

Maintaining State monopoly over broadcast media

Journalists reject draft press law

By MOHAMMED AL-QADHI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Almost all media professionals in Yemen have been disappointed. They truly rejected the draft press and publication law that the ministry of information has come up with. The draft law, which the Yemen Journalists Syndicate (YJS) is expected to start debating on it today, is worse than the previous one, which is in effect now. The draft law which has completely been described as totalitarian, ignored the question of the electronic media freedom, putting an

end to the state ownership and monopoly over broadcast media. Rather, it went on controlling the websites just like print media.

Yemen co-hosted, along with the UN, UNESCO and many local and international media and NGOs, a seminar on "Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Arab Media" in January of 1996. This resulted in the Sana'a Declaration, which called upon all the government members of the UNESCO and UN to promote independent and pluralistic media, as well as to allow private ownership of the press, radio and television. The Sana'a Declaration was later adopted as a binding document of the UNESCO by all state members, including Yemen. "It seems that the ministry of information has not read between the lines of the president's instruction that the new law should be improved to cope with the new developments both at regional and international levels," said Saeed Thabet, first deputy of the syndicate chairman. "The ministry abolished the clause concerning jail sentence of journalists while putting the profession

through this draft in a real chains of restrictions and taboos. " He even called for freeing state-run print media institutions as in democratic societies, governments do not own media.

Journalists feel, after reading the draft law, that the ministry of information has made use of the violations that journalists went through since unification in 1990, turning all the points of disagreements legal terms on the basis of which journalists are held accountable. This draft has not included a chapter for taboos and restrictions which were put in 11 articles in the current law but these restrictions and prohibitions are now found everywhere in the draft, which has granted the ministry of information more and more privileges, putting it in control of the media community. The ministry has the right to issue press facility cards as well as licenses for starting a newspaper or a magazine. The minister is to issue a by-law in which he will define conditions of granting and withdrawing such cards.

The draft law granted journalists freedom to operate "within the limits of the law". There are several articles that

restrict journalists and their work, necessitating the affiliation of journalists to the YJS, despite the fact that membership to any NGO is voluntary. What is funny about this is that the law has included a chapter on the YJS, but its board members have not been consulted when preparing this draft, rather the ministry worked it out secretly. The YJS, according to the draft law, is to endorse a code of ethics for media professionals, but the draft law turned these kinds of ethical commitments into legal terms for which journalists should be held accountable.

Among the taboos and prohibitions that journalists cannot go beyond are: that they can not "criticize the head of the state" as well as "publishing or exchanging anything that directly and personally prejudices monarchs and heads of brotherly and friendly states." "This draft law released the journalist as an individual from jail, but on the other hand put freedom of speech in a real cage," Ali al-Jaradi of al-Nass Weekly summarized the demerits of the draft law.

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Military leader targeted with bomb

By MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A bomb was hurled at the motorcade of a military leader — whose name was not revealed by Ministry of Defense — on Monday morning, April 25, opposite customs head-office and the Italian Ambassador's residence.

Perpetrators who were in a car fled the scene, eyewitnesses said. The grenade exploded and injured a number of pedestrians while the military man escaped safely with his armored vehicle.

"At 11:30 a.m. on Monday, a person hurled a grenade at a car belonging to the Ministry of Defense while it was driving past the gate of customs head-office in the city of Sana'a," a security source said following the incident.

"Security elements captured the attacker who himself got injured and transferred him to a hospital for treatment (where he later died according to the same source)."

"Three grenades and a pistol were seized in a hand-held bag besides some documents. A number of citizens were slightly injured who happened to be in the scene when the incident took place. They were also transported to the hospital and security authorities are still conducting investigations to uncover the identity of the perpetrator and his motives," the source added.

Yemen Times contacted Military Intelligence Leadership of the Ministry of Defense asking for further clarification concerning the incident.

A source said the attack was against a Ministry of Defense's car carrying military personnel but did not reveal the people in the targeted identity.

"It is untrue that Brig. Ali al-Saiyani, Director of Military intelligence was targeted. This rumor was circulated because his motorcade passed in the opposite direction."

On the other hand Akhbar al-Yaum newspaper mentioned in its Tuesday's issue, April 26 that security authorities identified the perpetrator by means of his ID documents.

"He is thought to be linked to Kata'ib Badr militias, a division of the so-called 'Believing Youth Organization' —supporters of Badr al-Din al-Houthi," the newspaper said.

The newspaper alluded that the attacker is probably linked to Badr Scientific Center which is sponsored by Islamic Zaidi cleric Dr. Al-Murtadha Zaid al-Muhawwari. The members of the Center took part in the rebellion led by Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi and later by his father, according to the newspaper.

Yemen Times contacted Dr. Al-Muhawwari who was surprised at "the



Dr. Al-Murtadha Zaid al-Muhawwari

unprecedented lies."

He said, "I am a Muslim man with a moderate and tolerant thought. I am not biased towards violence."

He wondered, "Does this mean that I am going to be assassinated? What should I do and what is my charge to face such an ordeal. Everything the State dictates to

me I do including the change to religious address. I have obeyed all their commands to the letter. What else do they want?"

He described it as a stigma on the security apparatus to allow such slander.

"I don't know the person who detonated the grenade and he is not one of my disciples."

"We are leading a life worse than animals and yet they envy us. He who circulates rumors against us saying we are against the State is malignant, disordered, and immoral," he concluded.

Eyewitnesses who were present at the scene told the Yemen Times that the killed man, who was charged of hurling the grenade, was just an unlucky passer-by. He was killed amidst indiscriminate shooting when the sentries exchanged fire with the attackers who escaped on a fast car.

LET'S TALK ABOUT CARS AGAIN.



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Panic strikes Hodeidah as polio breaks out

YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Minister of Health and Population Dr Mohammed al-Numi accompanied by the governor of Hodeidah inaugurated a campaign of vaccination against polio in all districts of Hodeidah in the wake of an appearance of polio cases there.

The minister of Health on Tuesday said, that the cases of polio discovered there were six, whereas a medical source close to the vaccination campaign has said that the number of polio cases has exceeded 50 cases.

Dr Mohammed al-Numi said that the cases were discovered in Alluhayah, al-Mansurah and the city of Hodeidah. The disease may have been imported by

pilgrims returning from Mecca or by people coming from African countries. The disease appeared to have been on the verge of eradication in early 2004, but since then, it spread to several countries across Africa and Saudi Arabia.

Four children paralyzed by polio have been found after ten stool samples examined, according to the minister of health who also said that other stool sample examinations are being carried out in Oman and in the US. The results will be available May 15th and on the basis that the genetic source of the disease will be known.

The minister denied reports that the vaccine drops given to children recently might be behind the appearance of polio which had not been seen in Yemen since

1999. "This is not true at all. We receive the vaccination drops from the UNICEF," the minister said.

In response, the ministry of health and the World Health Organization are planning immunization drives for May and July in an effort to deliver drops of oral polio vaccine into the mouths of all five million Yemeni children. Al-Numi said that the ministry in cooperation with the UNICEF and WHO are conducting vaccinations, targeting around 560, 000 under the age of five. In fear of any other cases to be discovered. "Our teams are now going from door to door," he said.

The Yemeni children found to have polio, aged from 18 months to 7 years, are all situated in Hodeidah. They first showed signs of paralysis in February or

early March, Dr. Mohamed H. Wahdan, the W.H.O's Eastern Mediterranean polio coordinator told Reuters. In poor countries, it can take weeks to confirm a polio case, because stool samples must be sent to distant laboratories.

All of the children had been vaccinated, Dr. Wahdan said, but it is apparently not enough. This might disclose allegations that corrupt officials at the ministry of health office in Hodeidah have a hand in the problem.

In countries with hot weather, open sewers and many other intestinal viruses, it can take six to eight doses of vaccines to produce the same immunity that three or four do in cooler, cleaner countries.

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PORSCHE

Eryani slashes at private newspapers

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Dr. Abdul-Karim al-Eryani, President's Political Advisor, Secretary General of People's General Congress (Ruling Party) severely slammed a number of private, party-organ, and semi-official newspapers. He described them as inciting "sect-based discrimination."

"What al-Shomoa writes, is as serious as al-Khaiwani used to write, if not more," al-Eryani said in an interview with 26 September, organ of the military, in last Thursday's issue.

"This is the same with al-Balagh, al-Ummah, and al-Shura."

He said that the people of these newspapers are trying to incite sectarian strife.

He denied that Sa'adah war is set aiming at the Zaidi sect, calling it a "satanic insurgency fueled from outside Yemeni heritage and history."

Concerning religious schools, al-Eryani said he is against shutting them but confirmed that they should be within Yemeni social, religious and historical fabric.

Al-Okaimi is back

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

April, Jawf, Yemen Times, after having been arrested by authorities in Sana'a two years ago, the Member of Parliament Amin Al-Okaimi returned from Saudi Arabia.

"Sheik Amin Al-Okaimi, one of the Islah PM, was exposed to different kinds of harassments on the accusation for accommodating terror elements," a source said. For this reason he left Yemen for Saudi Arabia, where he spent two years.

The MP was a leader of the Borders' Weapons in his area in Al-Jawf but was fired after his disagreement with the authorities.

The sources revealed that Al-Okaimi's return is attributed to the authorities' needs for his help against Al-Houthi and his supporters, who went to al-Jawf.

Qa'eda suspect surrenders himself

SANA'A, April 26- Yemen Times- The mediation done by Sheikh Ahmad Saleh Duaid Chairman of Tribal Affairs Authority succeeded in persuading Ali Mobarak, from John Tribe, to surrender himself to the mediator, who in turn took him to the security authorities in Sana'a.

Ali Mobarak was suspected of

being involved in al-Qa'eda Organization and the Yemeni security authorities attempted several times to arrest him after they failed in storming his brother's house in Sana'a, considering it a mean of pressure upon the head of the household to force his brother to give in.

South Korea gives Yemen modern medical equipment

The Al-Jamhori Hospital in Sana'a has received modern equipment worth one million dollars from South Korea as a gift. The hospital's director Dr. Nabeel Dhakaan said the gift was allocated for the hospital by the ministry of the planning and international cooperation. Dhakaan said the state-of-the-art equipment include apparatuses for the intensive care and operation rooms. He said the equipment would help enhance performance of the hospital. He made clear that a new USD-400,000-dollar

burns treatment section would be opened in the hospital during the ceremonies marking the 15th anniversary of the Yemeni reunification.

American students said attending

"unofficial" religious schools in Yemen

The committee in-charge of surveying religious institutions, public and private, stated that many American students and other nationalities study in unofficial religious schools and centers which are not working under the supervision of official educational bodies. Undersecretary of education minister, Muhammad Tawaf, head of the committee, said that 150 students from America and Indonesia as well as other nationalities were found among students who study in unofficial religious schools in Sa'dah. Tawah said that "some of such schools have books, publications and tapes which show hostility against the republican regime, democracy, national and religious principles.

