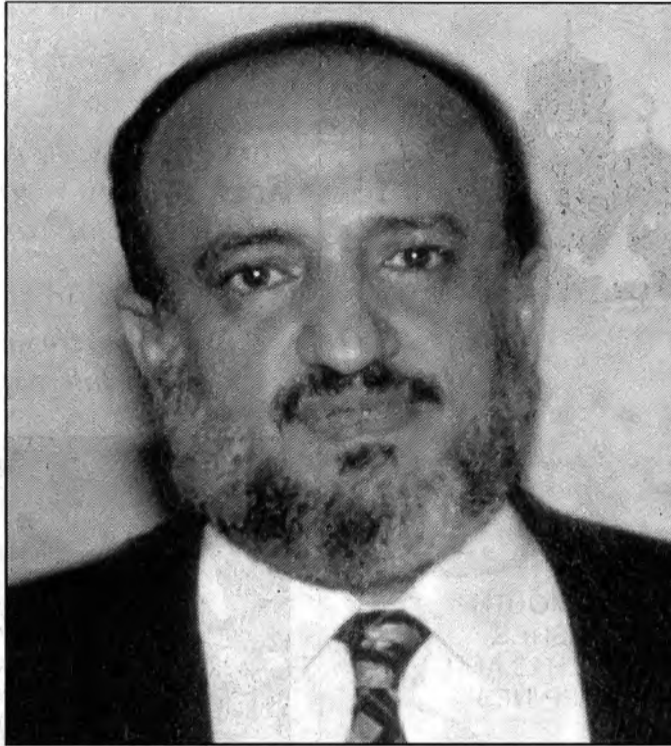
Q: What are the advantages of nature reserves?

A: The fact that there are many places in Yemen that still preserve their original surroundings, rare trees, birds and even animals, influenced the decision to have natural reserves in Soqatra, Baraa, Atmah and Rimah. There are other places as in Saada, Mahara and Tihama that can also be included. Such places offer the following benefits:

- Tour guides are available to tourists, and citizens can visit as well.
- A place for scientific studies of nature
- A preservation of ancient life
- Avoid the extinction of some animals
- Taking an interest in nature and environment and reducing the world of technology.

Q: What facilities are available to encourage reading and self improvement?

A: In big cities as Sanaa, Taiz, Aden and Hoddeida there are big public libraries, besides some small libraries that were founded after concluding agreements between the governorate and the Ministry represented by the Public Corporation of Books. These libraries, in spite of their small sizes, represent a necessary starting point for the country. The public has made a clear withdrawal from books, possibly due to the presence of many other types of media. We think that private sector should be involved in this area and should participate in publishing books and building public libraries.



Q: How should we preserve our heritage and manuscripts?

A: Yemen owns a unique and distinctive wealth of manuscripts. Preserving this wealth is the joint responsibility of the people and the government. The Ministry of Culture represented by the Public Corporation of Archeology, Museums and Manuscripts makes sincere efforts to restore what is available and to bring back what is missing. A specialized center, funded by the Germans, undertakes the responsibility of restoring and repairing the available manuscripts. We look forward to cooperating with the owners of such manuscripts, promising that their treasures will be reserved and restored.

Our ambition is reaching Yemeni Reservation for Heritage. It would be a costly project but we should begin. We already established a music and musical heritage reservation center, assigning the renowned musician Mr. Jabir Ali Ahmed as the head of the center. We are looking forward to see its success in reserving the various traditional types of our music.

Smuggling our heritage out of the country is an unpleasant issue, security forces extend their best

awareness to stop these harmful acts.

Q: What types of tourist publications are available

A: Periodic publications are released showing various tourist subjects and places. Lately we published a tourist guide prepared by a group of tourism experts in Yemen; the publications will be in different languages, for our visitors, German, Italian, French and English.

Yemen will host a tourist Arab Conference next July, the Arab Ministers of Tourism Conference, a branch of the specialized conferences of the Arab League. We are preparing to render success to this activity that directly benefits tourism.

In the near future the Tourist and Archeology map of Yemen Republic will be released. This map shows the tourist sights and cultural attractions besides the positions of tourist islands, deserts and mountains which tourists could visit.

Projects of the Ministry of Culture:

1. Heritage Record
2. Tourist and archeology map
3. Foundation of Supreme council for culture and art
4. Foundation of the Cultural

Development Fund and the protection of archeological and historical cities

5. Reviving Qaser Ghamdan
6. Reconstruction of historical citadels and sights in all over the country.

7. Vitalization the scientific cultural role of the Culture and Science Center

8. Publication of Yemeni book that covers the area and reach the outer world.

9. Attract tourist investment in Yemen

10. Renew sheet metals of all Yemeni cities that exist on main roads and adding some historic briefs.

11. Reviving cultural festivals that used to take place in many governorates aiming to have a special festival for each city.

12. Publication of regional artistic groups (music, theater and folklore).

13. Vitalization the role of Fine Arts Institutes in Sanaa, Aden and Al Mukala.

14. Tourist training and concern of hotels Institutes to generate qualified staff after a thorough study and training.

15. Holding specialized festivals (Poet, novels, etc.) that start from governorates and end in the capital.

efforts to stop this phenomenon, as they did a great job in bringing back many antiques and manuscripts. But this task requires public

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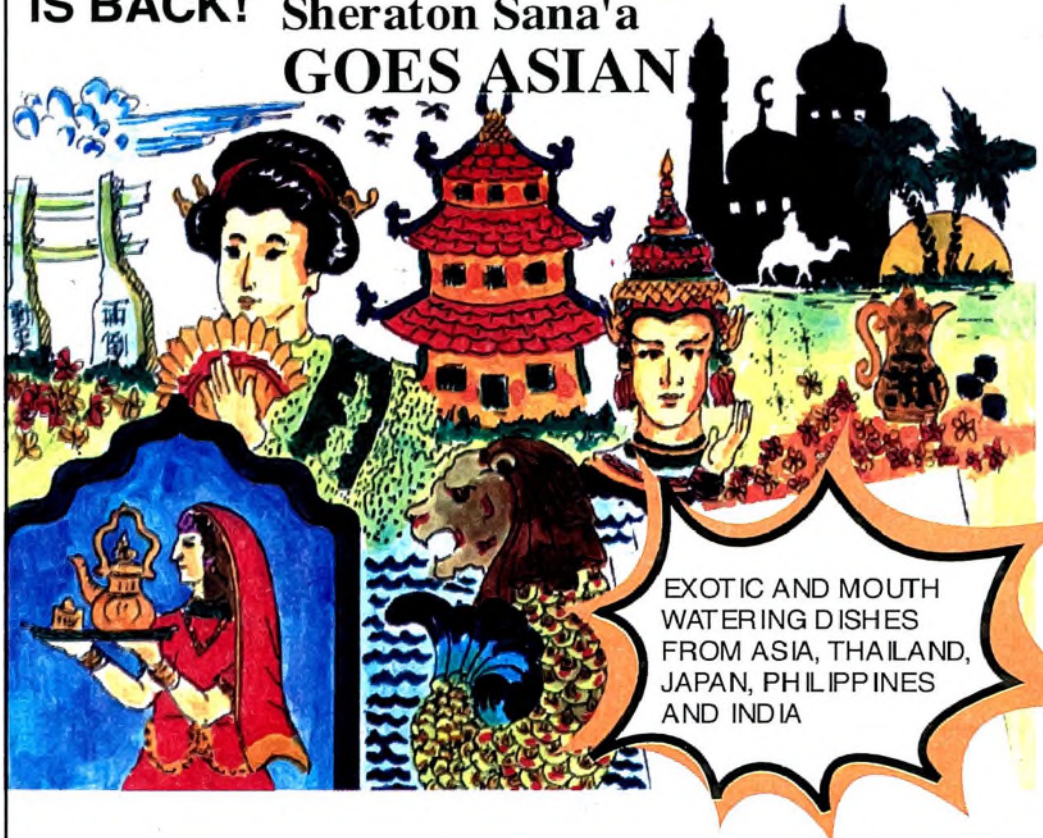
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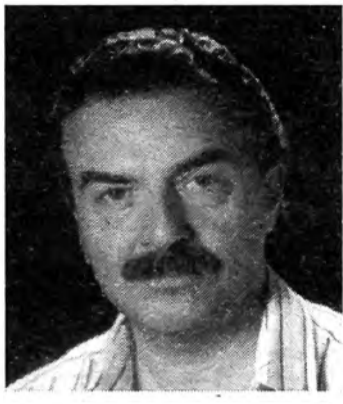
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April 5th, 1999

Kingdom Come

By: Riad al Khouri,
Arab Intellectual and Columnist
based in Jordan.



Change of Heart!
Name a Middle East kingdom pushing to develop its tourism sector. If you answer "Jordan", you are of course correct, but the reply of "Saudi Arabia" is not off the mark either. Name an Arabian Peninsula state interested in promoting its small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The reply "Yemen" is right, but the Saudis are also now into giving SMEs a higher priority.

So, why is Saudi Arabia, a conservative society that also happens to be the world's largest oil exporter, interested in promoting tourism? And why is it that SME development, often a poor man's game and practiced by, among many others in the region and the Third World in general, the Saudis' less affluent neighbors Jordan and Yemen should become more important in a relatively rich economy? The answer to these seeming paradoxes lies in the rapid changes Saudi Arabia is undergoing. Having spent the past ten days there, I had the chance to observe this process at first hand.

Less Money from Oil:

For a start, it is gradually sinking in that the oil boom of the 1970s and 80s is over. Despite last week's good news about higher oil prices, many Saudis are now more convinced than ever that diversification away from the energy sector is vital for sustainable growth. This is correct, particularly since the price of oil is not likely to rise much beyond the ten dollar a barrel mark and stay there over the long-term, as opposed to the figures of fifteen to eighteen dollars being touted by some optimists. Either way, oil revenues will generally be lower than they were over the past two decades. This in turn means that there will be less money coming into the Saudi Arabia as a whole and the public sector in particular. The latter has traditionally been the engine of Saudi growth, with the state pumping oil out of the ground and money into the economy. This mechanism is now becoming weaker, hence the search by some Saudis for new ways to do business, including tourism.

Discovering Tourism:

Calls for change now prevailing

in the tourism sector in Saudi Arabia are particularly strong because tourism is an area in its economy which remains largely undeveloped. Actually, there is already considerable internal tourism in Saudi Arabia, particularly in the southwestern part of the country. The terrain there is mountainous. Thus, the highlands are cool and the valleys are green. In addition, there are many other attractions bringing large groups of people from the hotter and drier parts of the country.

Efforts aimed at developing tourism in the kingdom were given a boost last week with the government saying it will lend full support to moves in this direction. Policy on tourism was explained by Mecca Governor Prince Majed bin Abdelaziz while opening a two-day symposium on the development of tourism in Mecca region, promising that the authorities will "listen to what you tell us of the challenges and obstacles that deter the development of tourism in the region and we will work together to overcome these difficulties." The region, headed by the prince, incorporates the western part of the kingdom and is seat to the holy city of Mecca, the destination of millions each year for pilgrimage. The region also includes Jeddah, Saudi Arabia's commercial hub, and the summer resort city of Tayef.

A similar position was voiced by Minister of Communications Nasser Al-Saloum, who told the gathering of businessmen, corporate executives, government officials and academics that steps should be accelerated to set up an independent body to look after tourism. Symposium papers touched on the absence of a clearly defined tourism policy and legislation, the tourist identity of the Mecca region in light of local traditions, the social impact of tourism with

emphasis on the employment and training of local manpower, how the local population view and treat visitors from outside, and financing investments in this sector. The speakers lamented the poor state of the Saudi tourism industry in terms of the money spent inside the country, revenues generated, job creation, the condition of facilities, and the degree of awareness among the population. One speaker noted that in 1997 income generated from domestic tourism did not exceed \$400 million, against \$8 billion spent by Saudis outside the country.

Re-Orienting SMEs:

Other signs of change in the Saudi economy came in a workshop on SMEs held in Riyadh last week. Organized by the country's Ministry of Finance and National Economy in conjunction with the World Bank, it included a paper presented by Dr Mohamad Abdelkarim Sulayman, head of Research and Studies at the country's Manpower Council. In it, he talked about the need to support SMEs to boost Saudi national employment. He accused SMEs of being "the main factor causing structural disequilibrium in the labor market" in Saudi Arabia, "due to their small capital and low wages" which do not help to absorb national manpower. Instead, low-capitalized SMEs, he added, actually encourage the recruitment of foreign workers at the expense of local manpower, thus exacerbating the country's labor problems. Such talk of employment issues and SMEs was rare only a few years ago, and is further proof of the changes in the Saudi economy.

External Implications:

That SMEs, tourism, and other issues are being aired in Saudi Arabia today is a good sign. Saudi officialdom is becoming more sophisticated in dealing with the kingdom's coming changes, and this makes many observers of the regional economy more optimistic. Saudi Arabia is still by far the biggest Arab economy, and sustainable Saudi development is good news for the country's poorer neighbors, like Yemen and Jordan, as well as for the rest of the Middle East. A superficial assessment could result in wrong conclusions that the Saudis are going to compete in the regional tourism and investment markets. This is not accurate. Saudi success will lead to new opportunities for all.

REFLECTIONS...

ON YEMEN'S DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS

Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf
Chief Editor - Yemen Times

The following article is based on a presentation at the Roundtable on "Future of Democracy Development in the Arab Region" organized by IDEA (Institute for Democracy & Elections Assistance) in Stockholm during 29-30/3/1999.

A: FACTS:

1. It was on 22nd May, 1990 that Yemen's democratization process formally began. Two nearly-bankrupt regimes, one tribal-military (in the former Yemen Arab Republic = YAR) and the other Marxist-leftist (in the Yemen Democratic Republic of Yemen = PDRY), found salvation in reunification of Yemen. The birth of the Republic of Yemen was a long-cherished dream of the people.

