

Fisheries problem tops Saleh, Afwerki talks

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Eritrean President Isayas Afwerki is expected to visit Yemen this week, an official source said Saturday.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Afwerki are to discuss the problem of the traditional fishing in the territorial waters of the two countries after the International Arbitration Court passed its ruling on the Yemen-Eritrea conflict over the Hunish Island in favor of Yemen.

Yemen Times learnt from diplomatic sources that the visit is an attempt

from Eritrea to break the isolation it is facing since the establishment of the Sana'a Gathering for Cooperation which includes Yemen, Sudan and Ethiopia.

This is the second visit for the Eritrean president to Yemen since the International Arbitration Court verdict was passed in 1998. President Ali Abdullah Saleh also paid a visit Eritrea in 2001. Saleh and Afwerki will discuss during the visit, which would last for few days, the problem of the Yemeni fishermen who are being arrested by Eritrean authorities, which



President Saleh President Afwerki

claim that the Arbitration did not give them the right to fish in the Eritrean waters. It is expected that Afwerki will

respond positively to the request of Saleh to release the arrested Yemeni fishermen, exempting them from the fines imposed on them.

Eritrea said that the Sana'a Gathering was an attempt from the three countries against it.

However, President Ali Abdllah Saleh called upon Eritrea last January to join the Sana'a Gathering for Cooperation. Saleh emphasized that Eritrea is welcomed to join the Gathering while meeting Ali Said Abdullah, Eritrean Foreign Minister January.

Father of Yemeni press shot dead Prominent journalist mysteriously killed

BY MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Police is continuing investigations into the mysterious killing of Al-Waseet newspaper's editor-in-chief. Mohammed Salem Al-Sagheer, the prominent Yemeni journalist and businessman, was found killed along with his wife in his house located in downtown Sana'a on Monday 6 December 2004.

The killer, described as professional by criminal investigators, had used a silenced gun shooting bullets one of



which lodged in the head of the wife, and three others penetrated his skull and heart.

the victim, Mohammed Al-Sagheer, was born in Al-Turbah, Al-Hujariah district, Taiz province in 1956 and is a father of a 21-year-old daughter and a son in his teens.

He studied his primary and preparatory school in Aden and his secondary



Mohammed Al-Sagheer

in Taiz, and obtained his bachelor degree in commerce from Cairo University in 1985.

After his graduation, he was a staunch supporter for the freedom of press, enabling more than 26 private sector and opposition newspapers to publish their stuff at reasonable prices by means of his printing press. Thus, he was described as father of Yemeni press.

His death represents a great loss to press community and Yemen in general as he was a skilled journalist and economist.

Sufan Promises Support for Media

Danish Initiate Media Development Program

BY MOHAMMED AL-QADHI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A roundtable discussion to mark a phase to prepare for the launch of the Joint Media Development Program (JMDDP), a project initiated by the Danish government in collaboration with the Yemeni stakeholders was held last Monday at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MPIC). The meeting was attended by Ahmad Mohammed Sufan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning who said that the media sector in Yemen needs a real reform. He thanked the Danish government for taking such an initiative and promised a support from the government to bring about comprehensive development to the media sector in Yemen. Representatives of the donor countries and organizations including the Danish, Japanese and Dutch ambassadors were present to hear the results of

a six-month work between the Danish team and Yemeni stakeholders. During the meeting, the working groups coordinators covering several areas of the media landscape presented identified problems, assessment of their needs as well as strategic priorities on the short and long run. The Danish team also presented a summary of their field visits to Aden and Taiz. Some background was presented on how the working groups covering (Access to information; Freedom of the media; Strengthening the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS); Professional training in the media sector; Upgrading of schools of journalism; Supporting private publishers; Gender (as a cross cutting issue) as well as the preparatory committee set up from the coordinators of these working groups who signed an agreement to during Ramadan to work together for the promotion of the media sector in Yemen. Of course, this committee is not final

and is subjected to change and amendments. The next steps that the Danish are working for is to sign a framework agreement between Yemen and Denmark as basis for further Danish input as well as sign memorandum of understanding between stakeholders. They will also establish an office to facilitate the program including a Danish senior media advisor. Then, there will be an official launch of the program with a 6-month start-up phase where many consultations and dialogue as well as pilot projects will be implemented.

The event saw broad participation from media stakeholders who presented their ideas and input to who the program should appear, the areas of interest. During their stay in Yemen, the Danish mission has conducted several talks with

government officials, media stakeholders and donors. Journalists were very happy about the roundtable, envisaging it as a very good step to improve the media sector, which is very weak and needs a lot of attention. They were optimistic about the initiative that brought them into direct dialogue and contact with donors who can be attracted to focus on the area that was neglected.



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*The government has got big challenges***UNDP administrator visits Amran**BY SHAKER AL-MOLSI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

After his arrival on Monday December 6, Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, Administrator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), conducted a field visit the next morning to the province of Amran, 50 kms northwest of Sana'a City. He was accompanied by Dr. Abdullah Al-Saidi, Yemen's Representative at the United Nations, Dr. Mutahar Al-Abbasi, Deputy Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, and Mrs. Flavia Parsieri, UN Resident Coordinator in Yemen.

There, Mr. Brown met with Amran governor Taha Hajir, and a number of officials at the governorate compound. Mr. Hajir briefed the guest on the conditions and recent developments in the province.

"It is a newly established governorate, and is witnessing much in terms of development," said the governor.

"We focused on poverty reduction and illiteracy eradication. We have established training centers for women. We also encouraged boys to get enrolled in schools, and put much emphasis on girls education reaching an unprecedented rate."

Yet, the governor reiterated that Amran is a new governorate that still needs many things.

On his part, Mr. Brown thanked the local government for its efforts and expressed his belief that the previous four years were full of activity, and that in the coming years more progress will hopefully take place. Yet, he spoke plainly about points that requisite treatment.

"Yemen is pressed by international donors to make reforms and fight corruption. It has got to look for new resources and has to better manage available ones. For this reason, it was selected a Millennium Project pilot country."

The delegation then visited a school in Thibain district benefiting from the School-Feeding Program managed by the World Food Program (WFP), a UN organ-



UNDP administrator visiting a rural school in the province of Amran. It has become noticeable that number of students enrolled has increased especially girls due to the school feeding program

ization. The program is intended to encourage more girls in the rural areas to join education.

After that, they visited Al-Amel Women Association in the city of Amran, which receives technical support from the UNDP. The directress of the association explained the types of works they do and the courses they offer to women.

In a statement to the Yemen Times, Mr. Mark Brown said the aim of his visit is to evaluate what has been done so far.

"We have allotted \$60 million to Yemen over the past four years. Our priorities were decentralization, and poverty reduction by means of different initiatives. We support also microfinance for small businesses and women societies so that more jobs are created.

"We've done a very good work and decentralization is successful but it is a long way to go. Control has been shifted from Sana'a to provinces and efficient administration is required on the part of governors."

Mr. Brown said the government has got many difficulties to deal with. "It has got big challenges to build new sectors in the economy quickly in order to cope with the consequences of overpopulation and poor

resources."

On the other hand, Dr. Mutahar Al-Abbasi said that the UNDP administrator's visit to Yemen is a great event.

"The visit of this high profile UN official will give impetus to the development efforts in Yemen."

Warning over water:

Mr. Brown indicated the impending water crisis of Yemen. "It is a critical thing because the country has a low water average and much of it is wasted.

"The country needs a better water management. They should explore engineering alternatives finding if agriculture might be adapted so that it consumes less water. There is also the option of distilling seawater, but rationalizing water use is very necessary."

UNV's awarded:

At the end of his tour, Mr. Mark Brown attended a reception ceremony held at Dar Al-Hajar (Rock Palace) in his honor in the accompaniment of Amran governor. He presented recognition certificates to the UN volunteers in Yemen, appreciating their efforts in the development process of the country.

Inauguration of IATA bureau in YemenBY YEMENIA
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

IATA has inaugurated an office in Sana'a, with Mr. Shady Muhammad Raweh selected as the Bureau Director in Yemen. The director of the IATA Bureau in Sana'a will supervise the 2005 BSP project, after all local and international arrangements have been finalized.

Chairman of the Board of YEMENIA, Capt. Abdul Khaleq al-Qadhi, has declared that this BSP project represents a qualitative transfer for the financial dealings among travel agencies and airlines companies, and organizes the financial reconciliation

through an advanced computer system.

The IATA Bureau will have the main role in approving the local agencies' membership, and coordinate IATA economic and the training initiatives locally, and by coordinating with regional bureaus and training centers.

The IATA has chosen Yemen for executing IATA numerous programs in the Middle East aimed at upgrading the proficiency in navigational, economic, environmental, and training functions.

The Chairman of IATA, Mr. Jeoffany Businyani, and the Deputy Chairman, Mr. Mujdi Sabri, are paying special attention to Yemen for attention to development and innovation.

Micro-enterprise course concluded

TAIZ BUREAU

A training five-day course aimed at strengthening technical and administrative skills in managing micro-enterprises has concluded. It was run by the Social and Cultural Center for Development (SCCD) in collaboration with the German Project for Developing the Private Sector. Twenty female trainees participated in the

course.

Amin al-Duba'ai, said that the trainees had previously taken courses in dressmaking and other handicrafts but are now interested in founding private mini-enterprises.

He confirmed that the center SCCD would provide step-by-step assistance in improving these enterprises, providing them with technical support, training and consultation.

Japan assists in Abyan Governorate

The government of Japan has extended a grant aid of up to \$US86,821 to Abyan Governorate local council to renovate Al-Ghafiqi School in Zinjubar under the scheme of the "Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects."

This project aims at supporting small-scale community based projects to be implemented by local governments and NGOs. The grant will cover the costs for the renovation of the school in order assist the 1200 students and their teachers.

The agreement was signed in Sana'a by Mr. Fareed Mujaear, Governor of Abyan and Mr. Yuichi Ishii,

Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Yemen.

During the current Japanese fiscal year (April 2004 - March 2005), eleven projects, including this project have been financed in Yemen at a total cost of \$US758,666.

Since Japan believes that one of the most important imperatives for poverty alleviation is developing human resources, it has made its major contribution to the development of education sector in Yemen in fiscal years 2002 and 2003. Japan extended two grants amounting up to approximately \$US12 million to construct and furnish 30 basic education schools in the

Readers' Voice

Yemen Times features "Readers' Voice" a popular way for our readers to interact with us. This is your opportunity to have a say on world and local affairs.

This edition's question:

Do you think president Afwerki's visit will pave the way for Eritria's joining the Sana'a Gathering?

Yes
No

last edition's question:

Do you think the problem of tribal vengeance in Yemen can be solved quickly?

- Law enforcement and disarmng tribes can start immediately **54%**
- No solution in the short-run, a long-run plan may work **36%**
- There is no solution whatsoever **10%**

Go to our website at: yementimes.com/#poll and have your voice heard!

Iran Red Crescent opens hospital

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A new Iranian Hospital was opened last Sunday by Abdurabu Mansour Hadi, Vice President of the Republic, in conjunction with the Iranian Red Crescent delegation. The hospital is part of the mutual cooperation between Yemen and Iran in the field of health.

The five-storey hospital and its equipment cost around \$5.5 million, and includes 70 beds, an operation room, intensive care facilities, and



observation areas. The specialized fields, including heart, eye, and dental care, are equipped with the modern medical equipment.

Dr. Ahmed Ali Bala, Chairman of Iranian Red

Crescent Association, confirmed that opening the Iran hospital in Sana'a represents the brotherly cooperation between the two countries. He pointed out that the fields of cooperation will increase in the near future that will include new hospital facilities in Aden and other cities.

Violence still practiced against childrenBY FAHMIA AL-FOTIH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Recently a number of studies have revealed that there is much violence practiced against children. A number of workshops and symposiums have attempted to combat this growing problem, and the Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood held a special workshop to discuss the outcomes of a study on the violence against children in Yemen.

The participants were divided into

four groups, to discuss violence in the local community violence at home, violence in schools violence among juveniles.

Fatihia Mohammed Abdullallah, assistant secretary-general, said in statement to The Yemen Times "this study has tried to analyze the real situation of violence against children either in the family and school or between children themselves. The aim of this workshop is to display the efforts and outcomes of the study that a number of academics and researchers from Sana'a University have

carried out and supervised it."

She added "the study has found that there is really violence practiced against children but we cannot consider it as a big phenomenon. We in the Higher council for Motherhood and childhood are going to announce the results of this study in two workshops."

She concluded that "the results, along with other results of other Arab countries will be sent to United Nations for review. Accordingly there will be plans and strategies to handle the violence in all different levels."

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VACANCY

The British Council in Sana'a invites applications for the post of Assistant Director (Projects)

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. Our purpose is to build mutually beneficial relationships between people in the UK and in Yemen, and to increase appreciation of the UK's creative ideas and achievements.

In Yemen we work to support education reforms and the teaching and learning of English; we provide access to information on opportunities in the UK; we provide opportunities for creative contacts and exchanges for young people in Yemen and the UK, and we act as a centre for British examinations.

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Closing date for applications will be **27 December 2004**.

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International Crescent concludes course

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The recent course of the Islamic Committee of International Crescent concluded its activities last Monday.

During the opening session of the course, Dr. Abubaker al-Qirbi reinforced the agreement between the national legislations of Islamic countries with the international human rights law. He called on all Islamic governments to finalize the steps

toward practicing international human rights law for the good of the Islamic nation.

Dr. Ali Abu Humdah, Chairman of the Islamic Committee of International Crescent, said that the Islamic Conference Organization is aware of the need to support and improve the joint work in this area and the importance of increasing the participation of the Islamic nation in the efforts of the international community.

Dr Mohammed al-Kabab, Chairman

of the Yemeni Red Crescent Association that hosted the course, said that the occasion "opened the door of cooperation and partnership with all international and regional organizations that are concerned with achieving the goals of the Islamic Conference Organization."

Secretary-general of the Islamic Conference Organization said that, "we are trying to study the best possible ways of achieving the goals of this course meeting the needs of the Islamic

nation in the field of the social and human services in all conditions."

Many papers were presented in the course including the paper of Ahmed Naser Al-Hamati, Deputy Minister of Information, about the media and its role in spreading international human rights law. Another paper was presented by Qatar Red Crescent represented by Dr. Mohammed Bin Ghanem about the importance of charitable work in the international human rights movement.

