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YEMEN TIMES

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In front of the presidential palace in Sana'a:

Journalists protest harassment

MOHAMMED AL-QADHI YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Tens of Yemeni journalists staged Monday a sit-in in front of the Presidential place to protest the continued detention of Abdulkareem al-Khaiwani, editor of al-Shoura Opposition Weekly.

Al-Khaiwani was jailed September 5th, 2004 after the preliminary court verdict sentencing him to one year in jail and closure of his newspaper for another 6 months. He was charged with incitement, insulting the president, publishing false news, and causing tribal and sectarian discrimination as well as supporting cleric Hussien al-Hawthi's rebellion against the authorities.

The journalists and pro-democracy activists who gathered in front of the presidential palace, urged in a letter to President Ali Abdullah Saleh to "put an end to the plight of our colleague al-Khaiwani through means endorsed by the Constitution."

Continued on page 2



Tens of protesters staged a sit-in in front of the presidential palace on Monday to demonstrate against the continuous harassments and violations committed against the free press in the country, particularly the ongoing imprisonment of Abdulkarim al-Khaiwani. YT photo by Mohamed Al-Qadhi

With population boom

Illiteracy growing

BY PETER WILLEMS YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Although efforts have been made to curb illiteracy in the Arab world, the rapid rise in population has helped to push up the number of people in the Middle East that cannot read or write over the last three-and-a-half decades.

According to a report from the Arab League Education, Science and Culture Organization (ALESCO) - based in Tunis and a part of the Arab League - 70



A Yemeni boy reads in the corner of a shop in Old Sana'a. Teaching such youth to read is a growing challenge, as illiteracy is growing across the Arab world. (YT photo by Jamil Abdul Karim)

million people over 15 years old in member states of the League are illiterate.

The percentage of people that are illiterate out of the total population has steadily decreased: from 73% in 1970 to 35.6% this year. But in numbers, those who are illiterate rose from 50 million 35 years ago to 61 million in 1990 and now stands at 70 million.

The report showed that nearly half of the women in the region are not able to read or write (46.5%), while 25.1% of the men are illiterate.

The countries struggling the most to fight illiteracy are those having to face poverty coupled with population rising at a rapid pace. The countries cited in the report included Yemen, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and Sudan.

Although Yemen's Ministry of Education efforts, The World Bank, local and international aid organizations are building more schools for boys and girls in different parts of the country, other factors have been working against it.

Population Reference Bureau (PRB), a private organization based in the United States, reported recently that Yemen's population growth rate is one of the fastest in the world. If the pace continues, in 50 years Yemen's population will jump from around 20 million today to 71 million.

Over 40% of the Yemenis live below the poverty line and another 25% are liv-



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ing just above being poor.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor calculates that around 60% of the Yemeni children are enrolled in school for basic education. Forty-five percent of the population is illiterate.

New efforts have emerged to help control the local population explosion. Last month, President Ali Abdullah Saleh urged that action is needed to help bring the population explosion in Yemen under control and supported family planning.

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Abdulkarim Al-Arhabi said the key to slow down the rate of population growth is to get more girls to enroll in primary and secondary school, which would

reduce the number of early marriages and assist women to plan carefully before developing a family.

"Education is the first priority," said Al-Arhabi to the Yemen Times. "This is education in general and girls in particular. Educating girls allows them to be more aware of life challenges and at the same time keeping them in schools as long as possible so they finish secondary school and possibly go to a university. This would delay marriages, and once you have an educated girl, she will be able to judge properly feeding ten children or two children with her and her husband's income."

Continued on page 2

LET'S TALK ABOUT CARS AGAIN.



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International Organization and civil society call for the cancellation of Yemen's debts

Calls to free Yemen from foreign debt

BY NADIA AL-SAKKAF YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Monday, 17th Jan, Sana'a - CALLS are being made for the cancellation of all Yemen's debts so the money can be spent on improving the lives of people across the country.

The calls are being made by the Yemen based team of the international campaign and advocacy organization Oxfam GB and Yemeni civil society as part of a global campaign asking the G7 member nations to write off the debts of the poorest countries in the world. This would give them a greater chance to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, by the deadline of 2015.

Oxfam GB gave this call with the Yemeni Women's Union, which is

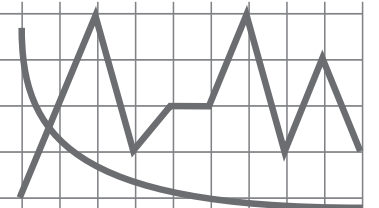
leading the Thematic Working Group for the Civil Societies (SC-TWG). This group consisting of 86 civil society organizations is involved in monitoring the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC).