2. The former YAR was ruled by the People's General Congress (PGC) under the chairmanship of Ali Abdullah Saleh, and the former PDRY was ruled by the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) under the chairmanship of Ali Salim Al-Beedh. For the unified new country to offer space for the two parties that had ruled its two components, a multi-party political system was agreed upon.

3. Once the door was open for political pluralism, other parties, some of which had been underground movements, also came above ground. Thus, with the birth of the new republic, the nation witnessed the rise of nearly 20 political parties. A new political atmosphere - open and tolerant, prevailed. There was an outburst of newspapers, political parties and NGOs.

4. The two parties that made the unity (PGC and YSP) also agreed to divide all government posts between them on a 50-50 parity basis. Though it was clear that the YAR had a much larger population, the PDRY more than made up for that with its larger space and richer resources. Hence the 50-50 partition deal was held up... that is, until the 1993 parliamentary elections. By mid-1992, the two unity partners had started a power struggle, each side trying hard to dislodge or at least downsize the other.

5. On April 27th, 1993, there were parliamentary elections. The results showed that the PGC was able to maintain its 50% of the power structure; while a new party, the Islah (officially the Yemeni Congregation for Reform - a northern-based religious party), ate away on the share of the YSP. As a result, the government formed after the 1993 elections was a 3-way split: PGC-YSP-Islah.

6. The YSP leadership could not live with the election results, and subsequent reduction in its share in power. It actually saw these developments as 'Northern hegemony' over the South. It wanted to go back to a divided Yemen. First, Ali Salim Al-Beedh left Sanaa, the nation's capital, and moved to Aden, the former capital of the PDRY. There, he started building the political and military base for a new state. He established contact with regimes which were enemies of Sanaa, and found that some of them were willing to finance his efforts to break the country. Many southerners were urged to leave Sanaa and go back to Aden, in preparation for the new country. President Saleh and his Islah allies in the meanwhile announced that they would be forced to stop the break-away state. By early 1994, it was clear a war was inevitable, in spite of the best efforts of many Yemenis as well as others, especially the late King Hussein of Jordan.

7. On April 28th, there was a violent confrontation in Amran, between northern and southern army units. Soon push came to shove. By May 5th, a full scale civil war had started. Northern armies encircled southern units stationed in the north and asked them to either join them in the war against the secessionists or surrender immediately. Many southern commanders stationed in the north decided not to fight, though the Southern forces which fled to the North following the 1986 civil war in the PDRY did. The secessionist regime did not have the same success in encircling northern units stationed in the south.

8. By the 7th of July, Aden surrendered as the last of the secessionist leaders fled. Unified Yemen was saved. But, what was not saved was the highly open political environment. Between 1990 and 1994, the vision for running the nation's affairs was a blend of PGC (centrist) and YSP (leftist) thoughts and ideas. After the 1994 war, the vision in running the nation's affairs was a blend of PGC (centrist) and Islah (rightist-Islamist) thoughts and ideas.

9. But soon, the PGC felt shackled by its new partner - Islah. There were many complaints against Islah's traditionalist tendencies. Many PGC leaders started talking about the limitations imposed by their partner which sought to create an

Islamic republic based on its own vision. By late 1995, there was already open talk of disengagement and rivalry.

By 1996, the PGC, in preparation for the April 1997 parliamentary elections, embarked on its goal to achieve a comfortable majority in parliament to free it from Islah. Indeed the 1997 elections gave the PGC exactly that. Thus since 1997, the PGC has been the master party, formed its own government, and dominated all aspects of political life.

10. The following are some reasons for the PGC successes in elections:

- a- The power of incumbency;
- b- Abuse of state resources, media, manpower (civilian as well as security/military) and local/international connections;
- c- Partnership with power brokers and centers of influence in society;
- d- Centrist image as PGC is flanked by rightist parties (Islah & other religious parties) and leftist parties (YSP & pan-Arab parties such as Nasserite and Baath);
- e- Strong loyalty within the army and security apparatus which work to frustrate potential rivals;
- f- Absence of dogma or rigid commitment to any ideology thus allowing vast room for followers to make up their positions;
- g- Flexible leadership of President Saleh.

11. The future of Yemen's democratization process will depend on what happens in the April 2001 parliamentary elections. If the PGC continues to grow it will lead to 3 troublesome developments:

- a- It runs the risk of breaking itself up;
- b- It will lead to a one-party state;
- c- It will render elections meaningless.

B: ACTORS TO WATCH:

In my opinion, the following are the most important actors. It is worth watching their interaction and contribution to the nation's evolution.

1. Civil Society Organizations:
According to a directory being completed by the Human Rights, Liberties and NGOs Committee of the Consultative Council in collaboration with the Yemen 21 Forum, there were, at the end of February 1999, exactly 3218 NGOs registered with the Ministries of Social Affairs, Culture and Tourism, Trade and Supply, and Public Health. Of these, some 300 are active all the time, and about 1000 are active at least once a year. Before the end of 1999, a new NGO law is expected to be enacted. This law will pave the way for a more active and effective NGO movement in the country. Yet, the state (read, the ruling PGC party) has been trying hard to co-opt NGOs (through financial support), or to clone NGOs (by creating doubles) when co-option fails.

2. The Media:
The government (read, the ruling PGC party) enjoys full monopoly over radio and television stations as private ones are not allowed. In a country that is 50% illiterate, and in a society that is 70% rural, the fact that only the press provides plurality of views has little impact. Therefore, the next real move in the nation's political evolution will depend on whether non-government radio and television stations are allowed to operate. Within the written media (press), there is still adequate dynamism in spite of efforts to reign in the free press. There are today some 80 newspapers and magazines. These can be evenly divided between one third state owned, one third political party owned, and the last one third is owned by private interest groups, business, and independents.

3. International Partners:
As an aid-recipient country, Yemen is susceptible to 'advice' from its aid partners. The comments of visiting dignitaries has been important in shaping government policy towards democracy. In addition, many international NGOs such as NDI, IFES, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, RSF, have actively helped shape Yemen's transformation. Let us hope International IDEA will join the process.

4. 2001 Elections:
Yemen today is at crossroads. The whole process of democratization is still reversible. But the country also holds out the hope of giving the world a new success story. What happens until April 2001 and during the April 2001 parliamentary elections is worth watching. For this process to succeed, the presently marginalized opposition parties have to be revived. Part of this, they have to do themselves. Some of these opposition parties are actually far less democratic in their internal structures than the ruling PGC, which they criticize. Yet, another part of the game has to do with the illegal and unethical pressure and over-powering that the ruling party has brought to bear on what it sees as potential rivals. The rules of the game have to be more clearly spelled out, and transparency has to enter.

Cont'd. from p. 1 Stealing Our Heritage...

The Yemen Times talked to several officials, but got no satisfactory answer. "We don't know what they stole. We are still investigating the crime," said Colonel Nasser Al-Masri, Manager of the Old Sanaa Investigations Office, and a member of the committee set up to investigate. Abdul-Malik Mansoor, Minister of Culture & Tourism, described the event as sad. "The mosque is under the Ministry of Endowment and Religious Guidance. It is not under our jurisdiction," he said though he agreed that the looted goods are important part of our heritage, and thus part of the tourist attractions and culture. Professor Yusuf Mohammed Abdullah, Chairman of the General Authority for Manuscripts, Antiquities and Museums (GAMAM) said "This crime points to a serious degeneration in our security standards." He should know. In November 1997, the GAMAM premises were looted of various documents. "It was an inside job. I will not be surprised if some officials are implicated in this new crime," he added.



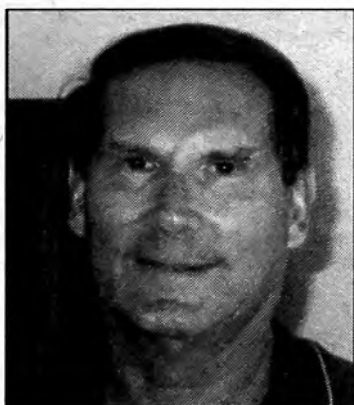
The remains of the broken door of the mosque

This is an *OPINION* page.

Every week, a different intellectual writes a *FOCUS* on a pertinent issue!

Community Colleges: Good Solution for Yemen

By: Bob Sherman
American Expert



There are also many high school graduates who are not academically prepared for the university. They become discouraged and quit or they struggle through receiving very poor grades, leaving them unprepared for work. The community college is a form of post secondary education that offers very specific, specialized academic training that takes only 2 years to complete. Let me give you two specific examples.

There is a lot of construction going on in Sana'a and Aden many other areas right now. Lets say there is a young man who wants to work in the construction business. He enters the community college and majors in construction management. He takes very specific, hands on courses in plumbing, heating, cooking, electrical wiring, etc. The student isn't taught, for example, all the theory involved in why you plumb a house a certain way. He is taught how to successfully install the plumbing in a house so that it works right the first time. He is not taught by university PHD's, but by an individual who has had years of successful experience in the building trades. Lets look at reality. If you as a home owner call a plumber to fix a plumbing problem, you don't care if the guy who comes to your home has read Shakespeare, studied anthropology and history, and knows advanced algebra. You are going to pay this guy money (probably more than you thought) and you expect him to fix your plumbing problem, to your satisfaction and in a timely manner. (You don't want him in your kitchen for 3 days). The community college graduate is trained to perform this job. There is a difference between the

community college graduate and the secondary school Vo. Tech (Vocational Technology) graduate. Because the community college graduate has a higher level of knowledge and skill, he will more rapidly be able to move in to entry level supervisory or managerial positions. Please note the chain of command for construction management on the next page.

If you hire a secretary you don't care if she has studied music appreciation and macro-economics. You want a lady who has a thorough knowledge of computer word processing, can type quickly and accurately, can compose letters, organize your filing system, etc. The 2 YR community college graduate in secretarial Administration will be able to perform these tasks. The reason we use the term "Community College" is because the students should come from the community where the college is located. Almost all the graduates will remain in and serve the community they come from. The community college in Sana'a is not meant for students from Aden. Aden needs to have its own community college. Every medium to large population center needs to have its own community college.

Community colleges usually offer courses in three broad areas:

- 1- Trades - Examples are: Building, Automotive, electronics, welding, and drafting.
- 2- Business - Examples are: secretarial Administration, computer technology, legal assistant, business management, and marketing
- 3- Health - Examples are: Nursing, Radiology Respiratory care and Emergency medical technician.

The biggest problem that community colleges in Yemen will face is the same problem that they had, and to a lesser degree, still have in the United States - Social Acceptance.

Having a four year degree carries with it a certain amount of social status that at least initially a two year degree won't have. In the United States, the status of a 2 year degree improves every year and it will happen in Yemen as well. If you have a four year university graduate who has to work as a worker Al Shaybani because he can't find a job, how much status is that? On the other hand if you have a 2 YR community college graduate who is gain fully employed in a worthwhile profession that he enjoys, what value and corresponding status will be placed on his community college education? A recent study has shown that approximately 40% of the community college students in the United States attended 4 year Universities and returned to the community college to obtain a marketable skill.

Bob Sherman is a professor at the Dona And Branch Community college in Las Cruces, New Mexico and has been for 13 years. He is considered to be an

Mr. Sherman states, "Contrary to what you see or read in International media the United States does not have the answer to all the worlds problems. We do have over 30 years of experience in developing the modern community college concept.

I believe in community colleges, I know they work in the United States, and I am absolutely sure they will work in Yemen. The Yemeni people are wonderful, friendly, hardworking people who deserve a better chance in life. I believe that a community college system would offer a big step forward. I am very proud that I can play a small part in initiating this new educational opportunity. Thanks for inviting me to your beautiful country.