Third local council conference

BY YASSER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The third local council conference, which lasted for three days and included 839 members from the central and local authorities, concluded on Dec. 6.

"Decentralization is the future choice" was the slogan of the conference, which was inaugurated by the President Saleh who stressed in his speech that the experience of local authority is the base of pride for many countries across the world. He said the local authority experience has been positive and is essential to national unification in every country.

He also emphasized the importance of the participation of different political forces within the local councils, the General People Congress having won 49 per cent of local seats, followed by Islah with 24 per cent and the Yemeni Socialist Party with 3.6 per cent. Smaller parties and independent forces also participate in the decision-making process.

The conference, chaired by Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal, discussed the performance of local councils, the executive systems, and the relationship between the systems of central



Prime Minister chaired the conference on local councils; an activity that enhances the government's plan to adopt decentralization so that to apply development strategy efficiently.

and local authorities.

The Ministry of Local Administration presented a report that reviewed the quality of local councils' performance, ambition and ability to adhere to the outcomes of the first and second conferences.

The report said that the regular attendance of local council members in all the administrative units was as usually as high as 88.5%. In Ibb, Mahweet, Sana'a,

Dhal'e. Aden, and Beidha, however, attendance records of local council members reached 100 percent.

Five groups were formed in the conference to discuss work papers on the changes witnessed by Yemen during the period of decentralization. The papers focused on the realities and difficulties faced by various local authorities, and attention was drawn to the need to enhance the infrastructure of local councils, expand national participation, and increase women's participation in the councils.

The project aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the local councils as well as raising awareness and effective participation in the development of the country. However, several of the papers indicated that the performance of the local councils have improved in several districts.

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Collections of great writers issued

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism has recently issued the complete collection of the great writer Abdullah Salem Bawazir. This project is part of the Sana'a Arab Cultural Capital 2004 festivities and has added to the 28 books of other writers that were issued previously.

The complete poetic collection of Abdullah Ghudwah and all works of the historian Abdullah Muhairiz were also published.

The ministry has also issued in the

last months a number of complete collections of the poets such as Mohammed Mahmoud al-Zubairi, Saleh al-Hamed, Mohammed Saeed Jaradah, Lutfi Ja'afar Aman, Edris Hanbala, Ismail al-Wareeth, Abdulrahman Ebrahim, and Mohammed Hussein Haytham.

The Information Unit of Sana'a, Arab Cultural Capital 2004, commented that the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Khaled al-Rowaihan, is interested in publishing the complete collections of distinguished young writers, poets, and researchers.

High achieving students to be awarded

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF
TAIZ BUREAU

A meeting was held at Illiteracy Eradication National Organization (IENO) Nov. 27.

The meeting was attended by Shawqi Al-Qadhi, Member of the Parliament, a number of pressmen and others who are interested in eradicating illiteracy.

They discussed the program of supporting the high achieving students who got more than 90 per cent in all Taiz schools and universities. They also discussed preparations for the award celebration that will take place on Dec. 31.

During the meeting, Al-Qadhi

stressed the vitality of the program that is sponsored by IENO in collaboration with some businessmen and establishments that are concerned with encouraging the high achieving students.

They will support those students with computers, enroll them in some courses, give them medical insurance cards, and follow their study.

The program's aim is to improve the students' skills and solve the social and financial problems that may hinder their performance.

The meeting discussed the strategies of expanding the base of this program to include other provinces in order to effectively contribute to the development of education.

Course on financial accounting

TAIZ BUREAU

Under the patronage of Ramzia Al-Eryani, Chief of the Yemeni Women Union (YWU), the YWU Branch in Taiz organized a course in the field of accounting and financial management from Dec. 4-8. The project was funded by the government of Netherlands and supervised by a British Organization.

As many as 30 participants are participated in the course. Mrs. Sua'ad Al-

Absi, Chief of Yemeni Women Union, Taiz Branch said: "The training course is in the field of financial accounting for women from cities and rural areas aims at developing the skills of the Union members to cope with changes of the modern era."

She added: "The year 2005 is due to witness development in the mechanisms of the union in the urban and rural areas. The financial accounting is the pillar for any organization working in Yemen."

Unemployment and population

BY MUHAMMAD AL-AREEQI
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Just 25 years ago, the southwestern area of Sana'a, presently known as the Political Zone, was agricultural areas.

People who lived in that area used to be looked at as inhabitants of rural villages; the closest school was the Martyr Ali Abdul Mughni School, located in the heart of Haddah Street.

In the past, it was possible to look to al-Zubairi Street through the windows of the homes as the number of the buildings didn't exceed the tens whereas the transportation charge was so expensive due to the difficulty of the road.

You will find the zone nowadays with tens of crowded streets, tens of Boys and Girls intermediate and secondary schools and also thousands of children, many of whom have completed their school stages, plus a big

number of graduates from universities.

Every morning and evening, many of them are sitting idle in the streets and talking to each other complaining of their difficulties and the lack of opportunities of jobs.

It reflects the relation between the population increasing and the unemployment problems. It is the scene which I daily, everywhere, in the main towns as well as in rural areas.

So unemployment is the natural product of the increasing population if there is no balancing between the population growth and the socio-economic conditions.

The community by its government and its organizations and also the private sector have to cooperate for the sake of those youths in question and to organize the country's wealth to favor its people faithfully and help the future.

Especially bad in Hodeidah

Schools inspectors are bleeding

BY ABDULWAHAB AL SOFI,
abdulwahab_alsofi@yahoo.com
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Teachers and inspectors have two different jobs but they are performing one lofty human service for their society.

Inspectors are important in the educational process, and teachers are also most important in the process. Yet, they are both neglected. Teachers like to be inspectors whom soon prefer to come back to teaching.

To prove this I have one example.

The teacher, performing his duty sincerely in the past, is always respected by his pupils. The salutes of students in the streets create an enthusiasm in teachers. This is a volcanic love of the teaching process. That's why teacher is like candle burning for learners.

This energetic teaching process, however, vaporizes into thin air when joined with inspectorate administration. Inspectors are not only frustrated but also neglected and ignored. He becomes an old paper.

Something is worrisome. Inspectors expected more enjoyable work than when they were teachers in schools, respected by their students. They are waiting for esteem and appreciation. They want to get the salutations, which they have been accustomed to during teaching.

Unfortunately this does not happen at all. This is because inspectors were divested of their authorities. Their instructions are not executed and even though they are not taken into consideration. Inspectorate management in Hodeidah, and in the Republic generally, is absolutely neglected.

This vital management has no sta-

bility particularly during the last five years although it has the ability to reform. It really needs a serious review by decision-makers. In short, the ability is there, but not stability.

Many changes are always taken place. The local administration was mainly established to scatter the inspection. Many decisions are issued every year. It is something credible and satirical. Consequently, inspectors have lost their credibility in schools.

What is education without inspectors and vice versa? In my opinion inspection is the core of education. It is really that this sector is wounded. No need to mention who bled it. It is the matter now how to put the medicine on the wound.

The Ministry of Education has to heal this wound as quickly as possible. We want to keep the people who defame inspectors silent, because flies always like to live on wounds as long as it is bleeding. The performance of teachers decreases gradually.

This is because inspectors in classroom of students do not follow teachers repeatedly. The teacher became inactive. They are looking for help from inspectors but no responses. Inspectors, in school usually activate the process.

The absence of inspectors in schools weakens the teaching. As a result of that, the level of students in general worsens. The task of the educational inspectorate is to determine whether and how well an activity is functioning in relation to the regulations set out in the Education Act, school ordinances and curriculum.

Inspectors must be activated and the inspection must be also united and given the liability. But neither this nor that is achieved in the inspectorate.

Human Rights discussed

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF
TAIZ BUREAU

The National Cultural Center for Youths in Taiz organized the 3rd annual Yemeni Universities Students Training Course on Human Rights and the Democratic participation.

It was organized by the support of Fredrich Eyebert and the British Embassy in Sana'a, and will last for the period from Nov. 27 to Dec. 2.

Some 45 students from different Yemeni universities representing Sana'a, Aden, Hadhramout, Taiz, Hodeidah, Dhamar, Ibb took part in the

course besides the youth sectors in the political parties and the national societies.

The Manager of the National Cultural Center for Youth, Mr. Abdullah Abdul Elah Sallam, declared that such course was carried out as a yearly tradition approved by the Center in an aim to contribute to raising the awareness among the youths on the Human rights and encouraging them to join democratic practice and making them able to conduct political participation and to react to the community issues.

The training process was carried out by Academy lecturers from Yemeni universities.

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Application deadline 17 December 2004.

8th Egyptian Products Exhibition

BY YEMEN TIMES

Strengthening the economical relations between Yemen and Egypt, the 8th Egyptian Products Exhibition is inaugurated on 8th December 2004 presenting a number of Egyptian companies. The exhibition is set up at Sana'a Expo Center from Dec. 8th -16th 2004. It is organized by the General Authority for Exhibitions Affairs and Egyptian International Bazaars in coordination with Expo Sana'a Company for International Exhibitions and under the supervision of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Yemen.

Mr. Omer al-Nehmy, the Marketing Manager of Expo Sana'a Company, said that this exhibition is an annual event for eight years, as it works for fortifying the commercial relations between the two brotherly countries. It allows opportunities

for discussing among the Yemeni and Egyptian businessmen and identifying the possibilities of benefiting from the experiences available with each party, and the carrying out of joint investment project. The company is attempting to identify other countries' products through setting up such exhibitions, and availing the opportunities for meeting and getting introduced to the business in addition to reflecting good picture of the possibilities available in our country in exhibition and sales promotion.

Mr. al-Nehmy has clarified that there are numerous contributing companies in this exhibition through which they want to market their products in Yemen, and via which the economical interconnection and integration for the both brotherly countries takes place gradually. And also, he urged the businessmen to benefit from this event.

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Soldier, 4 militants die in renewed Gaza fighting

GAZA, Dec 7 (Reuters) - Four Palestinian militants and an Israeli soldier were killed on Tuesday in the heaviest Gaza fighting since Yasser Arafat's death, raising the prospect that renewed violence could complicate a vote for his successor.

Adding to uncertainty over the Jan. 9 election, jailed uprising leader Marwan Barghout was considering dropping out of the race against Mahmoud Abbas, a moderate backed by Israel and Washington as a potential peacemaker, a lawmaker said.

Before dawn on Tuesday, Hamas gunmen detonated a bomb hidden in a chicken coop that troops were searching and opened fire, killing one soldier and wounding four. Israeli forces killed two of the attackers and two Islamic Jihad militants.

The ambush, which shattered a relative lull in fighting since Arafat's death last month, came as Abbas faced stiff resistance to a proposed ceasefire to help instil calm for the Palestinians' first presidential ballot in eight years.

"Calm cannot be achieved at the expense of Palestinian blood," Hamas spokesman Mushir al-Masri said.

Polls show Abbas neck-and-neck with Barghout, serving five life terms in an Israeli jail after being convicted of ordering attacks that killed Israelis. He denies the charges.

A victory for Barghout would pose problems for reviving long-stalled peace talks with Israel.

Uncertainty over Barghout candidacy

But Israeli-Arab lawmaker Talab El-Sana said Barghout told him during a jailhouse visit on Tuesday that he might drop out to avoid splitting his mainstream Fatah faction, which has named Abbas as its official candidate.

He said Barghout, part of a younger generation seeking greater clout, told him he would talk to Abbas and other officials before deciding whether or not to pull out.

He declared his candidacy last week, days after he ruled out running. "I believe in the end ... he will act responsibly," El-Sana told Reuters.

Violence erupted a day after Abbas, who succeeded Arafat as PLO chief, met Hamas leader Khaled Meshal in Damascus. Palestinian sources said Abbas made no progress in coaxing Hamas into suspending suicide bombings and other attacks on Israelis.

Renewed fighting could also spell trouble for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's efforts to forge a "unity" government to carry out his plan for evacuating all Jewish settlements in the occupied Gaza Strip by the end of next year.

Tuesday's incident began while soldiers were searching for weapons at a farm on a road leading to a Jewish settlement that runs past Gaza's Shijaja neighbourhood, a militant stronghold.

The booby-trap explosion inflicted the army's first combat fatality since Arafat's death on Nov. 11 in a Paris hospital. Killings of soldiers have often triggered army reprisals.

Hamas said two fighters were killed in an ensuing gunbattle. The army later killed two Islamic Jihad militants. Seven Palestinians, including bystanders, were wounded, medics said.

"The military will continue to act to prevent terror from any area where there is a threat to Israeli civilians or soldiers," the army said in a statement.

Hamas, which this week ruled out any truce with Israel and repeated its long-standing objective of destroying the Jewish state, said it was avenging "Zionist crimes".

Since Arafat's death, Israel had said it would restrain military operations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, territories captured in the 1967 Middle East war, as long as calm prevailed.

But Hamas has vowed to ensure that any Israeli pullout from Gaza will be under fire.

Polls show most Israelis back Sharon's plan to quit Gaza, but ultranationalists and rebels within his own rightist Likud



Members of the armed wing of Hamas, Izz eldeen al-Qassam Brigades, claim responsibility of an attack against Israeli troops during a press conference in Gaza City Dec. 7. An Israeli soldier and two Palestinian militants were killed on Tuesday in the heaviest Gaza fighting since Yasser Arafat's death, raising the prospect that renewed violence could complicate a vote for his successor. REUTERS

party say any withdrawal would be a "reward for terror". Sharon has called a crucial vote on

Thursday of Likud's hard-line central Labour Party, which has promised to help committee in an attempt to reverse its ban him push through his "Disengagement Plan".

1,000th US soldier killed in action in Iraq

BAGHDAD, Dec 7 (Reuters) - The number of U.S. troops killed in action in Iraq hit 1,000 on Tuesday when the military said a soldier had been shot dead on patrol in Baghdad.

"One Task Force Baghdad soldier died of wounds received at about 11:30 a.m. (0830 GMT), on Dec. 7. The soldier was on patrol when the unit came under small arms fire," the military in Iraq said in a typically brief routine statement.

"The name of the soldier killed is being withheld pending notification of next of kin."

