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# YEMEN TIMES

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## The government offers 183 islands to potential investors:

# 2005: Year for tourism

### Yemen Times Staff

In a move to emphasize Yemen's commitment to make the year 2005 the year for a booming tourism sector, the government had offered 183 islands in the Red and Arabian Seas and in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean to investors willing to use the fascinating natural beauty and strategic location to establish tourist projects.

### Unique offer to investors

The offer, which was declared in an international conference last December exposed the spectacular potential of the islands and pledged to offer all sorts of facilities to Arab or foreign investors willing to take advantage of this offer.

The General Manager of the Yemeni Islands Development Authority, Dr. Yahya Al-Kainai said that the offer was huge in magnitude and constituted an excellent opportunity to make good profit from investing in pioneer projects in the 183 islands. "Great investment potentials are available in tourism, fishery, sea life, industry, trade, transport, agriculture, livestock, electricity, water, communication, digital messaging, and monetary services," Dr. Yahya said.

Furthermore, the government has also pledged to establish a special investment oriented bank in the Island of Socotra and help establish competitive and free market that would provide many options for investors willing to invest in the island. It is hoped that this step will also help provide the inhabitants of Socotra and other regions with thousands of job opportunities.

### Some challenges ahead

However, the main challenge that would confront any investor who wishes to seize the opportunity is the lack of any infrastructures in the 183 islands offered. Furthermore, transportation back and forth the mainland would have to be arranged on a privately funded basis, as there are no public services in this

respect. This creates a stumbling stone for many willing investors. The government however is studying the possibility of creating partnerships and common solutions with investors to overcome this difficulty.

### Zuqar and Hunaish islands

The Eritrean occupation of Zuqar and Hunaish islands in 1998 had sabotaged the Zuqar islands project, which was supposed to have been in advanced stage by now. It was started by a UK company that had realized the great potentials in transforming the islands into a tourist haven with an advanced and modern infrastructure.

The government hopes that similar initiatives would now be reborn and implemented in Hunaish and Zuqar islands, which would set the stage for other investors to do similar projects in other islands scattered around Yemen.

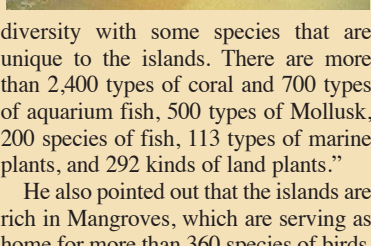
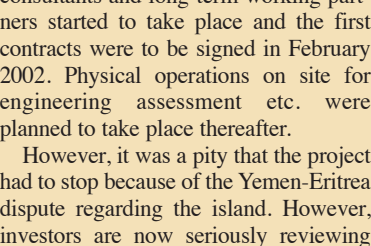
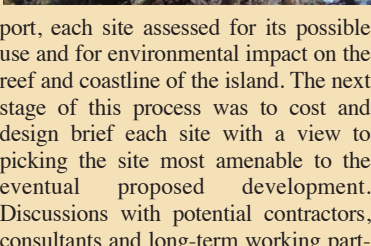
### Infrastructure projects planned

The Yemeni Islands Development Authority has declared that a plan is currently being drafted to carry out a number of infrastructure and service projects in the Kamaran-Zuqar-Hanish Archipelago in the Red Sea similar to those already being implemented in Socotra Island in the Indian Ocean. The projects would include the building of marine services and airports, hospitals, schools, ground transportation routes, electricity, and communication services.

### Remembering Jabal Zuqar project

Jabal Zuqar project was going to be one of the largest tourism projects in Yemen's history if it were not for the Eritrean occupation in 1998. British company Aztec Island Development Ltd started structuring to enable the study, finance and management of Jabal Zuqar (Zuqar) Island Resort project in the Red Sea off the West coast of Yemen. Studies have been conducted over the last two years and the pre-build study was due to be finished in 2002.

Visits to the island by consultants and company representatives have identified on Jabal Zuqar sites for port facilities, airport location, development sites for construction of hotels, villas, marinas, logistics and supply sites. A visit by Philip Lacey of Global ports has identified four sites for cruise ships and small cruisers as well as a supply and facilities



port, each site assessed for its possible use and for environmental impact on the reef and coastline of the island. The next stage of this process was to cost and design brief each site with a view to picking the site most amenable to the eventual proposed development. Discussions with potential contractors, consultants and long-term working partners started to take place and the first contracts were to be signed in February 2002. Physical operations on site for engineering assessment etc. were planned to take place thereafter.

However, it was a pity that the project had to stop because of the Yemen-Eritrea dispute regarding the island. However, investors are now seriously reviewing the possibility of reviving the project and having it implemented in the coming years.

### Features of Yemeni islands

The natural habitat and the spectacular beauty of the Yemeni islands' beaches make them an excellent attraction for tourists from Europe and other parts of the world. The Yemeni authorities are promoting the islands considering them a perfect environmental habitat for scientists to explore and for eco-tourists to enjoy. Among the attractions that the islands offer are diving, surfings, boat racing, swimming, and other water sports.

Dr. Al-Kainai confirmed this by saying that the islands "enjoy rich biological

diversity with some species that are unique to the islands. There are more than 2,400 types of coral and 700 types of aquarium fish, 500 types of Mollusk, 200 species of fish, 113 types of marine plants, and 292 kinds of land plants."

He also pointed out that the islands are rich in Mangroves, which are serving as home for more than 360 species of birds.

### Great demand by investors

According to Dr. Al-Kainai, there have been a number of requests delivered to the government to invest in those islands. Among them was a memo signed in December with an Australian company specialized in investments in tourism and energy. The company will start its projects in the islands of Kamaran and Socotra.

Furthermore, a number of other Turkish, Ukrainian and Arab companies have also expressed interest and they were told that their offers are being studied.

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# Yemeni citizenship in a transnational state

CHARLES SCHMITZ

“International pressure is turning Arab and Muslim governments against their people,” lamented Abdalla bin Hussein al-Ahmar in October of 2001 (al-Sahwa 2001). Indeed, over the last decade the Yemeni state adopted the IMF’s economic austerity program, allowed Israeli citizens to tour the country, cooperated with the American CIA assassination of al-Harithi in Marib, and allowed the Americans to open an office of the FBI in their embassy in Sana’a. Cooperation with the Americans has its benefits, of course, especially for the state leadership, but others, including Sheikh al-Ahmar, are less sure whether the Yemeni people are served by their state.

states to the threatening chaos of the absence of a state (Helman and Ratner 1993). As a result, authority over economic, political, and military functions of the nation-state in places like Yemen began to migrate upward in geographically wider political hierarchies composed of the international financial institutions, UN agencies, and the most powerful states of the world (Hardt and Negri 2000). Economists at the IMF and the World Bank, for example, design economic policy in the Republic of Yemen. They have managed to gain significant influence on political and administrative policy as well by linking these to economic performance. Yemen is implementing IMF monitored reforms of the civil service, a World Bank program for local governance, and reforms of the judiciary. In this sense, then state leadership in Yemen has fewer policy options today, even

was repeatedly asked to subordinate Yemeni law to American intelligence efforts. Things became tense when the FBI team wanted not only to conduct their own interrogations but to interrogate top Yemeni officials as well. American marines, stationed at the Adeni hotel where the team resided, symbolized American distrust of Yemeni security and Yemen’s violated sovereignty. When the Americans assassinated al-Harithi in Marib, the government characterized the attack as strengthening Yemeni sovereignty against foreign terrorism, but the opposition charged that the government had surrendered Yemeni sovereignty. The killing of Yemeni protesters against the American war in Iraq, by Yemeni security guarding the American embassy, only reinforced the impression that American interests dominated the Yemeni government. Even military official began to complain about imperious American behavior: “I was very optimistic when the US first said they would help Yemen build its security forces and coast guard,” said Yemeni Brig. Gen. Yahya al-Mutawakel. But “the result is not satisfactory. We have not yet made the Americans understand that they are here to help us fight for ourselves” (Bowers and Smucker 2002).

Ordinary Yemenis may forgive the government for relinquishing sovereignty to the Americans are strong and the Yemeni state is weak— a level headed realist recognition of stark differences in global power — but people’s daily experience is a powerful register of truth and reality. Eight years of IMF economic supervision has brought macroeconomic stability but precious little improvement in the lives of most Yemenis. In the words of economists at the World Bank, “GDP growth in Yemen was, however, driven mainly by factor accumulation (labor and capital) in the 1990s. Productivity growth was negative for most of the decade with only modest improvements after the implementation of economic reforms” (World Bank 2002, p. 1). This means that Yemeni income has grown very little and poverty has increased: Yemen’s GDP per capita has yet recover to levels achieved in the 1980’s and some 40% of Yemenis are living under the World Bank’s poverty line (World Bank 2002, p. ii). The modest improvements that have been achieved under IMF supervision are clearly contingent upon oil revenues, not improvements in the capabilities of the economy. Oil provides half to three quarters of the state

S budget, enabling the state to reduce deficits, but oil production is expected to decline significantly over the next ten years. Unless current trends reverse, Yemen’s macroeconomic stability will quickly unravel. Thus Yemen’s fate is still tied to oil prices and to annual rainfall, which determines the fortune of the half of the labor force that still works in agriculture.

