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## The British Foreign & Commonwealth Office Declares:

# "Random Armed Killing is Common in Yemen"

The very first sentence of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office 'travel advisory' on Yemen reads: "Random armed killing is common in Yemen". The British authorities thus renewed their strong advice "against all travel to Yemen on March 5th." They especially warned against travel to Abyan, Al-Jawf, Al-Mahara, Marib and Sa'adah. The text can be read at [www.fco.gov.uk/travel/](http://www.fco.gov.uk/travel/).

The British government's assessment of conditions in Yemen matches the reality. Over the last ten days, over 32 incidents of shooting were reported. Most Yemeni cities sleep under the sound of gunfire every night. A Western ambassador in Sana'a stated that the authorities have lost control over the situation in the country. He added that individuals and groups regularly engage in various violent confrontations leading to armed killings every day.

The authorities routinely turn a blind eye to these killings, provided they do not affect the power division in the country. People often take the law into their own hands to settle differences. Therefore, individual and group showdowns became a recurrent phenomenon involving guns, kalashnikovs, bazookas and other light arms.

The main loser from these developments has been the middle class. The well-to-do and powerful have made fortresses of their homes. They also move around town only with hordes of bodyguards - either officially sanctioned or otherwise. The penniless poor and low-income individuals offer little incentive to be targeted by armed marauders.

Thus, it is the middle class, the professionals - like medical doctors, engineers, lawyers, journalists, accountants, small businessmen, artists, etc. - who have been forced to live under very insecure and unsafe conditions. They are the ones who suffer from different forms of intimidation, blackmail and harassment by armed thugs.

Foreigners who used to visit the country have decided to basically stay away. Those who live in the country, whose numbers have been dropping drastically, keep a low profile and follow painstaking measures when they have to travel. Even then, they have been subjected to kidnapping.

No wonder, therefore, that the foreign office of the UK, and many other countries, continue to advise against coming to Yemen.

## Tribal Warfare Hashed vs Redaa Stand-off

Some 250 tribesmen from Hashed and a similar number from Redaa are gathered in Hodeidah in a stand-off regarding a blood feud between them. The two sides are armed to the teeth, and are in a psychologically edgy condition leading to a potentially explosive situation. Both sides have laid siege to the Hodeidah Central Prison where Mr. Nasser Mussa Ali, from Redaa, is kept under lock and key. Yemen Times went to see him, and found him badly battered and in a physically shocking condition. He is guilty of shooting Mr. Mohammed Al-Hashedi to death at 8:30 pm on Thursday, April 29th. The two sides are also pressuring the security and judicial authorities to push things according to their interests and versions of the story. It is reported that very top Hashed tribal sheikhs have urged an immediate death penalty, or else. The Redaa tribal grouping also demand proper judicial process of law. "We want a fair and just trial. A kangaroo court will be unacceptable to us, and we will not stand by and watch them kill our man," said Sheikh Ali Saleh A-Tayri.

Neither group has much trust in the system. That is why both sides have mobilized a physical presence of armed men around the prison, the attorney's office, and of course the offices of the governor, director of security, and the



Entrance to Central Hodeidah Prison: 'Guarded' by All Sides

director of the investigations office. The authorities are in a fix.

The problem started at around 8:00 in the evening on Thursday, April 29th, near Ras Katnib, a few kilometers north of Hodeidah. It is a place for outings and picnics. Mr. Nasser Mussa Ali, a businessman from Redaa, parked his Mercedes car along the coast, close to another car. The driver of the previously parked 4-wheel car, Mr. Saleh Al-Hudaiki, who had women in his car, was discomfited that another car would park close by. "Move away! Drive off. You can't park there!" "Why? Am I trespassing private property?" The two men soon exchanged harsh words leading to insults.

The 4-wheel car driver left the scene, only to come back a short while later with 2 other cars loaded with armed tribal compatriots. They beat up Nasser Mussa Ali, breaking one arm, a couple of ribs and left him with big bruises on his face. As they started to walk away leaving him on the ground, he reached to a pistol and fired a shot, fatally injuring Mohammed Al-Hashedi, one of the group that assaulted him. Mohammed died upon arrival at the hospital.

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OUR  
VIEWPOINTThe Difficult Struggles  
of Sanaa City

Sanaa city used to be a wonderful place to live, some 20 years ago. The climate is temperate year-round. The mix of physical habitat between concrete block buildings and greenery was reasonable. There were a couple of streams flowing by, on the southern and northern outskirts of the city. The city was surrounded by small satellite villages which offered refuge to picnicking families, individuals and groups. Basic services were adequate, including asphalted roads, water supply, electric flow, etc. The number of people living in the city was manageable, but more importantly, the number of vehicles was manageable.

Today, the city is choked and exhibits signs of serious problems which our officials refuse to attend to. Only a third of the city's inhabitants receive piped water supply on a regular basis. Periodic electric interruptions mean that half the city is dark, at any one time. The number of residents has grown to over 1.3 million persons. All kinds of vehicles madly roam the streets without any sense or order. Garbage litters the streets, and sewer flows in many quarters. Herding livestock is still a common scene in Yemen's largest urban center.

But it is not just the infrastructure and utilities that are not well-developed. There are many aspects of urban life that have yet to evolve. Take a few examples.

1. Can any one believe that this city has not one convention center? What I mean is that when people want to meet in large numbers, there is no place to go. People have to do with the ballrooms of large hotels. That point was driven home a few days ago when the organizers of the upcoming conference on "Emerging Democracies Forum" were at a loss as to where to meet. They needed a large auditorium for the plenary sessions, and many large rooms for the group meetings.

2. Can you believe that this city of 1.3 million does not have one opera house or even one up-to-standard theater or cinema hall? Instead, it has many lavish and well-furnished qat-chewing rooms and mafrajs - what a curse. As a result, all kinds of acting and staging takes place in the cultural centers which are large theater-style facilities where all efforts go.

3. Can you believe that this city does not have simultaneous translation facilities and equipment? Whenever there is a multi-lingual gathering, the organizers either have to bring such facilities from abroad, or rent them from one of only two foreign entities who have them in Sanaa. The going rate is about US\$ 1000 a day, which is plain robbery. We economists actually call it monopoly pricing.

4. Can you believe that this city does not have computer connected projector facilities to be used in presentations? Today, there are three such facilities in the whole city - one at the Ministry of Planning and Development, which is often out of order; one at the Yemen 21 Forum, and a third one at a foreign company.

5. Can you believe that this city does not have one internet cafe? There are no adequate efforts to promote the use of computers, the internet or other modern information technologies.

Sanaa city is struggling to catch up with the world. As the capital of Yemen with its 18 million inhabitants, it deserves better facilities and services. Unfortunately, the leadership of the country, and of the city have their focus on big cars, big houses, lavish furniture, and other similar amenities of good living.

The city needs to develop those services which allow us to integrate and interact fruitfully with the rest of the world. It is only through such efforts and facilities that Sanaa can evolve into a modern city.

*The Publisher*  
*Saqqa*

Yemenia Offers 50%  
Discount to Journalists

Captain Abdul-Khaleq Al-Qadhi, Chairman of Yemen Airlines (Yemenia) told the Yemen Times that any journalist flying with Yemenia will receive a 50% discount on the value of the ticket. "This was an old practice which had been discontinued. Now it is back in force," he said. At another level, Yemenia has placed all its schedules and many other details on its homepage on the internet. People can access them at [www.yemenia.com/](http://www.yemenia.com/).

National Board to Defend  
Rights and Liberties

On May 7th, 1999, 25 pro-democracy activists got together to launch the National Board to Defend Rights and Liberties. The group is made up of professionals - lawyers, journalists, medical doctors, and artists. The group stated that they will work to document human rights violations and come to the rescue of victims.

## Al-Shoura Editor in Court

The chief editor of Al-Shoura newspaper, Noman Kaied Saif, said he was given false information by the Press Prosecutor. He was told to report for a court session on Sunday, May 9th, at the South-west Sanaa primary Court. The judge was not aware of the case, but once informed, he re-scheduled the case for 11th May. The editor is asked to account for a story about the YR 150 million which the paper said was the amount spent on car purchases by the president. The article lamented the purchase of new cars, at a time when the president said he was fighting corruption and mismanagement.

## Technology in Music

At 5pm on Sunday May 16th, the Health & Culture Center will offer a presentation on how technological progress affects music and its instruments. The event is open to all.

## Ghulam Hussain Is Out

The Aden Primary Court decided to release Mr. Ghulam Hussain, one of the Brits on trial, on bail. The judge's decision on Sunday, May 9th, was based on a medical report stating the man's health was failing. The rest of the group are still in prison while the trial proceeds.

Yemen Times  
Weekly Opinion Poll

Yemen Times Opinion Poll Question is found weekly at:  
<http://www.yementimes.com/#poll>  
The results only reflect the opinion of the portion of people who use the Internet to submit their votes online.

## Question

How in your view, will President Ali Abdullah Saleh be affected by the fact that there are no prominent candidates for the presidency?

## Results

- It will be in his favor in the short-run because he will win easily, but in the long-run he proves his regime to be not so democratic. (65%)  
- It will damage his image because it shows the public that there is no need for the waste of time and money on the elections when their results are predetermined. (14%)  
- It is in his favor because it clears the way for a 100% victory in the elections. (17%)  
- I don't know (3%)

## Bally: Impressive Opening in Yemen

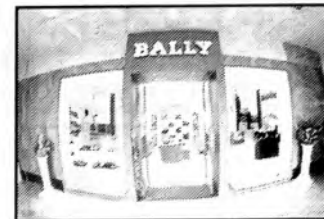
Al-Ahmar Trading and Investment Co. (ATICO), celebrated the grand opening of their new business venture with Bally of Switzerland, a well known name in the shoe and leather accessories world since 1851, in Sana'a Trade Center, Algeria street, last Wednesday.

In the press conference held after the official opening, Sheikh Hamid Al-Ahmar, CEO of ATICO said when Yemenis travel abroad they spend most of

their time and money in shopping, they travel to buy reliable and durable goods of reputed names, such as Bally, which are not available in Yemen. Now they don't need to do that.

ATICO tries to bring the best to the Yemeni markets at affordable prices. "Bally's products all over the world are made for the middle class people. It is sad that not many middle class people in Yemen can afford to buy our products, in spite of the fact that our prices are inexpensive compared to any of the other markets," added Sheikh Hamid Al-Ahmar.

Mr. Fritz Luchsinger, Head of the New and Developing Markets Department of Bally said "It took us a long time to



come to Yemen, because we wanted to have a reliable and reputed business partner and a good investment atmosphere. We are very happy that we have met our requirements, and we are glad to be in Yemen."

"Bally started by making shoes, today we manufacture a variety of leather goods and accessories, such as ladies purses, leather bags, wallets, neckties, shirts, etc." Mr. Luchsinger added

By: Hatem Bamehriz  
Yemen Times

Khamer Crazy  
Kills 3 and Injures 8

On Friday, May 7th, 1999, inside a mosque in Khamer, some 90 kilometers north of Sanaa, a man suddenly started spraying the people left and right with bullets from his kalashnikov. The man, visibly disturbed and disoriented, was able to get away. He is still at large, though the people have identified him and the police continue to hunt for him.

Three persons were killed and 8 injured. Community elders and religious leaders used the incident to plead once more with the public and authorities not to bring arms into mosques, and other public places like parks, restaurants, cinema halls, etc.

Immigrants' Conference on  
15-17 May

The Ministry of Yemeni Immigrants' Affairs has completed all preparations for the First General Conference of Yemeni Immigrants to take place in Sanaa during the 15-17 May. This event represents one of the principal efforts to strengthen the links between the nation and the Yemeni diaspora, estimated to exceed 10 million.

Under the patronage of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the conference will study how the Yemeni authorities can assist immigrants, and will discuss ways to speed up the integration of immigrant families into society. Investment possibilities are also high in the agenda.

Oracle Upgrade2000 Offers  
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In a continuing effort to prepare customers for Y2K, Oracle Systems Limited, The Middle East Operations of Oracle Corporation, today announced the Oracle Upgrade2000, a limited-time offer for upgrading Oracle customers. Anyone using obsolete, unsupported versions of Oracle databases and development tools can upgrade. Oracle Upgrade2000 allows customers to replace earlier unsupported versions of Oracle products with currently supported, fully Y2K compliant software at **no cost**. The Oracle Upgrade2000 program will be available in Oracle Middle East Operations region, including the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and Qatar, the Levant countries of Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, as well as **Yemen**, until **June 30, 1999**.

"Y2K issues are among the chief concerns of IT professionals today," said Mr. Carl Olofson, research director at IDC. "Oracle Upgrade2000 is the right program at the right time. This is a win-win proposition that enables customers to avoid very serious problems, while enabling Oracle to retain potentially thousands of customers and bring them back into the mainstream Oracle user community."

"Oracle is actively helping our customers prepare for Y2K," said Mr. Eric Sisi, Regional Manager, Oracle Support Services. "With the Oracle Upgrade2000 program, Oracle customers will be able to upgrade their older Oracle technology to Y2K compliant software quickly and easily."

Oracle Upgrade2000 is a once-in-a-millennium offer that demonstrates Oracle commitment to helping its customers in the region become Y2K-complaint."

In order to take advantage of Upgrade2000 call Oracle Middle East headquarters in Dubai directly at +971 4 313 828, fax Oracle on +971 4 313 258, or e-mail [upgrade2000@ae.oracle.com](mailto:upgrade2000@ae.oracle.com), or contact CRC directly at (01) 202748/9, fax: (01) 202716, Email: [digital@y.net.ye](mailto:digital@y.net.ye).

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## Hussein Al-Awadhi:

# “I think of our problems as challenges!”

Almost all countries have their own news gathering and disseminating agencies - either controlled by the state or by large private companies. The fight over control of information flow is an old one, and there have been many arguments on this issue. The debates of the 1980s in the UNESCO and other circles are still not a distant memory.

As the world develops a more information-based civilization, the ability to influence is increasingly through control of information flows. Fully aware of this reality, the Republic of Yemen has embarked on improving its news gathering and disseminating network - Saba News Agency (SNA). Towards that end, one of the critical decisions has been to appoint an able person to lead the SNA.

Mr. Hussein Dhaifallah Al-Awadhi, the new chairman of SNA, has an MA in Journalism from Maryland University in the USA. His earlier background has been in political science.

His work experience is broad and impressive. He served as Director of Parliament's Hearing Session during 1977-79, then he served for two years as Director-General of Ibb Governorate. His longest association, however, was with sports. First as Director-General of Sports Reporting (1980-94), and second as Secretary-General of the National Olympics Committee (1994-99).