Earlier in the day, the Pentagon had issued a revised combat casualty toll of 999, a figure which had risen sharply last month during the U.S. assault on Sunni Muslim insurgents in the city of Falluja. At least 71 Americans were killed



A memorial service for 10 U.S. Marines killed is conducted at a U.S. military base in central Iraq, in this photograph released on Dec. 5. The 10 Marines were killed while on deployment with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit. Nine of them were members of 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment. REUTERS

there. In all, 1,275 U.S. service personnel have died during the Iraq operation, launched with the invasion on March 20 last year. This figure includes accidents, suicides and other deaths not classed as being killed in action.

A total of 9,765 U.S. troops have been wounded. No official figures are available for the numbers of Iraqi dead. Estimates have ranged from some 14,000 to tens of thousands of civilians and around 5,000 troops in the war.

PM says Turkey has done all it can for EU talks

ANKARA, Dec 7 (Reuters) - Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan said on Tuesday Turkey had done all it could to ensure that the European Union agreed at a Dec. 17 summit to open entry talks.

Reacting coolly to the latest summit draft prepared by the EU's Dutch presidency, Erdogan said it was for the leaders of the 25-nation bloc now to honour their commitments to Turkey and not impose fresh conditions.

"Turkey has fulfilled all the political criteria (for opening negotiations)," Erdogan told a rare joint news conference with main opposition leader Deniz Baykal, convened to underline Turkey's political consensus on the EU question. "If our partners do not keep their promises (to open talks) we will continue on our own path of reform," Erdogan said. Baykal, who leads the centre-left Republican People's Party, pledged full support for the government at the EU summit.

Asked about the mention of the word 'torture' in the new draft, Erdogan said curtly: "Our sensitivity on torture and similar issues is well known."

Turkey has pledged to eradicate torture and other major human rights abuses in its drive to join the EU. It acknowledges that instances of torture persist but denies allegations by human

rights groups that it is still widespread. If the draft is adopted unchanged by the EU leaders, it will be the first time the EU has referred explicitly to torture in opening talks with a candidate country, reflecting persistent concern about Ankara's human rights record.

The draft text also says Turkey must prove its track record in implementing as well as adopting EU law to make progress in membership talks, and spells out in more detail than a previous draft the standards Ankara would have to meet.

A Turkish foreign ministry official also responded negatively to the latest draft text.

"They (the EU) are playing a diplomatic game. There are irritating elements. We say these must not be written (in the final text)," the official said, adding that Turkey would try to have the conditions watered down before the summit.

He said Turkey had conveyed its concerns to the Dutch minister for Europe, Atzo Nicolai, who was in Ankara on Tuesday.

President Ahmet Necdet Sezer was due to chair a meeting of Turkey's political and military leaders later on Tuesday aimed at coordinating tactics and policies ahead of the summit.

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Dutch Higher Education Program

The Government of the Netherlands assistance to Yemen is one of the most effective and pronounced donor aid to Yemen's development efforts. The Dutch Embassy is well known for its active presence in several major and minor development projects ranging from municipal sanitation to electricity and water. But the Dutch government also pays attention to important non asset accumulation projects that are just as

important to Yemen's development. No where is this more apparent than the Dutch assistance to the higher education sector. With its two major programmes, the National Fellowship Programme (NFP) and the Netherlands Programme for Institutional Strengthening of Post Secondary Education and Training Capacity, known as the NPT for short, the efforts focus on enhancing the human resources development aspect of the development process

through both fellowship arrangements for Yemeni post graduate students and in the areas of institutional strengthening and capacity building for the various government and academic institutions that are involved with higher education. The Yemen Times, in cooperation with the Embassy of the Royal Netherlands in Sana'a is pleased to present an overall view of Dutch support to the higher education sector, viewed from different angles. The objective of this



Ambassador J.F.L. Blankenberg

Interview with Ambassador J.F.L. Blankenberg

"We are working towards a harmonised approach of supporting Yemen's development objectives"

Q: Your Excellency, you have recently taken up your position in Sana'a. We understand that development co-operation is a major task of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Yemen. Could you tell us about the size and the shape of the RNE's programme in Yemen?

A: Certainly. Yemen and The Netherlands enjoy a long-standing development co-operation relationship. In fact, last year we celebrated the 25th anniversary. We are currently focusing our support on the three sectors of education, health and water. Complementary to our investments in those sectors we also support activities in what we call 'good governance'. This includes activities in support of Civil Service Modernisation, gender equality, human rights, improving the environment for business development and democratisation.

In 2004, this Embassy itself will spend 22 million Euros in Yemen. From central budgets there are additional transfers for e.g. the NPT programmes in support of post-secondary education, Civil Service Modernisation and basic education (a

grant in the framework of the global Fast Track Initiative).

Q: In the past Yemenis saw many projects all over the country that were funded by the Dutch government. You don't seem to be so visible anymore. What is the reason for that?

A: That is a very accurate observation. The shift that you notice is one that can be observed worldwide and is not limited to Dutch development co-operation only. In the past the most common way of giving development aid was to set up project implementation units, staffed partly by foreign nationals. They would often achieve good results in the short term, but the problem was that – for many reasons – when the project finished the results often proved unsustainable. Generally speaking, the overall impact of the interventions that we supported left much to be desired. As a result of many evaluations, a real shift has come about in the last decade. We can summarise this under the heading 'harmonisation'.

Q: What do you mean by this term

'harmonisation'?

A: The principle of harmonisation is that development assistance can only be truly effective if it supports a country's own poverty reduction policies and helps develop its capacity to implement those policies. This means that there should be a healthy dialogue between development partners and the recipient country about its poverty reduction strategy and the way the country uses its own resources to achieve the objectives. On the side of the donors we have realised that it's too much of a burden if we all come with our own missions, discussing policies and projects and using a lot of the much needed capacity to implement stand-alone projects. That is why we feel we need to work much more closely together, have a joint dialogue with government, pool our resources and thus reduce what we call the 'transaction costs' associated with aid. In the ideal situation where there is full agreement about the policies, the implementation mechanisms and the management of resources, donors give general budget support to a country.

In Yemen the conditions are not right

yet to move very far in this direction. But we do feel that we need to set out a 'roadmap' on how to get there. For that reason we are organising jointly with the Ministry of Planning and International Co-operation a workshop on 12-13 December on this topic. We are hoping for a lively and result-oriented debate among government and donor partners.

Q: Could you tell us a bit more about the three sectors in which you are working?

A: In all three sectors we are working towards a harmonised approach of supporting Yemen's development objectives. In terms of our investments in the water sector there is a strong focus on integrated water resource management, which is essential in view of Yemen's scarcity of water. In the health sector our investments concentrate on reproductive health and in education we support mostly basic education. In all sectors we face similar challenges, which is why we try to work with Yemen on ways to improve public sector performance and the management of public finances, both within the sectors

and in separate programmes. Decentralisation is also an important theme that has a bearing on all of these sectors.

Q: How do you rate the performance of the Yemeni government in terms of progress in essential reforms? Would you withhold support if it was unsatisfactory?

A: Progress in essential reforms seems to us to be rather uneven. In some areas real progress is made, in others very little. Although there is still a long way to go, the Government has made progress in controlling the size of the civil service. An area where far too little progress has been made is the diversification of the economy. Yemen urgently needs to develop other sources of income and reduce its heavy reliance on the income from oil. We are of course not blind to the huge obstacles the Yemeni Government is facing in the implementation of reforms: institutional weakness and limited capaci-

ty, lack of resources, the need to make very difficult political decisions.

Whereas some reforms may seem quite feasible in the immediate future, others will require a long time to bear fruit, such as reform of the judiciary and the civil service. In such areas, we do not expect miracles overnight. The important thing, from our point of view, is that a beginning of reforms is made and that the political will to change things is demonstrated. Withholding support is hardly constructive and would only be an option if we felt that the basic will to reform was lacking.

Coming back to education: we rate the reforms in this sector as encouraging. Although the full effects of all these efforts will not be felt until years from now, we see a manifest political will to create fundamental improvements. There are clear strategies and objectives in place and the Government is giving the sector its full attention. We hope this good example will be followed in other areas.

Interview with Rebekka van Roemburg, First Secretary Education, Royal Netherlands Embassy

"Yemen as a whole has made enormous progress in terms of expanding the access to basic education"

Q: The Netherlands government is currently supporting the education sector in Yemen quite considerably. Could you tell us when you started funding this sector?

A: We have been involved since the mid 90s. We co-funded the Basic Education Project with the World Bank from 1995 to 2000 (€ 8 mil) and we supported UNICEF's Girl's Education Project from '98 to '01 (€ 1.6 mil), but we were not directly involved so much in policy development. In Dakar, during the big conference on Education for All in 2000, the then Minister of Education Dr Al Shoaibi convinced the Dutch Minister for Development Co-operation to include the education sector fully into the RNE's programme. Since 2001 we have supported both the Public Works Programme and the Social Fund for Development quite considerably in their construction programmes. UNICEF receives support for their education programme which includes the Child Development Project as well as interventions at central level, e.g. in the area of curriculum development.

Q: What have the achievements been so far and what are your plans for the future?

A: Yemen as a whole has made enormous progress in terms of expanding the access to basic education. In 1970 only 25,000 children in North Yemen and about 115,000 in South Yemen attended school. In 2004 this figure has risen to some 4.5 million! But Yemen has still a very long way to go particularly in terms of getting girls, children in remote areas and children with special needs into school, making sure that all children complete their basic education and, most importantly, in improving the quality of education. A study that was recently undertaken by the Education Research

and Development Centre to objectively measure learning achievements among students in grades 4 and 6, did not show good results. While we have made some modest contributions in the past to quality improvement measures, we want to stress this issue much more in the future. A good physical learning environment is important, but even the most beautiful classroom doesn't teach. It is what goes on inside the classroom (or under the tree, if there isn't a classroom yet) that really matters. Luckily, the Ministry of Education is also fully aware of the need to improve quality.

Q: How do you intend to do this?

A: As the ambassador explained to you, we are not keen to set up separate projects any more. We were very pleased when Yemen developed its Basic Education Development Strategy (BEDS) in 2002, because it provided a good framework within which to work. The international community recognised this as well and invited Yemen to put forward a medium-term proposal to the so-called Fast Track Initiative (FTI) for Education for All. This FTI aims to help countries that would otherwise not be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary completion by 2015. It suggests things that a country can do itself and based on different scenarios of reform, it calculates a financing gap to which the international community will then contribute. On the basis of Yemen's proposal it was awarded a grant in November 2003 (\$ 10 mil), which as it happens is fully financed by the Dutch ministry in The Hague. This grant is currently being used to build schools in areas with very low (girls') enrolment and for the training of 14,000 teachers.

Starting during the preparation of the National Basic Education Conference in 2002, the donors in Yemen have been

working hard on better co-ordinating their efforts. In the course of 2003 donors and government have been preparing a Partnership Declaration that commits all of us to work in a more coherent manner towards the objectives of BEDS. We are now working with the Ministry of Education and other Yemeni organisations as true partners and the Minister is showing real leadership. A first concrete result of this commitment is that three development partners have decided to join forces in supporting BEDS. The World Bank, United Kingdom and the Netherlands have pooled their funds in the Basic Education Development Project (BEDP).

This five year programme with a total value of \$ 120 million (of which the Netherlands contributes \$ 24 million) addresses all the critical issues in education reform and expansion and is intended to help pave the way for direct support to the education budget. It is meant to strengthen the capacity of the education sector to deliver quality education, including literacy. We are, through intensive co-ordination, trying to make sure that all our efforts are complementary and sustainable.

Q: What are some of the biggest challenges the basic education sector faces in your opinion?

A: There are many and I cannot go into all of them, but the three biggest ones in my view are efficiency, girls' education and quality. As far as efficiency is concerned, you should know that Yemen spends quite a big share of its budget on education (20% of which half goes to basic education). The sad thing is that the results are not what could be expected from this investment. There are many inefficiencies in the system, such as a very uneven distribution of teachers in comparison with the number of students

(too many teachers in some places, too few in others), teachers with very small teaching loads getting full pay, underutilisation of existing facilities (only one shift) and many children dropping out prematurely. If children then revert to illiteracy, all the investment in their education is lost.

That brings us to quality. The perception of low quality and relevance is often a factor in families deciding to withdraw from education. They decide that it is not worth their time and money to let the children continue. There are many things that could and should be done: improving teachers' general and subject-specific teaching skills, better school management, more effective guidance and supervision of teachers and headmasters/mistresses, a balanced curriculum that is based on a clear understanding of what we want children to learn and how they can best learn it and a better system of diagnostic testing and examinations. We are pleased to see that several measures are already being taken by the Ministry of Education, but much more needs to be done.

Last but definitely not least is girls' education. Yemen has the biggest gender gap in the world. That means that the difference between girls' and boys' access to education is bigger than anywhere else. There are many reasons for this, both cultural and economical. I find it very encouraging when I go and visit places that I am often confronted with requests for a girls' school. In other words, the demand for girls' education appears to be increasing. To meet this demand is quite a challenge. It means creating school environments that are conducive to girls' education. Having a fathers and mothers council appears to help a great deal: they get girls into school and monitor their performance. Discussing the most appropriate utilisation of the school building (e.g.



Rebekka van Roemburg

two shifts separating the older boys and girls) can encourage more girls. Having female teachers helps win over reluctant parents and offers a role model as well as a professional perspective for girls. Unfortunately, despite the positive results of training up female secondary school graduates from rural areas as teachers, this model is not applied very widely yet. We hope that this will change in the very near future.

Q: Having a population that is educated to grade 9 is not going to be enough to enhance Yemen's development. Why are you not involved so much in other parts of the education sector?

A: I couldn't agree with you more about the importance of a healthy total education system which produces high quality people in all fields of expertise, both practical and theoretical. My big wish for Yemen is that it would develop a sound comprehensive education strategy with good links between all the different stages and forms of education. It doesn't really help that the main responsibility for education is spread over three different Ministries (in addition to of course universities and other training institutes). Within its own mandate the Ministry of Education is already developing a sec-

ondary education strategy. Maybe, when the Ministry of Education embarks on its institutional reform process in the beginning of next year, these issues of how its mandate relates to that of other ministries and local government will be tackled and this may be a beginning of devising an overall education strategy. We are definitely interested in supporting other parts of the education system, once such a comprehensive strategy is in place. And if it is needed we are happy to offer assistance in building such a strategy.

