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GPC levels unprecedented defamation against Abdullah Al-Ahmar

Nation appalled

By WALID AL-SAQQAF
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The nation and the expatriate and international community have been appalled by the unprecedented attack of the ruling party, the General People's Congress (GPC) represented by Al-Mithaq Weekly against the person of the prominent national figure, and speaker of parliament, Sheikh Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Ahmar.



Sheikh Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Ahmar

Unprecedented, unjustifiable

The latest articles that defamed Al-Ahmar, of the Islah Party, was released in the last edition of Al-Mithaq, where Al-Ahmar was called extreme names and accused of outlandish things such as robbery, deceit, ignorance, and men-

tal illness. In response to the published statements, Sheikh Al-Ahmar said the attacks are being directed by the regime and result from unjustifiable hatred. "I would rather not add to what has been

عبدالله الاحمر.. الطبع الذي غلب الطبع!

كتبه: المحرر السياسي
تعد عبدالله حسين الاحمر نفسه هو باب الطبع وهو تارة من الطبع الذي غلب عليه الطبع وتارة من الطبع الذي غلب عليه الطبع...
عبدالله حسين الاحمر نفسه هو باب الطبع وهو تارة من الطبع الذي غلب عليه الطبع وتارة من الطبع الذي غلب عليه الطبع...
عبدالله حسين الاحمر نفسه هو باب الطبع وهو تارة من الطبع الذي غلب عليه الطبع وتارة من الطبع الذي غلب عليه الطبع...

said about me except what the poet said: If the immoral had spoken, then don't respond, as staying quiet is wiser."
Some articles said that Sheikh Al-Ahmar had been told to read a statement by his party members, without knowing what it contained and that they used him to market their more extreme views. However, Sheikh Al-Ahmar strongly denounced this, saying every word he said in the conference held more than a week ago were his own.
Continued on page 1

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World Bank president's warning

Big reforms needed

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

economic catastrophe in the long run.

In his visit to Yemen last week, World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn warned of the urgency and extreme necessity for much-needed policy reforms to have the country move forward. Hinting about the country's poor economic conditions, Wolfensohn also clearly highlighted the fact that Yemen is still mostly underdeveloped and with a population that is mostly illiterate, particularly among females. He continued to describe the gloomy picture of the country in terms of high unemployment and a population growth rate that could result in an

Action needed urgently
Wolfensohn said that it was not enough for the government to analyze and realize the situation and the needs of the country, but he stressed that it is about time to improve the investment climate and promote good governance and enhance employment opportunities. The government has in the past continuously said that it knows the problems and its solutions, but so far no concrete action has been taken to implement urgently needed reforms. Wolfensohn also warned that Yemen is depending too much on oil



World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn.

and could face severe economic difficulties if other sources of income are not introduced. He noted the need to maintain macroeconomic stability, and also improve water management. It is noteworthy that Yemen could face a disastrous water shortage crisis within a decade if proper precautionary measures are not taken. However, amid the many urgencies that Wolfensohn mentioned, he also did note some positive elements in the country, mainly represented in the 'commendable' work in the Social Fund for Development and the Public Works Project.
Continued on page 4

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Al-Moayad linked to bin Laden

By YEMEN TIMES NEWS SERVICES

NEW YORK - A former FBI informant testified at the terror-funding trial for a Yemeni sheikh and his assistant that the defendant had supplied arms, money and fighters to Osama bin Laden. Mohamed Alanssi, called as a hostile witness for the defense, testified Thursday that Sheikh Mohammed Ali Hassan al-Moayad told him that he gave \$20 million to bin Laden before the Sept. 11 attacks and \$3.5 million to the terrorist group Hamas.

"He told me he helps al-Qaida with money and arms and he sent mujahideen to Chechnya and Afghanistan," Alanssi said, speaking through an Arabic-English interpreter. Alanssi was to be the star prosecution witness in the trial before he set himself on fire outside the White House three months ago, claiming the FBI reneged on promises of money and U.S. citizenship. The defense then called Alanssi to the stand in an effort to portray him as unstable, greedy and untruthful. Defense attorney Howard Jacobs asked whether al-Moayad, who runs religious charities in Yemen, explicitly stated he funneled money to Islamist fighters. Alanssi replied that it wasn't necessary. "The charitable work of Sheikh Moayad is a front, and the money he gets is for mujahideen," or holy fighters, Alanssi said. Jacobs asked to strike the response from the record. "No," Judge Sterling Johnson Jr. replied. "You asked it." Alanssi, 53, said he moved to the United States in 2000 and briefly worked at a Brooklyn travel agency before losing his job. He described his horror at the 2001 terrorist attacks as his motivation for helping the FBI. "It was my duty to cooperate with the American government against the terrorists that I know," Alanssi said.
Continued on page 4

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Will take pressure off declining oil reserves

Yemen scores big on natural gas

BY PETER WILLEMS
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen has scored big in recent deals that will see it send millions of tons of natural gas to several foreign markets for two decades.

Yemen LNG announced last Wednesday that it signed agreements to supply buyers with up to 6.5 million tons of natural gas annually.

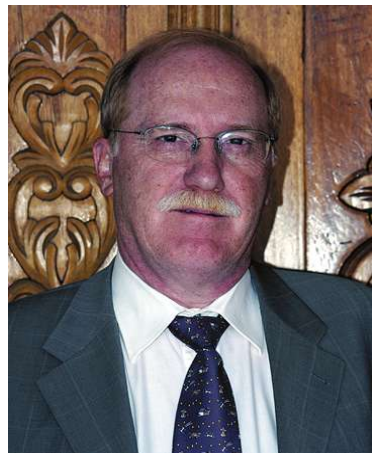
"We have been able to secure the sale of liquefied natural gas (LNG) which will be very close to the maximum quantity we will be able to produce," Jean-Francois Daganau, General Manager of Yemen LNG, told The Yemen Times. "This was the main step for producing gas in Yemen. Finding buyers was the major challenge we had to face, and from here on out we will turn the project into reality."

Yemen LNG, which has been searching for markets willing to buy natural gas for the last eight years, signed three agreements. It will provide Tractebel EGI, part of the French utility giant Suez, with 2.5 million tons of LNG yearly, while Total, the leading shareholder of Yemen LNG, will purchase two million tons annually. Both will ship natural gas to the United States, which begins in 2009 and will last for 20 years.

The third agreement was with Kogas (Korea Gas Corp.) as Yemen will supply South Korea between 1.3 million and two million tons each year for 20 years. It is planned for Yemeni gas to reach South Korea near the end of 2008.

According to Daganau, the agreements will be finalized by the middle of this year.

Yemen has already developed natural gas fields. Hunt Oil Co. extracts around three billion cubic feet of gas daily in the Marib region. It strips out 22,000 barrels of liquids to add to



Jean-Francois Daganau

crude oil then re-injects gas back into the ground.

Yemen LNG plans to build a liquefaction plant at Bal Haf, on the coast near Mukalla, and will have the total capacity of producing 6.7 million tons of LNG each year. A 320 kilometer pipeline will also be constructed to carry gas from Marib to Bal Haf. It will take around 43 months to complete the project.

Last August, Kogas sent out invitations to nine countries to bid for supplying South Korea with gas. Studies have shown that the demand for natural gas in South Korea will increase 5% every year over the next decade. Yemen, Malaysia and Russia will provide South Korea with five million tons of gas per year.

Analysts say that with competition heating up between suppliers, the global market for gas has turned into a buyers market: It is said that Kogas will pay between 35% and 40% less than what it paid under previous contracts.

Daganau believes that Yemen LNG had an advantage of winning the contract with South Korea. Two shareholders in Yemen LNG are South Korean companies, SK Corp. and

Hyundai Corp. SK Corp. runs the largest oil refinery in South Korea and has been involved in the oil business in Yemen since 1986.

"There is little doubt that one of the reasons Kogas chose Yemen LNG is because it has Korean content in the company," said Daganau.

Shareholders of Yemen LNG include France's Total (42.9%), state-owned Yemen Gas (23.1%), US Hunt Oil (18%), and South Korea's SK (10%) and Hyundai (6%).

Yemen LNG has been targeting the United States as a potential customer for over a year. The United States takes up around a quarter of natural gas consumption worldwide and recently became aware that it would need to import gas in the near future.

"The United States is a new market," said Daganau. "Since its exploration of gas fell short of demand in the future, it became a new potential buyer."

Yemen LNG started looking for customers in the mid-nineties, especially focusing on the Far East, but faced a setback when Asia suffered from an economic meltdown in 1997. Analysts claim that it has been critical for Yemen to find buyers of natural gas since its oil reserves will dry up in the future. Last year, The World Bank estimated that oil reserves dropped nearly 9%.

But Yemen, which has 16 trillion cubic feet of natural gas below its surface, will soon be able to use gas as its second natural resource that will bring in substantial revenue.

"This agreement marks an important step for the development of natural resources of Yemen," said Rasheed Baraba, Minister of Oil and Minerals. "We are pleased to be working with such a fine group of international companies whose expertise and skills can only complement Yemen's high potential in the oil and gas sector."

KSA gives Yemen 19 suspects

BY YEMEN TIMES NEWS SERVICES

RIYADH - Saudi Arabia said on Saturday it had handed over 19 Yemenis detained on security charges to Yemen, in the latest of a series of extraditions between the two states which are both fighting al Qaeda militants.

A ministry statement carried by the official Saudi Press Agency said the 19 had been held in various security cases, but did not say when they were repatri-

ated or give details.

The last such extradition was in May 2004, when Riyadh handed over 14 Yemenis and received one Saudi national.

The two Arab states have seen a spate of attacks, largely blamed on Saudi-born Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. They have increased security cooperation in fighting militants and the smuggling of arms across their long border.

WB president, local officials tour Taiz

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF
TAIZ BUREAU

World Bank chairman James D Wolfensohn, along with Ahmed Soufan, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation and Judge Ahmed al-Hajri, Taiz Governor conducted a visit to the Project of Municipal Amelioration and Protecting Taiz from Torrents Disasters.

The WB has contributed some \$76 million to the project for phases I and II. About 85 per cent of the second phase has been achieved.

Other projects in different areas in Taiz were visited including housing project which consists of 240 housing unit with facilities at a cost of \$2.7 million.

The officials went on a trip to Taiz suburbs seeing the urban expansion and tourist attractions of the city.

They also visited the photo and data

show prepared by the PMPTT, Public Works' Project and Social Fund for Development displaying graphs and photos on projects implemented co-financed by the WB.

The officials also visited Martyr Ne'amah Rassam Girl School where they were received by Dr. Mahdi Abdul-Salam, Director of the Province Education Office.

The WB official attended a number of cultural activities and reviewed a show for girl's drawings and hand-crafts. He also reviewed list of educational projects to which the WB contributed.

There are future projects such as construction of more educational establishments and complexes in addition to a campaign to raise awareness and linking the community to the school so as to encourage girls to go to schools. There is also a plan to equip schools with language, computer and scientific labs.

USAID delivers supplies in Al-Jawf

Al-Jawf is among five governorates receiving a total of \$132,000 worth of education furniture from the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

USAID Yemen Director Dr. Douglas Heisler was in Al-Jawf on Feb. 17 to donate the furniture and equipment for the use in Al-Jawf District Education Office and nine schools in the governorate.

It totaled 72 pieces including desks, chairs, computers, photocopiers and other office and school equipment. This was part of an agreement signed in July

2004 between the USAID and the Creative Associates International Inc, and the Ministry of Education to supply necessary equipment and materials to five education offices in the governorates of Al-Jawf, Amran, Marib, Sa'ada and Shabwa.

The USAID team visited the other US-funded projects in Al-Jawf, which include the construction of health units, schools, water dams, and infrastructure projects at a total cost of about US\$ 8 million, to be implemented by the Public Works Project and the Social Fund for Development.