Ismail Al-Ghabiry of Yemen Times talked to Mr. Al-Awadhi and filed the following interview.

**Q: How did you find SNA when you took over recently?**

**A:** I am sorry to say that it was in a pitiful state of affairs. In spite of reasonable resources, the organization had not represented itself adequately. I think the problem is basically that the people formerly in charge were ignorant of their role. They were oblivious to the power of information, as well as to their duty and the services expected of the agency.

The pleasant surprise to me, however, was that I found it to possess many capable and excellent staff in the journalism. It has a more than adequate central office building, and rather modern equipment. In other words, we do have the factors that will give us the role and success we aspire for. In a very short while, we should be able to show new achievements and make a more visible contribution. Time is on our side, and we only need a short while only. We start a new phase and we are embarking with full confidence to go about developing our services.

**Q: You sound like you have a clear plan of action. Can you share with us some of your future plans?**

**A:** We have already started. The first steps are of a practical nature. We are a news gathering and disseminating agency. So the first thing to do is to improve the agency's service in this field. We want to compete with other news agencies by offering more useful, more up-to-date and more accurate information about what is going on. We have a visible comparative advantage, at least as far as news on Yemen goes.

In the last few years, the work of news agencies has seen a lot of development. Many new services and facilities have been introduced. SNA has tried to keep pace with these developments, including internet facilities.

We also have four reporters worldwide - one in each of Cairo,

Canada, Washington DC, and Horn of Africa. The idea is to gather information and news, mostly as related to Yemen.

We are going to have more reporters in other parts of the world. We are going to start our press unit by the end of current May, in order to improve the agency's publications. We will start news broadcasting through satellite channels and introduce new services to subscribers. We are planning to improve remuneration of our personnel.

We have just instructed changes in the existing computer network to avoid the Y2K crisis. We have also installed new programs to provide more advanced and detailed business news. We are going to establish a press center before the year is out. This will help Yemeni, Arab and foreign stringers and correspondents in their dispatches.

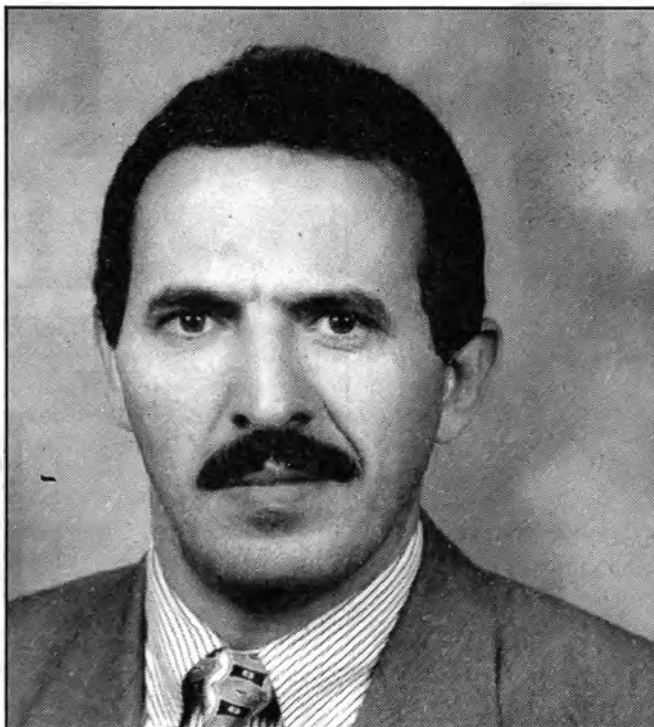
In want to stress that steps to implement all these decisions have already been initiated.

**Q: How many people work for the agency today?**

**A:** We have about 400 employees. Unfortunately the news-related professional staff makes up only about 10%. The rest are either administrative or support personnel.

Over-staffing is a problem in all government bodies. But we are trying to convert this liability into an asset. We have started discussions to train and re-train our personnel. This will allow us to put our people to more effective use. In other words, instead of looking at the large number of redundant personnel as a problem, we will try to re-structure our work while at the same time re-train our people so that performance is enhanced. This will take some time, but we have to start.

**Q: Technology has made news available to all. What specific and unique service is Saba News Agency going to provide?**



**A:** We know that technology has made information more accessible to all. People now can retrieve all kind of information at the tip of their fingers. That is why we are moving slowly into providing additional services.

For example, we will offer more extended analysis explaining the meaning and implication of news reports, we will provide special documentation and up to date news. We will cater to special-need customers especially in highly technical fields. For example, we are working to improve our services through expanded business reporting, enhanced sports coverage, and new reports on trends in music, fashion, arts, etc.

**Q: These are new fields. Do you plan to start new sections or how do you want to go about the organizational structure of your agency?**

**A:** We have already started reforming the different sections of the agency. We pay attention to those fields which our subscribers and customers are interested in. We now have political, economic and sports sections. I have given instructions for more detailed breakdowns. We are also interested in establishing new departments, as our efforts evolve. Of course, we are looking at a couple of years down the road. We have to do things gradually and smoothly.

**Q: Have you considered coordinating with Arab and international news agencies? What are the possible areas of cooperation?**

**A:** As a matter of fact, SNA has cooperation agreements with many Arab agencies. We all come together under the Association of Arab News Agencies umbrella. We also have strong cooperation with many friendly agencies. Exchange of information is the foundation of this relationship. Moreover, we exchange visits and

potential growth area for our future efforts.

**Q: How many local stringers and correspondents do you have?**

**A:** We have reporters in all the governorates of the republic. So, we do cover the whole country. In addition, we have in-house local and Arab professional journalists who are active in analyzing daily events. The agency covers all local news around the clock. It provides full coverage of events through the network.

**Q: You have an English news bulletin?**

**A:** Yes, we do have an English daily bulletin. This service is also available on the internet. We are now considering expanding our foreign editorial department to include other foreign languages.

**Q: As a government body, do you have constraints in terms of how you can report the news?**

**A:** As a government body, we have some clear guidelines for our work. Our basic mandate is to report the news from an official point of view.

Having said that, there is a lot of room to improve on the present

format. We have lots of possibilities that have not been explored in the past, because people wanted to do the minimum necessary for the job.

I want to insist that if we want to compete with other sources of information, the news we provide must be reasonable and must attract interest. People will link up and access only those sources which satisfy their needs. We have to overcome the traditional propaganda approach. Otherwise, we will simply become redundant.

**Q: What are the main obstacles you face?**

**A:** The obstacles are of a minor nature. There is no business that has no problems. Especially this field faces problems all the time. I want to take a positive outlook to these problems. I want to think of them as challenges rather than problems. Better still, I want to think of them as the 'spices' that add flavor to our work.

I think we can use all the help and cooperation we can get from all sides, especially the colleagues in the media. This will increase our collective abilities to serve our audiences.

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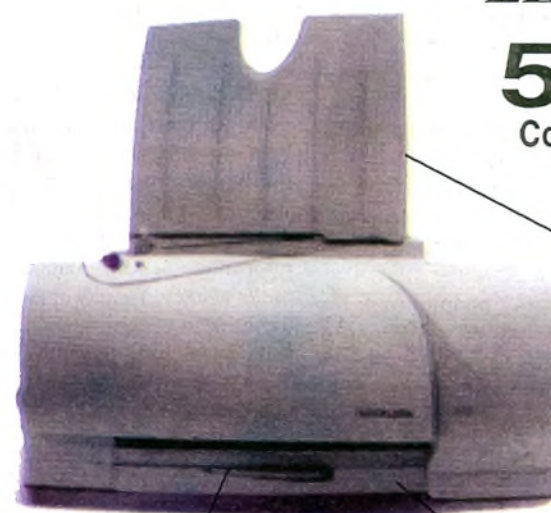


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# EMERGING DEMOCRACIES FORUM: Finalizing Preparations for the Big Event!

She was beaming as she spoke. "We have secured the necessary funds, thanks to the generosity of the donors," said Kendall Dwyer, of the Washington-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs which is organizing the event. She was referring to the Governments of Japan, Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, and the National Endowment for Democracy.

Ms. Dwyer is charged with the actual preparations for the Emerging Democracies Forum, a high-level gathering of pro-democracy activists. This will take place under the theme "Managing the Twin Transitions - Political and Economic Reform in Emerging Democracies" during 27-30 June, 1999.

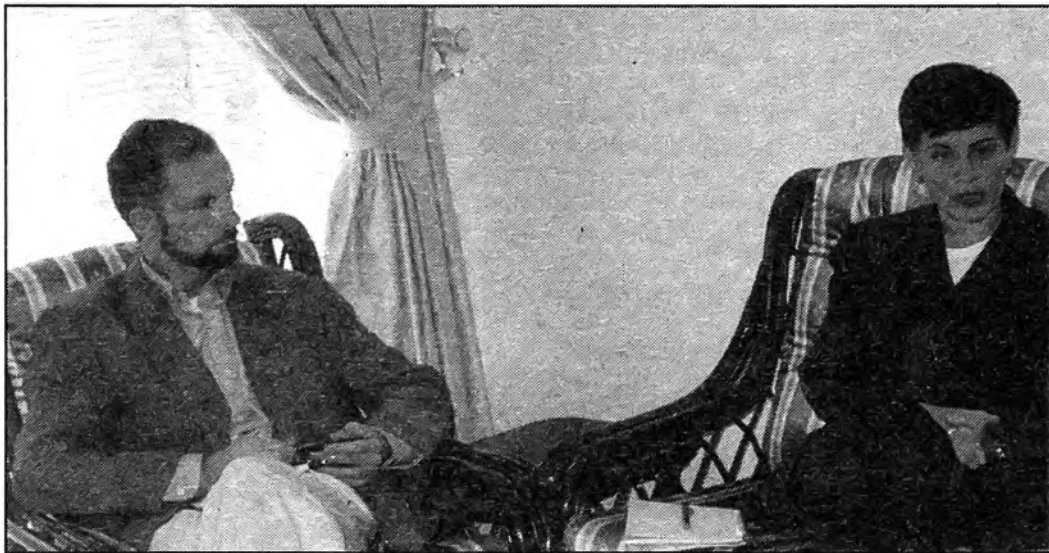
"Already, we have over 50 confirmations (for participation) and we are still some two months away from the events," she beamed again. Those confirmations include notables such as Alpha Oumar Konare, President of Mali, Zurab Zhvania, Speaker of Parliament in Georgia, two ministers from Morocco, two members of parliament from Macedonia, and a host of other

decision makers and influential people in several countries. Invitations were sent out to roughly 160 persons. "We expect an average of 10-person delegations from Benin, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala,

Representatives of the donors and organizations supporting the political and economic transformation are also invited. The organizers of the Forum are keen to shed light on the achievements of these democratizing

ference does address substantive issues that relate to the political and economic transformation process. The four major topics of discussion are the following:

1. "Setting the Context of Democratic Transition" which



Guyana, Macedonia, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, and of course, Yemen. The Yemeni delegation is headed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, and includes the prime minister, several senior state officials, politicians, as well as representatives of civil society.

countries, which they call "the second tier of transitional democracies." That is because these countries 'seldom receive the attention they merit.' Thus, a large corps of local, regional and international journalists is invited to cover the events. Aside from the recognition aspect of the gathering, the con-

tackles the hard choices that need to be made;

2. "Confidence Building Measures" which address issues of the public trust, governance, elections and communications;

3. "Participation" addresses the democratic decision-making process and the contribution of women, civil society, etc.

4. "Management" which looks into good policy dimensions such as rule of law, fighting corruption, etc.

Mobilized to chair and moderate the plenary sessions, panel discussions, group action meetings and levels of debate are well-known international personalities who have proven leadership qualities and demonstrated commitment to democratic values. The importance of the summit is that it re-invigorates the commitment to democracy. This is vital in light of the "backsliding" that has been witnessed in the recent past. Some countries have moved forward quickly with democratic reforms, only to entrench when faced with economic difficulties, public unrest or political challenges.

The main outcome that is envisaged from the gathering is:

1. A common statement identifying potential solutions to problems inherent in democratic transitions and defining tangible goals...

2. An agreed-upon action plan for follow-up activities and initiatives involving partnerships...

3. A summit report with findings and recommendations.

The three-day conference is expected to serve Yemen well. "It will put Yemen firmly on the map of democratizing countries," said Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, editor of the Yemen Times and member of the Yemeni delegation to the summit.

But it is Derek Butler, the NDI representative in Yemen, who is excited about the event. "I am

sure this occasion will bring deserved recognition to Yemen for staying the course of democratization in spite of visible hardships," he said.

He also expressed the enormous benefits to the pro-democracy practitioners and activists in Yemen because of the exposure to the important experiences of other democratizing nations. "Rubbing shoulders with people who are in the same situation will definitely offer much insight into how to engage and interact in the future," he explained.

Even opposition politicians are upbeat about the event. "We are happy if at least it will make our officials back-off a little bit. You know some elements in the establishments are not as tolerant as they should be. This international meeting will force them to take the back seat, at least for a while," said a beleaguered journalist who works for an opposition newspaper.

Academic circles are also enthusiastic. A Sanaa University professor saw an opportunity for new research. "The information and experience of these countries will definitely be food for thought at more than one level," said a professor at the Political Science Department of Sanaa University.

By:

Afra Zubair, Ramzy Saqqaf  
Anwar Al-Sayyadi, and  
other Yemen Times staff

## Abyan Court Passes Verdict on Extremists:

# IS IT OVER?

Presided over by Judge Najib Muhammad al-Qadiri, the Primary Moudiya Court in Zinjubar, Abyan, issued on Wednesday, May 5th, its decision about the 12 persons accused of murder, terrorism, possession of arms, etc, under case number 1 for 1999. Three of them - Zainul-Abideen Al-Mihdhar - known as Abul-Hassan, Abdullah Al-Junaid, and Mohammed Saleh Bin Omar - Algeria national known as Abu Hurairah, were sentenced to death; Abdullah Ahmed Atef got a 20-year prison sentence, and the rest were acquitted.

The group, which is accused of forming the Aden and Abyan Islamic Army, is also accused of having links to an international terrorist network with the goal of sabotaging law and order in Yemen. On December 27th, 1998, they kidnapped 18 American, Australian and British tourists who were on their way from Hadhramaut to Aden. On the 28th, when the army of Yemen stormed the kidnappers to free the hostages, 4 tourists were killed - Peter Rowe, Margaret Whitehouse, and Ruth Williamson, from the UK, and Andrew Thirsk from Australia. In addition, 2 kidnappers and 3 soldiers were also killed.