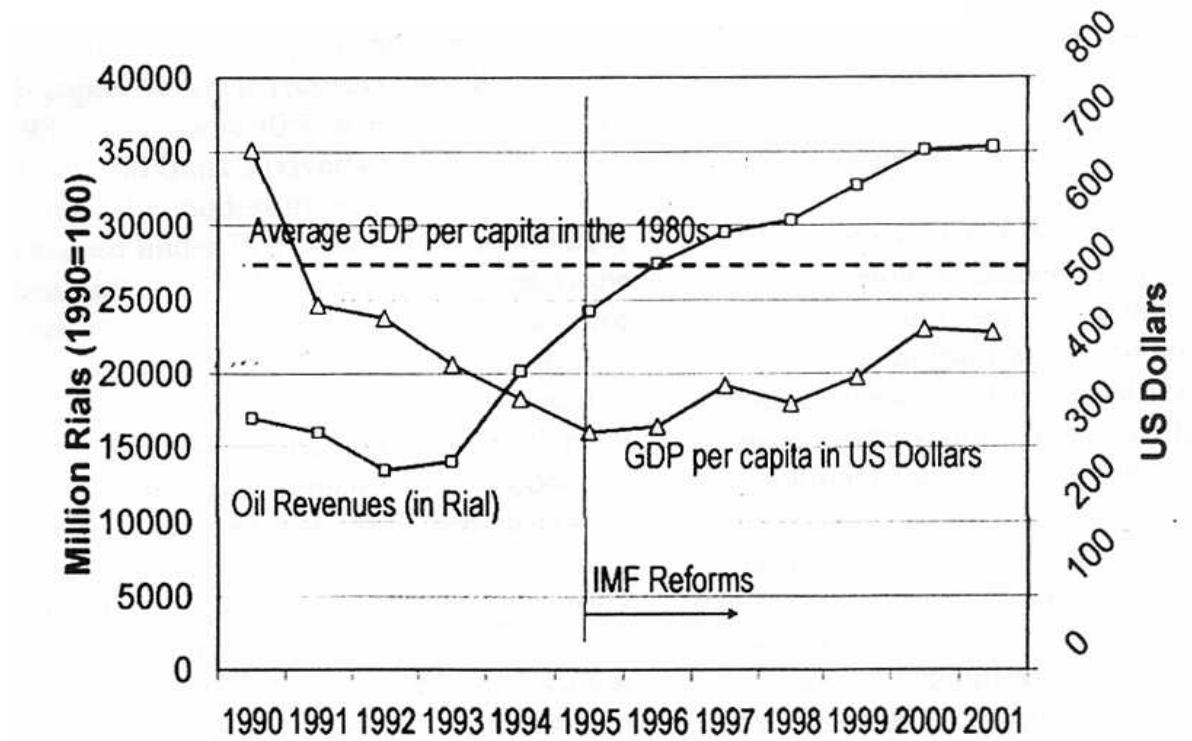
The solution, according to most economists, those at the IMF included, is to increase private investment in the non-oil sector where rising employment and hopefully increased productivity would have the greatest impact on average income. Investment in the non-oil sector in Yemen, however, has stagnated and the IMF charges that poor governance is the main obstacle to improved economic performance in the non-oil sector. This may be only part of

*The solution, according to most economists, those at the IMF included, is to increase private investment in the non-oil sector where rising employment and hopefully increased productivity would have the greatest impact on average income.*

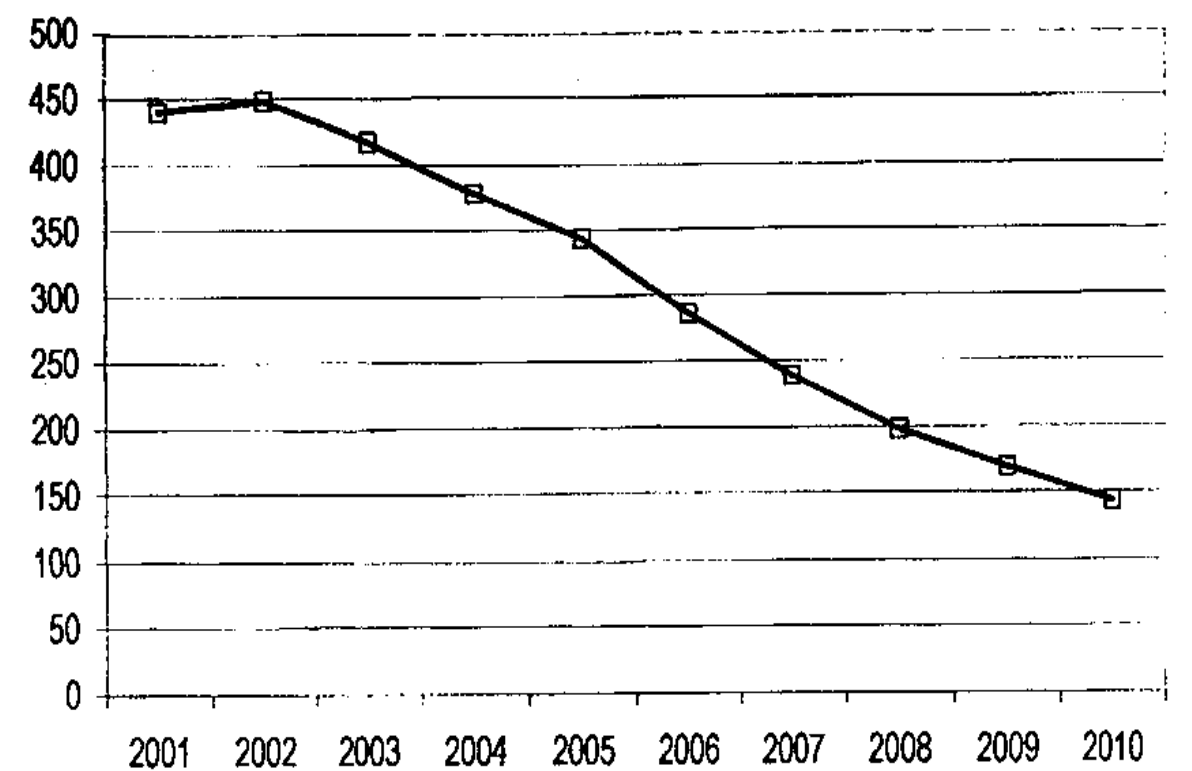
Al-Ahmar is alone in doubting the benefits of his nation-state. According to Jurgen Habermas, “...the growing interdependencies of a world society challenge the basic premise that national politics, circumscribed within a determinate national territory, is still adequate to address the actual fates of individual nation-states” (Habermas 2001, p. 70). For Habermas neither the neo-liberal celebration of the market’s erosion of politics nor the closing of political borders against “foreign” influences, as al-Ahmar suggests, suffices as a solution to the nation state’s decline. The way forward, he proposes, is in “self-steering” political structures that are de-territorialized, shifting the criteria of political inclusion away from the geographically assigned political rights of nation-states. The extension of the rights of citizenship to wider, non-territorial political groupings would extend the political community—those recognized with rights—to a wider circle of people whose fates are truly intertwined by political and economic relationships. But if new, deterritorialized democratic institutions are to be legitimate and provide the basic of real political solidarities, then “...the status of citizenship has to maintain a use-value” (Habermas 2001, p. 77). In countries such as Yemen, the combination of a paucity of tangible benefits from Habermas’ emergent “world society” and its long list of harsh demands make the value of world citizenship questionable, at best. Sovereignty in Yemen never achieved the Westphalian ideal of political exclusiveness; indeed, this ideal was hardly realized even in the most powerful of states. The small amount of sovereignty achieved in the period following the establishment of the republics, however, diminished in the 1990’s with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the American superpower’s attention shifted from threatening

though, ironically, state institutions in Yemen may have greater capacity. Most policies now come in templates of “good governance” and “economic adjustment,” and foreign experts oversee and evaluate policy implementation.

In Yemen, this “shared” governance is not questioned as long as it is perceived as serving Yemeni interest. When policies do not appear in the national interest, though, “shared” governance becomes a “violation of national sovereignty.” In Habermas’ terms, citizenship in world society ceases to “pay.” American and Yemeni cooperation in security and law enforcement has produced highly charged clashes between the government and political opposition over the meaning of sovereignty and national interest. In the late 1990s, the American military and the Yemeni government cautiously cultivated a security alliance that gave the Yemeni state greater capacity to police its borders and maintain security. American military aid was welcome and sought out by the Yemeni state in order to guarantee its military advantage within the country. When it appeared that the Yemeni government was implementing American rather than Yemeni policy, though, this military alliance came under suspicion. In April 2000 when the president of Yemen visited the Clinton White House, Israeli tourists suddenly appeared in Sana’a, and the White House praised the extension of human rights clauses of the Yemeni constitution to Israelis (White House 2000). Admitting Israelis clearly contradicted Yemeni and Arab League policy of withholding diplomatic ties until a full and just peace was achieved and the Yemeni opposition let loose a barrage of criticism. Then, in the investigation by the American FBI of the bombing of the USS Cole, the Yemeni government



Oil Revenues and per capita GNP



Average Barrels per Day (1000's) from existing wells

the problem. Certainly the lack of rule of law and weak institutional capacity in Yemen hinders private investment outside of oil, but the IMF’s bias towards macrostability and external openness may share some of the blame as well.