Readers' Voice

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

This edition's question:

Do you think that Sheikh Mohammed Ali Hassan al-Moayad had the ties with Osama bin Laden that he is accused of? (See page 1)

- Yes, al-Moayad was tied to bin Laden.
- No, al-Moayad was not actually tied to bin Laden.

last edition's question:

Who do you think was behind the assassination of Former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Al-Hariri?

- Israel 55%
- A Lebanese or Syrian official agency 26%
- The religious fanatic group that claimed responsibility on al-Jazeera 11%
- Some other group 8%

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

CCI holds Marketing Strategy course

The Taiz Chamber of Commerce and Industry recently held a training course on Marketing Strategy, which hosted 16 trainees from the private sector.

The course aimed at introducing the basic principles for formulating a marketing strategy for private establishments. The trainees received lectures, and theoretical and practical lessons on the concepts of marketing.

Mufeed Abdu Saif, Chairman of the CCI in Taiz said the course is within the series of courses organized by the CCI in the area of marketing, and financial administration to raise the level of trainees in the commercial and industrial fields.

Course on ceramic flowers

BY TAIZ BUREAU
YEMEN TIMES

A training course on making flowers from ceramic was concluded in the hall of Taiz Cultural Center on Feb. 16. The course was organized by Al-Ishraq Society for Women Development jointly with the German organization (Employment Private Sector Development Program).

Speeches were delivered by Mrs. Safiah al-Junaid, chairwoman of al-Ishraq Society, Faisal al-Nadhif from EPSP, Mrs. Su'ad Ibrahim on behalf of the female trainees, and Eng. Abdul-Qadir Hatem, Deputy Taiz Governor for Technical and Environmental Affairs.

They noted the importance of such courses in training and enabling girls and women from poor classes to get

employment, especially those who have not completed their education. Such courses will enable them to start their own enterprises and improve their lives, and build women's capacities to help cut poverty and fight unemployment.

The festival included sections on fashion shows accompanied by popular dances and shows of ceramic works.

Recognition certificates were given by participants by Deputy Governor.

صناعات تنجح في استضافة البروفيسور العالمي (اسكوجينا) لعلاج العظام والعمود الفقري والمفاصل

اعلن مستشفى الدكتور عبد القادر المتوكل بصنعاء عن زيارة طبية مفاجئة عالمية غير مسبوقة في اليمن خلال الايام القادمة في المجال الجراحي...

المعلومات اكدت ان جهود مستشفى المتوكل نجحت باستقطاب البروفيسور العالمي (ارمان اسكوجينا) اشهر جراحي المانيا استشاري جراحة العظام والعمود الفقري وزراعة المفاصل. وعلى رأسها مفاصل الكتف أعقد العمليات الجراحية باستخدام أحدث المناظير والادوات الجراحية في العالم اضافة الى العمليات التشفيرية الاكثر دقة... يأتي ذلك الزيارة قام بها الدكتور عبد القادر المتوكل في الفترة الماضية... الى المانيا والتقاءه بالبروفيسور الالمانى... اطلمه خلالها على التطورات الطبية الحديثة في اليمن وامكانيات استضافة (صناعات) لمشاهير الجراحين العالميين لتقديم خدماتهم في هذا المجال... وابدى البروفيسور الالمانى اعجاباه بتطور الخدمات الطبية بمستشفى المتوكل مبدياً استعداده لزيارة اليمن لأول مرة... وقد تقرر ان يحط البروفيسور الالمانى الشهير رحاله في مستشفى المتوكل بصنعاء ابتداءً من الخامس من مارس القادم ولدة اسبوع لاستقبال حالات جراحة العظام والعمود الفقري وزراعة المفاصل المختلفة... وذلك عقب انتهائه من رحلاته العملية الى مملكة البحرين الشقيقة التي تستضيفه مستشفياتها لثلاثة ايام... يذكر ان الجراح الالمانى (اسكوجينا) معروف بنجاحاته الجراحية وسعته العملية... حيث يزور العديد من مستشفيات العالم، كما تستضيفه اشهر مستشفيات دول الخليج الشقيقة لاجراء عملياته المعقدة... وقد ساعدت شهرته العالمية بعض الحالات اليمنية ممن ارهقتهم تكاليف الاسفار الباهظة والعمليات غير الناجحة ليحظوا بالعلاج على يديه... يأتي ذلك ضمن جهود مستشفى المتوكل لتقديم ارقى الخدمات الطبية في اليمن وتوجهاً لنجاحاته في استضافة مشاهير الطب والجراحة...

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The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate announces an opportunity for a one-year scholarship to obtain a Masters in Arts Degree in Global Journalism at Orebro University in Sweden.

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Those who wish to apply for the Autumn 2005 program must read the application guidelines and instructions and fill in the necessary forms available at:

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The form can also be obtained from the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate. The form along with all the necessary documents must be sent by courier by **1 March, 2005** to:

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Breaks even in first year

Air Arabia flies high

FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Air Arabia LLC, one of the UAE's national airlines and the first low-cost airline of its kind in the Middle East and North African region, announced this month its first year financial results to be a resounding success after posting a break-even result.

Speaking in press conference, His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Moh'd Al-Thani, Chairman of the Board of Air Arabia said, "I am very proud to announce that Air Arabia is the first airline in the Middle East region to post a break-even result in its first year of operation. We have exceeded our own targets for 2004."

Adel Ali, Air Arabia's CEO said: "We were anticipating year one to be a loss making year, projecting break-even during year two and posting a marginal profit during year three. The results so far are beyond our expectations as airline profitability is a long-term goal and never achieved during the first year of launching such an operation."

Adel Ali went on to say, "In the first 12 months of operation we went from 5 to 15 destinations, have flown 5,398 sectors and now have over 250 employees working for us. We logged over 13,000 flight hours in the past year and now our latest brand new aircraft has arrived, increasing our fleet to 5 Airbus A320s."

Adel Ali said: "We feel our success is also due to the fact that our priorities are, and will remain, safety, reliability and good service combined with low cost. It seems as an unbeatable combination."

Air Arabia is a Sharjah government owned airline currently flying from Sharjah ten times a week to Alexandria; daily to Bahrain, Beirut, Colombo, Doha and Muscat; five days a week to Damascus and Kuwait; four days a week to Dammam; three days a week to Khartoum and Aleppo; and two days a week to Assiut, Jeddah, Riyadh and Sana'a.

Prizes and passes

Close on the heels of its break-even financial result for its first year of oper-



One of Air Arabia's passenger jets in flight.

Photo by Paul Dopson

ations and with the announcement of the opening of the Mumbai route, Air Arabia LLC - one of the UAE's national airlines and the first low-cost airline of its kind in the Middle East and North Africa region - announces its first region-wide promotional campaign for 2005.

Simply fly with Air Arabia from 18 February to 18 April and you will be entered into a weekly raffle to win three fantastic prizes - 500,000 cash or one of two unlimited travel passes - valid for one year on any Air Arabia sector - and also be entered into the grand raffle at the end of the promotion for Yemeni Rial 5,000,000. A total of 25 prizes will be awarded during the eight week period.

Speaking on the launch of the campaign, Air Arabia's Head of Sales, A.K. Nizar commented: "We will be launching this promotion across 11 countries offering all residents and visitors throughout the region the opportunity to travel and win. Just fly with Air Arabia during the promotional period and every week passenger's boarding passes will be entered into a draw to potentially win one of three prizes. Each and every person flying during this time will also be entered into the final grand prize draw.

Even if you don't win one of the cash prizes or an unlimited yearly travel pass, I believe that everyone will be a winner thanks to the low fares we have available during this period."

Arhab Al Sarhi, Air Arabia's Manager in Yemen added: "As well as offering weekly prizes and a grand prize, during this period travellers have the opportunity to take advantage of special fares, offered for one-way trips from Sana'a to most of Air Arabia's destinations and vice versa excluding taxes."

"This is a great opportunity to take advantage of competitive fares while at the same time possibly win cash prizes - as well as more travel! With weekly prizes of one year travel passes on any Air Arabia sector, winning passengers can fly for business or pleasure as much as they want. The earlier you book the more likely it is that you will get the best fare - so book early and you will certainly win by getting the lowest possible fare to your favourite destination," concluded Al Sarhi.

New flight to India

On another issue, officials announced that Air Arabia has been granted flight rights to fly daily to Mumbai, India from the middle of March 2005.

"We are delighted with this addition to our growing network," said Air Arabia's Chairman, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Moh'd Al-Thani. "This is part of our commitment to provide our passengers with the best value and the highest quality of service. By connecting India to our existing routes, we can now offer Indian nationals the opportunity to travel at lower fares throughout the Gulf region and Gulf residents to travel to India at the best possible fares, allowing families to meet more frequently and tourists to enjoy even more destinations," he added.

The fares to India are expected to be lowest than the fares of all other airlines, and it is hoped that it will drive thousands of new customers to Air Arabia.

"India has always been part of Air Arabia's expansion plans and we look forward to addressing more of the region's travel needs with this new destination," said Arhab Al sarhi, Air Arabia's Manager in Yemen.

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Will technology propagate or curb violence against women?

FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

In recent years, new information technologies like the internet have emerged as a major medium of spreading notions of masculinity and 'manliness'.

And these notions so deeply connected to the display of sexual power over women, including through, for example, multiple partners to demonstrate virility. Even if we ignore the pornographic material on internet and look generally at the kind of mes-

sages that are being communicated through information technologies, there's a huge amount of subtle material that stress aggressiveness and dominance and lack of responsibility in sexual relationships as 'manly' qualities or traits.

But the use of information technology (IT), especially the internet, is disseminating messages of pervert sexuality, homosexuality and violent sex with women and children, bestiality and so on.

In many parts of the world, for

example in India, it is not uncommon to find a load of flesh when you click on a webpage saved on the desktop in an internet café. I have come across websites that explicitly promote rape and encourage sexual violence against children.

The messages and sites are not general. They are targeted at men. What the internet has done is made these messages and sites easily accessible to anyone who could afford to pay YR 10-15 per hour, a price far cheaper than a pornographic magazine or a book.

In addition, the video and webcam images offer much more perverse excitement. The cost effectiveness of this medium in disseminating violent sexual messages and images and its easy access are the kind of challenges that are extremely hard to meet.

Image trafficking

Issues like trafficking in women have acquired a worse dimension. Now along with the trafficking of women in person, we have to deal with trafficking in images - usually taken under force and through violence.

Among other main challenges to moving forward on gender equality ending VAW are deeply entrenched negative attitudes and stereotypes about women, which are institutionalized in the various systems. This makes it extremely difficult to engage in preventing and countering the messages of violence against women and sexual violence against children in equal proportion and with more intensity.

Breaking down the barrier created by the decision makers or power holders in the IT business, who put business before ethics and rights of women, and disadvantages that anti-VAW activists face in one way or another, requires tackling deeply entrenched values, norms and attitudes that work against women.

It also requires changes in national and international IT policies. These policies are more or less gender neutral and have so far treated IT only as a medium of business and education. It has also heightened the challenges in increasing women's access and partici-

pation in expression and decision making in IT. It is no longer just a matter of women's numerical equality in communication and representation of women's basic needs and their solutions. There's a need to broaden and redefine advocacy related to gender and IT to address violence against women through IT.

Traditionally, communication has been an extremely sensitive and critical for advocacy and action against violence against women. However, male monopoly over access and technical training, gendered segregation of IIT jobs, language of IIT education, training and services, etc have practically kept women out from decision-making and wide-scale use.

This implies that the anti-violence-against-women advocates remain at the mercy of the power holders despite a boom in IT which has space to address women's concerns, new manifestations of violence, and to promote women's rights. As a result, at the mass advocacy level, grassroots activists have not been able maximize their advocacy efforts through the use of new ITs.

Transnational advocates and advocates backed by institutions have been more successful in using IT. And a significant aspect of this engagement is that new ITs have provided a space for researchers, activists and policy makers to exchange understanding, information, experiences and approaches. Anti-violence researchers have also used new ITs extensively and engaged in collaborative research. Similarly,

gender and development professional working with international NGOs and other institutions have widely used ITs for cross-sectoral integration of anti-violence efforts.