The Yemeni civil society, including Oxfam GB, say debt cancellation would relieve future generations of Yemeni people from years of being chained through debt to bilateral and international donors. According to the MoPIC, Yemeni debts amounted to USD 5.23 billion in September 2004. A large percentage of the GDP goes to paying the debts leaving much less for the development projects and investments in infrastructure.

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YT Business



Science to develop oil sector

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

An official report by sources at the Ministry of Oil and Minerals mentioned that new oil explorations in a number of oil blocks, including blocks 43, 9, and 20, will be announced soon.

The report also indicated that an agreement was signed between the Yemeni Gas Company and the Korean Co-Gas Company under which Yemen will sell 3.3 million ton of the natural gas to South Korea. A number of international companies were also nominated to sell 2.5 million ton of gas to the US market and it is expected that the best company will be selected before the end of this month.

According to the report, the Ministry of Oil is due to inaugurate the Lead and Zink Mine in Nuhm shortly. The ministry sponsored during the last few years, in its framework of implementing the State's policy, a series of scientific conferences to bring forth database for the oil and mineral wealth in the country.

The most important conference was the one associated with the groove sedimentations Red Sea Aden Gulf. It was held in October, 1995, while the



first international conference for oil and gas in Yemen was held in June 2002. Both conferences contributed to the promotion of investment opportunities in the oil and gas sectors.

The Ministry of Oil issued in 1998 a scientific book under the title "Uniting the Biological Terms in Yemen".

The first Yemeni oil refinery was established in 1954 in the city of Aden and was designed to produce 80,000 barrel per day. When the British Occupation ended, the refinery is \$

200 million with local and Arab investments.

Meanwhile, a preliminary agreement regarding the establishment of Ra'as Eisa Refinery in the city of Hodeidah with a production capacity of 30,000 barrels a day was signed between Yemen's Oil Ministry and one of the International companies. It is worth noting that oil is an important source of revenue to the State's general budget as it exceeds 90% of the total exports.

repaired by the Government to retain its usual production..

In the middle of the eighties the State built Marib Oil Refinery with a production capacity of 10,000 barrels a day, and in the first half of the last year, an agreement with respect to building a refinery in the city of Mukalla with the capacity of 25,000 barrels per day in its first phase. Its production capacity is expected to increase to reach 100,000 barrels per day. The total cost of the refinery is \$

200 million with local and Arab investments.

meanwhile, a preliminary agreement regarding the establishment of Ra'as Eisa Refinery in the city of Hodeidah with a production capacity of 30,000 barrels a day was signed between Yemen's Oil Ministry and one of the International companies. It is worth noting that oil is an important source of revenue to the State's general budget as it exceeds 90% of the total exports.

Yemen loses 100 million dollars

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

General Corporation for Yemeni Environment Protection clarified in a new study that Yemen loses 100 millions dollars because of the air pollution in the capital Sana'a that affects many of the citizens with lot of diseases.

The Corporation said in a field search that the ratio of the pollution density that the Capital Sana'a is suffering from is over the international standards as a result of the status and location of the town which is surrounded by the mountains that stop the pollution from being scattered in addition to the mountains bareness in nature and a source of dusts which increase the pollution of the town which is of tourism distinctions and famed archaeological land marks further to the existence of diplomatic missions and also being considered as an important center for enacting the economical activity.

The main source of the pollution that the country suffers from is attributed to the transportation sector,

the electricity power stations, stones crushers and cutters, the red local bricks bakeries spread all over the town and around it which matter warns in the meantime about the dangers resulting out of the continuing pollution to whatever is existing at present.

The Corporation indicated that the total number of the vehicles roaming Sana'a streets reach to two hundred and fifty thousands vehicles in accordance with the census of the Traffic department, 90 thousands of which are minor private cars; twenty-three thousands are minor taxi cars, and about seventy thousands are buses for general transportation in addition to the public, military and diplomatic sectors vehicles and some others.

It has also pointed out that the taxi cars using diesel fuel are 2853 in number. Buses for transportation using diesel too are 2619, and 942 are minor private cars i.e. the total of the whole using the diesel reaches to approx. 6414 vehicles in addition to a big number of vehicles and plants which were changed to use the diesel illegally or which were not recorded within the capital Sana'a.

YR30 million a day deposited at post offices

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Savings deposited at the post office banking service has reached YR 30 million daily, while the number of customers has increased to around 162, 000, said

Yasser Hassan Thamer, General Director of Relations and Information at the Ministry of Telecommunications and Information Technology.