The primary goal of IMF/World Bank reforms is to provide a stable investment environment for capital, both domestic and foreign. In the IMF’s view, the primary tasks of the state are to improve physical infrastructure and “human” capital, liberalize trade, and let the global “invisible” hand — or the boardroom of multinational corporations — determine the fate of nations (World Bank 2002, p. 83). But recent research argues that openness is not the key correlate to economic growth. In cases of sustained economic growth and development the state fosters and guides investment — overcomes problems of “Coordination” in the terms of economists — in order to give the national economy the capacity to take advantage of global opportunities (Rodrik 1999). It is not a matter of closing the national economy, but of improving the terms through a coherent national investment strategy, upon which the national economy is integrated into global markets. The IMF tends to prefer a passive role for the state and to allow dynamism to arise from the private sector, rather than fostering a state-business partnership of the sort that Rodrik argues is necessary for real economic improvement. If this is indeed IMF policy, it is short sighted and reduces the likelihood that citizenship in Habermas’ “world society” pays for most Yemenis. The predictable result in Yemen will be suspicion of the global order, its American leaders, and their Yemeni counterparts.

## Yemen receives humanitarian aid

Yemen Times Staff

Yemen, one of the poorest countries in the world, has been allocated 2.53 million Euros of humanitarian aid by the European Commission. This aid will help the most vulnerable sections of the Yemeni population, in particular people living in shanty towns around cities, homeless children and refugees from the Horn of Africa.

The aid will be delivered by the ECHO, the Commission’s Human Aid Department and the projects themselves will be implemented by specialized UN agencies and non governmental organizations.

According to Louis Michel, the European Commissioner responsible for humanitarian aid and development, the humanitarian needs in Yemen are largely forgotten by the international media and the donor community. Because the Yemeni State has limited capacity to act, despite its development efforts, it is up to the European Commission to help the poorest and most vulnerable people to live in descent conditions and in dignity.

Thanks to the aid of the commission, almost 60,000 inhabitants of rural, particularly remote regions of Yemen will gain access to drinking water.

In the shanty towns around the capital Sana’a and the city of Taiz where the most marginalized communities live in conditions of extreme poverty, the commission will finance the building of drinking water systems and primary health centers that will serve more than 24,000 people. Accommodation and socio-educational support services will be offered to 650 children living and sleeping in the streets of Sana’a. As they are vulnerable to all the kinds of abuse, they have to defend themselves.

The funds allocated will also be used to increase the reception capacity of a camp on the southern coast to cope with the growing numbers of refugees arriving from Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia. Water distribution and sanitation facilities will be built.

Yemen is one of the World’s 30 least-developed countries. According to the United Nations, more than 45 percent of the 19 million Yemenis live under the poverty line, getting by with less than two dollars (1.54 Euro) per person per day. Almost a third of the Yemeni population and up to two-thirds of the rural population, do not have access to drinking water. The scope and quality of public health services is reduced. Consequently, more than one child in every ten dies before the age of five.

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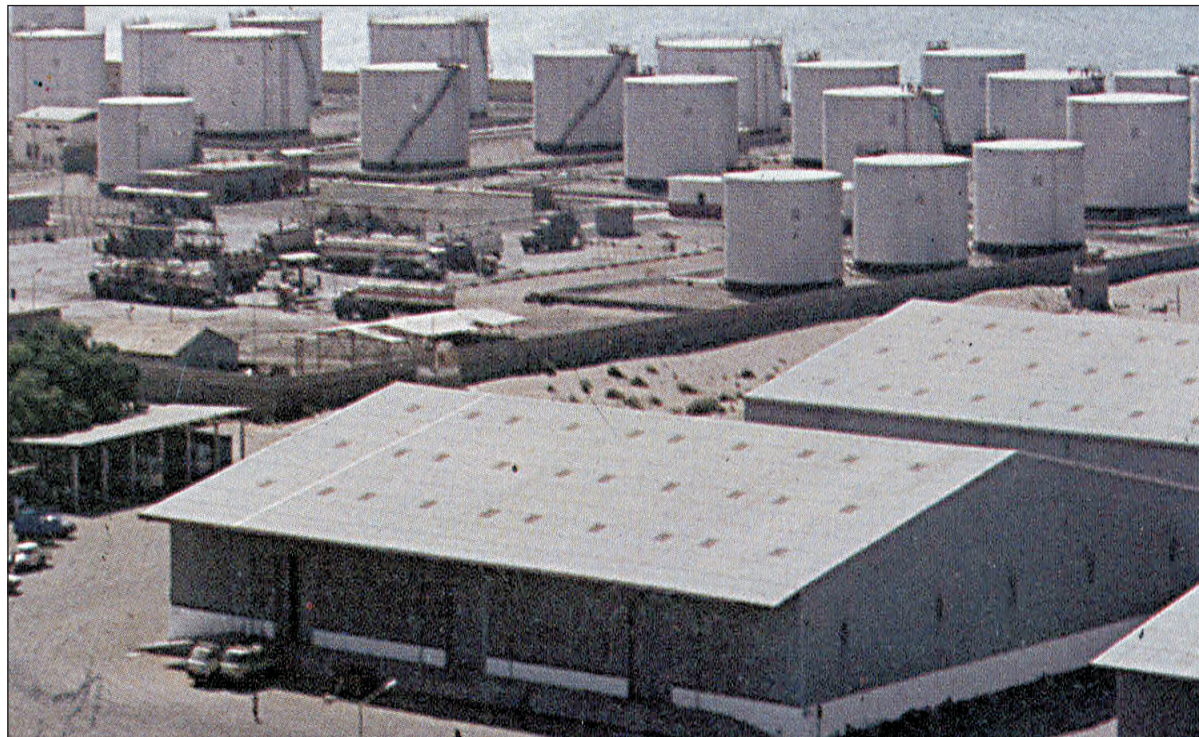
## 2005: Year for exports

BY ABDULAZIZ ABDULLAH  
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

To overcome the deficit in the commercial balance, which often reflects the gap between exports and imports, is the most challenging obstacle for a country, including Yemen. This is more important in our case since we depend mainly on crude oil as an export, yielding some 90-95% of the state's total exports during 1999-2002, while the remaining percentage represents other exports agricultural, fishery, and industrial.

The reliance on oil for revenues is very hazardous and it is very vital to stress the importance of formulating a strategy to develop exports of non-oil sectors and diversify our financial resources. We should always remember that any downward change in the price of oil would result in a real disaster, because the deficit rate will increase. The dire consequences will affect other economic areas such as the payment balance, inflation rate, and economic growth rate.

To avoid any economic results in the future resulting from unpredictable changes in the international oil markets, and to stop capitalizing on oil as the main and only export, we should focus on our non-oil exports. Why should not this issue be the priority of the government in 2005? And why should not 2005 be the year for exports with an executive



The government should cease to depend on oil, because this would lead to a real crisis in case oil price goes down or reserves get exhausted

program to deploy all capacities and powers to treat the conditions of exportation of non-oil product and identify hindrances to export growth in general.

For this suggested program to get attention from the government, it should be sponsored directly by the President himself. It is a very crucial matter. We need to avoid a setback similar to that of 1998 when oil prices

went down. Non-oil products should be encouraged, particularly given the fact of the inevitable membership in the

GAT agreement, and the Arab Free Exchange Area.

Here, we are sending a warning, setting forth the fact before the competent authorities in the government. We stress the importance of real partnership between the public

and the private sectors. If this is to be done, then we will get out safely from the economic depression from which many sectors suffer. If this decline persists, many productive establishments will close down and unemployment will increase. Consequently, economic and social conditions will deteriorate with poverty becoming more severe, and crime prevalent.

## Yemen shifts to big projects & restructuring

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen is endeavoring to correct the defects in its national economy that it has been suffering from since 1995. The government has presented a new effort aimed at developing trade activity so that it is more in line with regional and world standards. It also intends to develop its use of technology and human resources.

The government remains committed to implementing economic reforms and continuing to restructure state institutions to increase growth. The reforms include wage reforms, financial and administrative decentralization, and reforms to the taxation and customs

systems. The government also intends to attract investments to industrial zones for Hudeidah, Aden and Mukalla. It is hoped that this will help Yemen's accession to the World Trade Organization.

The Yemeni government has made it clear that what has been achieved for Yemen of those reforms came at a time when Yemen's economy was deteriorating rapidly. It defends its reforms by explaining that if they had not been implemented, the economy's conditions would have been much worse as the country's inflation was at about 77 per cent, the budget deficit at 17 per cent, unemployment at 22 per cent and indebtedness at about \$US11 billion. Then, after carrying out reforms, the deficit has dropped to between 3 and

3.5 per cent, inflation to between 8 and 10 per cent, unemployment has dropped to about 17.5 per cent, and the foreign debt than half of the previous figure.