Taiz in unprecedented water shortage

TAIZ BUREAU

The city of Taiz is currently experiencing an unprecedented water shortage, with each family allowed only a share of water once every ten days. However, this period has been extended to a month in order for water to reach houses.

Taiz residents have started to drill wells and call water trucks to meet their daily water needs.

What is of a great concern is that the water that is being brought in by trucks is mostly polluted, said Tawfeeq al-Najashi, an officer at a water truck station.

Asked about the reasons behind the water pollution, al-Najashi replied there

are many wells located in unhealthy environments and that the owners of the trucks fill them with dirty water, regardless of the health risks in order to make money.

Al-Najashi mentioned that when he hears about trucks that fill water from unclean wells, he dismisses them from working at the station, although it remains the responsibility of the environment and health authorities to prevent the sale of water from these wells for residential use.

The price of water carried by the trucks has increased to fill the demands of water the intensive qat plantations, and owners of wells have also raised their prices, both of which exacerbates the crisis.

Scholars to refute claims on suppression of Shite's in Yemen

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen is now preparing a statement to debunk the claims of the Shi'i establishment stating that the government's recent anti-rebel assault in Sa'dah was an oppression of Shi'is.

According to the 26 September weekly, the Association of Religious Scholars would discredit the "fabrications" of the Najaf-based estab-

lishment that "a recent government action against a deviant group of vandals" was a sort of a war against followers of the Shi'i sect.

Many political sources considered the statement of the Shi'i establishment on the Sa'dah events "an outrageous intrusion into Yemen's internal affairs". One source said "the establishment should have turned its concern to the regrettable events in its own country, Iraq.

7,000 infiltrators seized over last three months

YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In cooperation with coastal guards, the Yemeni security apparatuses seized around 6,900 infiltrators since the beginning of 2005, 1,600 of whom are women and children.

The Jordanian Dustoor Newspaper quoted Yemeni official sources as saying: "Nearly 2,700 infiltrators and illegal residents were caught in the Yemen lands late this month".

The Website of September 26 run by the Ministry of Defense reported that security sources mentioned more than 95% of those caught in the Yemeni coasts, particularly Shabwa Coast to the south of Yemen, were transported by unidentified boats from the Horn of Africa into the Yemeni lands.

It said around 2675 infiltrators, caught during last March, hold Somali citizenships, and 565 of whom are women and children, in addition to other seven people with different Arab citizenships and 18 Ethiopians.

Infiltrators caught in last March and April numbered up to 4,200 including 1,100 women and children. This brought to over 6 thousand the number of infiltrators and illegal residents seized in the Yemeni lands over the first fourth of 2005.

The sources pointed out that over 6 thousand and 60 of the total number of infiltrators caught in the Yemeni lands

hold the Somali citizenship.

The month of March every year witnesses a great influx of refugees infiltrating from the Horn of Africa into Yemen, said an official at the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Aden.

He added: "Some 16 boats arrived in the Yemeni coastal lines during last March, and all of them moved from the Somali coasts of Bosaso loaded with nearly 110 people each.

He considered that the average number of refugees on each boat is 95, and that 1,520 is the overall number of refugees reaching the Yemeni coastal areas from Somalia and Ethiopia over the last ten days.

The Ethiopian refugees come second in number, following the Somali ones, however their average is small compared to that of Somalis.

Some 12 Somali refugees were drowned in the southern coasts of Yemen on March 27th, in addition to tens of people, escaping the bad situations in the Horn of Africa, who lose their lives by drowning.

The source confirmed that the Coast Guards were given orders to chase ships and boats that transport infiltrators into Yemen, seize them and transfer their drivers to the concerned authorities to receive sanctions. These efforts aim to put a limit to such a phenomenon, which threatens the social life and the national economy.

5HHV Voice

Yemen Times features 5HDGHUVU 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 HGLWLR Question:

Is the Polio outbreak in Hodiedah a real threat to FKLOGUHQ lives in Yemen?
 - Yes
 - ,Wā normal health issue
 -No threat at all

Last HGLWLR Question:

Do you think that there are people who incited DOBDDZDQLā assassinate Jarallah Omar, as Jarrallah Omar family and party claim?

Yes 80%
 I don't know 13%
 No 7%

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Yemen sues 20 foreign companies for illegal fishing

The Ministry of Fisheries has filed a lawsuit against more than 20 foreign fishing companies and claim more than 35m US dollars overall compensation for illegal fishing in Yemeni waters and pay evasions. According to Minister of Fisheries Dr Muhammad Mujawar, the ministry would claim for the compensation of illegal violation that caused damages to coral reefs and evasions of due claims that are supposed to be paid to the ministry under an agreement with the ships allowed to hunt in regional waters. "Some fishing companies used environmentally harmful fishing tools including dynamite and other explosives that often blow up fish habitats," he said.

YRCS, ICRC hold scientific seminar

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

ADEN- With the conflicts of the 21st century, it is vital that scholars and academics exchange views on how to preserve humanity and independent humanitarian action in the light of both the Islamic Shari'a and modern international humanitarian law.

For the purpose, the Yemeni Red Crescent Society, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC -

an impartial, independent and neutral international organization working to protect victims of armed conflict), and the Faculty of Law at Aden University are organizing a two-day seminar on April 24-25.

The seminar aims at exploring the common elements of Islamic Law and International Humanitarian Law in terms of respect for the life and dignity during times of war, as well as the rules concerning the different aspects in the conduct of warfare.

One of the aims of the seminar is the exploration of how rules of IHL and the Islamic Shari'a protect the victims of armed conflicts on the base of humanitarian values. In addition to showing the violations that expose people to criminal liability in the rules and principles of IHL and Islamic Shari'a.

It also aims to discuss the meaning of independent humanitarian action for the safeguard of IHL rules in today's conflicts.

Increase in German annual support for Yemen

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
 YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The German government has decided to increase its support for Yemen through raising the total German annual support for the Yemeni Republic to 40 million euros at both official and government levels. Yemeni-German annual talks are to be held next May to discuss relations of bilateral cooperation. He talks would include technological, social and financial areas. The German ambassador to Sana'a said the talks would discuss all German-funded projects under construction in Yemen and stage of accomplishment in addition to the dis-

cussion of new projects to be implemented in the near future through cooperation of both sides. The German ambassador has made it clear that raising the German support comes within the frame of development of Yemeni-German relations that have been enhanced by the visit of the German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder to Sana'a last March. That visit was followed by other high-level exchanged visits to both Sana'a and Berlin, explaining that there was an intensified and close coordination regarding various issues of interest to both countries. The German ambassador has also praised the democratic development I Yemen saying Yemen has

followed the right course to democracy and taken big steps on it, adding it is in need of continued consolidation. He has also extolled the positive participation of the Yemeni woman in the political process and the political parties and other Yemeni organisations interest in enhancement that participation in future. The German ambassador expressed appreciation of the German government for Yemen's efforts in the field of fighting terror and the results that have been attained. He pointed out to the existing cooperation between Yemen and Germany in security area for the success of fighting the organized crime and terrorism.

Job Opportunities

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

"Information Resources Center Assistant-Temporary Position"

The position is located in the American Embassy, 6DDD under the supervision of the Public Affairs Officer (PAO). The incumbent will provide research, outreach, and collection development of wide scope. Also, s/he will research for information for the Information Research Center (IRC), find electronic and traditional resources to respond to complex inquiries from the target audience, mission staff, develop and maintain contact with target audience members, contribute to the outreach program and assist with collection developments.

Required Qualifications:

Education: A university degree in information science, library science, political science, international affairs, or American studies.

Prior Work Experience: Two to four years of progressively responsible experience in the field of information research. This includes experience in traditional research and reference services, but especially emerging technologies and electronic resources.

Language Proficiency: Level IV English (fluent) in both spoken and written English, and Arabic.

Knowledge: Good knowledge of U.S. reference and resource materials. Knowledge of electronic retrieval and delivery tools, in particular the Internet and standard information science practices and procedures. Research inquiries require that the incumbent has an in depth knowledge of host country and U. S. foreign affairs policies, legislative and other domestic issues of relevance to Country Plan themes. Knowledge of desktop publishing design, formatting, and production.

Abilities: Excellent service orientation to target audience, interpersonal, and cross cultural skills. Ability to carry out reference searches and respond rapidly to complex requests, often for breaking news; to work effectively with American and foreign national staff; to independently plan, organize, and carry out assigned responsibilities using electronic based technologies, including internet, CD-ROM, and print resources; to maintain contact with target audience members; excellent written and oral communication skills. Ability to prioritize work schedule and incoming requests.

Grade/Salary: *EFM/MOH/Non Ordinarily Resident: FP-06 (to be confirmed by Washington)

*Ordinarily Resident: FSN/ERR-08.

"Computer Lab Clerk"

The position is located in the Yemen America Language Institute YALI, American Embassy, under direct supervision of the Office Manager and the general supervision of the Director of Courses. Employee will maintain the YALI Computer Lab for students at the Yemen-America Language Institute (YALI).

Required Qualifications:

Education: Secondary school is required.

Prior Work Experience: Minimum of one year of prior work experience; basic knowledge of computer operation is desirable, but may be learned on the job.

Language Proficiency: Level I basic English oral communication skills are required.

Abilities: Ability to work well with others, to be flexible in dealing with students, and to follow up in a timely way on assigned tasks is required.

Grade/Salary: *EFM/MOH/Non Ordinarily Resident: FP-AA (to be confirmed by Washington)

*Ordinarily Resident: FSN- 04

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, Dhahr Himyar Street, P.O. Box 22347, Sanaa, Yemen, Tel: 7552000, Fax: 303-182 no later than May 07, 2005.

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

National Strategy for Childhood & Youth

BY FAHMIA AL-FOTIH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Mr. Abdulrahman al-Akwaa, Minister of Youth and Sport along with Mr. Abdulkareem al-Arahbi, Minister of Social Affairs, headed the First National Conference for Childhood & Youth on 19 April.

Al-Akwaa and al-Arahbi stressed the importance of preparing the National Strategy for Childhood and Youth as and children and youths now make up 68 percent of the population.

Dr. Nafeesa al-Jaefee, the general-secretary of the Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood, presented a report on the "Achievements and future plan".

The First National Conference for Childhood and Youth attempts to achieve a number of goals, all of which are to enhance role of young people and institute institutional mechanisms to implement the youth programs. It also aims to identify the challenges that young people face and their solutions, in addition to publicizing and encouraging youth activities, sports and programs to help them to compete internationally.

The Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood along with the Social Fund for Development and the World Bank carried out an analytical study on children who live in difficult conditions in 2003. This study recommended a special workshop, conducted by UNICEF to discuss suitable initiatives.