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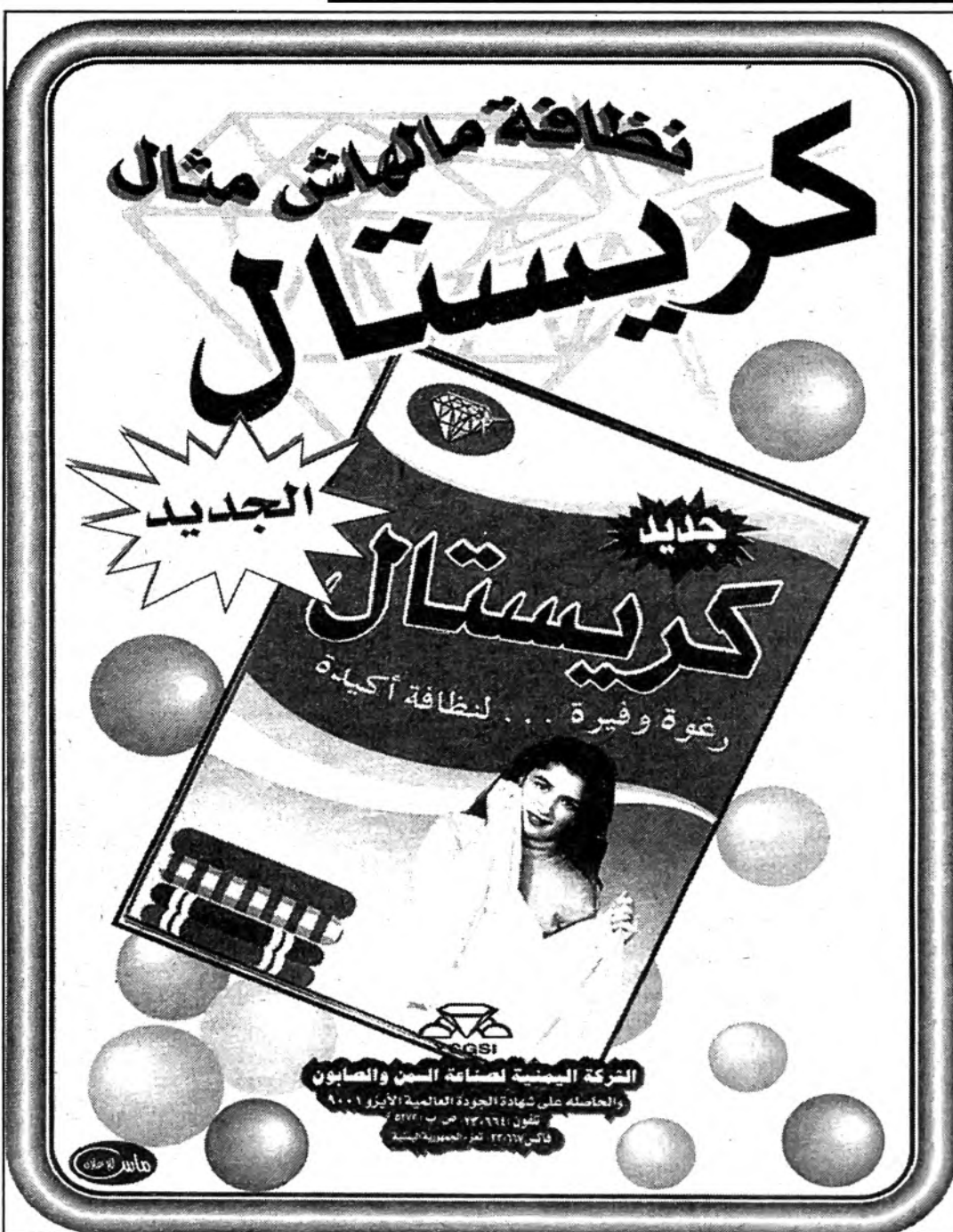
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April 5th, 1999

Two Sides of the Same Coin: Economy & Politics

In point of fact, the economy and politics are two faces of one coin. Thereupon, the meaning that any development or progress of economy reflects that there is the wise political system, and the reverse. The relationship between the economy and politics is a very strong one.

Those who run our country don't understand these facts. Because most of them are from a military background, they don't want to let an economist take a large part in the economy reform program. Regardless, those are the economy reform doses which resulted in the anger of Yemeni people, and sparked the demonstrations in most of the Republic governorates.

Due to the price hikes and occurred the violence between the demonstrators and the army in last June.

Actually, the recent violence was not only because of the price raises but was the expression of the people's anger at the government's policies and the current poor conditions:

A- Public Poverty;
B- Widespread Corruption;
C- Economic and Political Deterioration, etc.

Poverty:

No doubt that those the events-demonstrations, price hikes and violence, etc. enlarge the gap between Government and Yemeni people. Because the Government of Yemen does deal with the economic reform program by dual programs, but controlled by one side. Only the people who do bear the results of economic improvement program receive passive results. Because it effects in the living standard to Yemeni

citizen, certainly to worse. The per capita income is less than US\$ one Dollar per day. The meaning simply we are among the poorest in the world. Maybe some day less than this. While the other sides of economic reform program are very limited. Such as, the program of monetary & managerial reform, etc.

Corruption:

We already notice day after day that corruption does spread in the government offices by a gruesome way. Therefore, most senior state officials not interested in the welfare of country and the public. But they are busy amassing their wealth and money and transferring it abroad. Their wealth are getting either from the public money or private business during official employment. Both two conditions they are lawless. We have never look or heard that Yemeni Government bring the charge of corruption against corrupt state official. Where as a noticeable corrupt officials and this the matter of public knowledge (Government & Nation).

In addition, there is another truth; the large difference in living standards between senior state officials and a private native. The senior state officials are living in high standards of living; they have the best homes, clothes and the latest model of automobiles annually, etc. In short, everything they have existing (necessary and not necessary). While a private native - most of Yemeni people - lives in a poverty and desperate life. Indeed the gap between senior state officials and Yemeni people is very large.

Economy & Politics:

The Yemeni people have deep feeling that useless economic reform program, on less for them at present. Also, the people have feeling desperately of the government promises, statement and the order of World Bank. Indeed the people of Yemen do bear false policies and experiments of the others without any mercy.

What I want to say it, of course, it is point of view. I hope to publish on our "Yemen Times" newspaper, in order that we can voice about our point of view in a frankness. Due to the bad existing economic and political positions. And a politicians don't appreciate the patience of people on even their responsibilities and duties into the country. All that influence direct in all aspects of our economic, social, political and health life, etc.

Of course, to worse because the main reason for most of various problems is the result of economic and political deterioration.

Thereupon, the meaning that any economic deterioration positively reflects that there is the political deterioration. For example, the bad return on tourism investments is a case in point. According to statistics: "Yemen tourism lost revenue over US\$ 28 million for the first half of 1998". Due to the kidnappings to tourists and security lack in Yemen, etc.

Often the reasons are political. This is simple example about the influences of politics on the economy or the reverse. For the correlation and very strong. When are the wise politics and good regime is there also the independent and strong economy. In the final article summary, in my opinion, the program of economic reform requires first to the political reform. In order those are the result of fruitful reform.

By: Adel Ahmed Al-Haddad,
Faculty of Arts,
Ibb University.

More than the Salt Industry IS AT STAKE?

There is no doubt that the salt industry is the oldest one in Aden. As the English saying goes "Old is Gold", so we can reflect and even cherish the Adeni salt production.

How many of us know the history of this industry started in 1886? How many of us know it is still functioning more than a century later.

A quick review of the story, will show the following:

- Halian Company started salt production in Aden in March, 1886.
- In 1908, the Indian-Adeni Company was established in Khormaksar.
- In 1923, the Union Company for Salting Industry, Ltd. was established in the Caltex area.
- In the same year (1923), the Persian Co. for Salt was established in Little Aden.

in 1997, and 80,000 tons in 1998.

From the above data, we can judge that this industry is not a failure. Besides, the product is an essential one. This goods come from sea water, which yields the salt when exposed to sun heat, both are free of charge. They are God's gifts.

This introduction was necessary to understand what I am going to talk about here. Now how can we understand that some wise leaders have decided to expose this business to lots of danger. Because that is exactly what happened.

In a swift action based on magic signatures, somebody built two gas stations in the area. One of them is exactly beside the salt basin, and the second one is near to salt production area.

There are environmental considerations, because



• In 1970, a republican decree (No.II/1970) was issued to establish the public salt organization in Aden. It also called for cooperation with the Chinese Government to renew the equipment and production methodologies. Thus, salt production capacity was raised upto 120-150 thousand tons.

Now, how much revenue does this organization generate for the state treasury?

The data for the last 3 years show that net state revenue has been YR 17 million in 1996, YR 24 million in 1997, and YR 169 million in 1998. The same data, show that total salt output from the Aden vicinity was 58,000 tons in 1996, 68,000 tons

this new gas business will bring pollution. Many people, including the sea will be in harm's way. But that is not important to some people. What they will generate in terms of profits is most important. I am sure there are many who have already written about this pending disaster. Two documents especially interested me. These were from the Environment Protection Council - Aden Branch, and The Green Yemen Society. Both have elaborated the dangers of these gas stations. So what do we suggest in this concern? I suggest we should strongly consider the safety and environmental factors.

By: Iskander Yousuf

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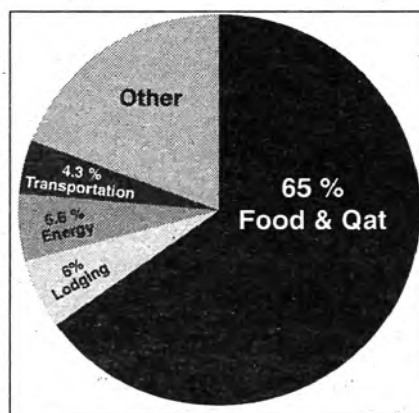
Cont'd from p. 1

FAMILY BUDGET SURVEY...

One of the major differences between the spending patterns of urban and rural families is the distribution. In urban centers, expenditures on food take up 35% of total family expenses, while in rural areas, the expenditures on food represent 69%, yielding a national average of 65%.

While food is the largest expenditure item, lodging expenses take up second place. For urban dwellers, rent claim an average of 32.88% of total expenditures, but the national average for housing expenditures is only 6.0%. The third largest expenditure item is energy consumption - fuel, electricity, etc. This represents 5.6%, while transportation and communication make up 4.3%. Durable household goods accounted for less than one percent - 0.76%.

We have seen that the largest expenditure item is food, representing some 65% of the total budget on a nation-wide average. Of this 65%, basic bread (flour) takes a whopping 24.2%, as Yemeni individuals consume an average of 17.76 kilograms per month of various forms of bread. Qat and cigarette expenses occupy second place, claiming 17.3% of the budget. Meat costs claim 11.3%, while expenditures on water make up 1.3%. One last comment on the results of the survey. The total household



expenditure of YR 28,138 per family per month was less than the average income of YR 27,372. This means a negative savings rate for the Republic, made up by inflows from the rest of the world. This is made up through foreign aid and private transfers.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT PROGRAM ASSISTANT



The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) invites applications for the above post.

The position demands a wide-ranging program work, accounts, as well as translation. Detailed job description could be obtained from FAO Office.

Required Qualification

- BA/B.Sc. Degree.
- Thorough Knowledge of computer/word processing and modern office procedures.
- Minimum of 6 years working experience in program work and accounts.
- Fluent in English and Arabic

THE POSITION IS OPEN TO YEMEN NATIONALS ONLY

All qualified and interested candidates are kindly requested to submit their application, with detailed Curriculum Vitae to:

The Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations
7 Mogadishu Street
Sana'a

The deadline for receiving applications for the above post is 22 April 1999

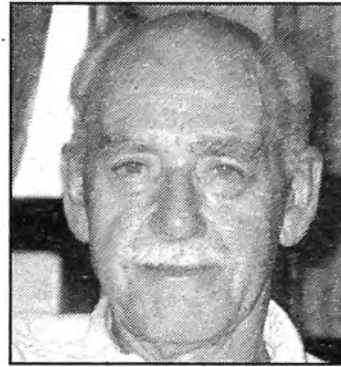
أجمل التهاني والتبريكات يتقدم بها:
محمد علي نشوان، ناصر أحمد الظاهري وجميع الأهل والأصدقاء
إلى كل من الشابين
توفيق علي نشوان
سمير صالح الحمش
وذلك بمناسبة زواجهما
تمنياتنا لهما بحياة زوجية سعيدة، وبالرفاه والبنين

Dutch Hands Perform Miracles on Yemeni Faces

Professor Dr. B.D. de Jong from Holland, is the coordinator of Interplus Holland, a known organization because they have been here for three times working twice a year in Al Thawra and Al Kuwait Hospitals. Professor Jong stated that: our aim is to treat children and young adults with burns, contraction burns, and other defects caused by accidents and dramatic cases. People come from far away sometimes from Mareb and Aden. Last time we were in Aden but this time we preferred to stay in Sana'a. We are here as two teams; each team consists of two plastic surgeons, one anesthetist and one theatre nurse. One team works in Al Thawra

November, Two visits a year scheduled in April and November. There should be a continuity of work. It's a long way treating, they try to teach and train Yemeni doctors and nurses. Now they have physiotherapist in their team who will give instruction on physical therapy. Teaching a new operated person how to exercise. Bad physiotherapy lead to bad condition.

Theatre Nurse Greta Hesseling from Holland, has 26 years of experience and specialized in plastic surgery, teaching student about plastic surgery and everything that has to do with it and also special skills and attitude need s to work in theatre which is



Prof. Dr. B. D. de Jong,
Team Leader



Mrs. Greta Hesseling,
Theatre Nurse



Mr. P. Van Derakker,
Coordinator



hospital while the other works in Al Kuwait, next week we will include as well Al Jumhuria Hospital because they are intending to build a Burns Center there and we are willing to participate in that organization in the primarily activities for primarily care, when you treat burns in a proper way there will be no invalidity later on. Now a day you see many cases, children and adults, they are invalid because they can not use their hands or close their eyes or mouths and many other kinds of invalidity. Unfortunately we have only 14 days, the teams are working voluntarily all days, even on holidays and they are glad to do it because it's a rewarding matter, you can do a lot of work and get a reward, no money but moral one.

Professor Jong added that their team will come in

quite different from working on words, Nurse Hesseling said that: If we been here once last year where I did a lot of looking and a little bit of teaching. I want to try with one of the local people here to see what you need when you work on theatre. In Holland it is a three-year educated profession. I think, on a lower level here, we can do a lot of things to improve the performance on the theatre, also for nurses to make them part of a team, but you need schooling and as I understand that there is no special school for theatre nurses, this is what I would like to discuss whether you can do with several hospitals in the neighborhood to start a school for specialized theatre nurses and everything they have to know at work in a good way at a

theatre.

Then we spoke to Mr.P. van DER AKKER, who is in charge of the logistic and translation for his ability in Arabic language. Mr. AKKER said that in 1997 he introduced Interplast to Yemen and since then he is working with the teams here.

Mr. DER AKKER said that: for this mission we have three specific targets. One target is the treatment of children by operation, the second target is the training of doctors and nurses and anesthetists and the third is to start training the staff required for the burn center at Al Jumhuria Hospital. These are the three targets set for this mission. But we have an agreement with the Ministry of Health and the

Embassy of Holland here that we work here for 5 years starting from 1997. The arrangement is that doctors work for free, the air-ticket fees are paid by the Dutch Embassy and the lodging is paid by the hospitals in which we work.