Freedom of the market should play a pivotal role in construction of the national economy because it provides the opportunity for each citizen to contribute to building the country. The government must also work to reduce poverty and unemployment and working against corruption in state departments and institutions.

The objective must be to enhance economic growth by expanding the base of investment and by a commitment to comprehensive development and modernization of administration and institutions.

## New mechanism for investment projects

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The State Authority of Investment plans to increase its attention on promoting investment projects in Yemen to attract more Arab and international capital.

The Authority has given priority to strategic projects in areas such as tourism, and the sugar glass industries to increase local job opportunities.

Sources at the Authority say that work is under way to enhance their

computer systems to provide the statements and information required by investors.

The sources said the volume of Saudi investments in Yemen is estimated to be around \$US 800 million in the cement, hotel and hospital building industries, reflecting the development in economic and trade relations between the two countries and improvement of the climate of investment in Yemen.

A number of world construction companies are also competing for licenses for to build a railroad and

express roads in Yemen. Official sources told the Yemen Times that European, American and Polish companies are now conducting the necessary technical studies.

The sources also mentioned that the Authority is preparing the necessary statements and technical studies on roads and railroads in coordination with the Ministries of Transport and Public Works and have called on investors to benefit from the privileges, exemptions and guarantees that the investment law provides.

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Arab and foreign investors are attracted to Yemen which represents a lucrative environment with an investment law accommodating tempting guarantees and incentives.



## Words of Wisdom



Gentlemen, Yemen does not need more money! It needs a system. Yemen needs 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-Sagqaf (1951-1999)  
Founder of Yemen Times

OUR  
OPINION

## Censorship is back

Once upon  
a time ...

Once upon a time, as the editor of The Yemen Times, I didn't have to worry about the constructive, yet strong criticism that's in opinion articles published in this newspaper. Such articles resulted from my belief in the regime's commitment to democracy and freedom of expression.

Today I don't have that belief any more.

Once upon a time I used to refrain from removing an opinion piece that I knew would trigger some anger of the embassy of an Arab country. But I knew that tolerance and understanding would prevail. So I never removed them.

Today I have to remove them and inform the writer accordingly.

Once upon a time I used to allow my journalists to do investigative stories of grave sensitivity regarding the person of the president.

Today I wouldn't risk doing so, even if the authorities would suggest that the law would protect us.

Once upon a time we felt that the West and the US upheld ideals of press freedom and democracy. And Europe would convey its dismay and would support the struggle of journalists who may be subject to harassment or oppression.

Today I see that the press community is shocked, dismayed, and disappointed to see the passive response of the West, particularly in the case of the trial of Al-Khaiwani and the other non-governmental journalists.

Once upon a time I was optimistic about the future of my country's democracy and the increasing tolerance in freedom of expression.

Today I am pessimistic.

If you are asking why, then you must have not looked into the news lately.

For me and many other journalists, there is a growing belief that the golden age of Yemen's press is over. In fact, today we are today witnessing the darkest eras of Yemen's recent history in terms of press freedom.

Journalists and editors are more afraid than ever so as not to make the authorities angry and cause closure of newspapers, and the subsequent problems of that, which, besides the reading public losing out, included economic disaster for employees.

When I try to explain the reasons behind this unprecedented level of oppression, I find myself with many questions, but few answers. But I do know that with the ongoing trends continuing, we are destined to lose our professional standards in journalism and return to mere insignificant news providers, giving only half of the truth.

This is unjust to our readers, and part of the blame would be directed to the international community, particularly Western countries who have stood idle watching while a whole country's democracy is falling apart.

The Editor



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US spending makes others look good  
Loving America's  
over-indulgence

BY KENNETH ROGOFF

With the weak dollar hanging like the sword of Damocles over the global economy, almost everyone laments America's spend-thrift habits. But did it ever occur to anybody how hard Americans must work to make everyone else look good?

Thanks to America's gaping trade deficits, the biggest headache of every developing country finance minister nowadays is trying to keep his or her country's currency from going up too fast against the dollar. When was the last time that happened? Chronic debt-crisis countries from Mexico to Russia to South Korea are all fighting off capital inflows from investors looking for an exit as the dollar collapses.

Ordinarily, as the world comes out of a downturn and global interest rates rise, at least one or two emerging market countries suffers a spectacular blowup. Not likely this time, at least for the next year.

True, policy in some countries has improved markedly. Brazil and Turkey, for example, have each instituted market-friendly policies that have made their economies more flexible and growth more durable. But can the same be said for Mexico, where reform has stalled, or for Russia, where reforms have been reversed? America's reckless deficit spending is making all their currencies look like good investments for 2005.

So non-Americans should be more appreciative of America's deficits. Do people think it is easy for a 12-trillion-dollar economy to spend beyond its means year after year just to prop up other countries' reputations for stability? It isn't. Going deep into debt when you have that much money to spend takes a lot of hard work.

Start with the American consumer, who consumes everything on earth (helping the United States eat up 25%

of world oil production) but saves essentially nothing. Thanks to America's gold-plated financial system, its consumers can buy fancy cars with almost no down payment. They can borrow more and more each year against the value of their homes, and spend every cent. They can retire earlier and earlier on their smaller and smaller savings. It takes nerve and energy to live like that.

Of course, the US government does it share, too, and more. When President George W. Bush took office in 2001, he was staring at giant budget surpluses as far as the eye could see. It was hard work engineering a five-trillion-dollar deterioration in America's fiscal position.

Cutting taxes was easy, but hiking spending on virtually every program involves a lot of legislation. Sure, the decision to invade Iraq was a big help in pushing the country's finances off a cliff, but that is far from the whole story. So why is the world so ungrateful?

Maybe some Europeans and Japanese are upset that they have consistently earned such poor returns on their US investments. Part of the problem has been the sinking dollar, which makes dollar investments look bad when translated into yen or euro.

Part of the blame also lies with bad market timing. Many Europeans bought into the US stock market at its peak in 1999 and 2000, only to find themselves selling at steep discounts after the collapse of 2001.

The same happened to the Japanese in real estate. Japanese financiers bought up pricey trophy properties like Rockefeller Center in New York and the Pebble Beach Golf Club in California, and then had to sell later at rock-bottom prices. These investment failures have been great for Americans, who owe a lot less to foreigners than they would otherwise.

Unfortunately, this cannot go on forever. Foreigners are either going to start

earning much better returns in the US, pushing American debt levels into unsustainable territory, or else they will pull back and invest elsewhere. Either way, the dollar collapse has to continue.

So how low can the dollar sink? By my calculations, the dollar still needs to go down another 15% if the US trade deficit it to go back towards balance. Ideally, Asian currencies would rise much more than 15% while European currencies would rise less.

Unfortunately, there is a real danger that we may see the opposite, with the euro going to \$1.50 or beyond. Governments may try to resist the fall of the dollar, but in today's world of deep and fluid capital markets, they will not succeed indefinitely, even in Asia.

Moreover, although US policy is making everyone else look good for now, things might not be so comfortable if the dollar collapse leads to skyrocketing interest rates and a sustained global slowdown. Some of the countries that look so strong today may suddenly experience the kind of financial crises that they thought they had left behind.

Even if countries avoid the immediate blow of a dollar collapse, they still have to watch for a boomerang effect. Exchange rates have a nasty habit of overshooting their equilibrium values, then knifing back on countries, especially those who have been spending too much based on inflated income valuations.

OK, so maybe it is too soon for the world to start toasting America's insane consumption patterns. Even so, isn't it generous of the Americans to make everyone else look so sober and frugal, if only for the moment?

Kenneth Rogoff is Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Harvard University, and was formerly chief economist at the IMF.

## Abbas needs to stay moderate

## Palestine's new direction

BY DAUD KUTTAB

The victory of Mahmoud Abbas in the Palestinian presidential election poses a huge challenge to the Palestinian leadership. By being voted chairman of the PLO's executive committee hours after the death of Yasser Arafat, Abbas clinched the support of the organization that represents all Palestinians, including those in the diaspora. Popular election as President of the Palestinian National Authority gives Abbas the grassroots legitimacy to carry out his political program.

That program, while similar to Arafat's, differs in key ways. Abbas (also known as Abu Mazen) has been publicly and consistently critical of what he calls the "militarization of the intifada." Even before Arafat's death, Abbas argued that the use of force by militants weakens the Palestinian negotiating position. He stuck to this position throughout his electoral campaign, refusing the demands of hard-line Palestinian factions that he apologize for his previous statements.

Abbas conducts himself in a business-like manner, and he strongly believes in the rule of law and in the need for real civilian governance to assume preeminence in Palestinian politics. In this he also differs from Arafat, who believed that the revolutionary mindset must continue so as long as Palestinians lived under an illegal foreign occupation. Until liberation, there could be no business as usual.

By winning election on a clear anti-violence and pro-rule of law platform, Abbas has the mandate and the responsibility to carry out this policy.

