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Monday, 13 December 2004 • Issue No. 798 • Price 30 Yemeni Riyals • Founded in 1991 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

## Uneducated, impoverished, shunned by society

# Yemen's 'servants' get a raw deal

By PETER WILLEMS  
 YEMEN TIMES STAFF

"My husband can't find work, so I have to go out and beg," said Fatima describing her plight while sitting in her tiny shack surrounded by nearly a dozen children. "Most of my children have to go out to earn money also. This is the best we can do."

Fatima is a member of a large group living under harsh conditions in Yemen's social system called "Akhdam." The term "Akhdam," still commonly used in Yemen's society, literally means "servants" in Arabic.

Until now, the group has been shunned by mainstream society with members facing serious difficulties integrating into the rest of the population while living in shantytowns in cities and villages in different parts of the country.

"We consider them the most vulnerable communities to poverty in Yemen," said Yasser Mubarak, CSO Coordinator for Poverty Reduction Strategy Project at Oxfam. "They are the most marginalized group in society."

Figures on the marginalized group are scarce, but according to a study conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund in the late 1990s, there were around 200,000 in Yemen.

In the shantytown near Bab Al-Yemen, one of the largest communities in Sana'a, it is common that over a dozen family members live in one-room dwellings. Some are made of cinderblocks, but many have been thrown together with aluminum, tarps and waste material.



Members of Yemen's Akhdam community in the squalored living conditions that many live in. (Yemen Times photo by Peter Willems)

Although government projects have contributed electricity and better access to water, most of the communities still lack facilities for basic needs, such as proper sewage systems and access to health care.

"The needs for their communities are endless," said Adam Taylor-Awny, Program Technical Advisor at CARE International based in Sana'a. "There is

a need for primary education, health services, water sanitation, better housing, legal recognition of where they live, the right to live in their areas, and more which shows that they are in need of many, many things."

The men are usually hired by the government to be street cleaners and garbage collectors. The average monthly salary for a sanitation worker is

around \$50 which is not enough to support a family. Some complain that job security is not insured.

"I work as a street cleaner, but I'm not always needed," said Adel, a father of five living in the shantytown close to Bab Al-Yemen. "There are no guarantees from the government for us to work."

Continued on page 4

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## Yemen is most corrupt in Arab world

# Rotting to the core?

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

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Yemen, along with Sudan and Iraq, has topped the list of the most corrupted Arab countries for the year 2004.

Ranked with 2.4 in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) by Transparency International, Yemen has fallen from 88th position last year (with 2.6 CPI) to 112th this year.

This has confirmed fears of the World Bank and other international organizations and experts in the fact that Yemen is quickly and rapidly becoming more corrupt by the year.

**Corruption on the rise**

According to this index, Yemen is in a serious condition concerning its corruption level and needs to act accordingly for the sake of saving the country's economic developmental program from total

collapse. A score of 5.0 is the number Transparency International considers the borderline figure distinguishing countries that do and do not have a serious corruption problem. Having said so, the score of Yemen (2.4) is even less than half that threshold, showing a great need to look at its governance policies.

In fact, Yemen is only 1.0 ahead of the most corrupted country in the world, Haiti, which attained 1.4 CPI.

If this increase in corruption continues, in less than 5 years, Yemen could reach to a level of negative economic growth, which could sabotage and hinder any

future efforts to revive the country's deteriorating economy.

This comes at a time when Yemeni authorities have promised to enhance law enforcement regulations and to have stricter means to control the flow of public funds.

But some steps that the government had taken to help boost the public budget, such as the sales tax of 10 per cent, has backfired because of the discouragement of investments and direct negative implications on the poor segment of the community, which constitutes the majority of Yemeni citizens.

Continued on page 13

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**Yemen and Eritrea resolve differences. See page 2**

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**Resolve differences**

# Yemen and Eritrea get new life

BY MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen and Eritrea have agreed to resolve a dispute over fishing in the Red Sea.

The two countries agreed to erase past differences and turn a new page of relationships, according to

President Ali Abdullah Saleh and Eritrean President Isayas Afwerki, who visited Saleh in Sana'a last week.

The differences between the two countries were just momentary, according to Afwerki.

President Saleh emphasized the importance of entering a new phase of relations based on historic bonds. He described the relations between Yemen and Eritrea as "excellent."

He added that misunderstanding of the past was resolved through a new fishing agreement.

"Yemen and Eritrea have declared their intention to sign eight other agreements during the meeting of the joint committee in Asmara slated for January 24, 2005 in the fields of investment, double taxation, culture, trade, and security," said Saleh.

"President Saleh also stated that he would deliver a message to the Sana'a Gathering (Yemen, Sudan and Ethiopia) leaders in their next meeting in Khartoum by the end of this month concerning their relations with Eritrea. "Each of them should accept the

other, and replace the language of violence with that of dialogue," Saleh said.

President Saleh pointed out that the Sana'a Gathering is not against Eritrea. "It is an economic gathering open to all."

He expressed his hope that peace would be restored to the region so that efforts are focused on fighting poverty and achieving integration and partnership.

President Afwerki described the signing of the partnership fishing agreement as a big achievement. He said there is now better understanding after the previous experience and resolution of past problems.

"The conception of the two countries of the regional and international issues has become more firm than ever because the situation in the area necessitates developing a secure atmosphere to implement joint project in investment and other fields," said Afwerki.

"We will work together seriously, and cooperate in security matters both with Yemen and other countries of the region," he added.

The Eritrean president said he did not think that Sana'a Gathering targets Eritrea.

"Any coalition that serves the people and maintains their security does not worry Asmara."

President Afwerki said relations with Eritrea's neighbors are based on respect for law, denying having any disputes

with Sudan and Ethiopia.

"We have resolved border disputes with Ethiopia by means of agreements signed in Algeria. A court was set up for the purpose and issued a binding verdict." Yet he admitted that Ethiopia hesitated to implement the judgment.

He stressed that it is imperative to sort out this problem, hoping that president Saleh's message will persuade Ethiopian leaders to implement the ratified agreement, and invoke the international community's help for doing that.

He added: "The historic relations between Yemen and Eritrea will create a desirable atmosphere in the region," hoping that president's Saleh efforts will save the area from terrorism and create an investment-fostering environment in the Horn of Africa and Southern Arabia.

The Eritrean president arrived in Sana'a December 8 and left on Dec. 10, accompanied by a delegation including ministers of foreign affairs, information, and development and commander of marine forces as well as director of Middle East Department in the ministry of foreign affairs and the president office manager for Arab affairs.

Results of the deliberations between the two leaders have indisputably shown that the recent visit has revitalized brotherly relations between the two adjacent countries, and pushed the limits of mutual cooperation through the expected eight agreements.

## General settlement called by President

FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

In response to H.E. the President of the Republic, Peace House Social Organization for Combating Revenge is currently preparing for the third national campaign 2005, which is under the motto (With the Leader Towards a Society Free From Revenge, Violence and Misuse of Arms).

The campaign includes seven provinces and aims at raising awareness and education through different styles as it is representing a major tool for changing the connotations and bringing forth a peaceful society, as well as creating a national unity.

The campaign will be carried out in cooperation with various organizations interested in combating this phenomenon and controlling it.

The campaign will instruct social classes on how to take the necessary precautions towards the misuse of

arms. Numerous scholars, intellectuals, media personnel and social personalities are participating in the campaign that is supported by the national capitals and civil community organizations.

It is expected that this campaign will continue up to the end of 2005.

152 sketches are to be played along with staging around 295 artistic and photographic exhibitions plus distributing one million and one hundred thousands of publications and pamphlets. Additionally, posters will be displayed as well as some 800 guiding boards.

1500 lectures are to be delivered by great scholars.

The campaign intends to raise social awareness on the dire consequences of weapon misuse, revenge crimes, violence, and their effects on the national security and stability, and the average per capita income.

## Yemeni elected PAA administrator

Yemeni Dr Ahmed al-Kibsi was elected a member of the administrative staff by 130 members of the Politics Arab Association (PAA) in its sixth conference, held in Beirut on Dec. 1 and 2.

Dr al-Kibsi, head of the Yemeni delegation participating in the conference, got 106 votes. He was followed by the Sudanese Dr. Mohammed Nouri, the Jordanian Dr. Mazen Ghaybah and six other members.

Dr. Ali-eddin Helal, Egyptian former minister of youth, was elected chairman of PAA, while the Algerian Dr. Ammar Jafal and the Iraqi Dr. Sa'ad Naji were respectively deputy chairman and secretary-general.

The Yemeni delegation of the political scientists headed by Dr. Al-Kibsi was formed of Dr. Khadijah al-Haysami, Dr. Abdulmajeed al-Mekhlafi, and Dr. Jalal Fuqairah.

The PAA's conference included delegations from most of the Arab countries.

It included a discussion about the role of Arab political scientists in developing the nation.

The second day was devoted to discussing the financial and administrative report and electing new administrative staff.

## YCHRDF inaugurated

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF  
ADEN BUREAU

The Yemeni Center for Human Rights and Democratic Freedoms was inaugurated Dec 5 after a decision from the Ministry of Culture & Tourism. Ja'afar Mohammad Ja'afar was officially permitted to build the center which is located in Al-Mu'alla District, Aden.

The center is a private civil society

institution, that will contribute to raising awareness of human rights, promoting democratic freedoms, and defending them according to the constitution. The center is to operate under the banner of the UN convention and the Universal Declaration for Human Right (UDHR) as well as the two international laws concerned with civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

Mr. Ja'afar has been appointed the

## Information Technology Sana'a U. will use more Microsoft ... legally

BY YASSER AL-MAYYASI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

An agreement was signed Dec. 8 between Sana'a University and Microsoft Co. to provide integral solutions for electronic study.

It will enable more than 70,000 students and professors in Sana'a University to benefit from most modern IT Higher Education.

Sana'a University will also publish Microsoft Electronic Study - Learning Gateway Applications, which will provide a comprehensive group of functions and services of higher education institutions in Yemen.

Learning Gateway provides educational content and examinations, providing the academic world with data bases and the contacts among students and their teachers electronically.

Dr. Saleh Basurrah, the chairman of the university, emphasized that Sana'a University will be one of the first higher education institutes in Yemen to provide lawful copies of Microsoft Office Desktop in its services and research centers.

This will enable the university to inaugurate the program of "Electronic International Driving License" known as ICDDL in addition to obtaining IT Academy syllabuses.

In a word from Microsoft Company, Mujdy al-Musry said that the agreement will develop research skills, explorations and thinking as well as provide the students with skills and tools to benefit from the fast developments in Information Systems.

Chairman of the center and Fadhl Ali Abdullah will hold the post of Executive Director. The center is also associated with a number of personalities interested in human rights and freedom.

The YCHRDF is an independent institution and does not have any affiliations with any political parties. It is a non-profit organization and accepts unconditional donations.

# Iron and steel factory to be established

ADEN BUREAU

The Governor of Aden Gov., Acting Deputy Chairman of the General Free Zones Authority, Chairman of Aden Free Zone, Dr. Yehia Al-Shuaiby, attended the ceremony held on October 16 at the Aden Chamber for Commerce and Industry on the occasion of announcing the National Iron and Steel Company which is to be established in Aden Free Zone.

The Governor renewed his calling for investors to come to Aden Free Zone which contains opportunities and privileges. He urged all investment-concerned authorities to facilitate the procedures before the investors.

He expressed his happiness at this developmental and economical event, wishing to hear the more of such fruitful developmental initiatives.

The Chairman of Yemen-Bahrain Al-Shamel Bank, Ahmed Bazara'ah indicated in his speech the several characteristics of Aden that entitle it to be the main center of the company and

the start of its production there. He pointed out the facilities provided by the Management of Free Zone.

It is worth mentioning that the company is attempting to set up its project which values is \$12.5 millions, on an area of 100 thousands square meters with yearly production of 40 thousands tons.

The project is composed of several units producing all types of iron and steel, industrial and medical gases units, equipment and medical instruments units, and workshop for producing lamps (neon tubes).

During phase I of the project, 150 employees will be absorbed, 60 persons of which are foreigners whom will be contracted for one and a half years before being replaced by local and trained employees.

It is anticipated that the project will start its production in August 2005.

The party was attended by leaders of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and business community.

## Psychological health course starts in Sana'a

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A training course in the field of psychological health began in Sana'a on Saturday, December 4 and will run until Dec. 14.

The Psychiatry Hospital in Sana'a is organizing the course under the auspices of Abdulaziz Abulghani, Chairman of the Psychological Health Supreme Council.

About 60 nurses from different Psychiatry hospitals across the country are enrolling in the ten day course.

The organizing hospital says that it has achieved a pioneering status in Yemen in providing psychological health care services. In a press release sent to Yemen Times, the hospital claims that is "is characterized by its highly qualified doctors and modern facilities." It has a capacity of 200 beds for men and women.

TAIZ BUREAU

# To protect the public Taiz food inspectors crack down

An inspection campaign targeting groceries and food in restaurants and buffets in Taiz has found large quantities of food for sale to be unsafe.

The new campaign of the Ministry of Environment and Health, based in Cairo District of Taiz, has confiscated the food.

Director of Cairo Zone, Eng. Ahmed Abdul Kabeer al-Rumaimah, has declared that the Environment Health Bureau in the district has doubled its comprehensive inspections on the markets.

He said they have seized food including some kinds of cheese which may some believe may cause cancer.

The campaign included confiscating

**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:**  
Considering Yemen's drop in global ranking of corruption (See page 1), what do you think is the main cause of corruption here.

1. The government
2. Cultural attitudes
3. Yemen's Third World status.

**last edition's question:**  
Do you think president Afwerki's visit will pave the way for Eritria's joining the Sana'a Gathering?

No 55%  
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## Palestine's future

# Does peace have a chance?

BY PETER WILLEMS  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

When the late Palestinian president Yasser Arafat was in serious condition at a military hospital in Paris last month, there was fear that the Palestinians were about to face trouble.

Some thought that there might be a power struggle between high-ranking politicians, Palestinians would become divided and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict would escalate which would further delay the stalled peace negotiations.

But since the president, who led the Palestinians for nearly four decades, passed away, none of the expectations emerged. The election to choose the next leader has been scheduled to be held on January 9, and the long-awaited rejuvenation of peace negotiations appears to be back on track soon.

Palestinians in Yemen see that with more encouragement coming from the international community, there is now a window of opportunity for constructive peace talks.

"What has been said recently has been encouraging, especially from Europe," said Dr. Khalid El-Sheikh, Palestinian Ambassador to Yemen. "There are some efforts to try and give confidence to our leadership, try to create a situation of a healthy atmosphere towards bringing both sides back to negotiations and resuming the political process. It is very encouraging."

After his meeting with British Prime Minister Tony Blair soon after Arafat passed away, US President George Bush said that he aims to exert efforts to establish peace and create a Palestinian state.

"I think it is fair to say that I believe we've got a great chance to establish a Palestinian state," said Bush. "And I intend to use the next four years to spend the capital of the United States on such a state."

After 15 months of refusing to communicate with the Palestinian leadership, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said that he was willing to meet with Mahmoud Abbas, new Chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Executive Committee and the expected winner of the upcoming elections to be the President of the Palestinian Authority.

Haron told Newsweek magazine near the end of last month that "when they [the Palestinian leadership] would like to meet, we will meet."

And after meeting Israeli and Palestinian officials, German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer said earlier this month, "This might be a historic opportunity to push forward the peace process in the next weeks and months in order to reach a two-state solution."

Some Palestinians have raised their hopes that the new climate will bring peace. "The United States and Israel would not talk with President Arafat, but now they are allowing the peace process to go forward," said Taghreed Adwan who has been living in Yemen for 20 years. "I hope that the situation will acti-

vate the peace process."

El-Sheikh points out that being open to negotiations is critical. "Let's be frank and honest and say 'This is what you have, this is what we have and this is what the international community approved of and agreed on. So, let's work on it,'" El-Sheikh said.

"There must be some basic rules for agreements for negotiations. There need to be concessions from both sides. From our side, we did whatever was possible. For example, we recognized Israel, we tried to give away 78 per cent of Palestine and take only 22 per cent, and we encouraged Arabs to recognize and deal with Israel."

He added that the Palestinians will maintain its request for an Israeli withdrawal to the 1967 borders, dismantling the settlements in the West Bank, stopping the construction of the wall, allowing Palestinian refugees to return and for East Jerusalem to be the capital of Palestine.

Some Palestinians are not optimistic about a possible peace agreement.

"I don't think there will be successful peace negotiations," said Wasim, 21, who has lived in Yemen for four years. "Every time the US mentions a peace process, it never ends with good results. It is always talk with little action."

Others, however, believe that the United States has an increased interest in establishing a Palestinian state.

"If the United States took the initiative to create and maintain a Palestinian state, the threat against the United States would diminish considerably," said

Abdullah Al-Faqih, Professor of Political Science at Sana'a University. "What has been said by the Bush administration recently might show that it is aware that terrorist groups have been using Palestine as a tool to mobilize against the West."

If Abbas is elected as President, some Palestinians say that he is right for the job.

"Mahmoud Abbas was a close friend of Arafat and was one of the founding fathers of the PLO," said Palestinian Sheikh Mohamed Al-Bohaisi. "He has a clear political vision and says what he believes, so he is well qualified to lead at this stage."