These increases have come after the Cabinet's 2005 decree No. 23, which gave the Post and Postal Savings Corporation an extra 20 per cent share

in Teleyemen, taking it to a total of 25 per cent (\$15.5 million).

The Posts and Postal Savings Corporation was a five per cent shareholder in Teleyemen when it came under the General Telecommunication Corporation after 13 years of Yemen-British partnership.

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IHI GLOBAL I

This health program plan offers maximum cover per person per policy year of USD1,800,000 for hospitalization, day-care treatment, maternity cover childbirth, cover for newborn children, home nursing and outpatient treatment with optional covers for medical evacuation & repatriation, dental, critical illness, and personal accident. Annual premium payable per age.

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- Cost of repatriation of dead body up to a maximum of Saudi riyals Three Thousand Five Hundred

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To achieve the above goals UNDP is inviting motivated and talented young people who are interested in an international career in development and who have a passion to make a difference to the world's poor, to submit their application to the Leadership Development Programme (LEAD). The LEAD Programme provides qualified individuals exciting opportunities to hone their knowledge and skills, serving as development practitioners while contributing to UNDP's work.

Interested candidates must share the UN values and ideals, have a strong commitment to development, be able to listen to and understand the ideas and concerns of the people we serve, mobilize and share knowledge and resources that inspire and catalyze development, and be able to communicate and work strategically and effectively with others to achieve results. Geographical mobility and willingness to serve in difficult country locations will be critical to selection.

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- Proficiency in English and at least one of the following languages: Arabic, French, Spanish, and Russian.
- 2-3 years relevant work experience, in development, crisis/post conflict management, consultancy work (particularly in the public sector), work in developing countries, management in a multicultural context.

Application deadline – 31 January 2005. For on-line application and more information on the LEAD Programme visit: www.undp.org/ohr/lead.

While on-line applications are encouraged, those applicants who do not have access to the internet may mail their application to the LEAD programme, 1 UN Plaza, Room 1810, New York, NY 10017, USA.

English now, Arabic later

Yemeni youth newsletter is a hit

BY PETER WILLEMS
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

During his visit to his native country, Alaa Qasem, who is currently a college student in Canada, took advantage of his time in Yemen to promote the online newsletter Shabab Yemeni, or Yemeni Youth.



Alaa Qasem, Editor of the online newsletter Shabab Yemeni. (YTphoto by Peter Willems)

Shabab Yemeni, which can be found on the website of Yemeni Students Association Abroad (www.yaaa.org), was established in May 2004 and aims at helping to encourage the youth in Yemen to be involved in positive changes for the future of the country.

"Our objective is not for the newsletter just to be read, but for the Yemeni youth inside Yemen to see what the activities of the youth outside the country are and what resources have been given to them," said Qasem, Editor of Shabab Yemeni and a student at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology in Calgary.

"We are hoping that the youth in Yemen will become more active and contribute to positive changes for the development of the country."

Most of the members of his organization are Yemeni college students in Canada and others living in England and Yemen. And one reason Qasem started the newsletter is because half of the Yemeni population is made up of the younger generation which is less than 15 years old.

"We noticed that the Yemeni society is

getting younger and that the Yemeni youth are in need of more resources," he said. "Somebody should help to bring the resources and encourage them to become more active."

"We are involved in filling the gap, such as using ideas, concepts, and ideas of projects that could be carried out by the youth in Yemen. From our experience around the world, we can give what we have learned to the youth to get involved in developing the country."

One of the sections of the Shabab Yemeni is *A Yemeni Abroad* which talks about a Yemeni sharing experiences liv-

ing overseas and includes positive experiences, difficulties one might have to face, and suggestions to other Yemenis planning to spend time in other countries.

Another part of the newsletter, titled *Yet Another Youth Organization*, which offers information about other youth organizations based in other parts of the world. It focuses on the purpose of the organizations, how to get involved in them and ways to use them as models to start other youth organizations in Yemen.

The Free Zone is analysis, and often constructive criticism, of what is happening in the Arab world, the Muslim world or Yemen itself.

Small Actions...Big Impact introduces ideas that are passed on to the younger generation in Yemen that can be projects that require no capital but are able to help the development of the country.