IT to end violence

There's no choice but to look at ICTs as one of mediums to end VAW. New ITs are being used by activists and women's organizations to promote their initiatives, forge linkages, build networks and exchange information.

Perhaps it is not possible to use IT in equal measure to counter violence against women being inflicted through IT, but ITs must be used as a critical tool in fostering awareness and action on such violence.

Such usage of IT must be supported by advocacy for policies that recognize and address challenges arising from IT as a tool to perpetrate violence against women. This kind of engagement today may create a situation when violence coming through ITs could be prevented.

What also need to be emphasized is that violence communication and information sharing through IT should strive to be more inclusive and representative. Roles of men in ending violence, promotion of men's groups who are challenging stereotypes and addressing men's roles and responsibilities in sexual relationships, positive sexuality, sexual rights, sexuality education, etc are some of the issues having a strong link to violence against women which need to be taken up through new ITs.

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Continued from page 1

Nation appalled

President interferences

Al-Sahwa.net had reported that President Saleh ordered an immediate investigation into the articles that defamed Al-Ahmar. And an official statement released by Almotamar.net denied any disagreement between Saleh and Al-Ahmar. It said that "There are no disputes between the President of the Republic and Sheikh Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Ahmar," and that the relationship between them is brotherly and was not affected whatsoever."

The statement also expressed outrage and dismay at what Al-Mithaq had published against Sheikh Al-Ahmar, saying that those responsible will be held accountable and journalists should write freely but according to the laws and should distance themselves from partisan disagreements and propaganda.

Indication of Islah's success

Some prominent Islah figures claimed that the extreme defamation of Al-Ahmar indicates Islah's success in

focusing on the important issues that touch the lives of regular citizens.

According to many prominent Islah members, the articles appearing in Al-Mithaq contributed positively to the image of Al-Ahmar and Islah because they highlighted the unexplainable anger and frustration that the ruling party had shown for constructive recommendations to end corruption and enforce the law.

Opposition parties have rallied behind Al-Ahmar after the attack and expressed their solidarity and support to the opposition leader, saying that such action by

the regime had only caused greater unity among opposition and highlighted the successful role that Islah is playing as an active, not double-faced opposition party.

Meanwhile, the general public had also expressed support to Islah and its leader after the series of attacks. It appears they were not convincing for a large portion of the public who had seen that the recommendations of the Islah conference were more about reforms, unifying opposition, rejecting price hikes, and other issues that appealed to the people.

on projects implemented co-financed by the WB.

The officials also visited Martyr Ne'amah Rassam Girl School where they were received by Dr. Mahdi Abdul-Salam, Director of the Province Education Office.

The WB official attended a number of cultural activities and reviewed a show for girl's drawings and handicrafts. He also reviewed list of educational projects to which the WB contributed.

There are future projects such as construction of more educational establishments and complexes in addition to a campaign to raise awareness and linking the community to the school so as to encourage girls to go to schools. There is also a plan to equip schools with language, computer and scientific labs.

World Bank support

The World Bank has been supporting Yemen's efforts to fight poverty since 1971. To date, the Bank has approved a total of 136 projects and supplemental credits, totaling over US\$ 2.4 billion, of which US\$ 1.7 billion (or 71 percent) have been disbursed.

At present, there are 19 projects support-

ed by the World Bank under implementation and 6 others under preparation. The current portfolio has projects active in the areas of health, education, water resource management, infrastructure and public sector management.

The Bank will shortly start the preparation of the next three-year Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for 2006 - 2008 in consultation with the Government, donor community and civil society.

At US\$ 510 income per capita, Yemen is among the poorest countries in the world and consequently receives financial assistance from the International Development Association (IDA) - an arm of the World Bank Group - on concessional terms. Projects financed by IDA are interest-free development assistance to the poorest countries that have a maturity of 40 years, including a 10-year grace period.

The World Bank delegation accompanying James D. Wolfensohn during his visit to Yemen included Christiana Poortman, Vice President for Middle East and North Africa; Mahdy Al-Jazzaf, Executive Director; Emmanuel Mbi, Country Director for Djibouti, Egypt and Yemen; and Mustapha Rouis, Country Manager.

Recent workshop in Taiz

Researches tackle water shortage

By YEMEN TIMES NEWS SERVICES

Yemeni officials and researchers are looking to rainwater as a primary solution to the water shortage problem in the city of Taiz, 260 km south of the capital, Sana.

A recent two-day workshop, organised by the Environment Studies and Society Service Centre (ESSSC) at the University of Taiz, in collaboration with the Ministry of Water and the local al-Saeed Foundation for Sciences and Culture, stressed the importance of setting up dams and cisterns to collect water for drinking, after being refined, and also for agriculture.

"The workshop discussed practical and scientific solutions to the Taiz water crisis, coming up with important recommendations, mainly conducting hydrological and geophysical studies into the water resources in various parts of the city, evaluating the quantity of water reserves as well as future water resources," Dr Shawqi al-Selwi of the ESSSC told IRIN from Taiz.

During the workshop - entitled "Taiz Water: Reality and Ambition" - issues focusing on the geological situation of Taiz, pollution, administrative and management problems and environmental awareness were discussed.

Recommendations

Participants recommended that the drilling of wells in the area should be stopped, as people were drilling themselves and consuming underground water reserves, thus affecting aquifers. At the moment wells are being drilled down to a depth of 1,000 metres.

Other recommendations include the modernisation of the current water-pipe network to stop water mixing with sewage. The use of such contaminated water should be banned in fruit and vegetable irrigation, they agreed.

The Yemeni cabinet recently approved the rehabilitation of the water-pipe network, a project funded by the World Bank and the Yemeni government at a cost of US \$1.4 million. According to Adel Magharef, director of the Taiz water authority, this would save much water that is being wasted due to misuse.

"The city of Taiz is stationed at the bottom of the Sabir mountain and can benefit a lot from the rainfall that can be used for several purposes," Water Minister Dr Mohammed al-Iryani told the workshop earlier this week.

He conceded, however, that there was no "magic solution" to the problem.

"The Taiz water problem is at the top of our agenda. The city has got the lion's share of the World Bank loans aimed at the rehabilitation of the outrun water pipes network. This would cut the wastage of water, estimated at 40 percent at present," the minister said.

Serious problem

Yemen faces a serious water crisis. Resources are low, even by Middle East standards, and the estimated per capita availability of renewable water resources was only about 133 cubic metres in 1994 and could be even lower now.

The figure for the Middle East and North Africa region is 1,250 cu.m. and the world average is 7,500 cu.m.

Water shortages are reaching emergency levels in some areas. According to a 2001 government report, there are absolute shortages in Taiz and Sana, where the public water supply is extremely limited. At the same time, water consumption continues to rise each year, and is now well above renewable water resources.

Surface water and rechargeable aquifers fail to provide enough water for both domestic use and agriculture, which accounts for 90 percent of water con-

sumption.

Complete exhaustion of the natural water resources of the capital and its surrounding rural areas is threatened within 20 years if current patterns of consumption continue unchecked.

The collection of rainwater is another option to be explored. Rainfall ranges between 50 and 200 millimetres per annum in most areas of the country, rising to 800 mm per annum in exceptional cases in some regions.

Al-Iryani dismissed the possibility of refining sea water as a strategic solution to the problem due to its high cost. "The ordinary citizen cannot afford to pay US \$7 per one litre of water," he said.

However, he said the ministry was thinking of refining water in areas such as al-Hawban and al-Hawjalah in Taiz which have a lot of polluted water. He confirmed that experts were carrying out a study on this issue which could increase supplies by 30 percent.

The minister disclosed that the government was drafting a law banning the expansion of khat farming which is the major consumer of underground water.

Yemeni chew khat leaves, said to give a slow release of a chemical similar to amphetamines.

Conflict over water

The shortage of water has led to conflicts and the government has intervened in disputes that have erupted between people or tribes. In 1999, it took 700 soldiers to quell fighting that claimed six lives and injured 60 others in clashes between the villages of Al-Marzuh and Quradah, fighting over a local spring near Taiz.

In the dispute, the village of Al-Marzuh believed it was entitled to exclusive rights from a spring because it was located on their land.

However, Quradah, a neighbouring village, believed it had the right to the water based on a 50-year-old court verdict acknowledging their rights to the water.

Coping

Taiz, which now has a population of over 2 million, started facing a serious water shortage in the mid-1990s as the public water supply was available only every 20 days. It is now worse and is supplied just once every 40 days, compared to every two weeks in Sana.

This has forced local people to send their children to line up in long queues to get water from mosques, which usually have their own supply, as well as wells. The increasing shortage has pushed people not only in Taiz, but in other cities like Sana, to build up a private water tank in every newly-built house to ensure a continued supply.

Mahmoud Abdu told IRIN he uses a cart to carry 20 containers for family use and his fathers restaurant. "I bring 15 containers for the restaurant and five for the house every day, starting at 5pm and finishing at 8.30 pm. The government water service comes for three days a month only," Abdu explained.

"I have borrowed this donkey from my neighbour to carry water for the family as it is far from our house. But sometimes I carry the water on my shoulder," Ramzi Abdulraakeeb Ahmad from Dar al-Nasr in Sabir, Taiz told IRIN.

He carries 10-15 water containers every day, each containing 20 litres, from the water source four kilometres from his home.

With 10 family members needing water to wash, cook, drink and clean in, Ahmad says they really face tough times. "I do this job when I am back from school. I do not have time to study because when I finish bringing water home, I am exhausted and most of the time I go straight to bed," he said with a painful sigh.

Source: IRIN

Al-Moayad linked to bin Laden

Alanssi allegedly lured al-Moayad and his assistant, co-defendant Mohammed Mohsen Yahya Zayed, to Germany by posing as the fixer for another informant who wanted to donate \$2.5 million to Hamas and al-Qaida.

For his work, Alanssi said he had asked the FBI for \$5 million, American citizenship and his family's relocation to the United States. "After I chase the terrorist and I bring him here to America I deserve even \$10 million," he said.

Alanssi was dropped from the government's witness list after he set his clothing on fire outside the White House. Without Alanssi, who was burned over a third of his body, the

government relied more heavily on surveillance tapes and the case began to center almost entirely on the Hamas allegations.

By calling Alanssi as a hostile witness, defense lawyers were taking a gamble. They hoped to damage his credibility and blunt the damage from tapes secretly recorded over four days in a German hotel.

Al-Moayad and Zayed are charged with conspiring to fund and attempting to fund Hamas and al-Qaida. Al-Moayad also is charged with supporting the terrorist groups.

If convicted, Al-Moayad could receive a 60-year prison sentence and Zayed three decades.

Hizbollah tells Lebanese to cool anti-Syria line

BEIRUT, Feb 19 (Reuters) - Hizbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah warned on Saturday that popular agitation against Syria's grip on Lebanon after the killing of former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri could plunge the country back into civil war.

Opposition leaders are urging Lebanese to join a peaceful "independence uprising" to free their country from Syria's military and political dominance, intensifying a war of words after Hariri's assassination in a huge bomb blast on Monday.

"God forbid, if the roof collapses, it collapses on all of us," Nasrallah told tens of thousands of Shi'ite Muslims gathered for Ashura, the most solemn event in their calendar.

"Today we are responsible for a nation that came out of the civil war ... but we face acute problems, especially this year and in the past few months," the black-turbaned cleric declared. "As Lebanese, we have no choice for remedying our crises and problems except to discuss and meet, even if we are angry and tense," he said. "We must not repeat the mistakes of the past."

Hizbollah, backed by Syria and Iran, is now a formidable Lebanese political party as well as an anti-Israel guerrilla force that still controls much of south

Lebanon since helping end a 22-year Israeli occupation in May 2000.

The death of Hariri, a wealthy Sunni Muslim businessman, sparked an outpouring of public grief mixed with anger against Syria, instinctively held responsible by many Lebanese.