Yemen is Assistant Secretary-General of Arab Universities Federation

FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Yemen represented by Dr. Ali Hood Ba'abbad, Consultant of Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, won the position of the Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab Universities Federation while the 38th federation's cycle held in Cairo during April 24- 25.

Dr. Abulkarim Yahya Rase'a, Rector of Aden University, occupied the position of the Executive Office

member for the four year.

Dr. Waheeba Fare'a, Rector of Queen Arwa University, was selected to be vice president of the current cycle, whereas Dr. Mohammed Abdullah Al-Sofi, Rector of Taiz University, Financial Committee Reporter of the cycle.

Therefore, the eleven Yemeni universities operating in the federation that contained 165 universities achieved a distinctive participation in this cycle.

New provisions for the deposit on drink cans

FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

The German Packaging Ordinance attracted considerable interest internationally. Countries like Austria and France were prompted to introduce their own national measures. On 12 January 2005 the German federal government adopted an amendment: It simplifies the deposit on drink cans.

Only in December 2004 did the European Court of Justice confirm that the compulsory deposit is in principle compatible with EU law. This decision paved the way for the new provisions. Consumers especially profit from the simplified deposit on one-way packaging - but it is also an advantage for fillers, distributors and small and medium-sized companies, since they are presented with a clear framework for their investments. The new provisions will be implemented in two steps. In the first step, starting May 2005, there will be a standard deposit of 25 cent. Up to now, the deposit on packaging with a volume of more than 1.5 litres has been 50 cent. From May 2006 on, the compulsory deposit will be extended to all ecologically unfriendly one-way packaging and the so called individual solutions will be discontinued.

Under the "individual solutions", discounters only had to take back one-way drink packaging sold by their own sales chain. In the future, stores that sell drink cans, glass or plastic bottles are obligated to take back correspon-

ding packaging from other drinks manufacturers. Federal Environment Minister Jürgen Trittin states: "With this step the deposit becomes more consumer-friendly. Empty one-way bottles and cans can be returned to any outlet where one-way packaging is sold." This is also done to promote the development of a uniform nationwide return system.

As of May 2006 the deposit is compulsory for all ecologically unfriendly one-way packaging from 0.1 litres to 3 litres. This includes all packaging of beer, mineral water and carbonated soft drinks which is already subject to deposit. In the future, a deposit must also be paid for non-carbonated soft drinks and alcoholic mixed drinks, especially the so called alcopops: "The deposit is compulsory for iced tea cans just as it is for coke or beer cans. A shot of alcohol will not - anymore - exempt a drink from the deposit on drink cans", says Federal Environment Minister Jürgen Trittin. Packaging of juices, milk and wine as well as ecologically advantageous packaging such as drink cartons, polyethylene tubular bags and stand-up bags remain exempt from deposit.

YTS resort to judiciary

SANA'A- April 20- Yemen Times - The Yemeni Teachers Syndicate (YTS) expressed its strong denunciation of the statement issued against it by the so-called Teaching and Educational Professions Syndicate (TEPS) accusing it of treachery and other charges.

The press release issued by the YTS mentioned that the leadership of the syndicate strongly opposed such a statement be longing to the TEPS and was published in Minber al-Shura Newspaper on April 24. It also denied all the charges contained in the statement.

The press release emphasized that when the YTS reacted to the accusations alleged by Dr. Abdulkarim, Secretary General of PGC, against the syndicate and were published in PGC-affiliated

media means such as al-Mu'tamar Net, al-Mithaq, May22 and al-Maseela Newspapers.

These media means are said to practice violations and breaches against human rights as well as press laws. The YTS favored to not respond to the statement of the Head of the PGC Political Department and what has been published in al-Mu'tamar Net on April 20.

People at the YTS described the statement as using uncultivated language and publishing false information that harms teachers and their respected profession.

The YTS threatened to resort to judiciary unless these media institutions apologized publicly for the false information published by them against teachers.

"Improving Skills and Knowledge at Taj Sheba Hotel - Sanaa"

As part of the Taj 3HRSON Philosophy, and the Taj Way "We will continuously improve our skills and knowledge in order to enhance service to our Guests" 6 Yemeni staff members left 6DDD to Mumbai on 12th April 2005. and are returning today 28th April 2005.

Name	Designation	Department
Mr. Idris Abdulla	Asst. Restaurant Manager	F&B (Service)
Ms. Jawhara Abdulla	Asst. Beautician	Health Club
Mr. Abdu Tamesh	Laundry Operator	Laundry
Mr. Derham Abdulla	Cook	Kitchen
Mr. Yasser Bin Abdulla	Sr. Room Boy	Housekeeping
Mr. Abdu Fateh	Bell Boy	Front Office

They have undergone a IRUWQK Cross Exposure Training at the Taj Mahal Hotel, and the Taj President Hotel, Mumbai, the flagship hotels of the Luxury and Business Brand of the Taj Group of Hotels.

Having undergone the above cross exposure training they will now provide improvised products and services to their customers at the Taj Sheba Hotel. The Management and their colleagues at Taj Sheba Hotel wish them a "Happy Home Coming".

Continued from page 1

Journalists reject draft press law

With regards to the foreign and Arab journalists working in Yemen, the draft law has stipulated that they should be registered with institutions organizing work in the media in their countries and that they should obtain a license from the ministry of information if they want to move in the country and do some coverage. The ministry has the right to call off their license of work without mentioning the reasons.

Although the current law No. 25 of 1990, imposed huge financial burdens involved in starting a paper, the Minister of Information's Decree No. 9 for 1998 states that "for establishing a paper or a

magazine, the publisher's capital should amount to YR 2 million for a daily newspaper, YR 700,000 for a Weekly paper, YR 1.2 million for a Weekly magazine and a periodical, YR 100,000 for an Advertisement Bulletin." Yet, the new draft law has stipulated that the publisher should have a deposit in a Yemeni bank no less than YR 5 million for an individual and no less than YR 15 million for an establishment, whose capital should be no less than YR 7 million. Such conditions will be, according to the draft law, applicable also to websites that are to be controlled by the government. This has made it difficult for people to start news-

papers and magazines or even run websites.

This draft law has really, according to journalists, shown the attitude of the political regime towards media freedom to which Yemen committed itself in several international conferences. It is expected that campaigns against the draft law will be run during the coming days, demanding the liberalization of media in the country. Some international organizations operating in Yemen have shown interest in backing up the journalists in their struggle for a more liberal press law, despite that some do not find it necessary to have a law for press at large

Panic strikes Hodiedah as polio breaks out

Only about one case in 200 leads to paralysis, so there could be at least 800 more carriers in Yemen, with Dr. Wahdan expecting to find more cases.

A Saudi official said earlier this year that tens of thousands of people enter his country illegally each month through Yemen.

Sudan is having a major polio outbreak, particularly in Port Sudan, a

Red Sea ferry port.

All the migrating strains originated in Nigeria. Three large Muslim states in northern Nigeria stopped vaccinating in 2003 after rumors spread that the vaccine was a Western plot to sterilize Muslim women, and that it transmitted AIDS, as well that it contained pork products.

They resumed vaccinations in mid-

2004 after entreaties from top Muslim clerics and after state officials visited foreign vaccine factories. But by then new cases were turning up from the Atlantic to the Red Sea and as far south as Botswana.

The global number of polio cases has been driven down from 350,000 in 1988 to 1,243 last year.

VACANCY

CARE has an immediate vacancy for a **Project Monitoring Officer**, based in it's Sana'a Office. The person will support

the programme unit in CARE's headquarters but will be expected to travel on a regular basis to field sites.

The PMO will help design implement and record site selection and base line surveys, write progress and impact reports, train field staff in M&E operations and help develop M&E systems for CARE.