Mr. DER AKKER concluded that the Interplast team has selected two nurses from the team here and they are trained now in Jordan. One is specifically able to work in the operation theatre while the second is specialized in anesthesia. They are now in Jordan for additional training; their training in Jordan is paid by a fund in Holland. We want to stress the importance of training nurses.



Integrating Disabled into Society

Handicapped people represent a full 12% of our society. All forms of disabilities - mental, physical, - sight or hearing - are included in this troubling number.

The basic point I am trying to make is that a disabled person is not an inferior person. Such a person cannot be deprived of his/her rights and must not be exempted from his/her duties towards their country. In other words, handicapped persons must be integrated into the society.

In Yemen, awareness on this matter is still limited and neglected whether by concerned specialists or parents, despite the fact that the Official Rehabilitation Center of The Martyr Fadhil Al Halali was founded in 1989. This is a joint work of the UNDP, International Labor Organization, Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs and Ministry of Education. The implementation of the project went well. Two production units were established to create chances for graduates to work in a future practical career. But after completion, many obstacles appeared regarding staff and material. The activities of the center were reduced instead of expanded; and the center now includes only two sections, educational and vocational.

The Educational Section includes 14 departments with 209 students, 87 of them are females. Thirty of those students abandoned their study due to transportation difficulties. These departments start from first to sixth grade with 22 teachers.

The Vocational Section includes 10 departments with 140 students, 27 of them are females. The crafts are as follows:

Carpentry, smithy, weaving, packing, farming, sewing (men and women separate parts), typing and computer, manual activities and machine-weaving. The vocational section has 17 trainers and assistants. Handicapped persons' benefits from the services of this center vary. Most of them are deaf or mute, besides the mentally disabled one, and some with physical problems.

Future plans call for taking in an increasing number of physical disabled because new sections, including one for the blind, will be opened.

The center prepared a plan to improve the current situation, but financial obstacles stood in the way of implementation. Lacking a permanent source of support after completing the project, the center lost its balance. Unfortunately the two production departments are not activated. Those were the departments the center was greatly looking forward to, to guarantee opportunities of employment to graduates and a financial source for the center.

Basic difficulties the center suffers from many, but the main ones are as follows:

- The distant location of the center with no sufficient transportation mean or allowance for the 450 students and employees. The center owns 3 old

buses that break down frequently. Thus, the center was forced to hire a bus. This added to the financial drain. These 4 buses do the work of 8 buses daily, working in two shifts. They cost the center YR. 70000 a month, a major headache in itself.

- No sustained stream of income for some of the employees, who are not on the official payroll of the state, but receive payment from the project.

- The building lacks proper maintenance, and there is a deterioration in the health condition of the students and staff.

- Insufficient educational materials and teaching aides, especially for the mutes and deaf.

- No necessary work material for training in the crafts departments.

- No specialized educational material for deaf and mute that help improve the quality of education and training.

- Lack of trained staff, no encouragement to work with this kind of people that requires special kind of treatment and lots of patience.

- No entertainment or sports facilities that suit the handicapped's abilities.

- No food facilities especially for breakfast. The remote location of

the center imposes on the students to arrive early (around 5-6 a.m.) and a long stay, up to 3 p.m.

The center extends all its efforts to improve the situation. Many promises were made, but unfortunately nothing was realized. Even those who previously supported the center stopped their support. These include the Municipality, The Local Council, The Ministry of Local Administration and some philanthropists.

Parents are quite enthusiastic and eager to register their children at the center. About 400 students are on the waiting list due to insufficient space and resources. Some are unable to cover the monthly expenses of the center that is YR. 2500, as they are poor and have other children to support.

There is another problem. Graduates of this center have not been successful in finding jobs. More than 150 students graduated from the center and have been unemployed. They are looking in government offices, and in the private sector. Nonetheless, some have been employed.

Ms. Mona Basharahel, General Manager of the center, says: "We appeal to philanthropists and the society, at large, as well as to international organizations to extend their help and assist the center in overcoming the current conditions of the staff and students."

أجمل التهاني والتبريكات للأخ

أشرف الجرهوري

بمناسبة ارتزاقه مولوده البكر الذي اسمه

جلال

فألف مبروك، ونفع الله به دينه ووطنه وأهله

المهتومون

جمال العواضي، محمد الجرهوري، وجميع آل الجرهوري

نتقدم بخالص التعازي للأستاذ

فاضل مبخوت الزبييري

وذلك لوفاة زوجته.

تغمدها الله بواسع رحمته وألهمها الصبر والسلوان، وإنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون

الأسيفون:

عبدالله أحمد عبده الزبييري، عبدالعزيز أحمد عبده الزبييري

محمود مبخوت الزبييري، سعيد محمد علي الزبييري

وجميع الأهل والأصدقاء في صنعاء

تعزية

في موكب جنازي مهيب ووسط أسى وحزن عميقين تم تشييع جثمان الفقيد الشاب

ياسين عبدالهادي المستني

الذي انتقل إلى جوار ربه الكريم

وكان لخبر وفاته فاجعة في النفوس التي عرفته بما يتمتع به من خصال حميدة

وبهذا المصاب الجليل نتقدم بأحر التعازي والمواساة إلى أسرة الفقيد.

تغمده الله الفقيد بواسع رحمته وألهمنا وأهله وذويه الصبر والسلوان

وإنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون.

الأسيفون

كافة آل المستني وآل السقاف

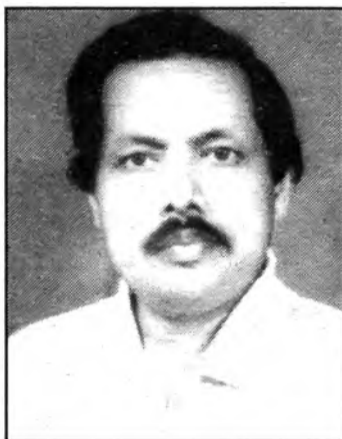
عنهم د./ عبدالعزيز السقاف، د./ مختار المستني، عقيل السقاف

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هياف عبدالرحمن السقاف، لطفي علي المستني، عدنان عبدالله السقاف

ENGLISH TEACHING: Knee-jerk Reaction Won't Do!

By: Dr. Murari Prasad,
Head, English Department,
Faculty of Education, Sa'adah.



In several recent issues of Yemen Times entitled "To Greater Heights: Improving English Language Competences of Yemeni Learners" (Issue # 5 dated February 1st), and "Making It Work: Parameters of Innovation in the EFL Curriculum in Yemen" (Issue # 6 dated February 8th) - both by Dr. Ramakant Sahu, the prescribed curriculum of English language training at secondary levels has been evaluated, leading the writer to conclude that it is inadequate and has a lack of appropriate material.

While not entirely without merit, the writer's observations of the steady shortcomings of the curriculum, as well as his overview of the English teaching situation, and the turn-around package are not unacceptable. However, the assessment is much too general, sweeping and clogged with a stale rehashing of the notions emanating from ELT (English Language Teaching) empire.

The expansive global reach of the English is not a matter of dispute. For accessing up-to-date information, the language is certainly a potent and enabling medium. Full marks for Sahu for dinning it into the ears of Yemeni learners of English. The language dominates major domains of modern life, and over half the countries of the world have given English some kind of special status.

As the language of commerce and communications, aviation and advertising, business and beauty contest, popular culture, and the worldwide web, it has enormous scale of use. With 80% of all the information stored in electronic retrieval systems in English, the language has critical mass which is unlikely to be ended by the available capabilities of language engineering - at least within the foreseeable future. Of course, it is not that everybody in the world has started speaking English, but the current spurt of growth in its use has invaded even non-English speaking advanced countries like Germany and France. The latter had instituted a state-controlled language policy in 1994 - Loi Toubon, to prohibit the use of English in public language. Some Germans too were prompted by the exaggerated use of Anglicisms and Americanisms to form the Society for the Protection of the German Language, in 1998.

Since a practical response to the uncontrolled spread of English has not been considered, so far, and supranational auxiliary languages have not been devised, the best approach for countries like Yemen is to promote efficiency in the use of English. This option will not make Yemen an anonymous ingredient in increasing globalization, because Arabic, as the entrepreneurial indigenous tongue with substantial load, will continue to remain its lingua franca.

Thus, with the advantages that are there, communicative competence in English is a necessary prelude to socio-economic mobility of Yemeni citizens.

Now, what is the current state of English-teaching? What are the impediments to efficient

acquisition and use of the language by Yemeni learners? In Sahu's opinion, the curriculum has failed to take off. It lacks the ability to kickstart a desirable pace of learning

My point is: no curriculum, however well-designed and fine-tuned it may be, can by itself produce targeted learning. Its potential needs to be exploited by well-skilled and professionally committed teachers. A well-made curriculum can fall flat in the hands of indifferent teachers and a mediocre one can tick and click if the teacher is resourceful enough to prime it with his mettle. My feeling is that the writer has not gone by actual classroom practices where the existing curriculum is being harnessed with a measure of success. Plus, he is making much of the motivation of Yemeni learners who are not turning out to be efficient users of the English they do learn.

Amidst obvious institutional variations, lack of sustained intrinsic motivation and hard work, curricular assumptions are bound to lie fallow and untilled. These impediments to the pace and perspective of English-teaching seem to have escaped Sahu's notice. I am not glossing over deficiencies in the curriculum, but these are barely a blip in the gamut of failures. The malady lies elsewhere.

Sahu is probably not aware of the on-going review of the textbook series titled CRESCENT by a committee of experts, on the basis of feedback data on their teachability and learning outcome.

Sahu is perhaps not aware of the on-going review of the textbook series titled CRESCENT by a committee of experts on the basis of feedback data on their teachability and learning outcome. A clearer perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of these books would have emerged had he weighed the findings of the committee in the light of his own survey. The shortcomings that he spots don't seem to be credible and convincing enough to warrant a dismissal of the series. By flagging their improper structural grading and lack of communicative activities, he is over-reading ELT theories which need to be diluted into an eclectic concoction for pragmatic reasons. It will not be correct to say that these books disregard the "schema" (background knowledge) of Yemeni learners and abound in unfounded jumps while introducing words like "air hostess" or "emergency". The charge would have stuck had there been words like locomotive or railway compartment in that

Yemen has no railway. Even people from rural background in Yemen fly abroad for medical emergency needs or whatever. So these words do not add up to high cognitive demands on Yemeni learners. Also, the learner learns a foreign language to form contact with a community other than his/her own. Why should the context of his/her learning be always his/her own?

Sahu's plea posits a split between teaching English as a skill and as a context of subject. How will the foreign language learner be fluent unless he/she has some content to communicate. Yes, we must teach the nuts and bolts of language along with socio-linguistic variable, but without sufficient content, forms can't be anchored into learners' perception. Sahu seems to be too obsessed with the bandwagon effect of ELT theories which can't be taken straight off to classroom as blanket solutions without detailing them with factors germane to specific teaching contexts.

Sahu is perfectly correct when he says that a well-assorted coalition of men, method and materials is a must for successful teaching. Given the situation as it is, it requires massive resources to improve the situation in Yemen's 12,400 schools. The issue involves policy planning and a good deal of educational engineering which the government alone can conceive and execute. The idea of periodic revamp of teacher training programs with fresh inputs and learner-friendly teaching models has all along been thrown up and needs to be harped on again and again. But more important than that is doing the best within the possibilities that are there, and not to throw the baby with the bathwater. If an understanding teacher can succeed with poor materials, then we can't bet for better change with brilliant curriculum and bad teachers. This does not mean that we should privilege status quoism and shoot down improving suggestions.

Sahu's innovative parameters have certain unrealistic ingredients. True, our learners should be good at oral communication for interactive survival in everyday life. In his scheme of things, the curriculum at secondary level should be attuned to the requirements of sociolinguistic competence of learners. The gaps in learning at secondary level are to be bridged by a "compensatory, remedial bridge course" to consolidate FL (Foreign Language) competencies of learners. Who will handle the bridge course?

The same teachers who are teaching English in Yemen. What is the task complexity of the bridge course? In terms of cognitive load it is many times higher and heavier than the course given earlier. Doesn't it sound like making bricks without straw? Phase 3 and 4 curricula say two little to comment on. The writer does not offer the prescriptive minimum for attaining sociolinguistic competence and phonological essentials either.