I would like to stress, though, that we do already support other parts of the education sector. With funds from BEDP the Ministry will go beyond the formal education system and also support literacy. This is extremely important because even if Yemen is very successful in expanding formal education, for quite some time to come not all Yemeni children will be reached. Complementary forms of non-formal education can really help in reaching these groups of people. There is much that can be learned from other countries in this respect.

We also provide quite substantial support to higher education, through the NPT programme managed by NUFFIC. We have prepared a write-up of this project for your readers which can be found elsewhere in this issue.

Interview with Dr. Mohammed-Muttahar Vice Minister of Higher Education

“We are hopeful that donors will also show an interest in contributing to the Ministry’s efforts at Gender Development and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education”

His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Muttahar is well known in the Yemeni academic community and has held prominent positions in the Higher Education Sector in Yemen (and overseas), almost from the time that higher education was launched in Yemen. In addition to teaching at Sana’a University, primarily in the area of education, soon after the establishment of Sana’a University of Sana’a (late 1960s), he was the Deputy General Manager of the University. With a PhD in Education from the United States, Dr. Muttahar has contributed considerably to the growth and development of the higher education sector. He also undertook consultancy work in education for such organizations as the UNDP and the Yemeni Government. Perhaps no one is more knowledgeable about the Dutch support to the Higher Education sector than Dr. Muttahar. YT Managing Director interviewed Dr. Muttahar in the Ministry Office of the Development of Higher Education Project.

Q: What areas are covered by the assistance of the Royal Government of the Netherlands to the Higher Education sector?

A: Let me start off by first by

expressing how grateful and thankful we are for the generous contributions of the Dutch Government to the development of the Higher Education Sector. I also wish to state that the Dutch Embassy here in Sana’a has been very cooperative in helping the Yemeni Government tailor programs that will be in keeping with the development aspirations of Yemen and are demand oriented to provide the appropriate human resources needed to enhance the higher education sector and in the areas of institutional strengthening of the sector. We have at the moment two major programs: the first is the Netherlands Fellowship Programme and the Netherlands Programme for Institutional Strengthening of Post Secondary Education and Training Capacity, known as the NPT for short.

Q: What are major fields does the NPT Programme cover in Yemen?

A: We have worked with NUFFIC, the Dutch agency supervising the NPT Programme to determine and design the appropriate programs that are most suitable to Yemen’s Higher Education development needs. We have together come up with 4 core NPT programmes: Information Communication Technology (ICT), Basic Studies, which starts with MBA and MPA post

graduate studies, Basic Sciences Development and finally the Gender Development Programme. All these programmes are geared to foster the improvement of the quality of higher education. We have now eight projects in different specialized fields within these four major areas, some of which are already in the implementation stage, while others are still being designed.

Q: How is cooperation undertaken with the Dutch relevant institution?

A: In the eight projects (ICT, Problem based Learning, NPT Coordination Office, Gender Research Studies, Integrated Water Management Development, MBA, Basic Sciences Education and Executive Master of Public Administration) involve the participation of different academic or research oriented institution in Yemen working in cooperation with counterpart Dutch institutions. For example the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research is working with Delft University in Holland on the ICT component of the NPT Programme and Aden University and the Women Research Center are working with the Institute of Social Studies at Wageningen University and with Delft University of Technology.

Q: Can you give us some overall idea about the ICT Project?

A: The Information Communications Technology is being carried out by Delft University of Technology, which helps the MHESR to develop overall ICT policies for higher education and in the design of the national ICT Network for Higher Education and in the completion of the ICT Network for 10 Yemeni higher education institutions.

Q: Are your NPT projects mainly dealing with public institutions?

A: While most of the programs are undertaken by public higher educational institutions, there are some that involve non-governmental research centers and organizations and private sector firms to determine their needs and bring candidates to the studies programmes, such as the MBA programme.

Q: How much money is involved in the NFP and NPT programmes?

A: The NFP Programme basically is ready to absorb as many fellowship students as can be found to be acceptable to the Dutch institutions that are participating in the Programme. In the past there were only three or four students from Yemen enrolled. We are now opt-



Dr. Mohammed Muttahar

ing to increase the participation to up to 25 students now, by encouraging more students to apply and thus improving the potential number of candidates to be accepted. The NPT projects we discussed above total Euros 12,400,000.

Q: What about the Future Projects?

A: We have two more NPT projects in the drawing boards to be completed by the end of this year. One project assists the MHESR to further strengthening the Ministry’s capacity of supervise the developments in the higher education sector and the other is an extension project for the ITC, with the first phase focusing on the development of an ICT Master Plan for all higher education institutions, to be followed by

an implementation of such a Master Plan. We are hoping that other donors will be participating in this component of the Higher Education Development Project by chipping in the Euros 25 million implementation costs for the ICT Master Plan. In March, there will be a donors’ conference on the ITC implementation phase sponsored by the MHESR. We are hopeful that donors will also show an interest in contributing to the Ministry’s efforts at Gender Development and Quality Enhancement of Higher Education, which are considered essential elements in the overall development process in Yemen and in Yemen’s efforts to fighting poverty, which are all common concerns of all the donor community for Yemen.

NPT

The Netherlands Programme for the Institutional strengthening of Post-secondary Education and Training Capacity (or NPT in short) is a co-operation programme, in which Dutch and academic and training organisations based in other countries in the region help developing countries in building their capacity for providing post-secondary education and training. The Netherlands’ Ministry of Foreign Affairs finances this programme and the Netherlands’ Foundation for International Co-operation in Higher Education (Nuffic) manages the NPT.

Yemeni organisations providing post-secondary education can propose initiatives to be included in the NPT programmes. Since January 2004, the NPT has a co-ordinating office under the Vice-Minister of Higher Education. This office has close links with the Higher Education Development Project (HEP) financed by a Learning and Innovation Credit of \$5 million of the World Bank. The NPT Co-ordinating Office assists, on behalf of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR), the individual Post-secondary Education Organisations in the further development of project outlines. These outlines are then sent to Nuffic for tendering among Dutch Institutions of Higher Education. After the selection of the Dutch institutions the implementation of the programme is the responsibility of the Yemeni and Dutch institutes with little interference from MoHESR, Nuffic or the Royal Netherlands Embassy.

NPT projects are a mixture of institution building on the one hand, with emphasis on the organisation and management of the programmes, and capacity building on the other, with a focus on the training of the higher education staff members who will conduct the new programmes. Most of the present NPT projects in Yemen are concerned with universities introducing new fields of study. That means that staff members focus on writing new courses, pilot training and the organisation and management of the new programmes. The projects are a mix of Dutch experts working with their Yemeni counterparts in Yemen

and Yemenis going for short term training, masters’ or PhD studies in the Netherlands or where appropriate and needed (because of difficulties with the English language) in the region. Closely connected to the training is a material component for teaching equipment and books to a maximum of 20% of the total budget.

The first three NPT projects started in January 2004, and during the year another five were identified of which three have already started and two will start in January 2005.

Two more NPT projects are expected to be drafted before the end of the year 2004: one project to assist the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in its further strengthening of the capacity to supervise the developments in the higher education sector and one extension project for the Information and Computer Technology project. Where the first phase of this project focused on the development of an ICT National Master Plan for all higher education institutions, the follow-up of this project will be the implementation of the Master Plan. The first calculations of this programme point to a total sum of 25 million, which cannot be borne by the NPT programme alone. A donor conference on the ICT implementation will be organised by the MoHESR in March 2005.

Yemen belongs to the 15 NPT countries selected by the Netherlands’ Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The programme officially started in January 2003. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the Royal Netherlands Embassy, and the Nuffic decided to start with four areas of NPT cooperation for the first commitment 2003–2007. These areas are: Basic Sciences, Gender, Information and Computer Technology (ICT) and Public/Business Administration. The total committed amount for the 15 countries over this period is 100 million. There is no commitment per country, projects from the 15 countries just compete on relevance. Yemen has profited by being fast in proposing relevant projects. From the 100 million, already more than 12 million is approved to Yemeni projects.

Name Project	Yemeni Institute	Netherlands Institute	Duration of the project	Amount in _
ICT	MoHESR	Delft University of Technology	2 years	700.000
Problem-based Learning	Hadramouth University, Faculty of Medicine	Maastricht University	2 years	400.000
NPT Coordination Office	MoHESR	Span Consultants	2 years	400.000
Gender research and studies	Aden University, Women Research and Development Centre	Wageningen University, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague and the Maastricht School of Management	4 years	1.800.000
Integrated Water Management Development	Sana’a University, Water and Environmental Centre	Wageningen University, Arcadis, Meta-Meta, and Delft University of Technology	4 years	2.000.000
Master of Business Administration	Sana’a University, Faculty of Commerce and Economics	Maastricht School of Management	4 years	2.000.000
Basic Sciences Education	Sana’a University Hodeidah University, Thamar University, Faculties of Sciences and Education	Free University of Amsterdam	4 years	3.000.000
Executive Master of Public Administration	Sana’a University, Faculty of Commerce and Economics	Dutch Institute for Public Administration and Leiden University	4 years	2.100.000
Total				12.400.000

Overview of the NPT projects:

Objectives and Target Group

The NFP target group is mid-career professionals who are nationals of one of a preferential group of countries. Yemen is included among these countries. Candidates for an NFP fellowship must be nominated by their employers. These nominations must include a structured motivation or a statement of defined needs. The NFP aims to increase the fellowships’ impact by linking them to the institutional development of organisations in the developing world. Fellowships are awarded to individuals, but their training must be within the context of the development of the local organisation for which they work.

Components of the NFP

The NFP offers professionals from developing countries a chance to enrol in international postgraduate degree programmes of one or more years. Programme providers are Dutch organisations.

- Master Degree (Professional – 1 year; Research - 2 year)
- PhD studies
- Refresher courses (for alumni).

The NFP also offers fellowships for professionals to enrol in diploma courses or a course of tailor-made training of one year or less. The course must be provided entirely or partly by a Dutch organisation, i.e. such a programme may include a component of training in the region.

- Short-Courses
 - Tailor-made training
- The demand for tailor-made training, formulated by the Yemeni organisation, is matched with what is on offer by means of an open-tender procedure. Organisations interested in tailor-made training should contact the Royal Netherlands Embassy or the NPT co-ordination unit for more information.

NFP Priorities and Special Criteria

One of the main priorities of the NFP is that 50% of the awards are to be made to female candidates. Applicants from Sub-Saharan Africa also have preferential access.

The Netherlands Fellowship Programme

The Netherlands fellowship programme Questions and answers

Q: How many fellowships have been allocated to Yemen?

NFP does not allocate a specific number of fellowships to each of the countries eligible to apply. Instead, countries and individuals essentially compete for funding under the programme. Once applications for the programmes are received, NUFFIC decides how many fellowships will be granted for each of the various programmes.

Q: How many fellowships are available for all countries?

Last year, nearly 1000 participants received funding under NFP.

Q: What majors or area of specialisation are the programmes and courses?

The NFP catalogue of programmes for 2005 listed nearly 300 programmes, divided under 13 categories or sectors such as Agriculture, Business and Economics, the Sciences, and various other categories.

Q: How do I apply for a NFP fellowship?

First, you must review the catalogue of programmes and apply directly to the Dutch organisation offering the listed programme you are interested in. Once an admission to the programme is received, you can then apply for funding through NFP. You can download the application form from www.nuffic.nl/nfp or you can get it from the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sana’a. All applications, except those for refresher

courses, have to be submitted via the RNE. An interview is usually part of the application procedure.

Q: When is the deadline to apply for an NFP Fellowship?

There is not one single deadline for applications. Different programmes have different deadlines. Normally, however, programme admission for Master’s degree study and many of the short-courses is offered twice per year. The deadlines are listed in the NFP catalogue. For Masters’ programmes starting in the autumn of 2005, the deadline for the application is 15 March 2005. For PhD study, the deadlines vary since a research proposal will have to be agreed to with the host institution.

Q: What is my employer’s role in the application process?

Since this is a capacity-building programme, it is important that your employer confirms the development need which you seek to address. Therefore, NFP requires employers to submit a statement to this effect and to agree to continue to support an employee until the employee returns to work.

Q: What are the main requirements of the NFP?

There are a number of requirements for the fellowship, but the most important ones include the qualifications of the applicant, English-language proficiency and a demonstrated employer-related

development need.

Q: What is the duration of the various programmes funded by NFP?

Programme duration varies from short three-week courses to four-years of funding for a PhD.

Q: Does the fellowship include funding for travel costs, living expenses and other such direct costs?

Yes.

Q: As an organisation, I have many employees who need training under such a programme. Should we apply for each employee individually?

No. In this case, there is another modality offered by NFP that can be applied for. That is a multi-year agreement to meet the needs of an organisation. Under such an agreement a number of employees from the same organisation can be trained over a period of years. Such an agreement can be discussed with the Royal Netherlands Embassy as a first step.

Q: Where can I get an application and more information on the NFP procedures and programmes?

All information, including application forms, is available at the Nuffic website: www.nuffic.nl/nfp. You can also contact the fellowship officer of the Royal Netherlands Embassy (tel 01-421800) or the NPT co-ordination unit (01-468467)

The Royal Netherlands Embassy in Sana’a announces

THE NETHERLANDS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

The NFP offers a range of opportunities for post-graduate studies in the Netherlands. Those interested can review the courses for which fellowships are available on the NUFFIC website www.nuffic.nl or in the brochure which can be obtained from the Royal Netherlands Embassy or the NPT support unit. Applications can only be submitted after obtaining admission from the University.

The deadline for submitting applications for Master’s programmes starting in autumn 2005 is 15 March 2005.