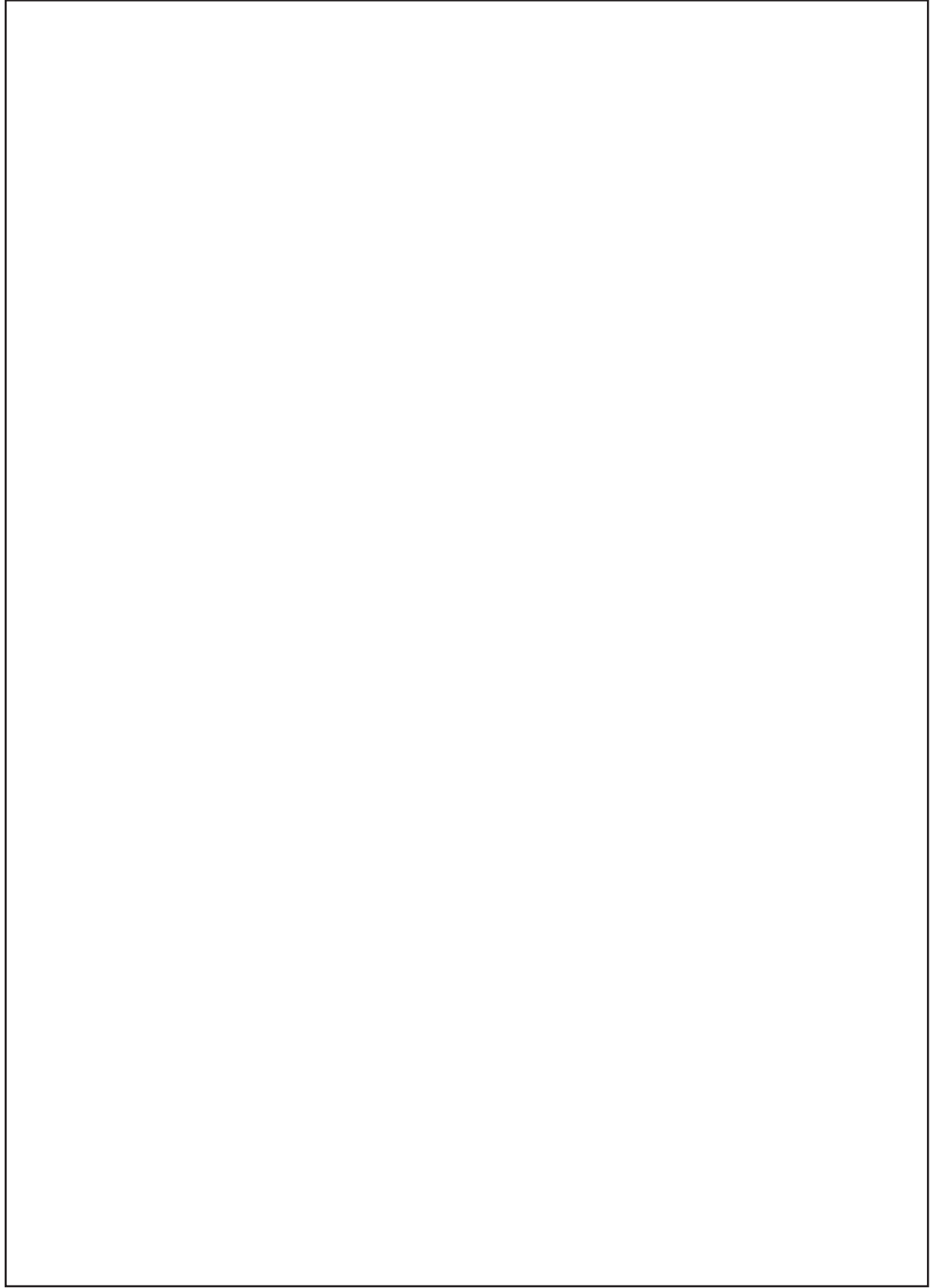
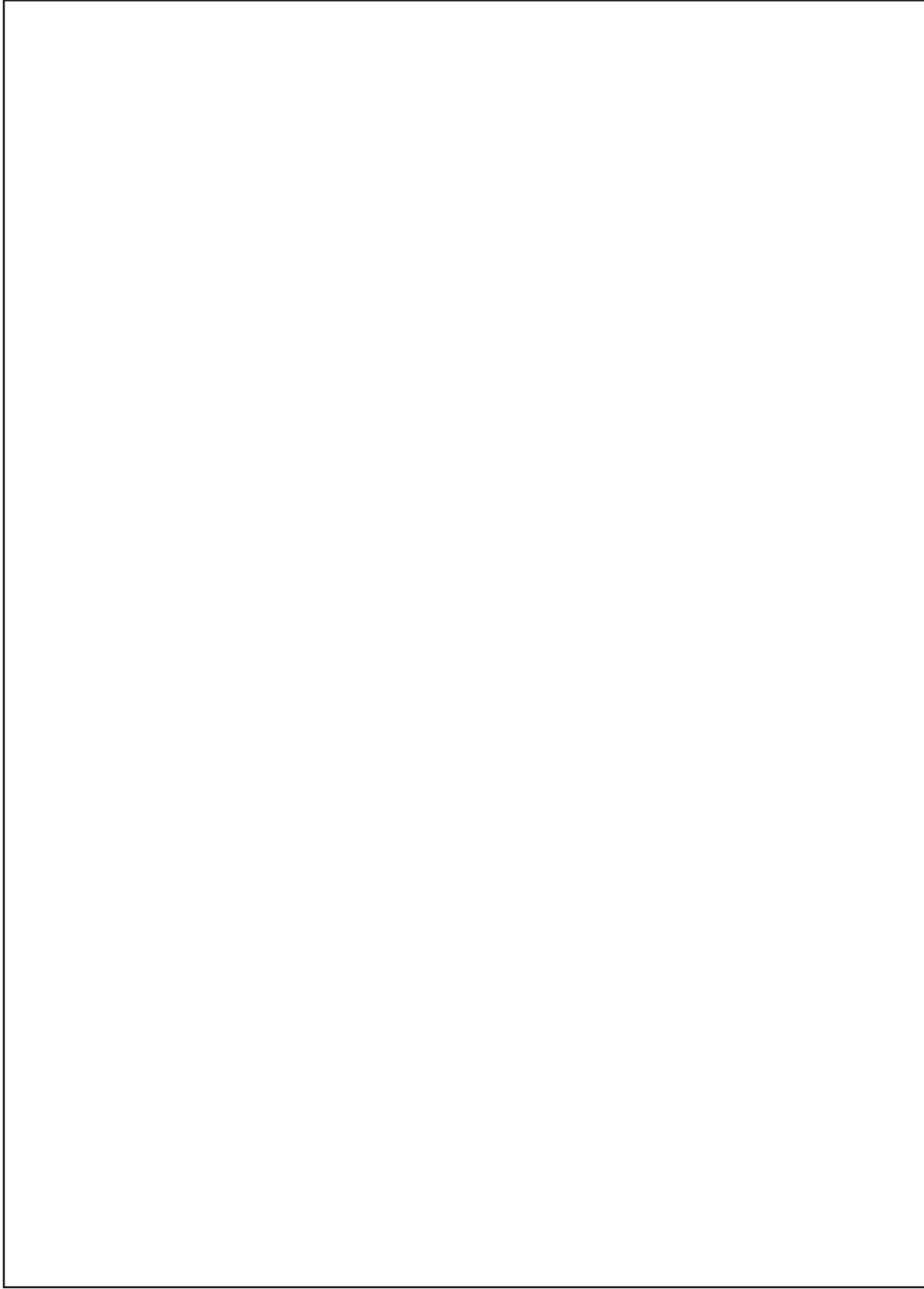
Person Specification

- Good spoken English
- Excellent computer skills
- Excellent English report writing skills
- Experience in INGO operating systems
- Self motivated and able to deliver good quality work with minimal supervision
- Technical qualification in a relevant field (M&E, Agriculture, Education, civil engineering, social studies etc.)

For a detailed job description, call in at 68 Arwa School street or e.mail care@y.net.ye. With the subject heading "PMO Vacancy" Application deadline (CV and a covering letter) is 5th May 2005. Only short listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

Ads

American university of Sharjah



Who's responsible for breaking this mother's heart?

BY NADIA AL-SAQQAF
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

What's worse than taking a person's ability to move? What's worse than destroying a mother's life with eternal grief?

Who's responsible for the hundreds of children who became disabled because of the medical system's carelessness?

N.A. told her story to the Yemen Times, and I have nothing but to carry it through to you as she narrated it, and leave it for you to answer the question: who is responsible for breaking this mother's heart? If you think you have an answer or can help, please write to the Yemen Times.

"It was my second pregnancy, I was

living in Sana'a with my husband and daughter. I had suffered from emotional problems with my husband and has probably affected my child, I don't know. All I can remember about my son's birth three years ago was that I was dying. I was in labor from 12 midnight to 9 PM the next day. Now I understand that it was an obstructed labor. During delivery I kept telling the attendant in a specialized government hospital that I felt weak and I couldn't push, but they kept waiting. I saw his head come out and go back in more than three times and I was bleeding so much that I was drained. When the baby was eventually born his face looked rather strange, he looked tired himself and his head was somewhat elongated. They cleaned him, rapped him and gave him to me. Two hours later I was on my way home. I didn't



"Mohammed was very quiet or rather subdued for the next two months."

know at the time that I should have let someone check the baby to see if he was fine. I thought that since I had come to a hospital, unlike many other Yemeni women, that I had done my role, and I trusted the hospital to know what they were doing. What else should I do? Even when I was telling them to help me they told me I must wait, now I know I should have had a caesarian. Mohammed, my son, was very quiet or rather subdued for the next two months. He would breast feed and he didn't cry at all, he seemed as though he had no energy at all. He couldn't even deposit after digestion and when we probed it through medicine once every ten days or so it smelled like a dead animal. After two months he started crying endlessly, and we realized that his head was hanging rather strange, and his hands was sagging beside him. That is when I started my journey with doctors.

Some doctors said he had shrinkage in the brain, some said he suffered from lack of oxygen, some said something

happened during my pregnancy and they didn't know what. No one knew what was wrong with my Mohammed. The Modern German Hospital had a delegation of German doctors last year and when I showed Mohammed to the doctors they said that he could be treated, especially since he was a clever boy. He understood what was going on and he tried to speak, he said some words but couldn't control his limbs. A specialized doctor from Cuba at the Army hospital gave me hope again and said that my son could walk soon if he got the right treatment. I went to Cairo and the doctors there started physiotherapy along with medications but it was so expensive and I couldn't afford staying there for long. I witnessed some improvement but I had to cut short and return home because of money problems. I had filed for a divorce from my husband and I got it finally after one and half years of fighting in court I got it. He wasn't a good husband nor a good father and he doesn't care about his son.

All I want is to see my son healthy and what hurts me the most is that I know it is possible, just not in my hands.

If there is anything I would like to tell mothers is to become aware, to learn and read about child health and care and not just depend on the hospitals because the doctors, nurses and all the medical staff may be ignorant or careless. I would advice every pregnant woman to take care of her self and don't just listen to what health practitioners say without consulting. If there is obstructed labor demand a caesarian and don't wait for many hours to decide. And if the child has trouble coming out get a pediatrician to check the baby immediately and put it in intensive care, give it oxygen. I feel so angry thinking if Mohammed had just been cared for by the responsible staff he could have been a healthy baby today. In my journey to seek help for my baby I saw so many other cases of disabled and ill children that could have been prevented. Who's responsible for breaking their mother's hearts?"

Automatic translation: talent or persistence?

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

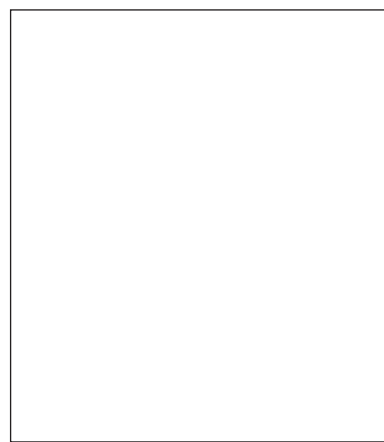
When Abdulkhalig Obad first told me about what he had been researching I thought to myself "why didn't I think of that?" I would like to think that many of you who read this would think that way too. It is not extraordinary as much as it is worth admiring. I guess the difference between Obad and most of us is his persistence and love for knowledge that had made him go the extra mile that many of us would not bother to take.

Coming from the countryside in Ba'dan, Governorate of Ibb where he was brought up and did his schooling, Obad came to Sana'a in 1996 and joined Jamal Abdul Nasir's school, graduating in the academic year 1997/98 with a score of 79 percent.

"I have always wanted to be a doctor, but my percentage would not allow me to join the medical college and for personal reasons I had to work in my family's carpentry stores in Sana'a for two years. When I joined the university I chose to study translation in the Faculty of Arts because I felt that translation is something like sculpture. Just like how I create shapes and restructure wood to make beautiful pieces and crafts I feel that I could do the same with words when I take them through the journey from one language to the other," Obad explained.

Fascinating, isn't it? His desire to learn and create has gotten him through the difficulties he encountered in the first few semesters especially, but Obad devised a special way to learn and handle English, he says: "I found out that I can learn easily through observing the structure and spelling of the words and relating them to each other. Every time I came across a new

word I relate it to one with a similar spelling and this is what made me think of my research topic."



Abdulkhalig Obad

Obad was influenced by his teachers at the Faculty of Arts, English section as they used to encourage the students not to duplicate what has been said in class but to be more creative. In 2002 Obad was working on a research with his assistant Ahmed Ameen about analogy. Obad found out that words spelt similarly, even if partial, had similar meanings. For example revenge and avenge, announce and pronounce...etc. and that most of these words are identical with each other in meaning, pronunciation, spelling, syntactic devices, morphological devices, prepositional particle, denotation and connotation. He discovered over 20,000 analogous words and their semantic relation through pronunciation and spelling. Through his research he discovered that this analogy is not only applicable to the English language but also to other languages worldwide.