Abbas may not only face pressure if he is elected and negotiations resume. Militant groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad have announced that they will boycott the presidential election. Hamas has also said that it has not agreed to a ceasefire.

"Although Hamas and Jihad chose to boycott the election, it is possible that they will reverse their decision because we want everybody to participate," said El-Sheikh. "We are going further trying to convince other factions of a ceasefire. We want to create an atmosphere which is convenient to resuming the peace process."

And even though peace negotiations might be back on the table in the future, some have chosen to reserve expectations.

"I think it is best to wait and see," said one Palestinian. "I have seen peace negotiations before, so the best thing to do is just wait and see what happens."

## Zabid's history

# A window to yesteryear

BY ISMAIL AL-GHABRI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Zabid town is one of Yemen's historic places that is a window to Yemen's past.

It has 29 mosques and 53 Quranic schools, the most famous of which are Al-Sha'ir mosque built by Abu Musa Al-Asha'iri in the 8th year after Hejra, and Zabid Grand Mosque that dates back to the year 798 After Hejra (16th century AD.)

The two mosques were rebuilt and expanded during successive periods of time.

The town of Zabid is one of the most famous religious and scientific centers, not only of Yemen, but also of the ancient Islamic world.

The first educators of Al-Azhar, University of Egypt, came from Zabid. The schools of Zabid taught the interpretations of all Islamic sects, 'Safie', Maliki, Hanafi, Hanbali and Ismaeli.

Some of these schools, bearing their original names, still stand. Another landmark of Zabid is the old souk which was divided into sections on the basis of the type of craft or product sold. The old souq is one of the most important parts of the town.

Zabid was a center for weaving, dying and tanning industries. The facade of houses tells a story of a glorious past. The dazzling, richly orna-



A view of the old castle of Zabid.

mented walls, alters, pedestals, pillars and wooden gates reveal the aesthetic aspect of architecture. The grandeur of construction can be seen in the surviving structures of Al-Nasser Palace, and Nasser Citadel and towers.

The private libraries of Zabid still contain many rare manuscripts and books in various sciences. Algebra was invented by a scholar from Zabid. There are a number of tombs of the followers of Ismaeli sect visited by many people especially from India.

Since Zabid was a capital of several successive dynasties and an important center from time to time, several locations around it were under its authority.

## Eighth European Film Festival

ADEN BUREAU

The Eighth European Film Festival currently held in Aden will be concluded on Tuesday Dec. The festival was organized by the German Consulate and the German Cultural Center at the headquarter of the German Consulate in Khur Maksar.

The festival started with viewing the Dutch Film "Young Kees" by Andre Van Duren and the Czech "The Rebels" by Filip Renc. Afterwards, the French Film "To remember the beautiful things" by Zabou Breitman and the German "Good Bye Lenin" by Wolfgang Becker followed by the British Film "Touching the void" by Kevin MacDonald were also viewed one by one every day. Another films that were displayed were the Italian "Rane e Tulip" by Silvio Soldini and the Polish "Onwards and backwards" The concluding day will see viewing the Turkish Film " Dar alada kisa paslasmalar" by Serdar Akar.

The organizers stated that a huge number of spectators came to watch the films for free.

Such events contribute to creating a useful impression about the culture of other nations, particularly, the European ones and deepening the ties between the Arab and European nations.

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## Workshop about Zabid

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The General Authority for Conserving Historic Cities in Hodeidah is organizing a workshop titled "National Workshop To Rescue Historical Zabid Town from Dec. 14 to 16 in cooperation with the UNESCO International Heritage Center.

The workshop aims at displaying the history of Zabid.

Many specialized researchers from Yemen and a number of experts from the UNESCO/International Heritage Center are participating, talking about:

- The value and significance of historical Zabid Culture,

- Antique heritage of Zabid  
- Cultural heritage of Zabid  
- Zabid manuscripts  
- Zabid as of international heritage at risk,

- National efforts for preserving historical towns

The same workshop was attended by many officials from the UNDP and International Heritage Center, and a number of officials from the Ministry of Culture & Tourism, and the General Authority for Antiquities and Museums.

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Continued from page 1

# Yemen's 'servants' get a raw deal

With the need for income, many children are unable to go to school because they are out working. A World Bank study showed that 45% of the children younger than 16 were enrolled in school in 1999, and another study reported that only 43% were literate.

"I am now in elementary school," said a 17-year old from the marginalized group in Sana'a. "I was not able to go to school for five years because I needed to go and work as a street cleaner to support my family."

Even though there are different theories as to why the group has remained separated from the rest of society for many years, the common belief is that they descended from the remnants of the Ethiopian kingdom in Yemen, defeated in the sixth century. Its soldiers were given the lowest form of servitude: They were condemned to collect human waste before the invention of sewage systems.

The perception of the group has been degrading for centuries, as one popular Yemeni proverb says, "Clean your plate if touched by a dog, but break it if touched by a 'Khadem.'"

To make matters worse, the vulnerable minority group lives in one of the poorest countries in the Middle East while the economy is on shaky ground. Around 42% of the country's population lives below the poverty line and as many as 40% are without work.

Although the government is in the middle of implementing reform programs, the growth of Yemen's gross domestic product has slowed from 4.1% in 2001 to an estimated 2.5% this year.

One strategy currently implemented is the improvement of living conditions being developed from within. Communities in Sana'a have established their own organizations with the

assistance of international aid organizations, such as CARE International and Oxfam.

"Our number one priority is to create a better life," said Massoud Hassan, Public Relations Officer of Amr Al-Aqbi, one of eight organizations in the capital's communities.

"It is time to change our belief in ourselves and to no longer feel inferior. Many people ask why we are called 'servants,' but our aim is not to change what we are called but to achieve our goals. Our aim is to improve our lives, and the strength from within is the most important part."

The Community Empowerment Project under the guidance of CARE International focuses on skills training, adult literacy, and developing projects that can produce an income.

Three communities have been provided with water trucks, not only to improve access to water but for the organizations in the communities to run the water business and make a profit.

"This is an example of trying to find successful income generating projects," said Taylor-Awny. "It was a model that works."

In the western village Amr Al-Aqbi, the Social Fund for Development provided funding to build elementary and secondary schools for the community. A new health unit was also built for medical training to help local health care and assist members in the community to integrate into society with skills.

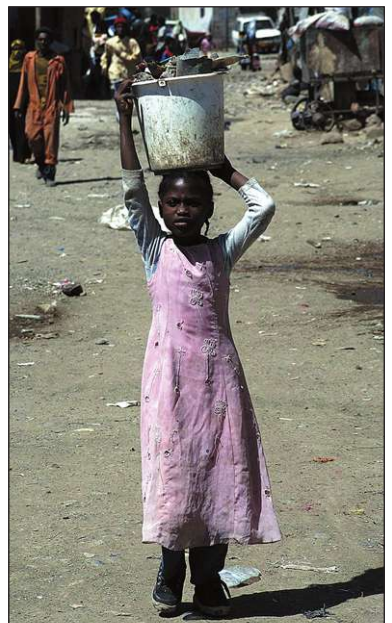
Funding from donor countries and Oxfam supported the rehabilitation of the community in the Bab Al-Saba area in Sana'a recently which transformed shanties into brick buildings fully equipped with basic utilities, including electricity and a modern sewage system.

Organizations representing the minority group are also preparing to demand better human rights.

According to Hassan, the street cleaners, who normally work eight hours, seven days a week, are not given contracts that protect their rights and do not receive benefits, such as health insurance.

By law, employees must receive a contract after working for six months. "The workers receive no job security, and these conditions are against labor laws of Yemen and international labor laws," said Hassan. Also in the works are for people to have the right to claim the land they have lived on for decades.

"It is important that the most marginalized group is raising awareness and mobilizing in the communities," said a representative of an NGO based in Yemen. "What is needed is for Yemeni society to also become aware of their difficult living conditions and help them integrate into society."



A girl from the Akhdam community carries water. (Yemen Times photo by Peter Willems)

# Women in Taiz study photography

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Events relating to photography basics for women, organized by the social union of photographers, are being held in the hall of the Confederation of Trades and Professions Societies in Taiz.

The events were financed by the Social Fund for Development, under the supervision of Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Labor and Welfare Bureau.

Included in the events is a course that will run Dec. 12 to 15.

The inauguration was attended by representative of Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Fuad Sultan, and Mr. Foul Kumar, the Representative of the DED Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst and the General Secretary of Photographers Union, Mr. Muhammad Hassan al-Zureiqy.

Miss Entisar al-Athwary said the course will help the 20 trainees work in the field of photography, as the union is attempting to employ them later on in private studios affiliated in membership to the union.



Discussion during the workshop.

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# Iraq insurgents kill police, hit US convoy

KIRKUK, Iraq, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Gunmen killed three high-ranking Iraqi police officers in two separate attacks on Saturday, among a daily round of bombings and ambushes targeting U.S. forces and their Iraqi allies.

A car bomb exploded in the centre of the ethnically divided northern oil capital of Kirkuk, badly damaging a U.S. Humvee patrol vehicle and wounding two soldiers and an interpreter, the U.S. military said. The wounded were in a stable condition.

In southern Baghdad, gunmen assassinated a police brigadier and a colonel, a police source said, while west of Kirkuk near the town of Ash Sharqat a police colonel was one of two officers killed in an ambush. A second colonel, who reported the incident, was among three policemen wounded.

In a separate attack near Kirkuk, a policeman was wounded by a roadside bomb.

In the northern city of Mosul, where the Sunni Arab insurgency has been particularly active in the past month, a car bomb exploded near a U.S. military convoy wounding at least two passersby,



An Iraqi fireman walks past debris after a car bomb exploded in the northern Iraq city of Mosul Dec. 11. The bomb was detonated as a U.S. military convoy was driving past, injuring two Iraqi civilians, according to eyewitnesses. REUTERS

witnesses and the U.S. army said.

Security officials and civil servants have become prime targets for insurgents opposed to the U.S. military occupation and to Iraqis working for the U.S.-backed authorities. There are fears violence may increase before an election on Jan. 30.

A bomb damaged an office for election workers in the town of Zab, southwest of Kirkuk, wounding a civilian, police said.

Four employees of the Education Ministry were wounded when the bus taking them to work in Baghdad was raked by gunfire.

A civilian motorist was wounded on the main highway between Hilla and Kerbala, south of the capital, when a roadside bomb went off, missing a convoy of National Guards, police said.

In Kirkuk, U.S. troops and Iraqi police sealed off the area where the car bomb exploded. Master Sergeant Robert Powell, a spokesman for U.S. forces in the area, said it was believed to have been remotely detonated and not a suicide bomb attack.

KIRKUK TENSIONS

Close to the same spot exactly a month ago the provincial governor of Kirkuk, an ethnic Kurd, survived an assassination attempt when a car bomb exploded near his convoy. At least 16 people were wounded in that attack on Nov. 11.

Kirkuk is the centre of Iraq's northern oil industry. Tension has risen between Arabs, Kurds and Turkish-speaking Turkmen since Saddam Hussein was toppled last year.

At Ash Sharqat, Colonel Mohammed Abed said from his hospital bed that a fellow police colonel and another officer were killed in the ambush which left Abed and two others wounded.

"They blocked our way, shot us and took our cars," he said.

A police source said the brigadier and colonel killed in Baghdad both worked at the Interior Ministry.

A woman who survived the attack on the Education Ministry bus said in hospital: "We were on our way to work. We go the same way every day." Two men and two women were wounded.

The yellow, unmarked city bus was riddled with bullet holes.

## Egypt links ambassador's return to peace progress

CAIRO, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Egypt said on Saturday it would send an ambassador back to Israel when it felt that the gesture would help Middle East peace talks.

Presidential spokesman Maged Abdel Fattah said there was no promise to send back an ambassador, who would replace the envoy withdrawn in 2000 in protest at the way the Israeli government was dealing with the Palestinian uprising.

"When the peace process has started to enter its natural course and there is something to justify the presence of the Egyptian ambassador, the Egyptian ambassador will go there," Abdel Fattah told reporters.

"We do not link it to the Palestinian elections (on Jan. 9) but to achieving progress in the peace process," he added.

Signs of an improved atmosphere between Egypt and Israel last week, illustrated by an exchange of prisoners on Sunday, led to speculation that Egypt might send its ambassador back.

The political editor of the state news agency MENA said on Tuesday that if the new spirit continued, the reasons for withdrawing the ambassador may no longer be valid.

Abdel Fattah said: "If we feel at any stage that the presence of the Egyptian ambassador would contribute positively to supporting the move towards peace, we are prepared to do anything to push the peace process forward."

Asked if Egypt thought Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was serious about peace, he said Egypt would take Israel's commitments seriously until the opposite is proven.

He said that Israel's brief detention of Palestinian presidential candidate Bassam al-Salhi on Friday appeared to be an isolated incident.

"Since Israel understood that it was a mistake and released him, that gives the impression that some mistake happened and was immediately reconsidered and the agreement to give freedom of movement to candidates is being carried out," he added.

## Palestinian committee gets report on Arafat's death

RAMALLAH, West Bank, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Yasser Arafat's nephew on Saturday handed a medical report to a Palestinian committee investigating the cause of the Palestinian leader's death at a French hospital on Nov. 11.

Nasser al-Kidwa, who is also the Palestinian envoy to the United Nations, said the French doctors who treated Arafat in his final days had failed to discover a definitive cause of death for Arafat in their 557-page report.

He said he hoped a Palestinian committee would shed more light on Arafat's cause of death. The committee, which would include Tunisian, Jordanian and Egyptian doctors who treated Arafat, was due to begin consultations on Saturday.

"We are not in a position to reach a final conclusion in the near future



A bodyguard of late Palestinian President Yasser Arafat recites verses of the Muslim Holy book the Quran at Arafat's gravesite in the West Bank city of Ramallah Dec. 11. Yasser Arafat's nephew on Saturday handed a medical report to a Palestinian committee investigating the cause of the Palestinian leader's death at a French hospital on Nov. 11. REUTERS

on the cause of death," al-Kidwa told reporters at a news conference after presenting the French medical dossier to acting Palestinian President Rawhi Fattouh.

French officials have rejected rumours that Arafat, who died at the age of 75, had been poisoned.

They have declined to comment further on his case, citing French privacy rules. But they gave copies of Arafat's medical records to his next of kin, including al-Kidwa. Israel has vehemently denied being responsible for Arafat's deterioration in health before his death or for poisoning him.

Officials say that he had access to medical treatment, food, water and medication during the two years he spent in his battered compound in the West Bank city of Ramallah, which was besieged by Israeli troops for months in 2002.

## Reform needed in Arab world to defeat terror: U.S.

RABAT, Dec 11 (Reuters) - U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell on Saturday said Middle Eastern economic and political reform would help defeat terrorism but many Arabs dismissed his call and demanded an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

With continued violence in U.S.-occupied Iraq and the Palestinian question unresolved, the one-day "Forum for the Future" conference in Morocco was viewed by many in the Middle East as U.S. meddling even though American officials insist change must come from within the region.

Powell insisted that Washington was committed to working actively with Palestinians and Israelis to solve the con-

flict but that reforms in the region could not wait.

"Now is not the time to argue about the pace of democratic reform or whether economic reform must precede political reform," he told delegates from nearly 30 countries.

"All of us confront the daily threat of terrorism. To defeat the murderous extremists in our midst we must work together to address the causes of despair and frustration that extremists exploit for their own ends," he said.

Despite criticism of the meeting about 20 Arab, African, Middle Eastern and Asian countries attended the gathering, along with members of the Group of Eight (G8) industrial states, who launched the

idea of promoting reform across the region in June.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal, dismissing any ideas of "clashes of civilisations" between the Western and Arab worlds, said "the real bone of contention" was a perceived bias on the part of the United States toward Israel.

"It remains to be seen if for the first time we can be honest with each other and commit ourselves to ending the Arab-Israeli conflict," he told delegates.

European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana agreed, but in different terms. "The problem of insecurity in Iraq and the peace process in the Middle East need to take momentum" to ensure ideas floated at the forum bear fruit, he told Reuters.

Forum "A flop"?

While ministers talked behind closed doors, about 150 human rights activists and Islamists tried to stage a sit-in outside the Foreign Ministry building. The protesters were dispersed by police. There were no incidents.

"The U.S. administration can never bring us a democratic project," said Abdelhamid Amine, head of Morocco's main independent human rights group AMDH. "Look what happened at Abu Ghraib (prison in Iraq), at Guantanamo, Falluja," referring to reported abuses by U.S. forces.

Independent Moroccan news magazine Le Journal Hebdomadaire called the meeting's organisers "delusional" and branded the forum "a flop" even before it took place.

"It is legitimate to wonder if the promoters of this charade really believe in it themselves," it wrote in an editorial.

The concept of promoting democracy across the Arab world has been watered down since the plan first leaked to the press, putting more emphasis on economics and less on political reform.

### VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following positions within its project "Capacity Building to National AIDS Programme (NAP) and Mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS issues into Poverty and Human Rights projects".

#### Project Manager

Establish and manage the office at premises of National AIDS programme (NAP) and study the broad project work plan and develop detailed 3 monthly activity work plans for operational details of the project to ensure timely and cost effective implementation of the different project activities.

Interested candidates are requested to visit our website at:

<http://www.undp.org/ye/undp-vacancies.htm> for detailed term of reference of the position and may submit their applications indicating the title of the post applied for by mail to Human Resources Unit and response will only be made to short listed candidates. UNDP is an equal opportunity Organization and the female candidates are encouraged to apply.

UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448841/E-mail: (registry.yp@undp.org) The deadline for receiving applications is Saturday, 25th December 2004



### DFID would like to invite Applications for the post of Administrative Assistant for the DFID Office in Yemen

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the UK Government Department responsible for providing international development assistance. DFID is looking to recruit an administrative assistant for its office in Sana'a. The successful applicant will join a small team based in the British Embassy. The administrative assistant will report to the deputy head of the Sana'a office. Applicants should be a Yemeni national or someone having the right to work in Yemen.

We are looking for candidates who have:

- Experience of managing small office budgets
- Experience of managing electronic and paper filing systems
- An interest in development issues in Yemen
- Fluent written and oral Arabic and Excellent written and oral English skills
- Computer literate with Word, Excel and databases
- Able to work effectively with others both one to one and in teams
- Experience of planning missions and visits outside of Sana'a
- Excellent interpersonal communication skills

#### Selection procedure

Applicants should send their CV (no longer than 2 pages) and a short covering letter setting out why they want this job and how their experience meets the terms of reference no later than 20th December by email to: [dfid.fa@yemen.net.ye](mailto:dfid.fa@yemen.net.ye)

# Bangladesh opposition in 900-km human chain protest

DHAKA, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Thousands of Bangladesh opposition activists have gathered on Saturday in cities and urban centres to form an unprecedented 900-km (560-mile) "human chain" to demonstrate no-confidence in the government. Opposition leaders expect about five million activists and supporters of the Awami League and 13 other left leaning parties to complete the chain by late afternoon.

"We will stand hand in hand on the roadsides linking Teknaf in the south-east with Tentulia in the northwest for an hour to show a total no-confidence in the government of Begum Khaleda Zia," said Mohammad Abdul Jalil, general secretary of the Awami League party.

The government has deployed thousands of police and paramilitary troops to tackle any possible violence during the formation of the cross-country human chain.

Police, witnesses and opposition leaders in most of the places where the human chain has been planned said thousands had already converged at the sites carrying loudspeakers, banners and placards with anti-government slogans.

Helicopters carrying troops from the elite Rapid Action Battalion have fanned out to major urban centres in the densely populated country of 132 million to monitor the protest.

For security reasons, authorities



Activists from Bangladesh's opposition groups form a human chain to demonstrate their no-confidence in the government in Dhaka Dec. 11. Thousands of opposition activists gathered in cities and urban centres to form an unprecedented 900-km (566 miles) "human chain" across the country. REUTERS

have banned movement of motorbikes at protest sites throughout the country for the day.

"We want resignation of the government as it failed to give security to the public life, curb corruption, arrest commodity price hikes and gagged the opposition," said Rashed Khan Menon, president of the Bangladesh Workers Party.

Opposition parties said police had arrested more than 1,000 of their leaders and activists over the past two days

in a bid to frustrate the campaign.

"The security has been tightened to stop any sort of mayhem, because vested groups might instigate bloody incidents to shift the blame on the government," State Minister for Home Affairs M. Lutfuzzaman Babar told reporters.

Of the 14 opposition parties, only the Awami League has representation in the 300-member parliament, holding 58 seats.

The business community has praised

the opposition for adopting a different style of protest instead of the crippling strikes that have cost the country millions of dollars in lost productivity this year.

But opposition leaders said they would go back to strikes if the government disrupts their peaceful programme.

The Awami League is demanding the resignation of the government to pave the way for an election that is not due until 2006.

# Afghan president says "fight drugs like Soviets"

KABUL, Dec 9 (Reuters) - Afghan President Hamid Karzai urged his countrymen on Thursday to tackle the war on drugs with the same zeal with which they fought the Red Army during the Soviet Union's decade-long occupation that ended in 1990.

Speaking two days after being sworn in as the country's first democratically elected president, Karzai said that as the source of the majority of the world's heroin, Afghanistan risked becoming a pariah state.

"The nation of Afghanistan, for its survival from this disgrace, this dishonour, has to fight against poppy ... like it fought against the Soviets," he told a two-day national anti-drugs conference in the capital, Kabul.

"If we do not, our homeland, our independence, our soil will face danger again."

Afghanistan's opium economy is estimated to have earned \$2.8 billion this year — up \$500 million from 2003 — and the country now accounts for 87 percent of global heroin.

According to a United Nations report released last month, the opium economy was equivalent to over 60 percent of Afghanistan's 2003 gross domestic product.

But while Karzai's speech was one of his strongest on the subject to date, he offered few new initiatives to eradicate a crop in which 10 percent of Afghanistan's estimated 24 million

people are directly involved.

Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. ambassador to Kabul, told the conference that the U.S. Congress planned to provide \$780 million to assist Afghanistan in its fight against drugs in the next few months.

The assistance would go to provide cash for alternative work for some 125,000 people in three provinces.

But opium production goes much further than that and the U.N. report says the poppies that produce the base of the highly addictive drug were grown in every one of the country's 32 provinces last year.

The opium trade has flourished since a U.S.-led coalition helped oust the Taliban in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

Ironically it was the Taliban who successfully brought opium production down to virtually zero in their last year of rule — deeming it un-Islamic and making it punishable by death.

But many of the militias that helped overthrow the hardline Taliban are also involved in the drug trade and Karzai risks losing their support if he acts too harshly against them without offering alternatives.

Interior Minister Ali Ahmad Jalali conceded that some government officials backed the trade, but said that under a new strategy smugglers would be tried and the government would destroy drugs markets and heroin laboratories.



Afghan President Hamid Karzai attends a two-day conference on countering narcotics in Kabul Dec. 9. The conference discussed actions to be taken by the country in the campaign against narcotics. REUTERS

# Japanese foreign minister may visit North Korea

TOKYO, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura was considering visiting Pyongyang early next year in a bid to resolve a dispute over Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea decades ago, a Japanese daily reported on Saturday.

The Asahi newspaper said in its Saturday evening edition that Japan had begun to consider sending Machimura to North Korea sometime between late February and late March.

Japanese officials were not immediately available for comment.

The report came a day after Japanese lawmakers urged the government to consider economic sanctions on North Korea — a reflection of public anger after Tokyo said bones claimed by Pyongyang to belong to kidnapped Japanese were of other

people.

North Korea handed over the bones at talks in Pyongyang in November, saying they were the remains of Megumi Yokota and Kaoru Matsuki, two of 13 Japanese who Pyongyang has admitted abducting in the 1970s and 1980s to train spies.

Japan, which does not have diplomatic ties with North Korea, lodged a protest with Pyongyang on Wednesday and demanded clarification on the fate of other Japanese who Tokyo believes were kidnapped and are still unaccounted for.

## Liberating North Korea

Earlier on Saturday, a top figure in Japan's ruling party, was quoted as saying that Japan should work closely with the United States and China to put pressure on North Korea.

"Is it good for Japan to impose sanctions

alone. It is important to coordinate with the United States and China to put pressure," Kyodo news agency quoted Tsutomu Takebe, secretary general of the ruling liberal Democratic Party (LDP), as saying on a TV programme.

A survey, conducted by Kyodo news agency and released on Friday, showed that three in four Japanese voters supported imposing the sanctions.

Takebe, number two man after Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in the LDP, was also quoted as saying that Japan should consider liberating North Koreans from the current regime when it deals with the reclusive communist state over the abduction and other issues.

"We are now focusing on resolving issues over North Korea, such as abductions (of Japanese citizens), its nuclear and

missile programmes," Kyodo quoted Tsutomu Takebe as saying.

"Boldly speaking, we should consider how to face it with an eye on its emancipation."

Takebe did not say exactly what he meant by "emancipation", but his remarks could anger North Korea, which harbours bitter memories of Japan's often brutal occupation of the Korean peninsula from 1910-45.

Some analysts believe imposing economic sanctions could make it difficult to hold six-party talks on ending North Korea's nuclear programmes.

Most diplomats and analysts do not expect full-scale talks — involving North Korea, South Korea, China, Japan, Russia, and the United States — to take place before the end of January.

# Philippine rescuers see no new storm survivors

Philippines, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Hopes of pulling more survivors from a building that collapsed 12 days ago in a fierce storm in the northern Philippines dwindled on Saturday as private rescuers ended work, saying they had explored all possible areas.

Rain fell as miners from private firms prepared to leave the site, but soldiers said they would continue excavating bodies from the rubble as long as it was still safe to do so.

"In our assessment, the basement where we expected there may still be survivors, we think there's no more hope. They're all dead," said Joel Son, an engineer who headed the miners' group.

Son said the miners had dug holes in the basement area but had failed to detect any sign of life. About 120 people were believed to have been using the structure as a storm shelter.

Nearly 1,800 people are dead or missing in eastern and northern provinces on Luzon island after a typhoon and three tropical storms in two weeks set off torrents of water, mud, boulders and logs that swept away villages and bridges.

At least three million Filipinos have been affected. With disease a major worry, relief efforts are focused on getting food, clean water,

medicine and shelter to 650,000 of the most desperate by helicopter, boat and on foot.

On Thursday soldiers and miners searching the collapsed building in Real found a child, her grandmother and two teenaged boys alive 10 days after they were buried in the rubble.

The four survivors had no serious injuries but were very weak after living on nothing but dripping water for 10 days.

"I heard the digging and then I saw the light," said Ian Carl Bungat, 14. "God heard our prayers."

Their discovery had given hope to waiting relatives and rescuers, but later excavation turned up only corpses.

## Major water artery damaged

Colonel Jaime Buenaflores said rescuers had extracted about 80 bodies from the ruins.

Ariel Montes, a local village chief, said he hoped rescuers would continue their work.

"It is saddening. I have not yet retrieved my parents from the ruins. But at least other residents of my village have seen their dead," Montes said.

Debris from the typhoon and storms also clogged a major water tunnel connecting the Umiray River

in General Nakar, Quezon to Angat Dam in Bulacan province, which supplies water to 97 percent of Manila's estimated 12 million residents.

"The damage to the Umiray tunnel is unprecedented," President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo told a news conference after meeting with disaster officials.

"The government is working round the clock to repair the damage but this incident should galvanise Metro Manilans to carry on a strong environmental cause," she said. "This is a grim warning as well as a wake-up call for collective action."

Water utility officials said it would take four months to clear the tunnel of boulders and logs, adding that water supplies in the capital might run low if bad weather delayed repairs.

Logging has been blamed for making a natural disaster worse. Arroyo has ordered cancellation of all permits to cut and haul trees but timber companies have scuttled previous attempts in Congress to ban logging.

Damage to crops, fishing and infrastructure is estimated at 4.69 billion pesos (\$83 million). It will take weeks to restore power to the worst-hit areas, clear roads and rebuild bridges.



A Filipino woman carries her baby while trekking near the coastline in a village in Real town, as the roads in the typhoon ravaged towns remain impassable by vehicles, in Quezon province Dec. 11. Nearly 1,800 people are dead or missing in eastern and northern Philippine provinces after being hit by a typhoon and three tropical storms in two weeks. REUTERS

# Yushchenko poisoned by dioxin: doctors

VIENNA, Dec 11 (Reuters) - Ukrainian presidential hopeful Viktor Yushchenko was a victim of dioxin poisoning, but it remains unclear if it was the result of a deliberate act, Austrian doctors treating him said on Saturday.

Yushchenko, who faces Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich later this month in a re-run of November's rigged election in the ex-Soviet state, has long alleged he was poisoned as part of a plot to kill him. His illness kept him out of the early stages of the campaign and left his face bloated and pocked.

"There is no doubt," Dr Michael Zimpfer, president of the Rudolf-Heubach clinic where Yushchenko is undergoing treatment, told a news conference. "There were high concentrations of dioxin, most likely orally administered."

It was impossible to determine, he said, how the poisoning had taken place. "We weren't there and we will leave that to the legal authorities to decide".

Zimpfer said dioxin was soluble and would therefore be easy to administer in something like a cream soup.

"We suspect a cause triggered by a third party," he said.

Yushchenko arrived at the clinic on Friday evening and was to undergo further testing over the weekend.

In anticipation of the announcement, Yushchenko's U.S.-born wife Kateryna told reporters she was certain the doctors would confirm her long-held belief that her husband was poisoned.

"I know in my heart that he was poisoned and it will be medically established today," she told reporters outside the clinic.

Yushchenko's wife said this week in a U.S. television interview that the day before he fell ill, she tasted poison on his lips when she kissed him, but he brushed off her concern.

### Mass fraud

Yushchenko says that after attempting to poison him, his enemies used mass fraud to try to steal the Nov. 21 run-off vote, in which Yanukovich, backed by outgoing President Leonid Kuchma and giant neighbour Russia, was declared the winner.

The Supreme Court struck down the result on grounds of irregularities and ordered a new vote on Dec. 26.

Yushchenko told reporters on Friday his health was improving and he was optimistic he would achieve victory in the re-run against Yanukovich.

"Everything is going well," he told

reporters outside the clinic, his wife acting as interpreter. "I plan to live for a very long time. I plan to be very happy. I am gaining better health every day."

Earlier in the week he said it was his "growing conviction that what happened to me was an act of political reprisal against a politician in opposition. The aim, naturally, was to kill me."

Medical experts outside Austria and Ukraine have said Yushchenko's disfiguring condition appeared to be "chloracne", commonly associated with dioxin poisoning.

Chloracne is a skin condition, similar to acne, that is caused by exposure to toxic chemicals such as dioxins. It usually results from occupational exposure to compounds in fungicides, insecticides and herbicides.



Supporters of Ukraine's presidential candidate and opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko sit around a camp-fire at a tent camp in central Kiev Dec. 9. Yushchenko said on Wednesday a parliamentary vote to root out cheating in elections opened the way for him to win a re-run of a rigged presidential poll. REUTERS

## UK Black Watch troops home for Christmas from Iraq

LONDON, Dec 11 (Reuters) - About 200 soldiers from Britain's Black Watch regiment have arrived back in the UK for a Christmas break after their tour of duty in Iraq.

The troops landed at the RAF Lyneham airbase in Chippenham, southern England early on Saturday and travelled to Battlesbury Barracks in Warminster, southern England for a reunion with their families.

"I'm going to relax as much as possible," one soldier from the regiment told Sky News.

"I can go up to Scotland and enjoy Christmas and New Year with all my family."

Their official six-week period of leave will begin on Wednesday. The remainder of the battalion is due to arrive back in the UK by Monday, the spokeswoman added.



The Black Watch return to RAF Lyneham airbase in Chippenham, England. Soldiers from the 1st Battalion The Black Watch return to RAF (Royal Air Force) Lyneham airbase in Chippenham, England by chartered flight from Basra, Iraq via Qatar, Dec. 11. Around 850 troops were sent to a base south of Baghdad to replace U.S. soldiers taking part in the storming of the rebel-held city of Falluja. REUTERS

The regiment returned to its base in Basra in southern Iraq earlier this month after a month-long mission standing in for U.S. troops in a more violent part of the country.

Around 850 troops were sent to a base south of Baghdad to replace U.S. soldiers taking part in the storming of the rebel-held city of Falluja.

The regiment came under almost daily bombardment during the mission, suffering five deaths.

The soldiers' move north to the area dubbed the "Triangle of Death" from the relatively quiet south was controversial in Britain where anti-war sentiment remains strong.

Critics said it was politically motivated to show support for U.S. President George W. Bush just before the U.S. election.

# Berlusconi ally sentenced to 9 yrs in Mafia trial

PALERMO, Italy, Dec 11 (Reuters) - An Italian court found a close political ally and business associate of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi guilty of colluding with the Mafia, and sentenced him on Saturday to nine years in prison.

The verdict came less than 24 hours after Berlusconi escaped conviction in a major corruption trial in Italy's financial capital Milan, and gave fresh ammunition to opponents of the centre-right government.

Marcello Dell'Utri, a senator in Berlusconi's Forza Italia (Go Italy) party and a former chairman of the prime minister's advertising firm Publitalia, had been accused of acting as a link between the mob and Italy's business and political elite.

Prosecutors had demanded an 11-year jail term, saying Dell'Utri had frequent contacts with the Mafia when he worked for the Berlusconi family's holding company Fininvest from 1974 to 1994.

Dell'Utri vowed to appeal against the decision, which would also bar him from public office. At a news conference, he bitterly remarked that "justice is not of this Earth" and tried to distance his conviction from Berlusconi, who travels to the United States next week to meet President George W. Bush.

"Berlusconi is perhaps my greatest friend, the foremost person to be pained by this ruling. But to say that this conviction is also a moral conviction for



File photo dated Jan. 7, shows Italian businessman Marcello Dell'Utri arriving at the Palermo law court as Carabinieri stand guard in the southern Italian island of Sicily. Dell'Utri, a senator in Berlusconi's Forza Italia party and former chairman of the prime ministers advertising firm Publitalia was found guilty of colluding with the Mafia by an Italian court and sentenced to nine years in prison. Dec. 11. REUTERS

Berlusconi is a bit excessive," he said.

His lawyer, Enzo Trantino, described the ruling as just the "first round in a long battle."

### Both hands in fire

Dell'Utri helped create Forza Italia and acted as Berlusconi's campaign manager in the 1994 election which first catapulted the media mogul to power.

Berlusconi, who named Dell'Utri to Forza Italia's executive board last week, reportedly told party members: "I wouldn't put one hand in the fire for

political favours and electoral support.