During the court session, the accused repeated their call for striking out against American and Western interests in the country. "The only dialogue with the West is through the bullets. Only force will restore our dignity," yelled Abul-Hassan. He called for closing off the Red Sea to Western forces.

## The Judge Hands Down His Sentence



He also issued an ultimatum to foreigners in Yemen ordering them to pack and leave within 20 days. He made a call for the Aden and Abyan Islamic Army and mujahideen in Yemen to kill foreigners, stating that it was no crime to have an Islamic State. Abul-Hassan described the court as secularist, and its verdict as pre-determined. He said he had known what the verdict would be much earlier. He looked sad and said, "Thanks to God for the humiliation Muslims receive in a Muslim country".

It is worth mentioning that Abul-Hassan refused to appeal saying, "I don't want to appeal the sentence. We seek martyrdom, and now we can have it." Yet he threatened to carry out reprisals if the verdict were carried out.

His lawyer did appeal the verdict, and the appeal was officially lodged with the courts.

By: Ridhwan Al Saqqaf,  
Head of the Yemen Times Bureau, Aden

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This is an **OPINION** page.

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

# The Arduous Path of Marriage

**Dr. Azza Mohammed Ghanem**  
Professor, Educational Psychology

makes it necessary to rely on books, story telling and long-standing customs. Apparently, women's role in Yemen was a submissive cooperative one of passive acceptance. Women did not dare argue or rebel because divorce was so easy for the male. Women were never the bread winners and could not be self sufficient. There was much shame involved in returning as a divorcee to her parents, and she suffered just as much of an inferior role in her father's house due to male dominance by even her younger brothers. Her chances of getting married again were very slim. Moreover, women were kept busy into the daily life chores to such an extent that they did not have time to reflect upon their predicament. Illiteracy no doubt enhanced this disadvantageous stance. Large families and consecutive child birth would make a woman reticent to place her marriage in jeopardy, as she could not risk losing her children. Many of these factors have changed today, a greater degree of literacy and education, better female jobs and careers, fewer children and family planning, greater Islamic awareness of rights, more house help and time saving gadgets and greater participation of women in economic, social and political life. It is these things that are bound to undermine the submissive role and replace it by a more reflective, active role. But do we want this change of attitude when it could be hazardous in a society where the law does not give women any severance compensation? e.g. in some Islamic Arab states the break up of a marriage gives the female the residence and child custody. A woman who has spent

20 years could leave her husband's home in Yemen with nothing but a suitcase of clothes and her modest jewelry in addition to a dowry that ranges from \$100 to \$3000 at best. A house maid would have cost more in a matter of 3 years.

According to a Newsweek Article (April 26/99), the psychologist Gottman has set up a Family Research Laboratory in Seattle to study couple's problems and marital relationships. He sets out in his book seven principles for making marriages work and guiding them to happiness. Amongst the most harmful behaviors are criticism of the spouse, contempt, defensiveness and stonewalling. He recommends a deep understanding of the partner's psyche. He claims that gender's emotional discrepancies may contribute to marital problems but are not the main cause. He found that an unequal balance of power and non-sharing of decision making was deadly to a marriage. Of course he was talking about the USA where men and women share a lot. Yet the USA has one of the highest divorce rates in the industrialized world. Defusing anger between spouses is important, but anger may exist in happy marriages and not just unhappy marriages.

He found that the first 7 years of marriage were the most precarious, the next critical stage is between 16-20 years after the marriage. Often the couples do not seek help or counseling soon enough because of the stigma involved. The children suffer the most and often have emotional problems. Needless to say, the couple may display not only psychological and emotional problems but also physical ones as

their immune system is affected. It is my opinion that so many things could go wrong it is almost impossible to delineate the causes. However some factors seem to predominate. A clash of personalities, values, morals and goals in life can be a constant source of friction. A lot has to do with selfishness or even the spouse taking advantage of the other's selflessness. Many can tolerate differences initially due to the initial glow of love and affection. However, this can subside and disappear with time and thus make sacrifice and continuance appear irrational.

Financial and economic problems and hardships can contribute to failure especially if a change of standard is incurred due to incompatibility between the family's living styles, e.g. the girl is a spoilt rich daughter and suddenly is living in a poorer environment. Failure to talk things out, to discuss matters, to understand each other leads to an impasse e.g. the wife wants to talk about things even trivial matters but the husband is too busy watching TV or talking on the phone. Excessive preoccupation with friends of the same sex can cause friction and jealousy. The wife's excessive involvement with the children or house work or shopping can create a vacuum in the man's life. A man's obsession with his work

and duties to the exclusion of his family's interests can be a perpetual source of problems. Discrepancies in emotional and sexual needs can be detrimental, sexual satisfaction is essential for marital well being. Wives need to feel respected and admired for their abilities and not merely loved, but often the husband does not seem to see the significance of this, it is only the male ego that matters. Meddling members of either family can be disastrous, especially to an already unstable marriage. Problems of the children can affect the marriage, but even more so inability to have children. Lazy, careless, extravagant demanding wives can induce corruption in husbands.

Dishonesty, infidelity or violence can terminate a marriage abruptly even without prior problem. Drinking is often a cause of continuous problems in the home. Taking another wife can be the last straw to any emotional bond that exists and survival of the physical marriage can be merely an economic benefit for the sake of the children. e.g. a young girl explained to me that it was not at all a problem that she was marrying a married man as he would give her equal rights but a few months later, when her jealousy reached a dangerous peak, reality was another thing. Psychological problems can cause severance of a marriage, but a medical psychiatrist can help alleviate that. Irresponsible behavior can cause problems, the male is the provider and in charge of duties outside the home, and the female is in charge in the home. This was

the old pattern, but with changing Yemen styles the more educated females have very often become responsible for both duties at work and at home, thus falling under greater stress. One important problem in Yemeni society is qat, which causes husband/wife separation for at least 3 hours each afternoon after arrival from work. This leads to neglect of each other and the children, a definite source of estrangement. Family life on weekends has been eroded by Qat. Marriage is often looked upon as a partnership, not a friendship. How many husbands confide in their wives about their income, their problems, their dreams etc. as they would in a best friend. Most amazing is the fact that arranged marriages do not seem to fare any worse than personal choice marriages in Yemen. However, this is only speculation.

There are so many unanswered questions, and the topic is so fraught with ambiguities that it needs further research. In all this, we have not even touched the case of rural marriages with such a different setup. It would be very helpful if readers wrote to tell us briefly their view of the major marital difficulties and the best remedies.

**Please do write to us your:**

- 1- Nationality
- 2- Sex (Male/Female)
- 3- Social Status (Married/Divorced/Single)
- 4- Years of Marriage
- 5- Problems
- 6- Remedies

Today, much is being said openly about marriage that was hushed up previously. In all cultures, young people dream incessantly about their life partner, the sacred bonding, the genuine romance, the companionship and the children. They visualize the attraction, the niceties and the tangible privileges to the exclusion of all other issues, so that the reality of marriage hits them hard. The daily problems and difficulties of coexisting under the same roof in close proximity to strangers and living by a new set of rules comes as a shock. One such girl was actually thrown into a state of anorexia nervosa and would not even explain her problem, (a case of refusal to eat)

The issue is complicated further by the wide spread use of mass-media and exposure to other cultures with totally different backgrounds. Comparison is inevitable, dreams and fantasy - even when unrealistic - are defense mechanisms that are harmful in excessive quantities. How did our parents and grandparents manage to keep marriages from falling apart? It appears that there was less divorce and confrontation, although there is no scientific or statistical documentation to support this. As to the quality of marriages, the paucity of information

Continued from Page 1

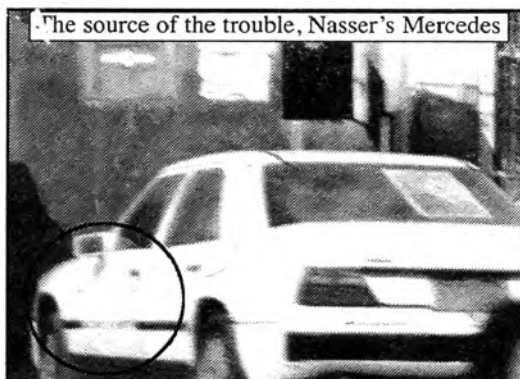
## Tribal Warfare Hashed vs Redaa Stand-off

State officials are visibly worried by the stand-off between the hashed and Redaa men in Hodeidah. A number of proposed solutions have been refused. The Redaa people have proposed a tribal solution but the hashed men refused it. They want a court verdict sentencing Nasser Mussa Ali to death. "We will not accept anything short of a death sentence," they keep repeating to me. They see the death of Mohammed Al-Hashedi as a cold blood murder.

The Redaa tribal grouping, already disgusted by the state's military action against the Redaa district village of Al-Saeed a few weeks earlier, are ready for violence. They have secured lots of arms and have mobilized a lot of young men for the purpose. "It is clear that Nasser was in self-defence. These Hashed men assaulted him for no reason, and he was simply fighting back. We are willing to negotiate adequate compensation in the form of blood money. But if the state executes Nasser, it will have to account to us," their sheikh said.

The city of Hodeidah is gripped with tension as the armed groups move in large numbers from one place to another. The state has been helpless in reducing the tension.

Most of the people are wondering who is going to be the judge in the case. Many judges have



The source of the trouble, Nasser's Mercedes

tried to stay clear from the case, because no matter what verdict they issue, they are bound to antagonize one of the two groups. One judge told me, "The authorities cannot protect me. I know of many judges who have been victimized by people unhappy with their verdicts."

The hashed people have refused to bury their dead. They insist to bury it only once the killer is executed. "We will them together," they say. Hodeidah is not a place to be at this time.

By: **Yusuf Al-Sharif**  
Yemen Times  
Hodeidah

## UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

UNDP



## VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is inviting applications for the following post in its Poverty Programme in Yemen.

**Procurement Co-ordinator/Public Relations — Sana'a - Sub-line 13.47**

**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. More over, 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 Description 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, 216 222,**  
**Fax: 400 384**  
**Sana'a, ROY**

Applications should be received **not later than 15 May 1999.**

Applications received after this date will not be considered. Only those candidates who strictly meet the requirements could apply, and acknowledgment will only be sent to short listed applicants meeting the requirements of the post.



Gianni Brizzi:

## "The more problems, the more committed I become to working in Yemen."

The World Bank is Yemen's most generous aid partner. Its loans are mainly IDA terms - about 30 to 40 years of repayment time, an initial 10-year grace period, and less than one percent interest.

Five years have passed since the establishment of a World Bank office in Yemen. Next week will witness yet another expansion of this office, which will move to larger premises.

In June 1998, Dr. Gianni Brizzi took over as the World Bank resident representative in Yemen from Dr. Osman Ahmed. Gianni, a native of Italy, 58, has a solid mathematical background from Milan's Politecnico. His work in Milan, Rome, Paris, and Washington has steadily moved him into the social sciences - mainly into development economics. He has been with the Bank for the last quarter of a century in various capacities gaining experience in over 20 nations in the Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Sahara Africa, Europe, Latin American and South Asia. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Chief Editor, had an extended chat with him covering different issues concerning relations between Yemen and the World Bank.

Excerpts.

**Q: You have been here almost a year. What is your initial assessment of your work in Yemen and how is your effort organized?**

**A:** The World Bank is the largest donor in Yemen. As a result, we have a certain level of work in the country.

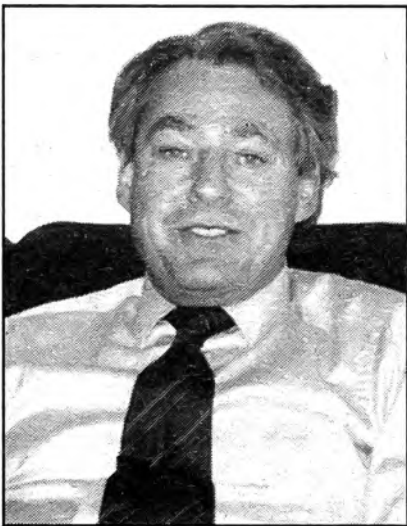
I would say, I am generally satisfied from the professional point of view. The work is challenging. As I was moving to Yemen, a major decision was taken in Washington to decentralize management of project implementation. Thus, I took over the job with a lot of enthusiasm and responsibility trying to organize the (World Bank) office (in Yemen) along sectoral lines. We have 11 professional staff - 6 international, and 5 local. In addition, we have the support staff such as secretaries, accountants, etc. One team deals with human development process, basically education and health. Another team deals with agriculture, a third with infrastructure such as transport, water supplies and sanitation. Finally, we have a new team which is led by my deputy handling public sector management and private sector development.

We carry out some policy dialogue on these areas in addition to sharing responsibility in implementing projects. It is very challenging, and sometimes it is very difficult because I have to admit that the implementing capacity of the country's administration is rather limited.

**Q: What is the average volume of annual World Bank disbursements, and their ratio to outstanding allocations?**

**A:** Last year, disbursements reached about \$ 124.5 million. In 1997, they were \$70.2 million. This is encouraging.

In terms of the disbursement ratio, it is now above 22%. In 1994 the rate was just 4%. This means that,



on average, we are implementing our projects over a period of less than 5 years.

This year, 1999, we look forward to a similar and possibly even better performance than 1998.

**Q: Enhanced disbursements are good, but does the money go to the target projects? Are there worries regarding mismanagement and corruption?**

**A:** Let us look at this from different angles.

First, corruption is a serious problem worldwide. Here in Yemen, we are working with the authorities to address it. We now have several projects to improve good governance.

Second, during the procurement process for the projects we finance or co-finance, we are trying to make sure that the procedures of the Bank are fully applied. These procedures in principle should limit corruption.

Corruption is the cancer of the world. It is part of human nature. What counts is to set up systems which control and limit this problem. We have tried to implement our systems here.

Whenever there is a contract that is tendered by the WB, it is open for international bidding. The process is transparent. Even in small projects, we require at least three competitive bidders.

If something happens in this process, something we are not aware of, it would be very difficult for us to follow. Obviously, whenever we find out that there is a case of collusion between government officials and a particular bidder, or if there are irregularities, we intervene.

**Q: What does that mean?**

**A:** If the irregularities are serious, we could re-launch the procurement.

**Q: Has that ever happened in Yemen?**

**A:** Not to my knowledge. We try to address such issues very early in the process.

**Q: Sometimes the problem is inefficiency or lack of proper planning of resource allocation on the government's side. For example, there are many schools, clinics, etc., that have been built by World Bank money but which are not operational because the government does not have the resources.**

**A:** That is a good point. Our considerations when agreeing to finance projects now include looking into the operational phase. We want to make sure that once we have completed the project, the assets which have been created are properly and fully used. We don't want to build a school, while the Ministry of Education doesn't have the means to equip the school, provide the teachers, etc.