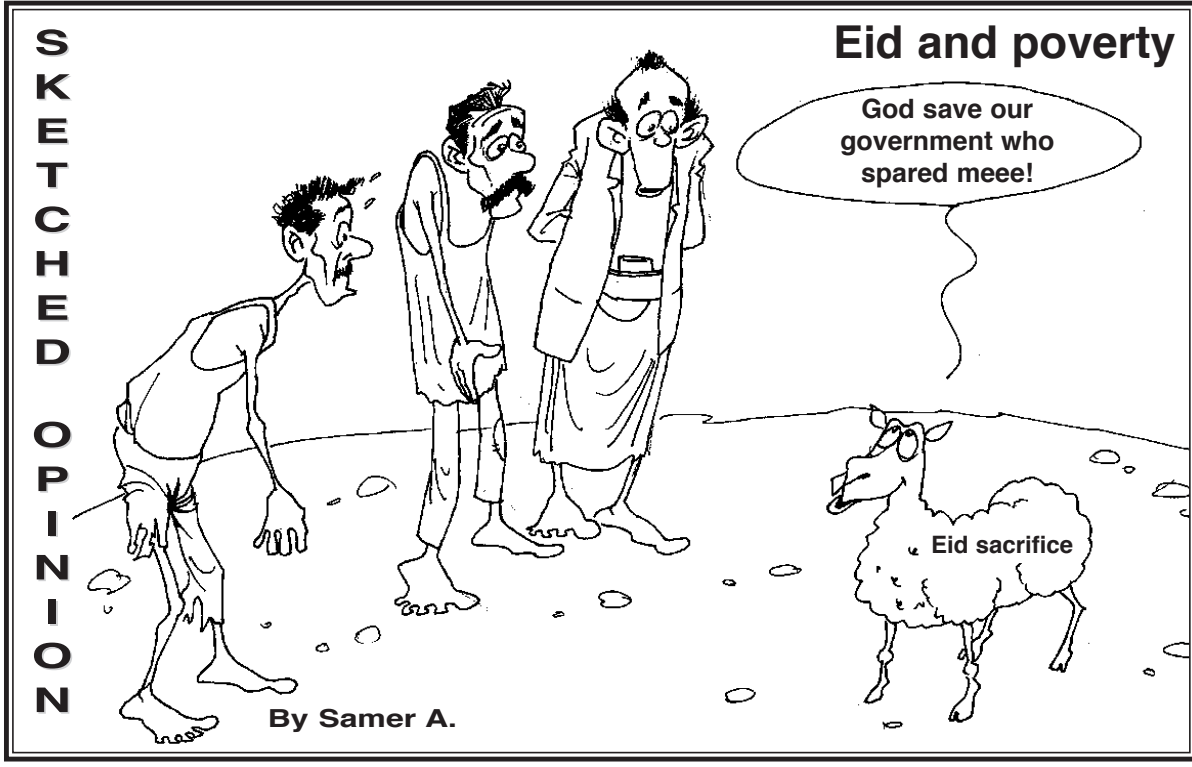
"We have found that there are limits and restraints in Yemen for the youth to generate useful projects," said Qasem. "*Small Action...Big Impact* focuses on small projects that would not require establishing an entity, and the small projects could break through the restraints and possibly make a big difference in Yemen."

Qasem said that one of the primary targets of the newsletter, which is released on a monthly basis, is university students. "College students probably have more awareness of what our goal is and a better understanding of issues we are discussing," he said.

During his visit to Yemen, Qasem, whose family is originally from Taiz and has been studying information system development at the university in Calgary for two-and-a-half years, presented the organization's purpose and goals to students at a number of English language institutes in Sana'a.

Qasem pointed out that since the newsletter is written in English, it has a limited audience. The plan, however, is to recruit additional staff members that can create an Arabic version which can reach out to the youth in Yemen on a larger scale. The newsletter also plans to create its own website and function independently within a year.

Shabab Yemeni has also set a goal to become the number one youth magazine in Yemen and the Middle East.



Time to celebrate, but ... Eid is hard on the pocketbook

FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Yemeni people are sticking to traditions and customs, despite economic woes, to meet Eid. Many know that al-Adha Eid this year 2005 is approaching with heavy burdens due to their lower income levels, and the prices of the merchandise, clothes, and other driving costs between the towns and the capital are rising highly.

Here's a couple of comments from average citizens.

Mr. Abdullah Sultan said that the first thing shocking the youth in this Eid is the prices rise of the necessities of his wedding especially the clothes, furniture, and the rental of the hall for celebrating.

The Yemeni families used to carry out their sons celebratins, and daughters in the religious Eids, as the marriage is part of the community ethics. Despite the official instructions not to overspend in wedding parties, and the Yemeni families are directed to facilitate the marriage of the female and male youths, the wives dowries are still going higher.