The anti-Syrian sentiments now uniting many of Lebanon's Christians, Druze and Sunnis have not been voiced by Shi'ite leaders counted among the most loyal allies of Damascus. Shi'ites form the country's biggest religious community.

Hizbollah, the only militia to retain its guns openly since the civil war ended, could come under intense pressure to disarm, in line with United Nations demands, if Syria left.

Nasrallah called for a speedy investigation into Hariri's killing, but rejected international involvement in Lebanon.

"Cooperate or else"

The United States, which this week recalled its ambassador from Damascus in response to the bombing, told Syria on Friday to cooperate in the investigation or face further sanctions.

Washington imposed some economic sanctions in May, including a ban on U.S. exports to Syria other than food and medicine.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said Syria could avoid further punishment by changing its policies. "We are not trying to isolate Syria, what we are



Thousands of Hizbollah supporters walk through the streets of Beirut's largely Shi'ite Muslim southern suburbs to mark the holy day of Ashura Feb. 19. Hizbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah warned supporters that popular agitation against Syria's grip on Lebanon after the killing of former prime minister Rafik al-Hariri could plunge the country back into civil war. REUTERS

trying to do is to get Syria to engage in more responsible behaviour," she said.

The United States has not blamed Syria for Hariri's assassination and Damascus has denied involvement.

Washington has previously told Syria to withdraw its 14,000 troops from its tiny neighbour, crack down on Iraqi insurgents and stop backing Hizbollah and Palestinian militant groups.

The Beirut government has rejected U.S. and French calls for an international inquiry into Hariri's killing, but the United Nations has asked an Irish policeman to lead a U.N. team to report on its "circumstances, causes and consequences".

Deputy police commissioner Peter Fitzgerald is expected to leave for Beirut in the next few days, a U.N. spokesman said.

The Bush administration wants Security Council members to consider measures that could be taken against Hariri's killers but it was unclear how many council members would agree.

In September, France and the United States engineered a council resolution demanding Syrian troops get out of Lebanon. That measure, resolution 1559, squeaked through 9-0, the minimum number of votes required, with six abstentions.



Lebanon's Hizbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah speaks in Beirut's largely Shi'ite Muslim southern suburbs to mark the holy day of Ashura Feb. 19. REUTERS

Nasrallah attacked the resolution as an Israeli-inspired measure that would not bring Lebanon sovereignty, freedom and independence, as some Lebanese imagined.

"There is another viewpoint that says this resolution will ruin the country and make it hostage to international powers and enemy powers, specifically Israel," he said. "The demands made in 1559 are entirely Israeli demands."

Bombs kill 23 as Iraqi Shi'ites mark Ashura

BAGHDAD, Feb 19 (Reuters) - Insurgents killed at least 23 people and wounded around 90 in a series of suicide attacks and bombings in Shi'ite Muslim districts of Baghdad on Saturday, the holiest day of the Shi'ite religious calendar.

Iraq's security forces had been braced for attacks in the southern holy city of Kerbala, where more than 170 pilgrims were killed during the Shi'ite ritual of Ashura last year.

But guerrillas targeted the capital, which has borne the brunt of violence since last month's elections.

In the worst attack, a man wearing a vest laden with explosives boarded a bus in the Shi'ite Khadamiya district and blew himself up, according to witnesses and the U.S. military.

Police said 17 people were killed and 41 wounded in the blast, close to a barrier protecting a Shi'ite mosque.

A Reuters photographer at the scene said bodies were lying in the road, blown apart and burned. The orange bus was torn almost in half and reduced to a burnt wreck.

In a separate attack in the same area, a suicide bomber blew himself up after an exchange of fire with security forces. One U.S. soldier was killed.

Earlier, a suicide bomber on a motorbike attacked a group of people attending the funeral of a woman killed in one of Friday's bombings.

Four mourners were killed and 39 wounded, hospital officials said.

While Baghdad was rocked by the blasts, Shi'ites in Kerbala were able to observe Ashura in relative peace.

Officials said several hundred thousand pilgrims marched through the city's streets, chanting, beating their breasts and crying "Hussein" in honour of Imam Hussein, a grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, who died in a battle in 680 A.D.

Some cut themselves with knives in a symbolic act of atonement for Hussein's death.

Traffic was banned around the city to limit the threat of car bombs, and local residents helped set up checkpoints.

This year's Ashura came days after results from Iraq's Jan. 30

election confirmed Shi'ites would dominate the new national parliament at the expense of Sunni Arabs who held sway under Saddam Hussein and before.

Shi'ites have been repeatedly attacked by guerrillas who the government says are trying to spark a sectarian war.

Shi'ite religious leaders have urged restraint from their followers and said they had expected some attacks.

Attacks baquba, Samara

North of Baghdad, a suicide car bomber killed an Iraqi soldier and a civilian at an army base in the mixed Sunni and Shi'ite city of Baquba, and a roadside bomb killed another Iraqi soldier in the city of Samarra.

There were attacks in Samarra and the northern city of Kirkuk overnight. Among the victims was a prominent Kurdish Islamic figure, Sheikh Mohammed Ristem Abdul-Rahman, who died with his wife when gunmen attacked their car.

Few Sunnis voted in the election, a result of boycotts and intimidation, and will barely be represented in the new 275-seat National Assembly to be inaugurated in the coming weeks.

But Shi'ite politicians, wary of sectarian tensions, have said Sunnis will play a role in shaping Iraq's new political landscape despite their lack of representation.

The assembly's main task this year will be to draft a constitution under which a new parliamentary election should be held by the end of the year.

The United States is hoping a legitimate Iraqi government can provide for its own security and allow Washington to withdraw its forces, currently numbering some 150,000.

Talks have been going on for two weeks over who will take the top government positions, with Kurds expected to get the presidency and the main Shi'ite bloc the prime minister's post.

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Kuwait detains two suspects in raid: state agency

KUWAIT, Feb 19 (Reuters) - Kuwait, which has been grappling with a rise in militant violence, detained two suspects on its wanted list in a police raid on Saturday, the official news agency KUNA reported. It quoted a security source as

saying the two Kuwaitis were captured when police, backed by helicopters, raided a house in the Al Andalus area of the oil-rich Gulf Arab state.

The source did not name the two or say if they were suspected of

involvement in Islamist militant activities.

Kuwait is holding several suspects after a series of bloody clashes since the beginning of the year between police and militants suspected of links to al Qaeda.

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All raffle draws will be conducted at the Air Arabia Head office in Sharjah.

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British woman dies in bus accident in west Germany

BERLIN, Feb 19 (Reuters) - A British woman was killed and 21 other people injured on Saturday when a bus taking British tourists to an Austrian ski resort lost control and tipped over on a snow-covered highway in western Germany, police said.

The bus, carrying 34 passengers,

two drivers and a tour guide, skidded on the snow before tipping and sliding on its side for 80 metres, according to eyewitnesses cited by the police.

The 57-year old tour guide was thrown from the coach into the oncoming lane and died at the site of the accident, near Gruenstadt in the western state of Rhineland-Palatinate.

Another 21 passengers were injured, 7 of them severely, police said.

The bus was driving holidaymakers to Zillerthal in Austria from a location near London and was not equipped with winter tyres, police said.

All those travelling on the bus were British.

Pope skips mass but resumes private audiences

VATICAN CITY, Feb 19 (Reuters) - Pope John Paul missed a mass to mark the end of his lenten retreat on Saturday, but resumed his private audiences for the first time since spending 10 days in hospital earlier this month.

The Vatican said the Pontiff received the Patriarch of Babylonia and an Italian bishop during the morning, marking a return to public duties for the frail, 84-year-old Pope.

However, he was not deemed strong enough to attend a mass in the draughty St Peter's Basilica to mark the end of a week-long lenten retreat for Vatican prelates.

John Paul was rushed to hospital at the start of the month suffering from severe breathing difficulties brought on by a bout of influenza.

After 10 days of treatment he returned home and appeared at his window last Sunday to give his usual weekly blessing.

He was expected to give the blessing again this Sunday,

but it was not clear if he would be able to read his address or would leave it to an aide to do the speaking for him.



Roman Catholic cardinals arrive to attend mass in the Vatican's St. Peter's Basilica Feb. 19. Pope John Paul missed a Mass to mark the end of his lenten retreat on Saturday, but resumed his private audiences for the first time since his hospitalisation earlier this month. REUTERS

Sinn Fein leaders discuss Irish cash probe crisis

DUBLIN, Feb 19 (Reuters) - Leaders of the Irish Republican Army's political ally Sinn Fein met for crisis talks on Saturday as a cross-border money laundering investigation piled pressure on the party over alleged links to paramilitary crime.

In recent days police in Ireland have quizzed eight people and recovered more than 2.5 million pounds (\$4.73 million) in cash - some of which may be linked to a 26.5 million pound Belfast bank raid in December - in what they say is a probe into illegal IRA funding.

Accusations of Sinn Fein involvement in the bank raid have dealt a blow to Anglo-Irish efforts to restore Northern Ireland's regional assembly, which was intended to share power between Catholics and Protestants, and which collapsed in 2002.

In a series of television interviews on Saturday, Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams rounded on critics on both sides of the border who say the allegations prove his party is unfit for office, accusing them of "disgraceful" attacks on its integrity.

"There has been a torrent of abuse and of hyperbole and of invective visited upon the party by our political opponents, because obviously they see this as an opportunity to try and destroy Sinn

Fein," he told Sky News from Dublin, where the party's ruling executive was meeting.

"To listen to some of our political opponents you would think that Sinn Fein as a party, Sinn Fein as an organisation, that those who vote for our party are criminals, and we're not."

Of the eight people arrested in Dublin and the southern city of Cork over the past three days, one has been charged with membership of an illegal organisation and six - among them a former Sinn Fein elected official - were freed without charge.

One man, reportedly arrested after police received reports of cash being burned in a garden, was still being questioned by detectives in Cork, an Irish police spokeswoman said.

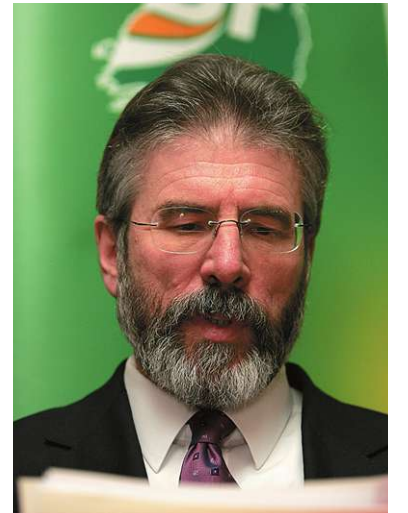
In Dublin forensic tests were being carried out on money seized in a series of raids to see if it could be linked to the December 20 heist at the vaults of Northern Bank in Belfast.

The haul included 2.3 million pounds in sterling found at a house near Cork, and 94,000 euro allegedly found hidden in a washing powder box in Dublin.

Earlier this month Northern Ireland's ceasefire monitoring body backed the assessment of police and the British and

Irish governments that the IRA carried out the Northern Bank robbery, and said it was sanctioned by senior members of Sinn Fein.

The IRA, which called a ceasefire in its campaign against British rule in Northern Ireland in 1997, has denied involvement in the Northern Bank robbery, and Sinn Fein leaders have said they believe the guerrilla group.



Sinn Fein party leader Gerry Adams prepares to speak to fellow republicans in a Dublin hotel, Feb. 19. REUTERS

Party office attacked ahead of Spain's EU vote

MADRID, Feb 19 (Reuters) - A small explosive device shattered glass at a ruling Socialist party office in Spain's northern region of Asturias on Saturday, a day before a referendum on the EU constitution, officials said.

"No to fascist and imperialist constitutions," read a note left at the scene and written in the Asturian dialect, which would rule out the armed Basque separatist group ETA.

A firecracker acting as detonator

exploded but did not set off the aerosol cans and five litres of gasoline that made up the bomb, the government said in a statement.