1-Example from English
- Select =Elect [V]
- Selection =Election [N]

-Selectional=Electonal [Adj]
-Selective =Elective [Adj]
-Selectable =Electable [Adj]
-Select sb to =Elect sb to

٧ ٤٢ ١٤ -٤
١١ ١٤ = ١١ ١٤ -
١٤ ١٤ ١٤
١٤ ١٤ ١٤

3-Example from Germany
-Halten =Behalten=Verhalten [V]
-Haltung =Behaltung =Verhaltung [N]
- Haltliche = Behaltliche =Verhallischet [Adj.]

As to what the benefit from this research is, he answered: "It helps people take more control of the language and the command of spelling becomes easier. I hope to develop this through doing my masters in USA where I intend to study translation. I want to invent a mechanism in which automatic translation could take place from any language to the other just by giving the system a few words and their meanings and without needing to know the language. This would require time, but I do believe it is achievable.

Workshop on national health account

BY HAMOUD AL-HASHIMI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

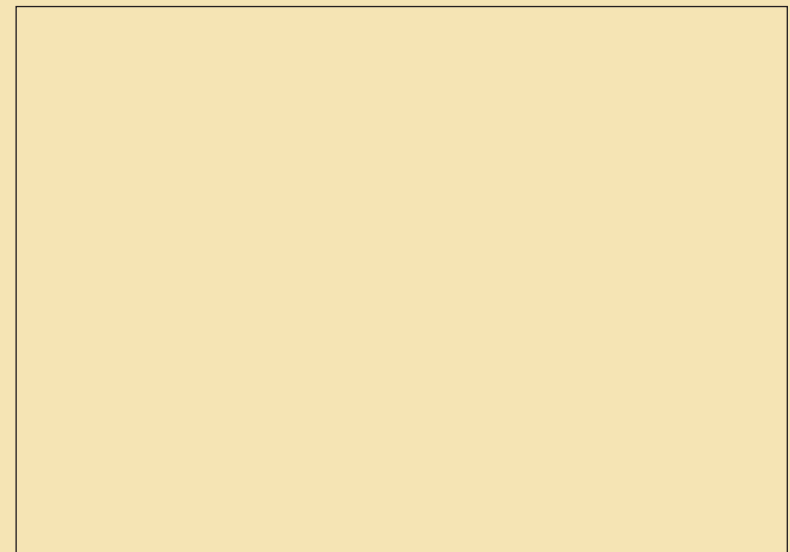
SANA'A- April 23- Yemen Times- A workshop on the health and national accounts was held at Sheraton Hotel on Saturday, which lasted for five days. It was organized by the Ministry of Public Health and Population in cooperation with the executive office of the Gulf Cooperative Council's foreign ministers and the regional office of the World Health Organization's USAID.

The workshop aimed to develop abilities of the national teams and utilizing them in conducting health studies.

At the opening of the workshop, Dr. Yahya al-No'mi minister of public health and population delivered a speech in which he clarified that staging the workshop comes as a fruit of the joint efforts exerted by the executive office of the Gulf Cooperative Council's foreign ministers and the regional office of the World Health Organization.

Outcomes of the workshops reflected the implementation of protocols signed by the two sides, with the aim to enhance cooperation between Gulf Cooperative Council countries and the WHO, as well as exchanging experiences in medical areas.

Minister of public health and population confirmed the attention his min-



istry draws toward raising the standards of health services, pointing out the necessity of increasing funds allocated for the health sector through the processing of national health accounts.

He noted that the national health account was enhanced in 1998 in which the aspects of health sector financial agreements were analyzed. In addition to the issuance of report of the national health account for the financial years 1999-2003, which is considered as a useful tool for workers in the field of planning.

On his part, Dr. Tawfeeq Khojah,

General Manger at the executive office of the Gulf Cooperative Council's foreign ministers, delivered an address in which he emphasized the importance of various activities held at the workshop.

The workshop was attended by representatives from national health account teams in UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq and Yemen, as well as a number of finance and planning ministers and officials from the Central Organization for Control and Audit.

Taste Iranian cuisines.
We have the pleasure to welcome our customers

Syrian forces quit Lebanon after 29 years

RIYYAK, Lebanon, April 26 (Reuters) - The last Syrian soldiers and intelligence agents left Lebanon on Tuesday, ending three decades of Syria's direct involvement in its small neighbour.

As their buses crossed the frontier, many Lebanese hailed the completion of a withdrawal that had taken seven weeks as the start of a new era. But although Damascus's domination is past, many believe its influence in Lebanon is far from over.

"With the completion of the Syrian forces' withdrawal from Lebanon, a new political era in the relations between the two brethren countries starts based on close cooperation in all fields," Lebanon's new Prime Minister Najib Mikati said.

Syrian forces entered in 1976 to try to end Lebanon's civil war which had begun the previous year. It was not until 1990, however, that the conflict ended; Syrian forces had fought variously against Muslim and Christian militias, Lebanese army units, Palestinian guerrillas and the Israeli army.

Pro-Syrian Lebanese officials say 12,000 Syrian soldiers were killed in Lebanon and many more wounded.

Syrian forces and intelligence had dominated Lebanon since the civil war — until a U.N. Security Council resolution last September demanded a total Syrian withdrawal.

The Feb. 14 assassination of Lebanese former Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri, blamed by many Lebanese on Damascus, triggered large anti-Syrian opposition protests in Beirut and piled the pressure on Syria to quit.

"We are very happy, we are celebrating," Khaled Saleh, 24, a computer consultant said. "I have been asking for this all my life." A score of young Lebanese males performed the traditional dabke dance in celebration as the Syrians were leaving.

Analysts say the withdrawal will end Syria's domination of Lebanon but would not end its influence altogether.

"Definitely there will be a reduction

Syrian civilians mount a military vehicle carrying troops returning from Lebanon April 26.

in Syrian involvement in internal Lebanese affairs, they will no longer select high-ranking officials," Samir Baroudi, a political scientist at Beirut's Lebanese American University, told Reuters.

"There will continue to be high-level coordination between the two countries as far as bilateral economic relations and the overall peace process in the Middle East."

Opposition happy

The anti-Syrian opposition welcomed the pullout.

"This is a historic day for Lebanon. It ends a long period full of mistakes and hegemony," legislator Nayla Mouawad told Reuters. "The withdrawal met the opposition's demands and leads the way for new balanced relations with Syria."

The United Nations issues a report on whether Syria is complying with the Security Council demand later on

Tuesday.

A U.N. team will arrive in Damascus to verify the withdrawal. It hopes to obtain maps of Syria's former positions and reports on the status of its military and intelligence presence in Lebanon, a U.N. official said. The team then travels to Lebanon, where it is to verify the Syrian withdrawal.

Cars carrying the last intelligence officers, including their chief, Rustom Ghazaleh, crossed the Lebanese-Syrian border at the Masnaa crossing after attending a farewell ceremony.

Eight green buses carrying Syrian soldiers soon followed. Soldiers inside, hoisting Syrian flags and pictures of President Bashar al-Assad, smiled and waved.

"Farewell to our brothers in the Syrian Arab Army!" a Lebanese officer had shouted at the preceding ceremony on the nearby Riyyak airbase in the Bekaa Valley.

"Goodbye!" his men responded, to about 200 Syrian troops.

"We will never forget them," soldiers chanted in reference to comrades who died in Lebanon.

"We sacrifice our blood and soul for you, Bashar," Syrian troops chanted.

Thousands of Syrians gave the soldiers a heroes' welcome as they crossed the Jdeideh border post into Syria. Vehicles transporting the returning troops were mounted by civilians carrying Syrian flags and pictures of Assad.

Lebanon's new government, led by Mikati, has pledged to hold free and fair elections on time in May. Parliament began a two-day meeting on Tuesday to discuss the new government's policy statement and vote it into office.

Security forces clashed with about two dozen protesters who tried to enter parliament in Beirut to demand the release of Lebanese prisoners in Syrian jails.

Sudan allows freer aid access to entire country

KHARTOUM, April 26 (Reuters) - Sudan on Tuesday announced new procedures to simplify aid access to the country to facilitate a huge expected humanitarian operation following a peace deal ending more than two decades of war in the south.

Sudan signed a peace deal with the former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in January which will usher in a new unity government, and share power and wealth in Africa's largest country.

Donors pledged \$4.5 billion earlier this month to assist the reconstruction of the war-torn country.

"We decided to make new procedures and policies in the state to facilitate all humanitarian aid work during this stage of peace," Humanitarian Affairs Minister Ibrahim Mahmud Hamid told reporters in Khartoum.

The government would immediately begin registration of all aid agencies working in Sudan.

The goods they bring into the country will be exempted from all customs and taxes, avoiding lengthy bureaucratic procedures.

Most importantly, Hamid said, was that permission would no longer be needed to travel to areas where there are no security concerns, removing a huge obstacle to aid workers travelling through the vast country.

"During the time of conflict and instability we used to demand from aid workers that they get travel permits from Khartoum," he said.

"Now we have cancelled these except to go to areas where there are still security issues."

He said the United Nations had a separate agreement with the government about its operations in the country.

The southern civil war, Africa's longest, claimed the lives of more than 2 million people, mostly from famine and disease, and forced more than 4 million to flee their homes.

Darfur

The southern peace deal does not include a separate conflict in Sudan's remote Darfur region, where tens of thousands have been killed in fighting after rebels took up arms accusing the central government of neglect and of giving preferential treatment to Arab tribes over non-Arabs.

Special procedures to deal with the Darfur humanitarian crisis, where violence has raged for more than two years, would continue for another three months at least, the minister said.

Aid workers travelling to Darfur are guaranteed visas within 48 hours.

That and other procedures to facilitate aid to Darfur, where more than 2 million people have fled their homes to makeshift camps, were put in place after an agreement in May last year with the United Nations.

Health Minister Ahmed Ballal Osman said that mortality rates in the camps in Darfur had fallen below the emergency threshold to less than one per 10,000.

"This is now considered a normal threshold for mortality," he said.

The World Health Organisation is undertaking a second mortality survey in conjunction with aid agencies and the ministry of health in the Darfur camps.

The previous survey in August last year, the height of the crisis, found about 10,000 were dying each month in the camps.

Conditions have since improved for those in the camps, although outside the camps many affected by the conflict are still without aid.

Of the about 200,000 refugees who fled the fighting across the border into Chad, UNHCR said in briefing notes sent to Reuters on Tuesday that 20,000 people had returned to Darfur.

But it said it was concerned by the recent burning of abandoned villages, a clear warning to those returnees not to try to go back to their homes.

EU to Turkey: boost reform pace before entry talks

LUXEMBOURG, April 26 (Reuters) - The European Union told Turkey on Tuesday to raise the pace of reforms before entry talks start in October, citing persistent concerns about human rights and religious freedom in the mainly Muslim state.