This is an area, I must say, with which we have a major problem. In the past, we looked mainly at the implementation of the project. Now we are focusing on the operational and maintenance phases.

**Q: Let us talk about the reform program, which is four years old. There have been some improvements in monetary and budgetary aspects, partly due to a continued infusion of money from the World Bank and IMF. How do you assess the reform program so far?**

**A:** I would say so far we have been engaged in many aspects related to micro-economic and financial management. I think it was a successful start by all counts.

Of course, there are external disruptions, like the dollar crisis last year, and the fall in oil prices. The government took very courageous measures and managed to come out of a very difficult situation with a respectable efficiency. Let us not forget the budget deficit in 1994 was around 70%. This went down to 2% in 1997. Last year it rose again to around 6%.

Inflation and the pressure on the Riyal has been managed, though over the last few weeks we have witnessed renewed weakening.

Going to your question, I will say that in the area of the micro-economic management and the financial sector, the performance was adequate. I am not saying that the agenda is complete. There are a lot of things that still need to be done, but I think that these processes have proceeded very well and we can expect continuity.

We are in the second phase of reform. Obviously, you can have all the micro-economic fundamentals straight, but you can see that without private sector development and investment, the situation cannot progress much. Yemen needs to create job opportunities and obviously some serious work has not been taking place.

We didn't have sufficient progress in privatization, which is very important because it links the civil service reform and it also passes a very important message to the business community. Also, some major reforms in the management of the civil service still need to be done.

In short, there are a few important items on the agenda in the near future.

**Q: You have just completed the Country Strategy Program for Yemen. What is new in terms of emphasis and priorities?**

**A:** Yes, we have just completed our discussions and formulations of the Yemen Country Strategy for the next three years. The focus is on the requirements of the second phase of the reform program. This involves modernization of public administration, and of the judicial system, speeding up of the privatization process, and above all, the package that relates to government. We will gradually create an environment conducive to private investment.

**Q: You have just concluded discussions regarding the Country Strategy for Yemen. What are your redefined objectives?**

**A:** We have slightly re-defined our priorities with respect to working with Yemen. I can summarize our new approaches and priorities as follows:

1. We looked at the aspects of selectivity of our involvement. In the past, we were spread thinly in many sectors. We think it is very important to be more selective and to focus our resources in areas in which we have comparative advantage. There are other donors who can do better in some sectors. So we leave these to them.

2. We now look at issue of sustainability. We have touched on this before, when we mentioned the need to finance only projects which have the chance to be operational and to be maintained.

3. We highly value partnership building in implementing our projects. We are a large donor, but we want to link up with other donors, who will bring into play their expertise. In our drive for partnership, we are also looking at civil society organizations, especially NGOs.

4. We are pushing for a more efficient public sector administration. We want to create an environment which is conducive to private sector investment. This means the civil servant must see his/her role as supporting private investments rather than as a controller or impediment unless remunerated.

5. We are intensively working on the elimination of natural constraints to development. I am talking pri-

marily about water. Water resources are scarce in this country. So, we want an agenda in our assistance activities which will focus very much on the use of water

6. Finally, human resource development will continue to command a high priority in our agenda. Without educated and trained people, without a healthy population, you cannot have a productive economy or create a better future. In this area there is a very particular focus, which is gender. We want to see girls have an equal access to education. We will deal with maternal health, and a package of activities that seek a better future for Yemen.

**Q: In the package of priorities you described, there is a lot of talk about restructuring the civil service. The government has just completed a census of its bureaucracy. Ostensibly, they now know how many people are employed by the government, and doing what and where. What are the next steps?**

**A:** The census was the first step to enable the government to know how many people work for it, where, and in what capacities. It is also important to root out corruption in the form of double payments by the state to the same person.

The second phase is to set up a database to manage the personnel and relate that to needs. This leads to re-structuring of the educational system and the bureaucracy. We have to define human resources which are required in order to operate the system. There will be a need to re-qualify and re-train people, to shift personnel, and to re-structure the hierarchy of responsibilities to match the human resources. Obviously, working out the mismatches in this area - between existing resources and the required work is the task ahead of us. This is the challenging part of the reform process.

**Q: Will this lead to major lay-offs?**

**A:** I think that this is something that we will have to handle in a human way, and with full and proper compensation for those who have to leave the civil services. We still don't know the numbers. But whatever is done, it will be done taking into account the human dimension. The challenge is to find a balance which will lead to improved performance without hitting the potential victims too hard.

**Q: Is this process limited to the civilian sector or will it encompass the military/security personnel. You know that there are a lot of ghost names in the army and security forces?**

**A:** As an institution, we don't deal with military affairs, unless the World Bank and the other international organizations were asked to look at these aspects. But today, our efforts are limited to the civilian sector.

**Q: You speak about transparency, about opening up, etc. Yet, the World Bank stays clear of the media. Actually your important publications are for limited circulation only. How do you explain the contradiction?**

**A:** I think we are gradually opening up. Here in Sanaa, for example, we are going to establish on our premises a library which will be open to the public. Of course, that includes the media, and it would be a good information service. We will also have a few computers, printers, etc., which will provide more information.

At the same time, may I inform you that the World Bank Board has decided that as of July 1st, 1999, all the country strategy documents negotiated with governments will be available to the public.

**Q: What frustrates you in working in Yemen?**

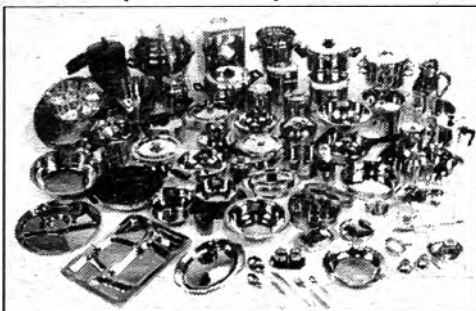
**A:** The notion of time. For me, any action follows another action in a logical sequence until you reach end result. Thus, time programming is fundamental in my mental attitude. Obviously in Yemen, things go in a different way. But, I am getting used to this, though occasionally it gives me some frustration.

**Q: You have had some difficulties since your arrival here. A bomb went off just across from your residence, forcing you to stay in a hotel for a while. There were other nuisances. Foreigners are leaving as you are settling-in. In fact, you brought your wife, as well. Why?**

**A:** The honest answer is 'I don't know!'. This is something I have yet to explain to myself. My experiences here have tested me. But Yemen is enchanting and unique place. The more I was tested, the more I love the country and its people.

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# To the 21st Century بوابة القرن الـ 21



A. Jumman  
5/99



## Labor Force in Sanaa Textiles, Weaving and Spinning Factory

Adopted from an MA thesis submitted by Ms. Suhair Ali Attif to the Center of Applied Research and Gender Studies.

### Background

Sanaa Textiles, Weaving and Spinning factory (TWSF) is one of the public sector production enterprises which is administered by the Ministry of Industry in the Republic of Yemen. The factory was constructed in Sanaa in 1964 over an area of about 1 square kilometer. The construction of the factory was based on an agreement between the government of the former Yemen Arab Republic and the government of the People's Republic of China. The factory, the first of its kind in the former YAR, has played a remarkable role in boosting the national economy.

In March of 1967, the factory began, in one working shift, to trade its products in the local market and therefore was to some extent able to meet the needs of the local consumption. The work in the factory expanded gradually until it finally reached its full capacity. The working shifts expanded to three when the factory's machines were running 24 hours a day.

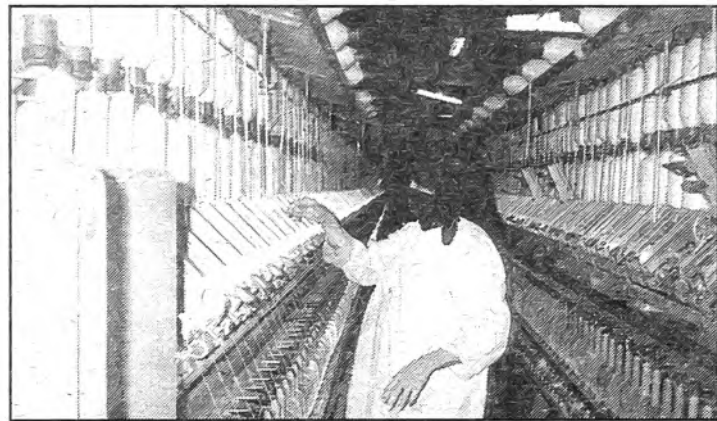
The main departments in the factory are cotton ginning, spinning, weaving, dyeing, printing and tailoring.

During the 70s the volume of the labor force rose to 1500 workers (male and female) in addition to 200 office workers.

It is worth mentioning here that

riorate and production rates have dwindled phenomenally. Most of the factory's hardware is out of order due to the absence of regular maintenance. Despite the apparent need for this factory, nothing has been done to bring the factory back to its feet.

Consequently, the situation of the factory's labor force has been seriously hurt. Wages are now very meager and incompatible with the health risks, especially in certain departments like the department of thick spinning where workers may potentially develop asthma. Moreover, health insurance is not guaran-



teed and most of the workers are not aware of their rights guaranteed by the official Law of Labor. The complete absence of female activities in the Worker's Syndicate is another negative factor. All of this has forced many female workers to quit working in the factory and to look for other less difficult and risky jobs.



TWSF was the first production enterprise which opens the door to women for equal job opportunities. This development echoes the advance social concept of the Yemeni Revolution. At the beginning the Yemeni women were trained under the skilled Chinese administration and step by step she was able to establish her presence as she contributed effectively in the production processes. At the end she was able, just like the men, to replace the Chinese employees.

### The factory's social and economic effects.

These effects can be summarized in the following:

Meeting the local market needs. Assimilating great numbers of workers.

Opening the doors for the Yemeni woman to work.

However, in recent years the situation in the factory began to dete-

### Survey

A survey conducted on the factory's female workers concluded with the following results:

The workers' ages vary between 16 years and 65 and the average age is 31 years.

Most of the female workers come from rural areas, either through birth or residence.

The level of education among the workers is very low while the degree of illiteracy is very high. Very few of them can read and write.

The female's are not represented in administration or senior posts. The engagement of the Yemeni

woman in out of house employment is not only brought about by economic factors, but also by the social and behavioral transformation in the modern Yemeni society.

Although the level of education among the female workers is low, working in a career has helped many of them to acquire practical life-related knowledge and experiences. It also helped her to achieve a certain level of financial independence.

### Recommendations.

- To encourage female scientific researches, especially those related to the improvement of the working woman's role.
- The expansion of woman vocational and educational programs, with more attention to illiteracy eradication programs.
- Creating the right atmosphere to achieve equal job opportunity between man and woman.

- Improving services in social and health care specially for women working in the industrial sector.

- To encourage female workers to join the relevant workers unions and vocational syndicates.

- Finding ways to increase wages for women working in the industrial enterprises so as to cope up with the recent standards of living.

- Paying more care and support for the existing institutions working for the development of family situations, such as:

- Center of Applied Researches and Female Studies.
- Woman's National Committee.
- The Yemeni Women Union.
- Department of Woman and Child.
- Department of Rural Families Development.
- Department of Productive Families Development.

By: Ahlam Al-Mutawakel,  
Yemen Times, Sanaa.

## A Maverick, But ... He Is a Presidential Candidate!

Ali Bin Ali Subaihi says he will compete in the presidential race against President Saleh.

Thus, Mr. Subaihi has become the first nominee to knock at the door of the presidency, which will be officially open in June.

Ridwan Al-Saqqaf of Yemen Times spoke to him. Excerpts:

**Q: Could you please tell us about yourself?**

A: My name is Ali Bin Ali Al-Subaihi. I was born in 1952 in Moodiyah, Toor Al-Baha district, Lahj (not to be confused with Moodiyah in Abyan). I received my elementary education in my birthplace in Moodiyah up to 1960. Then I moved to Al-Waht to pursue my studies at Al-Waht Preparatory School. That was during the Sultan's Regime.

In 1969, I joined the teaching profession and I was an active member in a number of cooperatives. Later, I went on a scholarship to Bulgaria to study Agriculture. On my return to Aden, I founded the Yemeni Farmers Union in what was then South Yemen.

I was appointed Secretary of Culture and Information and Chairman of the Inspection Committee. The military coup of 1978 which ended with the death of former President Salem Rubaya Ali disrupted the growth of my career, because I was

taught to be pro-Salem. So, I was fired and put in jail for 3 years. When I was released, I was appointed to a minor job that did not fit my educational abilities or previous work experience. Now, I work with the Public Corporation for Construction Material as the General Director of Distribution.

**Q: Your political affiliation?**

A: I belong to no political party.

**Q: Any honors?**

A: I am very proud that I was conferred a badge of honor as a freedom fighter against colonial presence in South Yemen.

**Q: How did the idea of your candidature to the presidency come up in the first place?**

A: I was encouraged by the country's constitution which gives the right to any eligible citizen to come up and announce his candidature.

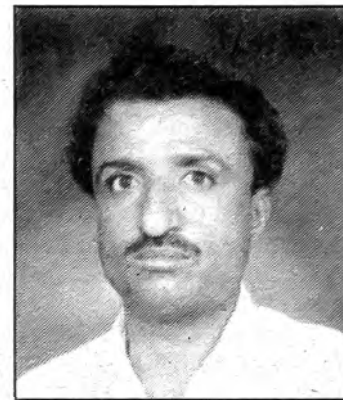
It is just as simple as that.

**Q: Have you ever contested in any elections before?**

A: Yes, I did. In 1993 and 1997, I competed in the parliamentary elections. It was a very tough contest. That is why I failed in both occasions.

**Q: How do you plan to finance your campaign?**

A: I did not work that out yet, but something will give!



**Q: Yes, but you realize it costs a lot of money to compete?**

A: I am an independent contestant. I hope to get support from political parties and prominent national and social personalities.

**Q: What do you think your chances of winning are?**

A: Well, first I will try to get the required nomination (from parliament). That should be easy and possible.

The rest is in the hand of the Yemeni people. The people Yemen will exercise their right in choosing the best candidate. To stand for the presidential elections is a personal decision.

**Q: Tell us about your campaign agenda?**

A: I will concentrate on health, education and agriculture. These are the essential issues.

**Q: Any last comments?**

A: I would like to say that competing in the elections is a great experience. Thanks to God and to President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who established the foundation of our democracy.