For further information, visit www.nuffic.nl or contact

Ms Linda Olyhoeck
Fellowship Officer
Royal Netherlands Embassy
01-421 800
(Wednesdays 10.00 – 12.00)

Mr Aziz Alhadi
NPT co-ordination unit
Higher Education Project
01-468467

A special information session, open to all, will be held at 10.00 a.m on 15 December in the meeting room of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Presented by Mohammed Khidr

Main Headlines

- Resistance scenario in Falluja makes Americans lose their minds
- Armed clashes in Bab El Mandab region between smugglers and security men
- A gang forges presidency office signature and stamps and gains YR 130 million
- Locust reaches Yemen across the Red Sea
- The Unified Nasserite National Party declared
- Twelve hotels in Sana'a detected to have tuning in porno programs on TV channels
- Three persons killed, four others injured in an oil tanker fire
- 15 accused people tried on charges of terrorist acts
- A new distinguished era of Yemeni-Italian relations
- Symposium on studies at Arab Universities concluded
- The president: None can realize the value of the homeland but those who suffered from colonialism
- Presidential decree declares formation of a council for administration of the State Authority of free zones
- FM: Yemen a headquarters for the center of democratic dialogue in the Middle East
- Yemen, Pakistan confirm their cooperation in combating terror and organized crime
- Justice Minister: Arab coordination in international forums on combating terror
- Parliament Speaker al-Ahmar discusses parliamentary relations with a number of ambassadors
- Expected to be released beginning of next year, Sheikh al-Mouyad and his companion make telephone calls with their families
- Yemen's religious scholars have not instigated resistance in Iraq
- Green party and the Nasserite Organisation condemn Arab and international silence towards genocide taking place in Iraq
- Law suits for trying Bush and Blair in many European capitals against the war crimes committed in Iraq
- Third annual conference on local councils concludes meetings in Sana'a, PM Bajammal affirms the importance of the role of local council's in enhancing efforts of developments, calling for active contribution to the success of census
- Saudi FM Saud al-Faisal: Yemen cooperation for developing major relations with the GCC states would facilitate its gaining full membership of the council
- President Saleh: successes of local authority encourages us granting it more authorities
- Egyptian measures to prevent ships from fishing in Yemen territorial waters outside protocols
- 33 killed, 50 others injured in Al-Jawf fighting
- As a result of the dose, the Yemenis receive the new year with a new economic crisis
- Pakistani authorities arrest tens of Yemenis
- Collective trials for journalists at the democratic dialogue center
- Members at the Islamic National Conference appeal to the president for the release of al-Khaiwani and cancel suspension of Al-Shoura newspaper

Al-Wahdawi weekly, organ of the Nasserite Unionist Organisation, 30 Nov.2004.

Main headlines

- The government tries to take differences in oil prices
- Hada waters company evades from paying YR 500 million worth taxes

Columnist Mahmoud Sharafudin says in an article the press for the political parties in Yemen is the only means through which they address their cadres in particular and the society in general. In the light of that is what the press gives prominence to the party's stances regarding issues of interest to the country and the people and their interests. Unfortunately the parties a matter makes some partisan newspapers living a stagnant situation without any development towards the institutional and journalist action which nearing to collapse face this importance with no-comprehension. It is especially so under the authority orientation towards narrowing the democratic margin and limiting press freedoms, putting opposition journalists in prisons because of their ideas and opinions and criticism of corruption spread inside the state machinery. Opposition parties are demanded to disclose those orientations to the public opinion and their rejection to stand by press in their ordeal. It is the only means they possess and which the authority fears from and tries to silence and curb the democratic margin available for it by regulations and laws.

Al-Sahwa weekly, 2 Dec. 2004.

Main headlines

- While many MPs deem as against the law, Approval of the additional appropriation is expected
- Some central parties stick to centralization, main hindrances of local authority, Annual conferences a décor and previous decision not implemented
- Workshop on rationalizing the consumption of waters
- Media delegation from Scandinavian countries visits Yemen
- Heedless of the ministry of education, Sana'a University nationalizes

the Higher Institute

Columnist Zaid al-Shami writes in his article during the past few years oil barrel price rose from 15 dollars to more than 40 dollars, which is a reasonable rise due to the rise in prices of industrial products whose prices had doubled by more than tenfold during years. Nevertheless this increase

In oil prices is considered as a leap we would do good to our coming generations and ourselves if we directed it towards investment and finding job opportunities and completing the infrastructures of development. The contrary is that if we see it squandered on consumer expenditures.

Our government is still counting the price of an oil barrel in the budget by 22 dollars and it knows it would sell it by no less than 35 dollars per barrel. These differences in prices have supplied the treasury with huge sums of money the parliament had recommended to be deposited in a special account and there must be a studied plan to benefit from them in development. However, the government has made of this increase a crisis it tries to get rid of it in unreal banks and book accounts without including it in the general budget.

Our country suffers from a great backwardness in many fields and this situation can be dealt with by benefiting from the revenues that have come beyond the budget.

It is regrettable that the people are taken advantage of their inattention and thus squandering their riches and changing them into unnecessary and consumer spending under allegation of their being as inevitable expenditures.

Al-Jamaheer weekly, organ of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, 1 Dec.2004.

Main headlines

- Within days locusts reach Yemen
- Martyr Abushawareb, a homeland in an image of a person
- Legal violations in employment in Sana'a
- \$471 million, Japanese grant to Yemen
- In its editorial on the 37th anniversary of the independence day the newspaper says events in the Arab arena and Islamic have escalated greatly leaving behind them a dark image and meanings depicting the form of the new world order led by

America and its means leading to domination over the world by force without showing any respect towards sanctities and ideologies. The new world order seems also does not commit itself to international laws and principles or the ethical values. Events in Falluja and other parts of Iraq and driving the leader Arafat from the circle of action by poisoning him and the interference in internal affairs of states with the aim of changing regimes and laws are but images of that and a proof confirming a real collapse of the world. Those events have stolen from us the celebration of the Independence Day and taken from its anniversary its meanings. Lowering the head and waiting for relief that the Arab regimes follow has become a phenomenon heralding a catastrophe and disagrees with reason and logic that urge for preparation for confrontation.

Al-Thawri weekly organ of the YSP, 2 Dec.2004.

Main headlines

- Billions of riyals cause the arousing of questions in the parliament
- Chairman of the YSP in parliament requests accountability of the minister of interior
- Regional parliamentary organization against corruption formed

Columnist Abdulbari Tahir says terror in Yemen is not an inevitable destiny or a trait that could not be ridden of or a characteristic attributed to Arabs and Muslims, as some Zionist circles try to visualize it.

Terror in Yemen has its roots in the structure and thinking and has extension into history. The tribal construction mostly resorts to weapons to decide and settle disputes that could not be decided by the use of arms. Disputes among families, on pastures and tribal boundaries and the like could be continuous for years and their victims can be in tens.

If the tribal heritage in itself based on continuous fighting, it has also associated in Yemen historically with the principle of fighting the tyrannous imam and this covers an important part of the history. When the Yemeni revolution took place in September 1962, it was confronted with a fierce war characterized by tribal and religious stamp for seven years. The conflict between the north and the south

SKETCHED OPINION

Iraq Elections

By Samer A.

also was characterized by the religious stamp.]

Al Mithaq weekly, organ of the General People's Congress, 6 Dec.2004.

Main headlines

- The fifth session of the Islamic Conference consider the situations in Iraq and Palestine and Sudan
- The GPC achieves majority in elections of vacant seats in local councils
- 200 families rescued from drowning in the island of Socotra
- Yemeni-Qatari ministerial committee discusses in Doha technical and economic cooperation

Columnist Dr Abduaziz al-Maqaleh says in his article political analysts in various parts of the world have not agreed on anything but on whom the beneficiaries from the bloodshed and fires are raging in Iraq. They unanimously see and talk very clearly that the Zionist entity is the first beneficiary from what is going on in Iraq in addition to warmongers and contracting companies through exporting the services that spots of tension need. But all others' benefit dwindle before the first beneficiary that wishes all the world gets in tension and wars so that it would devote itself to destroy the Palestinian resistance and the

Palestinian people.

Hence it is not arousing astonishment to know about what Arab newspapers have published about the presence of Israeli officers taking part in the battles in Falluja and in organizing street wars as they have acquired long experience in chasing the Palestinian resistance and killing the innocent people of children, women and elderly people. Disclosing the real beneficiary from the fires of Iraq and continuation of and escalation of the war in an unexpected manner does in return reveal the implicit agreement between this beneficiary and the American administration, which drives its soldiers to inferno and sends thousands of Iraqis into the same inferno.

Republic of Yemen

Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MAI) Groundwater and Soil Conservation Project (GSCP)

Expression of Interest for Consultant Services (EOIs) RE-ANNOUNCEMENT

The Republic of Yemen has received a Credit from the International Development Association (IDA) to assist in financing of the Groundwater and Soil conservation Project (GSCP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consultant services for:

1. Survey, designs and preparation of bidding documents for small and medium spate diversion works spread in ten field Units.
2. Carry out a basin-line survey in the project area for Monitoring and Evaluation of the future project performance in regard to key monitoring indicators.
3. Establishing MIS system at Project Coordination Unit (PCU), Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation field offices (17 IAS) and at the Central Water Monitoring Unit (CWMU), and
4. Satellite Imagery/Data Analyses Study for Monitoring of Changes in Irrigated Areas and Cropping Pattern for some selected sub-basins.

The Project is geographically spread country wide in fifteen governorates.

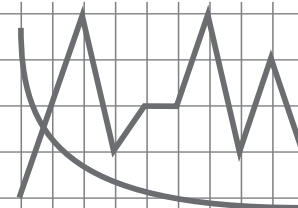
The period for carrying out any one, or more or all of the four studies together will be 4-6 months except for the study at number (4) in which case the period of study shall be in two spells during 2005-2009.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation represented by the Project Coordination Unit of the PCU now re-invites eligible consultants to indicate their EOI in providing the services for carrying out any one, or more or all of the four studies together. EOIs should include INTERALIA, a profile of the firm, key personnel and proposed staff for the studies and specific information regarding relevant qualifications, description of their experience in similar assignments.

EOIs must be delivered to the address below at or before 11.00 a.m. on December 25, 2004. Firms submitting EOIs will be considered for short-listing and a formal Request for Proposal (REP) will be provided to the short-listed firms. EOIs delivered earlier by the firms to the Project are considered valid.

**Groundwater and Soil Conservation Project
Director of Project Coordination Unit
P.O. Box 18733
Al-Hay Al-Seyasi, Near Djibouti Embassy,
Sana'a – Republic of Yemen
Tel No. ++967-1-445315 or 443219
Fax No. ++967-1-445261
e-mail GSCP@yemen.net.ye**

YT Business



Exchange Rate for the Yemeni Rial

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	185.2800	185.4700
Sterling Pound	359.9900	360.3600
Euro	247.6700	247.9300
Saudi Rial	49.4000	49.4500
Kuwaiti Dinar	628.4800	629.1300
UAE Dirhem	50.4400	50.5000
Egyptian Pound	29.7600	29.7900
Bahraini Dinar	491.4700	491.9800
Qatari Rial	50.9000	50.9500
Jordanian Dinar	261.3300	261.5900
Omani Rial	481.2500	481.7500
Swiss Franc	162.9100	163.0800
Swedish Crown	27.5700	27.5900
Japanese Yen	1.8158	1.8177

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

To attract investments,

Three industrial zones to be established

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF
mkmal@yahoo.com

The Yemeni government has adopted a plan for the building of zones contributing to industrial development, distribution of industrial activity over various regions of Yemen and the providing of environment suitable for attracting local investments.

Yemen's cabinet has, for that purpose, called upon all investors and industrialists to invest in the new industrial zones, participate in the construction of their infrastructure and benefit from privileges the government would make available for investors. The Yemeni council of ministers has in this regard approved the republican decree related to the establishment of three industrial zones selected to be built in Aden, Hudeida and Mukalla where Yemen possesses a coastal strip amounting to

2500 km extending from north of Midi on the Red Sea to the west to Shahr to the east of Mahara on the Arabian Sea.

This situation qualifies Yemen for the construction of many strategic cities and ports on both Arabian Sea and the Red Sea, forming significant sea outlets for both economic and tourist sides.

Yemen is at present implementing a project for developing the city ports aimed at focusing on designing city ports and to care of them in addition to preparation of developmental strategy for them. This project has been established a short while ago. In accordance to Yemen's strategic plans the project is now being implemented as it is considered one of the more significant essential outputs for the speeding up economic development focusing on the coastal stripe in general and city ports (Aden, Hudeida and Mukalla) in particular.

This project is based on preparing ports as centers for economic attraction, to strengthen infrastructures in the three cities and preparation of the developmental strategy of those

cities. It is also meant for concentrating on the essential structures of the local administration authority, especially in the economic aspect. Yemen does focus presently on the city of Aden and then there would be a shift in concentration on the cities of Hudeida and Mukalla.

The importance of the projects comes from its being one of the major outputs for economic development. The projects works on three phases where the industrial zones in the three cities are included in the second phase of the project as well as the restructure of the local authorities and render help for the private sector in those cities in establishment of the projects and their implementation and creation of new jobs, and this would be at the third phase.

This phase includes also the support for the private sector in those cities in building projects and creating new jobs and this phase would also pave the way for supporting the major economic establishments; airports and seaports, and the focus on building a database by using communication technology for the facilitation

of work in those cities.

The total cost of the project amounts to \$ 96 million whereas the cost of the first phase amounts to \$ 26 million and work in it would end in 2006. The World Bank has contributed to the cost by \$ 23 million, approximately 90% and the government by 10%. In addition to that there are secondary finances to the project offered by other funds like the Saudi Fund that supports the project with %13 million. Sources at the project management say there are negotiations with the Arab Fund that would support the project of the sea bridge for linking the area of Khouf Maksar to Al-Mansoura and the support is estimated to be at \$10 million.

The sources say the work is presently done according to the main general design of the city of Aden which some international companies have started work in it in July 2004 and would be finished in February 2005. It is also expected that work in Hudeida and Mukalla have also begun in the mid of last October and presently work is going on for supplying projects of the infrastructure

of the city of Aden and also preparation of a list of the main projects for the cities of Hudeida and Mukalla in order to help the government in applying decentralization system in the three cities and help those cities to implement the government economic plan planned to be implemented in those three cities.

Future activities of the project are in preparing for the first phase where there would be entering the industrial zones, supporting the private sector to conduct qualifying and training

courses for the workforce and also facilitate measures of investment through supporting branches of the State Authority of Investment in those areas and establishment of an information bank within the administration of local development.

As for the second phase there would be preparation of a scheme for four cities in each of Mokha and Taiz, Nashtoun in Mahara and Midi in Hajja. This scheme would work for expansion of the secondary city ports in Yemen.

A view from Aden industrial zone

Yemen negotiates with WTO

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Yemeni team negotiating with the WTO held its first round of talks with the organization in Geneva in preparation for Yemen's accession to the world body. Yemen hopes to join the organization to gain commercial benefits.