Among the setbacks EU officials cited were the beating of peaceful women protesters when police broke up a women's rights rally in Istanbul in March, and lawsuits launched by Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan against several newspapers for satirical items aimed at him.

"A number of issues cause concern," Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency, told a joint news conference after a meeting with his Turkish counterpart, Abdullah Gul.

"The Turkish government has made huge reforms but they need to be pursued and above all implemented."

That is how (European) public opinion will assess the willingness of Turkey to move to the EU," he told reporters after the last top-level review meeting before accession talks are due to start on Oct. 3.

Asselborn and EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn cited the need for greater efforts on legal reforms to strengthen the rule of law, and improve the rights of women, and ethnic and religious minorities.

They also called for an early signing of an accord to extend Turkey's customs union with the EU to new member states, saying it would help normalise Turkey's ties with the divided island of Cyprus, over which Ankara is locked in a dispute with Athens.

Gul pledged that Ankara would sign the accord when the EU had it ready, and insisted it was making progress on far-reaching reforms demanded by the EU.

"When you have so many topics to discuss, there are inevitably certain problems," he told the news briefing.

The EU Commission expects to send by mid-May the text of the customs accord to the Council of EU governments, for signing by Ankara. Membership talks are seen lasting at least a decade and Turkey is not expected to join the EU before 2015.

Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul holds a news conference after a European Union-Turkey association council in Luxembourg, April 26.

REUTERS

"Slippage"

Asselborn and Rehn did not mention the police beatings or the lawsuits against newspapers at the joint news conference, but an EU diplomat who attended the talks said: "All of these issues were raised at the meeting."

EU leaders agreed last December to open talks with Turkey on Oct. 3, but also set firm conditions for starting negotiations, saying Ankara must see through reforms to ensure it met the bloc's standards on democracy, rule of law and civil liberties.

EU officials have since complained of "slippage" in Turkish efforts, citing reports of police harassment of the Alevi religious minority and of petty restrictions placed on the Istanbul-based Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.

In a paper outlining what Turkey needs to do, the EU also expressed "serious concerns" on a range of issues, from cases of torture, to control of the Turkish military, the high level of state aid to industry and intellectual property rights.

On the eve of the meeting, French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier said he and his Dutch colleague had asked EU president Luxembourg to urge Ankara to "reassess its past concerning the Armenian genocide".

Armenia wants Turkey to admit that the killing of up to 1.5 million Armenians 90 years ago in Ottoman Turkey was genocide.

Turkey denies this, saying that num-

Libya delays trial on torture of Bulgarian medics

SOFIA, April 26 (Reuters) - A Libyan court delayed until early May the trial of nine Libyan policemen and a doctor charged with torturing five Bulgarian nurses to extract confessions, a Bulgarian official said on Tuesday.

The defendants are charged with torturing the nurses to force them into confessing that they deliberately infected hundreds of Libyan children with the HIV virus that causes AIDS.

"The Libyan court postponed the trial for May 10 after many of the defendants' lawyers were not ready with their pleas after 15-minute hearing," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Donska said.

"This would likely be the last delay." The confessions convinced a Libyan court last May to find the five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor guilty of deliberately infecting 426 children in a hospital in the eastern town of Benghazi.

They were sentenced to death by firing squad.

The Bulgarians, who have been imprisoned since 1999, say they are innocent and that they were forced to confess.

Libya's supreme court will rule on their appeal on May 31. AIDS experts testified to a lower court last year that an AIDS epidemic started before the nurses arrived in the hospital.

The United States and the European Union denounced the verdicts, which have cast a shadow over Tripoli as it emerges from decades of diplomatic isolation.

Blair fends off critics on Iraq, leads in polls

LONDON, April 26 (Reuters) - British Prime Minister Tony Blair has overcome fierce opposition attacks over his support for the Iraq war to hold a strong lead in the run-up to a May 5 general election, two opinion polls showed on Tuesday. A NOP poll for the Independent newspaper put Blair's ruling Labour Party on 40 percent, up three points on last week. The main opposition Conservatives were down two points on 30 percent and the Liberal Democrats were unchanged on 21 percent.

If the figures were repeated on election day, Blair would be returned to office for a third successive term with his 161-seat majority in parliament cut only slightly to about 150 seats, the Independent said.

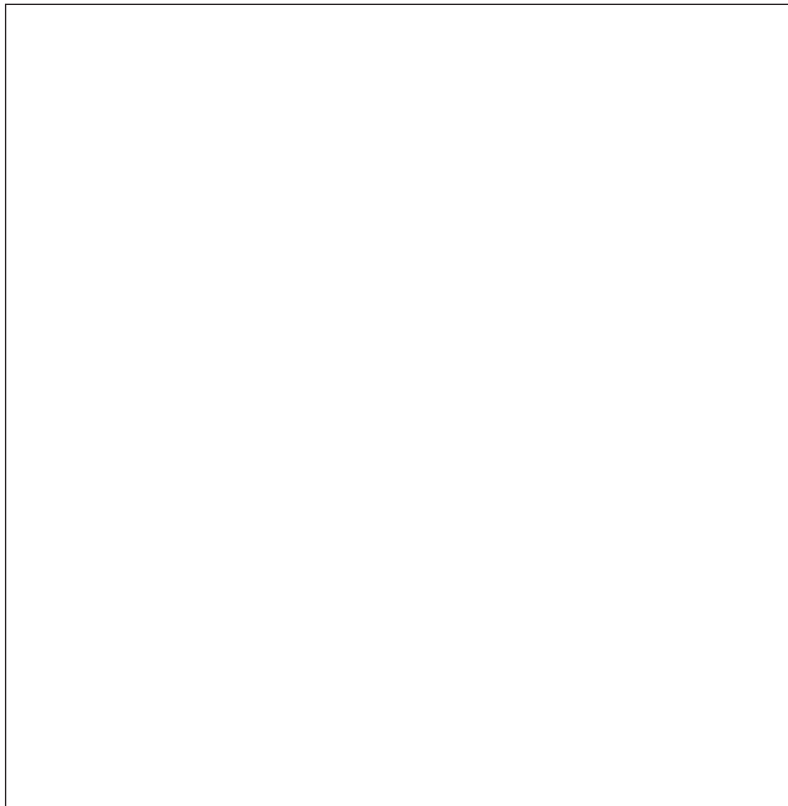
The poll of 959 voters was conducted between Friday and Sunday, when the election campaign shifted for the first time to Blair's support for the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

A poll by the Times newspaper and ITV News put Labour on 41 percent, the Conservatives on 33 and the Liberal Democrats on 19.

After weeks of debate on domestic issues, Conservative leader Michael Howard used a television interview to accuse Blair of lying over his reasons for backing U.S. President George W. Bush on Iraq.

CRITICS DEMAND INQUIRY Many of Blair's critics have demanded an inquiry into the grounds on which he went to war because none of the weapons of the mass destruction he accused Saddam Hussein of possessing have been found since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

But surveys suggest voters view domestic issues as more important than Iraq, and Blair has been boosted by a buoyant economy since he came to power in 1997.



A British soldier lets Iraqi boys to look through the scope of his rifle while on patrol in the city of Basra. A British soldier lets Iraqi boys to look through the scope of his rifle while on patrol in the city of Basra April 26. Prime Minister Tony Blair is riding out ULYD attacks over Iraq to hold a big lead ahead of %ULWB 5 election. REUTERS

However, the Iraq issue showed no signs of falling off the election agenda on Tuesday when veteran Labour legislator Brian Sedgmore, whom the Independent reported would join the Liberal Democrats, accused Blair of "stomach-turning lies".

"It becomes clearer every day that Blair decided to go to war after meeting Bush on his Texas ranch in 2002. After that he lied to persuade the country to support him," Sedgmore, who is standing down as a parliamentarian at the election after 27 years

with Labour, told the newspaper.

Blair has repeatedly said he believed he made the right decision on Iraq and that the world was now safer without Saddam, accusing rivals of making personal attacks because they had nothing to say on issues such as health and education.

"I've come to the conclusion that for those people who are opposed to the war, the more I put my point of view, the more it simply irritates them," Blair said in an interview with the Guardian newspaper.

Schroeder backs Chirac in EU treaty campaign

PARIS, April 26 (Reuters) - German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder on Tuesday threw his weight behind French President Jacques Chirac's misfiring campaign to persuade French voters to back the European Union constitution.

The close allies said after a meeting of the French and German governments that a French rejection of the treaty in a referendum on May 29 would be a severe blow to European integration and leave France trailing its European partners.

"France will find itself on the platform as the train goes past," Chirac told a news conference with Schroeder standing beside him and the German, French and EU flags behind them.

"This treaty will allow France to be stronger in Europe, and Europe to be stronger in the world...A 'No' vote means taking responsibility for interrupting 50 years of European construction, 50 years of movement towards peace, democracy."

The constitution is intended to make decision-making easier following the Union's enlargement to 25 members last May. All 25 member states must approve the charter for it to take effect.

The lower house of the German parliament is expected to ratify the constitution on May 12 without a referendum. But all opinion polls point to France rejecting the charter, despite the repeated urgings of France's closest European allies.

Schroeder's visit highlighted growing concern in Berlin and Brussels over the possibility of a rejection by EU founding member France that could cause a political crisis in the EU and send ripples through financial markets.

"It (a rejection) would mean the paralysis of Europe, a weakening of France and an abrupt halt to moves towards a powerful Europe," Jacques Delors, a French former head of the EU's executive Commission, told RTL radio.



French President Jacques Chirac gestures during a joint news conference with German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder at Elysee Palace in Paris April 26. Chirac said on Tuesday France cannot let imports of Chinese textiles invade its markets without regulation. REUTERS

CRITICS WANT TREATY REVISED

Opponents of the constitution say it would be better to negotiate a new treaty, although EU leaders rule this out.

French critics say the charter enshrines liberal economic trends which they oppose and does not protect workers or jobs. Others simply want to punish the government for its economic record and high unemployment by voting against the constitution.

Supporters say the treaty will make the EU stronger and less bureaucratic, helping it make decisions faster on major issues such as the EU's trade dispute with China over textiles exports.

European Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson has recommended opening a probe into nine categories of Chinese textile and clothing products, which have leapt in some cases by over 500 percent since a global quota system was scrapped on Jan. 1.

The Commission is expected to complete the probe by mid-June. But France's industry and foreign trade min-

isters have written to Mandelson asking him to take urgent action to curb the surge in Chinese textiles imports.

Commission officials confirmed the letter had been received, and Chirac took a tough line.

"We cannot accept that these textiles, the prices of which have fallen significantly recently, can invade our markets without regulation," Chirac said.

Fears of Chinese domination of the global textile market risk causing a backlash by French voters, already disillusioned with EU plans to liberalise the bloc's market for services and with France's declining influence in Europe.