One youth, Farhan Ali al-Shareef, says that his marriage to a young girl will cost him approx. YR 1.6 million, which has been paid to the family of wife, plus YR 400,000 for his marriage party held in a humble hall hired for YR 150,000.

He adds that the necessities of the marriage in the Eid will add more burden on the Yemeni family, besides the requirements. On top of all is the cost of the sheep or a goat to be slain.

Many of the Yemeni families sons who are working in the capital look to the holiday of Eid-al-Adha as a joy and chance for them to go to their towns and villages for visiting their families and relatives which matter. That costs them more monies to spend on their travel and transportation charges, besides the presents they used to give to their families.

By the prices-rise of the consumable materials and clothes, the people of limited income will be affected by the same. So, the laborers in the free markets prefer to stay in the capital where most of them get satisfied by saying "Eid is the Eid of the Health-being well."

On the other hand, the richer people go to the coastal towns for celebrating the Eid holiday, meanwhile, their sons attend vociferous wedding parties that the poor people look at it as overspending phenomena and dowry expensiveness.

Despite the foregoing, still there is a common denominator shared by the rich and the poor people equally i.e. their visiting to their families, the kindness among them, and their assistance to the needy ones.

Meanwhile, their children are enjoying the Eid cheerfulness besides the financial grants that they receive for buying the necessities of the Eid such as electronic games and fire-works.

As-Said folkloric songs

BY NASSER ABDULLA NASSER SALEH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

The customs and traditions of every society have deep roots, often stretching back centuries. Yemen is marked with a unique heritage, and culture, one remarkable element of which are its folkloric songs. These songs differ from place to place.

As-Said, situated in Wadi Yeshbom in Shabwa is endowed with rich folkloric works and traditional songs are still handed down from one generation to another. They are often chanted during marriages and farming opportunities.

At weddings, the songs are repeated by the women and girls on the behalf of

bride through the performances of Al-Hiddan, Ash-Shareh, As-Samareh and As-Syar or Az-Zafih, and are all associated with dancing and drumming. Performances of Ash-Shareh, As-Samareh, Al-Gabalieh, Ad-Dan, and Az-Zamil, are sung by the men on the behalf of bridegroom.

During the harvest season, the songs are repeated by the farmers as they crush large blocks, and plough the earth. The songs are also repeated as the fruit of the Nabk-tree is picked, as grass is mowed in the fields, as water is drawn from wells, as wheat is ground, and during Eid. Chanting the songs helps time pass quickly, and relieves fatigue.

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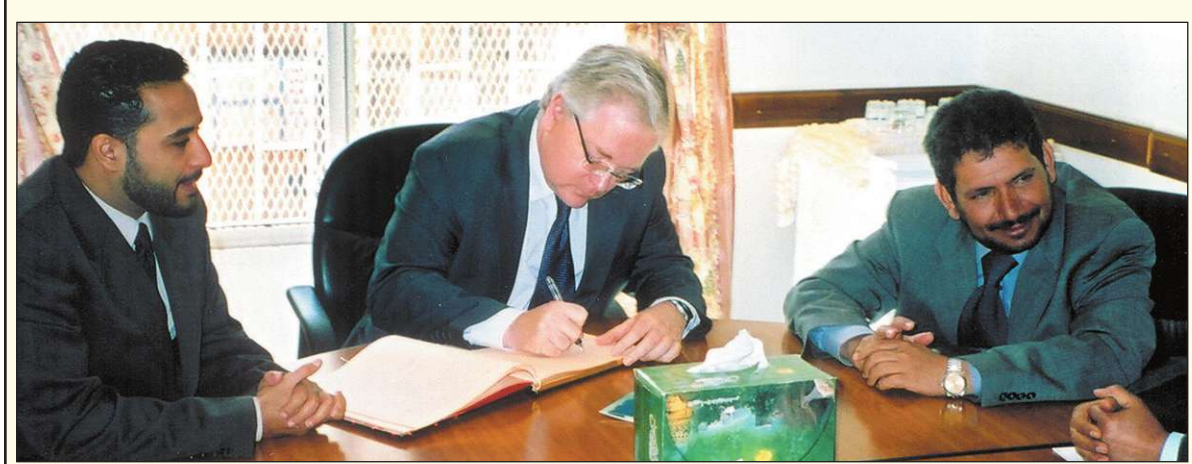
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Psychiatric Hospital concludes 40-day course



Under the auspices of Al-Shura Council Chairman Abdulaziz Abdulghani, the Psychiatric Hospital in Sana'a concluded the fourth course in the field of Psychiatric Nursery. The course lasted from Dec.4, 2004 to Jan.14 2005 in cooperation with the Embassy of Saudi Arabia.

