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# YEMEN TIMES

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## Government takes stock of religious schools

# Feeding young minds

By MOHAMMED AL-QADHI  
 YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In an effort to assess their impact in Yemeni culture, authorities have counted about 1,000 religious doctrinal schools operating in 11 governorates across the

country.

An official at the ministry of religious guidance and endowment said last week the campaign counted 941 schools. Most of them are out of authorities' control. Part of the total is distributed in: Hodiedah 303, Taiz 191, Aden 52, al-

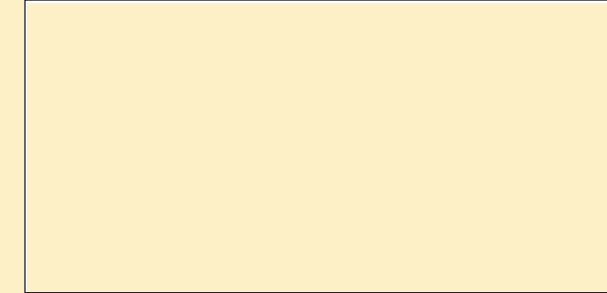
Jawf 11, Abyan 11, al-Baidah 34, Mukala 114, Seiyon 76, al-Mahweet 11, al-Dhal'e 32 and Marib 15.

These schools are teaching the Holy Quran and other principles of the Islamic religion, but with curriculum that fits the interest of the people running these

schools.

Some of these schools are financed by some charitable societies mainly Islah Social Welfare Society while others are funded by some businessmen or political parties.

*Continued on page 13*



WGHW... adapt more  
 Riia public school IRUPDWQ (Yemen Times photos by Jamil Abdul Karim)

## New publication closed, established one suspended

# More press under fire

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Ministry of Information has closed operations of a new magazine, "al-Neda," which printed its first issue Oct. 13, and, in a separate move, suspended al-Hurriye newspaper.

The ministry has withdrawn all the copies of the first issue of al-Neda from different bookshops for passing the legal period of issuance (6 months) by two days and has cancelled the license of al-Hurriye for an alleged change in the newspaper's logo.

The Editor-in-chief of "al-Neda," Sami Ghaleb said the closure reflects a major aggression, whereas there are some other magazines issued irregularly but are never closed down.

He confirmed that his magazine, which had not seen the light except for one week, did not violate any press laws or ethics. He also said that democracy gives him the right to print the magazine.

Observers and politicians confirmed that the newspaper exceeded its authorization period by two days, but this is not a standard measure applied on most Yemeni newspapers.

The magazine may have been targeted if some journalists wrote topics not

favoured by the government. The first issue of "al-Neda" had several topics such as: conflicts among wings within the ruling party (the General People's Congress), campaign collecting of international signatures for Mr. Alkhaiwani, greetings to Judge Muhammad Luqman by the Socialist writer Omer Muhammad al-Muqaleh, disaster of parties transfer in Yemen by the Journalist Nabeel al-Soufi, plus sports and cultural events and a number of other topics.

Meanwhile, Mr. Akram Abdulkareem Sabra, the Acting Editor of al-Hurriye newspaper also expressed outrage at the decision to withdraw his newspaper's license and instruct the printing press that prints his paper not to print it.

"I could not have imagined that because of a minor change in my newspaper's logos, we would have our newspaper suspended. This is simply out of proportions!" he told Yemen Times.

*Continued on page 13*

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*Media has a role, but ...*

## Poverty alleviation needs co-ordination

By HASSAN AL-ZAIDI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Participating in a session held Oct. 11 at the Ministry of Information, journalists discussed the role of media in the strategy of poverty alleviation.

They ascertained that media alone cannot contribute to poverty alleviation without carrying out processes in

real-life situations.

The symposium, attended by representatives from several media, featured numerous views and proposals on the program to be implemented by radio broadcasting, television, and other media for the purpose of alleviating poverty.

The participants affirmed that 95% of the poor are illiterate. This is why radio programs are preferred in sup-

porting the strategy.

The papers offered by some media institutions indicated that there are many difficulties and barriers which influence the awareness programs of the strategy.

They also mentioned that there is no coordination between the main unit responsible for executing and monitoring the strategy of poverty alleviation and the relevant media.

## Drug-traffickers caught

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The national security forces, at one of its checkpoints, arrested two men having in their possession 1,750 kg of hashish recently in al-Sawm, 85 km east of Say'un in Hadramout.

Sources say one of the men escaped from prison next day. He had been trafficking drugs in the past.

Security forces are still searching for him.

Drug trafficking in Yemen increased recently because drugs merchants exploit Yemen and use it as a transit station through which to pass to the neighboring countries.

The primary court held its hearing before the vacation of Ramadan to look into an issue of which three Yemenis and

two Pakistanis were blamed for drug trafficking.

One of them, Abdurahman, was married to a daughter of a high-ranking official working for the political security office. He is thought to have manipulated his family links to secure himself from interrogation and possible imprisonment.

## Taiz Governor meets Yemeni-French Medical Society

By Yemen Times Staff  
Taiz Bureau

Taiz Governor Judge Ahmed Abdullah al-Hijri met the Head of Yemeni-French Medical Society, Dr. IreHe Viillard and other accompanying French doctors, who, years ago, founded cardio, X-ray, and chest disease departments in the Republican General Hospital, Taiz.

During the meeting, the governor

expressed his thanks and appreciation for the efforts of Dr. Viillard in strengthening the Yemeni-French friendship and the supports that she renders to the Republican General Teaching Hospital in Taiz.

Meanwhile, she expressed her thanks for positive changes that took place in the equipping of the Republic Teaching Hospital in Taiz, under the supervision of Dr. Abdul Salam al-Dhorasy.

Further, she said she'll support the hospital with qualified technical cadres and help qualify them.

Dr. Viillard has also presented ultrasonic waves system for the X-ray section of the hospital.

Taiz citizens are showing appreciation to the French friends, in particular, to Dr. Viillard for the treatment and diagnosing by X-rays free of charge, and for the humanitarian deeds in fighting chest diseases.

## Saudi permits expatriates to invest abroad

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Saudi Arabia has agreed to allow Yemenis working in gold trade in that country to invest their money outside of Saudi Arabia.

Some of those Yemenis had earlier been exposed to harassment by Saudi authorities insisting they invest only in Saudi.

Expatriates coming from Riyadh to Yemen said the Saudi move was positive and that the Yemeni-Saudi rapprochement had contributed to the realization of the decision.

Thousand of Yemenis working in the field of gold trade in Saudi Arabia will benefit from it.

The expatriates, in statements to Yemen Times, described the decision of settlement as wise and enhancing Yemeni-Saudi relations.

Those have estimated the volume of Yemeni traders working in the field of gold as worth about YR 120 billion,

approximately 3 billion Saudi Riyals.

The Yemeni expatriates considered the Saudi acceptance of transferring the guarantee of Yemenis working in gold to other fields as a positive measure pouring in the two countries' interests.

The Saudi move comes after the influx of Yemeni expatriates' capitals into investment in Yemen in available opportunities for them especially in the field of investment in cement projects in Hadramout and Abyan.

The Saudi authorities had taken a decision of Saudizing shops of selling gold and silver, saying they would be providing about 20,000 to 30,000 jobs for Saudi citizens.

Sources of the Yemeni community in Saudi Arabia have expected that Yemeni owners of funds would draw their deposited money and assets to invest them in the Emirates, especially in Dubai where they have old and strong commercial relations.

## Ramadan free clinic inaugurated

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF  
ADEN BUREAU

Ramadan free clinic was inaugurated last Wednesday evening by Al-Falah Society, Oct 10 in Da'ar Sa'ad, Aden.

The clinic will provide medical services for citizens in several specializations. The inauguration took place in the presence of Abdolkareem Shayef, Secretary General of the local council in Aden, Dr. Abdulkareem Yahya, Rector of Aden University, Ayyob Abubakr, General Director of the Office of Social Affairs in the Governorate, the General Director of

Da'ar Sa'ad district and a number of officials and a host of locals.

Mr. Shayef delivered a speech in the inauguration ceremony in which he commended this valuable work and pointed out that the enhancement of such charitable work calls for cooperation and solidarity to bring benefit for all. Citizens throughout the province of Aden are due to reap the fruit of such achievement. He also stated that the Governorate shows readiness and willing to offer every kind of support for any charitable work that contributes to serving and developing the society.

On his part, Dr. Abdulkareem Ras'e diagnosed a number of children who

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- Yes, change or close them
- No, leave them alone

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- No, I think they will reach an agreement **22%**

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## ICSC workers hold strike

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

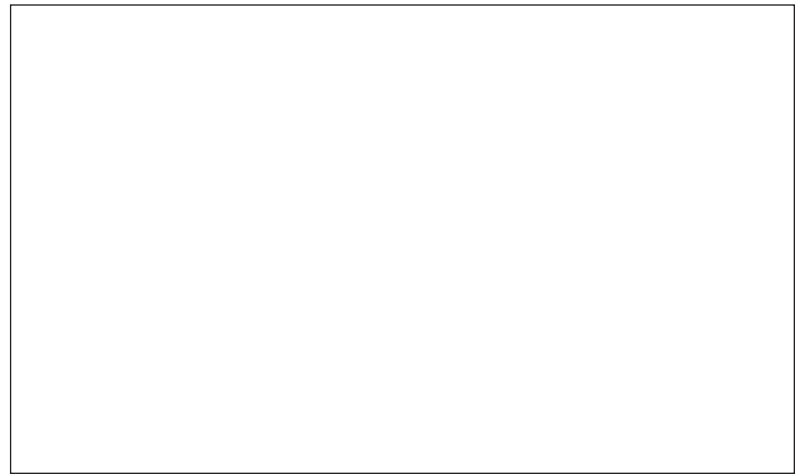
Some 15 workers, the majority of whom are Somalis, held a strike last Wednesday at the Iranian Company for Sewage Construction (ICSC) in the capital Sana'a in a protest for not getting their wages.

One of the workers confirmed that the company financial accountant was not available for two weeks in order not to pay them what they deserve. He further claimed that he possesses the list of their wages but being Somalis, the company seizes it as an opportunity to deny them their rights.

The workers prevented the company accountant, who was escorted by personal guard, from leaving the building of the company unless he answers their claims.

Later on the manager of the company intervened in the issue and settled the quarrel down.

This company has only been working



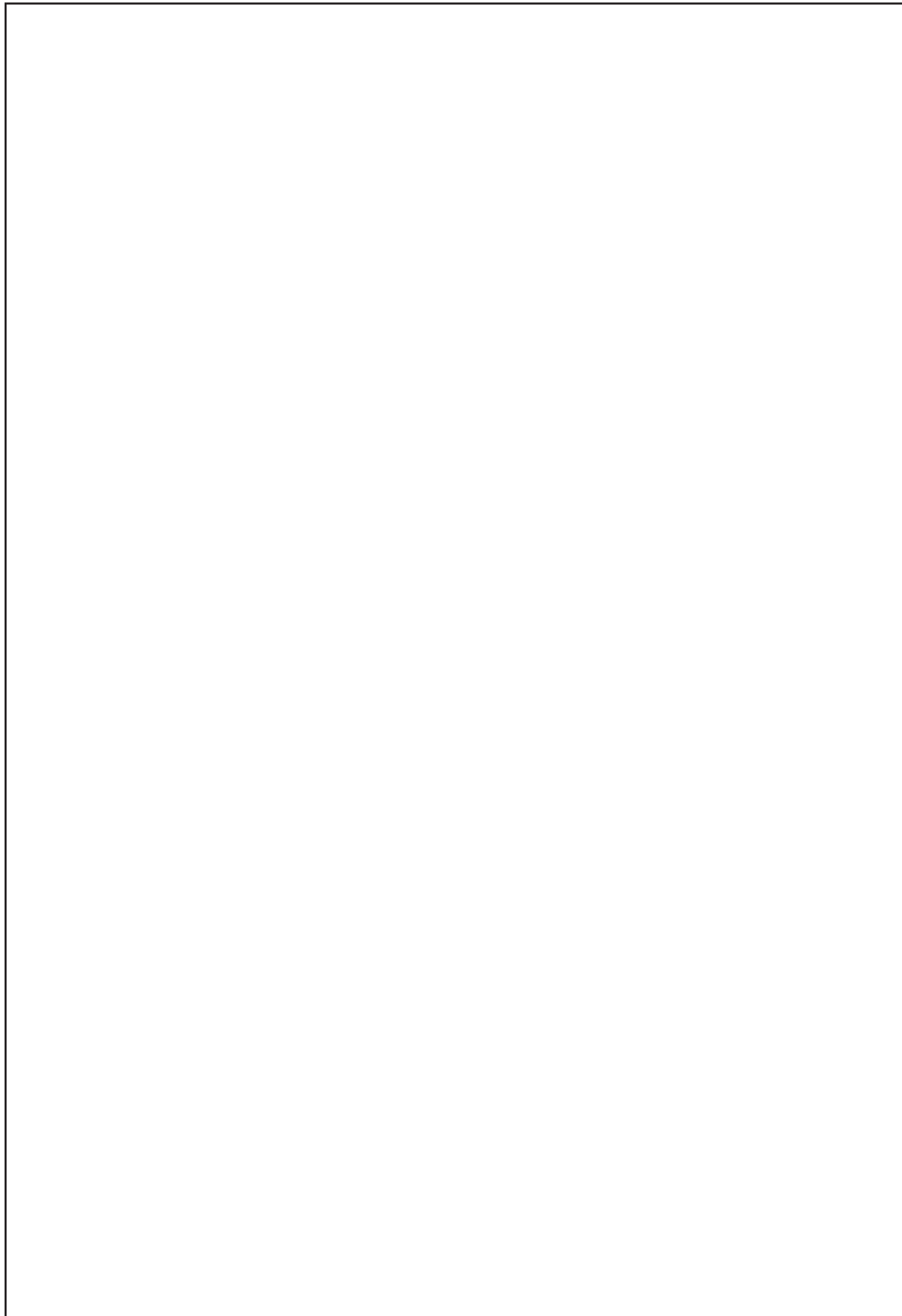
Workers gathering at the gate of the company

for a short time in Yemen in the field of sewage.

Another worker also ascertained that the company gave them some envelopes

in an attempt to persuade them that such envelopes contain all of their wages.

They were shocked to find that certain sums of their wages were deducted.



## Bank manual in Arabic and English

By YASER AL-MAYASSI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

To promote the banking and insurance sector, "The Yemeni Banking Manual" has been issued recently.

This distinctive manual contains important information about the banking and insurance sector in the country.

It covers most of the laws, terms and studies associated with the banking sector in both Arabic and English.

The manual will help develop banking and insurance activities in Yemen. The new issuance, to which all the Yemeni banks and insurance companies subscribe, comprises 184 color pages. It is brought out in the Gulf countries by being copied in a CD.

The issuance of the manual is a result of the advertising efforts by Al-Nukhba for Public Relations and Advertisements. This Nukhba also prepared the Yemeni Advertising File in the Arab Tourist Manual, which was sponsored by the Arab League, in addition to the a Training & Qualification Manual.

The banking manual was also distributed to Yemen Times subscribers

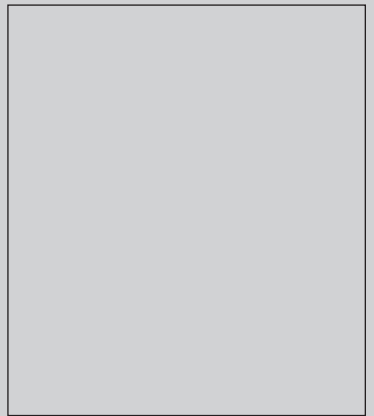


# Interview with director Waleed Muhammed El-Bashir Save the Children (Sweden) has active role in Yemen

BY ISMAIL AL-GHABRI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

**S**ave the Children Sweden fight for children's rights and influence public opinion and support children at risk in Sweden and all over the world. It is guided by the fundamental values stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Universal Convention on Child Rights which is founded on the conviction that all children and adults are equal. Children have special rights; everyone has a responsibility to respect and promote rights of the child, but the state has particular obligations.