The talks were headed by Yemeni Minister of Industry and Trade, Dr. Khalid Rajih Sheikh, who conveyed to the meeting the government's efforts to reform the economy and its determination to encourage further foreign investments.

Some businesspeople close to chambers of industry and commerce in Yemen, have blamed the Yemeni government for not allowing them to participate in the negotiating round, and underline some potential negative impacts of Yemeni membership in the WTO.

Despite some possible negative repercussions, globalization and the technical revolution have made Yemeni accession to the World Bank a necessity. Unlike the pessimism shown by some businesspeople, government sources say membership in the WTO may help to establish an international umbrella to protect the country's economic interests against regional

cooperation among other WTO members.

The government hopes to steer investment to production for export, rather than for local consumption. Joining the organization would help provide a better climate for exports.

An increase in Yemen's credibility with foreign investors is another tangible benefit of membership, as is the possibility of increasing trade among Arab members of the WTO. With the pledge to open borders and remove trade barriers, Arab trade activity can be improved.

The WTO is the successor of the General Agreement of Tariff and Trade (GATT) that was established

after the Second World War. The WTO has more than 140 members representing more than 90 per cent of world trade. Thirty other states are negotiating for membership in the organization. The organization's essential tasks are to manage agreements related to trade, act as a forum for trade negotiations, settle disputes pertaining to trade, revise national policies related to trade, and to help developing countries with technical assistance and training programs.

Yemen's progress in its trade and investment policies has brought the country to a stage where most of their policies are in line with requirements of the WTO.

Expression of Interest for Travel Service

The World Bank's Sana'a Office hereby solicits expressions of interest for provision of Travel Service, from qualified Travel Agents in Sana'a, to express their interest in providing the above service. The expression of interest with relevant price quotations for providing the required travel services should specify the name and address of the company, contact person, relevant travel service experience and list of professional staff.

The quotations and relevant documents must be received by the World Bank no later than December 31st, 2004.

Only vendors with demonstrated experience in delivering quality service will be considered.

Interested travel agents should forward their expression of interest, labeled "EOI TRAVEL SERVICES" including the documentation listed above, to the following address:

World Bank
EOI TRAVEL SERVICE
P.O Box 18152
Hadda, street No.40 (Off Damascus Road)
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

Attn: Office Administrator

The grove of recitation

By: MR. KHALID AL-ROWISHAN
THE MINISTER OF CULTURE AND TOURISM

(A word written on Mr. Al-Aqua latest book)

Where do those melodies come from to make our eyelids wet and our eyes pour?

And to where do those sounds waving and flying us?

I wondered as my spirit was tasting "Al-Sana Lah" (1) as a soaring melody in horizons and also as a poem engraved on a mold made of golden speech.

And then, we have that capturing and captured sigh..

Is it actually a sigh or a moan coming out of the reciter's (2) throat bleeding, arresting and sparkled with anxiety, grief and yearning?

Moreover, we still have that unique, wonderful sense of humor, that delighting spirit, that sweet word, that creative, on-the-spot intuition and that fascinating munificent and openhandedness. The reciter spreads all such qualities, when he has already finished reciting a part of a sonnet, a

graceful joke or a marvelous comment, or even a quick flying wave by his hand to friend sitting on the corner.

Reciter himself is a great ballad with his pure voice, pure conscience, chic costume, tactful talks with a great deal of great smiles, waving and greetings distributed by him.

Such a reciter distributes his jokes and comments in a precise courtesy and a tender policy. As a result, boredom could never exist in his presence.

Nobody would get bored with listening to his recitation or even his talks.

Gatherings always miss him, hearts always feel delighted by him and the place is overwhelmed by his scent and grace. The scent comes from perfumes and aloe and the grace comes from his cheerfulness and gaiety. When he speaks to you, even if he has never met you before, he always addresses you in pluralized titles, indicating his politeness and respect towards you! He never misses the chance to good-bye someone that would leave the place, nor does he miss the cheerfulness welcoming someone that would be arriving at the place.

Traditions of a city whose whiteness is magic itself, whose legends of the balconies of its palaces are flowing falling on people passing through. And in return, visitors take their hats off greeting the bride of cities, Sana'a-greetings and congratulations on crowning Sana'a as a capital of Arabic Culture. Among all this, there is a reciter who deserves greetings taking hats off at the same time! This is Mr. Ali Muhsen Al-Aqua: a nectar of recitation and a faithful reciter. He is a rose full of vitality in a charming bouquet of his colleagues of reciters. Upon such reciters, we strongly rely and depend for the purpose of vitalizing and reviving the grove of recitation in Yemen.

Notes:

- (1) Al-Sana Lah is a famous traditional Yemeni Ballad.
- (2) Reciter in Yemen is a person of a very beautiful voice. He usually attends gatherings like wedding parties not only to recite unique different poems, but also to make people enjoy the time by all wonderful things done by the reciter (as mentioned in the article above).

Yemeni artists show creativity

By Yasser Al-Mayyasi
Yemen Times Staff

In the framework of Sana'a being the Cultural Arab Capital for 2004, the Ministry of Culture & Tourism Khalid Al-Rowaishan inaugurated the Artistic Exhibition Nov. 27, with a group of Yemen Artists taking part in the exhibition.

The artists are Hashim Ali, Amina Al-Nusairi, Reema Qasim, Talal Al-Najjar, Abdulghani Ali and Madhihar Nazzar.

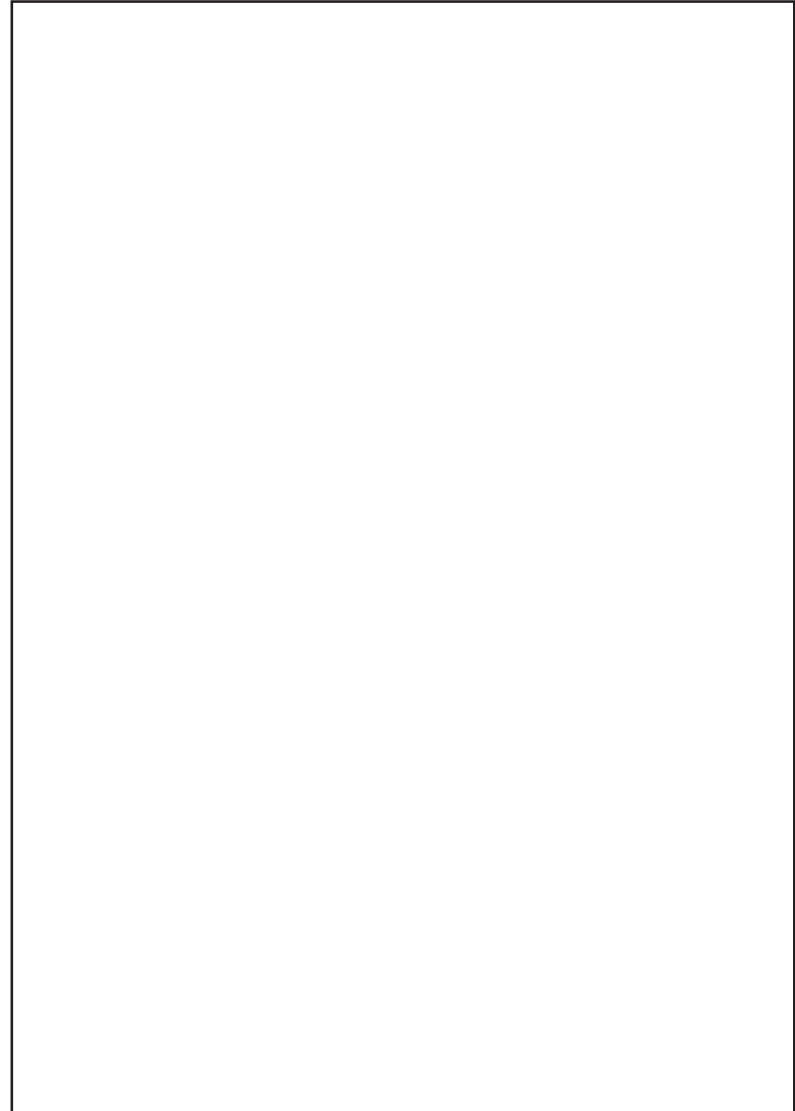
These artists are considered the pioneers of fine arts in the country and their works and achievements are highly respected in international and local assemblies.

The exhibition will continue up to Dec. 2, during which time the participating artists exhibit their fine works including around 70 paintings.

The artists attempt to record and display some scenes of the Yemeni life through the use of a wonderful style, changing the real into a fascinating world. Their paintings deserve to be exhibited and viewed for a long.

The paintings have come out of a long experience over the last few years employing modern technology in the manipulation and design of the natural scenes. Colors, symbols and decoratives were diversified in an attractive style.

Works of the artists also included Yemen people's heritage and the



ancient arts derived from the old city of Sana'a. Details of women's faces in the old city of Sana'a were shown in the paintings to express the fact that the Yemeni woman is a symbol of fortitude and this dates back to history of Queen Balqis.

The reality of Islam

By ISMAIL AL-GHABRI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

When Islam first emerged, the surrounding society was still quite primitive. People used tents made out of sheep and goat fur, and the houses of the elites could be compared to what is now a cattle stable.

Islam underlined the difference between right and wrong and emphasized the equality between people. It saw in urban life the possibility for peace and stability, although economic conditions continued to decline. The construction materials, stones and clay

did not enable the ordinary citizen to build a house similar to that of Abi Sufian, the famous trader. Slavery also contributing to the economic problems of the time.

God ordered his messenger to build mosques for worship, and to promote education and development. In the absence of other educational facilities, people were schooled in the mosques. It is appropriate again now to devote mosques to worship and to keep politics out.

The place for political discussion is not in the mosque, and its presence there contradicts the principles of Islam. The real role of the mosque is being changed and this why we continue to suffer.

Breeding program for Socotri reptiles

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Socotra Archipelago is home to a large number of endemic reptiles. Of the 22 types lizards, six types snakes, and a species of worm-like lizards (Trogonophidae), 26 are found only in the archipelago.

The geckos are the most diverse of the archipelago's reptiles, with 18 species, 15 of which are considered endemic. Seven species belong to the genus *Pristurus*, nine to the genus *Hemidactylus* and two to the genus *Haemodracon*.

Little is known about the biology and ecological needs of these species.

The Genus Haemodracon

The *Haemodracon riebeckii* was described by Peters (1882) as *Diplodactylus riebeckii*, based on three specimens collected by the two German naturalists Dr. George Schweinfurth and Dr. E. Riebeck, who spent six weeks on Socotra in 1881.

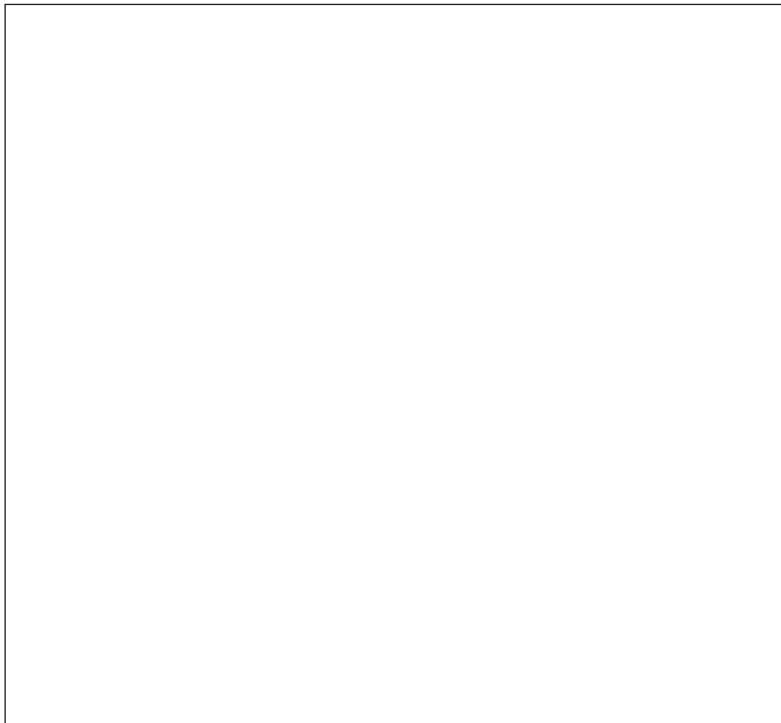
It grows up to 30 cm in length, and is the largest gecko species on Socotra. It has relatively small, flat scales, and is distinguished by a dark streak from the nostril to ear, that is interrupted by the eye.

The *Haemodracon trachyrhinus* was described by Boulenger (1899) as *Phyllodactylus trachyrhinus* based on two specimens recorded by the British zoologists W. R. Ogilvie-Grant and H. O. Forbes, who visited Socotra and Abd al Kuri in 1898.

It grows to be about 9 cm, and resembles a dwarf *Haemodracon riebeckii*, with larger scales, although the scales on the snout are distinctly larger and conical.

Bauer et al. (1997) reviewed and revised the genus *Phyllodactylus* and created the new genus *Haemodracon* for the two taxa from Socotra.

A few years ago, forms of *Haemodracon* were also recorded on the island of Samha. The species there are similar to large *H. riebeckii* of Socotra, but further taxonomic study is needed to



An enchanting scene from Socotra (Photo by Moh'd S. Noman)

clarify the status of this population.

On Socotra, *H. riebeckii* seems to be more common than *H. trachyrhinus*. They are predominantly nocturnal and if disturbed, take refuge in the deep crevices of the rock, living a predominantly solitary existence. All our specimens of *H. trachyrhinus* were located during the day in an inactive state.

Captive maintenance and breeding

Two male and two females specimens were kept in the laboratory terrariums, with a floor covered with a larger layer of mixed sand and loam. Nesting boxes, similar to those used for birds were offered, and the temperature and humidity was carefully controlled food. They were fed crickets, locusts, cockroaches, and fruit.

Egg laying

The female digs a small vertical pit in which she usually lays two white and sticky soft-shelled eggs. The eggs are laid next to each other and the shells harden in the air, becoming fragile.

Immediately after the eggs are laid, the female closes the pit with substrate and leaves them for the unusually long time before they hatch. Eggs are incubated at 20-28 degrees centigrade, and the young hatched after 176 to 270 days.