Giuffre also testified that Berlusconi had met a top mobster, charges the prime minister's lawyers dismissed as absurd.

The court took 13 days to reach a verdict — a record for the Palermo anti-Mafia tribunals.

Berlusconi escaped conviction in his nearly five-year-old trial on Friday after a court invoked a statute of limitations, meaning time had run out to sentence him.

The ruling implied that the 68-year-old prime minister was guilty of one count of authorising a \$434,404 bribe to a Rome judge in 1991 but could not be sentenced because of the time limit. The court then acquitted Berlusconi of a second charge of bribing the judiciary.

"Yesterday, the prime minister was saved by the skin of his teeth, and today his confidant Marcello Dell'Utri is convicted," said opposition politician Antonio di Pietro, a former star anti-graft magistrate.

"This political class is not worthy of governing the country."

Dell'Utri was found guilty of extortion in a separate trial in April and sentenced to two years in jail, charges he has always denied. He is appealing against that verdict, too.

"I am ready to continue to fight, more than before .... I am only resigned at the fact that it (the verdict) happened, like thunder in the sky — I can't stop it," he said.

# OPEC makes moves to rein in excess oil supply

CAIRO, Dec 11 (Reuters) - OPEC oil producers on Saturday said they had already moved to rein in excess supply, a day after doubts over the group's resolve to cut sent prices into a tailspin.

Oil prices fell 4 percent on Friday to the lowest level since July despite the cartel's agreement to wipe out one million barrels per day (bpd) of excess supply from January 1.

Top OPEC producer Saudi Arabia said on Saturday that it was not worried by the price fall. "Don't panic," said Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi. "I tell you it will go up on Monday." Saudi Arabia had already enforced its cut of 500,000 barrels per day — 5 percent of current production — by reducing nominations to customers, he added. U.S. prices have dropped by more than \$15, or 27 percent from record highs less than seven weeks ago. OPEC's own reference crude

basket has fallen even faster and was valued at \$34.29 even before Friday's fall on international markets.

"Markets appear to want to test OPEC's apparent resolve to defend prices at \$33 for the basket. And promises to cut out 'over-production' may not deter them," said Jan Stuart of brokers Fimat.

The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries has this year been producing at the highest level in 25 years to meet rising demand, while also enjoying prices which are on course for their highest yearly average on record.

OPEC now fears an out-of-season increase in oil stocks during the northern winter will weaken prices. Cartel ministers meeting in Cairo on Friday agreed to cut production back to the group's official limit of 27 million bpd.

Seven of the cartel's 11 producers will reduce supply by around 5

percent each to make up the overall reduction. Iran, Venezuela and Indonesia will be exempt as they are pumping at or below official limits.

Saudi Arabia has in recent years led OPEC's efforts to improve credibility by enforcing agreed cutbacks.

Traders are sceptical over other producers' determination to reduce supplies. Nigeria, Algeria and Libya, who all want a bigger quota to reflect their higher production capacity, have pledged to reduce a combined 260,000 bpd.

"The market has to see the action and the action will be taken," Algerian Energy Minister Chakib Khelil told Reuters.

Excess supply above formal cartel quota limits has swelled crude inventories to about 5 percent above year-ago levels in the United States, the world's largest energy consumer.

While heating oil stocks in big

consuming centres are low, only sustained severe weather would put real strain on supply, analysts said.

A fall in the dollar's value has eroded OPEC's purchasing power from non-dollar economies. OPEC ministers will meet again on January 30 to discuss whether further cuts are needed.

"If prices will continue to fall from now to January we will have to cut the ceiling by 500,000 to one million barrels per day," Kuwaiti Oil Minister Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahd al-Sabah said on Saturday.

Friday's price fall was accelerated by higher supplies from Iraq as flows resumed through the country's northern export pipeline following a 12-day halt.

Consumer nations have urged OPEC not to curb supplies, saying oil stocks need to rebuild to calm volatile prices and underpin economic growth.

ببالغ الحزن والأسى  
تلقينا نبأ وفاة المغفور له بإذن الله تعالى -  
الحاج محمد عثمان الأديمي  
وبهذا المصاب الجلل نتقدم بأحر التعازي وأصدق المواساة إلى  
أبناء الفقيد وكافة أسرته الكريمة  
سائلين المولى عز وجل أن يتغمده بواسع رحمته وعظيم غفرانه ويسكنه فسيح جناته  
«إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون»  
الأسيفون:  
الحاج / أحمد محمد الزريقي وحرمة

## Words of Wisdom



Gentlemen, Yemen does not need more money! It needs a system. Yemen need accountable officials, and it needs people with some decency in the way they work. If the IMP, World Bank and other organizations pump loans into Yemen, where will it go? More importantly, how will it be paid?

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

OUR  
OPINIONMorocco gives  
a worthy vision

The visit I recently paid to Morocco impressed me greatly. I was amazed by the level of development and maturity of this Arab country on the eastern Atlantic.

The reforms that have been implemented in the last few years have had a striking impact on the population, particularly on the younger generation, which is now looking to the future with more hope and confidence.

Today, Morocco is the only Arab country with a completely liberal civil society and press movement. To set up a newspaper or an NGO, all one needs to do is send a note to the concerned authorities indicating that he/she is willing to found the institution or newspaper, and the next day, the enterprise can start working.

This openness has resulted in a flourishing NGO and newspaper industry in the country.

But the Moroccan government did not stop at that. According to sources, it is now legislating to give about US \$45 million to the roughly 1,800 NGOs in the year 2005 to help them build their capacity and work more professionally.

In fact, this is merely a first step in allowing the civil society in this country to take over developmental projects from the government and apply them on the grassroots level.

This is indeed a vision that deserves respect and appreciation. One can see that what the Moroccan government has done is to its own benefit because it allows it to do more work with less manpower, and splits duties with the active and professional civil society.

I was also impressed by its freedom of the press. There are almost a dozen daily independent Moroccan newspapers. They have all contributed positively in disseminating information and encouraging citizens, specifically the younger generation to read more often.

One of the latest moves of the government to help encourage newspaper-reading among the population by facilitating the capacity building of independent newspapers. In order to do that they allowed and encouraged the formation of the Moroccan Publishers Federation, whose main objective is to help make newspapers self-sustainable, more professional, accurate in reporting, appealing, and readable.

It is hoped this will be a major drive for newspapers to abide by professional standards and allow the enhancement and development of skills of the cadres of each member newspaper to compete regionally.

At the end of my visit, I felt that we could indeed learn a lot from Morocco. Even though it also has its problems, Morocco seems willing to change.

The young king of the country, Mohammed the Sixth, seems to be aware of the current needs in this era of information, and realizes that the civil society and freedom of expression are main attributes of any country that wants to have a better rank in the world of today. The country's progress in terms of growth, liberty, and standard of living is strong.

The point is, if Morocco can do it, so can Yemen. It is all a matter of political will and wisdom. Without those, we will miss the road to development and human dignity.

The Editor

## Reform? What reform?

Talk is cheap,  
it's time to act

BY PROF. DR. ABDULAZIZ AL-TARB  
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Talk has increased in recent months about issues of change, reform, and democracy in the Arab World. The theme has been noticed in every Arab country.

Arab regimes compete in giving prolonged speeches about each one's efforts in terms of reform and the achievement accomplished so far on their own initiative and not due to external pressure.

This raises a question as to the degree of vitality of Arab policies. Flabbiness and stillness that has affected bilateral relations has raised questions and worry. The dynamics of modern regimes emanate basically from healthy relations between peoples and rulers. This does not appear to be there in the Arab arena. Here are some remarks about that.

First: political and constitutional reform govern other variables. Nobody should imagine economic, cultural, or social reform without tackling the political and constitutional reform. Reform should start at the head, because corruption starts at the head as it is evident in some regimes unable to live up to the spirit of the age and catch up with the pace of change. It is after all the policy package in different fields. Therefore, political and constitutional reform is the independent variable presiding over other variables.

Second: the reform slogan has been abused. This raises concern and invites fears. Extravagant chanting of a slogan is a covert abortion of it and a way to evade it. Criticism of the ideology of reform on the basis that it has been imposed on us is a right word to get bad purpose. Our need for reform and change is bigger and more important of the claims of foreign intervention or dominance.

Third: we have indicated earlier of the distinctiveness and conditions of every Arab capital. Yet, this point should not be misused as a boost to nullify reform, and warn of imaginary dangers. Distinctiveness does not go against the prevailing of law, respect for liberties, and enlargement of political participation to include all forces in public life. So, that excuse does not virtually reflect reality.

Fourth: Arab-Israeli conflict or Palestinian-Israeli confrontation does not serve as a valid reason for procrastinating reform. Our real misery in managing that conflict is attributed to short-term slogans lifted to give an impression that the Arab-Israeli conflict is the main obstacle to democracy and development. We slowed down on the way to reform and gave up seriousness on the ground that battling is more important than anything else. Meanwhile, Israel won not only its military battles but also the political one due to its scientific, technological, industrial and military advancement. Adopting democracy helped the Israelis, notwithstanding that its democracy has a racist touch.

Fifth: the gap among Arab countries

we noted in previous articles in terms of intellectual and social development sets starting points differing respectively, but does not define a ceiling limiting the ambitions of any of them. We should learn lessons from newly-independent small African states. They are admirable for adopting democracy and fostering plurality so much that they laid aside some of their historical leaders, and replaced independence heroes with new leaders through elections and democracy which should be revered.

Sixth: poverty and low living standards are of the commonplace phenomena in the Arab communities. There is no doubt that the failure of some Arab regimes to fulfill their commitments towards the limited-income class and the proliferation of administrative and financial corruption (legitimate son of political corruption) are due to poverty. Therefore, poverty is the main hurdle and a considerable challenge. Thus, reform is very significant. I don't exaggerate if I say that terrorism is also the son of poverty, social backwardness and ethical collapse. In the past, Imam Ali bin Abi Taleb said "If poverty were a man, I would kill him."

Seventh: the developments taking place in reality, besides the series of expected trials of ousted former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, will reveal an important part of the Arab shame. We must admit that the ousted regime is unmatched in the region. It is an example for others to heed, and proves that the dictatorial governance leads to hardships and catastrophes. There must be an honest evaluation of internal policies in Arab countries amidst the current regional and international conditions.

Eighth: human rights are the gateway of people to the future. Human rights have taken on broad concepts and comprehensive contents not confined only to fighting torture in prison and detention centers, but go beyond that to involve political, economic and social dimensions the first of which is a minimum of living standard that ensure the dignity of the Arab citizen.

Ninth: the most dangerous threats before reform, change and democracy is the fact that most of the people targeted by reform lead the crowd who lift the above discussed slogans. It is an extremely alarming point that the people who call for reform are the ones who should be uprooted by the forthcoming wind of reform. This issue may arouse fears related to many excuses such as distinctiveness, and national identity.

Tenth: there is still a suspended question regarding the intentions of foreign powers who call for democracy and reform in the Arab area. The question that poses itself is whether the US has any interests in the existence of democratic regimes in the region. With an expanded scope, we may ask "Is Israel enthusiastic to see real reform in the Arab World?" To answer these questions

requires sincerity which we cannot feign to have. Actually, we believe that adopting democracy, reform and change contradicts the interests of the powers anxious to seize the resources of the region. They only want to control the area and be present in it.

These are observations intended to clarify that the current of reform whose slogans have swept the region and whose ideas have grown in many directions needs a scrutiny and a comprehensive view that can distinguish between varying phenomena and size them up according to their real nature.

We need also indicate that the status of systems and value of governments are determined by their vitality degree and ability to acclimatize with the surroundings.

We, Arabs, confuse stillness with stability; the former depends on the degree of stillness regardless of the undercurrent interaction, while the latter is the aggregate of a number of factors leading to social balance, class reconciliation, liberty respect, and peaceful transfer of authority.

It is no secret that most Arab governments are characterized by violence in dealing with citizens. Their human rights records do not live up to the standard, let alone that some of them are not free from authoritarian traits emanating from dictatorial rule and idolization of leadership.

All of these notions have been outdated and put in the history margin. Hence, Arab countries must be redeemed from the manacles of political backwardness for them to catch up with the great events of the era and swift developments. Nobody should think that the Arab-Israeli conflict or the anarchy in Iraq is apart from political reform. Nay, but we think that reform is the natural and sole approach to get out of the dilemma and open up new horizons for Arabs.

In concluding, we, as Arabs and Muslims, should earnestly take up the issue of reform. Among our historical mistakes is lifting slogans without applying them and starting a journey without reaching the destination. Now, taking into account the difficult challenges and perilous condition, time is ripe for us to upgrade our mindset and broaden our view so as to cover the future with its expectations, surprises and events.

Since we always talk about civilizations conflict and cultures clashes, we should first harness ourselves in order to change our gloomy image in the eyes of the otherness. I may say here that when I remember the aired episodes of Saddam's trial, I immediately conjure up a sense of the pains and predicament of our nation. I have come to an unshakable belief that solution is only represented by real change, complete reform, and permanent democracy.

Here in Yemen, an interim government in preparation for the coming elections may be a good way to achieve that.

COMMON  
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

Believing in  
miracles alone  
is not enough

The almost 50/50 split in the results of the American Presidential Elections of last November was a major setback for many Americans, who were captivated by the events of 9/11 to seek real answers to what really happened on that tragic day. These people suspected the official position of their government taken since that day with respect to so many of the issues that are not only of importance to Americans, but to world peace and to the achievement of justice for all mankind. These people were not merely utopians chasing after some far fetched ideas. On the contrary, they really considered United States government policies, as adopted by the George W. Bush Presidency as not commensurate with what loyal Americans, guided by the fundamentals set forth by the founding fathers of the American Republic and their own intuitions as their consciences would mold them, should succumb to. These are not people who simply are entrapped in any form of radical rebellious spirit along the lines advocated by radicals of the second half of the last century. These people are from all walks of life and professions – teachers, businessmen, writers, students and a whole assortment of categories and social standings. They all have one thing in common: a strong belief that there is something that is happening to America, which simply is not guided by national interest, or any fundamental beliefs of high moral fiber. Thus, these people, after seeing the almost unacceptable idea of having George W. Bush and his clique of right wingers have a chance to go at it again, saw all their tireless efforts to persuading their fellow countrymen that Bush is putting America on the wrong track go down the drain. In fact, some even went further and stated clearly and loudly that America has been sucked into the Likudnik Zionist mentality, which to these Americans is as destructive to America as it is to the Palestinians.

In their expression of sorrow, some could only hope that a miracle will give rise to a changeover from this unexpected return of the Bush Administration. They really felt that Americans could not be manipulated to believe that a repeat of the last four years of illogical foreign wars, bad management of domestic affairs, isolationism from former allies and all the other irrational attributes of the Bush Presidency is in the best interest of the United States. They were startled to witness their fellow Americans for once unable to see the irrationality of their own choice. This hopeless feeling brought many to think that only leaving the matter with the Al-Mighty would eventually repair the course for America. But as John Kaminski wrote to a mutual friend Duane Evans, "Duane, if you believe that miracles are the only way out of the demise we are in, you are all wrong". Americans cannot hope to become simply fatalists and expect the Al-Mighty to bail them out, says John in more ways than one. Americans can only get out of this predicament through miracles worked by their own hands!

This can also be said of many of the Moslem and Arab countries that are suffering from oppression and autocratic regimes that threw away such things as moral considerations and national interest ever since their leaders rode their tanks and armor to power. We hear Moslems all over the world state, God is bound to take pity on us and relieve us from all these calamities that we are subjected to. Alas, Allah has clearly stated that: "Allah does not bring change to what a nation is confronting, until the people (of that nation) bring change within themselves". In other words, it is up to people to act if they want to change their destinies and not let a minority decide their fate and future for them and their children. Yes, God is not averse to seeing oppression and tyranny over his worshippers, but then again, God himself would not act alone, but through human agents to deliver their people from such oppression and tyranny. Thus, as is the case in America, those who aspire to correct the misguided course the Moslem World is following are asked to remember that their religion demands that all worshippers are responsible for their destinies and must take the proper course that will set their paths straight and enable their countries to come out of their depressive states. It is no wonder that throughout the ages, God had to rely on human messengers to set the minds of people straight on how they can control their destinies, but at the same time implored even the most faithful of his believers that only through their own action can they expect to overcome the stagnant and repressive lives they are forced to live in.

How can a people under so much repression free themselves from well entrenched autocratic orders that are not ready to relinquish any of the tight holds that their rulers have on their subjects? The answer varies from situation to situation, and depends on the level of repression and hopelessness one endures in any given society. But to rely on the hope that a heavenly sent miracle will pave the way is a misconception and a weakness in the belief in the Al-Mighty. One only has to look at the history of the early Moslems to realize that the early Moslems were active Moslems, who sacrificed a lot to make sure that the Moslems are free from any form of oppression and persecution. Moreover, they knew that they had to deliver a message to the world that it is not faith alone that defeats tyranny and oppression, but rather it is faith combined with resolute determination to overcome all forms of misguided despotic rule or even social inequity.

Yes, God is capable of quickly changing our plight, but if Moslems do not realize that only when believers are ready to take action against the distortions created by despotic rule, then God will simply sit aside and wait for us to wake up to the sad reality that the faithful indeed let all that is happening to them occur without so much as raising a finger to protest the pathetic state their rulers have left them in. The miracle, as John Kaminski says, is indeed in the hands of people!