To talk about the humanitarian aids and programs conducted by the organization in Yemen, our col-



Waleed El-Bashir

league Ismail Al-Ghabri from the Yemen Times met with Waleed Muhammed El-Bashir, director of Save the Children Sweden in Yemen.

### Historical background

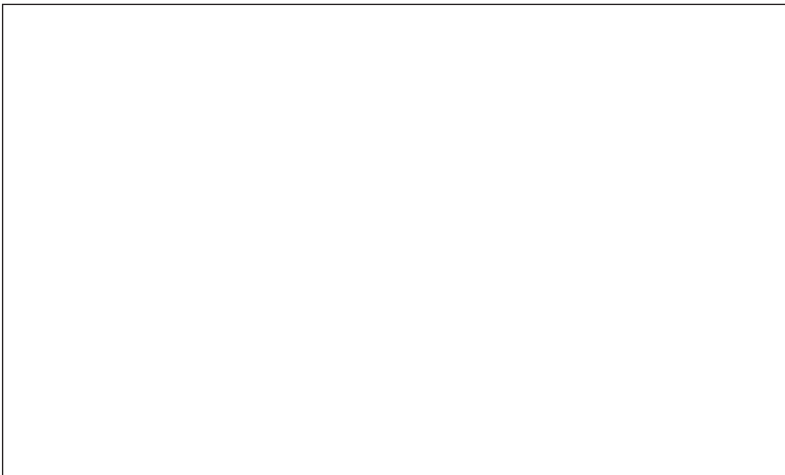
Save the Children Sweden has been active in the Arab World since 1963 when it opened its first office in Yemen. At that time, its work focused on service provisions and capacity building that addressed child development, health and survival. Its outlook into the country programs has since evolved into more developmental and child right perspectives.

The program in Yemen now spans several projects at local, national levels, tackling issues related to racist discrimination, child protection, education, child rights advocacy, child participation and more.

**Q: What are the goals of the organization?**

**A:** We work for the promotion and realization of children's rights in gen-

eral. As for protection, we work for the protection of children against discrimination, against abuse and



Some of the benefitting children.

exploitation and against violence.

**Q: How do you assess the work of your organization in Yemen after 41 years?**

**A:** The priorities of work in Yemen changes according to the situation and evolving needs and also as per the priority of interventions set by the head office in Stockholm. SCS started with pure health activities running hospitals with Swedish staff at the beginning. Now we more support local organizations and Government departments to so they have the capacity themselves to run the programs. The focus is now on children's rights. In general, we feel satisfied with our contribution but the real evaluation should come from the local community including the children themselves and also from the partner organizations and government authorities.

**Q: What projects have you**

**accomplished in Yemen?**

**A:** The organization now implements projects focusing on:

- Inclusion of children with disability and other marginalized groups in normal education.
- Juvenile justice
- Monitoring and reporting on children's rights
- Support to the Somali Refugee Children

**Q: What are your plans for the future?**

**A:** We will continue supporting inclusion of marginalized children in normal education, we will increasingly address violence against children, support the capacity building of our partners, promote the participation of girls and boys in all activities and support their own organizations and keep supporting the implementation of the UN Convention on The Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

**Q: What is the objective of the organization in humanitarian work?**

**A:** Our vision is a world where all children's rights have been realised. Save the Children works for a world:

- \* which respects and values each child.
- \* where all children participate and have influence.
- \* where all children have hope and opportunity.

**Q: How do you coordinate with other concerned authorities in Yemen?**

**A:** We work very closely with the Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood, Ministries of Education, Human rights, Judiciary, Social

Affairs, Labour and the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. At the same time we also coordinate with UNICEF and UNHCR and implement joint activities. The Social Fund for Development is a new influential actor and we also work together. So far, there is a reasonable level of coordination but we always seek more as it increases impact and reduce time, effort and maximize utilization of resources.

**Q: What is your role in the combat of child labour?**

**A:** The organization lobbied and

advocated for the UNCRC optional protocols on child soldiers and child labour. We work against the worst form of child labour and advocate against children's economical exploitation and social. Save the Children Sweden was the first to write about child labour in Yemen and other countries. Now we are discussing with the committee set at the Ministry of Labour to combat child labour.

**Q: Do you have any last comment?**

**A:** I appreciate the role that the Yemen Times is taking in shedding light on the activities of humanitarian organizations in Yemen.

## Future of NGOs in Yemen

# More NGO accountability needed

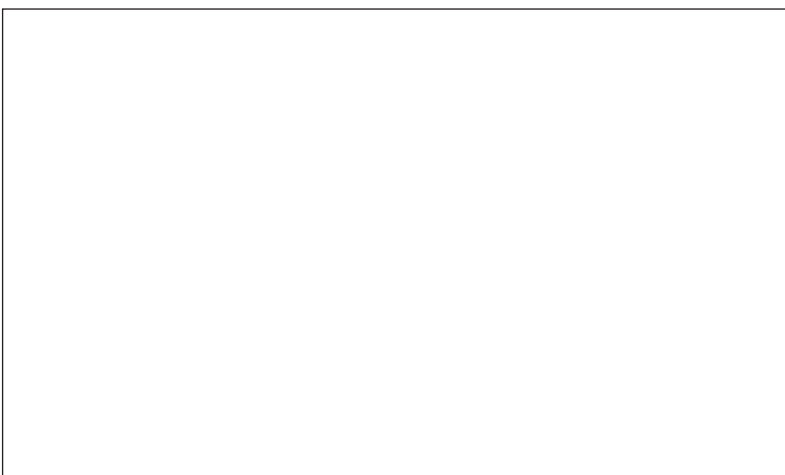
BY MOHAMMAD BINSALLAM  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

**A** recent two-day symposium dealing with NGOs in Yemen continued to send a signal that changes are in store in how their work will be monitored in the future.

The Oct. 18 and 19 symposium was held by the Civil Community Forum (CCF).

A number of researchers and academics reviewed papers relating to updating the legal relationship of the private societies and institutions; and establishing, promoting, and managing them as well as the financial resources of such societies and institutions.

The positive and negative points concerning the relation of these societies and institutions with the government system were discussed along with the sanctions stipulated by the government. The participants also reviewed the rights and duties of the NGOs.



Symposium participants.

From the government side, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Labor, Ali Saleh Abdullah explained the current situation of the NGOs, the problems and the negative aspects of these organizations. He also talked about the factors having influence on the law and by-laws, which organize their work, in addition to the standards and monitor-

ing practiced by the ministry.

He said: "the ministry neither practices unacceptable monitoring nor wants to act like the role of a policeman upon the non-government organizations. The concept of monitoring means to observe what is going on in these organizations but not to intervene in their domestic affairs. The monitor-

ing on such organizations in the base of a security concept is illegal and unwarranted."

The Deputy Minister stated that there are 4,576 non-governmental and cooperative organizations registered by the Ministry till the middle of 2004 compared to 4,105 organizations in 2003. Some 2,941 of them work under the NGOs law, 37 of which are qualitative unions, 1,964 charitable societies, 69 charitable institutions, 459 social societies, while 54 societies are cultural, 48 scientific, 19 friendship societies, 5 brotherhood ones, 26 professional syndicates, 220 clubs, and 8 forums.

Dr. Mohammad Ahmad Al-Mekhlafi (who is also an advocate) reviewed sanctions as stated by the NGOs law. He said: "we discovered that the NGOs law resorted to fabricating other tools of dominance over the functions of the NGOs as well as to oblige them to express loyalty to the government so that their agents will not be subjected to criminal observance. We find that some of the statements of the law do not only violate the rules of the Yemeni constitution, but also the criminal legislation."

In his paper, Dr. Al-Mekhlafi further advocated "the provision of guarantees to enable citizens to pursue their rights in establishing the NGOs and to allow them to play an important role in the development process, and constructing the republican regime and the civil community.

"These organizations have to be considered as a partner of the government in shouldering the responsibility towards the society as well as conducting their activities completely independently, as a partner able to incorporate the capabilities of the community and form one of the contributors to development."

His paper added that NGOs should participate in the political, social and cultural life, and defend their rights so as to reap the utmost benefit from democracy- the just share of citizens in wealth and authority, and putting an

## Yemen celebrates UN Day

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Under the auspices of Prime Minister Abdul-Qadir Bajammal, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office organized on Sunday October 24th a reception ceremony at the Police Officers Club, in Sana'a.

It was attended by a group of government officials, politicians, and heads of diplomatic missions to Yemen as well as a number of press operators, intellectuals, and community leaders.

In her speech on the occasion, Mrs. Flavia Pansieri, Resident Coordinator of the UN, welcomed all attendees especially Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Ahmed Mohammed Sufan as well as ministers, vice-ministers and members of Parliament and Shura Council.

She highlighted the contributions of the UN to Yemen's development process including health, education, democratic governance, humanitarian, media, and poverty reduction.

Yet she said that "efforts will be

needed to see continued progress being made in the areas of primary education and child mortality, as well as increased openness for participation in the country's political and development process, true freedom of opinion and of the press and fair access for all to services."

This year's UN Day has come on October 24 marking the 59th anniversary of establishing the UN. Yemen, along with other countries, takes part in this festival to stress their commitment to their pledges at the Millennium Summit, and their belief in the principles of human rights and dignity.

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# Reflections on an environmental study trip

## Yemen needs to focus on sustainability

BY STEFAN OUMA  
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Between September 14th and October 12th a group of German geography students (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg) visited the Republic of Yemen under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Horst Kopp for a study trip.

Apart from natural, historic and socio-cultural facts, we dealt with a number of items and problems concerning the development of the country such as urban and rural development, agricultural and socio-economic aspects (e.g. poverty, tourism etc.) and the

development and use of infrastructure (roads, electricity and water supply).

One term that must be inevitably linked to all of these sectors is the aspect of sustainability, which is a crucial necessity for a long-term and prosperous development of a country.

The term, originally being used in forestry, implies that people must treat their natural resources in a way that future generations can still benefit from those. Unfortunately this term is unknown to the great majority of Yemeni people.

There are a lot of problems in the country linked to this particular item. One, for example is the scarcity of water in many parts of Yemen that has

increased through the use of motorised pumps, overuse and inefficient irrigation techniques and that has already reached a dangerous level in some regions as we could witness in Hadhramout or the basin of Sana'a.

However, one of the most striking sustainability projects the group witnessed was at Jebel Bura' Protected Area. This mountainous forest is the last of its kind in whole Yemen.

Whereas in other parts of the country, tree vegetation has been hurt due to intense cultivation and consumption, Jebel Bura has been preserved as a home to around 50 tree species – some of them endemic – and a diverse fauna including baboons, hyenas, varans and even leopards.

The shocking fact is that a road is being built through this officially protected area, a road not necessarily needed, neither among tourist nor among residents living up in the mountains since another road is leading to those villages. Especially for tourists this is absolutely unattractive since the ultimate experience for people keen on

Yemen would be to enter this natural forest on foot.

The effects of the road construction already are or will be devastating. Vegetation has been destroyed and water has been polluted by traces of dynamite that was used to cut off the rocks. Noise has expelled the animals.

The future effects could even be more devastating. The road may attract traffic, people collecting wood and vendors, which results in an immense garbage production like elsewhere in Yemen. In the long term the forest may not survive or at least lose a significant part of its original shape and biodiversity.

It is now the duty and task of the authorities responsible – mainly the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the Highway Authority to take action against this development. A better sense for planning and coordination must be there in order to avoid the destruction of natural heritage and a great potential for tourism.

Corresponding measures could be a great example for a starting point of

### The German study group.

sustainability in Yemen, a term, of course, that is difficult to explain to people who first of all try to survive. Nevertheless sustainable development will bear crops in the long run in Yemen, not only ecologically but also economically – and hopefully psychologically!

### An urgent appeal to YePHQ's Minister RI Interior

A number of the doctors of the Police Hospital under the Ministry of Interior composed last week an appeal via the Yemen Times to the minister, Major General Rashad al-Aleemi, asking him for help in adapting the suitable conditions that allow them to do their human duties. They appealed to him for quick intervention to stop their suffering from harassments, humiliation and sacking and Yemen Times keeps a complete file of this issue. The Yemen Times publishes extracts from the letter under the signature of Dr. Ahmed No'man, one of the doctors of the hospital, on behalf of the other doctors who presented the complain, which reads as follows:

believe they are in the use of the available resources. Since opening the hospital, there is no system of the medical services so that laws and regulations of management became subjective views.

Dr. Al-Aleemi

Those views are still a problem because they have no limits. The experience of the medical services of the armed forces in Sana'a could have given benefit in forming such system.

Dear Major General Dr. Rashad al-Aleemi, Minister of Interior,

We don't exaggerate when we say that opening General Police Hospital in 1994 was a great achievement for the staff of security and Ministry of Interior. It realized their expectations.

The unlimited ambitions of the medical staff in the first stages were to facilitate the difficulties and to overcome any defects or to avoid them.

They know the problems, but their main care was to see this achievement in reality. They thought that after the abnormal conditions of construction and inauguration, that all the obstacles would be properly tackled.

When those conditions disappeared and work went on and improved in terms of quality and quantity, new problems occurred and became a major hindrance encountering the staff and preventing them to perform their humane duties.

The good health administration means good health care. It is wrong to consider the administration a job that's only concerned with the higher organizational systems. The administration should involve all levels in order to be effective.

Many programs failed because of the vague and confused management in the secondary and marginal levels.

The good administration is like health of a body for it shows the priorities and exploits the limited resources to a great possible extent. It also improves the level and kind of services and keeps the employees' morale at its highest levels.

Some people claim that the solutions are in the resources themselves but we

The present director, who has been appointed since 1997, was one of the directors who commit mistakes and behave in a way that's irrelevant to the rules of the administration. That's because he doesn't realize the bases of the administrative work. We bore sufferings at the expense of our human duty.

Since the ministry appointed this person to be the charged of director, we tried to advice him helping him to stop committing more mistakes aiming to maintain this hospital and develop it. All attempts of doctors were in vain.

Our attempts of doctors made the situation get worse and worse due to his proceedings which we complained about more than once, but unfortunately we got no solution to this problem though we had the evidences and documents that have been enclosed to each letter of complaint to the ministry.

When we haven't been listened to, we have to appeal to you for culminating these procedures for the sake of rescuing the Police Hospital, that we are so depressed to see its conditions getting so.

It is the hospital where we performed tireless efforts and sacrificed our rest without hoping to receive simple words of thank. We were satisfied with the happy looks of patients compensating us; the hospital we suffered too much to make it go on in offering its humane duty to all the Ministry of Interior.

All people know your honorable record of achievements, your care for the cadre and the ministry's annexes; therefore we don't think that you would accept such miserable condition. So, we hope you look at this complaint.



# Iraq govt resumes talks to pacify rebel-held Falluja

BAGHDAD, Oct 23 (Reuters) - Iraq's interim government said on Saturday it had resumed talks to pacify the western town of Falluja and avert a military assault on the rebel stronghold that has faced heavy U.S. bombardment in recent days.

Defence Minister Hazim Shaalan said he had renewed contacts with Falluja's chief negotiator, Sheikh Khaled al-Jumaili, and other local leaders who said a meeting could come as soon as Sunday.

"We will resume talks once again with our brothers and will reach new results, God willing," Shaalan told a news conference. "Today, we will have a phone conversation to agree a meeting for this week to keep talks going."