Sahu slams home a salient point when he says that the 4-level English curriculum for college of Education students requires a much sharper pedagogical slant because the target learners are the future teachers of English in Yemen, and as such they need to be groomed into resourceful professionals for a nation-building activity. Fittingly so, they must have confidence in classroom management and delivery system of their calling. I would like to add that they don't learn teaching skills and strategies from methodology courses alone. It will be a tunnel vision approach to limit the acquisition of prospective teachers to a set of skills because they do learn a lot through their exposure to a variety of ways in which other courses are taught. So, "pedagogical slant" should not

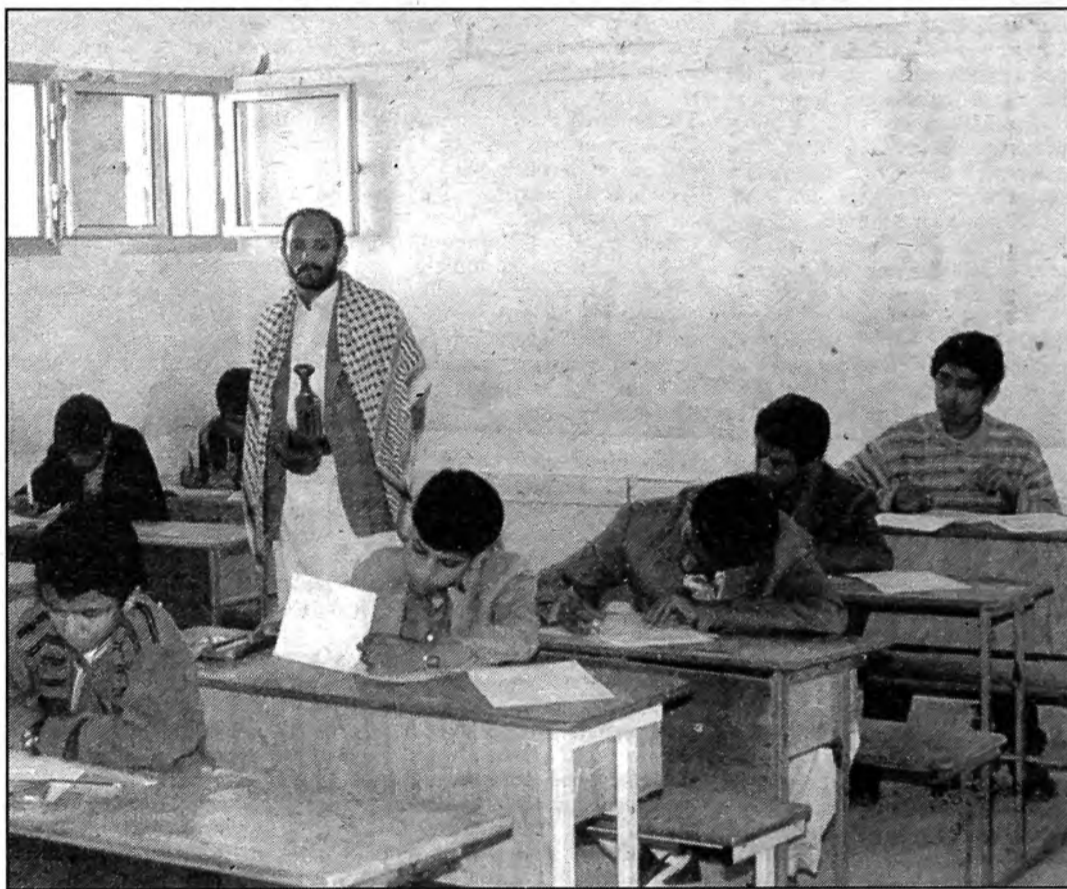
to the old and corny debate between linguistics and literature. It is a settled issue now that literature is a specific use of language and literary texts can be exploited for language teaching without putting a crimp in the learners' acquisition of communication skills.

Sahu's plea for decanonization of the literary corpus of English studies is a welcome intervention in that we have to come to terms with the changing constructions of literary canon following the emergence of new literature in English. The very implications of English literature have changed: the term has long ceased to mean the literature of England, and today covers a wider range of national productions than ever before. This enlargement of scope in English literary studies is being

Zealand as well as the literary productions of decolonized locations like India, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Singapore, etc.

Also, texts like Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Jane Austin's *Mansfield Park*, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, etc. are amenable to postcolonial interpretation in signifying ways. So, trimming of the curriculum has to go along several lines of new adjustments. A few women-centered texts should also find their way into the curriculum in keeping with the global interest in feminism. But the restructuring is not as simple as easy as Sahu suggests.

So, after such knowledge what forgiveness for the existing English-teaching curriculum in Yemen? But Sahu traverses the well-worn trail which the ELT empire has failed to blaze with its



fence off amplitude and breadth of exposure, otherwise it will be like overegging the pudding.

Sahu's reflections on the relevance of the English literature component of the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) curricula raise a lot of dust without allowing any traffic to pass. How do we stream career options of those who wish to major in English and devise as many syllabi as their takers? As a corollary to his argument, there can be two ways:

- i) the literature component of English studies in the Faculty of Education as well as in the Faculty of Arts should be abridged and simplified for one group of learners;
- ii) another version should be set apart for a segregated band of linguistically well-equipped students. The suggestion is not only inconsistent with Sahu's earlier position in the write-up when he describes English specialist courses as "a well-planned integrated module based on a holistic approach to language," but it also harks back

noted by many universities around the world, although most of the recent histories of 'English' literature omit virtually all account of the so-called 'New Literature in English'. This is not something new and surprising because American literature too, was for long disregarded and caviled at.

The belated recognition has not checked the boom of new literatures miles away from the British Isles with compelling multicultural flavor, bright colors, strange cadences, new themes and electric ways of expressing them.

However, while appreciating such diffusion of literary energy, we should not dispense with Shakespeare and Eliot in our curriculum. Sahu's scheme of dounsiing the syllabus by taking in "representatives from contemporary British, American, African and post-colonial literature" might amount to capsizing it with a terrible load. Post-colonial literature includes the literature of settler colonies like Australia, Canada and New

theorizations alone. However, periodic stock-taking of teaching programs for professional turn-out should not be mistaken for nit-picking. And Sahu's concerns are well-founded, though to many of his colleagues he might seem to be carrying coals to Newcastle. The curriculum contours outlined by him considered amidst essential feasibility factors do not add up to a paradigm shift in English-teaching. Nevertheless, they should be taken as a raft of new challenges without inverting the existing trajectory of ELT curriculum. That alone is its USP (Unique Selling Point).

The aims, methods and materials of language teaching depend on the socio-linguistic status underpinned by institutional support and functional load of the target language. Since Yemen stepped into the education sunlight only in the seventies, linguistic gestation of English among generation of learners is still awaited. Mere tinkering with curriculum won't hasten the pace of learning.

Acculturation in Yemen: Problems and Possibilities



Dr. Ramakant Sahu
Associate Professor
Department of English
College of Education at
Mahweet.

partnership. This constitutes acculturation at the macro level.

Now let us consider acculturation at the micro level. When an immigrant individual or group, couched in a specific socio-cultural crucible, with a certain matrix of values arrives in a foreign land and is confronted with a socio-cultural framework that is radically different from the one he/she brings with him/her, he/she very naturally experiences a mental or psychological jerk which goes by the name of 'culture-shock'. This, eventually, is the first phase of response in the process of acculturation, on encountering a foreign culture. There could be two manifestations of this response. One is of calm acceptance of the external realities as a natural expression of a different way of life. As a part of this response, one shows an eager preparedness to identify oneself with the new and unfamiliar labyrinths of the target culture as well as to contribute, in whatever way one can, for the revitalization of the cultural fabric.

The unreserved, uninhibited Catholicism so expressed is a product of positive thinking, the spontaneous overflow of a sense of involvement, of identity, of belonging with the cultural frame of the land in its totality, into which one plunges readily. This uninhibited identity leads to an unalloyed affinity which prompts one to further nourish the multifold orchestration of life. The healthy, integrative approach to understand, appreciate and approximate the target culture leads to a rich and fabulous cultural amalgam which is essentially creative and generative in its tone and temper. This attitude represents, what is called, 'the cultural melting pot' approach which is synthetic, not analytic, and where the participating cultures tend to lose their atomistic identity and help creating a trans-cultural recipe.

The other kind of manifestation of the response is based on a patently individualistic, fissiparous and dichotomous approach born out of an inherently cynical sense of alienation tempting one to don a mantle of 'diplomatic' resignation, beneath the deceptively simple appearance of adoption and adaptation of the target culture. Such an attitude of implicit polarization is deeply embedded in a corroding sense of insecurity for oneself and a perplexing sense of uncertainty about one's place in the crucible of target culture which one finds difficult to make one's own. This fluid, schizophrenic and highly vulnerable mental state forces one to adopt a shrewd, hypocritical, intensely mundane and mercenary attitude to the host culture which is basically driven by the ideals of pragmatic opportunism. The arithmetic of immediate gain overrides and obliterates the chemistry of human relationship which tantamount to a gross negation of a liberal, humanistic approach to the wealth of the target culture. Such an attitude is characterized as the 'salad bowl' approach, where individual constituents maintain their distinctive identity and give a semblance of unity in diversity, like a piece of mosaic. Obviously,



Although almost all Yemeni women wear the veil, the emergence of non-veiled women shows that acculturation is actually effective in Yemen

cultural integration coupled with the blossoming of creative energy is the assured outcome of the former approach. Conversely, cultural alienation accompanied by intellectual, emotional and aesthetic degeneration is the inevitable consequence of the latter.

In this backdrop, we should try and understand the prospects of the process of acculturation in Yemen. Yemen is the epitome of a fascinating cultural mosaic. With the breathtaking natural canvas, pervasive splendor of range of mountains, astounding architectural patterns all brilliantly chiseled by the inscrutable hands of Nature's bounty are unique specimens of superb craftsmanship which endearingly beckon everyone to ravish the inexhaustible treasure trove in this scintillating crucible.

On arrival here, one cannot help being enraptured by the picturesque environs and overwhelmed by the natural piety of the Yemenis around. The very common and familiar scene of a group of people sitting together and enjoying a recipe or chewing qat in a relaxed, friendly environment, far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife' is, in the first place, an instance of happy comradeship and a robust community life par excellence. The unmistakable sense of contentment, of fulfillment is the essence of an unending spiritual glow which runs through every nuance of the private and public life in Yemen. What is most striking about this country is that in an age ravaged by crying abuses of atrocities on women, Yemen represents the pinnacle of glory in this respect, with the characteristically high regard for women. Selfless service with the flicker of a smile is the precept every Yemeni lives up to. I for one, have often been touched by the rich repertoire of human values the younger generation, particularly the student community, has imbibed when, on many occasions, I have been accosted by a spontaneous, winsome offer of help: 'Any help/service, doctor?' which is the rarest of the rare gestures I have come across in my professional career spanning nearly three decades. What has impressed me most is that it is not a hollow, fervourless verbal

gesture but a distilled philosophy of life that seems to run through their blood.

One instance of how the average Yemeni lives this philosophy in his daily life won't be out of place. One busy evening my wife, unaccustomed to the turbid traffic flow here, was caught in the ceaseless stream of vehicles in the crowded Tahrir square in Sana'a. As I was helplessly gazing at her agony from across the pavement, one cab driver stopped his cab, came along and rescued her to a safe point. What an eloquent expression of empathy! A society that is built on the solid foundation of such values has the potential of being a model for the rest of the world. I can daresay, without any fear of exaggeration, that Yemen is a jewel in the crown of humanity.

Assimilation into the cultural hegemony of Yemen is a privilege one would hardly choose to let go. I have often felt the pride of belonging to such a pristine culture and, I trust, many others would have an identical impulse of responsiveness, of reciprocation. What can we do to express our volumes of gratitude in return for the immensity of the burden of love and good will showered on us?

A lot can, indeed, be done by the diverse cultural groups present in Yemen to revitalize the bond of cohesion at the social, cultural and linguistic levels. This endeavor won't go in vain but help create a healthy respect for one another, promoting understanding and strengthening mutual bond of relationship. At the social level, there could be exchange of greetings, of courtesy visits among different communities on national celebrations, religious festivities and social occasions.

We could have Friendship Societies which serve as resource centers, equipped with books, vital tourist information, view cards etc. on places of historical, cultural and tourist importance. These would act as windows enabling those interested to get glimpses into the respective country's social structure, cultural heritage, economic prospects, tourist potential, and so forth. Tourism can directly and indirectly get a valuable boost by

such a measure.

In the cultural front, we could share the vigor and creativity of one another's cultural treasure by setting up community cultural centers and organizing a wide range of cultural activities including periodic cultural festivals, art exhibitions, exhibition of postage stamps, coins and handicrafts, organization of films festivals, music concerts, etc. which would substantially contribute to the promotion of cultural sensitivity among various groups.

Similarly, much can be done for enrichment of languages and literatures. Sponsored study tours can result in closer interaction among languages. Departments

of translation studies in the universities could carry on cross-cultural studies and translation of classics of one literature into another. All this would go a long way to show the power and positive influence of the participating cultures and help build up stronger cultural ties among the cultural groups in Yemen, paving the way for a tension-free, homogeneous world order.

Acculturation is a journey, not a destination. It is a process, not a product. A positive attitude is the most basic determinant to acculturation which, as a trend, is currently sweeping the world over. Let us not lag behind, but take effective and timely steps towards creating a world family.

حمداً لله على السلامة يا أبا أنور
بمناسبة نجاح عملياته الجراحية، نتقدم بأحر التهاني للأب الفاضل
عبد القوي الصيادي
حفظه الله وأمد في عمره
المهنؤون
أنور عبد القوي الصيادي
رمزي علوي السقاف
وليد عبد العزيز السقاف وجميع أفراد طاقم الـ "يمن تايمز"

مستشفى اليمن التخصصي

Yemen Specialized Hospital Proudly announces:

Arrival of Professor Fingerhut chief of surgical Units in Intercommunal Hospital Paris, to offer consultations in digestive and hepatobiliary diseases and perform:

- laparoscopic operations such as antireflux, gallstones, hernias of abdominal wall.
- open surgery of stomach, liver, pancreas, bowel and anus.

Arrival of Doctor Hasham Khani, consultant orthopaedic surgeon in Intercommunal Hospital Paris, to offer consultations in bone and joint diseases and perform operations for:

- fractures and their complications.
- congenital hip and foot deformities.
- joint and bones surgery.

Period 3 - 13 April, 1999

For Inquiries and booking please contact:

Yemen Specialized Hospital, Sana'a

Tel: 224963 Fax: 222111

The advent of modern age brought in its wake greater inter-regional, international mobility among peoples, not only for the purpose of colonization alone, but for promotion of trade, commerce, education and culture. This necessitated the immigrant population's adoption of and assimilation into the social fabric and mainstream of the target culture which is generally understood as the process of acculturation. Acculturation is, therefore, a bifocal, reciprocal process of give-and-take marked by an intimate sense of mutuality. Each culture benefits the other and is, in turn, benefited by it, creating a mutually enriching, sustainable

April 5th, 1999



Letters to the Editor

Yemeni People & English Language

English is a very famous and important language. It is used and understood by many people of the world. In many countries, English is not just taught in schools, but, it is spoken by the society members even if it were not their first language.