## Letters to the Editor

US has begun the spin  
war on Iran

Bush, having rattled his sabre at Iran on numerous occasions, has now sent off his disgraced poodle Powell to fetch up phoney evidence and rally the Republican Congress and the citizens for yet another costly Middle East disaster. Yes indeed, having refurbished the B61-11 thermonuclear "bunker-buster" bomb, Bush can't wait to try it out on someone and Iran will do nicely, thank you.

Supposedly, the B61-11 hydrogen bomb buries itself so deeply before it explodes that nearby goats will continue to graze contentedly while the mushroom cloud busies itself contaminating only Iran's hidden treasures. Of course, actual tests on tent families in Afghanistan show that it actually doesn't get quite deep enough to do that. A minor problem for Mr. Bush but a major problem for the goats and nearby schools.

After all, Iran has a lot of nerve competing with U.S. and Israeli stockpiles of nuclear weapons that are reserved only for the good guys – guys who were recently Saddam's and Osama's buddies like George 1st and Oily Dick Cheney.

But Iran and the goats should take Bush seriously. The Crusading Cowboy needs some diversion of world attention from his failed Iraq adventure. With the U.S. Congress and (soon) the courts all stacked with Christian Fundamentalists, the only chip in the Cowboy's armor is his rapidly growing financial disaster in Iraq.

Although a phony national election in Iraq will evoke another "Mission Accomplished" gospel hymn from the Bush Family Singers, the facts are the Iraqi oil wells are producing diddly squat, the Resistance grows stronger daily and suicide bombers are going to be

leaping uninvited into the arms of Allah for years to come.

Another war for this sick Christian fascist is just what his new Secretary of Defense, Witch Dr. Rice, will prescribe. So there you have it; a fresh batch of tritium coming off the rods at Savannah River about April 15 '05, and the B61-11x will be ready to make goats glow faster than you can say Tora Bora.

On another subject, and as I've mentioned in several letters, Yemen citizens who cooperate with the FBI and CIA are bound to get themselves in trouble. These U.S. organizations are controlled by and staffed with hoodlums and goons. Yemen would be wise to boot these scoundrels out of the country before it becomes another Iraq.

Robert Lindh  
lindh@swnebr.net

Qat is laughable  
I have a comment to make  
on qat in Yemen. I believe

that the more educated the individual is the more they don't want to be around the qat crowds. I guess some Yemenis need to do more schooling, so they could invest their time wisely on a more productive activity such as exercising, pursuing for higher education, etc.

It's really funny to see so many immigrant Yemenis working hard in the USA and Gulf countries and then go back to Yemen with their pockets full of money, but then spend this money on qat.

It makes me think whether those people realize how hard they worked but to eventually find their money spent in vain. However, after they spend all their money on qat and other silly stuff, they end up broke, without any money and have to go back again to work hard. Now that is laughable!

Ali Abdulla  
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Independent Cultural, Economic & Political Weekly  
First English Newspaper in Yemen, founded in 1991  
by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

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15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of collapse of USSR

# New World, less order

BY MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

Looking back to the revolutions that shook Europe and the world 15 years ago this month, we should rejoice in what has been gained – freedom, democracy, and transcendence of Europe's 40-year division. But we should also take stock of missed opportunities in the wake of the Cold War's peaceful end.

Ultimately, the end of the Cold War came because of the revolution underway in the Soviet Union. But the pro-democratic policies of glasnost and perestroika that I unveiled in the mid-1980's did not appear out of thin air. They arose from Nikita Khrushchev's reforms of the 1950's and 1960's, and from Alexei Kosygin's reforms later on.

Many people now view such efforts to "renew" the socialist system – to make it actually work for the people – as having been doomed from the start. But these earlier reforms were in fact more difficult to undertake than the ones that I launched in the 1980's and 1990's. During my presidency, we had to nurture a democratic atmosphere, but this was possible only because fear was no longer overpowering.

We also tried to curtail the arms race and address other areas of conflict between East and West. But the Berlin Wall remained, standing in the heart of Europe as a symbol of division. When

Chancellor Helmut Kohl and I talked about this in July 1989, we thought that the time had not come to end the division of Germany. Dismantling the Wall, we agreed, would likely be an issue for the twenty-first century.

Of course, the German people decided otherwise; they took history into their own hands by insisting that the Wall come down. The rest of Eastern and Central Europe quickly followed, knocking down their own barriers to freedom.

My conception of my role as Soviet president compelled me not to intervene. I believed that I could not open our country while dictating to others. Indeed, from my first appearance as General Secretary of the USSR, at the funeral of my predecessor, Constantine Chernyenko, I said that every country should be responsible for its own politics.

So the fall of the Berlin Wall less than half a decade later was a consequence of these thoughts. (But, even here, my ideas and policies were not novel: in 1955 Khrushchev talked – albeit in a very different context – about uniting two Germanys.) My task, as I saw it, was to ensure Central and Eastern Europe's peaceful return to full sovereignty with a minimum of Soviet interference. To the surprise and delight of the world, the changes did take place peacefully almost everywhere.

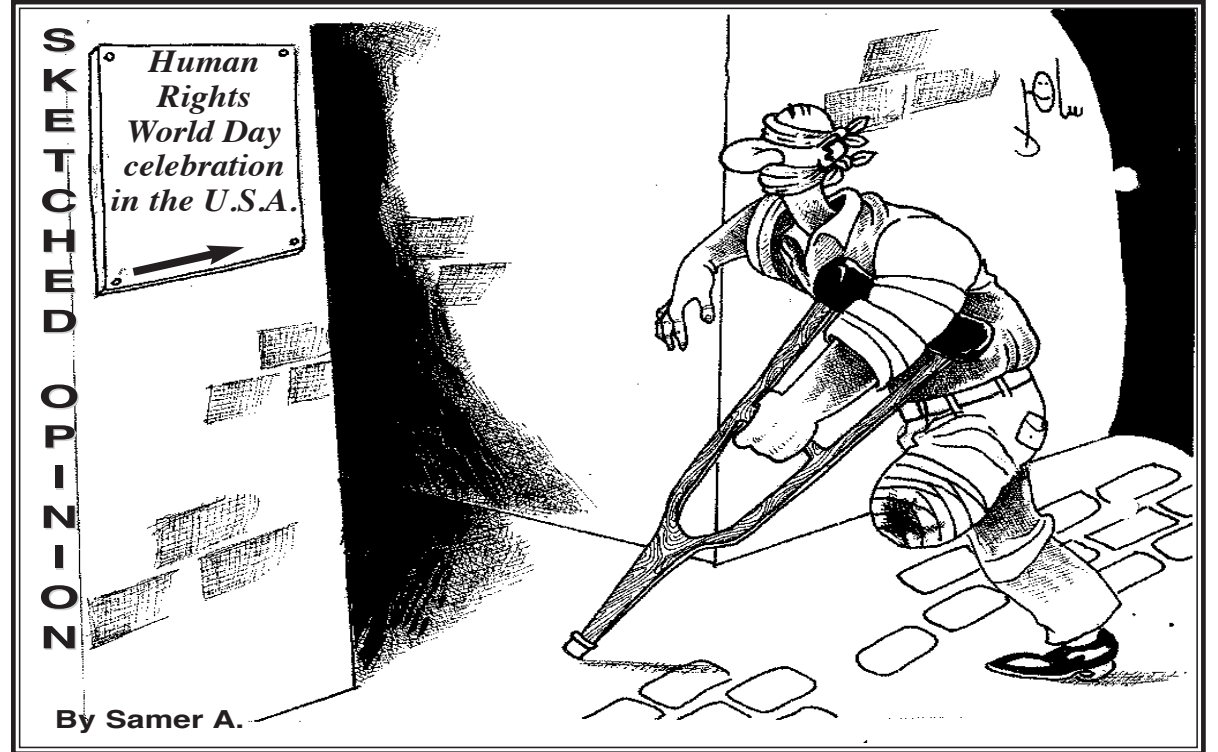
But did the Cold War's end merely

make the world a more dangerous place – one of terrorism, insecurity, uncertainty, and growing disparities of wealth? My response is to remind people what terrors the Cold War held. The threat of nuclear Armageddon was real, with three trillion dollars spent on the arms race that could have been used to help the world's poor.

On the other hand, an opportunity to create a safer, more secure post-Cold War world was lost. In the 1980's, when the communist-capitalist confrontation ended, there was a chance to create a "new world order." But the collapse of the Soviet Union meant that there was no negotiated settlement of this new order. As a result, the subsequent spurt of globalization has proceeded with no one steering the wheel – and thus with no means to implement new thinking for a better world.

We Russians obviously bear the most responsibility for the USSR's collapse, but America should also be called to account. When change came, instead of following a slow democratic process, Russia replaced its discredited communist model overnight with a Harvard-designed blueprint that was also unfit for the country. Eventually, the plan threw the country on its back.

This was no US-led conspiracy, but the collapse of the Soviet Union was convenient for America. The US conceived of itself as the Cold War's winner, and winners, it seems, make the rules. The Iraq war proves this: a new



American empire is asserting itself. The victor of the Cold War now expects other nations to indulge its philosophy of self-righteousness.

Unfortunately, this type of old thinking breeds more crises than it can ever resolve. Indeed, unilateral policies can never succeed in a global world defined more and more by shared concerns rather than national interests.

So, fifteen years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the world remains more in need of new thinking than ever. We need a new world order that benefits all, a global civil society that will help fight terrorism. We know that bombs and special operations alone won't make us safer, for we must fight the poverty that breeds terrorism.

That is no easy task. On the contrary, as in 1989, we are faced with the urgent need for change and responsible leadership.

*Mikhail Gorbachev, former President of the Soviet Union, is the president of the Gorbachev Foundation in Moscow.*



## Reflections

By Yahya Al-Olfi  
alolfi@hotmail.com

*How to steal public money*

# Beware of Yemen's entourages

Everybody has his own entourage, and the richer or the higher position he holds, the bigger is his entourage. Mostly the entourage is believed to be constituted of yes-men. In democratic countries the effect of the entourage is considerably diluted due to the preeminence of law and order as well as the active opposition or shadow government, let alone the filtration via free elections every four years, not to mention the free media.

In backward countries such as ours i.e. the different states of the Arab world, the effect of the entourage is rampant and pretty considerable. Some might dare to say that the impact differs from an Arab country to another. But to me, this is merely a bit correct and is not that significant at all.

Indeed, this article was brought up due to an address last week by the Yemeni president in which he called upon the responsible men in his government not to heed his directives if they find those directives overriding the already set rules and regulations. For, as he said, sometimes such directives are being prompted by people close to him whom he finds it rather difficult to reprimand.

The Yemeni Opposition Press declared that the president wanted simply to distance himself from shouldering responsibility with regard to the ongoing corruption, and that such tactics cannot relieve him from liability, proceeding to say that the populace are now mature enough to differentiate right from wrong.

By looking at the current status quo, and from reading Yemen's local press and the interaction with the people from different backgrounds, I know the people constituting the direct entourage around the president, and who are well known to us. They have been mentioned on several occasions by name and I do not need to mention each and every one of them.

These respective entourages are far more worse in robbing the public of its money and properties, because they do assume managing positions where they are directly responsible for considerable amounts for public good, but which are often channeled into private accounts here and abroad under different pretexts such

as recurrent feasibility studies, seminars, exhibitions abroad etc.

In other words, the indirect entourage uses its relations with the direct entourage to assume official capacities and then gets a free hand in many areas. In fact one day an acquaintance complained to me how his minister used to be subjected to pressure by an individual belonging to the president's close entourage in order to effect certain decisions related to traveling abroad and the disbursement of certain allowances and how another brags day and night about his influential connections.

Unfortunately, the present ruling system in all Arab countries cannot warranty clearance from such malignance. Thus, you would mostly for sure find that most of those holding managerial, official and diplomatic capacities are by no means the best that an Arab country can offer.

This applies to all Arab countries and differences are not that significant. An Arab writer once wrote that Arab embassies are often utilized to entertain the top people as well as an exile place to unwanted figures or to satisfy the disgruntled.

I think that the president should shrink the powers given to his close entourage with regard to promotions, appointments and other official affairs related to administration. That such close individuals are knowingly or unknowingly cause lots of disturbance and confusion by enabling their respective entourages to assume official capacities whereby regardless of qualification their friends tend to loot and demolish rather than to build and reflect a good choice.

Most of such men are considerably cunning, for they pay underpaid journalists in order to make publicity for their phony projects and earn employees' allegiance here and there in return for regular allowances so as to help them achieve their selfish targets smoothly without hindrance whatsoever.

In a nutshell it is not enough to know, but something must be done at least to curb the deterioration which is on the rise from one year to the other. I am here neither in the president's camp nor with the opposition, but do merely give a personal opinion endeavoring at best to be correct.

# Leading a proverbial life

BY ABDULLAH SHAWQI  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
SANA'A UNIVERSITY

Life is a struggle. This is why we say that "Life is not a bed of roses." However, life is also sweet. So we say, "laugh and the world laugh with you; weep and you weep alone."

And we can't deny that "beauty is altogether in the eye of the beholder" and "God helps those

who help themselves."

There is no doubt that one should adapt him/herself to such and such a condition; that is he/she should be romantic in a time of romance and practical in times of practicality, in as much as life is a composition of ups and downs.

Which leads us to the fact that there are glossy and gloomy moments in our lives.

Ups of life are, of course, welcome. Downs of life, however, are not too hard to be handled. The way to cope with downs of life should be

efficacious, "not words but acts."

Here is no room for dreaming or daydreaming, though dreams are necessary for life.

In the end, let's take into account the fact that "life is action, not contemplation."

That is, when life gets action, then we will get the way (acts) which lead us to lead our proverbial life - the genuine life - which can be touched in our own earth, not only in the utopia as some believe. So, let's lead our proverbial life.

# Egypt needs a president, not an old pharaoh

BY SAAD EDDIN IBRAHIM

Egypt is undergoing a heated nationwide debate over political reform. The central issue is a demand by all opposition parties and civil society groups to amend the 1971 constitution and abolish the 23-year-old State of Emergency that was imposed following Anwar Sadat's assassination in 1981.

Such demands are not new. But President Hosni Mubarak and the ruling National Democratic Party have been stonewalling since the mid-1980's. What makes the demands for reform more pressing this time are ominous developments in Egypt, the region, and in the wider world.

At home, concern about Mubarak's age (76) and deteriorating health has grown. Mubarak's ill health, widely rumored for years, was never officially acknowledged until November 2003, when it could no longer be covered up. While speaking to Parliament, Mubarak fainted before millions of TV viewers. Although he returned an hour later and delivered the rest of his speech, Egyptians began to demand greater transparency regarding the president's health as well as other state affairs.

Meanwhile, Egypt's sagging economy, high unemployment rate, and rampant corruption have driven many Egyptian youngsters to despair. More than one half of living Egyptians were born since Mubarak assumed office.

According to a recent report by the UN Development Program, roughly half of those between 15 and 30 years old dream of emigrating to Europe, North America, or Australia.

There are weekly reports of would-be illegal Egyptian immigrants drowning in the Mediterranean. A few weeks ago, several youngsters suffocated to death while being deported back to Egypt across the Libyan desert in overloaded trucks. The incident caused an uproar that compelled the authorities to arrest, interrogate, and try the Egyptian police officers in charge.

Regional and international events have also emboldened the Egyptian opposition, not only to press for reform, but to focus on amending the constitution's articles that pertain to the presidency. Mubarak has been re-elected four times, and rumors have persisted that he will either seek a fifth six-year term or establish a "hereditary republic" and groom his 41-year old son, Gamal, to succeed him, like Syria's Hafez al-Assad and son, Bashar.

The opposition battle cry is "No" to Mubarak's re-election and "No" to passing the presidency to Gamal. Many Egyptians may not have major misgivings about Gamal Mubarak per se, but they find it mortifying that, after 24 years of the father, they might be stuck with another 24 or more years of the son.

The current constitution was adopted in October 1971, and has 211 articles, 30 of which concern the presidency.

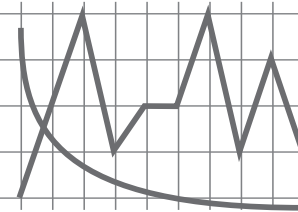
The president is nominated by two-thirds of the People's Assembly, and endorsed in a plebiscite that allows only for a simple "Yes" or "No." A simple majority of the ballots is required to win a six-year term, which is renewable indefinitely by the same process.

These lax procedures contrast jarringly with the president's powers. The president is the head of state and commander-in-chief; officiates over the Supreme Judiciary Council, the Supreme Police Council, and the Cabinet of Ministers; and can appoint and recall one or more vice-presidents at his sole discretion. He also appoints the prime minister and senior ministers, and must approve all other ministers, ambassadors, and state representatives. He can call general elections, declare war, impose a state of emergency, and issue decrees that have the force of law.

There are no checks and balances on these powers. A single article stipulates that, "Accusation of the President of committing grand treason or any other criminal act may be made upon a motion submitted by at least one-third of members of the People's Assembly and approved by two-thirds." The president is then suspended from carrying out his duties, and the vice-president fills in until the accusation is resolved.

But Mubarak has never enacted the law essential to implementing this article or appointed a vice-president, despite repeated popular demands to do so. The result has been a de facto "imperial presidency," with Mubarak likened to the god-king Pharaohs of

# YT Business



*Price hikes, plus an expected drop in oil production*

## Yemen's 2005 draft budget irks opposition

By Mahyoub al-Kamali  
Yemen Times Staff

Price hikes as part of broader economic reform still hang over Yemen's economic picture for 2005. That glimpse into the state budget has aroused political differences and negative reactions

from the opposition.