The dispute has provided French leaders with a chance to show they and the EU are ready to defend French and European interests staunchly. But the government is under fire for raising the alarm too late.

"It's a difficult situation. I just say the government took time to react. We knew about this from the start of the year," said Charles Pasqua, a right-wing opponent of the charter.

US negotiator in China to push for N.Korea talks

BEIJING, April 26 (Reuters) - U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill arrived in Beijing on Tuesday to try to find a way to entice North Korea back into talks on its nuclear programmes, but he said he did not know when that might happen.

Hill, the new U.S. point man on North Korea who arrived from Seoul and was scheduled to travel to Tokyo on Wednesday, told reporters he was looking forward to "vigorous" negotiations when a new round of talks convenes.

North Korea, which the United States has branded part of an "axis of evil" along with Iran and pre-war Iraq, said explicitly for the first time in February that it possessed nuclear weapons.

China has hosted three rounds of six-way talks that also include South Korea, Japan and Russia. The last was in June. North Korea has since refused to return to the table, citing what it calls a "hostile" American policy.

"We are trying to get the six-party process going," Hill told reporters at Beijing airport.

"We have got five countries that are there and one that continues to stay away, so as soon as we get the North Koreans to the talks, we look forward to vigorous negotiations."

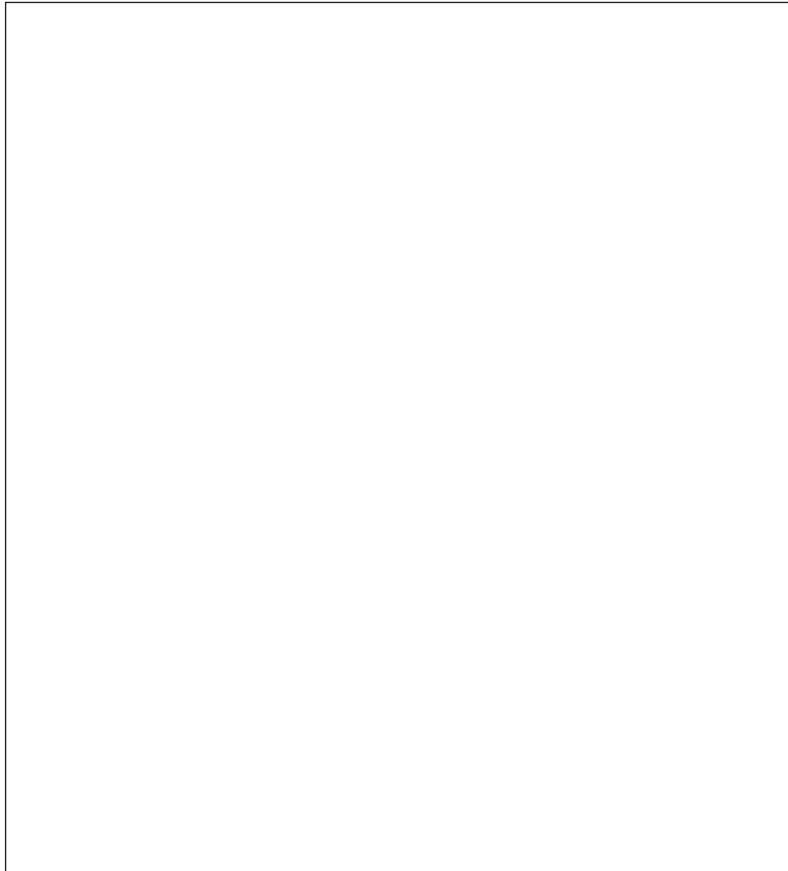
But Hill said he did not know if new talks were any closer.

"I am not going to make a prediction. We will have to assess where we are after my discussions with the Chinese," he said. Asked if he was optimistic, he replied: "I never bet on a game I'm playing in."

Signalling dwindling patience, Washington has said it would go to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions if Pyongyang continued to snub the talks.

But North Korea, officially known as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), said on Monday there was no reason for it to return.

"If the United States is really interested in the resumption of the six-way talks, it should provide the DPRK with conditions and justification to return to the talks," the state-run news



U.S. Assistant Secretary of State and top U.S. envoy to nuclear negotiations Christopher Hill (R) is followed by U.S. embassy officials upon arrival at Beijing Airport April 26. Hill arrived for talks aimed at breaking the deadlock over North Korea's nuclear weapons programme. REUTERS

agency KCNA quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman as saying.

U.S. officials played down a report on Monday that the Bush administration might seek a U.N. resolution empowering nations to intercept shipments in and out of North Korea that may contain nuclear-related materials.

A quarantine may be among the ideas discussed by Hill during his Asia trip, U.S. officials said.

Efforts to get the U.N. Security Council to authorise a quarantine would likely run into opposition from veto-wielding members Russia and China, which is particularly alarmed about the possibility of a North Korean collapse because they share a long border.

Washington wants China to put more pressure on North Korea to return to the talks.

"Hill has a few aces up his sleeve. He's sounding out possibilities," one U.S. official said.

Hill said he did not have plans to meet any North Koreans during his two-day stay in Beijing, although Pyongyang's ambassador to China was seen leaving the VIP exit of Beijing airport about a half hour before Hill.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Friday that the United States had quietly warned China that North Korea could be preparing for a nuclear weapons test and asked for Chinese help in deterring Pyongyang.

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- Incorporate agreed comments into documents, making full use of shared software capabilities
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Words of Wisdom

A person with character strength does not allow him/herself to be an instrument for wrong actions, decision and behavior. Many of our senior officials are rather well-educated, but they have mostly ended-up as mere puppets as they are routinely ordered around, many times to do wrong things. Character strength would not allow this phenomenon.

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

OUR
OPINIONHave a
heart!

Reproductive health has been an issue of great importance of late especially in developing countries where alarming rates of maternity whether mother or child is projected. Nevertheless, when a mother or child survives then people think the danger is over, and the medical practitioners in a round of applause smile at the new born baby witnessing the miracle of life happen again. Most of the medical staff in Yemen ignore the precautionary measures they were "supposedly" taught in their medical colleges about the standard checks of new born babies to see if the baby is fine. Checking the weight, pressure, pulse, blood tests and many other tests are simply ignored. As a consequence of which, there are many cases of disabled children in Yemen who suffer today because of the lack of attention once they were born into this world, perhaps a sign of how welcoming this world is to them.

Many cases of maltreatment of mothers by nurses and midwives in hospitals have been reported. Harsh words, neglect and even physical beating and slaps as if all the woman in labor needed was another source of pain. As for the poor child, it is wrapped and put near his mom who is sent home not knowing what the future has in store of her baby, discovering a few weeks later that the child doesn't breathe well, isn't moving at all or is suffering from a disability that would last with the family for the remaining of the unfortunate child's life.

Why is this the case? Medicine is one the most noble and human disciplines on earth how come people working in this field have become so ugly and cold hearted? In Yemen such cases unfortunately are not the exception, they are becoming the standard. If this is the situation then why is it surprising to find women hesitating before turning to hospitals for delivery instead of staying at home where at least there is emotional comfort and care. I am not saying that women should quit going to hospitals I am saying that they should be very careful and aware. You will read in this issue about a woman whose son has become paralyzed because of a prolonged obstructed labor. Whose fault was it, I can't tell but honestly I do blame the medical system in that hospital. However, I have learnt that women in Yemen should become stronger and more aware. They should be able to realize what their rights are and how to demand for them. And as for the medical staff working in reproductive health all I can say is please: have a heart!

Editor

Make the UN
stand for freedom

By PER AHLMARK

For Sweden, my homeland, the United Nations is a sacred cow. But today, many Swedes, like others around the world, are having second thoughts. Three events incited these doubts.

The first was the slaughter in Rwanda a decade ago of more than 800,000 people within 100 days – probably the fastest genocide ever. The well-documented fact is that Kofi Annan, then the UN's Deputy Secretary General, ordered UN soldiers in Rwanda not to intervene or protect the victims. That Annan, after this enormous failure, was promoted to Secretary General of the UN remains a puzzle.

Doubts about the UN, and Annan personally, were compounded by the ongoing scandal within the UN administration concerning the Oil for Food program. Although reports have so far not implicated Annan directly, his management failures are abundantly clear.

The third – and perhaps the most disillusioning – scandal concerns the Commission on Human Rights, for it lays bare much about the structural and permanent lack of balance and morality within key UN agencies. Most people assume that this Commission exists to promote human rights and democratic freedoms. Yet some of the worst human rights violators are Commission members. These enemies of freedom are permanently silent about torture, oppression, and mass murder carried out by their fellow dictatorships, but are quick to rant against the world's democracies, in particular the United States.

The recent "High Level Panel" report on the future of the UN was right when it said: "We are concerned that in recent years States have sought membership of the Commission not to strengthen human rights but to protect themselves from criticism or to criticize others."

So, finally, the truth is emerging. After more than a third of a century at the UN, even Annan has come close to admitting that the Commission on Human Rights is a source of shame.

Is it reasonable to elect a pyromaniac to the board of a fire department? Of course not. So why is it that tyrannies like Cuba, China, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe are members of this Commission? Recent members also include Libya, Vietnam, Congo, and Syria – the Libyans were even elected chair-country. How can this be?

About half of today's UN members are democracies, the other half non-democracies. So totalitarian or authoritarian states – more interested in hiding their own oppression than fairly judging other nations – can easily trigger a sort of political pogrom against any democracy that annoys enough tyrants. Sadly, many free countries seem utterly indifferent to the ongoing campaign against Israel.

To prevent such vicious absurdities from continuing, the world's democracies must unite to prevent any country that systematically violates human rights from being allowed to be a member of the Commission on Human Rights. Ongoing democratization in regions that have known only dictatorship provides hope that the balance is tilting in a way that would enable it possible for at least one UN body should incarnate freedom.

Who should decide if a country is democratic or not? A tremendously respected independent think tank, Freedom House, is, like the UN's headquarters, located in New York City. Freedom House is led and advised by experts on 190 countries. Political rights and civil liberties are rated between 1 and 7 for each country, with 1 representing the most free and 7 the least free. The designation of countries as "free" (1-2.5), "partly free" (3.0 – 5.0), or "not free" (5.5-7.0) is determined by combining these ratings.

Freedom House monitors developments over time and makes its conclusions public in its "Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties." If there is one book that should be compulsory reading for anyone who makes public statements about human rights, this is it.

So the goal of all free countries should be that only other free countries are allowed seats on the Commission for Human Rights. Regimes that are "partly free" or "not free" should never be elected or appointed, for the only governments with the moral legitimacy to review and criticize human rights records are those that came to power through free elections and that can lose power when a new election defeats them. Those who have attained power through violence and fraud are not legitimate and should never more shame the UN by being members of this Commission.