Another peculiarity is the time difference between the hatching of the young within one clutch of two eggs. If both eggs are kept under identical conditions, in most young geckos on, or nearly on the same day. However, in case of *H. riebeckii* the difference in hatching times can range from between 4 to 27 days.

Hatching

The young break the shell with their paired egg-teeth and form a hole through which they hatch. They usually then have to dig themselves out through the substrate.

Young specimens are more colorful than the adults. Immediately after hatching they shed their skin and consume the exuviae and eat their first food after 3-5 days.

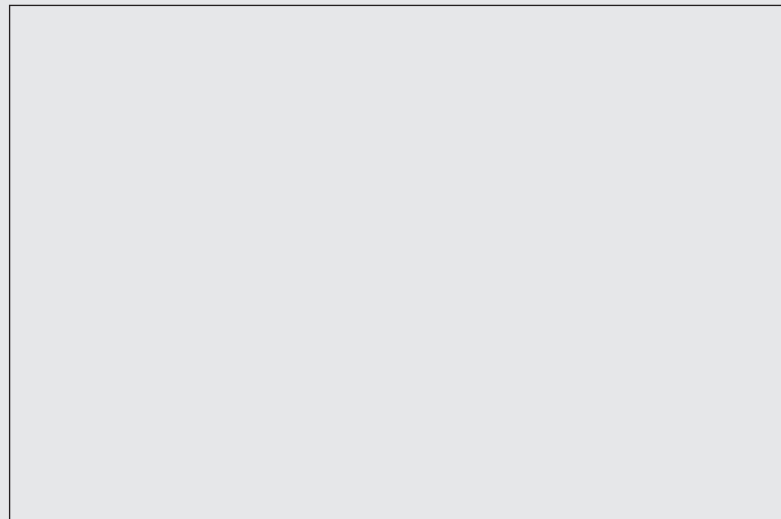
Japanese prints exhibited

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Opening Ceremony of the Japanese Prints Exhibition was held on Saturday Dec. 4, 2004 at the Culture House and announced the beginning of the exhibition that was organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Japanese Embassy in Sana'a.

The exhibition, which is part of the Sana'a 2004 Arab Cultural Capital, will present 75 of the most famous Japanese portraits from 1950-1991, and will run for 12 days. The opening was attended by the Syrian Minister of Culture, journalists, and art enthusiasts.

After cutting the inauguration tape,

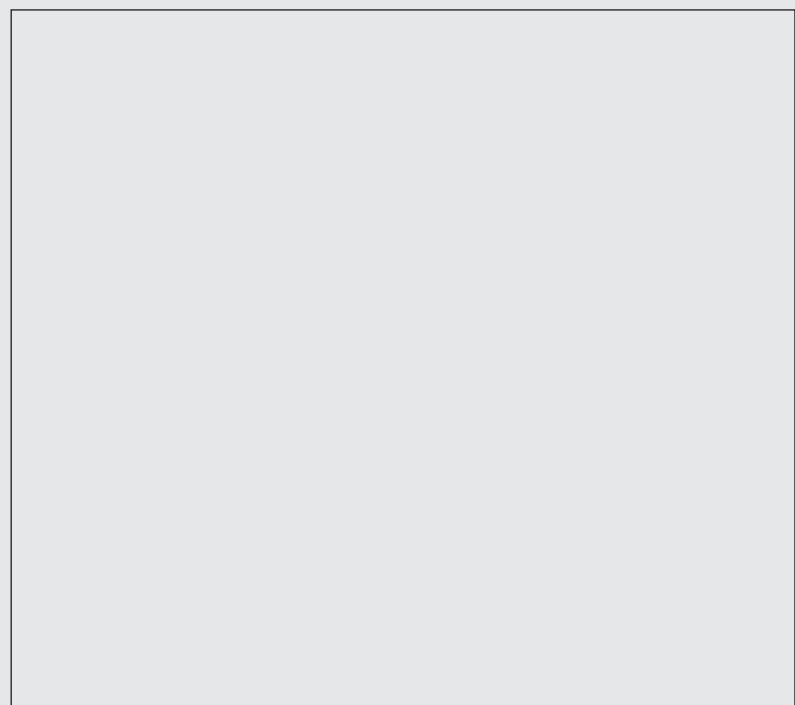


Japanese ambassador(L.), Khaled al-Rowaishan, Syrian Minister of Culture, Moh'd M. Adhban

the visitors viewed the portraits and listened to the welcoming speech of the Japanese ambassador. He mentioned that the exhibition is one of several Japanese cultural events celebrating Sana'a as the 2004 Arab Cultural Capital and promoting the relationship between Yemen and Japan.

The Minister of Culture also delivered a speech welcoming the visitors, describing the exhibition as the largest foreign activity to take place this year, and thanking the Japanese ambassador for being so active in organizing various cultural functions.

The exhibition offers portraits from different decades, from various artists using many different techniques, such as woodcut, silkscreen, lithograph, etching, and mezzotint.



One of the 70 Japanese captivating portraits

What is AIDS?

AIDS stands for Acquired Immunodeficiency (or Immune Deficiency) Syndrome. It results from infection with a virus called HIV, which stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. This virus infects key cells in the human body called CD4-positive (CD4+) T cells. These cells are part of the body's immune system, which fights infections and various cancers.

When HIV invades the body's CD4+ T cells, the damaged immune system loses its ability to defend against diseases caused by bacteria, viruses, and other microscopic organisms. A substantial decline in CD4+ T cells also leaves the body vulnerable to certain cancers.

There is no cure for AIDS, but medical treatments can slow down the rate at which HIV weakens the immune system. As with other diseases, early detection offers more options for treatment and preventing complications.

What Is The Difference Between HIV And AIDS?

The term AIDS refers to an advanced stage of HIV infection, when the immune system has sustained substantial damage. Not everyone who has HIV infection develops AIDS.

When HIV progresses to AIDS, however, it has proved to be a universally fatal illness. Few people survive five years from the time they are diagnosed with AIDS, although this is increasing with improvements in treatment techniques.

Experts estimate that about half the people with HIV will develop AIDS within 10 years after becoming infected. This time varies greatly from person to

person, however, and can depend on many factors, including a person's health status and health-related behaviors.

People are said to have AIDS when they have certain signs or symptoms specified in guidelines formulated by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The CDC's definition of AIDS includes:

- All HIV-infected people with fewer than 200 CD4+ T cells per cubic millimeter of blood (compared with CD4+ T cell counts of about 1,000 for healthy people)
- People with HIV infection who have at least one of more than two dozen AIDS-associated conditions that are the result of HIV's attack on the immune system

AIDS-associated conditions include:

- Opportunistic infections by bacteria, fungi, and viruses. Opportunistic infections are infections that are rarely seen in healthy people but occur when a person's immune system is weakened.
- The development of certain cancers (including cervical cancer and lymphomas).
- Certain autoimmune disorders.

Most AIDS-associated conditions are rarely serious in healthy individuals. In people with AIDS, however, these infections are often severe and sometimes fatal because the immune system is so damaged by HIV that the body cannot fight them off.

The History Of AIDS

The symptoms of AIDS were first recognized in the early 1980s:

- In 1981, a rare lung infection called *Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia* began to appear in homosexual men living in Los Angeles and New York.
- At the same time, cases of a rare tumor called **Kaposi's sarcoma** were also reported in young homosexual men. These tumors had been previously known to affect elderly men, particularly in parts of Africa. New appearances of the tumors were more aggressive in the young men and appeared on parts of the body other than the skin.
- Other infections associated with weakened immune defenses were also reported in the early 1980s.

Groups most frequently reporting these infections in the early 1980s were homosexuals, intravenous drug users, and people with hemophilia, a blood disorder that requires frequent transfusions. Blood and sexual transmission were therefore suspected as the sources for the spread of the infections.

In 1984, the responsible virus was identified and given a name. In 1986, it was renamed the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Need To Know:

Because many of the first cases of AIDS in the United States occurred in homosexual men and intravenous drug users, some people mistakenly believe that other groups of people are not at risk for HIV infection. However, anyone is capable of becoming HIV-infected,

regardless of gender, age, or sexual orientation.

Facts About AIDS

- As of the year 2000, nearly one million people in the U.S. were confirmed to be HIV-positive.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 2.2 million Americans now carry the HIV virus but do not yet have symptoms.

- Each year, about 40,000 new HIV infections occur in the U.S.

- AIDS is a leading cause of death for American men and women between the ages of 25 and 44.

- Through June 2000, 438,795 people in the U.S. had died from AIDS (374,422 men and 64,373 women).

- By the end of 2000, 36.1 million people worldwide were living with HIV/AIDS, with the vast majority living in

developing countries.

- Through 2000, 21.8 million people worldwide have died from AIDS.

- Between 1991 and 1996, there were more new cases of AIDS among people older than 50 than those between ages 13 and 49. Today, 11% of all new cases of AIDS in the U.S. are now in people over the age of 50.

- The HIV carrier rate in the U.S. is now 1 carrier for every 100 to 200 people.

Pretending there's no racism hurts kids

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - African-American preschoolers whose parents say they don't believe racism is a problem are more likely to be depressed or anxious, a new study indicates.

Racism is a reality," lead author Dr. Margaret O'Brien Caughy said. "It does have impact on very young children. And we have to acknowledge that," she noted.

Caughy said that there are many reasons why young children may become anxious if their parents deny the existence of racism. For one thing, parents who experience racism but don't acknowledge it may be anxious or depressed themselves, and pass that onto their children, she noted.

Otherwise, young children may witness signs of racism around them, and become upset when their parents' opinions don't match their experience.

"If (children) see in their day-to-day lives that racism is real, but their parents don't acknowledge it, could that create anxiety?" Caughy asked.

Traditionally, people who report they have experienced racism are more likely to have problems with their physical or mental health. In order to investigate whether denying instances of discrimination hurts health even more, Caughy and her team interviewed 200 African-American families with children aged 3 or 4.

Caughy, who is based at the University of Texas Health Sciences Center in Dallas, along with her colleagues, asked parents how often they experienced racism and how

they coped with it, then measured children's behavior.

Approximately 7 percent of parents denied that racism was a problem for their friends and family, the authors report in the *American Journal of Public Health*.

In an interview with Reuters Health, Caughy explained that parents who said they didn't think racism was a problem for African-Americans in general were more likely to have young children with problems such as anxiety or depression.

She noted that parents who denied that they had experienced racism personally were no more likely to have children with these problems, and denying racism in general did not increase kids' risk of so-called "externalizing" behavior problems, such as aggression or acting out.

Although the team did not measure whether or not people had actually experienced racism, research suggests that 90 percent of African-Americans who say they are not discriminated against indeed are, according to objective measurements.

Parents who responded to racism by confronting the people involved or taking some kind of action were less likely to report that their children had behavior problems.

The findings suggest that parents should try to talk to children about racism, on a level they can understand, Caughy said. "Acknowledging it, that it's real ... and then trying to help children develop realistic coping skills" appears to do the most good, she noted.

Yemen Airways (Yemenia) made a lease of two new Airbus A330 aircrafts in a step seen by many observers as a motivator for Yemenia customers and for tourists from all over the world to chose Yemen and fly Yemenia.

The national carrier has been delivered the two airbuses, becoming a new operating of the type. The two aircrafts were leased from International Lease Finance Corporation (ILFC).

Each of Yemenia's A330-200s seats 277 passengers in a first and economy layout. The aircrafts' engines are Rolls-Royce Trent 700s.

"Our new Airbus A330-200s represent an important step into the future for us, bringing both technical benefits as well as an increase in aircraft size," said Yemeni Chairman Captain Abdulkhaliq Al-Qadhi. "We are delighted to be modernizing our fleet with Airbus aircrafts in this way, and look forward to the improvements in economy and passenger comfort that it will bring."

Yemenia's fleet currently includes four Airbus A310s, which are used mainly on services to Asia, Europe and within the Middle East.

"Airlines play a key role in growing business and tourism, and are often major contributors to a country's economic growth - especially when they are 'flag-carriers' such as Yemenia", said Airbus President and CEO Noel Forgeard. "The Airbus A330-200 is an excellent aircraft for the modernization of Yemenia's fleet, and I am confident that it will proven an excellent tool for economic growth."

A hospitable reception

A delegation from Yemen composed of representatives of Yemenia, Yemen's the tourism industry, and the media was hosted for four days during 20-23 November 2004. The stay was in Toulouse, France, the headquarters of the Airbus corporation.

The Yemeni delegation toured the city of Toulouse during the first two days.

Yemeni media members of the delegation were introduced to Airbus and its aircrafts on the third day by David Belupillai, the Regional Press Manager, who presented an image of the achievements of Airbus and its rapid expansion in the region.

In the same day, the delegation was taken in a tour to see the Visit A330/A340 and A380 Assembly Lines and later also visited the Cabin Mockup of all Airbus aircrafts, including the super-size A380.

Airbus beats competition

In his presentation, Mr. Belupillai unveiled the statistics showing that Airbus is gaining more shares than its American rival Boeing by an increasing margin.

"I can safely assure you that Airbus is now steadily progressing and gaining trust of airlines throughout the world. I am delighted to inform you that orders of Airbus aircrafts in 2003 exceeded by a margin of 8% those orders for the closest rival Boeing," he said.

In a comprehensive presentation of the degree of sophistication of Airbus aircraft's and sale, presale, and after-sale services, Mr. Belupillai believes that Yemenia has made the right choice by going for the Middle-sized A330-200 to enhance its fleet and expressed his satisfaction for Yemen's

decision.

"With 8 customers and operators, Airbus A330 is the new Middle East and North Africa [MENA] workhorse and has a growing Middle East presence by the year," he added.

"With the constant increase in travel services and demand, by 2022, the MENA region.

He also mentioned that Airbus had almost double the share of sales in the MENA region during the first half of 2004.

Meanwhile, he also said that this was also reflected in the higher ration of passengers preferring Airbus A320 over Boeing 737 NG.

"Our aircrafts enjoy a wider cabin area, a more economical engine, a more efficient system, a successful design, and a much quieter atmosphere."

The amazing A380

It was clear from the visit that Airbus intended to break the monopoly of super jumbo aircrafts by introducing the amazing and unprecedented A380 family or aircrafts.