Talks aimed at securing the return of Iraqi security forces to Falluja collapsed more than a week ago after Prime Minister Iyad Allawi threatened to attack the city unless it handed over Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and his followers.

The U.S. military said it had captured a lieutenant of Zarqawi, its top foe in Iraq, and five other suspects in an overnight raid on Falluja, 50 km (30 miles) west of Baghdad.

But residents of the town, which has been a bastion of guerrilla activity since shortly after U.S.-led forces toppled Saddam Hussein's regime, say they know nothing of Zarqawi's foreign fighters and that U.S. raids take a toll on civilians.

A Falluja negotiator said the Mujahadeen Shura (council), a body that claims to represent at least some of the insurgent forces in the town, along with local governors and tribal sheikhs had agreed in principle to restart talks

**An Iraqi IDPLO receives treatment at a hospital in Baghdad. They were hurt when their vehicle came under attack near Falluja, October 23. The IDPLO said they were travelling in Baghdad to their home near Falluja when their vehicle came under attack. U.S. planes bombed targets in rebel-held Falluja, killing two people, and the U.S. military said it had captured a lieutenant of Zarqawi in an overnight raid.** REUTERS

provided the United States stops the daily air strikes.

Lieutenant Colonel Hakim Karim Midb told Reuters local leaders would demand residents who had fled the fighting be allowed to return and be compensated for damage, and that U.S. troops remove a checkpoint on the town's eastern entrance.

Midb said the town's leaders would also push for an Iraqi National Guard force that would include local residents to keep the peace between U.S. forces

and insurgents in the town.

Falluja has been in the hands of guerrillas since a U.S. offensive in April failed to dislodge them. Police there do not answer to Baghdad and the town has since become more militant.

The U.S. military and the interim government it supports say Falluja is a key base for Zarqawi's network, blamed for Iraq's bloodiest suicide bombings and hostage beatings.

They have vowed to eliminate Zarqawi's group and retake all rebel-

held areas ahead of elections scheduled for January.

Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih warned at the same news conference the government would not budge on its demands that rebels be handed over, saying an offensive remained possible.

"We are using all means at our disposal to avoid a military confrontation in Falluja and other areas," he said. "It is an option, but it is the last option, not the first."

# 16 killed in Algeria rebel attack

MEDEA, Algeria, Oct 23 (Reuters) - Suspected Algerian Islamic militants killed 16 people in the first attack on civilians since the start of the holy month of Ramadan, officials said on Saturday.

The victims, mostly young people, were shot dead, burned or had their throats cut at a rebel roadblock on Friday evening near the city of Medea, some 70 km (45 miles) south of Algiers, a civil defence officer told Reuters.

Local residents also said 13 people were reported missing and feared they had been kidnapped by the rebels. Some also said the number of dead was most likely 17.

"I called my friend to find out if he had been caught in the attack. Someone else answered the phone and told me 'come retrieve your dogs,'" a local resident, who asked not to be named, told Reuters.

The victims have been transferred to a hospital in Medea.

The Interior Ministry was not

immediately available for comment.

Algerian Islamic rebels have usually intensified their attacks during Ramadan, which began eight days ago, in the belief it brings them closer to God.

More than 1,000 were killed in Ramadan in some years during the 1990s. Last year Ramadan was the least violent in a decade with less than 100 killed. But authorities have still tightened security in main cities this year to foil possible attacks.

Islamist rebels have been fighting to set up a purist Islamic state in the Muslim country since 1992 when the government cancelled parliamentary elections a now banned radical Islamic party was poised to win.

More than 150,000 people have died since, mostly at the hands of insurgents, according to human rights groups.

Violence has dropped significantly in recent years paving the way for foreign investments to return gradually.

# Suicide bombers kill 20 Iraqis in surge of violence

BAGHDAD, Oct 23 (Reuters) - Suicide bombers killed 20 members of Iraq's fledgling security forces near a U.S. marine base west of Baghdad and at a checkpoint to the north on Saturday amid a spate of insurgent attacks across the country.

The surge in violence underlined the scale of the task facing the U.S. military and Iraqi interim government, which have sworn to quell rebels ahead of elections due in January.

Hospital officials said 16 Iraqi police were killed and up to 40 people wounded by the morning suicide bomb at an Iraqi police post near the marine base west of Baghdad.

Another suicide bomber blew up his vehicle near a checkpoint manned by Iraqi National Guards in the village of Ishaqi, near Samarra, north of Baghdad, killing four guards. A guard officer said six guards were also wounded in the attack. Police said a policeman was killed by a roadside bomb in Samarra town.

There was no let up in violence elsewhere across the Sunni Arab heartland of central Iraq.

Rebels killed two Turkish truck drivers and wounded two in a convoy attack near the northern city of Mosul, police said.

Six U.S. soldiers were wounded when their armoured vehicle was hit by

**Iraqi national guardsmen arrive to scene of a suicide car bomb attack north of Baghdad, October 23, 2004. A suicide bomber blew up his vehicle near a checkpoint manned by Iraqi National Guards in the village of Ishaqi, near Samarra, north of Baghdad, killing four guards. A guard officer said six guards were also wounded in the attack.** REUTERS

a roadside bomb on a highway leading to Baghdad airport. Insurgents also fired two mortar rounds in central Baghdad, killing two civilians and wounding one, witnesses said.

### SHRINKING HAVEN

But the U.S. military said it had captured a lieutenant of its top foe in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and five other suspects in an overnight raid on what it said was a hideout of the Jordanian militant's network in southern Falluja.

U.S. forces earlier launched an air strike on the rebel-held militant strong-

hold, killing two people and wounding three.

U.S. troops did not name the man or give his nationality, but said he had once been viewed as a minor Zarqawi operative.

"However, due to a surge in the number of Zarqawi associates who have been captured or killed by (U.S.) strikes and other operations, the member had moved up to take a critical position as a Zarqawi senior leader," the statement said.

The military said Falluja is a shrinking haven for Zarqawi's group, blamed

for some of Iraq's bloodiest violence.

"Zarqawi followers are starting to move to outlying areas of Falluja in a continuing attempt to hide amidst the civilian population of Falluja due to precision strikes against Zarqawi hideouts and fighting positions," it said.

Residents of Falluja, about 50 km (32 miles) west of Baghdad, deny knowledge of Zarqawi's network and say frequent U.S. air strikes inflict a heavy toll on civilians.

Saboteurs also bombed two oil pipelines transporting crude from northern and eastern Iraq to Baghdad's Dora refinery, oil security officials said.

Major Ali Mahmoud said National Guard forces were trying to extinguish a fire which damaged 150 metres (yards) of the Khana pipeline northeast of Baghdad. He said another bomb was found on Saturday along the same line and was safely defused.

Zarqawi's Tawhid wal Jihad (One God and Holy War) has declared loyalty to Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network and has claimed responsibility for beheading several foreign hostages, including two Americans and a Briton kidnapped last month.

It has not said it is holding Margaret Hassan, who was abducted on Tuesday on her way to work at the aid agency Care International, whose operations she headed in Baghdad.

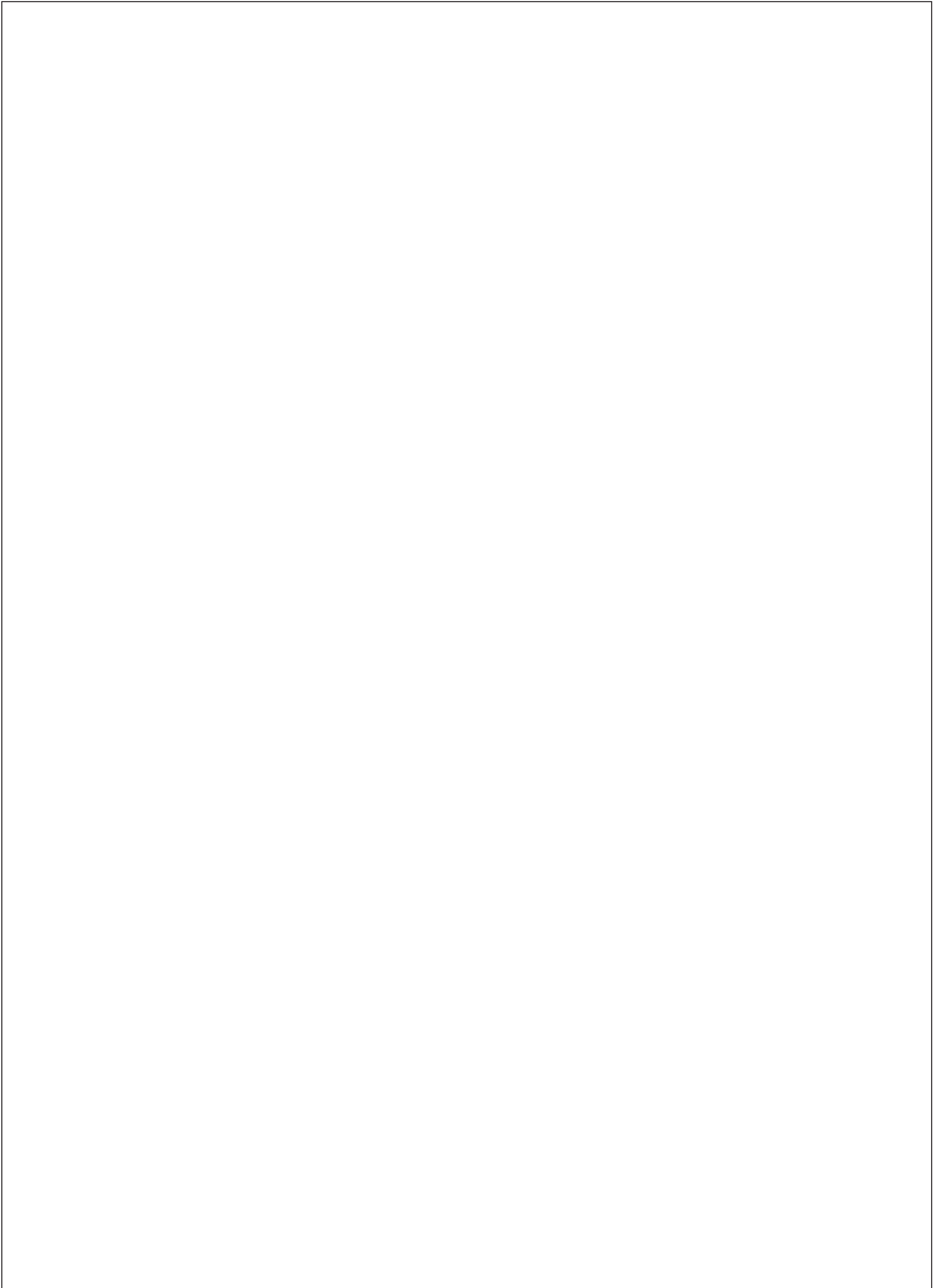
**Mourners carry the body of a person who was killed by suspected Algerian Islamic militants in the attack on civilians since the start of the holy month of Ramadan in Medea, Algeria October 23. The victims, mostly young people, were shot dead, burned or had their throats cut at a rebel roadblock on Friday evening near the city of Medea, some 70 km (45 miles) south of Algiers. A civil defence officer told Reuters.** REUTERS

# Hamas gunmen kill alleged collaborator in Gaza

GAZA, Oct 23 (Reuters) - Hamas gunmen on Saturday killed a young Palestinian they accused of helping Israel assassinate Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and other militants, calling it a warning to others not to collaborate with Israel. Hamas militants threw the body of Hassan Musalam, 19, out of a speeding car in Gaza City along with a note saying he had been executed for helping Israel assassinate nine Palestinian militants, including Yassin in April. Musalam had two gunshot wounds to his head and his family said

the body showed signs of torture. "We do not believe that our son has committed these unbelievably serious charges made by Hamas," a relative who declined to be named told Reuters. Relatives said Musalam was an unemployed and uneducated resident of Gaza City who had never visited Israel. They said they believed he had been in Hamas custody for almost two months since disappearing in August. Hamas spokesman Mushir al-Masri said his shooting was "a message to collaborators to return to the side of their people

as otherwise their fate could be similar to that of Hassan Musalam". Musalam's killing by Hamas, a group sworn to Israel's destruction, came two days after an Israeli missile killed Hamas's top bomb-maker, in another blow to the Islamic group weakened by a wave of assassinations of its leaders this year. Palestinian militants have killed almost 100 Palestinians accused of collaborating with Israel since a Palestinian uprising began in 2000, according to the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group.



# Strong quake, aftershocks hit Japan; 6 dead

TOKYO, Oct 23 (Reuters) - A powerful earthquake and strong aftershocks rocked northern Japan on Saturday, killing at least six people and injuring more than 500 while knocking out power and phone services and cutting off gas and water, media said.

Kyodo news agency also reported that five people had been buried alive, as aftershocks continued more than seven hours after the initial jolt with a magnitude of 6.8 hit rural Niigata prefecture around dinner time at 5:56 p.m. (0856 GMT).

Several houses collapsed and a bullet train was partially derailed by the tremors centred in Niigata, a mountainous area 250 km (150 miles) north of Tokyo. The focus of the first quake was 20 km below the earth's surface.

The initial tremor, as well as aftershocks of up to magnitude 6.3, also shook buildings in Tokyo.

At least six people, including an elderly woman who died of shock and a two-month-old infant, were killed in the Niigata area, a rice-growing region on the Sea of Japan, while more than 500 had been injured, public broadcaster NHK said.

"Roads caved in at many locations ... The city is hit by a power outage and traffic lights are off," Shigeru Shinata, an official in Ojiya, a town of about 40,000 where much of the damage appeared to be centred, told NHK.

There were unconfirmed reports that another three children were also killed, NHK added.

There were no reports of injuries or major damage in Tokyo.

About 12,000 people had evacuated to schools and other public facilities in Nagaoka, a city of about 200,000, NHK said. Several fires broke out in the city but most were extinguished quickly, media said.

NHK said a landslide had buried three cars and Jiji news agency said an expressway tunnel had collapsed.

Two cars of the bullet train derailed near Nagaoka, but there were no injuries,



**A collapsed electric goods store is seen in Ojiya, northwestern Japan, Oct. 23. A powerful earthquake and strong aftershocks hit northern Japan on Saturday, killing at least seven people and injuring more than 500 while knocking out power and phone services and cutting off gas and water, media said.** REUTERS

a Transport Ministry official said.

Kyodo said it was the first time a bullet train derailed since the high speed service began in 1964.

The government set up a crisis centre in Tokyo, as officials said they were worried about more landslides in areas lashed recently by heavy rains.

Japan has been hit by a record 10 typhoons this year, including one that killed at least 80 people earlier this week.

#### Power, phone outages

The quakes were the strongest to hit the region since 1933, officials said.

Some 278,000 homes were without power and telephone service was disrupted in some areas, making it difficult to contact ambulances to take the injured to hospital, media said.

Gas supplies to more than 140,000 households were cut and some water mains also ruptured, Kyodo said.

Temperatures were falling and people who had gone outdoors for fear of fur-

ther aftershocks were keeping warm with stoves and blankets, NHK said.

"It is dark and no lights are on and aftershocks are rattling, so we are in a dangerous situation," Eiichi Yoshizawa, an Ojiya city official, told NHK.

The Japan Meteorological Agency warned of more tremors.

"Aftershocks are continuing and we must be on alert for more," Japan Meteorological Agency official Masahiro Yamamoto told a news conference.

The magnitude, a reading of energy released, was measured according to a Japanese technique similar to the open-ended Richter scale but adjusted for Japan's geological characteristics.

The defence ministry will dispatch patrol planes to the area to gather information and the National Police Agency put nearly 200 officers on standby for disaster relief, Kyodo said.

"We were preparing for a wedding party at the time. I found it hard to stand because the quake was so strong.