He needs to make it clear to every armed Palestinian that there will be no tolerance for any unofficial group carrying arms or conducting military attacks from Palestinian territory.

In order to preserve national unity, Abbas will obviously need to use all his persuasive skills to convince radical groups (some in his own Fatah movement) to respect that approach. As chairman of the PLO, he will be under extreme pressure not to delegitimize the internationally sanctioned acts of resistance against Israeli military targets. In order to counter that pressure, he will have to show that a cessation of violence is in the higher interest of Palestinians.

Abbas will find it equally challenging to apply rule-of-law principles to a traumatized community that is reeling after nearly five years of violence, oppression, and draconian travel restrictions imposed by the Israelis. As in the issue of the militarization of the intifada, this is not a simple matter, as it concerns forces outside the control of Abbas and his government.

Nevertheless, internal policies will be of grave importance. The day-to-day lives – and livelihoods – of Palestinians need immediate improvement. The Israeli-built wall to the west of the West Bank means that Palestinian unemployment will continue to rise and living standards will continue to drop. To counter this, Abbas will have to seek external Arab and international support. The real need is to encourage investment, primarily from Palestinians and Arabs. But this is unlikely without major legal and administrative reforms, and, more generally, good governance and ironclad application of the rule of law.

The key to establishing civil order

is peace. No matter how persuasive Abbas is in convincing radical groups to put down their arms, a unilateral ceasefire will not last long if it is not mutual. The role of the Israeli occupation forces will thus be crucial in determining the success of Abbas's daunting mission. Indeed, the task that Abbas faces will become impossible if the Israeli policy of "targeted killings" is allowed to continue while Palestinian leaders are working seriously to put an end to acts of violence against Israelis.

Ultimately, the main agenda for the new Palestinian president in negotiations with Israel will be to push the Israelis to make good on their repeated international assurances that a viable contiguous Palestinian state is a realistic goal in the near future. But if left to Israelis and Palestinians alone, the goal of Palestinian independence within the 1967 borders of Palestine will most likely remain out of reach. The international community, led by the United States, must invest effort and political capital to realize this goal.

The new Palestinian president faces a challenging agenda and high popular expectations. Much will depend on how Abbas handles himself and how he governs. But the ultimate question is what Israel and the international community will do if Abbas fulfills his pledge to end anti-Israeli violence and apply the rule of law in a functioning democracy. Palestinians have chosen; now the world must do so as well.

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COMMON  
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

The children  
in all of us

It was a normal sunny but comfortable day in the vineyard gardens of one of the Rawdha village residents, just 6 kilometers north of Sana'a. The vines were almost dry lying there atop the pine wood branches laid out as bedding for them, awaiting their seasonal trimming to prepare them for the next annual crop. It was a small plot of land, but was fortunate enough to still have traditional ground surface well with a generous flow of water below that allows for pumping of two fillings for the two water cisterns that rose about a meter and a half above the surface of the well farmed land. Two children had entered the vineyards at their own discretion and found pleasure in sitting at the half meter wide rim of the stone and cement cistern at the interior plot near the old well itself. The two children, a boy and a girl, around the age of 9, were innocently playing the water in the full cistern with their hands. Because it was mid-winter the water was slightly cold, which brought coolness between their swaying fingers as they played with the water. At that quiet and peaceful minute, the little girl saw the relatively inattentive boy easy game for some fun as she saw it. She inched up to him slowly and gave him a little push into the full pool. At that age, it is hard to judge if the girl had acted under mischief prodding or simply wanted to frighten the boy. The girl is not known for being devilish in behavior and is friendly and not prone to conflict with her peers.

The pool was some 80 meters distance from the house overlooking the garden. Somebody in the house and in the adjoining small house where the boy's family lived, but the sister of the boy, aged 14 was the only person to reach the pool and make some futile attempts to get her younger. She was not able to swim herself so she tried to get her brother to hold on to a stick. By then, the younger brother was acting erratically; the relatively cold water and his sense of the pull of the water had overtaken any hope of responding to any efforts from a distance to pull him out. Luckily, a young boy of 13 had heard the commotion and his adrenalin managed to put enough energy to get him to the scene in the nick of time. He wasn't a great swimmer, but the kindness and good breeding he had acquired provided the stimulus that prompted the young boy to have all his thoughts around the helplessness he saw in the fragile helpless boy struggling to catch a breath any way he could. He jumped into the pool and managed to gather all the strength he could to push the drowning boy towards the edge of the pool where he could be helped by the drowning boy's sister to pull the boy out of the pool.

The drowning boy came from a poor day laborer's family and the girl who nudged him into the pool was a kin of the owners of the garden, who always came to her grandparents' house to play with the children. The drowned boy was one of the children she played with, because the little house that his family lived in had an entrance to the yard of the house.

The incident quickly raised the levels of the section of the family from which he came from and the mother of the boy rushed to hug him in appreciation of his courage and stamina and his great moment of pity and sympathy for her drowning son. This incident mended some differences that had arisen between the drowning boy's mother and the mother of the boy who saved his life just a few hours ago, over an issue that should not be of interest to any one in particular. The mother of the almost drowned boy went to apologize to the mother of the boy who saved her son's life (actually in her erstwhile dispute with the mother of the hero, she had been the one more transgressed). Nevertheless, events made her compelled to take the initiative and seek rapport with her former transgressor. The mother of the hero was so elated by her son's brave deed and the kindness he displayed and pity he showed for the drowning boy, although he came from the family of the woman that has raised her voice against his mother earlier that morning and she also turned her former anger at the drowning boy's mother to a sense of forgetfulness at all that transpired between the two ladies earlier that day. At that instance, maternal instinct had become a bridge between the two former disputing ladies and the realization that fate had brought their lives together to produce a mutual sense of mutual of maternal fulfillment that prevailed above all nonsensical tit for tat that might have arisen. Where human life is involved, nothing takes precedence and petty conflicts have no bearing in our feelings for one another.

Incidents like these truly bring back to the human mind a sense of rational reasoning that indeed human beings can make mistakes in their interaction with each other, but that no matter what irrelevant consequences from such mistakes, the overall approach to life is that human beings truly find greater reasons for mutual cooperation and understanding than conflict.

Moreover, children's behavior is quite often generated by the proper upbringing that their parents provide to their children and the social climate they engrain in their offspring's hearts.

One wonders if older human beings should start to take a closer look at how children interact and learn that any biases or engrained bigotry or class difference really do not matter to children. The drowned boy felt no grudges against the little girl that pushed him into the water. The generally pious character of the drowned boy's family did not generate any grunts against the girl who almost ended the life of their charming little boy, nor against her family, who had not been careful in making sure that their child daughter does not seek fun by possibly harming others. In the end, incidents like these show us that there is a really lot of the children in all of us. It is something we need to restore our sanity.



*Asia's post-Tsunami future*

# The world has never adjusted to change very well

BY FAN GANG, MICHAEL GARRETT, AND JEAN-PIERRE LEHMANN

There can be no underestimating the scale of the human devastation wrought by Asia's horrific tsunamis. Family members have been lost, homes destroyed, and livelihoods ruined. As is often the case in natural disasters, the poor are suffering the most.

And yet, even with damage to infrastructure such as road and rail links, the tsunamis' overall economic impact is expected to be minor. In the worst hit parts of India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, the immediate interior was unaffected, while the tourism and fishing industries – the lifeblood of wrecked