# المعرض الصحي الدولي

## للأدوية والمستلزمات الطبية

23<sup>rd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> May

### YEMEN MEDICAL EQUIPMENTS & PHARMACEUTICALS EXHIBITION

يُصاحِبُ المَعْرَضَ

مِنَ المَعْرِضَاتِ المَعْرِضَةِ المَعْرِضَةِ / النسخة الثامنة لطلاب المدارس

**During the Exhibition days:**  
The Eighth Scientific Dental Symposium  
Will be held at Al-Thawra Educational Hospital




مركز إكسبو صنعاء - شارع الستين - أمام منتزه فج عطان - تلفون: ٢٠٢٤٠٠ فاكس: ٢١٦٥٣٠  
Sana'a Expo Center - Tel.: 202400 Fax: 216530 E-Mail: apollo.exp@y.net.ye web Site: www.ynet.com/apollo



## Money Spent On Qat is NOT a Joke!

It seems that the talk of the hour is the "Qat Combating Society". Everyone seems interested in the topic, and of course with different points of view. But the most significant feature of this subject, unfortunately, is nobody seems interested in the real harm this evil tree caused. One colleague said that qat is a profitable tree if you compare it with others. When I tried to enlighten his thought and highlight the fact that it is a local profits, not foreign currency that enters your country from qat, he looked disinterested. The quantity of water qat requires is horrible, but also it seems no one is concerned with the lack of water Yemen suffers from. Everyone blames the government, for instance, one said that there are no substitutes for qat chewing gatherings, what shall I do? The other said it is quite awkward to sit with your family or friends and refuse to chew qat like the rest. The problem is that they ignore the fact that they like to chew qat, whether they have free time or not, they create their free time to sit and chew qat. My neighbor leaves her house every day at 3.30 p.m. to go to her friend's house with many other women for qat. Talking about her children requires many pages but in brief they are in a miserable condition, dirty and smelly clothes, playing in the street bare feet, swearing and throwing stones. There is no free time for a housewife, in fact no time at all, wouldn't it be more useful to bade here children or help them with their lessons rather than going out for 2-3 hours for qat? The substitute is spending money on clothing or her children rather than buying a bundle of these leaves. She does not believe so. When I asked her this question she looked bewildered and said you are right but it is a habit that I been in since I was married, and I cannot quit it. The most horrible thing I saw is when I visited her after she gave birth to her 6th child, she was a crowded long room with windows shut; qat and a Madaa'a. This is normal, but the abnormal thing was a 2-day-old baby sleeping next to his mother at the same room, when I tried to explain to her that this smoke is dangerous for the baby's lungs she laughed and said the baby will get used to it soon. How could a 2-day-old baby get used to this suffocating atmosphere?

One person said that "Even if I stop chewing, I am only an average citizen that nobody cares for, and the rest will continue chewing qat. There is no use, I am a logical person and I tell you real things." Well I am sorry my friend, you are wrong, all nations start individually, you can not fulfill your ambition unless you believe in its importance deep inside you. Each society consists of individuals, these individuals including you and me can make up the initiative, maybe a friend of yours will be convinced, and maybe not. But the important thing is that you keep on going. The difficult phase exists only at the beginning. As long as you are doing the right thing, people will feel embarrassed for their wrongs, and they will try to stop. Don't talk about substitutes such as cultural centers and other entertainment facilities, talk about what your country and family needs from you. It would be worth it.. Take a look at yourself while you chew qat, you look disgusting, not to mention the smell. Buy a pair of shoes for your child, because his old ones worn torn long ago. Sit with your daughter and befriend her, she needs you more than qat. A call to those who are called "Intellectuals": If you quit qat, average people will do the same. Plant your fertile lands with delicious fruits and vegetables; let your children benefit from their natural vitamins. You can export your products to neighboring countries. They already import everything. Before you talk about the substitute the government should provide, think deeply of things you can do. You will find many things. Let your mind wonder, think of the harmful affects of qat. Think of your wife, your children, your house, you can afford to buy a car if you save the money that goes daily for qat. In fact you can do many things. Foreigners have an unpleasant image of our country due to your habit. You can build your country, clean it, and show a high quality generation to the world. Remember, "the religion is Yemeni and the wisdom is Yemeni," but most probably the Prophet Mohammed made this statement before your nation discovered qat, or at least the people whom he addressed were not qat chewers.

By: Hind Shakir

## Defending Human Rights with a Brush!

People in Yemen are slowly learning their basic rights. There are now many campaigns that aim at increasing human rights awareness among Yemenis. Most of these efforts are government-sponsored, others are promoted by NGOs, and still many are driven by individuals with a commitment to democracy. Some people defend human rights through their writings, others volunteer their time to work in human rights organizations, etc. Today, there is a new means of expression - through art. One example of such modern artists is Jamal Abdullah Al-Shami. Jamal's themes have encompassed different aspects of human rights.

Ismail Al-Ghabiry of the Yemen Times talked to this extremely talented painter who has participated in many exhibitions throughout the Arab world, and who is the vice president and an active member of the Human Rights Activists Association. Excerpts:

**Q: What inspires you the most?**

**A:** Nature, the environment and scenery of open space and places are the things that drive me to paint.

**Q: Artistically, which school do you belong to?**

**A:** Well, when I started painting, I did not know anything about the different schools of Art. I simply applied my brush.

In one of the exhibitions I took part in, some professional painters taught me the differences. After seeing the varieties of styles and approaches, I realized that my paintings combined many different schools.

I still draw in many styles. I do

add some touches of my own to my paintings, to give them a personal feeling.

**Q: When did you start sketching? When was your take-off as a professional artist?**

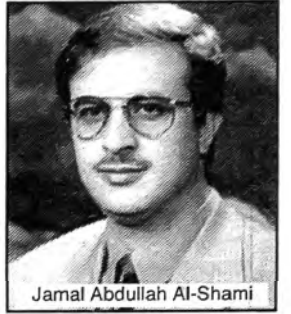
**A:** I started sketching during my school days. It was my favorite hobby. Later the hobby developed into a passion. The first time I was recognized as a professional artist was in Damascus in 1987. That was my first participation in an international exhibition.

**Q: How many paintings have you done?**

**A:** I have done many paintings and drawings. Some of these are sold to an appreciating public. I am satisfied with all my work.

**Q: In how many local and international exhibitions have you participated?**

**A:** I have organized four solo exhibitions in Damascus. I have participated in many international exhibitions, I participate in most local exhibitions. I also have competed in some of the international com-



Jamal Abdullah Al-Shami

petitions. I design postage stamps as well as logos.

**Q: Does the government support and encourage this kind of art?**

**A:** Painters and artists receive no support at all. In fact, the opposite is true. The Ministry of Culture had bought some of the paintings of famous Yemeni artists, but so far they have to receive payment for them. The sad fact is that our officials do not understand any thing about art, let alone appreciate it. They come to exhibitions out of formalities and to get their face on the TV camera. They nod and stare as if they have understood something. It is just a show, because they never make an effort to learn.

**Q: What are the paintings that you have an affection for?**

**A:** I don't paint unless I am convinced of the idea it represents. The theme and message have to be well formed in my mind. Many of my paintings are a reflection of our estranged life. I see our people and I draw on my own personal experience. One of the issues I now focus on is human rights. I will have an exhibition this month at the French Cultural Center on this theme. In closing, I would like to say that there are very few artists in our country today. These people are of a very sensitive nature and they have special needs. They need to be encouraged, and the best way to do that is by buying the product - paintings. This will allow them to continue with their creative output.



فاين كريم  
يغذي الشعر  
وينزل القشرة



تهانينا

تهنى

صحيفة الـ Yemen Times

الإستاد/ عبد الله سحر

بمناسبة إختياره رئيساً لتحرير

صحيفة الوحدة

راجين له النجاح

في التوفيق بين جموحه المستقل

مع متطلبات صحيفة رسمية

والله موفق

تهانينا

تهنى صحيفة الـ Yemen Times

الإستاد/

عبد العزيز سلطان المنسوب

بمناسبة إختياره رئيساً لتحرير

صحيفة الوحدة

راجين للصحيفة الزميلة

المزيد من التميز والتقدم

بالكلمة الحرة والجريئة

ورفع مكانة الصحافة اليمنية



# CATCH THEM YOUNG!

## Developing Young Yemeni Learners into Proficient Bilinguals

**Dr. Ramakanta Sahu,**  
Associate Professor,  
Department of English,  
Mahweel College of  
Education



Communication is one of the most complex of all human functions. Efficiency in handling the process of communication is the single most strategic factor that determines all human relations at the personal, regional, national, and international levels. Communication is not a unitary process, but rather is the result of a proper coordination among a number of factors as sensory, perceptual, cognitive, motor and linguistic functions. If an individual has access to the systems of one language only for discharging all the complex communicative tasks, he more often than not, suffers from a severe limitation, which is eased out if he has the advantage of knowing another language to lend support to him when the first language fails to stand him in good stead to adequately express his ideas in certain fields. As a matter of fact, there are certain areas or domains where the second language can perform the communicative functions more competently than

ter than one.

In Yemen, the presence of members of several language communities like Indians, Russians, French, Dutch, Germans, as well as English speaking communities all of whom play a vital role in the country's progress in strategic areas such as education, health, telecommunication, multinational business and investment, tourism, and the hospitality trade and so forth. There is an ardent need of an efficient link language, which can undeniably be English. The network of education in the fitness of things, produce young men and women who are proficient in at least two languages - Arabic and English - so as not to be handicapped by the lack of knowledge of an appropriate medium of communication while working in these fields.

As such, there is no denying the fact that it richly pays to be an

the first language. It would then seem clear that in matters of communication knowing two languages is decidedly bet-

efficient bilingual. The question, then that naturally crops up is: what constrains our young generation to become Arabic-English bilinguals? Why should they be hapless victims of a deplorable deficiency in one of the most basic prerequisites of being a world citizen, namely, communicative proficiency in English? What in other words, has so far thwarted all our effort in the direction of the Yemeni learners' acquisition of proficiency English, forcing them to be 'monolinguals'?

The obstacles could conceivably be one of the following:

- a) Yemeni children may have an inherent biological deficit that inhibits their acquisition of a foreign language
- b) The grammatical system of their mother tongue Arabic may be militating against and inhibiting their acquisition of another language system; or
- c) The situation could be the natural consequence of the shortcomings inherent in the language teaching scenario in Yemen.

Let us first consider the validity of the 'deficit' hypothesis. Leading psycholinguistic studies have given convincing and conclusive evidence that many people have in fact acquired 'thresh-

old level' competence in their mother tongue. Hence, the system of the mother tongue or is most likely to play a positive or supportive role in acquiring the system of the other tongue. As a matter of fact, when one has two language systems, the system of one enriches and is enriched by the other. So learning Arabic cannot be supposed to retard the process of learning English by Yemeni children. Rather it could potentially give further impetus to accelerate the pace of their learning English.

This brings us to the third possible aspect, which is that the bulk of the Yemeni learners' deficiency in English could be result of our failure to provide them i) the right kind of instrumental motivation to learn English ii) the right kind and amount of comprehensible input (Krashen) in the classroom as well as iii) an adequate exposure to English in the social setting. The following are some suggested measures to remedy the situation.

For most Yemeni learners, the first and only source of exposure to English is the classroom and the teacher is the sole role model for English use. The textbook is the only medium or rigger the use

of the language. In view of the strategic importance of the school and the classroom for building up the levels of learners' proficiency in English, we have to thoughtfully devise ways of enriching the school environment in such a manner as to provide a total 'immersion' experience for the learners as is done for the immigrant children in the USA, Canada and many other countries.

In order to achieve this we have to create a 'linguistic swimming pool' in the school, which augments the foreign language acquisition.

In classroom, in view of its paramount importance should be the primary target of an academic empowerment mission.

The battle of Waterloo is said to have been fought at Eton. The classroom as the microcosm of the universe of the child has to play the vital and multifaceted role of a springboard for language development. As such, the classroom ought to bristle with a number of fascinating wall posters with epigrammatic expressions such as 'Like the stream, the beginning of all great things in small'. While the attractive picture arrests children's attention, the antenna of their language processing mechanism unconsciously and involuntarily absorbs the language.

There should be a class library or a school library with stimulating storybooks and retold classic to foster in children pleasures of reading.

Children should be made familiar with simple conventions of 'phatic communion' (greetings) in English and be made to recite Rhymes, simple, short lyrics, short dialogues, etc. in the class regularly.

But for achieving all this, teachers own pronunciation and his/her awareness of stress, rhythm and intonation in English becomes an essential prerequisite.

The school should have a regular slot for organizing classroom discussion, debates and group dissension in English or simple, familiar themes to promote a healthy competitive foreign language use.

There should be a school magazine and a wall magazine embodying the creative pursuits of students. These for a would go a long way in encouraging and sustaining creative self expression among them there should be provision for the recognition of and reward for all such endeavors on the part of students.

The school authorities should make, through regulation if necessary, the use of English in school obligatory in all interpersonal communication among learners themselves and that between the learners vis-a-vis the teachers and the principal, etc.

Notices, circulars, timetables etc. meant for information of stu-

dents should be done in Arabic and English which would enable students to perceive the link between the content of the information and the two language codes expressing the specific content.

Students, especially of higher grades, should be encouraged to regularly listen to BBC broadcasts, particularly the English teaching programs since listening skill percolates easily and substantially helps develop other language skills. Cassettes accompanying texts, books, should be fully utilized in the classroom for providing vital aural input to learners which would eventually lead to the promotion of oral output.

More importantly, the electronic media should be suitably revamped to play a major and decisive role for promotion of English-Arabic bilingualism. The local radio station should embark upon a regular series of programs for school children where subject lessons, including English lessons. Can be delivered through interesting techniques of dramatization by competent and experienced teachers who are capable of properly articulating Arabic and English. The television should also join hands in this endeavor by producing and presenting lessons through a 'country wide classroom' network. The visual forum can fruitfully be utilized to produce and present short plays in English and panel discussion etc. on relevant themes.

For the professionals working organizations involving a lot of public contact, there should be crash courses to acquaint them with the idiom of conversational English.

Parents and conscious guardians can play a crucial role in encouraging the young learners use English in a variety of contexts and give a positive feedback to their words. Nothing succeeds like success. The first taste of success of being able to communicate in English would certainly produce a 'snow-ball' effect on the children and they would never look back.

The social set up can play a complementary role if road maps, traffic signals, sign boards, hoarding and various public awareness raising slogans are written in English as well as in Arabic. This would help create an appropriate English saturated environment, paving the way for promoting societal bilingualism. So let us enrich the FL learning environment in Yemen for young learners when their minds are highly receptive and they are bubbling with enthusiasm to try out new arenas and channels of communication. Let us catch them young to inculcate in them a healthy language sense from the early childhood so that the posterity, the architects of tomorrow, feels gratified for our taking timely steps towards building up their competencies in English alongside Arabic thereby making them efficient bilinguals. This can put them firmly on the highway of success for a highly fruitful and richly rewarding academic life and professional career. Let us remember together we can and we will.