Everyone went below the tables screaming," Kyodo quoted a hotel clerk in Nagaoka as saying.

There were no reports of significant damage to industry in the area, which includes chemical and textile manufacturing as well as electronics and food processing.

Both Narita International airport near Tokyo and Haneda Airport in the capital were operating normally, officials said, and NHK said a nuclear reactor in Niigata was unaffected.

Japan is one of the world's most seismically active areas, with an earthquake occurring every five minutes.

The country accounts for about 20 percent of the world's earthquakes of magnitude six or greater.

Memories are still vivid of the earthquake in the western city of Kobe which killed more than 6,400 people in 1995.

That quake measured 7.2 on the Richter scale.

The last quake of 8.0 or higher in Japan was in 1994.

# U.S. planes land in Rwanda to help DUIS mission

KIGALI, Oct 23 (Reuters) - Three U.S. Air Force cargo planes and 120 U.S. troops landed in Rwanda on Saturday to transport Rwandan soldiers and equipment to Darfur as part of an expanded African Union peacekeeping mission in the violent region.

Several dozen soldiers unloaded boxes full of rifles and hand guns on the tarmac of Kigali airport on the outskirts of the capital. They then loaded them with rounds of ammunition.

In the first U.S. military deployment in the Darfur conflict, the three C-130 planes from the Air Force's 86th Airlift Wing left Germany on Friday. They are expected to fly a battalion of Rwandan troops to Darfur over the next two weeks.

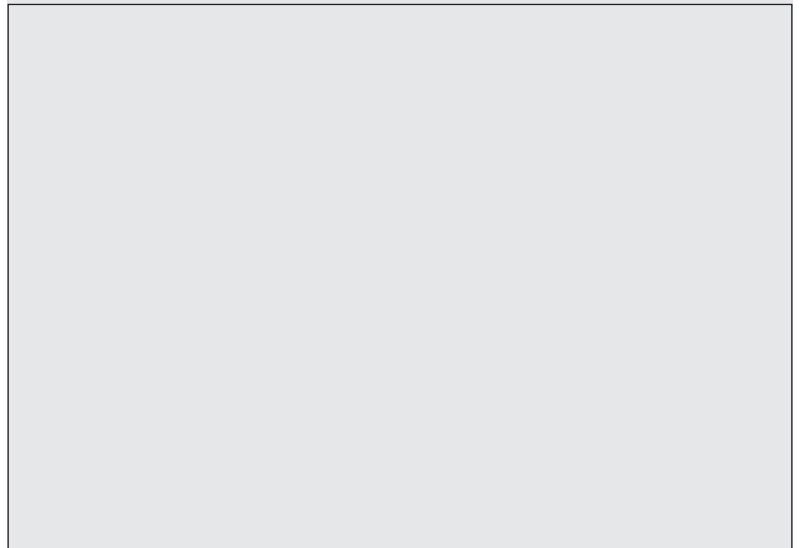
"The 120 U.S. troops are operational people providing security, airfield management and other requirements for the mission," U.S. army spokeswoman Capt. Heather Healy told Reuters.

Two of the planes will be used in rotation to ferry Rwandan forces to Darfur, where up to 70,000 people have died through malnutrition and disease, and more than 1.5 million have become refugees.

The third plane will carry additional supplies. The deployment of U.S. aircraft is a small part of the roughly \$300 million in humanitarian aid Washington has offered.

The 53-member AU agreed on Wednesday to boost its current Darfur operation by more than 3,000 extra troops. There are currently only 300 AU soldiers in Darfur tasked with protecting 150 AU observers monitoring a shaky truce between rebels and government forces.

Rebels say the government has used Arab militias known as Janjaweed to put down their rebellion and to loot and burn villages. The Sudanese government admits arming some militias but denies links to the Janjaweed, calling them outlaws.



**Troops from the U.S. Air Force's 86th Airlift Wing gear up for arriving in the Rwandan capital Kigali on Saturday Oct. 23, aboard three U.S. Air Force C-130 cargo planes. The planes will transport Rwandan soldiers and equipment to Darfur over the next two weeks to assist an African Union peacekeeping mission in the violent region in western Sudan. It is the U.S. military deployment in the Darfur region.** REUTERS



## Words of Wisdom

The fall-out from technology advances, notably globalization, is clearly ahead of us. We need to grapple with this and the sooner we assess the issues and decide on what we need to do, the better prepared we will be. A main component of globalization is liberalization.

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, (1951 - 1999)  
Founder of Yemen Times

OUR  
OPINIONWhy support Kerry  
by default?

I t saddened me greatly to realize that the Muslim community in the USA, which is more than 3 million, has received little attention by the two main US presidential candidates.

Leaders of the Muslim community complained recently that both George W. Bush and John Kerry refused to meet them even go get some idea of what their needs and demands are. This has shown quite clearly that both men are not concerned about Muslims' issues, and are avoiding meeting with Muslim leaders, possibly to not offend American Jews.

The other day, Ralph Nader, the presidential candidate of Arab origin contending for presidency in most US states had clearly expressed outrage to the neglect shown to Muslims and Arab Americans by the two main candidates. In a statement to Al-Jazeera Channel, he said that by backing democratic challenger John Kerry, Muslims have degraded themselves and gave him a prize for not doing anything and not even promising anything.

"I am really amazed to see that Muslim voters endorsed a candidate who openly said he would support Israel and not even refer to the struggle of Palestinians. I urge Muslims to consult their conscious before voting for either candidate," he said.

It is a fact that Muslims in the USA disliked the way Bush managed his affairs concerning foreign policy, and specifically the two wars waged on Afghanistan and Iraq. Nevertheless, they also realize that Kerry would not do any better when it comes to those two issues, but they would prefer him over Bush just for the sake of expressing their dissatisfaction with the latter's policies.

Is this a healthy decision? I personally believe that Muslim communities were not effective during the campaign and for most voters, whether they support Bush or Kerry is not of significance. But what one needs to think about is how Muslims can have a say in the policies of the country. They are Americans and deserve to be respected and listened to. But they also need to be united and outspoken about their concerns and demands.

It is indeed quite shameful to see that Muslims have had to vote for Kerry just because they disapprove of Bush, and not for the message the Democratic candidate conveys about his policies concerning American Muslims.

In fact, some suggested that it was a humiliation for Muslims to endorse Kerry through the American Muslim Taskforce on Civil Rights and Elections despite the fact that Kerry and his vice president nominee John Edwards pledged to be "an even better friend" with Israel.

It is also unfortunate that Muslim voters don't seem to get their message out that they may play a vital role in swing states such as Ohio and Florida, in which they can cause some trouble for either candidate.

In brief, Muslims in America need to have a stronger stance on their issues and a more aggressive approach in calling upon candidates to respect their civil rights and think about their needs and concerns. I am optimistic that in the long run, that Muslims will have a better say in US politics. I hope that this will be more respected by candidates, especially as their numbers and influence increases.

It is only a matter of time before US politicians realize the increasing importance of Muslims in the states.

The Editor



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by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

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## Some things on the "to do" list

Reform needs to  
come from within

By Prof. Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Tarb  
For The Yemen Times

R eform can never originate from the outside, because those who are outside can not see the reality either here or in the Arab World. They do not know the mistakes that have obstructed our political development and in terms of economic, financial, and administrative reform. They don't know the social and cultural faults accumulating in the Arab nation for a long time.

They have become a phenomenon agonizing all of us, and engendering habits and customs alien to the Arab community. It has also given birth to different anti-discipline extremist groups that belonged at no time to our original community.

This social deterioration has damaged both the Arab and Islamic nation and other foreign countries.

The Sa'ada event blocks the Arab and foreign investment flow. Recently, I have been asked at many symposiums about Darfur, Ghaza, and Sa'ada. I have arrived at a belief that I must write about the executive steps of reform and change. These curing recommendations are in articles I send to the Yemen Times.

- Warning of delaying reform. Such a mistake will open door to the unknown, especially the danger of terrorism and extremism besetting the region.

- Urgent invitation for raising citizens' political awareness and acquainting them with local and foreign events. This will ensure that the people will become a privy to and defender of the state's policy in various fields. The judicial authority should be independent while it looks into terrorist cases. The Arab official sees himself as the controller who is never becomes under punishment, whereas the Arab citizen feels weak and insignificant and that the authority is the sole ruler.

- Political reform should be based on a self-created vision. This means absolute rejection of the Greater Middle East Initiative launched by the US. Moreover, economic reform should be coupled with political reform involving citizens in the change process for the better.

- Not to set up plans for sought reforms will give impetus to corruption, unemployment, and inflation. Such a situation will not perish terrorism but will encourage it, and stability will be shaken.

- We need to reform the social context in order to achieve social justice shared by all community members. The priority in this respect is to the improvement of family interrelation patterns to build the distinctive individual who is able to responsibly practice his/her liberties and experiences. This entails a reconsideration of the some values that negatively affect life such as the those of submissiveness, obedience, and instating the values of independence, dialogue and positive

interaction.

- Media plays a major role in building up the public culture. It has an indispensable role in enhancing pro-development values such as equality, toleration, commitment, and others.

- Arab countries should be geared towards gaining, distributing and producing knowledge. Five integrated aspects should be focused on:

- Emphasis on development of human resources and education.
- Technological development, creating its infrastructure and improving scientific research strategy.
- Encouraging independent occupations, creative initiatives in the field of political, economic and cultural invention.

To guarantee achieving the above mentioned, the following points must be followed:

• Setting criteria for education's output at different stages in a way compatible with international standards and market needs.

• Establishing non-ministerial organizations to monitor quality of education.

• Continuity of state's support for educational institutions, while maintaining their academic independence. Activating the non-profitable community contribution to educational establishments.

• Supporting scientific research and increasing human and financial resources and linking them to production establishments, and removing bureaucratic barriers to knowledge and scientific research.

• Adopting decentralization in managing educational establishments and having flexibility enough to vary their programs.

• Tuning educational output to the market's changing needs and economic growth, and fostering the competitive spirit.

• Inviting the civil community to finance education, managing and inspecting it.

• Ensuring the right of students to enjoy their political role including non-violent demonstrations, freedom of expression, and democratic elections for student unions.

• Eradicating illiteracy in not more than 10 years especially among females.

• Taking care of Arabic and developing its syllabuses and executing the comparative evaluation system among Arab countries in the early grades.

• Formulating effective policies such as the just distribution of wealth and production revenue to achieve social stability.

Cultural reform, on the other hand, requires setting up plans to face national cultural challenges. It requires:

- Reinforcing the principles of rational and scientific reasoning by encouraging and financing research establishments, and releasing and developing the civil community liberties. Meanwhile, extremism should be

eradicated.

• Encouraging continual renewal of religious speech in order to embody the enlightening civil impact of religion. Intellectuals, researchers and scientists should be given the freedom to think and produce solutions to social problems.

• Going ahead in liberating women's culture and developing it so that they become equal to men in knowledge and work. This will enhance the social participation in its full meanings.

• Creating a cultural atmosphere to achieve democratic development and peaceful transfer of power by combating iron-cast traditions and the consequences of a corrupt policy that excludes effective political participation. Such a battle will change the social and political outlook on women and acknowledge their cultural and scientific contribution as well as their role in the development process. The cultural development is essential for overall development and is the first step towards radical reform, but it can never be obtained unless the culture of democracy is incorporated into school curricula and media messages.

• Reforming and activating cultural organizations through financial and moral support so that they work independently, increase their activity circle, and coordinate their activity with other culture-related authorities.

• Stopping censorship on cultural and intellectual production in order to bolster creativity without custodianship of any side under the name of religion, tradition, originality or politics.

• Advancing mutual enterprises at the national level, epitomizing the principle of mutual dependence in terms of the economics of culture.

• Activating cultural interaction with the whole globe so as to reinforce the creative culture of human diversity, and contributing to international organizations in a way that does not contradict the distinctiveness of our civilization obvious in the human dimensions of our original cultural heritage.

• Focusing on science as a fundamental component of culture and a path towards the public cultural awareness which is the secret of advancement in all fields.

• Documenting the cultural reality in annual data and statistics reporting on production mechanisms and follow-up techniques as well as coordinating efforts in the cultural arena and disseminating their results. The following should be done: Protecting cultural production from censorship and prosecution; Increasing electronic publishing of newspapers, magazines, and books and overcoming distribution problems; Activating public and private translation establishments.

Simply, the greater challenge before us, after the ordeal of Sa'ada, lies in the reconsideration of the governmental bodies' conduct. It is a "to be or not to be" question.

## Letters to the Editor

The days when Ethiopians  
& Yemenis were brothers

I recently published letter to the editor who described that Yemenis in Ethiopia were one day treated like our own people and did not have any restriction on their way of life. I personally grew up with my Yemeni friends and I did not feel they were from another country than Ethiopia even though I was a Christian I saw them as fellow Ethiopians. I hope that those days would have remained.

Daniel B.  
danbab123@yaoo.com

Another fine  
write-up by Haifi

Hassan Al-Haifi's editorial "It is God's that they take away" is one of the finest that has been written on the subject of terror in the Middle East. Thank you for writing it. I notice in the same issue the subject of appeals by the convicted men who were involved in the attack on the Cole.

Although the attack on the Cole can certainly be described as violent, it most certainly was an attack on a war ship, not on children. George Bush has killed and maimed over 20,000 Iraqis,

many of them children. Sharon has killed how many children? Yet these two people are very popular in the United States, the country who sent the spy ship Cole into the Gulf.

Yemen, of course, had to find the attackers of the Cole guilty. To do otherwise would be to invite the wrath of George Bush, the Butcher of Baghdad. It is not a matter of the guilt of the Cole attackers, it is a matter of saving children from Bush and Sharon. And who can blame Yemen for that?

Robert Lindh  
lindh@swnebr.net

## Banaadiris are not Somalis

I'd like the author of 'the culture of people of Banaadir to elaborate on terming some parts of Somalia like Barawe, Mogadishu, Afgoy, Marka and others as 'the native land of Arabs! I only know that Somalia belongs to black African people. Therefore, it's wrong to ever argue that some Arabs, namely Banaadiris, are natives of Somalia, part of Africa.

If you Banaadiris come from Yemen, then you should go back to your motherland,

because Somalia is a land, which belongs to Kushites. Some Kushitic people including Somalis and Oromos are the first people to settle in what's now called Somalia. They came here from southern Ethiopia long before you Banaadiris, or Arabs in other words, thought of coming to our beautiful land.

Hussein G  
hussein\_res1441@hotmail.com

When will we  
ever wake up?

It makes me very disappointed to hear and see what is happening in the Muslim world and yet no Muslim or Arab country has the guts even have their opinion while Israel is on the loose of wiping out Palestine and who ever gets on their way.

What happened to our Islamic pride? What happened to the hot blooded, brave no nonsense Arabs? Seems they are long gone.

Like the English say " we are done and dusted "

We have been silenced by our own greed; our governments are all concerned about their own seats let alone bother about their brethrens.

I only have one message to

all those who are concerned about this dangerous situation, its about time we woke up from our deep sleep.

Saeed Al-amoudi  
London, United Kingdom  
s\_aidroos13@hotmail.com

More focus on corruption  
needed

In his latest sketched opinions, Samer has started focusing on the right concerns and problems, which we are struggling from.

Corruption is as fatal as cancer and it is going to destroy our country, if we do not uproot it as quick as possible.

Fighting corruption is the job of all Yemenis, especially writers and artists like the talented artist Samer Ahmed who is doing his best to fight the rascal figures here in Yemen.

Also I would like to thank Yahya Al olofi for his frankness and courage in his reflections titled (The Hell Of Maswari is.....) in which he showed us some examples of what is going on in our country.

So let us make an invitation for all sincere people to start fighting corruption ,each one from his position.