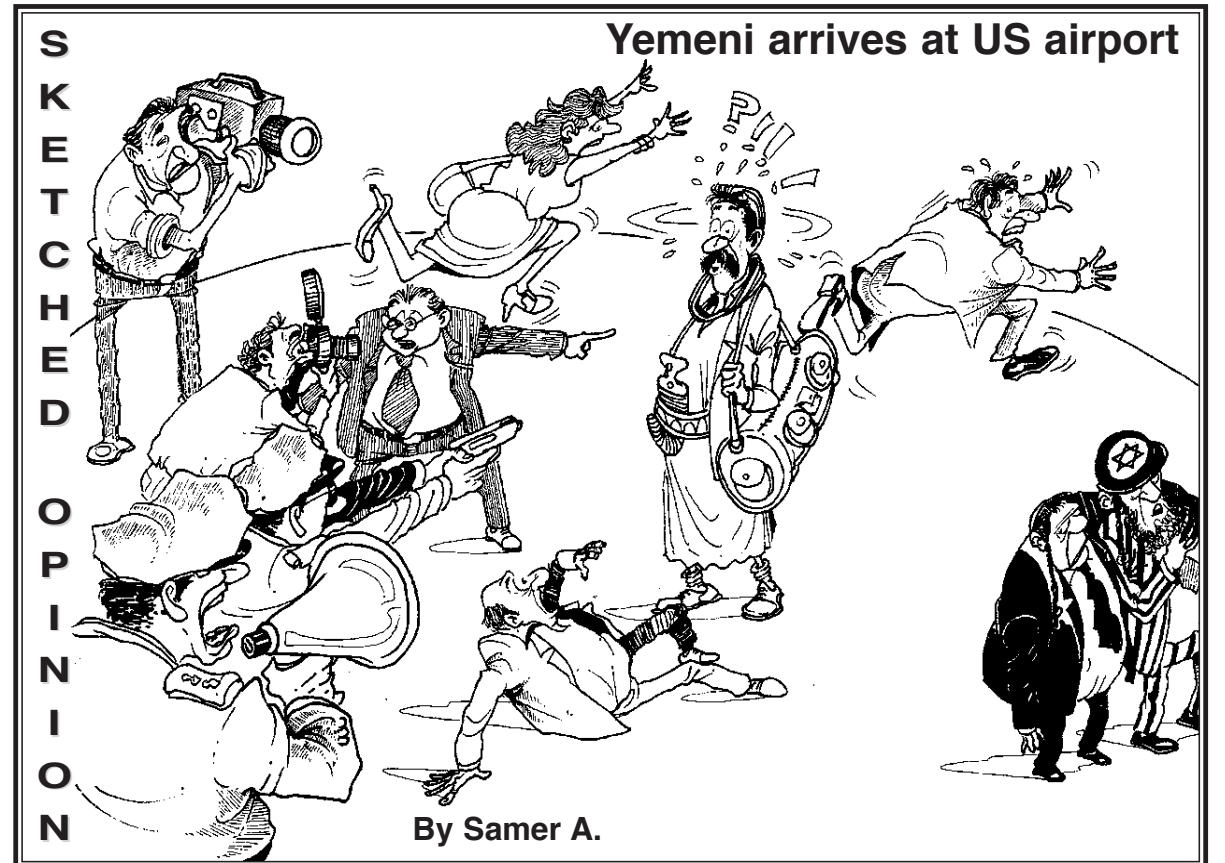
coastal areas – account for only a tiny share of these countries' GDP, as liberalizing reforms have fueled economic diversification and rapid growth.

It was not always this way. Historically, it has been difficult to convince Asians that international trade is not a zero-sum game, with Asia invariably the losers. This is one reason why, after Mao Zedong's communists triumphed in China in 1949 and other Asian nations gained independence, most Asian countries adopted protectionist inward-looking economic policies aimed at building domestic strength, keeping the "imperialists" out, and achieving self-reliance.

Historical experience incites this suspicion. In 1820, Asia's share of global GDP was 60%, with China accounting for

slightly more than half. That was two decades before the first Opium War. With the emergence of truly global world trade over the ensuing century and a half, Asia's economic dominance withered. By 1950, China's share of world GDP had fallen to under 5%, while all of Asia accounted for just 18%, the biggest chunk of which was attributable to Japan, despite its defeat in WWII.

The winds of global change began sweeping through Asia roughly two decades ago, first in East Asia, then engulfing China, and in the course of the 1990's blowing on to South Asia, most importantly India. What we are witnessing is thus not "emerging" Asia, but the "re-emergence" of a continent that comprises 60% of humanity. Its two giants,



An old Thai woman looks at the rubble of her house that was devastated by the tsunami in Ban Nam Khen village in Takuapa district, about 130 km (81 miles) north of the Thai resort island of Phuket, Jan. 8. REUTERS

India and China, are especially determined, as Indian author Ashutosh Sheshabalaya recently put it, "to return to their nineteenth-century status, when they accounted for well over half of world economic output."

One result of this is that China and India are seeking to make a bigger impact on global economic policy. Both countries were signatories of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, the precursor to today's World Trade Organization) in 1948, but China under Mao subsequently left. Although India remained a member, it was often a recalcitrant one.

Asia's current share of global GDP (about 38%) is still far from what it was in 1820, but both countries feel that they can – and must – participate in calling the global shots. It took China's government a protracted sixteen years to negotiate its re-entry into the GATT/WTO, but it soon showed its mettle by assuming joint leadership (along with Brazil, India, and South Africa) of the G-20, a group of primarily dynamic developing countries that threw down the gauntlet to the industrialized powers at the Cancun WTO ministerial meeting in September 2003.

In contrast to the emergence of the West in the nineteenth century, which proved such an economic disaster for most of Asia, the continent's re-emergence can have an immensely positive effect on the twenty-first century's global economy, including, needless to say, the West. But this requires careful preparation, adjustment and management. This is of vital importance, especially in light of the fact that Asia's populations are still booming.

Yet despite these gales of change, institutional atavism prevails. Global economic policy-making remains very much a Western game. It beggars belief that China and India are not members of the G-7. The Bretton Woods organizations – the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO – remain heavily Western in structure, leadership, and mentality. This is especially true of the WTO, where Washington and Brussels seem more concerned at settling old scores and protecting their respective turfs than in engaging with the new players. China will soon be the world's biggest trading power. Yet euroatlantic introversion still permeates the WTO.

This mindset is also pervasive in Western governments, industry, business

schools, and the media. None of these institutions in the West is ready for Asia's re-emergence.

History is not particularly encouraging when it comes to adjusting to profound changes – new actors and shifting balances of power – as the twentieth century tragically and repeatedly demonstrated. The tsunami that so devastated much of Asia has provided an opportunity for all key players – in government, industry, academia, the media, and civil society – to look at Asia anew, at both the challenges and the opportunities that have arisen from Asia's resurgence. These opportunities need to be seized with as much alacrity as the world has responded to Asia's sorrow.

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# A chocolicious affair



**BY AMRITA SATAPATHY**  
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The magic potion of every moony lover, the panacea of an aching heart, the recipe for many a childish whim, the solemn promise of eternal friendship, a chocolate means so much more to us. It is sheer poetry in the world of myriad culinary delights. Rich, dark, and sweet! Sounds sinfully tempting, isn't it? Well it is. Because we are not talking about the man of my dreams, but that delectable seducer called Chocolat. The history of confections and sweetmeats dates back to nearly 4000 years. And it will not be incorrect to say that chocolates have titillated the human palate since aeons. Like Hansel and Gretel in the proverbial fairy tale, we are still irresistibly attracted to chocolates of all kinds.

It is said that the Olmec Indians were the first ones to grow cocoa beans as domestic crop. That was in 1500 BC. But the earliest known plantations were in the Yucatan by the Mayas in 600 AD. In Mayan vocabulary "xocoatl" means a warm liquid. And the Aztec word for cocoa is "cacahuatl." The Aztecs are believed to have annexed the Mayan plantations making it a prerogative of the upper classes. "Chocolate" is infact a combination of the two Mexican-Indian words "choco" (foam) and "atl" (water). A mug of the frothy chocolate was shared as part of a ritual in twelfth-century Mesoamerican marriages. Cocoa beans also served as currency in those days. For instance, four cocoa beans could buy you a whole turkey and a 100 beans could also fetch you a good slave!

The botanical name of the cacao tree- *Theobroma cacao* has a mythical connotation attached to it. Translated it means 'food of the gods'. Cocoa seems to be a part of an extremely hoary tradition enveloped in a cloud of bizarre myths and rituals. Ancient chronicles speak of an extremely interesting Aztec lore. It seems the God Quetzalcoatl traveled to Earth on a beam of the Morning Star. He made a gift of the cocoa tree to the tribe and taught them the ways of roasting and grinding of the seeds. For the Aztecs the cocoa became a kind of paste that could be dissolved in water to form a universal remedy. It became a nourishing diet for them. The Aztec Emperor Montezuma served his guests with cocoa drink in ceremonial golden goblets. It was a royal treat. The drink was believed to be the nectar of the gods that granted one both power and wisdom. In the view of the Mexicans, the Gods in Paradise consumed chocolates; and that chocolates were in fact a celestial blessing to man from the God of Air. Mexican deities Tonacatecutli (the goddess of food) and Calchiuhtlucue (the goddess of water) were believed to be the guardian goddesses of cocoa. Annual sacrificial festivities were held in the honour of these goddesses where the victim was fed cocoa as his last meal. Chocolates have always been envisioned as the catalyst, enkindling the flame of ardour in two loving hearts. Montezuma's consumption of 'chocolatl' in goblets before entering his harem, transformed the chocolate into an aphrodisiac. His love brew was a cold concoction of cocoa flavoured with vanilla and spices with the consistency as mellow as honey.

The journey of the chocolate from primeval Mexico to Spain and finally the global arena is as fascinating as the pages of a thriller. In 1528 the Spanish explorer Hernando Cortez brought back with him a few cacao beans from the Mexican emperor Montezuma. Cortez presented it to the court of King Charles V. It was a secret gift, which became an endorsement of Spanish supremacy and a mark of royalty. The 16th century Spaniards enjoyed their chocolate drink by adding cane sugar, cinnamon and vanilla. Spain popularized cocoa plantation in its colonies but kept the art of processing hidden from public knowledge. The Monks became the practitioners of this technique and the monasteries, its clandestine guardians. Thus the formula remained shrouded in mystery for a 100 years until the decline of Spanish ascendancy. The secret unveiled itself in 1606, with its introduction to Europe by the Italian traveler Antonio Carletti. And chocolates charmed their way to France, Italy, Germany and Great Britain.