Neighbours found a second, similar device at an opposition Popular Party office elsewhere in Asturias, but the perpetrators had been unable to set it off, the statement said.

The crude devices were similar to others discovered around past elections and celebrations of Asturias' national

day. Some 106,000 police officers will be on alert during voting on Sunday.

Nearly 35 million voters are eligible to vote in the referendum to answer the question: "Do you approve the treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe?"

The vote will be watched closely by governments in other EU member states, some of which have also promised to hold plebiscites on the controversial document.

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Words of Wisdom

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

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

OUR
OPINIONKnowledge
makes a difference

In an interesting survey, we tried to know the reactions of the Yemeni public to the recently held Iraqi elections and particularly the election results. In the survey, which is still continuing, we found a divide between two main opinions in the country.

One group is composed of the intellectuals and educated people living mainly in cities, who tend to think that elections have run in more or less a free environment. They justify that based on the results, which show that the US-supported group led by Allawi was only able to attain 13.6 per cent of the votes. They see this as a victory for the dominant opinion of the Shiite majority and view this as an election that was run to higher in standards than elections in other Arab countries.

On the other hand, there is a group who continues to be skeptical and suspicious of the whole electoral process, saying that everything had already been staged in advance, and that elections were a mistake from the very beginning because they were held during an occupation.

For me, it is both ironic and bizarre to note that the two countries under occupation, Iraq and Palestine, may have witnessed the most transparent and free elections in recent Arab history. This of course should not suggest that I favor occupation, but I would like to remind readers of the level of totalitarianism and lack of transparency that dominate politics in all other Arab countries.

Interestingly, some of the ones we talked to openly suggest that occupation could sometimes have a positive influence on nations. It is not 100 per cent bad as you can see. There are at least some good things brought by occupation, said one of the individuals surveyed.

This can be understandable if we look into the amount of suffering and desperation reached by some citizens who do not see any hope for improvements in the way Arab countries are run.

The other thing that was noticeable in the survey was the amazing shift of opinions from one side to the other. It demonstrates how Yemenis and perhaps Arabs in general are sympathetic people who are affected very quickly with religious and fanatic slogans and ideas. At one time, they were ready to sacrifice their lives for Saddam, before the Iraq war. At another time, they see Saddam as a dictator. On other occasions they get confused when seeing Iraqis themselves hate Saddam, and think that they ought to love him.

Arab citizens have been raised in a culture of illiteracy, lack of information, and acceptance of what they have been told. They have been used to believing what is said and not providing a counter opinion. They are used to being passive and tamed by brutal and oppressive regimes that deprive them from attaining knowledge and education.

This was also an occasion to remember the UNDPs Arab Human Development Report, which clearly stated that Arab citizens needed to be liberated and informed. Information is the single most important element that could change the lives of Arab citizens to the better, and it is the same thing that Arab regimes do not want them to have.

But this has to change.

And, thankfully, that change is underway.

The Editor



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First English Newspaper in Yemen, founded in 1991
by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

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Brain-drain to U.S.
Europe's scientific meltdown

By CLAUDE KORDON

After World War II, most Europeans agreed that scientific research would not only boost their economies, but also deliver greater technological autonomy from the United States and act as a catalyst for social change.

The British Royal Society advocated creating the German Max Planck Society on the ground that solidarity between international scientific communities could contribute to reconciling former enemies. As a result, big projects such as the European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN), the European Space Agency (ESA), and the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), were founded to help unite European research efforts in basic science.

Today, however, European science is declining in almost all countries (Sweden, Finland, and Iceland are exceptions), wasting existing talent and losing attractiveness for young people. On average, a young European scientist working in the US receives 2.5 times more research support than in Europe. No surprise, then, that a brain drain has developed. Indeed, Europe has only five scientific researchers per 1000 inhabitants, compared to eight in the US and nine in Japan. Despite its strong scientific tradition, figures for Central Europe are even worse, and the cost of EU integration is likely to further shift priorities away from science and education.

Shrinking budgets are also damaging established scientists. In the life sciences, for example, foundations find it hard to identify high-level Europeans for awards. This is not due to lower scientific quality, but to the higher levels of sustained support available to American group leaders to transform new ideas into discoveries.

Massive military and health investments by the US government have generated a critical mass of research, which in turn attracts private funding – including from European companies, particularly in the pharmaceutical industry. Something similar can and does work in Europe. In Finland, for example, ten years of sustained public funding is now catalyzing private investments and fueling regular

increases in R&D budgets.

Edith Cresson, a former European Commissioner for Research, once said that, "funding directly nanotechnologies would have been more rewarding than creating CERN." She was wrong: the complexity of modern science does not allow anyone, least of all bureaucrats, to predict where innovation will emerge. Public funding of basic research and industrial investments are both needed to achieve long-term technological development.

Although most national funding agencies lack imagination when it comes to European cooperation, several institutions are aware of Europe's deteriorating research and the handicaps European scientists face in competition with those in the US and Japan (and also, increasingly, India and China). At a meeting organized for November 2005 by the Collège de France, Nobel laureates, science historians, and managers of European universities and research facilities will stress the need for a new science policy, including in the social sciences and humanities, in the presence of ministers and European commissioners.

Euroscience and the European Science Foundation have also made suggestions aimed at shoring up political will:

Establish a European Research Council. This initiative, originally presented by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and the magazine Nature, proposes to create a pan-European funding agency to organize international competition in "hard" and "soft" basic science. Most national research organizations and the European Commission support the idea, but questions persist: who will provide the budget (at least 2 billion is needed, which is roughly half of the increase promised by EU governments to raise R&D to 3% of the GNP in 2010)? What mechanisms will ensure the Council's autonomy, a key condition for basing research awards strictly on scientific quality?

Implement general European training schemes. Large facilities have trained a few generations of genuinely European scientists. But they cover only a small range of scientific disciplines; in most others, education is still overwhelmingly national. The Bologna protocol, which aims at harmonizing university training

throughout Europe, could prove useful here. In parallel, European post-doctoral schemes need reappraisal. In the US, such schemes contribute to widespread dissemination of expertise, whereas European laboratories still use them as waiting lines without putting enough emphasis on multinational and multidisciplinary trajectories.

Give appropriate recognition, salaries, and autonomy to young scientists. Unfortunately, young scientists are largely viewed as a source of cheap manpower, deterring the best students from embracing scientific careers. The new Charter of Scientists now under discussion in the European Commission should improve the situation, by making flexible career tracks compatible with transferable social benefits.

Europe needs proactive policies to meet the challenges of new research needs – and to take advantage of subsequent job opportunities – in areas like sustainable development, climate change, natural hazards, and public health. Creating an international pool of expertise could become an important asset for European universities, while enabling European industries to create new jobs.

Europe's science policies should also frame a new deal for developing countries. Today, scientific relations between developed and developing countries are unequal; important genetic discoveries based on Third World diseases provide neither appropriate credit to local scientists nor fair returns to the populations that made them possible. Moreover, the North-South gap in public health is a major threat to the future of mankind.

Europe should seek to make science more user-friendly, both to its own researchers and would-be scientists and those in developing countries. Let us hope that Europe's politicians have the foresight to meet these challenges before European science becomes irreversibly marginalized.

Claude Kordon, the former head of a neuroscience laboratory at the French Institute of Health and Medical Research (INSERM), is past president of Euroscience, a European association for the advancement of science and the reappraisal of its relations with society.

Letters to the Editor

Dubai's success secret

Thank you for your kind words about Dubai and the U.A.E.. I am a U.A.E national (originally from Yemen). It is true that leadership is so critical in the UAE achievements. But I will also point to something even more critical in the success of this country and that is the absence of religious extremism. There is tolerance for other people's religions, customs and lifestyles. It is called "live and let live", so sure people will be smiling and happy. But if they were in other countries in our region where there is religious madness (even if there is wise leadership) they will never be happy. Since hateful Imams and Islamic groups will make sure that no one smiles, drinks, swims or do anything that will make them enjoy life...So, for any other country that wants to copy this country, they would have to open their hearts and minds to other religions, cultures and lifestyles and realize that the world is really "one family".

Ali A.
Dubai, UAE

A suggestion to
monitor leather goods

During my last visit to Sana'a I found numerous leather shoes, leather garments, leather goods are made out of pig skins. These leather products are might have duly imported from the third countries. The manufacturer uses pig skins in various cut components like shoe uppers, lining, saddles, counter, binding, collar, cuff etc.,

When I enquired, I was given to understand that there no board or authority by the government to monitor these importation. And as such citizen of Yemen wearing these products with pig skins and even go to mosques by wearing pig made products. In Islamic rules and rites

eating of pig mutton is illegal and wearing its skins is prohibited/restricted.

Such being, I suggest the government to form a body to monitor these imports and allow the citizen to wear pig leather free products.

Mushtaq Ahmed
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About Soqotra's article

With great interest I read Serge Elie's article about Soqotra. What I was wondering about while reading it was why he isn't mentioning the effects of the Tsunami on the island at all. Of course they are not essential to his description, but I guess they are an important topic concerning the island right now.

Andrea Handl
andrea.handl@gmail.com

Responding to
Lindh's response

Mr. Lindh has chosen to respond to my criticism of his tirades exposing his hatred, with some interesting, yet flawed commentary. Though an American, from the beginning I was, and still am strongly against the U.S. involvement in Iraq. I am strongly for the construction of a Palestinian State. And I abhor George Bush's "cowboy" attitudes toward "diplomacy".

What I take umbrage to is Mr. Lindh's wide generalizations, suggesting genocidal tendencies, on the part of Americans. He seems to be incapable of reading my previous letter in its entirety, and would prefer to only pick up on bits and pieces that reinforce his own biases, discriminatory philosophies and hatred. He has ignored much of my earlier message, which pointed out some of the admitted atrocities committed by U.S. troops, and revealed by the U.S. media; but he says

nothing about the murder of an English/Iraqi woman, or others - Iraqis and foreigners alike - who were not combatants, and whose only crime was trying to feed their families. These murders were committed by Islamic terrorists; where is the attempt to restrain such behavior, or bring them to justice? Why is Mr. Lindh's response so silent, in this area?

My criticism of Mr. Lindh's viewpoints are not directed at political issues, with which he may not understand that we have some common ground. My concern is for his hate-mongering, in which he would seem to feed the fear that the ignorant (including, at times, George Bush) have used to fuel their own, private agendas. Wahabi philosophies are not endemic in the U.S., as far as can be told. They are the province of Islamist zealots, like you, Mr. Lindh; perhaps if you were to allow someone to read my entire letter to you...

Don Barrick
balto_db@yahoo.com

Could Greeks and
Yemenis be relatives?

Being of Greek descent, I know that Athenians and Northern Egyptian cities shared kinship in the distant past, and that a mutual respect and brotherly feelings exists up to the present.

I have also heard that certain tribes in Yemen claim kinship and common ancestry with Greeks going back to ancient times.

Is this true? Have you heard this? (I hope it is true) I request that any of your readers who knows more please inform me by emailing me to my email below.

George Polychronis
gpolychronis@rosehillfoods

The cursed qat tree

I strongly believe that qat is the cursed tree mentioned in

the Holy Quran.

Many people would argue that qat should not be considered as drugs, but what is the difference. Both qat and drug lead their addicts to the same end (hell).

A low / middle income Yemeni, would spend large or most of his income in buying qat, leaving if anything left for his family and children needs such as food, education and health.

Qat is waste of time for the large portion of Yemeni population who chew / eat it. It tighten its chewer to it. It dominate its chewer thinking, planning and future. A qat chewer would exhaust his mental and physical abilities in obtaining qat, rather than improving his family awful leaving condition. Everyone of us know several people of his relatives or friends who are in this horrifying situation.

I was in a visit to my beloved country Yemen last December, and I felt very sad to notice that the whole afternoon of most of Yemenis are dedicated to qat. The afternoon is considered as one of the busiest time in most of the world capitals, but in Sana'a it is considered as the time for relaxation with qat. Does this tell anything about the reason behind the lag behind of our country?