Kamal Yahya Maridi  
kamalmaredi@yahoo.com

COMMON  
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

As Moslems, we need  
to assess ourselves

I f the Holy Month of Ramadhan affords Moslems a chance to ponder their own personal situations and to determine their status with the Lord, Al-Mighty, it also should be a time for deep analytical evaluation of where Moslems as a nation stand in today's fast changing world. This starts at the country level, but certainly does not end there. Our religion has declared Moslems throughout the world as one nation bound together by the universalism of the absolute monotheism all Moslems are compelled to believe in and the brotherhood of faith, which the Prophet Mohammed (peace and blessings of Allah upon him) instilled in the hearts of all true believers. Therefore, Moslems everywhere in the world are bound by this inderstructible affinity towards each other that the fate of a Moslem in any part of this world is the concern of every Moslem everywhere in the world. Maybe this is one of the least understood but inseparable realities that characterize the adherence to Islam. Ironically, the grass roots Moslems of the world of all sects and denominations visualize and sense this reality more than even the most strictest religious rulers of Moslem states, who follow a traditional attachment to the religion for the sake of political convenience.

Islam is indeed a powerful unifying force, if it is allowed to have its true sensational attachment to cross the artificial borders and transcend regional and international political affiliations, most of which were imposed on Moslem states beginning from the end of World War I, when the western powers that defeated the ailing Ottoman Empire and set out to divide the spoils of war between them. When these Islamic domains gained sought their independence from European domination, it was Islam that brought the resistance its mass popular appeal, rather than national affiliation and this is something recognized by most of the European powers that held territories with Moslem inhabitants.

However, upon independence, most Moslem "states", began to veer away from the rallying call that brought their people together against the occupiers, and perhaps the former European powers that once ruled these states actually helped the placement of regimes that were not really keen on reestablishing Islam as a political force in their lands. These regimes knew well that allowing Islam to prevail in their domains would easily bring about desistance to these regimes as it did against the colonial powers. While giving lip service to Islamic dogma, specifically on the worship rites and other ceremonial aspects, most Islamic governments were able to let Islam act as a symbolic surface rendition, without allowing any political implications of Islam to have any effect on their ability to maintain their regimes. Thus, Moslem governments encouraged the building of mosques, but would not allow religious parties that adhered to more traditional renditions of Islam to rise to significant levels of political influence, even though some of these political parties had played a strong role in acquiring independence.

This repression of religious political activity paved the way for more radical renditions to fill in the religious vacuum which this suppression created. The Moslem populations of the world still saw in Islam a plausible political and social order they must fall under, because to a devout Moslem, the need for the prevalence of Islamic jurisdiction is indisputable if families are to be kept within the puritanical bounds of Islam and their chastity and purity is to be maintained.

This is not to say that Islam abhors modernization and the adoption of advance social and scientific developments. On the contrary, Islam encourages furtherance of knowledge and scholastic achievement. However, Islam does have a distinctive outlook on how to channel such a knowledge and how to control the negative connotations that could spoil the ability of the down to earth Moslem families to keep vice and social corruption out of the family and eventually out of the community. This does not necessarily entail an unbreakable attachment to crude or medieval practices, which regrettably many westerners seek to portray in the way Moslems view the right social conduct for themselves. However, it is partially due to the misrepresentations by Moslems themselves of the social norms that their faith really teaches. This misrepresentation was further expanded by the rise of the radical elements that sought to fill the vacuum of religious codes withered away by years of oppressive colonial and later home rule that sought to keep traditional organized religious activity under tight control for fear that it could incite rebellion or insurrection. Surely, it is impossible to disassociate politics from Islam, because Islam actually rose as a rebellion against all forms of repression and transgressions. In modern political philosophy what this really meant was Islam is indeed a force of liberation, that most Moslems view the only hope for reestablishing their rights and reaffirming their dignity. Yet, the so called modern fundamentalists have also failed to take note of the strong politicizing influence of Islam and went on to rely themselves on their own methods of suppression. Their strict adherence to ceremonial religious practices and their rejection of different sectarian interpretations was also another factor of their alienation from serving the hopes and aspirations of most grass roots Moslems and thus one will see little mass appeal to these radical renditions. Their access to funds has been the major source of their strength, but even that has little effect in convincing large masses of the Moslem constituencies where they have managed to operate freely.

In the next issue we will continue this discussion and see what Moslems need to do at the country, regional and international level to reassert themselves as a dynamic modern social force to be reckoned with.





## The town of Dhofar

# Where history and culture meet

By ISMAIL AL-GHABRI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

**D**hofar is the capital of Sheba Kingdom and Dhi Raidan (Hemayarites). It is located in al-Seddah district (al-Arafah Isolation), South of Yerim town approximately 17 kms.

Dhofar is a name of several towns in Yemen – Dhofar Dhi Bayn or Dhofar al-Dhaher in Amran Governorate, and Dhofar Amman is called Dhofar al-Huboodhi which is currently within the political boundary of Oman Sultanate.

As well, there are two areas with same name in Ibb Governorate: Dhofar Village in al-Adhareb, Ba'dan, and Dhofar in Jebel Khadhra', in Hubaish District.

Dhofar also carries three names – Dhofar Yerim, Dhofar Minketh, and Dhofar Hemyar.

### Political centre

The historical significance of Dhofar town lies in it being in the past as a capital of Sheba Kingdom and Dhi Raidan (Hemayar) since the beginning of its establishment, as the Hemyarite villages considered it a political center from which it kicked off towards unifying Yemen in general.

Due to its economical and military importance, Dhofar town was selected as a strategic capital, which was

planned for previously and absolutely perfect as it is above a number of wadis with running water such as Wadi Bana, Wadi Dhofar, Wadi al-Haf, and Qa' el-Haql.

Due to the significance of this town being the capital of Sheba Kingdom and Dhi Raidan, it was mentioned in a number of historical sources from abroad and inside Yemen similarly.

It was mentioned by the Classical Historian Belinos in the sixth chapter of his book "Natural History" that showed the mention of Dhofar refers back to the second half of the first century, as he had mentioned it within a number of the Arabian Felix towns.

Then, it had consecutively been mentioned within a number of books and other writings such as "Wandering About the Eriterian Sea (Red Sea)" written by unknown author, as a Capital of Hemyarites kings.

And Dhofar was mentioned by the Classical Historian Batlimous that it was within the interior towns of Arabian Felix. He described it as a Capital.

The 'Tongue of Yemen', the Historian Abu Muhammad al-Hassan al-Hamdani who lived in the Hijrah century, has mentioned it lengthily by describing it and its ruins as well as its location.

He had mentioned that it is located at the peak of a hill at the upper most of Qitab (currently a book). That it had nine gates (Babs in Arabic) – Bab Wala, Bab al-Aslaf, Bab Khurfah, Bab Ma'abeh, Bab Hedwan, Bab Khoban,

Bab Howzah, Bab Sayd and Bab al-Haql.

The most important of all aforementioned gates is "Bab al-Haql" on which the bells (alMa'aher) were hanging. The bells ring and can be heard from far away, if the gate "Bab al-Haql" is opened. The archaeological surveys have showed that that fence had extended in an irregular path protecting the area situated between a height (al-rahdeh) in the South until the Northern boundaries of Raydan fort.

Dhofar had played an important role in the religious side being one of the Christianity religious centers in Yemen as the Greek churches missions had arrived it in the Year 354 A.D. (middle of the fourth century A.D.) and could succeed in constructing an important famous church known by the historians besides the church existed in Najran.

And because of that church existence, Christianity could spread fortifiedly in Yehsob area, in general.

It was destroyed in the Year 523 A.D. by the Yemeni King Yousuf Asar Yethar, known by the Historians as (Dhi Nuwas) who is mentioned in the al-Okhdud story in the Holy Qura'an verses. (al-Berooj Verses in the Holy Qura'an) as he was a Jew in religion.

### Archaeological landmarks

Considering Dhofar town as the political capital for Sheba and Dhi Raidan for a long period, the kings of that Kingdom paid much care in fortifying it and constructing the general buildings in it such as temples,

markets, dams in addition to special buildings such as palaces and homes which ruins are still existing apparently to the sight. Some of the existing ruins are of most significant palaces.

### The palaces

A number of palaces were built in the town mentioned, most significant of which is Raydan, Shouhtan, and Kawkaban. According to the historians, Raydan Palace acquired great fame, because of Hemyarites' relationship to it, due their famous King title (King of Sheba and Dhi Raidan) whereby they perpetuated his name on the general buildings and the currencies.

Raydan palace was as a political palace for holding alliances and confederations among the Hemyarite tribes. The existing remains show its greatness, as it was built with stones of different colors and with mica materials, bluish, sky blue, green and al-hebsh (blackish) in color besides the tiles with various colors such as the red, yellowish, and black.

### Water institutions

Because of the agricultural area nature, kings of Sheba and Dhi Raidan constructed a number of water institutions with different functions, most prominent of which are the dams in Dhofar and the surrounding area such as al-Owar and al-Oqlah dam, Lahej dam in Aras, and al-Sha'bani dam in al-Arafah, Hararah, and al-Asbahi in Jurf Naji, and Touf dam in Jebel Hajjaj in addition to the irrigation network and

water pounds (al-Kuroof), and water reservoirs chiseled in the foot of the hills surrounding the area which is used for storing the water to be utilized throughout the year for drinking and agricultural irrigation purposes.

### Crops stores

As a result of the economical activity and agricultural products availability, kings of Sheba and Dhi Raidan built crops stores in the rocks besides the royal palaces in Dhofar town with various shapes to save the surplus crops of the agricultural seasons, and to use it when necessary, especially, during the wars and political disturbances because of the military nature of such kingdom.

### Graveyards

Graveyards had spread in a number of the areas in Dhofar, and the most of which are grave pieces within the rocks in the slopes of hills with various shapes displaying the importance of the grave owner and his social status. There are special royal graves for the kings and the high-ranking people who were of higher excellency than the graves which were provided for the common citizens.

Those graves enlightened us by archaeological evidences of essential information that it contained and which helped in leading us to understand the burying customs in that town. Personal effects of the dead persons were found besides their corpses such as dresses, pots, jewels, the matter which proves their faith in returning to life again.

### Tourism Components

In addition to the historical importance of that town which is the most important of the tourism components, Dhofar and al-Seddah District in general are enjoying weather and other natural characteristics increasing its importance as an attractive tourism area for tourists from inside Yemen and abroad.

There are a number of beautiful wadis (valleys) and are always green, out which are Wadi Bana, Wadi Hajjaj, Wadi al-A'amas, and Qa'el Huq in addition to the existence of a number of water falls which provide more beauty to those wadis (valleys).

The area is enjoying several number of heights and hills with greenish foot and beautiful scenes, out of which are Jebel al-Hebaly, Jebel al-arafah, Jebel Esam, Jebel Hajjaj, and Jebel al-Aseeby.

The variety of the undulations among the hills, the wadis, the plains, and the plateaus are adding beauty to the area and contributes in putting on the permanent greenness which depend on the rain water, and the permanent waterfalls.

Beautiful villages of original Yemeni architectural characteristic and heights are spreading by the hills foot as if they are pearls giving pleasure to whom are looking at them, and raises joyfulness and happiness into the hearts.

And what adds to that factor is the pardoning (forgiveness) nature of the local natives and the hospitality that they offer to the visitor to that area.

## An observance with universal appeal

# Fasting practiced by many faiths

By RAMZI AL-ABSI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

**F**asting is associated with human history; it is as old as the human race. The fast was performed by the ancient Greeks when consulting oracles, by the American Indians to acquire their private totem, and by African shamans to make contact with spirits. Many Eastern religions use it to gain clarity of vision and mystical insight.

It is not however related to specific culture, nor is it a distinction between religions. All the main religions in the world promote and sanction fasting in some form or another.

It has been similar in Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and some other religions but changes were brought about as time passed by and by the appearance of new sects in different religions or by intervention of some kinds of power.

The basic motive of fasting is related to the spiritual aspect of humanity for it is connected to the God-human relation. Therefore the main purposes can be condensed in two principal points: self-control over the body and its desires and repentance for sins.

### Fasting in different religions

Though fasting is nearly found in all religions, it is different from religion to another in terms of time, way of fasting and reasons as well, for each religion has set aside certain times in the year and some rules for regular fasting observances.

Depending on the Buddhist tradition, fasting usually means abstaining from solid food, with some liquids permitted. They practice some periods of fasting, usually on full-moon days and other holidays. Fasting for them is a means of freeing the mind. Some Tibetan Buddhist monks fast to aid yogic feats, like generating inner heat.

When Christianity became the main faith of the Roman Empire in the 4th century, the church's institutionalization led to stressing fasting. Therefore, the

early church's two-day fast before Easter came in the 4th century to be a Lenten observance of a forty-day fast.

By the 10th century Lenten was obligatory upon the Western church. The church of Rome added some fast days to their calendar during Middle Ages. The period from December 13 to Christmas was adopted later.

'Catholics fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (the beginning and end of Lent), two small meals and one regular meal are allowed; meat is forbidden.' That's what has been decided by the Roman Catholic church in the 20th century. Besides, it required fast on Fridays in Lent (the period before Easter), no meat is allowed. Fasting was modified by several acts related to Vatican Council II.

They believe that fasting teaches control of fleshly desires, penance for sins, and solidarity with the poor. The Lenten fast prepares the soul for a great feast by practicing austerity. The Good Friday fast commemorates the day Christ suffered.

There are several fast periods in Eastern Orthodox of which meat, dairy products, and eggs are generally prohibited. Fish is prohibited on some fast days and allowed on others. Including Lent, the fast periods are called Apostles' Fast, and the Nativity Fast, and several one-day fasts. Every Wednesday and Friday is considered a fast day, except those that fall during designated "fast-free weeks". Fast in their belief strengthens resistances to gluttony and helps open a person to God's grace.

Fasting in Hindu depends on the individual. It may involve 24 hours of complete abstinence from any food and drink, but is more often an elimination of solid foods, with an occasional drink of milk or water. It is commonly practiced on New moon days and during festivals such as Shivaratri, Saraswati Puja, and Durga Puja. Women in North India also fast on the day of Karva Chauth. Fasting is practiced to enhance concentration during meditation or worship; purification for the system; sometimes considered a sacrifice.

Jews are supposed to fast on Yom

Kippur, the Day of Atonement, and Tisha B'Av, the day on which the destruction of the Jewish temple took place, eating and drinking are forbidden for a 25-hour period, from fast days as well on which eating and drinking are forbidden only from sunrise to sundown. They fast to signify mourning, to show repentance and remorse or to demonstrate serious concern before God.

Some references show that Jewish Christians followed the Jewish custom of fasting and prayer on Mondays and Thursdays until around the end of the first century when Wednesdays and Fridays were observed, probably in reaction against the Judaizers. However, such fasts were usually concluded by midafternoon and were not universally enforced. Also, from the second century on, two intensive fast days were observed in preparation for Easter.

In Mormonism, fasting means abstaining from food and drink for two consecutive meals and donating food or money to the needy. After the fast, church members participate in a "fast and testimony meeting." For them, the families or wards may hold other fasts at will they aim at the closeness to God; concentration on God and religion. Individual or family fasts might be held to petition for a specific cause, such as healing for one who is sick or help with making a difficult decision.

Though some Protestant people abstain from food or drink entirely, others drink only water or juice, eat only certain foods skip certain meals or abstain from temptations, edible or not. Fasting is at the discretion of individuals, churches, organizations or spiritual nourishment, solidarity with impoverished people, a counterbalance to modern consumer culture, or to petition God for special needs.