The concluding ceremony started with the recitation of some verses from the Holy Quran and then a welcoming speech was delivered by Chairman of the Board of Directors at the Hospital Dr. Hamid Zeyad.

In his speech Dr. Zeyad pointed out the support offered by HE President Saleh as well as the health services offered by the Hospital to those psychiatric patients.

Dr. Ahmad Makki Al-Shura Council member delivered a speech on behalf of Abdulaziz Abdulghani to conclude the ceremony.

Top students and talented as well as other participants numbering up to 63 received recognition certificates and in-kind prizes at the end of the ceremony.

The course aimed at upgrading the level of health services and training specialists in all the Yemeni governorates.

The ceremony was attended by a number of personalities of distinction as well concerned representatives from the British Embassy based in Sana'a.

After the ceremony was over, Dr. Fahmi Al-Hakimi General Manager at the hospital noted: "the course comes in the framework of the comprehensive development adopted by the political leadership represented by HE the President Saleh.

For the purpose of deepening such concept, the policy of the hospital aims to improve the level of performance and upgrade the standard of health services.

The course was funded by the Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Sana'a.

Prior to this, three courses were held, two of which in cooperation with the British Embassy in Sana'a and the other one was sponsored by the Islah Charitable Society.

Expected outcomes of the course are as follows:

- Increasing the realm of knowledge on the part of nurses and trainees on how to treat psychiatric patients.
- Improving the nursery experience of the participants.
- Raising the awareness of nurses in dealing with psychiatric patients.
- The exchange of experience between workers in this field.

Brady Leads Patriots Into AFC Title Clash with Steelers

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Tom Brady threw for one touchdown and ran for another while the New England Patriots's defense shut down Peyton Manning and the high-powered attack of the Indianapolis Colts to claim a 20-3 playoff victory Sunday.

The win sends the defending Super Bowl champion Patriots into the AFC championship game for the third time in four years, traveling to the Pittsburgh Steelers, who advanced with a 20-17 overtime triumph over the New York Jets Saturday.

For the Colts and Manning, their twice MVP quarterback, it was a bitterly frustrating end to a record season.

Manning, who had one of the finest campaigns in NFL history and set a record for touchdown passes in a season with 49, could not find the end zone as a ferocious New England defense held the fourth highest-scoring team of all time to a single field goal.

"Our defense made this game," said Brady after improving his playoff record to a perfect 7-0. "Holding to three points one of the best offenses in NFL history is something special."

A clash featuring two of the most explosive offenses in the league failed to produce the expected fireworks as stingy defenses combined with cold, difficult conditions in snowy Foxboro to blunt the high-powered attacks of both teams.

Winning streak

The Patriots, who have not lost at home in more than two years and extended their winning streak to 20



New England Patriots running back Corey Dillon (R) runs away from Indianapolis Colts defender Bob Sanders (21) during the third quarter of their AFC Divisional playoff game in Foxboro, Massachusetts, January 16. Reuters

games stretching back to December 2002, moved the ball effectively in the opening half behind Brady but settled for two second-quarter Adam Vinatieri field goals to take a 6-3 lead.

New England appeared to score a touchdown in the second quarter when Corey Dillon twisted his way into the end zone to cap a 16-play drive.

But the touchdown was called back for offside, forcing the Patriots to settle for a Vinatieri 24-yard field goal.

New England's injury-riddled defense did superbly to shut down Manning and the NFL's top-ranked

offense, limiting Indianapolis to a Mike Vanderjagt 23-yard field goal on the last play before the intermission.

With 90 seconds remaining in the third quarter, Brady capped a 15-play drive by hitting David Givens with a five-yard touchdown to make the score 13-3.

Brady underlined his Super Bowl MVP credentials on the next possession by marching the Patriots 94 yards before finishing off the drive with a one-yard touchdown plunge to close out the scoring and put the game out of reach.

Favourites Real without Raul for King's Cup clash

MADRID, Jan 17 (Reuters) - Favourites Real Madrid will be without talisman striker and captain Raul when they host second division Valladolid in the second leg of their King's Cup third round tie on Wednesday.

A Real team packed with reserve players were held to a 0-0 draw by Valladolid in the first leg last week, with England striker Michael Owen making his first start under new coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo.

"The game against Valladolid was complicated for everyone," Owen said on the Real Madrid website on Monday. "If Ronaldo, Figo, Zidane and company are not on the pitch it is hard to play to the same level as when they are."