Let's take an example, a friend of mine from Addis Ababa. He speaks English well. We were in Taiz and before he was about to leave for his country, he gave me his phone number. When I asked him jokingly, "What if you were not at home and I do not understand the language they speak in your country?" He laughed and said, "Don't worry, all my brothers and sisters speak English well."

When will that be the case in Yemen? Is it possible? I hope so. It is carelessness of Yemeni students and teachers that is making it difficult. In my village, there are more than one thousand young people. None of them wants to study English either in or out of school.

Yemeni students find English difficult, because they are not encouraged. There are many good teachers and English speakers in Yemen but, they do not work hard enough to help the situation. Even the English teachers in Yemen who are responsible for English teaching, use only simple words in the morning and have nothing to do in the afternoon.

They do not read English books, they do not speak English with their students and they do not keep in touch with English-speaking people.

That means we are losing even the teachers, because their language will not be adequate. So, how are we going to improve? In fact, we all have to work hard together in this field. English language should be taught from primary school level. We have to teach our children how to love the language. We have to encourage them in different ways, by giving them presents in schools, by giving them additional lessons and by giving them English programs on TV. This way, we will be able to build a new generation that can speak English well.

Fuad Abdulkarim Mohammed
Taiz.

My Friend... Yemen Times

I write this letter, once again, following many previous letters about our present continuously deteriorating conditions of life. Unfortunately I have not seen my letters in print, and do not have any idea where my letters went.

Writing is my hobby. I write about anything around me. I feel I can contribute something to Yemen Times. This urge also makes me obliged to learn more. In fact, I have been a reader of Yemen Times since its first issue. I have more than a hundred issues right now in front of me. I do not throw the paper because it has lots of valuable information. In a way, Yemen Times and I have become close friends. It is there for me to go back to when I need it. Please remember my letters and do not forget to answer me.

Abdul Majid Ahmed
Mukalla

We Live in Deeds Not in Years

The important thing about our life is how we spend it. What we do in life is what matters. How long we live is not so important. A man who lives for a few years but does a great service to others is really a great man. A man who has not added to the sum total of happiness to any one will be judged a failure. It is not years but deeds that count. Man should do deeds which bring him fame.

A lily flower blossoms for a day only, but it is a flower of glory. It gives joy. But an oak tree serves little joyful purpose, though it lives for three hundred years. Many great men who have become immortal had a short span of life. We usually say "great" to a person who spends days and nights to discover something new, to invent something useful or to develop or provide new means of modern life. It is not impossible to be great one day, but it isn't so easy. We can be very famous and great if we do all our best by adding to the progress of our society. We can be great if we forget selfishness and start thinking about our people's needs and problems; trying to provide suitable solutions. Therefore, we shall be great without any doubt.

Try now and if you don't succeed at first, try again. Still I have a piece of advice to tell you my friends, out there. Keep looking forward to achieve greatness and never look underneath your feet. Believe me, when you make something useful, important and remarkable, you make and define yourself. Start now wherever you are and don't delay it even for a minute.

By: **Mohammad Moseid Khalid Al-Asa'ady**
Taiz University

What Price Our Traditions

First of all, I would like to express my great feeling of pride in the Yemen Times, this newspaper which covers many subjects in our Yemen today.

I was reading your issue No. 10, and I came across an article titled "Marriage Conventions in Taiz" which I liked very much. Really it is nice to read about such matters, our traditions.

I do have some comments which I hope they will be printed in the paper.

1- Did the writer know the cost for such marriages, and how young men suffer to meet the requirements of the marriage?

2- Are the steps and rituals which were mentioned in the article still applied? I think some of those conventions are old or too expensive and are not used any more.

3- Who can dare perform all these steps and rituals? Only a rich man.

Finally, I ask myself, when will we wake up and reduce the dowry and other requirements of marriage to make it easy for us young men who are looking for a stable life in marriage.

By: **Khaled Al-Rainee,**
Sanaa.

A Fine Communication Media in Yemen

What pleased me most of all was the realization that there existed a positive communication media in your fine country - Yemen Times online. I think the world media has carried out a disservice for your country's image. For example tourism must have suffered from the unfortunate incidents earlier this year. However back to your website - it really is very good, it's informative and most of all interesting!

David Lloyd

One Sided Views?

I was compelled to reply to your article on "Fighting Terrorism", which appeared today in your online paper, even though deep down in my heart something said, "Why should you care?"

I totally agree with the writer on the need to prepare for "fighting terrorism", but someone should also write on the 'need to fight the super powers on their killing spree on innocent lives'.

They is no difference between the so-called terrorists and super powers. They are all the same. They kill innocent people, disregard laws or rather take laws into their own hands. They have one thing in common - they are all murderers.

So please say something about the "superpower murderers"

Zulkefle bin Mahmud

Fine Article:

Yemenis Are Doomed to Emigrate

The opinion "Yemenis: Doomed to Emigrate" was a very frank and challenging position. The author, no doubt, has lots of love for Yemen and the Yemeni people. He zeroed in on the problems; however, he suggested no solutions.

Population problems exist not only in Yemen, but also in other parts of the Arab [Muslim] lands. This is common knowledge to many specialists and practitioners of public policy. The ideas I was hoping to find out is how to solve such problem. The same could be said about political stability.

I enjoyed reading the opinion page; it has offered very challenging positions.

A. Bari

Memories of an American in Yemen

Although I am not Yemeni, I have many fond memories of the three years (1990-93) I spent in Yemen as the Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN. Despite the difficulties Yemen experienced in those years (unification and the aftermath of the Gulf War), it was without a doubt the most challenging and most rewarding experience of the 32 years I spent in international development. I made many good and lasting friends there and still wish I could have stayed longer. Unfortunately I reached FAO's magic retirement age and had to leave Yemen. I only wish I could return again. Inshallah perhaps some day I will. Until that day, please accept my best wishes for the continued success of the Yemen.

Allan Furman
USA
E-Mail: arfurman@aol.com

Let Us Get Rid of Qat

I am a Yemeni who was born and raised in south Yemen. In 1995, I departed to the U.S.A. along with my aunt. I have not been to Yemen ever since. The truth is that I miss Yemen a lot. Not only do I miss the People of Yemen, but most of all, I miss the mountains and the natural beauty. Currently I'm studying Computer Information Systems, and hopefully, I will complete my bachelor's degree by 2002.

Sometimes I think about going back to my homeland; yet sometimes I change my mind thinking that as long as qat exists, Yemen will continue to be undeveloped. Qat makes Yemenis lazy and inefficient. I have a lot of concern for the people of Yemen especially in this technology era. I think if the people of Yemen could overcome the evil qat plant, they will prosper and eventually be as developed as other advanced countries.

I have no prejudice against the plant itself, but rather against qat's negative affects on our farms, economy, and people. We should use chemical pesticides to destroy all qat plants in our country and use the land for more beneficial plants and yield a better harvest.

As a result of qat, most Yemenis suffer from some kind of mental illness or other diseases. I know about this because I lived in Yemen and I compared people who chew qat with those who didn't. The people who chew qat regularly suffer from many psychological problems. Not only is qat a health problem, but it also takes a toll on the family's budget. Some 75% of income of Yemenis goes into qat consumption. You can imagine how the families of qat addicts suffer from malnutrition and various illnesses.

I hope that the government decides to ban the sale of qat. If it does, we will see Yemen occupying an important position in the world.

In short, if we want a glorious and harmonious Yemen, we ought to eliminate qat, corruption, bribery, and irresponsibility among our politicians.

Addrisi Aueraun
USA

E-Mail: addrisih@yahoo.com

A Yemen Rock Singer!

I am 29 years old and have been living in England since I was 13 years old. I am a professional singer. I write songs of English Music such as Country, RnB, Soul and Rock. So if there is anyone out there who would like to contact me (men or women) that would be my pleasure. Anyone can contact be via email. I am ready to share ideas with any artist, Yemeni or not? I am coming out with my CD single called Memories and it is going to be kicking as the people are getting to know me as one Helluva singer. Who would have thought a Yemeni could one day become a renowned singer in the UK?! I am also a good painter. I paint buildings and landscapes of Arabia.

Adam Abdulla
England

E-Mail: adamrnb98@hotmail.com

Call to the Yemeni Nation to Rise Again

I'm here to share an opinion with my fellow brothers, who are back in Yemen.

As immigrants, we are just running away from our beloved country, giving it our backs, saying: "I won't be back unless there is a drastic change in the system." How the hell do we expect any change when we, the country's youth, are giving up on it. No one is going to help us if we could not help ourselves.

I ask all my fellow countrymen to sit down for a while and think about what I am saying. You will instantly realize it's common logic. It's a fact that we judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing, while others judge us by what we have already done. So stop bragging that we Yemenis were so intelligent, wise, etc. back in time and history. Take a look at where our country stands today. It's calling for all of us to help revive the glorious past.

Pessimism never won any battle.

My brothers and sisters:

In the face of uncertainty, there is nothing wrong with keeping up hope. I believe that our greatest glory is not in never falling. It lies in our ability to rise every time we fall. We rose once, twice and many more times in history. I'm sure we can do it again, together.

We only need to believe in ourselves and in our nation.

Hisham Khalid al-omeisy
CALGARY/ALBERTA/CANADA
E-Mail: hisham_alomeisy@hotmail.com

An Emigrant from Qatar

I am 35 years old and hold an agricultural degree from California State University, USA. I worked in Yemen for Canadian Occidental Petroleum Yemen from 1995 till 98. However, due to the economic hardships and the unbearable level of corruption and insecurity in the country, I was hunting for a chance to get out like many other Yemenis.

Finally I was lucky enough to find an opportunity in Doha. I now work for RasGas, but I miss home very much. RasGas is a prestigious multinational LNG company, which operates out of Qatar and exports LNG mainly to SE Asia and Europe.

I am married with a 2-year old boy. My wife travels back and forth to Taiz to finish her last year of University, majoring in English.

I am a constant reader of the Yemen Times and love every page of it. I wish to come home someday and find all that this newspaper proposes to solve the country's agony is a fact and that home is really sweet home....

I live in hope..

Mohamed Kassem Aklan
Qatar

E-Mail: mkaklan@hotmail.com

Member, Yemeni Singaporean Organization: Must be Proud of Being Yemeni

I am not a Yemeni but inclined to Yemenis as I have many friends. Besides, I represent a Yemeni organization in Singapore. There are about 10,000 Singaporeans of Yemeni origin or descendants. I am disappointed that there are many Yemenis who are ashamed of their origin because Yemen is a poor country.

My personal wish is to see that Singaporeans of Yemeni blood cultivate an understanding of their original home. Being a Chinese and not born in China, I am proud of the land of my forefathers though it is poor and not as developed as the Western World. Whenever there is a disaster in China, I felt sympathetic with the people there. Though my family and I are attached and loyal to our adopted land, which we call our own country, I have ensured that my family must understand the culture of our roots. Without our forefather's land, we won't be what we are today.

I therefore urge all Singaporean Yemenis in Singapore not to be self-centered, but to raise their heads high and be proud that Yemen was once a great country and their presence in this world and their successful life today is owed to the existence of Yemen. I am disappointed that many years ago with the boom of oil, almost every Yemeni I met told me that he is a Saudi. I wonder what happened to the Yemeni elders. Aren't they proud of their motherland, the land that gave them life.

Till today, I don't see any effort by any Yemeni in trying to educate their children to understand their motherland and encourage them to visit and be proud of it. How many local Yemenis in Singapore are in touch with what is happening in Yemen? Yemen is not a poor country to my personal knowledge. It is rich in culture, which nobody in the world can deny or can take away.

I wish all Yemenis in Singapore could put their chest forward with their chin high and say "I am the child of a Yemeni Arab" and would not disguise and camouflage under an Arab mask, hoping people will think that he is a Saudi, Kuwaiti or an Arab from other wealthy state. I wish Yemen the very best and I am proud to be associated with the Yemenis. I take this opportunity to thank Yemen Times for the useful information posted on its website.

Ronnie Phua
Singapore

E-Mail: tmtcpt@pacific.net.com.sg

ألف مبروك

تهانينا الحارة للشباب الخلق

وليد درهم أبو الرجال

وذلك بمناسبة الخطوبة وعقد القران

المهّنون:

درهم أبو الرجال، الشيخ وليد الفضلي،

الشيخ ياسر السمييري،

التقيب عصام السمييري،

الشيخ حمود عاطف وأولاده،

الحاج عبد الله أبو الرجال،

محمد أبو الرجال

الاستاذ/ حافظ منصور الأهدل

وجميع الأهل والأصدقاء



20 Years of German Development Service (DED) to Yemen



Juergen Wilhelm
D-G. DED



Gerd Winkelhane
Representative

On the basis of an agreement between the governments of the Federal Republic of Germany and the former Yemen Arab Republic (now the Republic of Yemen), co-operation between the German Development Service and local partners in Yemen commenced in 1979.

This week marks the 20th anniversary of that momentous event.

We have the pleasure of presenting this article as a documentation of DED's activities and goals world-wide with a focus on Yemen.

DED IN YEMEN

Almost 200 German Development Workers, all specialized in specific professions, have worked in Yemen in various fields. The ultimate aim of co-operation is to support Yemeni partner institutions, to improve services, and help increase the standard of living of the Yemeni people. During the course of the years, significant progress has been made, which is a result of firm national development policies and the hard dedicated work of all ministries and institutions concerned with implementation of development programs.

As of January 1999, the DED co-operates in Yemen in the following fields:

- 1) Health services (12 development workers),
- 2) Vocational training/small business promotion, including construction and infrastructure (8 development workers), and
- 3) Community and social work (3 development workers).

In addition to providing development workers, DED supports local Non-Governmental Organizations by furnishing equipment, financial assistance and other types of aid.