Aren't we able to see that it is a cause of several problems? Do not we need to do some thing about it, or it remain part of our holy social habits that should be treated with full respect?

I hope to see soon a massive campaign in Yemen media, educating Yemenis of the bad effects of qat on their life and future and to see more restrictions on consuming qat until Yemen become a country free of qat.

Ahmed Al-Thamari
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COMMON
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

Masters of Death

It appears that after 9/11, the Middle East has been destined to become the bloodbath of the world, with the venue created for wild gangs to roam as they like and plant their lethal wares wherever they like, enjoying full access to the internet and the international media channels and running away with every drop of blood they spill free from punishment or even subject to deterrence.

How did this world come to be so easily vulnerable to these hordes of bloodthirsty vagrants, who have an open license to kill anywhere and anyone they so desire. It is indeed perplexing to the staunchest of thinkers and philosophers that the human species can first of all contain such ugly elements that feel no sense of guilt or conscience as they tear to pieces the most magnificent of all creations in mass numbers, and are even willing to take pride in it by announcing that we have boldly undertaken this act of murder and feel closer to God! No these are not God fearing individuals or groups.

On the contrary they have set it upon themselves to defy God in all his commandments and challenge his right to give and take away life, even if it be their very own! What kind of culture breeds such violent notions into the minds of seemingly normal men, who wish to convince us that they do this compelled by piety and the will of God? God forbid that anyone should associate Him with them or any of their doings, for they are truly the wretched and evil of the Earth who are set out to destroy all the work of the tens of prophets and messengers that the Lord Al-Mighty assigned over the ages to embed a culture of kindness, mercy and tolerance, not a culture of hatred, sadism and anarchy.

Yet, the whole world is an open stage for such wild morons to unleash their madness at random and without a rationale that can easily be consumed by the logic and reasoning that has taken millennia to develop in the minds of men. Kill, kill, kill! That is the only platform that these morons can adopt as if the only way to get anywhere in this world is through the process of elimination, whereby one eliminates all those one does not like, or one does not agree with or simply that happens to be at the spot when the itch to kill has hit upon their hollow minds and empty hearts. Where are the values that drive men to such wanton hatred and destruction and thirst for blood? There is no religion that can claim to be of spiritual inclination if it thrives and the separation of human spirit and body.

There is indeed culture that has been in the making for some time, which has been nurtured scientifically to carry out such monstrosities as 9/11 and Qana and Karbala and Najaf and even Beirut. Yes it is a conspiracy and the psyche that is driving these madmen is indeed not a product of coincidence but a product of evil connivance, masterminded by people, who have set up the appropriate channels to unleash this madness of blood, wherever they think it will serve their even more evil inclinations of becoming masters of the world – i.e. to challenge the Lord Al-Mighty for all the elements of his Superiority, including to have the control over human life and human destiny.

It is an evil force that is hidden but has made itself manifest in various images, with the common denominator between all of them being death. What is this hidden monster that has made death an inseparable element of life, with the intention of killing all kinds of conscientiousness and hope? Must mankind live in perpetual fear? Is this the testament of God? God forbid, for the Lord Al-Mighty has all along stressed that He has forbidden all transgressions of Himself.

So where do these monsters come up with the corruption of God's edicts and rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Men who profess that only death will serve God's cause are truly moronic and have no place in any religious doctrine. Yet they are so free to maneuver in this world and able to use all the resources that even modern technology has availed to make life easy towards their mission of death! Something has got to give here. These are not simply the act of a few brain-washed lunatics whose power to reason has been completely removed and who have been fed by the syringes of hate and thirst for blood, so that others, the hapless carriers of death do not even know about or conceive of existing, can eat of the spoils.

This is a highly organized machine that has been built up over the span of generations, where the masters of evil have created a shield that not only covers them from the rest of humanity but protects them from any revelation as to the real evil that brings about such brutality on mankind.

Why should the Middle East be the focal point of operations of this conspiracy by the genius of the real evil that seeks to overcome all forms of human decency and dignity and replace any comfort of the soul with a venue of bloodshed to implant fear upon men to submit to their evil dreams? Only the masterminds of Zionism will be ready to answer that! This is a highly organized campaign to be viewed as merely the work of some moronic gangs here and there that are acting out of their own free will. How could such similarity of deeds be perpetuated simultaneously throughout the world with such phenomenal precision? Random gangs do not operate like that. Only highly organized conspiracies can produce such horrific patterns of death in so many places at a relatively short time span.

Bali or Karbala emanate from the same school and if humanity does not wake up in due time, then any place in this world will be a playground for these wielders of death anytime they deem it to advance their cause. What is this cause? Any cause that regards death as the only way to achieve its objectives is indeed a unified evil cause that sees no evil in its doing as long as its narrow minded interests are advanced.

Terrorism is the baby child of a culture that believes that it can really achieve what no other empire seekers have been able to achieve: mastery of the world through the dissemination of death to instill in the hearts of mankind that there are human masters of death that have decided to challenge one of the powers of the Al-Mighty and that they are the ones who shall give or take away life as they please or as it serves their interests.

It is far bigger than Al-Qaeda, Zerkawi, Syria or even the Axis of Evil that Bush speaks, or even all of them put together.

UN will play a positive role:

A fresh start in Iraq

By KOFI A. ANNAN

The success of last week's elections in Iraq has created an exciting moment of opportunity. It matters greatly that Iraq's transition is a success. I am determined that the United Nations will play its full part in helping the Iraqi people achieve that end.

But it also matters that a world that has been angrily divided over Iraq now recognize that we all share a common agenda: to move Iraq from the starting point—its successfully completed elections—to a peaceful, prosperous, democratic future.

Even the scars left by past differences can be turned into opportunities. Precisely because the United Nations did not agree on some earlier actions in Iraq, it now has much-needed credibility with, and access to, Iraqi groups that must agree to join in the new political process if peace is to prevail. Now is the time for us to draw on that capital.

I want to capture this moment, and encourage the international community to come together around Iraq through the United Nations.

No one can fail to have been moved

by the Iraqis' display of courage at the polls. The United Nations is proud of the assistance it was able to give them, both in developing the political base for elections and in the technical preparations. We helped to draft the electoral law and to form the Independent Electoral Commission, which ran the elections. A UN electoral team of more than 50 staff in Baghdad, Amman and New York supported the Commission. The UN trained the commission's members and several hundred other electoral workers, who in turn trained thousands more; and we have advised and supported them throughout the process.

I believe we can also help in the next stage—the very delicate one of building a constitution. There, too, our help must be both political and technical. Politically, my special representative Ashraf Qazi is already engaged in efforts to reach out to those groups—mainly Sunni Arabs—that stayed away from the elections, for whatever reason, but are willing to pursue their goals through peaceful negotiation and dialogue.

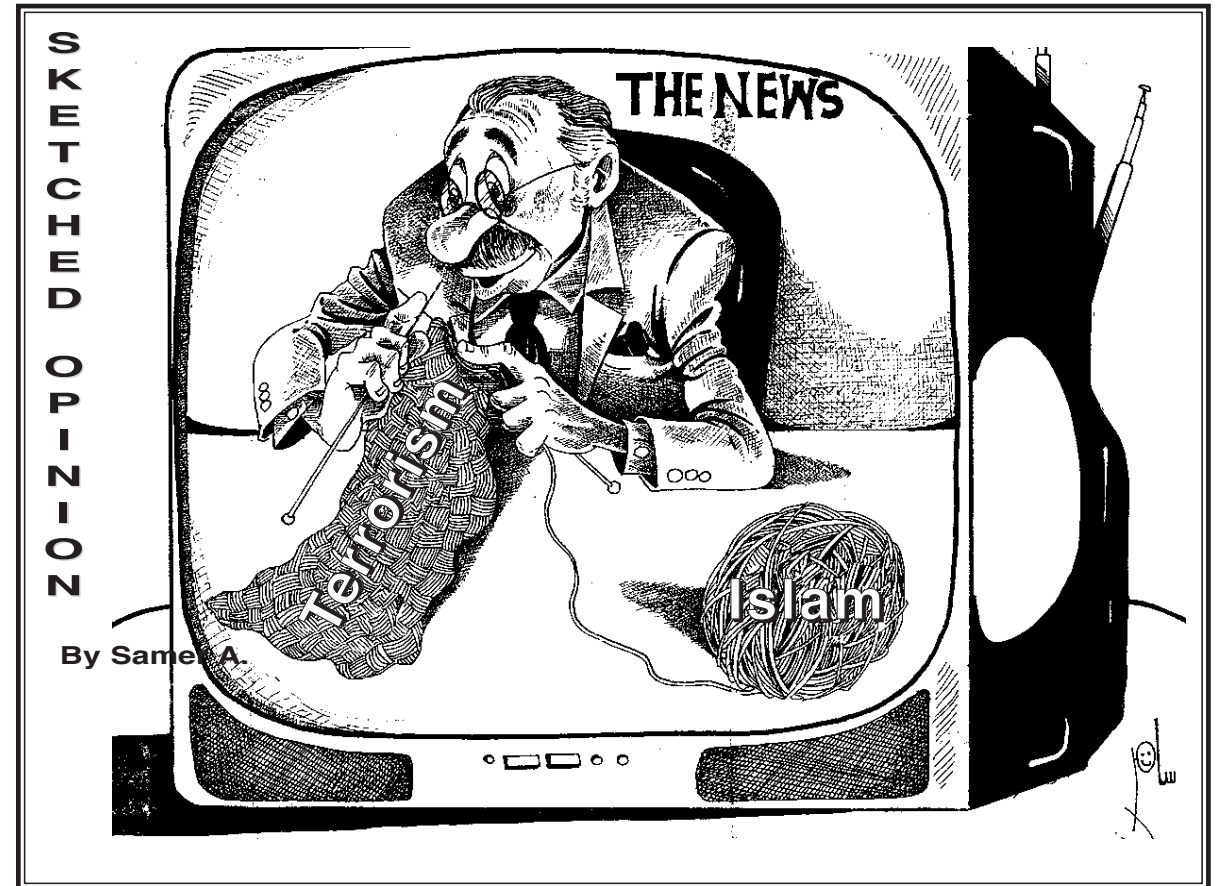
Success in this effort is crucial. Some groups are bitterly resentful of the occupation, and believe they have

been excluded from the political process. Every effort must be made to bring them in. The wider the spectrum of Iraqis that can be brought into the tent, the greater the chance of success.

The new constitution will, of course, be an Iraqi constitution, and Iraqis will decide its shape. There is no question of imposing any external ideas or models that they do not like. But if they ask advice—and I believe they will—we do have considerable knowledge and experience to draw on.

Once the draft constitution is agreed upon, a referendum is to be held, in October, to give all Iraqis the chance to pronounce on it. We would expect to be able to help the electoral commission in organizing that referendum and the subsequent parliamentary elections, just as we worked with them in preparing last week's election and are still working with them to tabulate and verify the results.

We can also give technical assistance to the new ministries. Many people seem to think that because, for security reasons, we have only 200 international staff people on the ground in Iraq (three quarters of whom are guards), the United Nations is not present and active there. This is



quite wrong, first because the U.N. has many Iraqi staff and secondly because much of our work—training, advice, coordination, acting as a conduit for funds—can be done from outside the country.

In fact, some 23 U.N. agencies, funds and programs are working together to coordinate international aid and help rebuild the country. Forty-six projects have been approved and funded to date, for a total of \$494 million.

In Basrah, for instance, the U.N. Development Program is providing \$15 million worth of spare parts to rehabilitate the Hartha power station. Similar projects are planned for power stations in other Iraqi cities, while engineers from the ministry of

electricity are being trained in Japan in a program jointly funded by Japan and Belgium. Meanwhile, in Fallujah, a group led by UNICEF has distributed some seven million liters of potable water to more than 70,000 people displaced from their homes in the recent fighting.