As well as Raul, out with a bruised back, Real will be without attacking right back Michel Salgado, who strained a knee ligament in Sunday's 3-1 league win over Real Zaragoza, which kept Madrid within seven points of leaders Barcelona.

Spanish international midfielder Guti returned to training on Monday after a bout of 'flu and will contest a place with new signing Thomas Gravesen.

The Danish international received a rapturous welcome from Madrid fans when he came on in the second half of Sunday's game.

In other King's Cup ties this week, Primera Liga side Athletic Bilbao need

to turn around a 2-1 deficit from the first leg against third division Lanzarote.

Third division giant-killers Gramanet, who took the scalps of Barcelona and Levante in the previous rounds, are favourites to record another

upset after beating second division Lleida 2-0 at home in the first leg.

In the only all-Primera Liga clash, Osasuna carry a 2-0 lead over Getafe into the second leg. Top-flight strugglers Numancia need to overturn a 1-0 result against second-division Elche.



Rusedski exorcises demons with Bjorkman win

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Greg Rusedski has exorcised a few demons by beating Swede Jonas Bjorkman 2-6 6-4 6-0 7-6 to reach the second round of the Australian Open for the first time in three years.

The 31-year-old Briton, who was eliminated in the first round last year soon after it was revealed he had failed a drugs test — an offence of which he was later cleared — recovered from a slow start on Tuesday to

register the win in two hours, 43 minutes.

Rusedski hit nine double faults but also sent down 14 aces to clinch victory, winning the fourth-set 9-7 in a tiebreak.

Having fought his way back up the rankings in the second half of 2004 to his present position of 48, Rusedski said the fight to clear his name had helped make him a stronger player.

"Having gone through what I had

to go through last year and the year before that with the injuries, you're either going to get weaker and disappear and fall off the planet, which I could have done when I was 168 in the world," he said.

"But I decided I was going to fight back and got to the top 50, which I think is one of my best accomplishments as a professional tennis player.

"I think it's made me stronger. I'm going to enjoy it and give everything

I can to this game.

"This is the first major I've actually been able to prepare for in two years.

"The last two years, with everything happening last year and then the previous year having the two surgeries, I actually had my first real chance to prepare properly for a major."

The former U.S. Open runner-up next plays either second seed Andy Roddick or Georgian Irakli Labadze.

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علي عبدالله صالح

وذلك بمناسبة حلول عيد الأضحى المبارك
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Family of China's Zhao forgoes state funeral: source

BEIJING, Jan 18 (Reuters) - The family of purged Communist Party chief Zhao Ziyang has decided to forgo a state funeral, sparing China's leaders a sensitive decision on whether to hold a high-profile ceremony that they fear could trigger protests.

Zhao, toppled for opposing a military crackdown on protests for democracy on Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989, died at 85 in a Beijing hospital on Monday after suffering multiple strokes.

In a sign of official nervousness that his death could trigger a wave of sympathy, plainclothes police barred his former aide, Bao Tong, from paying his respects on Tuesday and tightened security around Tiananmen Square and near Zhao's courtyard home, where the deposed leader lived under house arrest for 15 years.

Newspapers relegated Zhao's death to brief reports on inside pages, reflecting the concern among China's leaders that the sensitive mourning period could lead to an outpouring of public sentiment and spark protests.

State television and radio have kept silent on Zhao's death.

The government stood by its decision to suppress the 1989 protests and made clear Zhao's death would not spur a re-evaluation of a movement condemned as "counter-revolutionary" — or of Zhao himself.

"The political disturbance and the problem of Zhao himself has already passed. What happened in 1989 has reached its conclusion," Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan told a news conference.

"We will insist firmly and unshakably on our own road. Nothing will be changed."

The Zhao family helped to ease pressure on the leadership by deciding on a low-key ceremony.

"Zhao's family has decided not to ask the government to arrange a state funeral," said a source close to the family who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"They are going to do it at home. A hall of mourning was set up at home last night," the source said. "An invitation has been extended to friends and the public as well."

Plainclothes police stopped Bao, the most senior official jailed for the Tiananmen protests, from paying respects to his late mentor when he



China's purged Communist Party chief Zhao Ziyang poses for a photo at home in Beijing in this file photo taken in the Autumn of 2002. Zhao Ziyang, toppled as China's Communist Party chief in 1989 for opposing an army crackdown on protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, died in hospital on Jan. 17, after suffering multiple strokes, a source close to the family said. He was 85. REUTERS

tried to leave his home, his family said.

His wife, Jiang Zongcao, was knocked to the ground in a scuffle and taken to hospital for treatment of an injured back, the couple's daughter, Bao Jian, said by telephone.