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Yemen Times,

Thank you so much for editing and publishing my letter. I really appreciate it a lot. I wish you all the best and constant progress to our dear newspaper "Yemen Times". I have another article that reflects my viewpoints about Security in our schools.

**Ahmed Modhesh Thabet**  
Portland State University  
U.S.A  
amonasser@hotmail.com

Thank you for the compliment. Your article cannot be published in this section because it is too long. However, we are studying the possibility of publishing it as an article in another issue.

-The Editor

A Meaningful

Letter from a Teenager

I am a currently in the 10th grade in New York State. As a 16-year old, I have many concerns about my country Yemen. First of all, I am contacting you, hoping that you will help and publish my letter so that I could express my views about qat, and perhaps my letter will help in ending the inhumanity of chewing qat. My goal is to also help my brothers and sister in Yemen, who are currently living in a country being ruined by this evil plant, and to help them regain their life without it. It is a big problem in the people's social and economical life. Their health is at great risk. Recently, the city of Buffalos

N.Y. health center reached the conclusion that qat contains almost 35% damaging drug elements. I would like to know where are the great scholars of Yemen and what do they have to say about this, or are they just one of the many victims of qat? What in earth is the government doing about it? Who is responsible for the well-being of the country? Has Yemen sunk to its lowest level of productivity? Are we as Muslims going to help our Muslim families. I will leave you -as a Yemen Times reader- to think about this thoroughly. Perhaps, you can also send me e-mail telling me your views, and how we can fight qat together.

**Fawzi Ali Algahaim**  
YEMINI1234@aol.com

The Core of Democracy

The 27th of April 1993 witnessed the birth of a new democracy in Yemen. It was an event highly admired by the whole world. Being in its infancy, this democracy is still in danger, with a lot of problems surrounding it. Yet, the most harmful of these dangers is the misunderstanding that some people have of the true meaning of democracy. Some people in Yemen do not have the faintest idea of the meaning of being the member of a political party. They always have daggers drawn at anyone who does not see eye to eye with them. Their favorite motto is always "If you are not one of us,

you are our enemy." They went to the limit of sacrificing the public interests for the sake of the party's interests in a shameful way that shows mental illness. This is in fact the most severely damaging effect of partisanship.

According to the doctrine of these people, belonging to a party means following the party's line and strategy blindly, giving the leaders of their parties the chance to lead them by the nose. Thus, they are always ready to fight tooth and nail for their party's views even if these views are not convincing. Such people have a queer capacity of making a mountain out of a molehill for the sake of their parties' interests.

To all these people, we can say that to build a democratic nation, we must first understand the norms of democracy. Being a partisan does not mean silencing your own thoughts and adopting the wrong motto: "Our party is always right, the others are always wrong".

To cut a long story short, democracy means flexibility, not rigidity. It means individual freedom, not herd-instinct. And unlike what some Yemeni hard-line partisans think today, democracy is in fact a constructive method, not a destructive one. Will our politicians and people understand?

**By: Abdulrahman Al-Huthaifi,**  
Taiz University

Dear Publisher,

I hope you and the Yemen Times team are doing fine and are remaining strong. I know you from before as "A Newspaper of Principles". Keep it up as always. It is quite pleasant for me to see you like this. I also want to tell you that we get the message. Believe me, we are still buying and reading our beloved copy of the Yemen Times, and not the clown's copy, we mean the clone one.

All what we need is more freedom of speech, more human rights, and more fresh and clean air in this country. For that reason, we will keep standing beside the Yemen Times. Take care of yourselves. I wish you a good and happy life with more success in the times to come. Good luck in your mission, Yemen Times.

**Marwan Al-Haideri,**  
A Sincere Yemen Times Reader

Dear Editor,

Your article on issue 18 about the deterioration of the Yemeni rial is alarming and needs more elaboration. You described the problem without introducing ideas (suggestions!) to solve the problem. Can you do that in an upcoming issue? Thank you very much and best regards.

**Abdul Karim Alaag**  
Empirical Research & Women  
Studies Center  
Sana'a University



# University Students Send SOS

It is widely known that universities are the powerhouse of energy in any country. In other words, they are centers of illumination, progress and development. We cannot think of development in any domain of life without referring to its universities. This is because they are the places where research is performed, and minds are built up for the betterment of their societies. They feed the society to fill its needs in the fields of development and change.

An important part of the universities are the professors and teachers. These people are embraced with a halo of respect and reverence. People see them as something different in the society, since they are the minds thinking and producing people to promote their nations. Let me here look at ours.

Some university professors and teachers in our country really do honor their academic position and behave accordingly. They will never break academic regulations and norms, which in one way or another should be considered as something holy. But some are breaking all these norms and regulations. They favor some students and disfavor others in giving marks, which is a real crime against all the ethical norms of this profession. That is, when the relationship between the students and his students is based on friendship or what presents they give him/her, we can say the future of the university education is ominous, and heralds major damage. The society might turn a blind eye to such lowly behavior in schools but in universities it is very dangerous.

It is not only that, but some university teachers are not willing to listen to their students, they just come to the class and deliver their lectures and leave without giving the students a chance to participate, interact with them or ask them questions. And during the exam, if one adds something from his own knowledge, he is subjected to many punishments, including low marks. He/she has only to copy the instructor, and in this way they produce parrots rather than scholars.

What is more abominable is the double standards teachers use in dealing with male and female students. I am not against female students in this point. What I mean is that in the class there should be no difference between the sexes, both should be treated as students only and nothing more. Sex should not affect the way the female and male students are evaluated. It is a crime to evaluate the person on the basis of his/her sex. It is a very low conduct, isn't it?

Most of the targeted teachers in this regard are non-Yemenis. That mean that Yemenis are infallible. There are some who have behaves in this way. But teachers coming from abroad, mainly Arabs, are the focal point of criticism here. They exploit the freedom granted to their academic profession and

absence of university supervision. I am not against the freedom given to the university teaching staff. But the university administration should try to observe the academic process. There should be an evaluation for the merits and demerits of the teaching staff, particularly the foreign. This is because SOME of these teachers come to the country and start behaving in a way that doesn't serve the interest of the nation. They also start tempting female students to visit them at home and on this basis they evaluate their performance. They even start attacking the social and political structure of the society They complain about the low salaries they receive. They have forgotten that they receive their salary in dollars while Yemenis receive it in riyals.

A good number of students of Taiz university, as an example, have visited me in the office of the Yemen Times in Taiz several times, appealing to me to address their plight and allow them to reach the ears of the authorities and the public. Some of them told me that they do well in the exams, but never get what they deserve. Their crime is that they are males or don't flatter their teachers or don't give presents or whatever to please their teachers. Even some teachers are shocked by the behavior of some female students. Once, while I was talking with an Indian professor, he told me had was staggered by this behavior. He told me that a girl came up to him and immediately started flattering him, telling him that he is the most handsome and good-looking man in the world and such and such. This behavior was even sketched by some students in the university in their extra-curricular activities.

By and large, I should say that this has become one of the major problems our universities are plagued with today. Such procedures that are existing in our universities will jeopardize the future of the academic profession, and above all university education in general. This is because if the undeserving are placed in good place while the meritorious are thrown away or marginalized, it means that we help a lot to make the situation upside-down. To make it clear, these students who are given high grades on the basis of what kind of relationship they have with their professor, or who are given high grades on the basis of what kind of presents they give to their teachers, will one day become university professors. This would be a major disaster, wouldn't it? We should remember that honesty is a very important milestone for building human civilizations.

Are we all aware of this problem?  
I hope so!

Mohammed Hatem Al-Qadhi  
Taiz Office Editor, Yemen Times



## The State of the English Language in Yemen

I have a brother in Aden University, and one day I discovered that my brother does not know anything about English! He doesn't know a verb from an adverb, and can't tell the difference between the past and present tense.



Once in Aden University they gave him a small booklet or brochure about the history of the two world wars, First and Second. He was asked to give answers and summary of that in the coming exam in his final year in the university. At the moment he would graduate with no knowledge of English. So my

brother has asked my help, and I done what I could in this matter. I have discovered that my brother must go back to the first classes of English to the sections on grammar, to the parts of speech. One day I asked him, "Are you the only one weak in English in the university?": He said, I am the excellent one with this little English, the rest are the worst English speakers in the whole of Yemen, I think.

The question is how these student got reached to the university, and what kind of graduates will get? What is the value of the

Ministry of Education if our sons are speaking English so poorly? The Government says these generations are our future, what kind of future are they?

In the sixties, I have seen my friends in Lahaj school studying all their subjects in English, History, Geography, Maths etc. Also, in our lovely Aden Commercial Institute, we were took all of our subjects in English. This type of learning is like little drops of water and little grains of sand that together make the might ocean and the solid ground.

All government schools in those days were in English, and beginning to learn it in early primary school made it easier, and was to the benefit of our sons and daughters.

By:  
Abdulaziz Mohammed Saeed

## #3 of a series

## Career Women Dealing with the Public

Name : Baida'a  
Job Title : Doctor.

Women in Yemen are gaining a very wide influence in the society, and many of them face different obstacles during their duty. However, as a doctor I don't face any obstacles in my work. On the contrary, I am getting appreciation and help from my society and the people surrounding me.

Concerning my salary, me and my husband share in adopting our house expenses, part of which goes to the house rent and my daughter's nursemaid.

Its obvious that I face obstacles in my job and duties at home because I have a young daughter, but because of my love of my job, I could not do anything but sacrifice, which I hope to some day benefit from.

Finally, I have worked as a Doctor for the past ten years because I have no other options than this field.

Name: 'Ashfaq Hamood Noman  
Job Title: Teacher

I am very happy to be a teacher of a generation, but being a teacher I face many problems. It is my opinion that schools and teachers are getting very small allocations in Yemen. Frankly speaking, schools come at the bottom of every official agenda.

The obstacles that I face as a teacher in the class is the age of the small children who are too young to work. In addition to that, parents don't pay attention and follow their children's progress at home, which is a major obstacle, plus the insufficient number of schools, which leads to crowded classes and reduces the students' and teacher's capacity to concentrate.

My society appreciates and benefits from my participation as a teacher and from the successful generation I am helping to bring up.

Concerning my small salary, which does not fulfill any of my needs, I spend it on my home, helping my husband and covering some personal expenses.

During the period in which I have been working as a teacher I would like to thank God that I am able to manage between my job and house duties, it would not have happened if it was not for my husband's contribution and encouragement.

I have been working in the school for the past ten years and I will proceed with my job as long as I can.

Name : Ahlam Alsaiaid  
Job Title : Government Employee

Every one faces lots of things if he/she has just stepped out of the

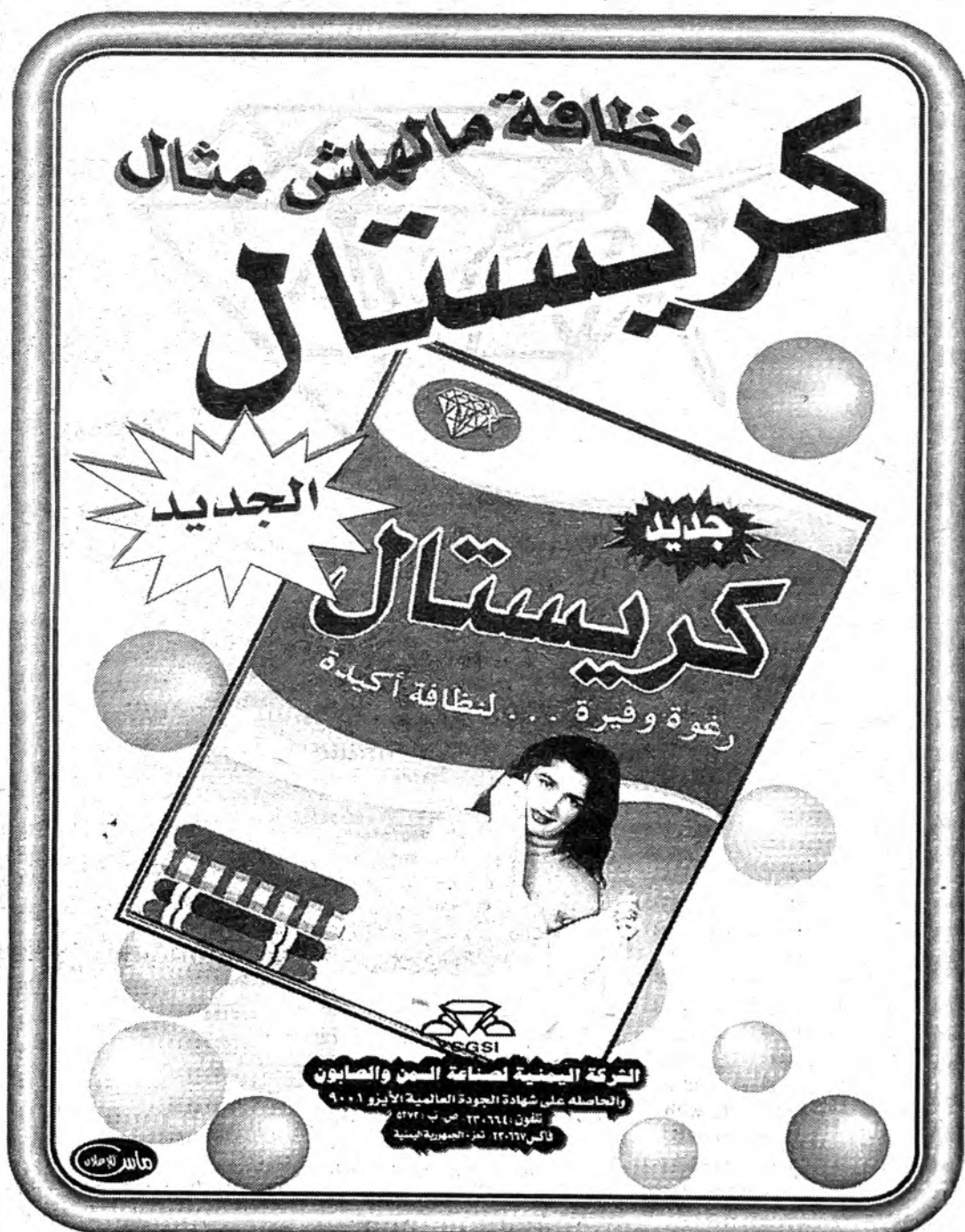
house. In my case, I face obstacles and at the same time amusement. Facing problems doesn't mean that we should stop working and sit at home. Working makes the woman realize her importance to the society. As they say that every problem has a solution, if woman think that by staying at home she can avoid many things, she is wrong. This is poor thinking, because woman have to go out and face what other women face and only by contact with other people can she can benefit and learn lots of things about life.