### Fasting in Islam

Fasting in Islam is as important as prayer. The obligatory fasting is the entire month of Ramadan. God ordered all Muslims more than 14 centuries years ago in the Holy Qura'an to fast this month. All Muslims, either in the past or in the future, are expected to fast this month in a very objective manner that follow specific rules and doesn't

expect change or any human intervention. This divine order is consistent in terms of time and conditions.

Fasting in Islam means abstention from food and drink that's required of all able Muslims from dawn until sunset each day of the month of Ramadan, which is the ninth month in the Islamic calendar. It is a very important month because the Holy Qura'an was revealed by God to the latest Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) during it. Muslims were ordered to fast this month achieving one of their spiritual satisfaction and worship. The Islamic fasting doesn't only include not to eat, drink or smoke during the daylight

hours but, for the married adults, it includes avoiding marital relations during the hours of fasting.

Sick Muslims, who can't fast, feed a pauper for every day of Ramadan or compensate by fasting other days of another month. Children are permitted to fast only when they are strong enough physically to tolerate fasting without difficulty.

Besides being a phase of worship, i.e. the fasting Muslims will be rewarded by Allah: their sins will be forgiven, they will enter heaven through al-Raian Door, a door of the heaven's doors, it has some other social and individual reflections. It allows one to have a sense of self-control and will-power. Muslims

learn to control their natural urges and desires. It helps also the Muslim to feel sympathy for those who are less fortunate and underprivileged.

That's not everything about fasting in Islam, there are some other optional days to fast: six days in Shawal, the tenth month, excluding the first day (Eid); Day of Arafah, (Eid al-Ad'ha, while pilgrims being on Arafah mountain); Mondays and Thursdays, 13, 14 and 15 of each Sha'aban and whatever days a Muslim wants to fast provided that the intention is to fast for God sake.

The Prophet Mohammed stressed the rewards of fasting such days in many of his prophetic sayings.

Continued from back page

## Socotra:

# The diachronic value of multi-cultural societies (2-2)

Who were the Dioskouroi? The name refers to the environment of Ancient Greek mythology. The name itself, in Singular Dioskourous, means in Greek 'the young man of Zeus', the young priest or the dedicated adolescent, the Zeus' disciple, follower and/or believer. The complex names to be formed in Greek use always the Genitive case, that is why we have Dios-(of the Zeus)-kourous (and not Zeuskourous).

Who were the two young mythical adolescents of Zeus, the Supreme God of the Ancient Greek Pantheon? Their names are famous: Castor and Pollux (Polydeukes in Greek). They were the twin sons of princess Leda, both born mortals; Polydeukes was fathered by Zeus, whereas Castor was the son of Leda's husband, Tyndareus. Because of their generosity and kindness to operate in life, they became gods at death, being the object of an 'apotheosis', i.e. deification, being guaranteed 'eternal life' or 'immortality'. First, only Polydeukes was offered immortality,

but – in order to accept – he demanded that his half-twin Castor received the same honor. Zeus consented but the twins had to spend alternate days in the Nether World, the terrible 'Hades', in order to appease the Fates, powerful divinities, and Pluto, the God of the Dead. Ultimately, Castor and Polydeukes received also a distinct place amongst the constellations, becoming the Mansion of Gemini (Didymoi in Greek, al Gawzat in Arabic). They were believed as the gods of horsemanship, and were considered as the protectors of guests and the homeless.

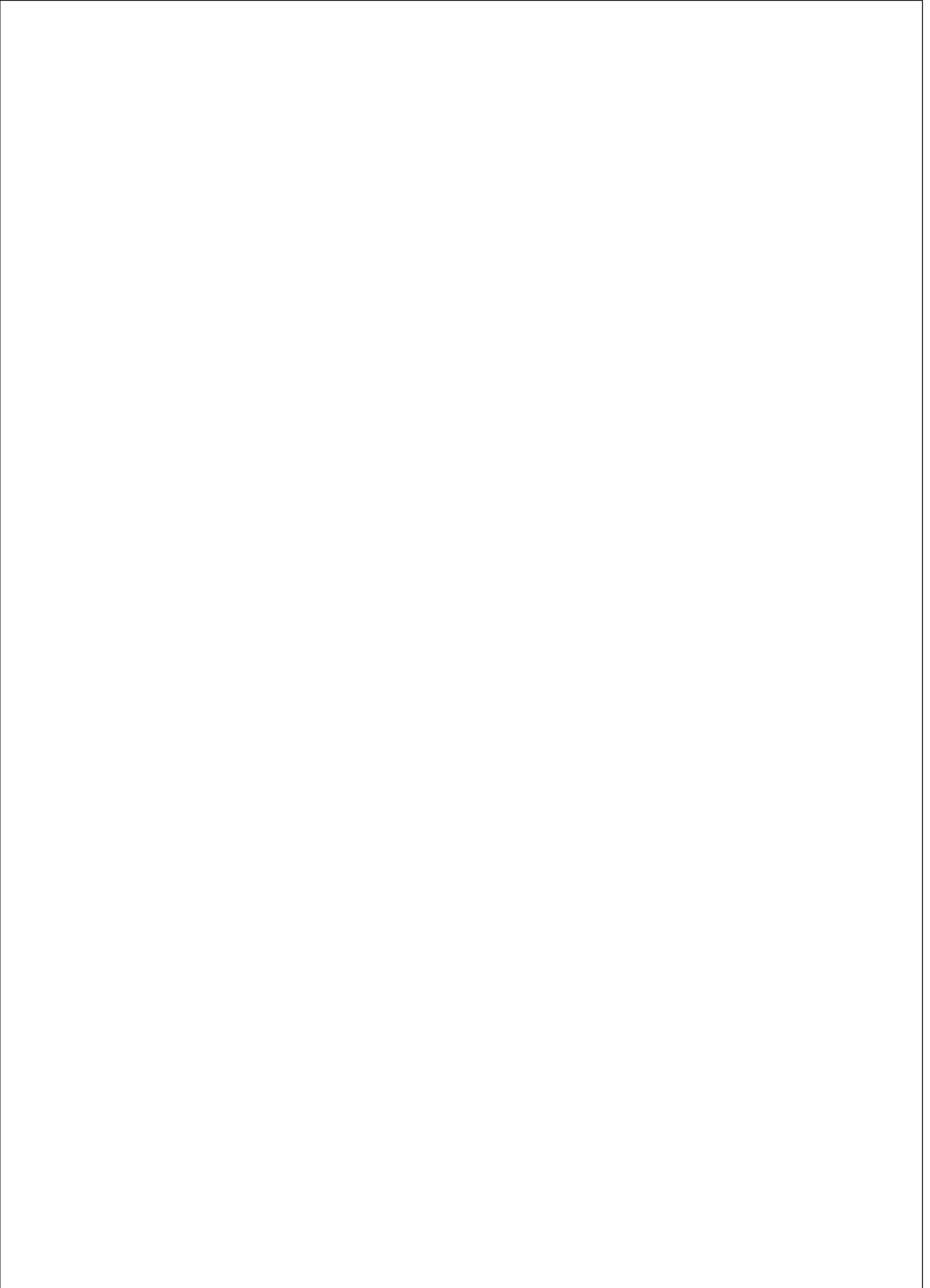
What does the island of Socotra have to do with the mythical twins of the Greek mythology? Here we have to consider that according to several versions of Ancient Greek mythical texts, the Dioskouroi appeared to sailors in distress during storms in the form of St. Elmo's fire, which is an electrical discharge creating a glow about the masthead and rigging of ships. It is actually a natural phenomenon well known to sailors; dur-

ing thunderstorms, the air between the clouds and the ground becomes electrically charged, and then this electricity is drawn to the closest conductor, usually the top of a tall building, or the mast of a ship. This was believed to be a portent of escape from a storm. 'Until suddenly these two are seen darting through the air on tawny wings', this is the way the Homeric Hymn XXXII to the Dioskouroi puts it. Greek Lyric poet Alcaeus (fragment 34) addresses them in this manner: "brilliant from afar as you run up the forestays, bringing light to the black ship in the night of trouble". In Silvae (3.2.1) they are asked as follows: "sit upon the twin horns of the yard-arm" and "let your light illumine sea and sky".

The most plausible interpretation of the Ancient Greek name of Socotra reveals its character of shelter and safe haven for the embattled Indian Ocean mariners and the far-away driven navigators in jeopardy.

(TO BE CONTINUED)





# A short story about ... Dreaming RI[Saddam

RUSSELL WHITEHEAD  
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Without question I knew better. I mean, how many times have I heard 'don't eat a big meal right before bed, especially not a spicy big meal'. But I got home late, ordered a large anchovy pizza and popped on cable news. As usual there were stories about Iraq violence, more Iraq violence and what's this, a statement by Kofi Annan about Iraq violence.

The pizza arrived. I devoured it down to the last anchovy, followed by a quart of Ben and Jerry's ice cream. I slowly drifted off to sleep still with the hum of Iraq, Iraq, Iraq in my ears. It's surprising what the mind can conjure up under such circumstances.

The next thing I knew I was a high-powered attorney in a custom pinstripe Armani suit in a courtroom standing before an old, stern-looking judge and charged with defending Saddam Hussein! Whoa! And not just a part of a defense team. I had sole and total responsibility for his outcome.

What's more, in this court system, the client's attorney met the same fate as the client. Something about the aggrieved parties not being able to extract enough vengeance with a sole defendant in such circumstances. Talk about motivation!

I sat through quietly as the prosecution presented witness after witness extolling the former dictators heinous acts, day after day, week after week for 8 1/2 months. All the time Saddam glowered at me. Occasionally he made a gesture with his flattened right hand running across his throat to signal it would be my head! Yikes!

And during all this time I had to look up at a large oil painting of "W" that was directly behind the judge, a king-sized "W" portrait with that kind of a non-descript smile like "nobodies home upstairs".

When the prosecution concluded its case the judge turned to me. I excitedly pulled out the witness list I had prepared contained on a paper scroll. Oh my clumsiness! The scroll fell to the floor and rolled out its entire 50 meter length, every centimeter filled with witness names!

The judge began to speak. To my surprise he said nothing about my disruption to the courtroom. Rather he began: "Its 10 o'clock now. We'll take a 15 minute break, after which you can begin questioning your witnesses. Then this afternoon closing arguments will begin."

Closing arguments? CLOSING ARGUMENTS? "But your honor, the prosecution had 8 1/2 months to present their case during which time I wasn't allowed to ask a single question cross-examining any witness. And now you're giving me less than 2 hours to present my case? Whose idea of justice is that?"

"First of all, Mr. High-Powered-Attorney, another outburst like that and I will hold you in contempt of court. You know the penalty for that, don't you?"

I grimly nodded my head knowing full well the penalty for contempt of court was getting sent to Abu Ghraib, stripped naked, dressed only in a homely pink bonnet and shown on perpetual late night reruns of Reality Iraqi Justice on cable. In my pudgy physical condition it was without doubt a fate worse than death!

"And since you asked, Mr. High-Powered-Attorney, the decision to give you an opportunity to mount a defense for your client comes from the very highest seat of justice on the planet, The Israeli Supreme Court. Otherwise you wouldn't even get that opportunity. Any questions, Bub?"

I grimly shook my head in the negative. I could feel the eyes of every courtroom observer on me as the blood drained from my face and I staggered to reach the back door of the room which was suddenly the size of a football field. In passing I glanced over at Saddam. His right hand kept moving back and forth at his throat like an unemotional mechanical figure. I was doomed!!! Saddam was doomed!!! And yet I wondered how many of those courtroom observers pictured me at Abu Ghraib naked in a pink bonnet. Oh cruelty!

I had good fortune on the break. My luck was about to change. I was able to order and down four espressos in 15 minutes. Boy was I wired now! Try to stop me.

The trial resumed.

"Do you have any witnesses? Then I suggest you call them."

"Yes, your honor. For my first witness I call Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon."

"You're kidding, aren't you?"

"No your honor he was on my witness

list."

"Yeah, but he had a prior engagement that took precedence. I guess there was a \$1.98 all-you-could-eat brunch at the Hungry Bagel going on at this very moment. Next Witness."

I was understandably stunned. But I proceeded on thanks to my four espressos. "I call the bag man, Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Finance Minister."

"I guess it won't come as a surprise to you that he's enjoying brunch in the company of Mr. Sharon. Next witness."

OK. So I couldn't get any witnesses from Israel. That's not too surprising. But surely America has to be cooperative in Saddam's trial. They were most vocal in wanting to show the Iraqi people how justice works. "For my next witness I'll call Senate Leader Bill 'openness is the hallmark of democracy' Frist."

"Not available."

"OK any of the other 99 senators on the witness list."

"Not available."

"At brunch with Sharon?"

"Hey, somebody has to pick up the tab. Next witness."

"I'll call Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz. And if he's not available Douglas Feith, Larry Franklin or any of the other necons from the Pentagon."

"Not Available."

"Don't tell me they're at brunch with Sharon?"

"I don't think so. Last I heard they were living in some caves in Tora Bora."

"Yeah come to think of it its probably not safe for them back home with their faces on the new deck of cards and all. OK. Steve Rosen of AIPAC?"

"Nope"

"Oh come on judge. And I so wanted to ask Mr. Rubin if he can still conduct business in the dark now that AIPAC is radioactive."

"Now let's get on with it! Do you have any more witnesses?"

"Just one your honor. I call Kofi Annan to the stand."

"Not available."

"Your Honor, I can't believe that Mr. Annan didn't show. I suppose you're going to tell me he's at brunch with Sharon too?"

"Don't be silly. We just didn't invite him to the proceedings. Too much of a doom and gloom contrarian you know. If the defense has no further questions, then we'll break early for lunch. Be back at 1 o'clock sharp for closing arguments."

I was devastated. What kind of attorney can't call a single witness or ask a solitary question in the biggest trial this century? I couldn't eat anything for lunch, you know, thinking about the possibility of getting cited for contempt of court and having to wear that unattractive pink bonnet. But I was able to down 6 more espressos, glory be! Somehow I didn't feel like the failure I so obviously was.

The extended lunch break, even though over 2 hours long, was all too short. It was now time for closing arguments.

The prosecution was smug and arrogant. They felt their case was a "slam dunk" and acted like it. Their summary was short "Hey, dumb brown-skinned people of the jury, you've seen the overwhelming evidence against Saddam Hussein and his stupid attorney. Now off these clowns." With that he sat down, glanced over at me and HE motioned his right hand in a sawing motion across his throat! Oh great. Just what I need.

Well at least he didn't make reference to a pink bonnet.

When it was my turn I couldn't help but notice that the judge was starting to drift off. He obviously didn't have any of those espressos. Not even a laite. I'll bet he must have had the turkey special. Turkey with Tryptophane. Yes, that's it. And I remember him going back for seconds. I wondered: was this the work of Saddam's diabolical chemical and biological weapons program? As the judge's head nestled in his arms on top of the desk, I could hear faint but unmistakable snoring. Finally some fair and balanced justice.

This was my chance to earn my big high-powered attorney fees. A victory meant a lifetime supply of anchovy pizzas and a bathtub full of Ben and Jerry's. I was almost ready to explode from the excitement. Or maybe that was from the 10 espressos I had chugged down today. Either way I was READY.

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury. We fully admit that my client - the guy over there with the hugh right hand swinging mindlessly back and forth under his chin - my client was a baaaaad man. Terrible. The worst. Everything the prosecution said about his sordid activities is true.

But so what? Iraq was, and is, a tough country to run. I mean, do you feel safer now than when Saddam was in charge? Are you economically better off now than

with Saddam? Ask yourself are there more or less Iraqi bodies lying in the street under the 'coalition of the willing' than under Saddam?"

I was just getting warmed up. I hadn't even begun my smoking-gun argument to the jury. Ah, the judge was entering REM sleep, nice and quiet and docile. Saddam's right hand dropped down to scratch his crotch and thoughts of that pink bonnet began to fade. LET'S GET IT ON!!!!