The reform aims at lifting the subsidiary used to support prices of oil products.

The draft budget estimates revenues at YR 761.8 billion, and spending at YR 836.4 billion, resulting in a 2005 deficit of YR 74.56 billion.

Opposition newspapers say the deficit is an indication of the failure of

the government's economic policy, noting in particular that military spending is up at the expense of development and services projects.

Opposition sources have also criticized the appropriation of YR 144 as subsidies to oil products, against YR 136 billion for the year 2004.

The opposition says the government intends to implement a new price hike

that would affect people's life and herald of more social disasters, and raise in proposition of poverty, whereas the new year would be a year of more suffering for the ordinary people.

The 2005 draft budget draft has focused on:

- Increasing spending of local authority to an amount of YR 163 billion, compared to YR 137 billion in

2004,

- Developing and modernizing the educational system at a cost of YR 177 billion against YR 162 billion in 2004,

- Giving an addition YR 42 billion to the health sector, against YR 35 billion for 2004.

- Giving YR 196 billion for capital-ist and investment expenditures and

### 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

YR 37 billion as a contribution to capital of economic units.

The financial statement expects that Yemen's oil production will drop from 154 million barrels in 2004 to 144 million barrels in 2005.

It's believed the oil sector will see negative development while development rate in other sectors may reach at 4.1 per cent growth.

### More technology needed

## Water projects continue

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Various works on Yemen's water projects continues. Total allotments for waters in the budget of 2004 amounted to about YR 33 billion, of which YR 13 billion came from government funding and 20 billion from external funding.

In the year 2003, the allotments were about YR 28 billion.

Local installations have implemented a continued plan in repairing networks of waters and sewage and changing damaged networks.

According to studies and field reports, the water situation needs the use of more modern technology for raising efficiency.

The national strategy for investment in the water sector is geared to help Yemen achieve goals of the developmental millennium for the years 2004-2009.

A new strategy that is part of this, after being approved by the council of

ministers, would reflect close cooperation of the partnership between the government and the private sector and the local society.

Waters networks have been expanded and the level of their services improved in urban areas and in some villages and countryside areas.

In 2003, 1,359 new projects were implemented in various countryside areas.

The amount of waters produced by local institutions for waters and sewage in the urban regions amounted to 114.5 million cubic meters, of which 21 million cubic meters were consumed by 3.7 million people.

The number of working wells were 282 in urban areas compared to 1,303 wells for drinking water in the rural areas.

Many works of water supplies and sewage services have been implemented in all major cities and most districts.

The more important of those were the rehabilitation and deepening of six wells in the capital secretariat to bring the number of productive wells to 68,

producing 20.3 million cubic meters.

Also, there was the beginning of preparation and studies and designs for building a new processing station outside Sana'a basin.

There have been development and conveying of waters to the city of Taiz, and the digging of exploratory artesian wells in the suburbs of Taiz city, and geophysical surveys in search of new sources of waters.

There were also the digging of two artesian wells in the city of Turba and the building of water pipelines in the city of Mokha, and the completion of modernization of sewage networks in a number of districts of Aden governorates.

Work has been finished in completing the major works of the projects of waters and sewage in the two cities of Tarim and Amran and preparation of studies and designs for projects of the second phase in the towns of Fuah and Ghail Bawazir and the eastern part of Mukalla.

Feasibility studies have also been made for sewage projects in Seiyoun, Taiz, Tarim and Hudeida.

### Please answer honestly

## Census can help development

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen's census is around the corner. To be held Dec. 16 and 17, the processes of counting will count people in various categories

Yemen considers this night, 16-17 Dec., the best way to accomplish the duties of the census teams that depend of course on cooperation of all citizens and recruits in order to reach the right results. Those results will help in making the economical and social development that is represented in the different services and projects in all districts and for all people.

The previous official censuses in Yemen provided the following details:

The presidential decree No. 219 for 2002 about the General Population

and Housing Census stated that the census recruits should be in charge of the governmental workers.

Whoever provides intentionally wrong information will be subjected to legal punishment.

Collecting the correct information is a crucial matter because the data will be in place for ten years and it's intended to achieve its goals of knowing the qualitative and age organization of population, their geographical distribution and their social, economical and demographical features.

The public should honestly provide

information showing the kind of accommodation, rooms, and available services such as electricity, water and sewerage that they have.

The recruits are also asking for information about poor people's conditions so the government can more effectively combat poverty.

The census is also geared to help understand social classes including the handicapped and people of special needs, illiterates, immigrants, and workers of different sectors, in addition to the elderly, youth, women and children.

Census	Population	Provinces
1973	1,590,275	Southern provinces
1975	6,462,530	Northern provinces
1981	8,540,119	North (cooperative census)
1986	9,274,173	North provinces
1988	2,345,266	Southern Yemen
1994	15,587,807	Entire unified Yemen

### India looking for seller

## Pumping Yemen's natural gas

By PETER WILLEMS  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

India announced last week that Yemen might be one of its suppliers of liquefied natural gas (LNG) after negotiations with Iran fell through.

Talks held at the ministerial level in Tehran were unable to finalize a deal for India to buy five million tons of LNG from Iran resulting from a disagreement on the price. India was demanding a fixed-term/fixed price agreement similar to its contract with Qatar. Iran was pushing for the price to be linked to the Brent crude oil price that fluctuates.

"At current crude oil prices, LNG would cost us over \$4 per million British thermal unit (MBTU) as compared to Qatar LNG of \$2.53 MBTU," said an Indian official after the talks. "With such high prices, Iran is a closed chapter for us."

The official added that India is talking with Yemen and Qatar to provide 10 million tons of LNG. "Price negotiations are on with Yemen and Qatar," said the official.

Qatar already supplies India with five million tons of natural gas, and in



Natural gas refinery in Yemen.

2008 and 2009 it will deliver another 2.5 million tons.

"Yemen is looking for a new market. This one depends on the offer coming from India," said Mohamed Al-Hawri, Professor of Economics at Sana'a University. "On principle, Yemen wants to export natural gas according to good conditions."

Yemen LNG - the company responsible for Yemen's natural gas - has been looking for customers since the mid-nineties. After Asian countries faced an economic crisis in 1997, the chance of capturing a market faded. Now that economic growth in Asia and other parts of the world is back on track, Yemen has a better chance to find a customer that is in need of natural gas.

Along with looking into India, Yemen put in a bid to win over South Korea last September. The results are expected to be announced within a couple of months. Yemen LNG said recently that it is also negotiating with the United States which is searching for alternative sources of natural gas as its reserves are declining.

It is estimated that Yemen has 16 trillion cubic feet of natural gas below its surface. According to Yemen LNG,

Yemen can produce and export 6.2 metric tons annually for 25 years.

In the Marib province, Yemen Hunt Oil Co. extracts more than 3 billion cubic feet of gas per day, strips out 22,000 barrels of liquids to add to crude oil then re-injects gas back into the ground.

Once there is a customer, Yemen LNG will build a 320-kilometer pipeline that will carry gas from Marib to Bal Haf, a site on the coast west of Mukalla where a liquefaction plant will be built.

Shareholders of Yemen LNG (France's Total, state-owned Yemen Gas, US Hunt, and South Korea's SK and Hyundai) will pump over \$2 billion into the project if there is a buyer, and the pipeline and plant will take around 43 months to be completed.

Yemen finding a customer may be critical in the near future. Over 70% of the government's revenue and around 70% of the country's export revenue comes from oil. More than 30% of Yemen's GDP depends on the flow of oil. The World Bank recently reported that after oil production leveled off in the last few years, it dropped nearly nine percent in 2004.

Wildlife needs preservation

# Bur'a gets attention

By ISMAIL AL-GHABRI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The General Authority for Environment Protection held an exploratory trip to Bura'a Mountain in Hodeida Dec. 9 and 10.

The trip included a number of officials, decision makers and media personnel went to raise awareness on the importance of maintaining natural resources in the area.

Ali Abdulkareem, Al-Fadheel, Director General of Land and Coastal Project at the authority noted the importance of this area, which will be officially announced soon as a protected area.

He pointed out that the announcement of Bura'a Mountain's being a protected area will be preceded by the provision of financial resources to create a

well-qualified administration for it. That will help sustain a more able cadre and maintain biological resources, as well as help environmental tourism.

Bura'a Mountain is considered one of the areas selected for the implementation of a series of studies along with many other areas like Hawf in Al-Mahrah and Broum, Beer Ali, Belhaf, Sharma and Jathmon in Shabwa and Hadramout.

These areas will be officially announced protected areas by the coming year.

More than 289 plant species in Bura'a Protected Area. Four plant species are rare (nationally and internationally), and eight species are endemic.

Threats are facing Bura'a Protected Area have led to 13 plant species slowly dying and three plant species already gone. There are also numerous undesir-



Money is expected to help preserve the wildlife at Bur'a mountain.



Both animals and plants need support to survive at Bur'a Mountain.

able plant species.

There are more than 90 species of

birds in Bura'a Protected Area, of

which. Two species of birds are under

threat at the world level, six are threat-

ened regionally, and 24 species are

included in Yemen's list of birds that

are ordered in terms of importance.

## Teens with diabetes

# Young people at risk

NEW YORK (Reuters Health) - Despite normal growth and maturation, young people with type 1 diabetes appear to lag in bone development, researchers report.

"Puberty is a critical time for additional bone mineral to be deposited into the skeleton," Dr. Laurie J. Moyer-Mileur told Reuters Health. "This additional mineral deposition is thought to minimize the development of osteoporosis in later life."

However, recent observations "suggest that children and adolescents with type 1 diabetes mellitus are at risk for decreased bone mass," Moyer-Mileur of the University of Utah, Salt Lake City,

and colleagues note in the Journal of Pediatrics.

To look into this, the researchers studied 42 diabetics between 12 and 18 years old and compared them with 199 healthy subjects from the same region.

"Body size and maturation were similar between groups," the researchers note. Nonetheless, "diabetics had lower tibia, spine and whole body bone characteristics, but greater muscle mass and lower bone mineral content."

Annual gains in bone mineral content were lower in diabetics, and this was related to poorer control of blood glucose levels. However, whole body muscle mass was greater, the team found.

Overall, the diabetics "had 8.5 percent

less whole body bone mineral content to muscle mass, suggesting that bone mineral deposition was not adequately adapted to muscle gains," the investigators report.

They say that "small but chronic alterations in bone mineral acquisition" associated with high blood sugar levels "may prevent adolescents with type 1 diabetes from achieving optimal bone mass and strength."

What does this mean down the road? "Long-term studies are needed to determine whether our findings support an increase risk of osteoporosis in later life for individuals with type 1 diabetes who had poor glucose control during pubertal growth," Moyer-Mileur commented.

## From overseas

# More flu vaccines into US

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. health officials on Tuesday approved the importation of up to 4 million doses of influenza vaccine made by GlaxoSmithKline, bringing the U.S. total to 65 million vaccines for this flu season.

The Health and Human Services Department said it would buy 1.2 million doses immediately, leaving another 2.8 million doses from the company available later in the flu season.

Regulators have been working to find overseas sources of the flu vaccine after losing almost half the coun-

try's anticipated supply in October, when one of two major makers, Chiron Corp., lost the license for its British plant because of contamination problems.

"With the latest purchase we will be able to protect more high-risk Americans this flu season in communities across the country," Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson said.

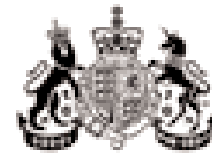
Officials approved Glaxo's vaccine, called Fluarix, as an investigational drug, which means patients will have to sign an informed consent form before receiving the shot.

Europe's biggest drugmaker said it aimed to supply Fluarix to the United

States on a permanent basis in the future. After upgrading its manufacturing plant in Dresden, Germany, the company said it hopes to supply 10 million to 20 million doses for the 2005-2006 flu season.

"GlaxoSmithKline is committed to pursuing a long-term strategy to gain FDA approval for Fluarix in the United States," said Chris Viehbacher, Glaxo head of U.S. pharmaceuticals.

U.S. officials had hoped to vaccinate 100 million Americans against the flu this season, in part to encourage more companies to get back into the business of making flu vaccines for Americans.



British Embassy  
Sana'a

## Vacancy

A full time post (one-year contract) is now available in the British Embassy, Department for Work and Pensions for a non-Yemeni national to fill the post of International Pension Service Assistant.

The post involves:

Acting as liaison point for customer enquiries.

Administration of customer database.

Control and monitoring of invitations and correspondence with customers.

Conducting interviews with new claimants and already existing cases.

Maintaining written records of interviews

Validation of existing customer identities from recent photographs and documentation.

Maintaining monthly statistics relating to post activities.

General clerical duties as deemed reasonable by the International Pension Service Officer.

Interested applicants should have experience in working directly with the public and with Microsoft programmes including databases. Some experience in interview techniques would be preferable.

English as a first language is essential.

Please send your hand written letter of application explaining why you would be suitable for the post with CV (no longer than 2 pages in length) addressed for the attention of the International Pension Service Officer, DWP Office, British Embassy, Haddah Road, PO Box 1287, Sana'a. Deadline for applications 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2004.

## Dozens of unique island destinations

# Seychelles are the pure islands

By IRENA KNEHTL  
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Day breaks and a tropic bird streaks for the horizon, tearing across the blue sky like a silver arrow. Huge boulders of pink granite, first weathered by the oceans rage them polished by the tenderness of its waves.

A line of emerald palms stoops over the jade and sapphire hues of a lagoon, fronds humming beneath the caress of ocean breezes. Crystalline waters lay table mats of foam on a carpet of golden sands and murmur melodiously underfoot as they usher time sweetly by.

It's the start of an ordinary day in Seychelles. An echo from nothing less than the dawn of time itself of Life... as it should be...

### Beauty

It is the unspoiled beauty of Seychelles that sets it apart from other destinations. This Indian Ocean archipelago of 115 islands, each with its own individual texture and feel, stands for "purity" in its most natural sense are timeless miniature world.

The vast geographic spread, the Indian Ocean region combines an enormous spectrum of human activity within it.

Civilizations emerged at various times and places around the Indian Ocean and were enriched by neighboring cultural zones. Human activity along the shores of the Indian Ocean can be seen as curve from southern Africa to Yemen and from southern Arabia south east Asia.

This curve, by land and by sea, people have moved eastwards and

westwards for at least 50,000 years leading to a constant intermingling of cultures, race, languages, religions, and trading goods.

The Indian Ocean itself has been an important avenue for this complex pattern. Sometimes the migrating people have taken to the sea and traveled to more distant parts of the littoral or to the islands of the Ocean. The movements of peoples across the Indian Ocean, within and between core cultural areas, was one of the major agents in the earliest forms of cultural interchange.

The process gained further momentum with the Arab discovery of the secrets of the ocean - particularly the monsoon winds - and refined ship-building techniques, foremost them were Yemenis. A settled civilization developed and prompted the growth of trade within what used to be then a "Yemeni" Indian Ocean region.

### Islands have own history

Seychelles are made up of some real beauties, 115 of them, each one possessing its own history, legends and mysteries. Every island is different and that is the joy of Seychelles. Here are islands whose names give rise to vivid imagination.

If one could look back through time to its very dawn, when the shape of planet Earth was evolving, we would witness the crumbling of the giant super continent of Gondwanaland, and also see how its fragment came finally to rest in what was become to be known the Indian Ocean, between Africa and Madagascar.

Today, we know them as granitic islands of Seychelles, the only mid-oceanic granite islands. Together with others of coral formation they make

up the Seychelles archipelago - 115 islands spreading like stars across night time sky, across more than a million miles of ocean.

Forgotten for centuries, they were discovered suddenly by Arab sailors and travelers, who were probably the first to wonder, wide-eyed at her natural beauty. Ancient travelers bear witness to the Arab knowledge of the islands from as early as the 9th century.

The Arabs accepted that the world was round, encompassed in an ocean, than air, than fire: rings of ocean, air, and fire. Certain graves on the islands point to visit to and perhaps an Arab settlement.

Were not the riches of the world in a green valley, the wide blue sea and in a pair of clear eyes. They named the place Jazair - az - Zarrin, the golden isles. They were listening to a tangerine, to voices far way, wafting through the night, sailing over dense heads of palm trees.

Their smiles in the dark, shimmering like wild silk. The winds were singing, the sun was sky. And night that like elbow rested on the seas and watched.

### First recorded sighting

It was the Portuguese navigator Joao da Nova, who made the first recorded sighting of Seychelles in 1501. On early Portuguese maps, Seychelles appeared as the Sete Irmas or Seven Sisters.

It was not until 1609 that a ship of the British East India Company first landed on her shores. Following a succession of expedition, a French settlement was finally established in 1770. Important estates of coconut, tea, food-crops, vanilla and other spices were established.