Employed women are highly appreciated in our society. I hope that our society can benefit from our participation and encourage us.

My salary is too small and barely covers the basic needs of life. I participate in helping my husband cover our house expenses like paying the rent and meeting my children's needs.

Being a housewife I face lots of obstacles. I have many responsibilities, in the house and at work, and I have to manage between both duties in a balanced way, which requires a great effort from me. Now, I am getting used to the practical life and that helps me in growing wiser too. I have been working for the ministry of health for the past ten years.

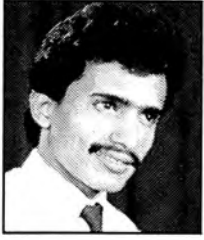
By : Ahlam Alkhwilani  
Yemen Times





## QAT: Pros & Cons

by: Asir Al-Soudani



While I was writing my column, "Ma yaktubuhu al mukhazzinoon" (What those who chew qat write) in al Raqib newspaper, I asked my colleague, Suhair,

whether the new issue of "Yemen Without Qat" was released or not. Then Mr. Taha Abdul Samad, the Editing Secretary intruded saying, "What would you think if we founded a society for the friends of qat?" He was referring to my qat-chewing habit. I replied sarcastically, "Personally I would back such a society, the same as I did the other one - Yemen without qat." Not only would I support it, I would be thrilled to promote the idea. I support most of the activities and issues that show the harm of qat.

Despite the abilities of Mr. Ahmed Jabir Afeef, the founder and president of Al-Afeef Cultural Institute, in promoting his society "Yemen Without Qat", I still wonder why he has not yet presented a short and medium-term strategies in fighting qat.

I consider myself a member of the "Yemen Without Qat" society. I do believe that the main factor in keeping Yemen behind is qat. But, at the same time, I chew qat everyday, and sometimes twice a day. A horrible habit that keeps me awake till the early morning hours. But these are productive hours as I write one or two articles at this time.

This column is also one of the products of these inspirational hours. My regular column, "Ma yaktubuhu al mukhazzinoon," adopted from an article entitled "Ma yaktubuhu al Na'imoon" (meaning what sleepers write) by Hussein Al Awadhi on "Al Mustakilah" newspaper.

Most of my readers might ignore the fact that I do fight against qat, but in my own way. Though my ways might not conform with those of the Yemen Without Qat society.

Qat is a national mania; a problem that will take time to eradicate. The government and the people should jointly accomplish this task. Qat is a dangerous virus which has strongly intruded into our lives.

When fighting qat, which should ask: What are the substitutes that chewers are offered?

For instance, are there cultural and youth centers, are there parks and public gardens with various activities, are there libraries, theaters, music centers artistic galleries, are there language centers, dance halls, sports arenas, etc. Are such facilities available throughout the whole country. Could the government, private sector, or whoever provide such facilities? Personally, I doubt it. The majority of qat merchants and farmers are senior officials in the state. Are they willing to go on a national campaign that will end up in reducing their income from such a profitable business?

Do the Yemen Without Qat Society volunteers know that a large number of people depend for their livelihood in producing, transporting, marketing qat. Do we have alternative businesses for these people?

These are some questions that I submit to the "Yemen Without Qat" Society. I hope that they have thought about them, and I hope they have answers!

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خالد الخولاني

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محمد سعد الدين، وعبدالإله سعد الدين معوضة

بمناسبة عقد القران.

ألف مبروك





## Yemen Press in a Week

Compiled by: Mohammed A. Abbas



**Al Shoura**  
Sanaa Weekly, Mouthpiece of  
Federation of the People's  
Forces,  
2/5/1999.

### A- Front Page Headlines

- 1- A mass rally in Mukala to commemorate victims of the peaceful march which was attacked in Mukala on the 27th of April, last year.
- 2- Oil companies warn of loose security in the Capital Sanaa. Some of these companies have reported to the Ministry of Interior cases of armed breaking into their headquarters in the Capital.
- 3- Under police protection, electricity service is denied to thousands of houses in the city of Aden.
- 4- Abul-Hamzah's son detracts his confessions and Abul-Hassan refuses to meet with the British investigators.
- 5- Yemeni and Lebanese businessmen explore investment opportunities.
- 6- The Iranian President is to visit three Arab countries.
- 7- Widespread epidemics among cattle, and fears of infection transmission to humans.
- 8- Governor of Lahj warns press reporters and describes them as bastards.
- 9- Hodeidah Sea Port is black-listed by the International Shipping companies.
- 10- Writers Union demands the release of Arra'ay Al-a'am newspaper.

### B- Issue's editorial

When the government embarked on implementing prices readjustment in 1995, the number of the unemployed in this country has risen from 207,417 in 1995 to 324,565 in 1998. This is of course what the official statistics say, but what the fact of the labor market says is that around 45% who had a chance to get a job then have now become jobless with no feasible opening on the horizon. These negative impacts could have been averted had the economic reform program taken into account the redressing of the organizational imbalances to ensure a real economic growth. This could have helped in controlling the extent of poverty arising from the economic reform programs. This year, the first of May has come while thousands of able workers are seen on the city's sidewalks waiting for someone to hire them. Everyday jobless newcomers join the old ones and stomach with them the agonies of need and destitution. The situation is further aggravated by the shrinking of the state's role in supplying the labor market with job opportunities despite the attempts to create short term

enterprises to employ some hundreds from among the low income groups.

To add insult to injury, while the government is determined to sell the public sector in the process of privatization, it completely overlooks the painful consequences that could deprive thousands of active laborers of their only source of livelihood.

One wonders what the State has left for the workers to be happy with on their big day?



**At-Tajamu'u,**  
Aden Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Yemeni Unionist Congregation Party,  
3/5/1999.

### A- Front-Page Headlines.

- 1- Given the government's insistence on controlling opposition activities, the march in Mukala is canceled and the opposition maintains the right to demonstrate.
- 2- Who runs the government's affairs in Hadrahmout?
- 3- Lahj's Deputy governor succeeds in concluding a tribal truce between the two tribes of Radama and A'al Dawood.

### B- Issue's Editorial

For a long time in the past an Egyptian newspaper used to publish a regular column under the title "They are Deceiving You". Perhaps many of us might still remember this column which was devoted to illuminating the ordinary people on wrong traditional ideas in medical treatment. We will come to account for this introduction later. For now let us begin with the following tale which, hopefully, will elucidate what we intend to say in this editorial:

The story says that a Christian priest tried to win the appeal of a Red Indian to become Christian, mainly Anglican Christian. The priest did what he could to persuade the Red Indian of the beauty of his religion and concluded his efforts by assuring the Red Indian that he will be in Heaven among the best members in the Anglican Church if he turns Christian. The Red Indian only replied that even in paradise, he would not like to be in any place with the English lest they turn it to a colony.

Now to get to the point. Some "priests" have succeeded in deceiving president Saleh when they persuaded him to come up with his initiative to solve the crisis in Kosovo. In the meantime, they have overlooked the fact that Yemen is a member in the Arab League and the Islamic Conference which in turn have been trying to find some role to solve this crisis. Such an individual initiative gives the impression that Yemen is sidestepping these Institutions to which Yemen is at least morally com-

mitted.

On another level, wouldn't it have been much better if those "priests" drew the attention of the president to the many burdensome local problems that have been crushing the country in recent years?

Does not charity usually begin at home?



**Al-haq,**  
Sanaa Weekly, Independent  
2/5/1999.

### A- Front-Page Headlines

- 1- The 21st century is to witness extensive political changes in the Middle East region.
- 2- A mass rally and ceremony in Hadrahmout to mark the first anniversary of victims of oppression in Mukala city.
- 3- Crisis continues between Al-Marakesha tribe and the third Armored Brigade stationed in Abyan.
- 4- In Hodeidah, a number of houses are exposed to collapse because of the recent digging in the city.
- 5- The People's General Congress (PGC) freezes membership of 7696 PGC members due to their dissatisfaction with corruption in the PGC.
- 6- In Sheikh Othman district, Aden, a young man was arrested for wearing female dresses.
- 7- A death of an Eritrean prisoner in Hodeidah's Central Jail due to inhuman practices by the jail's keepers.
- 8- In Shabwah, Security precautions fail to end tribal issues of reprisals.

### B- Issue's Editorial

The voice of Right has finally triumphed. Dubious official policies of Tafreekh or parties breeding received a blow from the hand of justice and the real paper of Al-Shoura resumed circulation for the third time. Desperate attempts to hinder the freedom of the press have failed pitifully, as they were completely shattered on the firm rock of honest Jurisprudence. All this has been accomplished by a court decision to release Al-Shoura newspaper which was issued in 24/4/1999 by the West Capital Secretariat Court. Congratulations to all of us for this fresh victory of a national independent paper and down to the enemies of Freedom, Democracy and Plurality. We raise our voices to their top, hailing the safe homecoming of the courageous Al-Shoura newspaper.



**Al-Wahdawi,**  
Sanaa Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Nasserite Unionist Party,  
4/5/1999

### A- Front-Page Headlines

1- US activity increases in Yemen amid fears of a comprehensive military accord between the two countries.

2- Smuggling of Diesel to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which the concerned authorities are doing nothing to stop.

3- In a press statement, the Secretary General of the Nasserite Unionist Party (NUP) says that the opposition will nominate their candidate for the presidential race in compliance with the Constitution.

4- The NUP and the Opposition Coordination Council condemn the Ministry of information for not broadcasting the outcome of the NUP's 9th conference.

5- In Hodeidah, a person from the tribe of Hashed was killed and another was injured. The incident started over a quarrel between persons who were strolling around the beach.

6- In a press statement, the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund warns of the rapid growth of population in Yemen.

### B- Issue's Editorial

When we acknowledged the narrow margin of freedom and democracy that was hesitatingly allowed by the totalitarian regime, but that did not mean our obedience to this margin as a permanent status-quo, nor did it suggest that we are doomed to such a future. What happened is that after we were able to defeat the mentality of partition, hope overwhelmed us that we would also be able to do away with the mentality of totalitarianism. To this end, we tried our best to persuade the others that democracy is by no means an evil thing, nor can it be in contradiction to religion. Although we feel somewhat content with what has been achieved so far, we are still intensifying our efforts to replace the existing ideas with new ones that aim at building a modern democratic state. Throughout this process, we were aware of the huge obstacles embedded in our own intellectual education and traditional manacles. Armed with faith and patience, however, we are strongly confident that, with time, our efforts will bear fruits. We know that the road to noble goals is crooked and hard and we of the NUP, have been paying for this conviction. Many times the NUP was the main target of negative practices which were only met with a great deal of patience and confidence in our mission. The latest incident in the chain of these offensive practices is the complete disregard by the ministry of information of the outcomes of the NUP's 9th convention for no apparent reason but the moody whims of the officials in this ministry. Although the Law of this country affirms that every one has the right to the service of the official media, the prevalent behavior of the ministry of information reflects the prejudice against, and the desire to ignore, the others.

That's why we have been repeatedly calling for the abolishing of this ministry if we want our limp

democracy to walk on the two healthy feet of Freedom and Equality.



**Attal,**  
Aden Weekly,  
Independent,  
4/5/1999

### Front-Page Headlines

- 1- Tribesmen from Hashed besiege Hodeidah's Central Jail following the killing of one of their relatives.
- 2- Serious violations on procedures of the security plan in Attaq city, Shebwah.
- 3- A British suspect disavows his confessions in Aden Court.
- 4- A sharp dispute between the local government and the Public land office in Hodeidah.
- 5- More than YR. 25 million is still unfound in the Yemen Bank for Reconstruction, Hodeidah branch.
- 6- In the Journalists' World Day, the United Nations praises the courage and commitment of journalists of the World.
- 7- The mosques in Hais town, Hodeidah governorate, are in miserable condition.
- 8- On Sanaa-Hodeidah highway, a truck carrying goods is exposed to machine-gun fire.
- 9- A booby trapped bomb is deactivated in Al-Habilin, Lahj.
- 10- Citizens in Say'oon Hadrahmout protest illegal practices by the Criminal Investigation Department.



**Al-I**  
Sanaa Weekly, Mouthpiece of the People's general Congress,  
3/5/1999.

### A- Front-Page Headlines.

- 1- The President renews the initiative to stop the bloodshed between Eritrea and Ethiopia.
- 2- During his reception of President Afforgi, President Saleh praised the Qatari-Lybian co-sponsored effort and expresses Yemen's welcome and support of the normalization of the Sudanese-Eritrean ties.
- 3- The Prime Minister hails cooperation existing between our country and the United Nations population Fund (UNPF).
- 4- US \$ 18 million is the amount of the UNPF assistance to finance 16 population-related projects in Yemen.
- 5- Arab participants in the Nasserite Party's 9th convention send a cable of gratitude to President Saleh expressing their satisfaction with democracy in Yemen.

### B- Issue's Editorial

The accord that was signed between Sudan and Eritrea to deter further repercussions between the two countries has highly delighted all Arabs from coast to coast. The accord, which was co-sponsored by Qatar and Lybia, has come in time to dissipate fears that the tense situation in the African Horn might lead the entire region into a vicious circle of conflict, a conflict which would create additional burdens to the region's people who are in dire need of their already scarce sources. Hence our delight as Arabs, for we believe that this agreement is a positive step in the right direction. Yemen's happiness for the signing of this accord, as was expressed by President Saleh, stems from Yemen's permanent philosophy which believes that peaceful communication is sure to end up with historical success.



**Al-Ayyam,**  
Aden 3- Weekly,  
Independent  
5/5/1999, 8/5/1999

### Front-Page Headlines

- 1- Abul-Hassan, Al-Junidi and Abu-Hurirah receive the death sentence for their involvement in the killing and kidnapping of foreign tourists last December.
- 2- Following the hearing of the verdict, Abul-Hassan told reporters that in case of execution the revenge would be extremely painful.
- 3- The trial of Bob Dinard, a French mercenary officer, who worked in Yemen and took part in a number of military coups.
- 4- The National Committee for the defense of the oppressed victims in Mukala reasserts its right to a peaceful demonstration and protest march.
- 5- In Aden, diesel runs out due to smuggling activities to neighboring countries.
- 5- The Yemeni Embassy in Kuwait will be re-opened soon.
- 6- Four Sudanese teachers are detained in Nessab district, Shebwah governorate, due to tribal armed clashes.
- 7- Britain, the European Union and Australia are opposing the death sentences passed on Abul-Hassan and his colleagues.
- 8- In Ibb, a local conference of the Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah) denounces the government's policies in Tafreekh (parties' breeding) and invites the government to review its policies.
- 9- The \$ Dollar rate rises to YR 158.
- 10- In Mahweet, the trial of the accused in torturing a young man to death is postponed.