I now showed video clips of cable to the jury. Even though they hadn't been placed into evidence during the trial! The prosecution objected strenuously. But their pleas fell on deaf ears - more accurately-sleeping ears. Saddam that sly fox had hidden his chemical and biological weapons in turkeys. Here we were searching for stockpiles of chemical OR biological weapons in Iraq and Saddam combined the two, stuffed them down some of those big birds and had them sitting right under our nose the whole time. Absolutely brilliant! Who in the world would have thought to look there? Hats off to you Saddam!

I was back to addressing the jury, which wasn't easy since I had to talk over the prosecutions constant screams of protest. "Ladies and gentlemen, you heard Kofi Annan declare the war illegal. Now that means there was no basis for the United States and the 'coalition of the willing' to invade Iraq and topple this fine cut of a man with the larger-than-life right hand. So you have to ask yourself, 'Why would they do it'"

You also should ask yourself 'Why would the United States congress approve a special \$10 billion payment to Israel? I mean that's \$6000 per Israeli child while at the same time congress burdened. US children with a deficit of \$7000 each in a single year? On the scoreboard of life that's Israeli kids with a lead of +\$13,000 over US kids! And that's just one payment in one year. I don't know if Israeli children are considered God's chosen people but they most certainly are the chosen people of the United States congress.

"Do you think Israel has any good reason to refuse the United States an audit into disposition of the special \$10 billion paid by the US congress even after hearing Sen Frist say 'openness is the hallmark of democracy? Why does Israel insist on keeping their \$10 billion as a secretive slush fund? And do you think its a coincidence that Israel's \$10 billion slush fund deposit just happened to be included in the congressional bill for the \$87 billion to fund the Iraq war?"

"Do you have any idea how much \$10 billion is? I know its difficult for us ordinary human beings to comprehend such a large amount of money but let me try to tell you anyhow. Why its enough to provide 100 people with \$10 million each and 435 people with \$2 million each and still have over \$8 billion left to buy other 'friends' in many countries."

"You also heard how Israel's western agent, AIPAC, arranged biannual trips to Israel for US senators, representatives and numerous other centers of political influence. Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, I ask you: do you think these politicians were so overcome with religious fervor that they felt compelled to visit the Holy Land? Or maybe they couldn't find a good vacation beach in Florida, California, Hawaii or the Caribbean? What do you think? Or maybe they just happened to find travel to Israel a rewarding trip, a HIGHLY rewarding trip."

"Now fighting a war isn't free. It costs lots of money. Even more expensive if you hire others to fight your war for you. And poor little Israel wasn't big enough on their own to buy the war the necons drew up for them. What to do? What to do? I know well get the United States to fight our war. Yes. And we'll get the United States to give us the money needed for the payoffs in this illegal war to senators and representatives as well as other centers of influence in the US, UK, Italy, Australia, etc. Yes. That will do the trick!"

"So in closing let me summarize for you. We have the United States Congress overwhelmingly voting to give Israel an obscene \$10 billion concurrent with funding for the Iraq war. You have Israel taking that money and establishing a \$10 billion secretive slush fund. You then have Congress coming to Israel in droves through AIPAC arranged trips. Then amazingly any little thing that Israel desires, Israel gets, including an illegal US led invasion into Iraq."

"So all I ask of you is to connect the dots and do the right thing for your native son, Saddam." Blank stares. That didn't register.

Let's try a different approach. "What I meant to say is I want you to follow the money to see what's behind the unwarranted attack on my poor innocent client."

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Big Sales during  
Ramadan

By Samer A.

Still no perceptible response from the jury. Not good.

"What I really meant to say, ladies and gentlemen, is in making this important decision to free my client rely on your common sense" Still no indication that I'm getting through.

"Oh, whatever. You know what I mean!" But there was no indication that they did. To say the least I was getting frustrated by now. In my desperation I turn my back to the jury to look at the judge who's now beginning to stir from his nap. Oh, great. Just what I need, more pressure. I glance up at the king-sized picture of "W" when suddenly it hits me.

I spin back around to face the jury while pointing up to "W". "If the lightbulb's not lit, you must acquit..... if the lightbulb's not lit, you must acquit..... if the..." Suddenly I see the juries faces light up. In unison they began slowly nodding in agreement. I could even see some of them begin moving their lips .... if the lightbulb's not lit, you must acquit .... if the lightbulb's not lit.....

I decided to end my close on that note. All the while the prosecutor was going absolutely ballistic. Finally, he even went over to shake the judge awake. And he did. To his regret. Big mistake. The judge cited him for contempt and battery.

Groggily the judge ordered the jury to the deliberation room. They left single file looking like they're dancing the Conga while mouthing the words 'bulb not lit, must acquit... bulb not lit, must acquit...'. The judge glared intently at me, knowing full well that I had something to do with this turn of events. But he wasn't about to admit that he was snookered by Saddam's chemical and biological turkeys.

The jury only took 2 1/2 hours to return a verdict, in a trial that lasted more than 8 months. They could have reviewed reams of evidence provided by the prosecution including pictures of gruesome mass graves, beheadings, torture, rape and on and on. They chose not to. And in the end they returned a unanimous "Not Guilty" verdict on all counts.

Following the conclusion of proceedings both Al Jazeera and CNN interviewed the jurors in depth. Although desiring diametrically opposing outcomes, they both determined that, to a person, jury nullification was cited as the reason for the verdict. A quote obtained from the jury foreman summarized the panels feelings:

"Without question Saddam Hussein was shown to be a dangerous and brutal thug. But we reject the assertion that Israel should dictate the fate of ANY Iraqi, particularly using the Zionists self-centered and deeply corrupt payoffs to the American political system to do their bidding. It is a miscarriage of justice not only to Saddam Hussein and the people of Iraq but towards every Arab and Muslim in the world." And here I thought I wasn't getting through to them. They understood everything I had said. Just goes to show you should never underestimate the power of a fair and balanced jury when they understand the true facts.

Saddam walked out of the courthouse a politically powerless but free man.

At last word there was a movement to erect a new statue of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, exceeding the height of any that had come before it. I saw the prototype. It was a highly complimentary rendering of Saddam. But I found it rather odd that he was in a saddle astride a turkey. Oh well. I never did much understand art.

When I awoke, I was in a cold sweat and made my way, rubbing my eyes, to the bathroom. As my eyes began to focus, I was crushed! The bathtub wasn't filled with Ben and Jerry's ice cream! It was all just a cruel dream. Oh well, maybe that's just as well. It had been some time since I gave the tub a good cleaning anyhow. I'll bet there wasn't a load of anchovy pizzas down in the kitchen either. Drat!

On the bright side at least there weren't any of those menacing pink bonnets seen lurking about.

## Reflections

By Yahya Al-Olfi  
alolfi@hotmail.com

# Might may seem right, but every season must end

The latest United Nations Report about the conditions of the Palestinians under the Israeli occupation, in addition to the extensive killings, incapacitations and injuries inflicted by the Israelis against the unprotected Palestinians whose conditions as it seems confirm to us every day as if the world has digested the daily Israeli brutality as something normal to see everyday before tomorrow worldwide without any reaction as long as such atrocities are endorsed by the most powerful country in the world, the USA.

The said report confirms that half of the Palestinians have no providers and are living on international charities, that half of the breast-feeding women are suffering from anemia while children are suffering from severe malnutrition.

The Palestinians are not merely killed and their houses being bulldozed but also they are being deprived from water. Israel has confiscated most of the water resources and destroyed hundreds of water wells.

During the past decades the Zionist controlled media and lobbies in Europe and America were able to cover the true color of the Israeli entity but steadily and daily the truth is becoming clear to all the people and the gap is widening between what the Israelis allege and what they are doing indeed to the Palestinians.

The world now sees Israel just like the Apartheid Regime of South Africa. Not only that, but ebody now tends to compare Sharon with Hitler, Milosevitch and Radovan Karaditch and the rest of the internationally famed criminals.

Europeans who aided and helped the establishment of Israeli have become irked with the Israeli extermination acts being practiced in these days leading to hundreds of killings, house detonations and the destruction of farms.

The International Court of Justice's resolution denouncing the wall being built by Israel has convinced the non-convinced that Zionism equals Racism and that the Israeli daily policies are dangerous to the worldwide security.

Israeli allegations in that the Palestinians were native of Greek Islands in the Mediterranean is being scoffed at because the Israelis are the ones who are aliens to the land and do come from different ethnic backgrounds but having one link and that is Judaism which is not a reason that is valid enough to build a nation on.

Israel and its policies are creating a Hoto- Tutsi situation, for while the Hoto criminals used knives to kill the Tutsis, Israelis are using airplanes, drones and machineguns in their systematic programmed killings. So, that is the only difference!

It is repulsive, Israeli children are grown up believing that killing Palestinians is like killing chickens or like being on a Hunting Trip. The majority of Israelis as it seems have become unfeeling and thus they can easily commit crimes even against the Israelis themselves. In fact, indications have lead now and in the past to many killings of Jews perpetrated by Israel itself in order to justify an Israeli policy.

History tells us vividly that Taba detonations are exactly a duplicate of the Israeli detonations of King David Hotel when U.K was still occupying the then Palestine which has become all of a sudden modern day Israel. Israelis are not stupid for they also justify their acts willily using the "security allegation" which is an age-old pretext said again and again.

This pretext has become now known to everybody, that it is being used to kill whenever and wherever it suits Israel. Through continuous usage of this pretext unfortunately many were convinced that Israelis are poor and who always are in danger while reality tells us that Israel is the most powerful in the region and others are being menaced by it not the other way round.

Ariel Sharon, has never ever been keen with regard to any peace initiative. Sharon also showed clearly his anger against the road-map process to solve the Palestinian exigency. Only lately the tactics of Sharon vis a vis the road-map are becoming clear.

Weissglas, an Israeli official divulged to a prominent Israeli Newspaper named "The Land" that Sharon's intended withdrawal from Gaza is but a preemptive plan to replace the road-map process and hence cease forever the establishment of a Palestinian State.

The American Administration under Bush appears so naive with regard to the Israeli tactics and is losing USA's remaining credibility with regard to the Palestinian Crisis.

In my opinion now and most probably in the future Israel has got three options, either to continue its savagery endlessly against Palestinians and Arabs, establish a neighboring viable Palestinian State or inevitably meet the destiny of the South African Apartheid Regime taking into account the hatred building up worldwide against Israel.



Continued from page 1

## Feeding young minds

Some were even financed by al-Harameen charitable society in Saudi Arabia which the Saudi authorities close won as it was proved that the society was involved in fund-raising for terrorist activities.

The investigations found out that only in Hodiedah schools around 810 people are working as teachers. The committee in charge of this task which was set up by the presidency expected to finish the task by the end of this year. This might disclose many more schools working with their own syllabuses without the knowledge of the authorities.

The most important consequence of the Sa'ada insurgency of Hussien al-Huthi is that it has raised concern over the religious doctrinal schools threatening the future of this country plagued with poverty and tribalism.

The cabinet decided in its meeting June 29th to shut down such schools operating without license. It said in its statement "due to the connection between extremism, militancy and certain curricula that promote deviant and

alien ideologies...the cabinet has issued orders for the immediate closure of all schools so as to realize moderation in Islam, preserve national unity, and to increase security and stability."

Some of these schools are being supported by the government like al-Hawthi. The government plan was to stop funding of these schools which bring their closure and for the others which are being financed by some people in Yemen and from abroad, the government will close down.

However, President Ali Abdullah Saleh said in a meeting with security later that these "religious schools will not be closed down but they will be working according to the education law and their work would be organized so they can operate after completion of secondary schooling and under monitoring of the ministry of education."

The plight is that the ruling regime tried to use such schools and religious sects against each other. In the beginning it supported the Salafia and Muslim brother against the socialist

party. Then, it supported al-Hawthi against the fanatic Salafia. The consequence was the bloody killings of Sa'ada. Now, the political regime is flirting the Sophists or mystics considering it as a group that present a rosy and moderate picture of Islam. But, this is not in the interest of Yemen.

These schools teaching different doctrines in a society that is tribal, conservative and heavily armed can pose a potential threat if the government does not monitor and control. There must be control over all these schools including al-Eman University which has become a pain in the neck for Yemen.

Even some voices in the Islah party have begun alarming the danger of this university which the US accuses of promoting extremism. Yemen really needs to address doctrinal teaching right now to avoid serious consequences.

Such a step by the authorities in counting the number of these schools is good but has to be followed by others that lead to control of the religious education.

## More press under fire

"We are not a newspaper that has just been founded yesterday. In fact, our newspaper was supposed to celebrate its 25th anniversary soon, and the timing of this governmental measure has indeed sabotaged our plans," he complained.

This comes in a time when press freedom in Yemen has been steadily monitored locally and internationally, as several incidents have caused concern about the freedom of press in Yemen, especially as the Editor-in-Chief of Al-Shoura opposition newspaper is still in custody.

Human rights activists in Yemen are upset due to the successive measures taken against non-governmental newspapers, fearing that this could signal a tendency to retreat from promises made by the regime to enhance democracy and allow more liberties, specifically in regards to freedom of expression.

# Reiki: an art of healing

DR. P.A. ABRAHAM  
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
SANA'A UNIVERSITY  
abbyraju@y.net.ye

Reiki ('Ray-key') is a Japanese word for Universal Life Energy. It is an ancient healing art rediscovered more than hundred years ago by Dr. Mikao Usui, a Japanese Priest. It is defined as the power, which acts and lives in all created matter. This energy is everywhere in the universe and in abundance.

In this system Reiki practitioners or channels can pass on Universal Life Energy to themselves and others thereby energizing and healing them. Once a person has been opened up to become a "channel" of Reiki, life energy will flow through his/her hands of its own accord and he/she will retain this ability for the rest of the life. This energy can then be passed on to self or others simply by laying on hands. It is a simple "touch and heal" system. In fact, we are all born with this Universal life energy, but that our negative reaction to life events causes us to become less open with the result that the natural flow of energy is less pure and less available. Science recognizes the fact that the so-called solid objects are just densely vibrating energy that in fact there is no solid matter. Hermetic science also states "all is energy". Energy is all around us and inside us as well. We constantly react and respond to energy without realizing it. Around us is an energy field which is referred to as "aura". The aura has mainly three levels; emotional, mental and spiritual.

The attunement process of Reiki enables one to get in touch with the true essence. We tend to feel this essence or core self at times in our lives when we are in a heightened state of awareness. Reiki can provide the boost to help you develop that sense of awareness and with a daily practice of self-treatment, enables this awareness to grow. But Reiki needs a receptive ear. Our inner voice is the natural spokesperson for the wisdom of Universal Life Force Energy.

## How does Reiki work?

The body is in fact energy vibrating at a certain frequency, and all its frequencies have their own natural flow. However, when we make a judgment about something (rather than discernment), the judgment gets stored in the cellular structure of the body in the form of a physical and/or emotional block.

Emotions are a reaction to our thoughts or judgments about people and life's situations. Since they distort the natural frequencies, negative thoughts or judgments are experienced as dense or uncomfortable vibrations. Such thoughts may turn into headaches, tension, stomachaches, ulcers etc. Anger, jealousy, greed, guilt, grief and other negative emotions can cause physical ailments. Plato has rightly pointed out that if you want to heal your body you must first heal your mind.