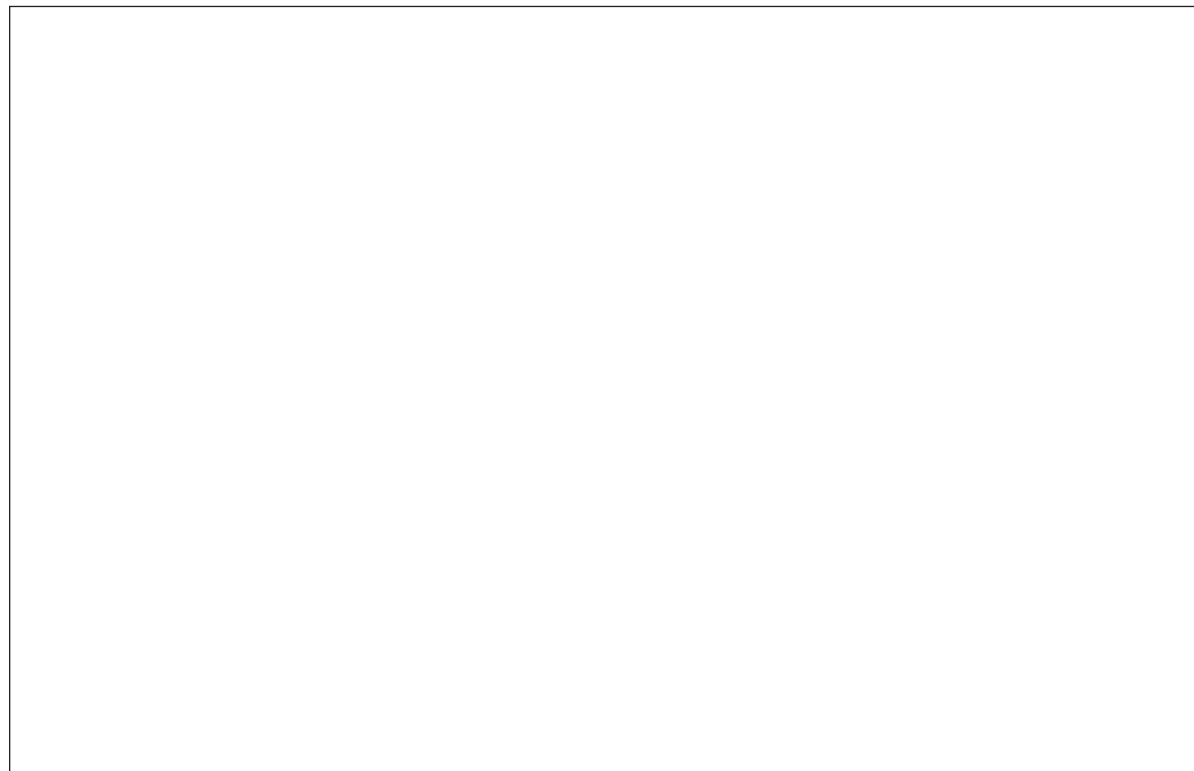
During that period Seychelles saw the establishment of Victoria as its capital. Seychelles was granted independence from Britain in 1976 and became an independent Republic within the Commonwealth.

The Republic of Seychelles is now a multi-party democracy with a comprehensive infrastructure for education, health and community services.

The Seychellios people represent a colorful blend of different races which stem from African, European and Asian roots, all of whom have brought something of their own customs and way of life to the islands.

The result is a charming Creole culture. Three are three official languages, English, French and Creole. Creole today is a written as well as spoken language, which has resulted in an outburst of creativity in plays, poetry, and prose.

Creole architecture is another important cultural aspect of the



A view of the enchanting Seychelles area.

islands. The design of some of the grand old houses, with their steep roofs and shutters to catch the island breezes, are representative of an architecture adopted for comfortable living in the tropics. Music and dance are an integral part of all Seychelles festivities.

The broad range of Creole cuisine is a reflection of the diverse ethnic mix of the islands. It features the subtleties and nuances of French cooking, the exoticism of Indian dishes and the piquant flavors of the Orient.

A dazzling array of fresh fish is readily available and is easily transformed into a wide selection of succulent dishes with the help of condiments fruits, spices, and herbs. Seychelles has some of the richest fishing ground in the world.

Seychelles offers a great variety of the accommodation: hotels - both large and small, hotels with more than 25 beds are classified as large hotels, guesthouses - offering Creole intimacy and hospitality, self-catering establishments and island resorts on remote islands with dive centers are located on the beach.

### What to see

Walk the town of Victoria, National history Museum, National Culture Center, Botanical Gardens, Seychelles National Park, The Craft Village, Tea factory and tavern, art galleries, island excursions, Creole restaurants, walks and trails, snorkeling Praslin Ocean Farm, The jungle tour, colonial houses, Copra factory,

Vanilla plantation, some finest beaches, granitic sculptures designed by Time, a stunning diversity of under sea life.

Two UNESCO Natural World heritage sites, one hosts the largest colony of giant tortoises and is breeding ground of the giant frigate bird. The second site is the Vallee de Mai on Praslin, an ancient forest, home to rare black parrot and the worlds largest coco nut growing wild.

The Seychelles archipelago boasts over 1000 species of endemic flora and over 75 species of endemic fauna. There are 20 national parks and reserves and around 370 sensitive areas are officially monitored and protected.

Seychelles is as pure as it gets, with 50 percent of the land is designed as natural park. Thus the Seychelles offers an unique holiday experience drawing on the diversity of 115 pristine islands.

The promoted concept of natural purity is the cornerstone of a philosophy that echoes the needs of today's travelers for a tranquil yet vibrant destination, simplicity, authenticity and innocence.

### Seychelles in brief

- Located in Western Indian Ocean, 1600 km off the east coast of Africa
- The archipelago stretches between 4° and 10° south of the equator
- 115 tropical islands spread over an area of 1,400,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- The Inner Islands are largely

granitic (41 granitic and 2 coralline) and are situated on the Seychelles plateau.

- Among them Mahe, principal island is home to the international Airport and capital Victoria.

- Praslin, second largest island, is home to UNESCO World heritage site.

- Silhouette, North Fregate, Bird and Denis islands, are more isolated, also fall within the Inner Islands group.

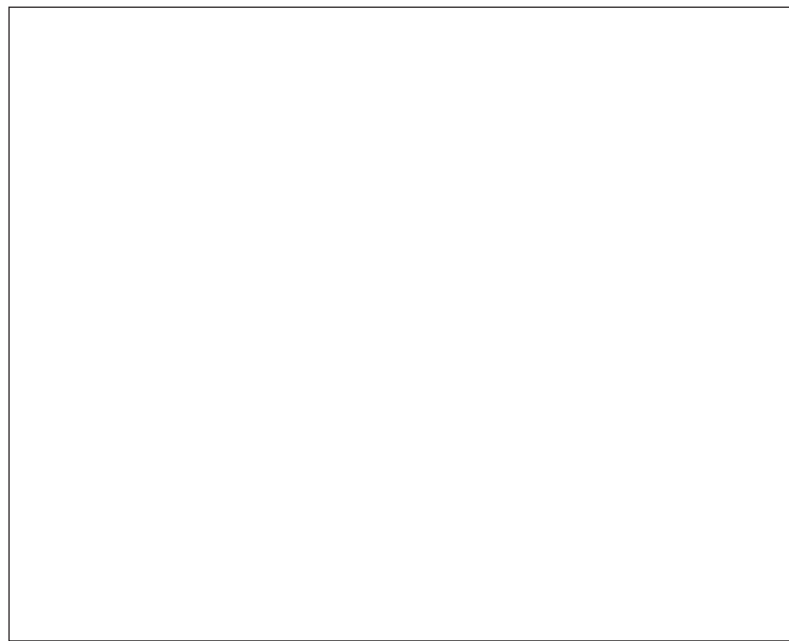
- The Outer islands, totaling 72 in all are situated beyond the Seychelles plateau and consist of low-laying sand cays and coral atolls.

- Population: 79,326
- Area: 456 sq km
- GNP: 545 US Dollar
- GDP per Capita: 6,450 US Dollars
- National Currency: 1 Rupee = 100 Cents

### How to get there

Air Seychelles, the national airline operates scheduled flights from UK, France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Singapore, Dubai, Comoros, Maldives, Mumbai/India, Mauritius into Mahe international airport.

**For more information:**  
[www.aspureasitgets.com](http://www.aspureasitgets.com) - the official destination website for Seychelles  
[www.virtualseychelles.com](http://www.virtualseychelles.com)  
 Air Seychelles: [marketing@airseychelles.com](mailto:marketing@airseychelles.com)  
[www.siba.net](http://www.siba.net) Seychelles International Business Authority



One of 115 islands in the Seychelles system.

## Remembering lives lived

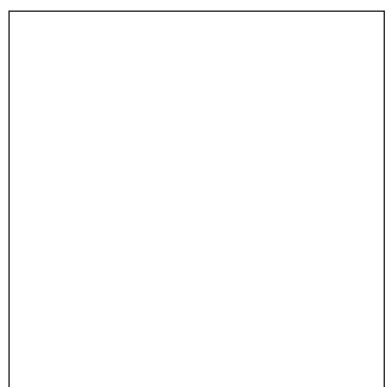
# Two men in Yemen's memory

FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Taking a look down memory lane, Yemen can celebrate some of its historic personalities. Here's a look at two of them

**Ali Hassan Al-Saqqaf**  
(Born in Al-Sheikh Othman, Aden in 1905)

Regarding the family of Ali Hassan Al-Saqqaf, Mr. Abdullah Kayed Fare'e, a symbol of the well educated and patriotic personalities said: "there



Mr. Safwat Ali Al-Saqqaf

are two great dynasties of a well reputed history in Aden. The first is the dynasty of Al-Saqqaf in sheikh Othman and the second is that of Hamoud Master in Kraiter.

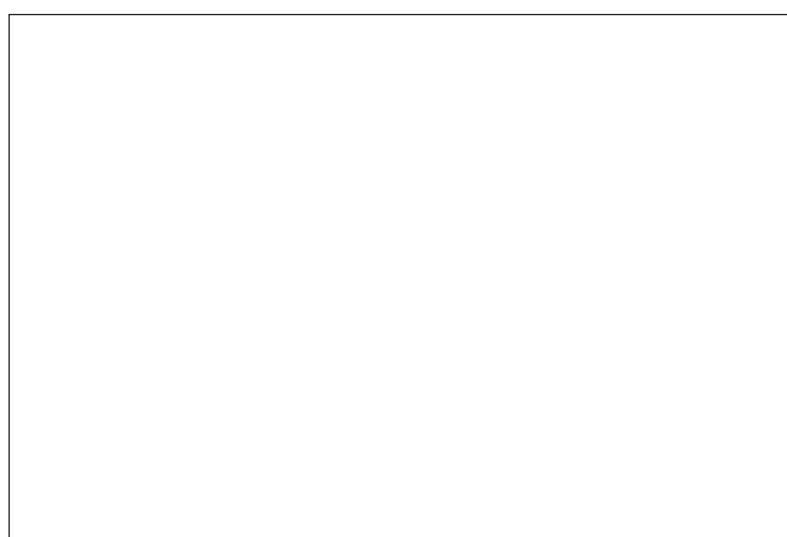
The Al-Saqqaf dynasty ruled Al-Sheikh Othman. The police chief, the magistrate, and the school principal in that district were all born and brought up in that dynasty.

Hassan Al-Saqqaf occupied a highly respected position at the Township Authority in Al-Sheikh Othman. He got his basic education at the Government School in Al-Sheikh Othman. After that he moved to Crater to have his preparatory and secondary education in the Residency School.

In 1923, Hassan Al-Saqqaf experienced two prominent events in his life, which are the loss of his father and his occupation of a government job. He stayed for a long in the area of accounting at the Township administration.

Afterwards he worked at the Treasury as a Cashier prior to his being promoted to the post of assistant of the general accountant. At that time he was the only prominent Yemeni national among the British and the Indians.

His son, Safwat, speaks reminiscently about his father. "He was one of the



Ali Hassan Al-Saqqaf with Queen Elizabeth II.

pioneers in the field of banking. He was awarded by the British government the M.B.E. (Member of the British Empire) honor."

For being discreet and socially respected, he was appointed a member of Aden Jury.

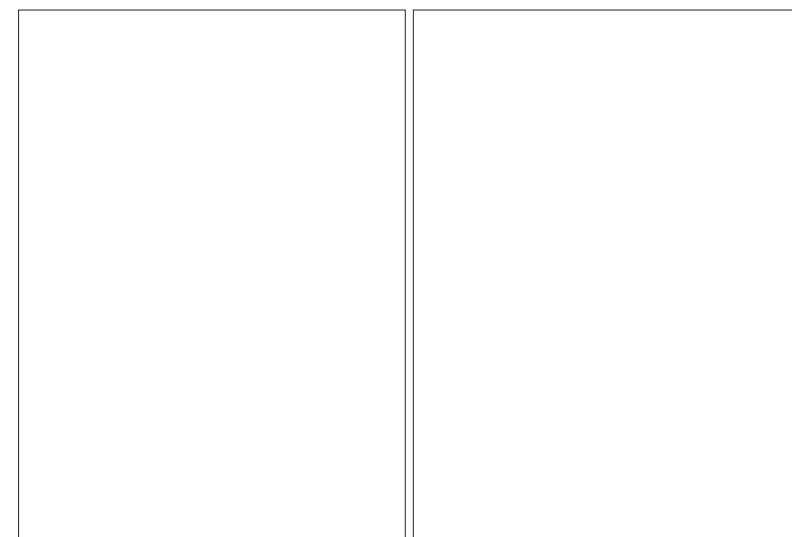
In the same day, the 30th of Shawal Mr. Ali Hassan Al-Saqqaf passed away. When he died, the British

Government conveyed its condolences to his family.

**Hassan Ahmad Hassan Al-Saqqaf**  
(Born in Al-Sheikh Othman, Aden in 1926)

This man also belonged to Al-Saqqaf dynasty.

Sheikh Abdullah Fadhil notes that he never joined any M'alama (pre-



Documents showing honors received by Ali Hassan Al-Saqqaf from the British government

Revolution schools) as he was born and brought up in a well-educated family.

So he was immediately enrolled in a government school in the neighborhood. He got his preparatory and secondary education in Al-Sheikh Othman.

He joined the army in 1941 and worked at the Military Hospital after

he was promoted to the rank of a major.

A few years later he joined the field of sports to assert himself a prominent footballer.

He published a valuable book named "Pages of the Memory"

Mr. Hassan occupied several well-reputed positions until he died in 1986, leaving nine children.

Continued from page 1

### Rotting to the core?

**Corruption at various levels**

Corruption in Yemen has spread out to virtually all public and most private sectors in the country.

With lack of credibility of governmental audit units, the level of corruption has not decreased, and this has led to frustration by international donors and economic experts who have been trying hard to work out new adjusted formulas to the economic reform package that was introduced in the 1990s.

Basically, core reform issues in Yemen have been singled out and structural impediments have prevented the country's economic order from a structural transformation towards a market economy.

Among the obstacles toward reform is the unwillingness or inability of the government to implement the straightforward reform steps proposed by the World Bank, such as lifting subsidies on oil products and reducing customs.

seriously and constantly warned by several international and local organizations and economists that serious steps need to be taken urgently to stop the deteriorating transparency and accountability in the government.

With an increasing number of donor-funded projects failing because of corruption, and with alarming rates of embezzled amounts of money disappearing from the general annual budget, the country's economic indicators of growth have fallen short of expectations.

"The only reason why Yemen was able to produce a symbolic and insufficient rate of economic growth is the increase in oil prices," an economic expert said.

"This growth is not even close to expectations and does not compensate for the annual increase of 3.4% in population."

Transparency International, the world's least corrupt country is Finland and its most corrupt countries are Bangladesh and Haiti.

The index defines corruption as the abuse of public office for private gain, and measures the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among a country's public officials and politicians.

It is a composite index, drawing on 17 surveys from 13 independent institutions, which gathered the opinions of business people and country analysts. Because of the absence of reliable data, only 146 of the world's countries are included in the survey. The scores range from 10 (squeaky clean) to zero (highly corrupt).

Even though the majority of Arab countries maintained a steady corruption level, a number have in fact improved their rating since the 2003 index.

At the top of those Arab countries are Jordan and the United Arab Emirates.

**Serious alarm**

The Yemeni government has been

**Other countries better**

According to the annual survey by the Berlin-based organization

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## A letter to the teachers of English: 57 Integrate all the skills while you teach (1)

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

Dear Fellow teachers,

In my earlier letters, I was telling you how to present language items, vocabulary and language functions in interesting ways involving the learners in your English classes. I also told you how to contextualize your presentations in the class so that they are meaningful to the learners. In this letter and the following, I will discuss another important aspect of classroom teaching – how to integrate all the skills while teaching English in the classes. This is important to you because, otherwise you will be like the legendary blind men who described an elephant in piecemeal!

First of all, let's see what skills are taught while we teach English. We teach them the four basic language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing; the study skills such as reference skills, storing skills and retrieving skills; the literary skills such as interpretation skills, skills of appreciation, critical skills and creative skills and so on. Of course these skills are paid attention to at different stages of learning English; for example, literary skills are generally reserved for higher classes. However, when there is a need for paying attention to any of these skills, you must not hesitate to do so. For example, while teaching Unit 7 in Pupil's Book 3 in the Preparatory Third year, interpretation skills are a part of the lesson, and you needn't hesitate to teach them these skills, thinking that they are meant for higher classes.