Right from the beginning cocoa had always been a delectable whim of the nobility, the consuming fancy of a dame and the cult fad of a snob. The story goes that during the betrothal of the Spanish Princess Maria Theresa to Louis XIV of France in 1615, the bride presented chocolates to her groom after the engagement. It was an elaborate affair with the gift being packed in a classily-designed ornate chest. The royal nuptial was emblematic of the marriage of chocolate in the Spanish-Franco culture. Thus, chocolate became a rage in the fashion conscious French court. Chocolates became a fetish with the famous Italian adventurer Casanova and Madame Du Barry, the last of the mistresses of King Louis XV. If chocolates were aphrodisiac for Montezuma, it was the prime ingredient in a love relationship for Casanova and Du Barry. Oviedo, a 16 century Spanish historian viewed that drinking chocolatl was literally drinking money. Only the rich and the nobles could enjoy cocoa products. It was a high symbol of indulgence. By 1570 the chocolate had established itself as a medicine for physical ailments as well as the wonder-drug igniting the doused flames of passion. But it did not take long for chocolates to become an object of popular demand.

'The Coffee Mill and the Tobacco Roll' was the first of the chocolate houses to be established in London in the year 1657. If Coffee Houses served the literati and the chaterati, the Chocolate Houses appealed to the finely tuned tastes of the snobby. They were centers of elegance and refinement with an air of exclusivity about them. The nobles and the businessmen smoked tobacco in clay pipes and discussed trade and finance over cups of hot chocolate. Drinking chocolate and its interesting concoctions with wine, milk, beer, sweeteners, and spices, became a fashionable social ritual. Next in line were the Emporiums that popularized the consumption of solid chocolate in the form of chocolate rolls and cakes. Victorian England saw the metamorphosis of this elitist beverage from the 'manly' brew to children's treat. It became the recognized drink for kids. With the advent of Industrial Revolution, mass production of chocolates began spreading the flavour to general citizenry. Dr. Joseph Fry of Bristol introduced his cocoa beans grinding steam engine in 1795. The dream of producing chocolates on a large scale was realized.

C.J. Van Houten's invention of the

Cocoa-Press in 1828 gave a smoother consistency to cocoa beverages. The 'Dutching' process made available high-quality cocoa in reduced price. It is believed that in 1847 Fry's company created a cocoa paste with sugar that could be moulded. And voila! We had "Chocolat Delicieux a Manger," the first toothsome modern chocolate bar. François Louis Callier the pioneer in chocolate-manufacturing in Switzerland opened the first Swiss chocolate factory in 1819. The Swiss chocolatier Daniel Peter invented the very popular milk chocolates that we consume with so much relish in 1876. Rodolph Lindt's, 'conching' procedure (a method of heating and rolling, by which chocolate is refined) shaped the desirable range of creamy chocolates and chocolate 'fondants' that melt in our mouth, leaving us craving for more. Till date Switzerland continues to be the largest consumer of chocolates with Swiss chocolates being adored the world over.

But it was the Cadbury brothers, Richard and John who brought out the romantic distinctiveness to chocolates that had somehow lacked earlier. Along with Fry, they organized the first ever display of edible chocolates in England in 1849. In the 1860s, Richard Cadbury created the first ever known heart shaped candy box for Valentine's Day and John Cadbury mass marketed the first batch of the boxed chocolate candies. Here's something to chew upon. The Cadburys and the Frys who belonged to the Quakers, (an extremely pacifist religious community), dominated the chocolate manufacturing scene in the English-speaking world for over a century. But it is really amazing that they were well-known for their progressive ideas and liberal attitude towards their workers. The Cadbury family had built an empire consisting not only of factories, but also houses, schools, libraries, churches for the well-being of their employees near Birmingham. The township was called Bournville. Does the name ring a bell? Next time you browse a chocolate store look for a chocolate called Bournville and you will know!

With every turn of century chocolates too underwent a vast make-over. From the nickel chocolate bars and the filled treats of the 1900s to the 'Chic Chocolates' of the 21st century. The delicious range of assorted chocolates would certainly have overwhelmed Montezuma! Here a few new-age sweet treats to tempt your taste-buds:

Ganache is a thick and rich chocolate spread. You can find them between the layers of gourmet chocolate cakes. It's prepared by pouring hot cream over chocolate slices and whipping till the chocolate melts to form a thick consistency.

Couverture is a special kind of chocolate as it contains a slightly higher percentage of cocoa butter than ordinary ones. It is used as coating for truffles.

Truffles are chocolates with creamy fillings. The fillings include orange, coconut, coffee, champagne, strawberry, butterscotch and any flavour you can think of.

Caramel is a firm and chewy candy. It is made of caramelized sugar, milk and butter.

Praline is prepared by mixing nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, etc) and boiled sugar.

Biscotti are a thin slice of chocolate biscuit either dipped or layered with or without nuts.

Nougat is made of sugar or honey, roasted nuts and chopped and candied

fruits. Nougats can be soft or hard depending upon its preparation.

Eclair is actually a cake shaped like a tube with chocolate topping and cream filling.

The ecstasy of every chocoholic, chocolates can be plain, classy, organic, hot and, cool. Chocolatiers have transformed this unassuming brown-gold of the Aztecs into exquisite works of art and sculpture. Be it the Easter egg or the rabbit, Christmas tree or scenes from the Holy Bible and every day life, the creative aspect of chocolate is not without flamboyance. Form haute couture to designer perfumery the chocolates are now at the zenith of their magnetism. It has influenced not only the glitzy world of media but also the realm of literature and arts. Who can forget the inimitable 'chocolate-cream soldier' Captain Bluntschli in Shaw's *Arms and the Man*? Though a treatise on the futility of war, the midnight escapade between the heroine Raina and the fugitive soldier involving the box of chocolate creams is one of the most romantic moments in the history of fictional passion. No wonder they are the idyllic gift for every beating heart that dares to fall in love. This is what the famous litterateur Roald Dahl said of children and chocolates: "They love being spooked... They love chocolates and toys and money... They love being made to giggle... Having had a bad school life, the only spot of sunshine in little Roald's life had been the boxes of chocolates that were sent to his school by the Cadburys. That was the germinating point of his popular children's fiction 'Charlie and the Chocolate factory'.

Eating chocolate is extremely conducive to physical and mental happiness. Chocolate contains essential trace elements and nutrients such as iron, calcium and potassium. It is also the storehouse of vitamins A, B1, C, D, and E. Cocoa is also the highest natural source for Magnesium. Diseases like hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, joint problems and pre-menstrual tension (PMT or PMS) are caused due to a deficiency in Magnesium. For every chocoholic the food chart consists of dairy, grains, meats, fruits/vegetables, and chocolate. A good antidote for depression, chocolates are recommended for patients suffering from mood-swings. Just as caffeine in coffee relaxes us into a euphoric state; phenylethylamine and serotonin in chocolate make us feel the lover's passion. These two are mood-changing substances, which when released into the blood stream cause a rise in the blood pressure and heart rate. And one can feel the bliss of falling in love.

Every single day in the calendar is dedicated to some day with a chocolate pre-fix on it, be it the Sweetest Day, Chocolate Cake Day, or Chocolate Milkshake Day. The Aztecs' treasury consisted of Cocoa beans and not gold or other precious stuff. Napoleon took chocolate with him to the battlefield, so do the American G.I.s today. Every game of flirting or love duel is incomplete without this alluring sweet. Whatever be the explanation, people eat chocolates for reasons known only to them. As the popular saying goes, "Nothing chocolate... nothing gained", Chocoholics are not only fanatics of taste but also collectors of ornamented boxes, enamel and vintage posters, moulds, stamps and wrappers. After all what's life without a little sweetness in it? 'Sweet like Chocolate', that's how a popular song goes. So spoil your senses and delve into its rich world as you embark on a chocolicious affair.

## A letter to the teachers of English: 72 Teaching a poem in the Secondary class (2)



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

Dear Fellow teachers,  
In the last letter, I shared with you some of my ideas about the importance of teaching poems to the Arabic learners of English in schools and colleges. I also told you how the pleasant experience of learning poems is spoiled in the colleges by the careless selection of poems for teaching.

Fortunately or unfortunately, this problem does not exist in schools; fortunately because teachers, who lack the resources, competence and experience are spared from the trouble of selecting the poems for their learners; unfortunately because poems chosen by the teachers for their learners are better suited to them than those selected by the outsiders. The selection of poems in English should be done taking into account the language level, experience, culture of the learners and also the linguistic difficulties and the content of the poems selected.

Poems pose many problems to the learners in terms of the language as well as content. The language of a poem is different from that of a prose passage in that there are many deviations from the normal way of expression. For example, in 'The Daffodils', the poet says 'ten thousand I saw at a glance', beginning the sentence with an object; such deviations are common in poems. In 'A Child Half-Asleep', the poet says 'Stealthily parting the small-hours silence, a hardly-embodied fragment of his brain, comes down to sit with me as I work late'; such expressions of imagination are hardly used in prose writings.