These activities are funded by the International Reconstruction Fund Facility, which the United Nations set up with the World Bank. So far 24 donors have committed about \$1 billion. We must see that these commitments are honored, and the money properly spent. This can help Iraqi improve their daily lives in many tangible ways.

Let's not pretend it will be easy. Iraq is in a complicated region of the

world, and has had a tortured recent history. It also has a very diverse society, and some groups are clearly determined to prevent a democratic outcome on any terms. But I believe that with international help, such a society can use democratic institutions to build itself a stable and prosperous future. That hope and that vision offer us in the outside world a real opportunity to start again—together—and support the Iraqi people in their great experiment.

We have a mandate from the Security Council to take the lead in bringing that support together, and we intend to do it.

The writer is secretary general of the United Nations.

German-US relations: Smiles on the Rhine

By CHRISTOPH BERTRAM

On February 23, a day after addressing America's allies in Brussels, President George W. Bush will meet German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder in the old city of Mayence on the Rhine. After the falling-out over Bush's Iraq adventure, the two countries—so central to the transatlantic relationship in the past—are once again on speaking terms.

But, however welcome the return to cordiality may be, it is no more than that. If Bush and Schroeder are now showing the world how well they get along together, it is not because they are off to a new start, but because it suits their tactical interests. Had the American people chosen John F. Kerry over George W. Bush last November, the reunion would be seen by both sides as a new beginning, resonant with personal warmth. But both continue to doubt that past substantive divisions can really be overcome.

Thus, the meeting in Mayence will be one of those diplomatic courtesy calls that gloss over important bilateral differences. There will be no meeting of minds between Bush and Schroeder, because, on most key issues, their minds hold opposite views.

Consider what is potentially the most contentious issue, how to cope with Iran's nuclear program. Germany has been determined, together with France and Britain, to get Iran to stop uranium enrichment through incentives and negotiation. While the US has now explicitly welcomed the European initiative, it remains openly skeptical and unwilling to join, thus weakening the chances of success. Failure would lead America to seek the UN Security Council's formal condemnation of

Iran, coupled with sanctions.

Indeed, the US is already trying to soften up Iranian resistance by hinting at a possible use of force. But there is no support in Europe for military action, and little backing for sanctions. If the negotiations should fail, the transatlantic cleavage could once again become glaringly wide.

The divisions are no less marked in another transatlantic quarrel, this one over whether to lift the European Union's embargo on arms exports to China, imposed following the Tiananmen Square massacre 15 years ago. Schroeder has been pushing the EU to lift the embargo, a move that now appears imminent.

But for the US, the step is seen, not without reason, as an encouragement to China in its conflict with Taiwan. It will be interpreted as a stab in the back of US efforts to maintain stability in the region.

Nor will there be much progress on a matter dear to Berlin, namely Germany's application to enter the UN Security Council as a permanent member. The prospect is uncertain enough as it stands that Bush may be spared the need to veto it. But it would make an immense difference for Germany's chances if the US actively supported what is, after all, a reasonable objective of one of its most important allies.

But the Mayence meeting will not bring the two sides closer to working out a common position on any of these issues, or even to seeing the other side's point of view. Instead, they will dwell on what is by now uncontroversial: welcoming the recent, if still fragile, progress in Israel-Palestine relations, supporting stability in post-election Iraq and Afghanistan, and extolling the transatlantic link.

The drafters of the farewell

communiqué are, no doubt, already at work listing all the issues on which the two governments see eye to eye. Bush and Schroeder will make up for the paucity of substance with a good deal of friendly banter and bonhomie before the press assembled in Mayence.

That is, of course, better than nothing. But it amounts merely to a temporary papering over of differences, not their resolution. Worse, there is no sign that either man is willing to speak his mind in order to signal to the other side what he will expect when the next crisis looms. Future misunderstandings and misgivings are thus inevitable.

The welcome return to civility is not, therefore, a return to mutual trust. After all, the test of alliance does not lie in praising agreements, but in thrashing out disagreements in a spirit of cooperation. Neither Bush nor Schroeder seem ready for this.

If nothing else happens, the chief transatlantic partners will be no better prepared for the next crisis than they were for the last. As Leslie Gelb, the former president of The Council on Foreign Relations in New York, recently remarked, leaders in Europe and the US have lost the habit of serious cooperation.

What could revive that habit? Perhaps only a miracle: real progress in the Israel-Palestine conflict, which both the US and the Europeans could then claim to have helped bring about. Common success could make both sides realize that they still have a common cause.

But that miracle will not materialize in Mayence.

Christoph Bertram is the director of the German Institute for International and Security Studies (SWP) in Berlin.

The Embassy of The United States of America announces for an immediate job opening within its organization.

“Assistant Information Management Manager”

The position is located in the Information System Center (ISC), American Embassy, Sana'a. Incumbent assists the Computer Management Assistant (FSN-09) and Information Systems Officer (ISO) as needed in planning, developing, procuring, implementing, administering, maintaining and evaluating Post's unclassified computer systems and information systems (applications, programs, etc). The incumbent acts as the backup Computer Management Assistant. Also provides computer and systems management advisory services; analyzes and maintains program applications, evaluates services and tests software (e.g., operating systems) and peripherals of the Windows XP/2000 LAN.

Required Qualifications:

Education: A University Degree is required in information systems technology, or computer sciences. Technical training in management and use of information systems technology, in particular personal computer hardware, Windows XP Workstation and 2000 Server, Microsoft application software (SQL, SMS), and TCP/IP networking is a must. Work experience can be substituted for formal training.

Prior Work Experience: At least three years of performing progressively more responsible work of a technical or administrative nature where emphasis is placed on analytical, judgmental and expository abilities with respect to the operation, management and use of Windows computer and network systems.

Language Proficiency: Level III (good working level) in English reading and writing is required.

Ability: Incumbent must have ability to manage Windows Local Area Network and peripherals. The ability to work independently and be resourceful is a must in finding solutions to information systems problems, and planning objectives. The incumbent must be able to work with the user environment, pass on information to users in formal and informal environments such that users can effectively use their software and hardware. Basic supervision skills are required as well as time management ability.

Grade/Salary: *EFM/MOH/Non Ordinarily Resident: FP-7 (to be confirmed by Washington) Ordinarily Resident: FSN-07 (Trainee level)

“Female Guard Receptionist”

The position is located in the Local Guard Program, Regional Security Office, American Embassy, under the immediate supervision of the Head Guard and the general supervision of the RSO. Employee will perform guard receptionist duties service to safeguard U.S. Government property and/or personnel.

Required Qualifications:

Education: Completion of Elementary school is required.

Prior Work Experience: One to two years of experience preferably in security related fields.

Language Proficiency: Level III (good working level) English required.

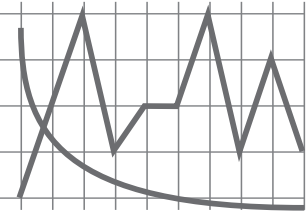
Ability: Must have the ability to learn security procedures and protection measures. Must have the ability to follow instructions, and be reliable in attendance and performance.

Grade/Salary: * EFM/MOH/Non Ordinarily Resident: FP- BB (to be confirmed by Washington) Ordinarily Resident: FSN-03.

How to apply: All Interested nationals should complete OF-612 or submit a current C.V. (with awards, recommendation letters, copies of degrees earned) that addresses the qualifications and requirements of the position, as listed above, and send it to the Human Resources Office, American Embassy, Dahr Himyar Street, P.O. Box 22347, Sana'a, Yemen, Tel: 755-2000, Fax: 303-182 no later than March 05, 2005.

NOTE: ALL ORDINARILY RESIDENT APPLICANTS MUST BE RESIDING IN COUNTRY AND HAVE THE REQUIRED WORK AND RESIDENCY PERMITS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION.

YT Business



Economic boost Building a tourism infrastructure

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Tourism in Yemen is considered the second most important sector in terms of the national income following the oil sector.

The capital city of Sana'a and other cities including Aden, Marib, Zabeed and Shebam all contain historic sights dating back thousands of years. These historic parts are recommended to be visited for the sake of investment reasons to achieve the sought goals of declaring 2004 "Year of Tourism".

The Yemeni government is expending extensive efforts to promote such tourist sights, and upgrade and expand tourism infrastructure.

It has the intention to develop the tourist industry, which has seen rapid growth due to the development of media and the internet.

The studies indicate that in spite of the fact that many countries have recently established travel and tourism markets, the Yemeni market is still promising to attract a great influx of tourists into the country to spend their leisure time, receive treatment in natural baths, or visit areas which show off distinctive biodiversity.

Additionally, numerous tourists visit Yemen to enjoy seeing the folkloric sights and landscapes, religious places and many other fascinating scenes that are classified within the tourism components.

But for 2005 to gain economic landmarks and great influxes of foreign tourists, it will take hard work on the part of the competent bodies to enhance the efforts of tourism industry and activate domestic tourism.

New industry
Tourist experts state that Yemeni tourism is still in need of additional efforts



Shibam City in Hadramout.

to yield growth for economic development. With the continuing increase in the tourist economy and the rapid rise of domestic and foreign tourism, Yemen will become one of the important tourist targets in the region. The tourist industry does not look like it did several years ago.

Tourist specialists confirm that that declaration of 2005 "Year of Tourism" could expand the base of the national economy and lessen the high unemployment rate through creating more job opportunities. They added that such activities could help

improve the living standards of citizens by the implementation of small and medium-sized enterprises and restrict the increasing phenomenon of immigration to big cities.

Tourism mechanisms

Specialists hold the view that there are numerous mechanisms needed to upgrade standards and services of the tourist sector and this can be achieved through evaluating the performance of, for example, hotels.

The evaluation process requires the help of researches and statistical studies conducted for the sake of boosting the tourist sights and upgrading effective strategies including the implementation of projects in the government and private sectors. The process also includes comprehensive promotion strategies as well as public relations strategies to ensure an effective tourist promotion.

In addition, a promotion program is needed to enrich cultural heritage and help the local communities in designing and

implementing projects.

The program is expected to play an integral role in creating links between culture and tourist attractions, and it will contribute to renewing the economic and social activities of these communities.

The following objects should be attained:

- Training on how to prepare and sell the tourist programs and promote services for local and international markets.

- The concerned authorities should get acquainted with the important internation-

Exchange Rate for the Yemeni Rial

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	187.1000	187.3700
Sterling Pound	353.3900	353.9000
Euro	244.1900	244.5500
Saudi Rial	49.8900	49.9600
Kuwaiti Dinar	640.6900	641.6100
UAE Dirhem	50.9400	51.0100
Egyptian Pound	32.2400	32.2900
Bahraini Dinar	496.2900	497.0000
Qatari Rial	51.4100	51.4800
Jordanian Dinar	263.8500	264.2300
Omani Rial	485.9900	486.6900
Swiss Franc	157.9200	158.1500
Swedish Crown	26.8700	26.9100
Japanese Yen	1.7766	1.7791

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

al tourist organizations and conferences, and the necessary procedures for getting licenses related to exercising tourist activities.

- Training the cadre specialized in the booking procedures, passport issuance and air carriage procedures through practicing the tourist promotion tasks on the website and other facilities.

- Studying the systems and by-laws related to travel and tourism, which help control the relation between customers, airways companies and tourism bureaus that possess control of the tourist activities.

Guidelines for visitors

The concerned authorities should work according to the international standards of the tourist industry and provide guidelines for foreign visitors. They should seek the help of local specialists to contribute through the consultation of selected individuals from different tourist sights so that the guidelines will be objectively made practicable.

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism should raise awareness about tourism among citizens, as it plays an important role in boosting the tourist industry.

Summing up, the Yemeni tourist specialists emphasize the significance of assigning the external tourist market which is expected to be one of the most important exporters for the Yemeni tourism. This objective can be attained through activating the agreements of tourist cooperation between Yemen and the countries of these tourist markets.