Through constant practice Reiki may actually heal all of these blockages by exposing them to the much higher vibratory frequency of Universal Life Force Energy, which can then penetrate and dissolve any blockages. Thus Reiki heals by calming the mind and raising the life force energy in the body. When we treat ourselves or someone with Reiki, we do this by laying our hands gently on various parts of the body with our fingers closed. We soon feel a kind of sensation in our palms like something flowing, warmth, pulling tingling etc. Each person reacts in a different way to Reiki and no general rule can be said to exist. The most common experience during a treatment is a sense of peace and relaxation and some even fall asleep. The effects of Reiki can be listed as follows:

- Reiki supports the body's natural ability to heal itself. When practiced regularly it develops good health and resistance to sickness
- Reiki works on all levels- physical, emotional, mental and spiritual
- Reiki loosens up blocked energy and promotes the flow of energy thereby, providing a total relaxation
- Reiki energizes and balances body's energy
- Reiki cleanses the poisons and toxins from the body
- Reiki is an extremely pleasant, holistic method of healing

## Characteristics of a Reiki Treatment

- Reiki is always drawn and never given. Do not take credit or blame for the final result
- Reiki is an intelligent energy and follows its own logic, knowing where and to what extent it is required. Therefore it is not necessary to diagnose before treatment.
- There is no overdose of Reiki and it can never do any damage as it only flows in the area and quantity required by the recipient.
- No special kind of power or ability or knowledge is required for Reiki. It is simple and natural enough for anybody to learn and make use of.
- Reiki is passed only on request. Not

without asking, except in case of family members and children, accidents and emergency.

## Reiki Treatment

• Wear loose dresses comfortable for sitting or lying positions. Remove watches, Jewelry, rings, belts, wallets etc. Relax your mind and body and close your eyes.

• Wash hands before and after treatment

• You can sit in a comfortable position or lie down on a blanket or any sheet. Avoid sitting directly on ground. As far as possible keep the surrounding peaceful and serene and if possible, make a regular place for practicing Reiki.

• Start with an Attitude of Gratitude (Thank God for all the Blessings that you have, Thank yourself, Thank the Cosmic energy, Thank your parents and teachers...)

• Start with keeping your hands in cup shape, gently on various positions on your body. Follow from top to bottom wherever you feel the need of energy. Keep your hand for 3-5 minutes on each position. Problematical areas can be treated for more time (10-15) minutes, as required. If you know the positions of "Chakras" on the body, try to give reiki on them.

• At the end once again thank yourself and Reiki.

## Five Principles of Reiki

The first principle is: "Just for today I will live with an attitude of gratitude".

If we try to follow an attitude of gratitude, life becomes a never-ending expression of abundance. It is the tendency of human beings to concentrate on what we don't have. Then we continue to experience the state of not having. As the saying goes "Count your Blessings". If we begin to focus on all the good things that we have; our family, the beauty of nature, your education, your talents etc. a positive shift in our life will begin to occur. The greatest challenge is to maintain an attitude of gratitude when things go wrong.

The second Principle is: "Just for today, I will not worry".

It is said that worry, hurry and hurry are the root causes of all illness. Worry is a signal, which shows how stuck you are in the ego and its attachment to having things its way. It is one thing to have concern about our loved ones, or about taking care of business properly etc. It is quite another to keep on worrying about all these. Worrying over the past is also futile, as the past never exists. If you regret something you did in the past, feel

your remorse fully until it dissipates and move on. Do not carry any guilt feelings, which are negative. If we brood over some past grievances, we start generating and experiencing negative emotions associated with the event, and though the event may be long gone, the emotions are refreshed and regenerated. The more we brood on this, more negative energy is generated. Each experience, whether good or bad should be considered as an opportunity.

The third Principle is: "Just for today I will not anger".

Anger arises when the ego notices that things are not happening as you wish. An angry person generates negative vibration not only on himself but also in others. When you are angry, your blood pressure goes up and the whole atmosphere gets affected. The best emotional option is: 'letting go' of judging yourself and 'the other'. It is really healing.

The fourth Principle is: "Just for today I will do my work honestly".

Honesty is not only the best policy; it is also the safest policy. This principle addresses the need to choose a vocation, which helps you grow, and gives you a sense of fulfillment and you do the job that is allotted to you with commitment and sincerity. It also means that you need not be afraid of speaking the truth when required. To be true to yourself also means that we need to take time for ourselves, not be interrupted by anyone when you wish to be alone and it is essential for maintaining a peaceful existence. Eventually, the more we are willing to give to ourselves, the easier it will be to give to others in a natural way. Life is simpler, when we are true to ourselves.

The fifth Principle is: "Just for today I will show love and respect for all living beings"

Plants, animals, birds along with human beings are all parts of God's creation and it is very important that we love and respect all living things. The weaker a living being is, the more sympathy and kindness it deserves.

The five Reiki principles given by Dr Usui, in fact, help us to improve the quality of our lives, even if you do not practice reiki. Dr Usui probably recognized that, if used wisely, they would remove the cause of suffering and disease. If followed faithfully, these principles will lead to a more positive outlook towards life because, though they appear to be mere concepts and beliefs, they are totally wholesome and life affirming when integrated with daily practice of reiki.

\*The word "Chakra" is derived from Sanskrit and means "Wheel". Chakras are spiral energy centers, which exist in subtle energy body of ours and are responsible for the flow of energy throughout the body. It is said that there are seven major chakras and many minor chakras in our body. The seven major chakras are Root Chakra, Hara Chakra, Solar Plexus, Heart Chakra, Throat Chakra, Third Eye Chakra, and Crown Chakra. The chakras also correspond to mental and emotional states of a person and decide various aspects of ones behavior and development. A blockage in the energy flow of the chakra and excess energy can lead to imbalance and disharmony on physical, emotional, mental and spiritual values. These disturbances are often caused by psychological stress and trauma and painful experiences or excess of joy.

(The author of this article is a reiki practitioner)

## A letter to the teachers of English: 63 Develop writing skills of your learners (2)

DR. M.N.K. BOSE  
(BOSE@y.net.ye)  
Associate Professor of  
English,  
Faculty of Arts, Ibb.

Dear Fellow teachers,

In the last letter, I said that the traditional thinking in ELT has been to teach the language skills one after another and writing skills are the last one to develop in the learners. But this sequencing of skills in classroom teaching has been challenged by many practitioners. According to them, such sequencing contradicts with the natural learning process; no one learns any language in a watertight compartment fashion, nor does anyone use the language in such a fashion. We listen and speak or speak and write or read and write at the same time, according to our needs. It is our needs that decide which skill or skills we use at a particular time.

Taking the needs of our learners into account has gained currency these days while planning our teaching of English. Integrating the necessary skills instead of compartmentalizing them is the recommended classroom technique, about which I have written in my earlier letters. So, writing need not be postponed in English classes and enough attention should be paid to the development of writing from the first preparatory class itself in Yemeni schools.

While developing writing, both the aspects of writing - cognitive as well as motor aspect - should be paid attention to from the beginning. However, motor skills are preparatory and so should get precedence over the other. This involves activities such as practicing the correct shape and size of each letter of the alphabet, joining each letter with the other in the right way. Activities found in the Workbook

meant for the first preparatory class (look at units 2 (p.10), 3 (p.13), 4 (28, 31), for example) are second stage activities. There are two handwriting books, as a part of the CECY course materials at the preparatory level, which are used for teaching the basics of handwriting to develop the motor skills.

But, unfortunately, these handwriting books are not available in many schools and so learners are not given practice in the basics of handwriting; when they are introduced to writing words and phrases in units 2, 3 and 4, they find it difficult and in most cases, the handwriting is not properly learnt. Teaching the basics of handwriting is very important for our learners in Yemeni schools for the following two reasons: one, English, unlike Arabic, is written from left to right, and two, most of the letters in English like a, c, d, e, h, i, k, l, m, n are joined with the following letters on the right, which is a problem for the Arabic learners, who are used to joining the letters on the left. One can observe the problem the learners face while writing these letters in English; some of them learn to write letters like e, v, w, u in the wrong way and this affects their speed in writing in higher classes. This can be avoided, if the basics of writing are taught properly in the beginning classes. There isn't much help available to the teachers of English in Yemeni schools, even if they are interested in helping their learners.

In the next few letters, this is what I am planning to concentrate on - how to teach the beginners the basics of handwriting such as the correct shape and size of each letter of the English alphabet, how to join each letter with the following letter while writing a word etc. I am sure, you will find them useful.

Yours fraternally,  
Dr.M.N.K.Bose.

## Poem

### Farewell

DR. M. SNEHAPRABHA  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
IN ENGLISH,  
HADRAMOUT  
UNIVERSITY

Farewell to thee, sylvan Pokkunn  
Though an early departure, unthought of.

With a heavy heart, rather tongue-tied  
I have to leave this hillock numbed  
Where I have spent long, long years  
The best period of life in high spirits  
All bright adolescent days in mirth  
As well as the joyous youth of infinite worth  
Adieu! My alma mater as well as my

workplace  
Numerous friends have I here of  
diverse streams  
Teaching, Non-Teaching, Men and  
Women

We had together dramas, seminars  
Festivals, Music, Art, Sculpture  
And what not!  
We had long hours of discussions  
On literature, politics and everything  
on earth

A number of picnics had we gleefully  
Time spent together jovially  
Which sure, never will return.  
I had inspiration for creativity  
From this campus, no doubt in plenty.  
Generations one after another  
Were taught by me with ease  
They occupy various positions

In and around Kerala and India's  
corners  
Some of them even in alien lands  
All assets of a teacher's profession

I thank thee, 2.G College  
For all the blessings showered upon  
me  
And all the honors and laurels  
As well as affection and  
encouragement.  
Happy, that I am not retiring  
But on the look out for new pastures  
Where I can render more service

One thing, I assure you  
Wherever I go  
I carry your memory  
And I am proud of you.

## Calligraphy

The written script of the Arabic language unites the world of Islam. Arabic Calligraphy is considered very beautiful by the whole world, both Islamic and non-Islamic. Of course, there are many different scripts which the Arabic calligrapher can use. Three well-known examples which are immediately recognized are Kufic, Thulth and Riq'ah.

But did you know that English also has many different scripts? Perhaps they are not so important in English nowadays as the different scripts are there in Arabic. Calligraphy is probably the most important form of art for the Muslims. It is seen not only in the Qur'an and in books, but also in many other places. It

is used, for example, for the decoration of buildings. In the western world. The art of calligraphy declined with introduction of printing and typewriters. However, it is now becoming more popular again and calligraphy is in high demand to illustrate books, posters, cards, letterheads and many other things.

Some of different English scripts are so common that you will almost certainly see them in your reading. Three of the most common scripts used are Roman (based on letters developed by the Romans about 2000 years ago) Gothic (which developed in northern Europe between the 10th and 15th centuries AD) and Italic (from 15th and 16th century Italy). How common are these scripts and where will we see them? Random script is probably the most common. This is because it is clearest and easiest to read. Almost all the newspapers, magazines and books which you will ever see in English use some form of the Roman script. Gothic script is quite difficult to read, even for native speakers. It is usually seen on letterheads, in the names of newspapers, and outside buildings. Italic script is always written by hand. However, a slanted version of Roman script is often used in printing to stress or emphasize things, and this is also called Italic.

Abdullah . A-Harekah  
Fourth Level  
Faculty RIIEducation,  
Al-Mahweet

## The closest stranger

BY EMAD AL-QADASI  
ENGLISH DEPT  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION,  
SANA'A UNIVERSITY

Hard to your ears and tough to your mind.  
I'm sorry, but I can't think the way you do  
Cause there's a barrier between me and  
you.

The closest person you are to me  
But strangers it seems we'll always be  
Why is it that we always fight?

A barrier made of certain kind  
Surely present in your heart and mind  
Who knows one day it may disappear  
Taking away all the pain and fear.

Sometimes my words are of unexpected  
kind

The closest person you are to me  
But strangers it seems we'll always be.

## Stop and tell me

BY A. M. AL-MALAMARI,  
FACULTY OF MEDICAL SCIENCE,  
HODEIDAH UNIVERSITY

Tell me:  
How do you want me to be happy,  
When you are the one who hurts my soul?  
How do you want me to be merry?  
When my sadness has been your goal  
My emotion is a whirlpool  
Which I can not control.  
Stop for a moment and tell me:  
If you have a heart or a stone wall  
Or on love ... you have a firm rule.  
Love is great and isn't a doll,

My life is a frozen winter, which is too cold  
Of course you gave me a coat, though with  
many a hole  
The agony is intense and dreadful  
It has made me a picture of grief  
But your silence and pride must fall  
It may be today or tomorrow, that's all  
Yet I am proud of my grief  
Which has been my adornment like a jewel  
Pick them and store them, if you like  
Just in case ever in future they satisfy your  
whim, ego or the like  
How do you want me to be happy  
When you are the one who hurts my soul?



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## Socotra:

# The diachronic value of multi-cultural societies (2-2)

The text reads as follows.  
 A. Dioscouridou Nesos – Socotra with- in the 'Periplus of the Red Sea'.  
 "And beyond that (cape Syagros, i.e. Ras Fartak), in the open sea, in the middle of the distance between that (cape Syagros) and the opposite cape, the Cape of the Perfumes, but however rather closer to Syagros lies an island that is called Dioscouridou, a very big island with humid climate and desert environment. There are several rivers in the island, crocodiles, many big snakes and huge lizards. The inhabitants eat the flesh of these lizards, and use the fat, after melting it, for oil. There is no agricultural production, neither vineyards, nor wheat fields. The inhabitants are not numerous, and they dwell in the northern side of the island only, that is the part that looks towards the Arabic peninsula. They are emigrants Yemenites,

Indians, and some Greek speaking Egyptians, and they have all intermingled with one another. They keep themselves busy with trade trips to all the coasts around. The island offers the best type of turtle shells, as well as the usual type of land turtle shell, and white turtle shells, everything in big quantity and in big size. There are also available shells of the huge mountain turtle that are very herd. This turtle's ribs that are the most useful part of its body cannot be easily cut, and in addition are of dark yellowish color. Contrarily to that, any part of its shell can be used; out of it, craftsmen make small boxes, small plaques, small dishes and plates, and all sorts of similar objects, since it can be easily cut. One finds here the Indian cinnabar (in Greek kinnabari) that is collected from specific trees on the trunk of which it flows.

The island belongs to the aforementioned king of the Frankincense-bearing country, in the same way Azania belongs to Kharibael and the Mofar administrator. The island's merchandise is usually transported on Mouza ships, as well as on some ships of the Limyrike and of Barygaza, when they happen to cross this part of the world. If such is the case, they exchange (barter trade) rise, wheat, and cotton from India, as well as female slaves that are most desired since scarce in the island, with huge quantities of turtle oysters. For the time being the king has purchased the island, and there is royal garrison permanently residing on the island".  
 B. Plausible Interpretations of the Ancient Greek name of Socotra  
 The reference to Socotra we find in this excerpt of the Periplus is among the earliest ones in the history of the island. The same name is used by Diodorus Siculus,

correct 'laboratory' for the top natural scientist of Alexandria! However, of course, it is not like this, the name was used at least 100 years earlier...  
 What means in Greek 'Dioskourides'? Here we are met with two possibilities. First, the name can mean the 'descendent of Dioskouros' (or of the 'Dioskouroi', I mean of both of these people), or the 'protected by Dioskouros', the 'disciple' or the 'follower' of them. Second, it can also be a reference to the Dioskourosi themselves.  
 It would be plausible that an Alexandrian Egyptian mariner, well versed in Greek mythology, appropriated for him the name of Dioscourides in the sense of the 'protected' mariner. The reasons of this protection we describe just below. Then, according to this possibility of interpretation, he settled in the island, rose to political power among the inhabitants, and ruled the island as an autonomous coun-

try. He then may have sold the island to Eleazos, and returned rich and wealthy in Alexandria. Either this is the case, or the island was attributed to the divine protection of the 'Dioskouroi'.  
**Continued on page 10**

A view R1ā IDVFLQDWLkEJ In Socotra



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