In addition, the use of poetic features such as metaphors, similes, personification, alliteration, assonance, rhyme etc make the poem more difficult to decode; a successful understanding of a poem lies in getting at the poet's

message after teasing out the linguistic and poetic features in it. A good command of English and experience in reading many poems alone can enable our learners to achieve the ability to understand poems successfully. Teaching poems in schools and colleges helps them gain this useful experience.

Let's look at the poem included in CECY PB6 closely. It is given in the Arts Reader in page no. 61. The title of the poem is 'Leisure' and it is written by William Henry Davies. It has seven stanzas, each stanza with two lines. There is a rhyme pattern; look at the last word in each line in the stanzas: care-stare, boughs-cows, pass-grass, daylight-night, glance-dance, can-began and care-stare. Each pair sounds alike making the rhyme pattern. This can be highlighted while you read the poem aloud, giving a little extra force to these words, in order to draw the learners' attention.

A few words in the poem are glossed in the box at the bottom. Are these words enough for understanding the poem? Yes and No. Yes, if your students are clever and no, if they are not. You can choose to gloss a few more words in the poem; beneath, enrich, poor life are some examples. The words you choose depend on your students and you have to make a wise guess about it, because glossing too many words kills the thrill of their struggling to understand them on their own. This decision-taking is like tightrope walking and you have to learn this art only through trial and error. You can extract the meanings of difficult words in the poem from the students by giving them parallel words or opposites or using them in familiar contexts. Using suitable aids can also help; for example, nuts can be understood with the help of real nuts brought to the class. Let's continue the discussion in the next letter.

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

## Technical writing

BY AHMED A. ALFOTIHE  
COMPUTER PROGRAMMER  
A COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATE,  
SANA'A

Technical writing is a skill we need to master so as to communicate effectively with people in the workplace in a formal way. Today, many companies here in Yemen use English as a medium of their inside and outside communication. So, we could be asked to write a report, a fax, a letter, a memo and so forth in an office establishment.

As a technical writer, your writing must follow a systematic approach.

Successful writing on the job is the result of knowing how to structure information using both words (language style) and design (formats) to achieve an intended purpose. The best way to ensure that a writing process is successful is to ensure the following five steps:-

- \*Preparation
- \*Research.
- \*Organization.
- \*Writing draft.
- \*Revision.

These steps must be followed consciously not self-consciously at first. Then with practice, the steps become nearly automatic. This is not to suggest that writing becomes easy. In fact, it does not. However, the easiest and most efficient way to write is to do it systematically. As you master the five steps, keep in mind that they are interrelated and sometimes overlap.

Also, the time required for each step varies with different writing situations. For example, when writing an informal memo, you might follow the first three steps (preparation, research and organization) by simply listing the points in the order you want to cover them. For a formal report, on the other hand, the first three steps require well-organized research, careful note taking, and detailed outlining. In short, the five steps expand, contract, and at times must be repeated to fit the complexity or context of the writing task.

Dividing the writing process into steps is useful for collaborative writing.

When you collaborate, you can generally keep everyone informed of your progress as you follow the steps in the writing process.

\*Preparation: How to prepare for your writing?

While preparing for writing, we must accomplish four major tasks:-

- \*Establishing the purpose (objective).
- \*Assessing the readers (audience).
- \*Determining the scope of the writing.
- \*Selecting the medium.

On must try and develop a style of writing which is legitimately one's own. It is the writer's potentially characteristic style as much adorable as anybody else's. In this context one must remember: "No writing style is inherently better than another."

In our next article we will talk about the four majors mentioned above.

## A note of caution to our contributors

It has been brought to our notice that some of our contributors are literally stealing other people's work and publishing them in their name. This is plagiarism which is a serious matter. For instance, a poem titled "The closest stranger" originally written by Sammar Ali Saleh Al-Hamdani and published at page 5 of "ERA ART" (Issue No. 3, May 2004), a magazine issued by Sana'a University students,

has been republished in the name of Emad Al-Qadasi of the Faculty of Education, Sana'a University in Yemen Times (Issue No. 784 dated 25 October 2004).

We hereby sincerely advise our contributors to send in only their original work for publication. They should refrain from copying others work and giving their label on it.

-Dr. Sahu

**WONDERWORD** by DAVID QUELLET

10 letters

CLUES

1 Across	2 Down	3 Across	4 Down	5 Across
6 Across	7 Down	8 Across	9 Down	10 Across

ANSWERS: 1. MARCH, 2. BREAD, 3. FISH, 4. HONEY, 5. BUTTER, 6. SUGAR, 7. MILK, 8. CHOCOLATE, 9. VANILLA, 10. COCOA

**BUSINESS CARDS** Selection: 10 letters

1 Across

2 Down

3 Across

4 Down

5 Across

6 Across

7 Down

8 Across

9 Down

10 Across

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## At the ICJ in Washington DC

# Cartoonist's work symbolizes Yemeni strife

FOR YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemeni cartoonist Saleh Ali may be surprised to know that one of his works in 1995 is currently hung on the wall of one of the most prominent journalism institutions in the world, the International Center for Journalists in Washington DC.

Indeed, just as you go into the main office of the center, you would find the framed cartoon next to the elevator, symbolizing our strife to enhance our democracy, and telling us that other countries are informed about our tiniest of efforts in the journalism field.

This may come as a surprise to Ali himself. But as an appreciation of his efforts and as a token of gratitude to the ICJ, we decided here to reproduce the original text that accompanied the framed cartoon.

**Quote:**  
 Saleh Ali, Yemen 1995

"Democracy, according to what I'm in the mood for..."

In June of 1995, Reporters sans Frontieres was informed that during the month of April, three journalists had been arrested and then released. They were apparently re-arrested in May, and



Police officer: "Democracy, according to what I'm in the mood for..."

released again. Apparently, either the government couldn't make up its mind, or the journalists couldn't keep out of trouble.

One of the journalists released in May was Saleh Ali, a cartoonist for 'Al Wahdawi' newspaper. That Cartoonists Relief Network was able to track down

this talented cartoonist was mostly due to the persistence of the political officer at one of the Western Embassies in Yemen.

Ali has been traveling around inside the country and has been difficult to get in touch with. He finally came into the embassy in question and contributed

## The "Zafin" performance in Malaysia

# An exquisite cultural event

By IRENA KNEHTL  
 irena\_knehtl@maktoob.com  
 FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

A rare musical event recently took place in Batu Pahat in Malaysia. There, an Indonesian Hadhrami group performed "zafin" with Abdullah bin Taalab from the bin Taalab family, as a solo singer.

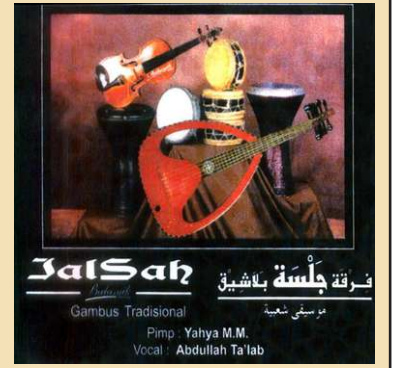
Courtesy of Professor Syed Farid Al-Atas from University of Singapore, who attended the event, we have now received recordings of this exquisite cultural event. Associate Professor Syed Farid Al-Atas, whose ancestry, too, goes back to Hadhramaut in Yemen, is the leading authority on Hadhrami Diaspora in Southeast Asia.

Human life is a journey (tariqah) and music is an aid to such remembrance as we make our way on the tariqah. It helps us to discover love, peace and tranquility.

The "zafin" is a music and dance form combined with the poetic form.

The musical ensemble consists of a solo singer, as well as instrumentalists who play the lute (ud), violin (kaman) and a variety of percussion instruments. The Zafin has important social and religious significance. Zafin is rarely staged or choreographed. It takes place during occasions, such as weddings and mawlid, the birthday of Prophet Muhammed (P.B.U.H). Usually there is a high degree of participation from the audience, who either dance or clap.

Zafin exemplifies an inner worldly ascetic outlook, that is, it combined concerns with the world and the next. This is the defining mark of the "alawiyah tariqah", the Sufi order that most Hadhrami Arabs belong to. One thing is certain, the art of "zafin" continues to thrive as part of Yemeni Hadhrami culture among the Yemeni Arabs of Hadhramaut in Southeast Asia.



**Explore further:**  
 Music and Worship in Islam: Zafin among the Arabs of Southeast Asia, by Professor Syed Farid Al-Atas, University of Singapore.

about 6 cartoons to this exhibit, all of which had caused him some trouble with the authorities.

Ali usually represents the Yemen "common man" as a poor, confused, well meaning sort who usually trusts in the better judgment of the authorities who control his destiny. In this cartoon, the Police Officer has arrested him, tied his hands behind his back, and locked his mouth shut. The poor fellow listens patiently as the arresting officer explains just what democracy means for him in his present situation.

In another cartoon, a mother and father were worried that their child, reading a newspaper on the floor, is growing up to be too creative. "God Forbid!", the mother comments.

**Name:** Saleh Ali  
**Country:** Yemen  
**Crime:** Never revealed  
**Punishment:** Saleh was arrested, released, re-arrested and re-released.  
**Outcome:** His current status with the authorities is unknown, but he is free and is still drawing cartoons.

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