"Showcase of shame"

In an essay on Monday, Bao charged that China had attempted to "erase Zhao from history", saying the effort to keep him from the public revealed the party's weakness and describing his house arrest as "a showcase of shame".

Scores of police fanned out around Tiananmen Square on Tuesday, fearful of any disturbance in China's symbolic political heart that was the scene of the student-led demonstrations that were crushed by the army on June 3-4, 1989. Hundreds died.

Two large buses and a small satellite dish guarded by paramilitary police were in a cordoned-off area near the Monument to the People's Heroes, around which students gathered in April 1989 to mourn the death of deposed reform-minded party chief Hu Yaobang.

Newspapers placed Zhao's brief obituary on inside pages. The party mouthpiece, People's Daily, ran it next to the highly popular weather map.

The reports were based on a brief



A Chinese worker raises red flags at the Monument to the Peoples Heroes at Beijing's Tiananmen Square Jan.17. Zhao Ziyang, toppled as China's Communist Party chief in 1989 for opposing an army crackdown on the Tiananmen Square democracy protests, died in hospital on Monday, his family said. He was 85. REUTERS

dispatch issued by the official Xinhua news agency hours after he died. News of Zhao's death on CNN and BBC were blacked out in China.

In contrast, the recent death of Song Renqiong, a former member of the party's powerful Politburo, was afforded front-page treatment, a photograph and a commentary. At a state funeral, President Hu Jintao paid respects to Song's family.

It remains to be seen if unrest will erupt. Older Chinese recall Zhao and the Tiananmen Square crackdown vividly. Younger generations have grown up reading newspapers void of news of the purged party chief and are unfamiliar with the events of 1989.

China's leaders are walking a delicate tightrope, hoping to get through the traditional mourning period without building up Zhao's passing while they decide whether to attend in person.

Vice President Zeng Qinghong, in charge of party affairs, rushed to Zhao's deathbed on Monday.

The choice was less clear-cut for Premier Wen Jiabao, whose position

is far more sensitive since he accompanied Zhao to the square when he made his tearful plea to students to leave — a day before martial law was declared.

"They're in a difficult position. They can't have too big a ceremony, but they can't have a small one either," said one Chinese analyst on condition of anonymity.

Yemeni agate's random beauty

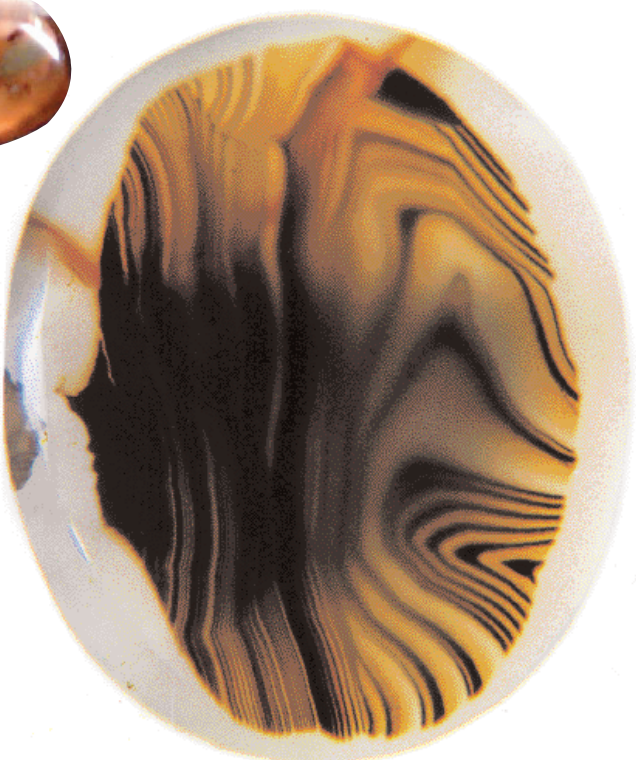
By YASSER AL-MAYYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Agates are the most scarce, beautiful and best gemstones available in the nature. Its solidity and strength are considered the fourth in sequence after the diamond and corundum, but the Yemeni agate is distinguished by the often-paint like patterns within it. The pictures in the stones can sometimes be bird, animals, people, or mountains.

Old Sana'a is the main center for buying and selling the Yemeni agate.

Tourists keenly purchase agate rings and necklaces as gifts for their families, or to sell in their own countries.

Mr. Ali Ahmed Musleh al-Sayyadi, an immigrant Yemeni in the Emirates tells the Yemen Times that he has seen pieces that look to hold the image of the Virgin Mary, or the word Allah.



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