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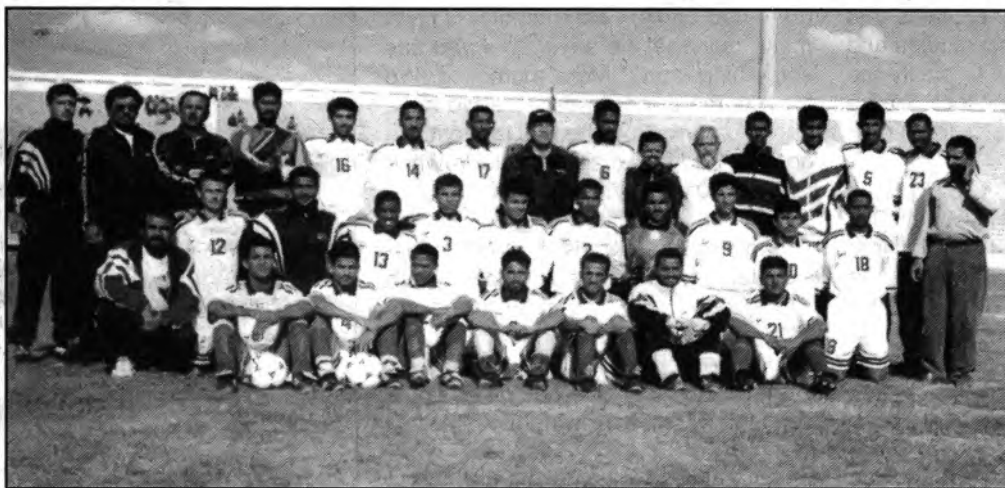
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# The Y.O. Football Team Defeats K.Y. team 2-1

In a friendly match during its ongoing training camp in Kuwait, Yemen's Olympic team defeated the Kuwaiti Youth team 2-to-1. This match, played on Thursday, May 6th, was the third game for the Yemeni team so far in their preparation for the qualifying tournament for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

The first half of the match ended with no score. All three goals came during the second half. Ashraf Ba-Madhey scored the first goal in the 57th minute. Just three minutes later, Aziz Zuraiki added a second goal for the Yemeni team. Unfortunately, the Yemeni team, the players relaxed and became careless near



the end, allowing the Kuwaiti footballer Saood Al-Ghanem the chance to score the only goal for the Kuwaiti Youth team in the 89th minute of the match.

The Yemeni team played a very strong match, and the appeared to



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### BANKS

Yemeni Banks:	
Central Bank	274310/1
Commercial Bank Sana'a	213662/6
Hodeidah	217040/3
Int'l Bank of Yemen	272920/3
National Bank of Yemen	275373
YBRD	271623/4

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Foreign Affairs	202544/7
Interior Affairs	252701/7
Immigration	250761/3
Tourism	271970/2
Inter-City Bus Co.	262111/3
TV Station	332001/2
Radio Station	282061

### INSURANCE COMPANIES:

Y. I. & ReInsurance Aden	273311
Marib Insurance Sana'a	206112/4
Aden:	255668
Taiz:	222162/3/4
Hodeidah:	217370/1
Yemen General Sana'a:	265191
Aden:	241171
Taiz:	221561
Hodeidah:	239184
United Ins. Co. Sana'a:	272890/2
Taiz:	215012
Hodeidah:	217292
Aman Insurance Sana'a:	214093
Hodeidah:	240354

### AIRLINES:

Air France	272895/6
Alitalia	273655
Austrian Airlines	272432
British Airways (Sana'a)	267929
British Airways (Aden)	241534
Cathay Pacific	272432
Egypt Air	275061
Ethiopian Airlines	272437
Gulf Air	265274/75
KLM	278747
Kuwait Airlines	272503/4
Lufthansa	213400
Royal Jordanian	275314/028
Russian Airlines	272540
Sabena	285865/925
Sudan Airways	279210
Syrian Airways	272543
Universal Travel (HO)	275028/9/30

## USD-YR Exchange Rate:

158.15

Sunday evening 9/5/99



EMBASSIES  
&  
Consulates

### Sana'a:

#### 1. Embassies:

Algeria	206350
Bulgaria	207924
China	275337/340
Cuba	417305
Czech Republic	247946
Djibouti	415985
Egypt	275948/9
Eritrea	209422
Ethiopia	208833
France	268888
Germany	413180/413174
Hungary	263586
India	243440/248343
Indonesia	414633
Iran	413552/4
Iraq	269571
Italy	269165
Japan	207356/208753
Jordan	413275/6/7
Korea (Rep)	245959/60
Kuwait	268879
Lebanon	203959/733
Libya	267636/4
Mauritania	264172
Morocco	247964
Netherlands	264080/78
Oman	208857/4
Pakistan	248813/4
Palestine	264236/66
Poland	413523/4
Qatar	269654/7
Rumania	205515
Russia (FR)	278719
Saudi Arabia	240429/30
Somalia	208864
Sudan	247885

### Syria

Tunisia	240458/9
Turkey	263476/241395
U. A. E.	248777/78
U. K.	264081/4
U. S. A.	238842/52
Vietnam	415985

#### 2. Honorary Consultants:

Austria	266725
Belgium	286965
Canada	208814
Denmark (Taiz)	04-215171/2
Finland	207018/20/21
Greece	272218
Spain	208745
Sweden	207595/470
Switzerland	414844

#### 3. International Organization

FAO	207331/607
UNDP	415505
UNHCR	201856
UNICEF	211400/1/2
WHO	252220

#### Aden Consulates:

China	233115
Germany	232161
Japan	232219/233282
Libya	233611
Oman	233433/460
Russia (FR)	232792/232625
Saudi Arabia	233009
Somalia	241101
U. K.	234117
Egypt	231270

Universal-Zubeiri	245888
Universal - Bonia	272861/2/3
Universal Aden	221146, 243475
Universal Taiz	225383/4
Universal Hodeidah	226980
Universal Mukalla	(05)354842/4/5
Bazara Travel	78093/270879
Ilias I. T. T.	273338/275554
Al-Nasim Travel	270750

#### YEMENI BRANCHES:

Abdul-Mughni	274698
Haddah	204538/550
Shauob	250833
Zubeiri	260834/5
Head Office	232381/9
Reservations	250800/1
Airport	250868/831

#### HOTELS:

Sana'a (01)	
Sheraton	237500/1/2
Taj Sheba	272372/3
Plaza Suites	209074/209903/205483
Hadda Hotel	415212/4/5

#### Aden (02)

Movenpick	232911
Gold Mohur	204392

#### Hodeidah (03)

Bristol	239158
Ambassador	231247/50
Al Burj	239336

#### Taiz (04)

The Plaza Hotel	220224/26
Mareb	210350
Yazan	217997

#### Mareb (063)

Bilquis Mareb	2666/2371
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#### Sadah (0751)

Al Mamon	2203/2459
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#### Mukalla (05)

Hadhramaut	2060
Al-Itimad	552493

#### COURIERS:

Aramex Sana'a:	240741
Aden:	255333
Taiz:	213489
Hodeidah:	218168
DHL	268551
American Express	272435/6
FedEX	2412604

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Aden:	255333
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be in very good shape. Their performance was much improved from their last match, and the training appears to be paying off. The course of the match was almost completely dominated by the Yemeni team, who had several opportunities to score, and frequently got the ball close to the Kuwaiti goalkeeper. Eyhab Al-Nuzili, who played as a left winger in this match, made most of the serious attacks, and fired on the opponent's goal more than once. More than anything else, this match showed that Mr. Fernandez, the Brazilian coach, has become better acquainted with his players skills and talents. Nasser Ghazi, who played in the second half, was a major problem for the Kuwaitis. His swift and accurate passes to Eyhab Nuzili repeatedly frustrated the Kuwaiti goalkeeper. However, Ashraf Ba-Madhi who also played in the second half started the scoring. In the 57th minute, Ghazi made a wonderful pass to Ba-Madhi, who received the ball and promptly sent it flying into the Kuwaiti goal. After the goal, the Yemeni team controlled the match and with the swift and intelligent passes it appeared that the game was one-sided. However, the Yemeni team still missed a number of opportunities to score. On the other hand, the K.Youth team was somewhat dazzled by the Yemenis' impressive performance, though they were able to take advantage of a moment of weakness in the Yemeni defense and scored their only goal just one minute before the end.

This match indicated that Fernandez, the coach, is almost ready to determine the final and distinct line-up of the Y.O. team. The players, now 27, will be reduced to 20 as the final form of the team who will take part in Sydney's qualifying finals. Names of the 20 players are expected to be announced today, Monday, May 10th.

Many sports analysts have noted a rapid improvement in the Yemeni team's performance following the three training matches in Kuwait. The new coaching, as well as the better facilities the team was able to use appear to be the main reasons for this remarkable improvement.

Let us hope that this rising morale and level of play will be kept up for the coming matches against Qatar and the UAE, which count towards qualifying for the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

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## The Second Round of the Excellent Division Football Starts on May 27th

After a meeting held last week between the deputy minister of Youth & Sport and a number of senior sports officials, and Ali Al-Ashwal, Head of the Football Union and some of the Union members, all parts agreed on the importance of proceeding with the Excellent Football League. The scheduled start of the second round is May 27th.

The Football Union is preparing to start the league on time, but they are expecting to delay the matches of some teams who have more than two members participating on the Olympic team, which is currently training in Kuwait. The decision to cancel the League, which was made by the Yemeni Football Union after its meeting with the teams representatives, frustrated the fans, as well as the teams which had done extremely well in the first half of the tournament. The main problem was the limited budget of the

league, even though it is one of the major sports activities held in Yemen and concerns many people in the country.

The Ministry of Youth & Sports said that it will try to solve the financial problems which some of the teams face, in order to assure the continuation of the football league for the 98-99 season. The season was stopped last December, with Ahli Sanaa on top at the time. They have been demanding the continuation of the league. Mr. Hussein Al-Ahjari, deputy administrator of Al-Ahli club in Sanaa, said that the decision of league to continue was very popular with the football fans. This decision also gave all the players their chance to improve their performances, and strengthen the Yemeni football team with new players from inside the country. These players wouldn't have a chance to develop without the league.

## Lawn Tennis Tournament

The tournament at the officers club organized by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), and sponsored by Yemenia was concluded on Wednesday. The final match was a tough one, with both finalists determined to win the trophy.

Sharif Abdulaziz won the first

set comfortably 6/1. In the second set, Gasas Anam regained his concentration and surprised Sharif by putting up a strong fight to win the second set 6/4. In the final set, Gasas became visibly exhausted and wasn't able to keep up with Sharif. He lost the final set 6/1.

Mr. Abdulaziz Fari gave the trophy and prizes to the winners.



# Life with My Teenager: TALKING TO RAY

The final examinations for high school graduation are less than a month away. They are taxing my relationship with my son - Ray, short for Raydan. Raydan was the man who founded the dynasty which established the Sabaeen kingdom, 2000 years ago. We may have asked for too much from our son, giving him that name. However, I have a feeling that Ray will surprise us by attaining greatness.

Over the last few weeks, I have been trying hard to explain how important the coming exams are for his university education and for his future career development.

The boy has a different set of priorities. "You know, you should trust me," he says. I back off, only to discover that none of the things we talked about have sunk into his brain.

My message is simple. "You have to focus on your studies for this short time," I have been repeating for the last several months. Just when I sometimes feel I have reached him, disappointment strikes.

My wife and I have raised three other kids before Ray. He is the last of the gang, and thank God for that. She thinks we are partly to blame because we both were overwhelmed by our own careers and paid less attention to Ray than we did with his elder siblings. That may be true, but we did give him the guidance he needed, and we provided him with better schooling opportunities.

The boy is hooked on cars. He thinks it is fine to spend hours reading car magazines, which he buys regularly. He has all kinds of car pictures hanging on his room walls. "Son, I know you like cars. But maybe you can, just for this

short time, focus on your studies," I often urge him. He gestures and moves as if trying to tell me to get off his case. He then calmly explains that he has enough time for his studies and for his "hobby". He wants to pacify me by talking slowly, making it look like he is explaining nuclear physics to an oyster. I yield.

Now that he has turned 17, he recently got himself a driving license. Not that one needs to wait that long to get it in Yemen. But I insisted that he wait, for my own peace of mind and sanity. In our multiple-car family, he often gets his hand on our small Suzuki, which the family now refers to as "Ray's" car, since he has managed to keep other users away from it. Besides, he has redecorated it to the extent that the more mature adults in the family no longer want to be seen driving it.

In my efforts to re-focus his attention, I have taken away the car keys from him. Among his valuables that were in the car was a collection of loud music. When I brought up the subject, I was told to wake up to the times, and appreciate the head bangers. They are, I believe, skinny people with long, and often dirty hair, who stomp around the stage, shrieking angrily to impress the public. Well, no matter what, I put away all that music. Ray can retrieve the whole thing in one month.

My main problem with him, outside of his strange priorities, is time organization. He does occasionally listen. Here is a case where we have made progress. We have had this conversation so many times. I kept on adding incentives to my arguments. Now, I can say we have succeeded in this area.

"Ray," I used to tell him, as he wakes up in slow motion with his drooping eyes asking for time-out, "I want you to go to bed earlier." He mumbles. I can't make out what he says. "Did you say something, son?" More mumbling. We have come a long way since we have had such talk. Now, he has made it. He goes to bed early, and is able to wake up by 6:00 in the morning.

Organizing his room is another impossible task. My wife keeps pleading with him to bring some order to the room. "You know, just remember to put the books here. The dirty clothes over there..." No dice! She has given up. "I don't think I will ever win this battle."

His teachers tell me something I already know. "He is a good boy." They mean, he doesn't break any laws. "He has never violated school regulations..." That is fine. But, I am not interested in the negative side. I want to know how productive and useful he is.

The next few weeks and months will bring more challenges in our relations. Parent-children relations have never been easy. But it is more turbulent with our teenage children.

My wife and I have tried to read a little more on the subject, but it has not been very helpful. Apparently parents have to find out the hard way - through direct experience. No self-help books will do the trick! I love this boy and I sincerely feel, he will have a successful life. But I can't help but worry! It is part of parenting!

**Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf,**  
Chief Editor, Yemen Times.

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