Why do we need to integrate the skills in teaching? The simple answer is

that it is only natural that all necessary skills are employed while using a language and English is no exception, and so when we teach English in a natural way, it is only appropriate that we integrate all the necessary skills. There was a time, when the Audio-lingual Method of teaching English was propagated, it was said that the skills have to be presented and practiced in a linear sequence – listening, then speaking, then reading and then writing. Teachers were told to adhere to the sequence and warned not to make their learners read what they have not listened to and spoken several times. But later experiments in language teaching/learning have proved that this practice of sequencing the skills in a linear fashion is against the natural process of learning and so treating the skills in water-tight compartment is discouraged while teaching. Can you ever think of a situation where one only speaks without having to listen to at all? Or does anyone write a letter to a friend without reading it at all? Integrating the skills while using a language is more natural than disintegrating them. So, while we teach, it is natural that we integrate the skills.

How do we integrate the skills while we teach English in classes? Not very difficult. As long as you don't try to teach the skills discretely, one at a time, you will be able to teach them integratively, because when you use English in your classes, you will be, no doubt, using all the skills necessary for your purpose. You don't need any extra effort to integrate the skills. Make your teaching as natural as possible; you will be integrating the necessary skills in your teaching. I will continue my discussion with specific examples in the letter that follows. Good luck.

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

**Dr. Bose's Letters No. 57-59 which were omitted due to oversight, are published beginning this issue. The omission is regretted.**  
**Dr. Sahu**

### I. What to Say

Situations and expressions (73):  
'Miss you' wishes III

'Miss you wishes' reflect a spirit of nostalgia or a deep and emotional longing for the person, closest to our hearts. As a matter of fact, absence of the person intensifies the buoyancy of spirit which is the true testimony of a time-tested relationship.

- I miss you more with each day that passes by and I don't feel happy at all without you. I count the days and long for the moment when we can be together and happy again.
- Do you know what moon would look without stars? - LONELY  
Do you know what cloud would appear without the sky? - UNBELONGED  
Do you know how I feel without you? - INCOMPLETE AND ALL THESE.  
I'm more than missing you.
- I'm miserable when you're not around. This note is just to let you know how much your presence means to me. Do you know what a flower would look like without its softness?
- My tears won't stop until you come back to wipe them off. Missing you a lot.
- I have been missing you! How I wish I could see you now. How I wish I could speak to you now. If wishes were granted, I won't be wishing you all these because then I won't have been away from you.
- I miss you more with each day that passes by and I don't feel happy at all without you. I count the days and long for the moment when we can be together and happy again.

### II. How to Say it Correctly

Correct errors, if any, in the following sentences

- He has been acquitted from the charge of murder.
- Whether he will be able to come or may not depends on the weather.
- He requested the Director to admit his son in the institution.
- On his way to the market, he was absorbed with his own thoughts.
- She is always busy in her work.

### Suggested answers to the previous week's questions

- Though you have a strong body, **yet** you are a coward.
- Keep us informed as we are anxious **about** your welfare.
- I am writing a letter **in** green ink.
- He went to Mahweet **by** bus.
- She congratulated me **on** my success.

### III. Increase Your Word Power

(A) How to express it in one word

- A state of weakness of the mind caused by old age.
- To examine something twice for exactness or quality.
- To cheat by pretending friendship.
- To use language that is unnecessarily hard to understand.
- A man who doesn't easily believe things.

### Suggested answers to the previous week's questions

- A place on the ocean where ships cannot move because there is no wind: **doldrums** (n)
- To make an animal able to live with man and serve him: **domesticate** (vt)
- Unavoidable destruction or death: **doom** (n)
- A medicine taken to improve the performance of people or animals: **dope** (n)
- Sleeping room with several or many beds: **dormitory** (n)

### (B) Synonyms and Antonyms

i) Synonyms

Given below are some words followed by four answers. Mark the answer which is nearest to the meaning of the given word

- spurious**  
a. pertaining to heraldry      b. stubborn  
c. angry      d. not genuine

- congenial**  
a. kindred in spirit      b. cold  
c. existing at or from birth      d. weak in character
- abysmal**  
a. despairing      b. bottomless      c. sickening      d. gloomy

### Suggested answers to the previous week's questions

- | Word                | Synonym                 |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. <i>appease</i>   | to pacify               |
| 2. <i>expunge</i>   | to blot out             |
| 3. <i>culminate</i> | to reach a final effect |

### ii) Antonyms

Given below are some words followed by four answers. Tick the answer which gives the opposite meaning of the given word.

- salient**  
a. chief      b. insignificant      c. lend      d. supernatural
- redundance**  
a. paucity      b. bare      c. rejection      d. crucial
- indiscretion**  
a. circumspection      b. magnitude  
c. inclination      d. ambition

### Suggested answers to the previous week's questions

- | Word                 | Antonym     |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 1. <i>recoup</i>     | to worsen   |
| 2. <i>slacken</i>    | to activate |
| 3. <i>scepticism</i> | gullibility |

### (C) Words commonly confused

Bring out differences in meaning of the following pairs of words

- secret, hidden, confidential      2. epitaph, epitheet
- egoist, egotist      4. intense, intensive
- exile, banish

### Suggested answers to the previous week's questions

- accessory** (n) (person who helps in any crime): He was made an accessory to the crime.  
**accessory** (n) (that which makes something more beautiful, useful): The accessories for a car include fan and radio.
- infer** (vt) (reach an opinion from facts or reasoning): I infer from your remarks that I don't enjoy your trust.  
**imply** (vt) (give or make a suggestion): Your statement implies that you no longer want to be with us.  
**Note:** It is the listener or reader who infers things.
- food** (n) (that which can be eaten by people or animals): People living below poverty line do not get enough food to eat.  
**diet** (n) (sort of food to which a person is limited for medical reasons): The doctor has put me on a diet.
- histrionic** (adj) (of drama, the theatre, acting): The actor charmed the audience by his histrionic ability.  
**historic** (adj) (famous in history): The Unification of Yemen is an historic occasion.
- distinction** (n) (point of difference): Death removes all distinction.  
**distinctness** (n) (separateness): Distinctness is the hallmark of her style.

### (C) Idioms and phrases

Use the following idioms in illustrative sentences.

- play havoc with      2. blow one's one trumpet
- beat a hasty retreat      4. red tape
- a drop in the bucket

### Suggested answers to the previous week's questions

- pave the way for (something)** (to make it possible for something to happen): The President's resignation paved the way for fresh elections.
- sweat it out** (to endure a difficult situation): It is difficult to deal with a boss like him, but we are determined to sweat it out and get him transferred.
- seal the fate of (someone/something)** (to ensure that something usually unpleasant happens in the future): Use of slangs and unparliamentarily words sealed the fate of the candidate at the interview.
- in the teeth of (something)** (against or in opposition to something): I am determined to forge ahead in the teeth of all opposition.

- have time on one's hands** (to have a great deal of free time): During the holidays we have time on our hands.

### IV. Grammar and Composition

(A) Grammar  
Choose an appropriate form of one of the words below to fit into the blanks in the sentences.

- |                   |                  |                 |              |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <i>disappoint</i> | <i>fascinate</i> | <i>bore</i>     | <i>annoy</i> |
| <i>amuse</i>      | <i>embarrass</i> | <i>surprise</i> |              |
- When I dropped the tray of drinks all over the carpet, it was very ———
  - I was ——— to see him standing on the doorstep with his suitcase.
  - I was very ——— when I couldn't remember his name.
  - We were so ——— with watching TV that we all fell asleep.
  - We were so ——— by the program that we stayed up until 2 a.m. to watch it.
  - He is a very ——— man. He makes everyone laugh.
  - It was ——— to see such a long queue at the post office.
  - I hate football. It's so ———.
  - I was very ——— when he forgot my birthday.
  - The party was very ——— as I had expected to see all my old friends there but they didn't turn up.

### Suggested answers to the previous week's questions

It was 6.30. We had arrived at the station at 6.15 and my two sons and I were waiting for an announcement to say that our train would depart on schedule at 7.00. The children were looking at the books in the news agent's, trying to choose something to occupy them on the long journey. Suddenly the loud speaker began to make crackling noises and a barely comprehensible voice announced that because of engineering works on the line, the train would be delayed for at least half an hour. We decided to have a snack in the station buffet. We just arrived at the door, struggling across the crowded station with all our luggage, when someone quickly stuck a notice on the inside saying closed. We knew we were in for a long, boring wait.

### (B) Composition

Expand the central idea contained in the maxim  
**86: NO MAN IS A HERO TO HIS VALET**

### Answer to the previous issue's topic

**85: NEITHER A BORROWER,  
NOR A LENDER BE**

Shakespeare says  
*Neither a borrower nor a lender be:  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend.  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.*  
How true! Money is rightly something 'that finishes the man.' Benjamin Franklin echoes Shakespeare's note of caution when he says "Lend money to any enemy and thou'it gain him; to a friend, and tho'it lose him." There are umpteen instances in our lives which endorse the veracity, authenticity and advisability of this dictum. A man of practical wisdom should make all out efforts to avoid the contingency whereby he is driven into either of the unfortunate situations. More often than not, it is seen that money lent is deemed as lost if one prioritizes friendship or relationship over money. But an attempt to recover the money lent very often leads to a situation where not only there is an unpleasant or strained relationship but a loss of the money. So a person of pragmatic outlook should try and avoid such a situation.

### V. Pearls from the Holy Quran

*"O ye who believe!  
Do your duty to Allah,  
Seek the means of approach unto Him,  
And strive (with might and main) in  
His cause:  
That ye may prosper."*  
S5:A35

### VI. Food for Thought

**"Ability is of little account without opportunity."**  
—Napoleon Bonaparte

### Leading a proverbial life

Life is a struggle. That is why it is said: "Life is not a bed of roses."

However, life is also sweet. So we say, "laugh and the world laugh with you; weep and you weep alone."

And we can't deny that "beauty is altogether in the eye of the beholder" and "God helps those who help themselves."

There is no doubt that one should adapt him/herself to such and such a condition; that is he/she should be romantic in times of romance and practical in times of practicality, in as

**By Abdullah Shawqi**  
Faculty of Education  
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much as life is a composition of ups and downs.

Which leads us to the fact that there are glossy and gloomy moments in our lives. Ups of life are, of course, welcome. Downs of life, however, are not too hard to be handled. The

way to cope with downs of life should be efficacious, "not words but acts."

Here is no room for dreaming or daydreaming, though dreams are necessary for life. To conclude, let's take into account the fact that "life is action, not contemplation." That is, when life gets action, then we will get the way (acts) which prompt us to lead our proverbial life - the genuine life - which can be concretized on the planet Earth, not necessarily in the Utopia as some tend to believe. So, let's lead our proverbial life.

### Wisdom

**Today.....**  
Forget the past with all its sorrow and all the deeds you did  
Build a wall on that part of your life  
A wall with no door  
Live this moment with all its good  
With all the people who love you  
Forget those who hate you and want to destroy you, by

destroying the good things in you

**Tomorrow.....**  
Open the curtain  
Look through the window  
look at the light of the sun  
Take a deep breath  
Every thing seems new  
Let the light which comes through the window brighten your heart  
Let it brighten the darkness

in you which will then  
Brighten up the love inside you to spread it around those who  
Love you

Live a new day which will bring new happy years to come  
Forget the past with all its stains

**By Ashwaq Al-Eryani**  
DDD

# Some homographs and their proximity in meaning

There are words which are homographs; that means these words have either the same pronunciation or the same spelling, as well as similar meanings. For instance, the following pairs of words are broadly synonymous. Some of these words can be used interchangeably.

- flush=blush**  
Both mean 'to become red in the face.'  
**flush**  
• The girl flushed (up) when the man spoke to her.  
• Shame flushed her cheeks.  
**blush**  
• She blushed for (with) shame.  
• He blushed as red as peony

- last=past**  
Both of them mean 'previous.'  
**last**  
• The last month of the year.  
• The last time I saw you.  
• The last letters of the alphabet.  
**past**  
• I stayed for the past few days.  
• Yemeni people are proud of their past



**BY ABDULKHALIQ OBAD**  
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- Announce=pronounce**  
Both mean 'declare.'  
**announce**  
• Mr. Ali announced his engagement to miss Aisha.  
• The government announced the danger to be past.  
• The book was announced as in preparation.  
**pronounce**  
• The doctor pronounced him to be out of danger.

- Has the judgment been pronounced yet?

- elect=select**  
Both of them mean 'choose.'  
**elect**  
• They elected him the president.  
• Purchasers can elect to pay in monthly installments.  
• She was elected to the Parliament.  
• The child was elected to stay with his mother.  
**select**  
• I selected him to be our leader in the journey.  
• He was selected to represent us in the conference.

- preserve = reserve= conserve**  
Both of them mean 'keep from (changes, loss).'  
**preserve**  
• You must preserve fruits in the fridge.  
• God preserve us all.  
**reserve**  
• Reserve your strength for the climb.  
• These seats are reserved for my friends.  
**conserve**  
• You must conserve your health.  
• Insulating the walls will help to conserve heat

- grumble =rumble**  
Both of them mean 'produce sound.'

- grumble**  
• Thunder is grumbling in the distance.  
• Is that your tummy grumbling?  
**rumble**  
• Heavy carts are rumbling along the street.  
• The smell of cooking made his stomach rumble.

- proffer =offer**  
Both of them mean 'give something to somebody.'  
**proffer**  
• Sami sipped from the glass proffered by the attendant.  
• I proffer him advice.  
**offer**  
• They offered a reward for the return of the jewels that had been stolen.  
• He offered to help me.  
• He offered some coffee to the guests.  
• They offered him a very good job but he refused.

- quiver =shiver**  
Both of them mean 'tremble.'  
**quiver**  
• He is quivering with cold.  
• The Moth quivered its wings.  
• He is quivering with rage.

- Suddenly the **6**'s mouth began to quiver, and he burst into tears.

- shiver**  
• He is shivering from fear.  
• He stayed outside shivering.  
• The wind is shivering the leaves of the tree.

- corrode=erode**  
Both mean 'eat away or destroyed by the effect of something.'  
**corrode**  
• Rust corrodes iron.  
• Iron corrodes easily.  
• Rain corroded the metal pipes.  
• All the electrical components have corroded.  
**erode**  
• East-facing cliffs are being constantly eroded by heavy seas.  
• Metals are eroded by acids.  
• The coastline is slowly being eroded by the sea.

- 10 fusty =musty**  
Both of them mean 'old-fashioned.'  
**fusty**  
• There are many fusty old professors.  
• These fusty ideas about education should be brought up-to-date

- musty**  
• I have bought musty books.  
• he lives in a musty room.  
• He is a professor with musty ideas.

- 11. compel =impel**  
Both mean 'to force somebody to do something.'  
**compel**  
• I compelled him to bring back my money.  
• He felt compelled to resign from his job.  
• His conscience compelled him to confess.

- impel**  
• He said he had been impelled to crime by poverty  
• The GHD's speech impelled the students to greater efforts.  
• Ahmed felt impelled to tell the truth.

- 12. cram =ram**  
Both mean to push heavily or fill too much.  
**cram**  
• Sameerah crammed her clothes into the bag.  
• He crammed food into his mouth  
• The refugees were crammed into the truck  
**ram**  
• He rammed down the soil.  
• The car rammed from behind.  
• He rammed the papers into the drawer.

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## A memorable trip

# The charm of the Cataracts Mountains

By Abdulwahab Abdulqawi Al Sofi  
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 For The Yemen Times

Some people prefer the simple and healthy life of our country; there they avoid the smoke of factories, the speed of city life and the crowded means of transport. They also enjoy the fresh country air and the beauty of nature.

One day we as job-mates decid-

ed to enjoy our holiday far off from the city's din and pollution. Our friend drove us along the main road towards Sana'a province in the early morning. It took two hours from Hodeidah city to arrive to that charming calm place, called Cataracts mountains in Al Qadam area ( Haraz).

As soon as we arrived, we started to hear our hearts' pulses because of quietness and the fantastic sight. Calmness dominates the place except some roars of vehicles in the main road.

High mountains are everywhere

leaving a narrow way to passers-by. These high mountains always obstruct the burning sunshine from visitors. They are overlooking on each other as if they embraced each other. The most beautiful is the Cataract that wells out of a mountain. It runs all time of year.

It is really a big fountain created by God in a middle of high mountains. This waterfall flows from up to down making a small lake at the bottom of the mountain in which visitors can swim.

In addition to that, green pleas-

es the sightseers and revives visitors. When we sat down for relaxing, we noticed that mountains surrounded us everywhere.

The sky was only our roof, green grasses were our mattresses and the mountains were the walls. We were powerfully affected by our mountains surroundings. Among those beautiful sceneries was the water murmuring of the cataract flowed from up to down, increase us the most enjoyable.

What a beautiful place. Calmness, green, water and shade are all there. Should you only bring your beautiful face, it will increase all the prettier. In a day you can live a fantastic life there, visitors can bring their food and may cook there.

In spite of our long, hard journey, we were very satisfied, because we were refresh energy and we learned many things.

We learned how mountains are calm, modest and steady despite their loftiness. Moreover, at time of day it is absurd to ignore the role of mountains in decorating our surroundings.

It is a law in this universe that the best things shall be the most seldom seen in their best form. Our lovable Yemen is rich in many charming sceneries which worthily attract tourists from all over the world.

Before the sunset, we were obliged to leave the place, but the scenery has stuck in our minds.

Thus, we did feel very sorry to lose this charming place.

Each one of us wishes to go there time and again.

The majesty of the Cataracts mountains.

A Cataracts passageway.

A Cataracts waterfall.



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