"Passenger traffic doubles every 15 years, fuel consumption and economic spending will become vital in competition, and more entertainment, comfort and space will give the edge for successful aircrafts. Hence, we as Airbus realized that the Airbus A380 would be the ultimate solution," Mr. Bellupillai confidently said.

Indeed, the A380 carriers seem out of the ordinary. With its three-floor structure, and its extremely large space area, the A380 offers more than 50% extra seats compared to the current largest passenger aircraft Boeing 747-400.

On the other hand, interestingly, even though it will be more spacious and can have more luggage and passengers, yet the A380 is quieter and more economical. It even needs shorter runway distance to take-off and land and with its 20 well-organized wheels has a more balanced pressure on the ground when landing.

However, when asked why didn't Boeing also go for a larger aircraft, the answer was somewhat surprising.

"At the beginning, Boeing though that such a huge aircraft is not needed and will not receive demand. But with sales of 139 so far, we have proven that going for such a jet is indeed the right decision," Mr. Bellupillai answered.

The \$100 million price was not seen an exaggeration by the Yemeni team members who toured the Mockup center and got to know the A380 from within.

"It is an amazing aircraft! We just cannot wait until we get on one of them," said Mr. Zaghlool Ba Zaraa of Ba Zaraa Travel Agency when he sat on one of the first class seats of the demonstrated aircraft.

Airbus and the future

Upon the completion of the visit to Airbus headquarters and after receiving extensive information about the different phases of manufacturing, selling and servicing the Airbus aircrafts, the Yemeni delegation was highly impressed by the proper administration and coordination for the visit. The delegation members also hailed the company for taking bold steps in reaching out the Middle East and North Africa with attractive and convenient offers and cooperation in the different stages of the visit.

Preparing for the 17th Gulf Championship

Yemen beaten twice

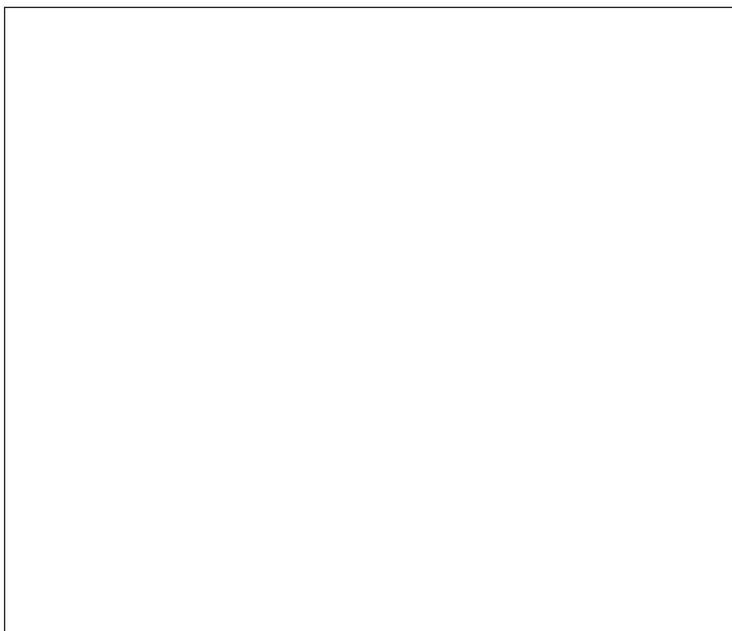
BY ADEL AL-KHAWLANI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In two friendly meetings with Iraq and Qatar, Yemen lost to the former on Dec. 4 by 1-3, and to the latter 0-3 the following day in Dubai.

The first meeting was arranged between the Algerian Rabeh Sa'adan, coach of the national team and his counterpart Adnan Hamid, coach of the Iraqi team just two days after the delegation of Yemen football team arrived in the UAE.

The match was fast paced from the beginning with the score at the end of the first half being 1-1. Iraq scored the first goal in the 25th minute of the first half and Yemen answered after only 6 minutes later through the skillful striker Nashwan Al-Hajjam.

The second half saw two goals for Iraq. The second goal came through a free kick from opposite the



Algerian Rabeh Sa'adan, Coach of Yemen' football team.

Yemeni net, and the third was scored almost in the same way.

In the second half, the play slowed down, particularly after the midfielder of Yemen Abdulsalam Al-Ghurbani was injured along with the goalkeeper who was substituted by Salim Awadh. The meeting witnessed two yellow cards for Iraqis and one for the Yemeni side.

Players of Yemen lost two golden opportunities, the first by Salim Sa'eed and the second by Ali Al-Nono in the final minutes of the first half. Al-Nono did not appear at his usual level and what saved Yemen from being badly beaten were the top efforts of fullback Mohannad Rajeh and left winger Waseem Al-Qa'ar, and the solid play between Nashwan Aziz and Nashan Al-Hajjam.

In the second practice play with Qatar, Yemen suffered a 0-3 loss meanwhile the team was camping in

the UAE before entering the 17th Gulf Championship which will open on Dec. 10.

The first half saw no goals for either side and in the 21st minute of the second half, Wasam Rizq scored for his side after he received a ball from Mush'al Mubarik and placed it in the right corner of the Yemeni net.

Salim Al-Mal added another goal for Qatar just two minutes after the first goal and Nief Al-Khater scored the third goal in the 74 minute of the game time, to increase his side's advantage to three goals.

Rage is mounting among the Yemeni public over the loss. They are angry that the situation of the Yemeni football has changed from Lusiano's exaggerations to Sa'adan's statements. The encounters scheduled for the team in the 17th Gulf competition will be the real test for the Sa'adan and the rest of the team.

YEARENDER-Olympics provide stream of unforgettable vignettes

LONDON, Dec 7 (Reuters) - Among the pine-scented groves of Ancient Olympia, along the marathon route traced by Phidippides and on the cycle course beneath the Acropolis, the 2004 Athens Olympics produced a stream of unforgettable vignettes.

In the afterglow from 16 days' competition staged under a flawless Mediterranean sky, it was easy to forget the chaos and confusion that had reigned before the Games returned to their spiritual home.

After a series of public warnings from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Athens somehow met all its main construction deadlines and staged a Games as stylish as either the 1960 Rome or 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

The athletes, notably American swimmer Michael Phelps, rose to the occasion.

Phelps won six of the U.S. team's table-topping 35 gold medals plus two bronzes. On the track Moroccan Hicham El Guerrouj atoned for the disappointments of the previous two

Games and confirmed he is the finest middle-distance runner of his or probably any era with the first 1,500-5,000 double since Paavo Nurmi at the 1924 Paris Olympics.

Portents that the country which staged both the ancient Olympics and the first modern Games in 1896 would be celebrating rather than lamenting at year's end had come in the previous month.

Prior to the 2004 European soccer championship Greece had not won a single game at a major tournament. In Portugal they did not lose one, beating the home side 1-0 in the final after recording a 2-1 victory over the same opponents in the tournament's opening game.

Appropriately for an Olympic year it was individuals rather than teams who scaled the sporting heights, apart from the notable exception of the Boston Red Sox who beat the St Louis Cardinals 4-0 to win the city's first world series since Babe Ruth was sold to the hated New York Yankees in 1920.

Federer's year

Swiss Roger Federer completed probably the best year on the tennis circuit since Rod Laver's second grand slam in 1969 by winning three of the four major tournaments, exciting speculation that he could soon be the best of all time.

Federer, who travels the world without a coach, has no obvious weaknesses, as Briton Tim Henman ruefully acknowledged.

"If you take Andy Roddick's serve, Andre Agassi's return, my volley and Leyton Hewitt's speed, you've probably got a chance," said Henman.

On the women's circuit, Russians won three of the four grand slam tournaments. Maria Sharapova, the youngest of the trio at 17, won Wimbledon in only her second year on the WTA tour.

Anastasia Myskina defeated Elena Dementieva to capture the French Open and Svetlana Kuznetsova won the U.S. Open, with victory over the unfortunate Dementieva.

Vijay Singh, who once gave \$10 lessons as a club professional in Borneo, became the first man to earn \$10 million on the U.S. golf tour. The well-built Fijian with an obsessive work ethic joined Byron Nelson, Ben Hogan, Sam Snead and Tiger Woods as the only players with nine victories in a year.

Singh ended Woods's five-year reign at the top of the rankings in September and secured his third career major at the U.S. PGA at Whistling Straits.

The most popular victory of the year came in the U.S. Masters where Phil Mickelson at last controlled his prodigious talent over all four rounds to win a major at the 47th time of asking.

Less happily Mickelson and Woods were twinned in a mutually disconsolate pairing at the Ryder Cup, where the United States went down 18-1/2 to 9-1/2 to Europe at Oakland Hills.

To nobody's surprise Michael Schumacher won his seventh Formula One world championship and Lance Armstrong succeeded where Jacques Anquetil, Bernard Hinault, Miguel Indurain and Eddy Merckx had failed by winning the Tour de France for a sixth time.

World record

West Indies cricket captain Brian Lara, who struck a world record 375 against England in Antigua a decade ago, chose the same opponents at the same venue to become the first person to score 400 in a test match.

Sri Lanka off spinner Muttiah Muralitharan, banned for a time from bowling a new delivery while the authorities debated whether it was legal or not, briefly held the world record for test wickets before he was overtaken by Australia

wrist spinner Shane Warne.

In baseball, Barry Bonds scaled hit his 700th career home run. Only Ruth (714) and Hank Aaron (755) lie ahead of the San Francisco Giants slugger, who turned 40 in July.

But those suspicious of Bond's longevity and impressive physique were not surprised when he was named as one of several high-profile athletes involved in the federal investigation into the Bay Area Laboratory Co-operative (BALCO), believed to be manufacturing and distributing the previously undetectable steroid THG (tetrahydrogestrinone).

Bonds denied knowingly using steroids but, according to a U.S. newspaper, told a grand jury he had used substances supplied by BALCO. His personal trainer Greg Anderson was one of four men indicted by the grand jury.

Double world sprint champion Kelli White and Olympic 4x400 relay gold medallist Alvin Harrison were banned after admitting taking THG as well as a host of other illegal drugs.

World 100 metres record holder Tim Montgomery was charged with serious doping violations as a result of the BALCO inquiry and the laboratory's head Victor Conte said he had supplied Montgomery's partner Marion Jones, the triple 2000 Sydney Olympics champion, with steroids.

The moribund heavyweight boxing arena was briefly revitalised after Briton Lennox Lewis announced he was retiring undefeated as World Boxing Council champion.

Ukrainian Vitali Klitschko stopped Corrie Sanders in the eighth round to avenge the South African's upset win over his brother Vladimir.

Vitali's first challenge was scheduled for December 11 against Britain's Danny Williams, who knocked out the former undisputed champion Mike Tyson in the fourth round in the biggest upset of the year.

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

BY Eugenia

Aries
(Mar 21 - Apr 19)
Plan to do a little festive decorating. Your creative talent coupled with the enthusiasm that it brings out in the people around you will be worth your time and effort.

Taurus
(Apr 20 - May 20)
Your observation will pay off when buying gifts for the people you cherish the most. Extra attention paid to the people you are personally involved with will make a difference.

Gemini
(May 21 - Jun 20)
If you push hard you will get enough done to enable you to take a few very badly needed days off. With so much going on, you will want to be in control and on top of your

game.
Cancer
(Jun 21 - Jul 22)
There will be plenty for you to cheer about, so stop looking so grim. Become a participant and you will probably find love or, at least, meet someone you'd like to be friends with.

Leo
(Jul 23 - Aug 22)
You know exactly what to say, but it's your actions that may cause the problem. Follow through with your promises or prepare to face someone who is disgruntled.

Virgo
(Aug 23 - Sep 22)
Get over your pride and ask for help and someone will prepare something for you that will make your life easier. Teamwork will lead to a closer bond between

you and your peers.
Libra
(Sept 23 - Oct 22)
Brainstorm and you will discover a lucrative idea. The time to do something to raise your income is now.

Sagittarius
(Nov 22 - Dec 21)
Keep that jealous side under control and be attentive. The only thing that will cause you grief will be how you handle personal situations.

Scorpio
(Oct 23 - Nov 21)
Do something in the spirit of the season. Invite friends or family over to prepare for the upcoming events. Shared responsibilities will build closer ties.

Capricorn
(Dec 22 - Jan 19)
Say what you think and do what you say and you will gain the respect of both family and friends. Promises made in return for what you offer can be counted on.

Aquarius
(Jan 20 - Feb 18)
What you see and what you get won't coincide. You will have to do everything in your power to stay on top of what everyone around you is doing.

Pisces
(Feb 19-Mar 20)
You will have all the right moves, but you may have to watch what you say. Actions will be the way to go if you are trying to impress someone.

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An appeal to save Hodeida old buildings

By **ABDULWAHAB AL SOFI**
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FOR YEMEN TIMES

It is beautiful and enjoyable to read history of one's country but the most beautiful and enjoyable is to watch it, using your naked eyes to ponder and enjoy the old and beauties of your country. Vestiges narrate the history of any generation as long as they are well protected. Historical and old buildings in Hodeidah are eroded as rust corrodes iron. There are many antiquities neglected in Hodeidah governorate. They need an excessive care because they remind us of our past which never comes back.

Heat, humidity, rains are major elements ruining this valuable heritage.

Beautiful bricks made of clay, appeared clearly in those buildings but because of climate weathering, they are about to collapse down. Consequently, this valuable historical heritage in this city will be obliterated. This antiquity denotes to a complete history of Yemeni origin in ancient architecture. Tens of monumental buildings called Alsoor village, overlooking the

Architecture of old buildings in Hodeidah attracting foreign tourists but it is neglected

sea, are not taken into consideration by institutions concerned with taking care and maintaining heritage. Ministry of culture should have repaired those buildings and renovated them for their age goes back to the era of the Imam. Those buildings were the main port for the

city in that period. That is why; they represent a history of that period. In addition to that, those ancient buildings are treasures to our country. They really reflex the artistry's scope of architecture in Yemen, as exactly mirror reflexes objects. Besides, they are historical masterpieces so

that tourists are extremely attracted to them.

It is worthwhile to give them our attention and repair them. These prominent historical features will continuously be an attractive spot in the city and to our country as well. They are really a tourist wealth for

Yemen. Everything of our life will pass away except history. It will remain and convey our civilization to the world and to next generations. Therefore, our hopes rest on our officials to do their best in this regard and as part of our patriotism and faithfulness to our heritage.