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A place for poetry

The Maldives and the post-Tsunami era

By IRENA KNEHTL
iren_knehtl@yahoo.com
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Letter from Maldives:

In Male everything seems back to normal, am not sure people are back to normal. It is hard for us who live in the capital to imagine what a person in a rural island is going through. And its difficult to get things going because there are so many scattered isolated islands: a small community all by itself. Rebuilding these will take time. I am back to school trying to finish my studies.

Regards Fazail.

The Maldives are string of atolls in the Indian Ocean, a thousand islands nobody could count accurately. They emerge from beyond endless blue horizons. A pond of water lily leaves adrift in the mid ocean heavy with history. The islands are so low above the wave that, were it not for the tall coconut palms, they would be invisible until the ship was cough in the surf. In total, there are 1,190 islands. In fact nobody knows for sure.

For some islets grow out of submerged reefs, and others are eaten away piecemeal by the ocean and disappear. Only 202 of the islands are inhabited, although others have ruins of former habitation.

Maldives were among the dozen nations around the Indian ocean that were struck by tsunami suffering loss of life and substantial material damage to its tourism industry, the backbone of its economy. Waves begun pummeling southern Thailand about an hour after the earthquake.

After two and half hours, the torrents had traveled some thousand miles and slammed into India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, the Maldives, Myanmar and Bangladesh were also hit.

Eventually, the waves struck Somalia, on the east coast of Africa, 2,800 miles away. The magnitude of this 9.0 earthquake – the worlds most powerful since 1964 – shifted huge geological plates beneath the ocean northwest of Sumatra island, causing a sudden displacement of millions of tons of water.

The Maldivian poets and writers of this island nation are now on the forefront in organizing relief in helping rebuilding lives. They let the tsunami victims speak, write, draw about their loss, traumas, shocks suffered from the tsunami. "The Land on the Dark Side", is this weeks featured poem dedicated to tsunami victims written by Farah Didi, a Maldivian economist and the most prominent contemporary poet and writer.

The land on the dark side

*They say do not go to the land on the Dark Side,
where even the moon hides near the Palace of Pride,
where the Lord Unmerciful behind the greedy gate,
Almighty and Powerful dictates your fate.*

*Where will you run. You in despair
What will you do. With nothing but a prayer*

*Your song is unsung. Your future hung.
On the whim and fancy. Of the Lord of Ensnare.*

*They say beware of the den of the Dark One,
There is not safe haven. Where the death river runs.*

They say do not hope, where there is none.

Nothing but a bolt hole. There is no protection.

They say do not talk. In the dwelling of the Dead.

There are no folks listening to the rest.

*There are no fires to warm your soul.
Just cold-blooded liars. There is no parole.*

Poets are not usually economists, and economists seldom poets. They might indeed be thought to be opposing characters on the stage. Only occasionally do such disparate humans meet in one person as Farah Didi, an economist and one of the most important contemporary Maldivian women poets and writers.

Her poems and writings are regularly featured on BBC. I write this introduction because am a friend of the poetess, and I read her, because here I find a friend.

Her poetic themes are universal, love, hate, longing, respecting, suspecting,



fearing and hoping, new life and dusty death, joy and sorrow, the happiness of good times, the desolation of mourning. She herself, as I know, has loved and won, won and lost, lost and regained.



One of the picturesque Maldivian Islands.

providing protection from the sea. The population is 213,215, out of which 56,000 live in the capital Male being an important trading center. Being on the Equator, the monsoon are mild.

The Maldivians are a mixed race. Their language, Divehi, belongs to the Indo-Iranian group. Maldivians are Sunni Moslem. Islam is the backbone of society. The National emblem of the Maldives is a Coconut Palm, a crescent and a star.

The economy is based on three principal activities, fishing tourism, and shipping. Traditional industry consists of local boat building, handicrafts. Export oriented industries include tuna fish canning and manufacture of garments.

Visit the web site of Maldivian poets

and writers: www.maldiveshores.com
Become a contributor to Maldives Shores. On the same web site inform yourself about Tsunami relief and efforts in Maldives.

Sing the guest book for tsunami victims. Let Maldivians know you care and they are important to you.

Visit also Maldives Tourism Promotion Board
www.visitmaldives.com

* Irena Knehtl is a regular contributor to Yemen Times. She is a Slovenian economist who has been living in Yemen for many years. Among her writings are reports focusing on tourism, economic, and social topics on Yemen and other countries spanning Asia, Africa, and Europe

She has a deep feeling for her Maldivian islands and her people. On the other end of scale, she has a preference for irony and her determination to try anything. The haiku, the ballad, the sonnet, the outburst of free verse, they all are at her command.

She is ready to borrow from half a dozen languages, and fashion from this enormous anvil a fire-new creations, after her own heart. There is an urgent wish to change men and things for the better, a true compassion, which sends pity into action: You ask what is this life so frail, so vain. This long to tell, yet will I make it plain. This but a breath blown from the vast deeps. And then blown back to those same deep again!

About the Maldives

The Islamic Republic of Maldives is a group of islands lying in the Indian Ocean south west of Sri Lanka and south of the Indian sub continent, stretching 800 km in length and 130 km in width comprising of 1,190 coral islands with only 202 inhabited. Each island is surrounded by a shallow lagoon which is enclosed by a coral reef



Beautiful blue waters off the coast of a Maldivian islands.

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS (WFP) VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The WFP office in Yemen is seeking qualified candidate in the post of **Programme Assistant** in its main office in Sana'a.

Main duties and responsibilities of the Programme Assistant:

- Assist in the implementation of WFP activities in the Education Sector.
- Focus on data processing, project monitoring and reporting.
- Perform other related duties as required.

Qualifications:

- University graduate.
- Strong analytical skills.
- Excellent writing skills (English & Arabic).
- Good knowledge of the development sector and familiarity with basic education projects in Yemen.
- Knowledge of computer software program including word processing, spreadsheet and other packages.
- Team spirited and good negotiator.
- Ability to handle multi-tasks & work under pressure.
- Willingness to work in remote areas away from the duty station for long period of times.

Experience:

Minimum 4 to 5 years experience in project management & monitoring.

Interested applicants should deliver their applications along with their detailed CV's in English.

The post is open to Yemeni nationals and qualified **Female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.**

All applications to be submitted to the WFP Representative in Sana'a not later than 27 February 2005 in closed envelope clearly marked:

Application for Programme Assistant at the following address:

World Food Programme
Sana'a, Villa No. 22 – Nwakhshut St. St. No. 21, Diplomatic Area,
P.O. Box 7181, Republic of Yemen
Tel: 01 214100/101
Fax: 01 205515

A greeting of love

By NASIRA ALVI
NASIRA866@HOTMAIL.COM
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

*When I search the world
I search the skies
I search the moon
I found like you
Many many around
This world is full of you
Selfish Friends
Selfish ones Like you
When I got tired
When I searched again
When I made this world
Upside down even see the rain
Then I found you
Allah you are the one
Who is my best friend
No one like you
No one like you
Who is loving me too
Who is caring me too
Who is giving me many
Not by taking any
Then I found myself
A selfish one
A very selfish one
The worst one
Then I searched the world
I searched the skies
I searched the moon
I went up & up*

*High up the hill
Then I found you I found me
The same same
Like me & you
You promised me there
You married me there
Then I found the world
Then I found the skies
Then I found the moon
Smiling with me
Cheering with me
Lightening with me
Love and Life Around me
Love and Life Around me
But When you left
YOU made me alone
You went alone
You couldnt see the tears
You couldnt hear
The heartiest cries
Now*

*I cant see
I cant search the skies even of Sanaa
I cant search the moon even of Aden
I cant find the world
I cant climb the hills
I want you
only you and you
I love you
I love you
Then I closed my eyes
Found you laughing
Saying saying that*

*I completed the project
by making me the object
What a woman love
what a woman life
Is the same the same
Every where every where
Around the world
What a man you
Who never fall in love
You played to me
You betrayed
Then I opened my eyes
Lightening with me
Holding tears and cries
I searched the world
I searched the skies
I searched the moon
I found you near
Very near like ear and hear
Allah you whisper there
Allah you are here
I love you take me there
I love you take me there
HE said to me
The world is for you
The skies are for you
Every thing of MINE is yours yours
BUT remember my dear
Love and Life have
L and L
Which is only
With ALLAH Dear*

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نكهة الإحالة والمعاصرة

Egyptian doctors remove attached head of second baby

Egyptian doctors said they removed a second head from a 10-month-old girl suffering from one of the rarest birth defects in an operation on Saturday.

Abla el-Alfy, a consultant in paediatric intensive care, told Reuters at the hospital in Banha, near Cairo, that Manar Maged was in a serious but improving condition after the procedure to treat her for craniopagus parasiticus — a problem related to that of conjoined twins linked at the skull. “We are still working on the baby. After surgery ... you get unstable blood pressure, you get fever. But she is stabilising,” Alfy said. “We have some improvement.” As in the case of a girl who died after similar surgery in the Dominican Republic a year ago, the second twin had developed no body. The head that was removed from Manar had been capable of smiling and blinking but not independent life, doctors said.

Video footage provided by the hospital, a national centre in Egypt for children's medicine, showed Manar smiling and at ease in a cot with the dark-haired “parasitic” twin, attached at the upper left side of the girl's skull, occasionally blinking.

After the 13-hour operation,



An Egyptian baby named Manar Maged lies waiting for an operation at a hospital in the city of Banha, 40 km, 25 miles, north of Cairo Feb.18. Egyptian doctors said they removed a second head from a 10-month-old girl suffering from one of the rarest birth defects in an operation on Saturday.

the conjoined organ in small stages, cutting off the blood supply to the extra head while preventing increased blood flow to Manar's heart, which would have risked cardiac arrest.

Benha, 40 km (25 miles) north of Cairo, was chosen for its equipment and proximity to the girl's family. “The family of the child are from near here, we have the equipment, we assembled a team, so why not have the operation here?” she said, explaining the choice not to work in Cairo or at centres abroad with more experience with conjoined twins.

Months of preparation

Alfy said Manar's skull had been reconstructed during surgery and her skin had been joined over the bone, leaving no need for further reconstructive surgery.

The doctors decided not to carry out Manar's operation soon after her birth: “We studied the babies well,” Alfy said. “We had to study how the blood supply of the parasite is working.”

She plans to keep Manar in intensive care for up to 10 days and remains cautious: “Things are getting better but ... at any time things can go wrong.”

The condition occurs when an embryo begins to split into identical twins but fails to complete the process and one of the conjoined twins fails to develop fully in the womb.

The second twin can form as an extra limb, a complete second body lacking vital organs, or, in very rare cases, a head.

Reuters



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Reuters journalists saw the baby, her head swathed in bandages and body wreathed by tubes, in an intensive care ward. A separate twin sister, Noora, is healthy after initial problems with the birth on March 30. Alfy said the 13-strong surgical team separated Manar's brain from

King of Yemeni hang-gliding returns

By MOHAMMAD GHAOTH FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Champion Yemeni hang-glider Mohammad Al-Maqalih is set to participate in the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of unification in the city of Mukalla. This will be the first time that Al-Maqalih has participated in the sport since he was wounded during the Ibb Tourist Festival two years ago.

Al-Maqalih hopes that Yemen will host one of the international hang gliding events because of its beautiful cliffs, mountains and coasts. From his childhood in Ibb, Al-Maqalih watched birds flying and wanted to do the same. In his early days as a hang glider in Yemen, people sometimes used to mistake him for a large bird. He has been injured several times but this has only driven him to persevere.

Al-Makalih is not only a talented hang glider but he is also a successful boxer, and is fluent in both French and English. He has partaken in several Arab and international hang gliding festivals and was the first Arab national to fly over the French mountains.

He has participated in France's International Championship for hang-gliding, Oman's Festival in 2000, and in the UAE's Festival on the occasion of the return of the late Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan.



Mohammad Al-Maqalih in his hang-gliding outfit.