The health sector is the main field of DED's work in Yemen. The priority given to co-operation in this field is the result of the particular structures that prevail in the country, and specifically those related to the health care policy in a land with an extremely high mortality rate of mothers and children in rural areas. The co-operation aims at creating an effective health care system for these target groups, based on the concept of the provision of basic medical facilities.

Strong emphasis is especially given to family planning. The population growth rate in Yemen stands at 3.7%, which is extremely high, compared with world-wide standards.

As in the past, the support of rural health facilities is the focal point of DED's engagement, though on a smaller scale than previously. There are still serious problems in the provision of basic health care, and due to economic and Organizational difficulties, the substance of equipment of facilities, the supply of medicine and work materials, the equality of the training, and the salaries of Yemeni health care workers remain inadequate.

There is still much to be done to improve health services, especially in remote rural areas, and only by offering better care can the governmental health centres gain the population's trust, and thus convince them to utilize these facilities to a greater extent than at present.



DED currently cooperates with the following Yemeni health care providers:

In Sana'a City and Sana'a Governorate:

a) The "Expanded Program on Immunization" (supported by WHO and UNICEF) is responsible for the planning, implementation and statistical analysis of the countrywide vaccination programs. One DED development worker is assigned to the statistics department, and is responsible for the recording and analysis of incoming data.

b) In 1995-6, DED supported a one-year course for community midwives at the former Menakha Health Centre. After the course's successful conclusion in summer 1996, the facility was upgraded to a "Rural Training Hospital". DED's current co-operation consists of the provision of a nurse who is in charge of supervision work.

In Amran Governorate:

a) Three DED development workers are currently seconded to the Amran Rural Hospital a paediatric nurse, a teaching nurse, and a midwife. At the end of 1994, the hospital was expanded to encompass a Health Manpower Institution. Responsible for the training of future Primary Health Care Workers for the region, the Institute conducts three-year courses for nurses, midwives, and lab technicians.

The DED development workers are involved in the practical components of the student's program, undertaking on-the-job-training in the hospital. Through this effort, DED helps insure a high degree of long-term sustainability for the project because by training the local staff, it is hoped that the placement of development workers in the Rural Health Centres will be unnecessary in the future.

b) The Amran-Rural Hospital serves as the administrative hub for all health facilities in the Governorate, and is thus responsible for supervision, the distribution of medicines, etc. Among the facilities under its jurisdiction are Rural Health Centres in the towns of Dhibin and Bayt Adhaqah. DED provides a female physician for the Dhibin facility and a female nurse for Bayt Adhaqah.

In Ibb Governorate:

a) The Rural Health Centres in the towns of Rehab Al-Qafr and Ba'adan Al-Uzla are located in the area of GTZ project "Family Health/Family Planning in Ibb and Abyan". DED has co-operated closely with this project since its inception in 1995, and provides a paediatric nurse and a midwife to the Rehab facility and a midwife in Ba'adan.

b) In order to achieve sustainable development, co-operation also takes place at a higher administrative level of the Yemeni health sector. In June 1997, DED provided a lab technician as a development worker in the Health Office in Ibb. Her tasks include the supervision of the laboratories of the Health Centers of the governorate, and participation in the creation of a training program for lab technicians at the Ibb Health Manpower institute.

In Taiz Governorate:

The Rural Health Center at Kadas Al-Kadara in the Huggariyya highlands is responsible for the provision of health care to a population of around 55,000. DED co-operation started in the area in 1989, and is scheduled to end in 1999. After having supported the center with teams of up to 4 development workers, DED is presently represented by a Paediatric nurse.

Construction and Infrastructure

In co-operation with the General Organization for Preservation of Historic Cities in Yemen" (GOPHCY), DED contributes to the preservation of Yemen's unique cultural property. Two DED-sponsored architects have been working in the "Centre of Architectural Training and Studies"



(CATS) - a sub-division of GOPHCY - since 1998.

In October 1998, DED placed a civil engineer in the project "Integrated Development in the Agricultural Sector" (IDAS). His tasks consist mainly of advising farmers' self-help-groups in matters like planning and construction of dams, cost calculation and supervision of construction activities. He also participates in other activities, which aim at improvement of the water supply for both people and livestock, such as rehabilitation of cisterns and water reservoirs.

The water sector is one of the main fields of co-operation between German development assistance programs and the Republic of Yemen. Within this context the "National Water and Sanitation Authority" (NWSA) receives substantial financial and technical aid from the German Bank for Reconstruction (KfW) and the German Technical Co-operation Agency (GTZ). Since 1998 a DED-sponsored pipe fitter has been providing technical support for the Yemeni staff at the Sewage Treatment Plant in Ibb and several of its sub-branches. In 1999 an electrician will also be supplied. The training of qualified Yemeni experts for the urban water supply system constitutes an important branch of urban development and a meaningful supplement and linkage to DED's work in the health sector.

Vocational Training

Yemen's high population growth is making enormous demands regarding the extension of the education sector, especially because the general population suffers from a relatively low standard of education and a high illiteracy rate. The unemployment rate is assumed to be about 40%.

For many years DED's co-operation in the vocational training sector was limited to the Vocational Training Center (VTC) in Al-Koud (Abyan Governorate). Here 2 DED Development Workers participate in the training of skilled workers in the automobile mechanic and agriculture machine technician areas. Recently, a refrigeration engineer has also been posted at the Al-Mansurah VTC at Aden.

Community and Social Work

Co-operation with the "Yemeni-German Project for Health and Environmental Education at Primary Schools" has been taken up. Project targets are development of locally appropriate and practically examined models for health and environmental education, as well as examination of their suitability for a national curriculum.

Methods and measures for the practical implementation of the project targets include, among others:

- a) mobilization of local potential for the practical creation of healthy, ecologically beneficial schools,
- b) support for the co-operation of the community and the school in health education, and
- c) preservation of the environment and elaboration of guidelines for the relevant themes, such as water, garbage disposal, hygiene, nutrition.

One Development Worker in this endeavor is posted in Abyan Governorate, a second in Ibb.

FROM GLOBAL CONCEPTS... TO INTEGRATED PLANNING

The German Development Service (DED) supports programs in many countries of the Third World, aiming to improve the living conditions of the population and to contribute to national autonomy.

For 30 years qualified and dedicated women and men have collaborated in government and private projects in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The DED also assists local organizations and self-help initiatives by means of financial or logistical support and promotes domestic expertise. Being a non-profitmaking organization, the DED's priorities are always to serve the interests of its Third World partners, to respect their right to self-determination and their responsibility for their own futures.

The German Development Service was



established in 1963, in a decade which the United Nations had optimistically declared a "Development Decade". With the colonial era drawing to a close, the newly-independent "infant-states" needed external support. The aim of the UN initiative was to encourage joint international efforts to combat mass poverty in the Third World and close the social gap between the rich North and the poor South.

This idea was taken up in the Federal Republic of Germany as in many other Western countries. But the West's hopes that underdevelopment could be overcome quickly were not fulfilled. The development model of the successful industrialized nations could not simply be transferred to Third World conditions. Through into the 90's, there are only a handful of countries from the South which have come near to achieving their development goals - most are poorer than ever.

Today, the importance of international work is appraised more realistically. Compared to the global economic environment and the efforts being undertaken by Third World countries themselves, development cooperation has only a modest and complementary role to play. Negative experiences with costly, large-scale projects and doubts about global solutions have led to new development strategies based on a step by step approach more in line with the basic needs of the people.

This concept has guided the DED's work from the start and it has stood the test of time. It includes cooperation with local organizations, manageable programs integrated into the structures of the host country, close professional and human contact between development workers and target groups, and support for self-determined development.

However, the DED has also changed over the years and found new answers to the varying requirements of its partners in the Third World. Its cooperation has become both more versatile and more flexible: "idealistic volunteers" have given way to "social-committed development workers", whilst regional and programmatic priorities have shifted as the challenges faced have changed. But help towards self-help still remains the guiding principle.

The DED currently has some 1,000 specialists - one third of them women - working in around 45 Third World countries. So far more than 10,000 men and women have worked as DED development workers in the Third World, cooperating with groups of poor and disadvantaged people to improve their social situation and to encourage them in their own efforts. They are contracted for a minimum of two years and can extend their contracts to six years if requested by the project partner. The duration of their stay in the host country makes it easier for the development workers to become integrated and build up a range of social contacts, enabling them to cooperate with their local partners to develop sustainable solutions to the problems at hand.

IT ALL BEGINS IN BERLIN

Three months before they leave Germany, development workers and their families come to Berlin to prepare themselves for their life and work in the host country. Experienced language teachers and regional instructors support them. The training program is comprehensive and divided into language, intercultural, developmental, and technical training. The aim is to enable the development workers and their families to conduct themselves appropriately in an unfamiliar professional and private context.

This training period is followed by a further one in the host country, lasting at least two months. During this time, the development workers can increase their language proficiency, compare the knowledge and insights acquired in Berlin with the reality of the country itself, and begin to make their own experiences - as live-in guest with a local family, on trips to various projects, in discussions with development workers living in the country.

April 5th, 1999



**General Managers Distributor Conference for Xerox
-First convention for newly
structured region -**

The last week of February marks the first General Managers Convention for Xerox, following the recent restructuring of the region to incorporate the Middle East, Eastern and Southern Africa distributors, and it focused on the global organization's leading position as a digital solutions provider.

distributor countries in the region, together with directors and senior executives from Xerox in the UK, met with top management from Xerox Regional Office in Dubai to review achievements attained in 1998 and to consolidate marketing and sales strategies to lead Xerox into the new millennium.

witnessed enormous changes in recent years and we are now more focused than ever before," said Jean Gignoux, General Manager, Middle East, Eastern and Southern Africa Region. "We believe that we can offer companies in our region the solutions necessary to streamline and manage their business and applications more efficiently."

STCO
Shaher Trading Co. Ltd.
Distributor for XEROX
(The Document Company)

Xerox is leading the digital document revolution in the Middle East and Africa region as more and more businesses recognize the extensive benefits of digital technology. Digital installation and equipment sales grew by 50 per cent in 1998, with overall revenue growth in the region posted at 17 per cent.



Mr. Nofal Saad, General Manager, Shaher Trading (Xerox Yemen distributor) receiving the Award for Outstanding Performance in 1998, from Mr. John Drinkwater, Managing Director, Xerox Middle East & Africa, at the Xerox MEESA General Manager's Conference in Dubai on 19 February 1999.

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BE GOOD TO YOURSELF. FLY EMIRATES.



Yemeni Press in a Week

Given the importance of this page to our readers, responsibility for it has been moved from one editor to a group. The newspapers' editorial is also translated.



AL-Thawri,
Sanaa Weekly, Mouthpiece of
the Yemen Socialist Party,
1/4/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:

1. Manuscripts and Deeds Stolen from the Grand Mosque.
2. Next Wednesday the Preparatory committee of the League of Yemeni Journalists Will Meet.
3. "Elections are the focus of YSP Political Activity."

B: Issue's Editorial:

In the beginning, the USA and the countries with it among the NATO alliance alleged the objective of their attacks on Serbia was to bring its leaders to the Rambouillet negotiations. Soon after the assault started, the US, Britain and others announced the objective is to destroy the Serbian war machinery and reduce its capabilities. As a corollary to this aim was to "save" the Albanian Kosovars. The attackers claim human rights is the driving force of their efforts.

What we see today is a mobilization of tremendous fire-power in a region that does not need any more historic hatred and animosities. Is the West doing all this for humanitarian reasons?

Let us the humanitarian record of the assaulting countries.

1. The US had embarked on a genocide against the native Indians and has nearly succeeded in totally wiping them out. If that is history, look at the racism that is still exercised today against the Americans of African origin.
2. At the same time look at Britain. British colonial history leaves much to be desired. Actually, most of the problems of former colonies date back to the seeds of conflict left behind by the British. In addition, one would simply need to look at British behavior in Ireland to be assured that there is little consideration of human rights.
3. If one moves to Spain, what that country has been doing to its Basque population involves lots of human rights violations.

That is why the NATO actions have transformed the situation into a catastrophe for the Kosovars who are death-trapped. Besides, the NATO attacks have covered schools, homes...

Maybe the world alliance will strike a deal with the Kosovo Liberation Army, as it had done with the Iraqi opposition. The truth is, however, that the fate of the Kosovo Albanians is of little importance to the Americans and British, as was the fate of the Iraqis - Arabs and Kurds. Maybe the mass migration of the Kosovo Albanians is part of the scheme of things, as worked out by the NATO forces.



AL-AYYAM:
Aden thrice-weekly,
Independent,
3/4/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:

1. America Helps Aden Regain Activities by Clearing Harbor.
2. The UN Asks Yemen to Respond to Questions by Human Rights Commission.
3. The Opposition Expects Cabinet Change.

B: Issue's Editorial:

Tomorrow, Sunday, 4th of April, 1999, marks the 80th birthday of the late Mohammed Ali Bashraheel, founder of Al-Ayyam newspaper. As much as the birth of Mr. Bashraheel represented the birth of the conscience in the nation's and people's psyche, his life was also filled with sacrifice and giving to others during his sixty years.

Remembrance of the birthday of the founder of Al-Ayyam, as one of the outstanding symbols of the nation, should mean reliving the life of a man who has given the fruit and years of his youth upholding the shining word which has lighted the way for people to see their course through the dark years and into the years of light. The pages of Al-Ayyam were the refuge for those freedom lovers, in spite of the efforts by many to eclipse them or stop its wheel from turning.

Today, as we salute the 80th anniversary of the founder of Al-Ayyam, we pledge to continue on his course which he drew up in the 1950s. We shall bring out the truth, no matter what, and not mindful of the obstacles that stand in the way of Al-Ayyam as it moves to expose the corruption and all that goes on in our society - good or bad. The decision to issue the newspaper three times a week is a new milestone in our pledge when we re-started the newspaper after the blessed re-unification of our country, and that is to make this newspaper available to our readers every morning, as it was in the days of its founder.



14th October,
Aden Daily, Official,
3/4/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:

1. Abdo Rabbo Mansour: "Our country welcomes Chinese investments which will receive support and attention." Zemin: "Our bilateral relations will have a prosperous future."
2. Official Yemeni-Czech Bilateral Talks.
3. Arab Parliamentary Delegation Visits Iraq.

B: Issue's Editorial:

The rising level of conflict, war, ethnic cleansing and large-scale removal of populations in Kosovo and different parts of the Balkans are a bad omen coming from a region which was at the center of the start of two world wars. The problem is that the Serbs, instead of discussing the Kosovar request for self-rule, responded in violence and by trying to impose their will and one-sided solutions. Unfortunately, the unfolding events point to a rapid deterioration of the situation as new factors and new players are continuously introduced into this tinder box. There is a real danger that the conflict will spread to involve the neighboring regions in Europe.

Even as the problem gets more complicated, the Yemeni position comes personified by President Ali Abdullah Saleh and expressed by Foreign Minister Abdul-Qader ba-Jammal, reflects a balanced and responsible attitude. As Foreign Minister Ba-Jammal received a

letter from his Russian counterpart on this matter, he re-iterated the position of Yemen:

- That we are saddened by these dangerous developments and rising level of violence and the war being waged; and

- That there must be an immediate end to the Serbian ethnic cleansing policies and atrocities against the civilians of Kosovo.

Thus, the policy of our government once more indicates the rational and principled positions in interacting with world developments and in contributing for world peace, stability and harmony.



Al-Thawrah,
Sanaa Daily, Official,
4/4/1999

A: Front-Page Headlines:

1. The President Receives the Czech Foreign Minister and Welcomes Joint Investments.
2. The President Visits the Sanaa Zoo.
3. Vice President Abdo Rabbo Praises Chinese Achievements.
4. Arab League Delegation Goes to Tripoli to Follow-up Handing over of Accused Libyans over Lockerbie.

B: Issue's Editorial:

In spite of intensified NATO air strikes, the Serbian leadership does not show any signs of relenting. To the contrary, the atrocities against the native Albanians have been stepped up visibly. The suffering on the ground has become the fate of the Kosovars, and the alliance is still debating whether it should be involved on the ground, irrespective of what happens to the helpless victims of the Serbian actions.

The limitless suffering is further exacerbated by the unwillingness and inability of the neighbors to

accommodate the refugees, who are fleeing from one form death to another. Moreover, the refugees have become non-persons because their identity papers have all been taken away.

The scarcity of information of the true nature of what is going is also fueling the speculations and rumors.

Given such a situation, it is not logical for the NATO forces to remain simply in the air. The only way to get over with this calamity is to cut off the head of the snake. That means going directly after

Slobodan Milosevic, the cruel leader of Serbia. This man has brought disaster, not only to his neighbors, but to his own people, as well.

In a matter of a few years, he has transformed the whole region into all kinds of conflicts and violence leading to untold suffering at all fronts. Now, his irresponsible behavior risks bringing an all-out war in Europe, yet once more in this century. That is why he is correctly dubbed by the media as a time-bomb. But going back to the NATO

objective, if the safety of the Kosovars is what the alliance is trying to achieve, then the air strikes alone will not do it. And if the West does not want to expose its people to the danger of ground fighting, it can at least provide adequate arms for the Kosova Liberation Army to stand a chance in the confrontation with Serbian forces.

Creating a military balance on the ground is going to tame the Serbian madness and will show the rulers in Belgrade that their plans will not work.

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

UNITED



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is inviting applications for the following two posts in its Poverty Programme in Yemen:

1. Regional Team Leader - Bani Sa'ad (Al-Mahweet) Sub-line 17.58

This position is open to Yemeni Nationals Only

Brief Description

Regional Development is one of the four major components of the Poverty Alleviation and Employment Generation Program. The aim of the Regional Development is to assist local communities in five selected regions in Yemen, to participate in setting-up participatory development institutional framework as a mean of poverty alleviation within the communities. Moreover, communities will be capacitated to undertake planning, implementation and set-up of development funds within their regions.

Interested candidates are requested to contact Regional Development office for Poverty Alleviation Programme Office, Sana'a for details and Job Descriptions of the posts. Applications should indicate post title and sub-line with detailed Curriculum vitae, and to be

forwarded to: Regional Development Office for Poverty Alleviation Programme
Amman St., Opposite Al-Mankel Restaurant
Bldg. next to Al-Nahdha School
Tel: 206 271 or 219 222
Sana'a

Applications should be received **not later than 21 April 1999**

Applications received after this date will not be considered. Only those candidates who strictly meet the requirements could apply and acknowledgment

April 5th 1999

After Mysteriously Disappearing in Northern Ireland Where in Earth is Abdulrahman Abdulaziz?



**Champion Abdulrahman Abdulaziz,
Have we lost him as a Yemeni Champion for ever?**

Abdulrahman Abdulaziz is one of the best Yemeni athletes ever, and he is well known at an international level in the field Marathon Races. His latest achievement was earning a gold medal in the Arab Athletic Championship 99 held in Syria last year. No one denies that Abdulrahman Abdulaziz is one of the most talented and promising figures in the field of Athletics. In spite of the insufficient support and care given to him by his country, he has proved to be a mature athlete and a true lover of long distance running. He achieved his mastery in running without the assistance of any coaches, relying solely on his own training.

In his latest event, Abdulrahman was among the national team, which went to participate in the World Championship Marathon in Northern Ireland on 28th of March, 99. However, Abdulrahman didn't return to his homeland with the rest of the team. He disappeared in Belfast under mysterious conditions, and there are no clues to his whereabouts.

Did Abdulrahman find an opportunity to join

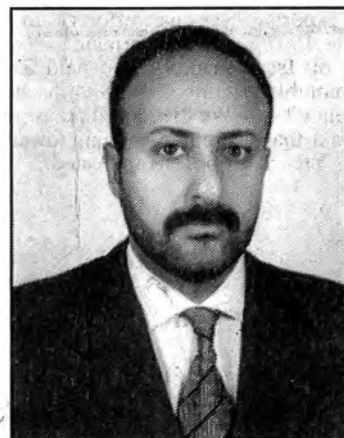
another country that realized his potential in the marathon? Or did he decide to stay in Belfast in order to find better support from other countries, after his own country ignored him and refused to back him? There are many possibilities, especially considering the interview Yemen Times filed some time ago, when he mentioned that there were times he couldn't get enough food to eat. He also expressed his disappointment in the small sum he received from the Ministry of Sports, which was not enough to live on. In spite of the many youth supporting associations, and financial resources that were available, he was given next to nothing. Whatever the reason for his disappearance, we lost one of our most promising athletes, who could have done a lot for Yemen if he had been given the chance. It is unfortunate that Abdulrahman is only one of hundreds of talented sportsmen who sometimes sleep without dinner. This is a bad sign for the country, and for the Ministry of Sports in particular, which should review its strategies and methods before we lose more of the likes of the champion Abdulrahman.

Haitham Al-Ainy:

"We are doing all we can to Financially and Morally Support Sports and Youth"

Ahli of Sanaa is one of Yemen's most prominent teams. Ahli Sanaa was established before the revolution in 1962, and it has remained an active club through all that time. It is still growing today. Many talented players and young Yemeni athletes have contributed a lot to the country through the club, and some have reached key positions in the public and private establishments of Yemen.

Ahli Sanaa is now witnessing a large scale improvement in its sports activities and its cultural events. Currently, Ahli football team is the leader of the football tournament, and the club's teams are doing well in every sport.



Haitham Muhsin Al-Ainy, a well-known businessman, is the general secretary of Ahli Sanaa club. Yemen Times filed the following interview with Mr. Haitham about Ahli Sanaa's ambitions to further enhance their club in various ways.

Q: Ahli Sanaa is leading the excellent league tournament after the 1st stage. Can it maintain its position? And how can the club management help it do so?

A: It's true that our team is leading our closest rival, Shaab Ibb, by six points. However, as every sportsman knows, anything is possible, but I can say that if our team keeps up the same spirit and enthusiasm it has had in the first half, we will be league champions. As far as the management is concerned we are all one team. Under the leadership of Mr. Mohammed A. Al-Qadih, we try to provide the best possible environment for our players to improve their skills and do their jobs.

Q: Other sports and games suffer of lack of support and encouragement. Is Al-Ahli club trying to support and develop these games?

A: It's true that games like basketball, volleyball, free style wrestling, swimming etc. been neglected, in spite of the large number of youth interested in these games. We have willing participants; all we need is good trainers and tournaments. If we could satisfy those needs, our other sports could grow quickly. Our team supports many of these games,

but this supports remains limited due to our inability to handle all the sports at once.

Q: Al-Ahli has organized many tournaments in collaboration with private companies. Is Al-Ahli planning to organize any more tournaments to help promote sports?

A: For the last twenty years we have been organizing tournaments in football, volleyball, table tennis and basketball as well as other competitions, especially during the holy month of Ramadhan. The participants in these tournaments come from clubs,

companies and local teams. We try to involve the private sector in order to promote these games and to finance the tournament. Unfortunately, the private sector shows little interest in sports, but at least Mr. Nabil Hail Saeed contributes generously to support sports in Yemen. I hope more businessmen will come forward to promote Yemeni sports.

Q: As I was coming in I noticed that your logo says the sports, education and social club. What is your role in educational and social activities?

A: We do give great importance to educational and social activities. We have a very humble library and a educational group, which publishes educational magazines, and I am proud to say that we won second place in the Republic educational activities championship.

Our social activities are mainly to support all our club members by studying their social conditions to provide them with necessary assistance, and we also have a charity society.

Q: What do you think about training and encouraging beginners as part of your work?

A: In sports, to ensure continuous success and remarkable achievements we must attend to youth. We realized this a long time ago, so we give a great importance to the youth, for they are the future of our club. In spite of our efforts, we feel that we still need to do more but our financial limitations stop us.

Yemeni Olympic Football Team begins its Training

Around 47 players gathered in the Sanaa Youth House last Thursday where they will begin their training in the house's internal training camp. Their training will run to the end of April. At the end of the training course, 25 of the 47 players will be selected to represent Yemen's Olympic Football team which participate in a training camp in Kuwait. The team then will have a preparation game with the Kuwait Olympic Football Team and then with a number of Kuwaiti clubs. All of this is intended to prepare the team and keep it in shape for the Asian playoffs. These are also a stepping stone, hopefully to the Olympic games that will be held next year in Sydney, Australia. Yemen will be playing in the same group as Qatar and the

Emirates. The first game for Yemen will start next May in Doha, Qatar. The next game will be in the United Arab Emirates. Several players from different governorates have begun coming to the Youth House of Sanaa for this important event.

On the other hand, Al-Muraisy stadium in Sanaa is currently witnessing a number of preparatory games under the supervision of the national coach Mr. Hasan Abdulhameed and the goalkeeper's coach, Mr. Adel Ismail. The Brazilian coach, Mr. Fernandez, is expected to be arriving in Sanaa in the next few days, where he will be training the Yemeni national and Olympic football teams in preparation for the Asian playoffs.



خالص التهانى والتبريكات للشباب الخلق

ناصر محسن البيضانى
بمناسبة عقد القران وقرب الزفاف.
المهنونون

أنور الصيادى وعائلته
حاتم مبارك بامحرز
وجميع الأهل والأصدقاء

Welcome Home

Family member welcomed last week the visit of
Mrs. Margreat Al-Khazzan
who's visiting the country for the first time.

Family members say
"Wish you'll enjoy Yemen"

Mubarak Bamehriz, Hatem
And family members

Yemen's Non-Oil Exports Rise

Yemen has become basically a one-commodity exporting country. Oil makes up more than 90% of its total exports. During 1998, oil exports represented 92.7% of the total.

But, according to Mr. Noman Al-Molsi, Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Promoting Exports, non-oil exports more than tripled in 1998, over the 1997 figures. In an interview published by the official "The Economic" half-monthly circular, issued by Saba News Agency on 31st March, 1999, Mr. Al-Molsi said that total non-oil exports jumped to YR 5

billion, from only YR 1.6 billion in 1997. In addition to traditional Yemeni exports such as coffee, hides, cotton, fish, etc. - all in raw material form, Yemen is beginning to export some manufactured consumer goods. These include biscuits, confectionery, detergents, juices, etc.

The Yemeni officials pointed to the various efforts undertaken to enable Yemeni producers compete in the world market. "We held a seminar 14-15 September, 1998 to discuss what can be done. We diagnosed many possible steps, and we are now moving towards their implementation," he indicated.

There are three main projects on which Mr. Molsi and his team are working. They are pushing for the establishment of an export credit bank, for building data base on potential markets for Yemeni exports, and for more strict quality controls on Yemeni products.


He also pointed to the tremendous good will generated by the successful visits by Yemeni officials, especially President Ali Abdullah Saleh to foreign lands. "Although we have to compete along market lines, these good-will visits and better political understanding help pave the way," he said.



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The French Cultural Center, Yemenia Sanaa
in collaboration with the Taj Sheba Hotel
invite you to join us on a culinary cruise
through Provence (South of France)

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Chef Jean-Pierre MOGGIA & Chef Christian AQUISTO Specially flown from Marseille will present you Provence with culinary traditions of this region during the French Week starting the 12th till the 15th of April at the Taj Sheba Hotel

Tickets are available at:
The CCCL ☎ : 203 206 / 7
The Taj Sheba Hotel ☎ : 272 372

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