Unfortunately, most democracies are often unwilling to fight against the perversion of the UN Human Rights Commission. The European Union represents 25 democracies and often inspires countries to seek their freedom, as it has in Ukraine and Lebanon. But the EU's habit is not to defeat the UN's extremists, but to make strange compromises with them. As a result, rogue states make a few concessions to get the Europeans and others on board and then claim moral parity with the democracies.

Free peoples everywhere should remember that totalitarian forces and ideas cannot be defeated by being nice and accommodating. The Commission on Human Rights must rid itself of members that detest freedom. Otherwise, the sole UN agency that concentrates on freedom will be nothing more than a handmaiden to tyranny.

Per Ahlmark is a former Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden.

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Culture in the age of apathy

By DR. AMR ADEL JAWI

Will future be anything different from the present? And are there people who still believe in this?

This is the question that poses itself and which is the subject of this brief article. In the beginning, let it be the talk of the end. This does not contradict the nature of this era which we are trying to sketch here. An age where thoughts fall apart right from the beginning.

It is an age where things get twined with their opposites. Knowledge is force and force by the same token is knowledge. The opposites in this age are galore. Some of them are passed

from successors to predecessors as forefathers' knowledge is degenerated much faster than it was acquired by them.

Can I ask about the whereabouts of logic in a time where what you know is less than whom you know. Many are entrapped in the absolute thinking: either this or that while computer itself is getting less strict about this binary inflexibility. It has become inevitable for man to go back searching for his primitive mind, the mythical mind, hoping that its illogicality would help decipher its modernism's secret.

What a big challenge lying ahead of the Arab nation in this ever-changing fast-paced world as most life aspects have become sources of challenge, technological, scientific, economic, etc. It is clear to many people that we are facing a problem much made by our hand than it is destined by our fate. We have been so familiar to this problem

since it has been amidst us for a long time, and we boringly know its reasons, and disdain to gauge its consequences. To cope with problems, we, Arabs, resort to questioning words such as: What (commonest), why (most frequent), and how (the most profound). This article addresses the link between culture and our Arab communities, and its social conditions. Undoubtedly, the contemporary age has witnessed tremendous revolutions in all respects which –no doubt– have re-shaped the world's maps, broadened its significance, and modified its systems and patterns. This opens the door for us to a vision alien to the Arabic culture.

In conclusion, we may write about the futuristic hope of this nation. I put it candidly at the end that history deceives even the most industrious of his students and history may conceal many things in the short-term future.

Letters to the Editor

Regarding Best Photo contest

On 15th April 2005, my family and I attended the "Best Photo Contest", arranged at the Yemen Times building.

After registering our names, we entered the exhibition and was shocked to find most of the pictures displayed along dark stairs ways which made it difficult to view the pictures due to attendees and visitors going up and down. Pictures were covered with selofin sheets that gave off a reflection which made it hard to get a good viewing angle.

Once again we were disappointed that YT had already short-listed the pictures due to competition or favorable compensation and not for any definite subject or criteria. People were also diverting the

interest of voting visitors. Most pictures were taken either in an African Jungle or in Lebanon (Maditarion Sea).

Other selected pictures of kids were exposed or shot in studios by professionals and not by amateurs.

I just want to know, what the criteria for the "Best Photo Contest" was. Do pictures have to be by professionals or amateurs? Do they have to be taken locally or internationally and is there a limit to the number of pictures submitted? Please mention any criterias and profiles for the next "Best Photo Contest".

Thanks and Regards,
M.A. Khan
One of "BPC" participant.
maminkhan@hotmail.com

Dear Mr. Khan

First of all let me emphasise on Yemen Times' unbiased policy that accepts and respects all comments and criticism no matter how harsh or unfair it may seem and for this reason only your letter has found its way to print along with due response.

Secondly, I must say that when joining the competition you did not read the instructions and conditions of the contest, why else would you ask whether it was targeting amateurs or professionals, whether it was to be taken within Yemen or outside or whether there was a limit to the number of pictures submitted. One answer to all those questions, and perhaps many more still lingering in your mind, is that this was an open contest in which everyone was invited to participate.

Considering your comment on the layout and design of the exhibition, I am quite surprised that it did not appeal to you because many others thought that it was well organized and quite professional. Perhaps you were right about the part when we displayed some of the photographs along the sidewalls of the stairs – like done in many exhibitions – and that it was difficult to enjoy those photographs in this way, but we seriously did not expect this huge number of visitors and to tell you the truth we don't regret that it exceeded our expectations.

The mechanism of selecting the photos for nomination was explained in the report done on the exhibition issued previously.

Best-Photo Contest personnel

COMMON
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haiji

The tragedy of it all

Bob Herbert of the New York Times could not have put it better when he wrote yesterday in his Op-Ed column about the tragic loss of so many innocent lives in Iraq. Mind you, Bob was only talking about those who are dying by collateral damage or frantic shootings by American GIs. Needless to say there are now hundreds more dying out of the misguided targeting by insurgents, who fail to understand that shooting Iraqis is not a very good way of propagating the message of the insurgency. How can they expect the Iraqis to welcome the insurgency with open arms, if most of its victims are the Iraqis themselves? Even if we can assume that the struggle against the American occupation is legitimate, it goes without saying that this struggle will need the support and backing of the Iraqi people themselves. Otherwise, how can the insurgents expect to gain the sympathies of the people most relevant to this struggle; i.e., the Iraqi people themselves. The observer is still inclined to believe that an insurgency that follows a methodology of victimizing the supposed beneficiaries of this "struggle for liberation" is certainly not working with the intentions expected to be pursued by such an insurgency. No this is not a genuine struggle for freedom. One might find it easier to believe that this insurgency is working for the benefit of the occupier. By the sheer numbers one is getting over the newscasts: 30 dead coming out of a mosque, 20 lining up looking for jobs, etc. There is no legitimacy in the killing of unarmed people coming out of a house of worship or the killing of desperate people like for sources of sustenance.

Another distressing thing one finds that these so called insurgents are apparently well financed and well supplied with all the killing tools that have the maximum impact. Many of these senseless bombing attacks are carried in BMWs, the cost of which can be used to purchase hundreds of light armaments that perhaps could be used more effectively against the "real enemy". Yet, we see this going on as if these people are not really guided by any sensible tactical approaches that wins the hearts of the intended beneficiaries of this struggle.

Once in a while there are even victims that are actually helpful in the struggle against the occupation. Bob Herbert mentioned the death of an American woman, who has been trying to get the message across to her fellow citizens in the United States that hey this war is all wrong. There are so many innocent people hit at random by American weapons and by an insurgency that forgot whose cause it is fighting for." Of course the death of innocent Iraqis by the insurgency does not raise the hairs of any one, because the insurgency is proving that the American presence is wise and prudent. For the Americans, Mr. Bush has indicated that indeed progress is being made. The death of so many people is of no concern to the White House, because the White House is not worried about American GIs getting killed or the death of advocates seeking a peaceful end to the demise in Iraq. In fact, the White House only believes in what its friends and war lords in the Administration are telling it. Everything is rosy, especially now that Iraq had its elections. Washington is busy chasing the Syrians for not preventing the death of Rafiq Al-Hariri, with its 14,000 troops in Lebanon. The US has a force of over 200,000 under its disposal in Iraq and it has not prevented the death of one innocent civilian, let alone protect the cooperative Iraqi leaders who are working with it in Iraq.

So, how can Syria with its far lesser means and capabilities be expected to forestall an attack that most likely was engineered by outside forces. Even if these instigators were Syrian or Lebanese, the motive just does not serve the interests of Lebanon or Syria. This observer was surprised to find that former President William Clinton would go about insisting that the Syrians were to be blamed for the death of Hariri. Even after admitting that the UN report on the investigations of the killing did not at all put any direct blame. The only argument Clinton finds in the report was that Syria should have been able to prevent the killing. Well, this observer is inclined to suggest to Mr. Clinton that the same argument can be used 10,000 fold for the Americans in Iraq. The Americans are indeed more capable and possess greater means, but we find that they are unable (or more likely unwilling) to put an end to so much senseless killing of civilians in Iraq. Shouldn't logic be applicable on an equal basis on both situations. More important, on what tangible evidence does Mr. Canton pointedly accuse Bashar Al-Assad, while not using the same logic to accuse Mr. Bush for the killing of thousands of innocent people, whether by American weapons or the erratic behavior of fly by night contractors of death, who have been given a free unchallenged hand to carry out their thirst for blood. The most intriguing thing is that it does not even seem that the Americans are even looking for the people behind all the senseless killings Iraq. One wonders, if they are really interested in finding them or even if there isn't a clandestine link between the occupation and their energetic and deadly presence in Iraq.

It is often proven that people who tend to follow an agenda based on vested interests, rather than real moral motives to justify their actions, will never look seriously at the negative consequences of their actions. This seems to be the case in Iraq. An invasion was undertaken for the vested interests of the American military-industrial complex, which is reportedly recording record earnings these days (even if at the expense of a huge budget deficit). Never mind that the declared intention of averting the dangers of Saddam's WMD have been declared hogwash by the very same organs that initially raised the alarm about them. It does not matter. Iraqis can keep on dying forever as far as the Washington war lords are concerned, as long as the bottom line is in the black for the machine that thrives on war and bloodshed.



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Presented by Mohammed Khidr

A t h - T h a w r i weekly, organ of the YSP, 21 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines

- Government militarize seaports
 - Journalists Salaman and Saqqaf before court
 - In the JMP dialogue with ruling party, Opposition asks for timetable, time ceiling, transparency and implementation mechanism.
 - Arab teachers deported in an inappropriate manner
- Columnist Ahmed Saleh Ghalib al-Faqieh says in his article the European Union is one of the most important donating parties for Yemen. Despite the EU knowledge of the volume of governmental corruption, it continues to fund this corruption in a way similar to what Arab Gulf funds do.
- If the Gulf funds render care to corruption that has made Yemen paying high price from its national territories in the border agreement between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, what is the interest of the European Union in rendering care for the Yemeni governmental corruption?

There are some shyly made attempts by the European Union to control and watch the use of funds granted to Yemen. But those attempts are not enough. Spending those grants and conclusion of contracts are in the hands of the government machinery where a big part of those funds goes to pockets of the corrupt. The World Bank has an experiment represented by the unit of funding and implementation of rural road projects. It is a unit subject to direct supervision of the World Bank through its office in Yemen and efficient Yemeni engineers and administrators run it. I think it is time for the European Union to follow suit of the World Bank through creating similar units to supervise contracts and implementation of projects at all sectors that are under the EU direct supervision.

Al-Sahwa weekly, 21 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines

- Welcomed response to its repeated calls. JMP parties name guarantees for dialogue success, waiting for the GPC reply
 - Situation of electricity tragic, MP's summon head of the government and finance minister
 - University professors threaten with resignations in body from parliament
 - Mikati forms a new Lebanese government
 - Merchants create black market, government as a spectator, Acute cement crisis, dollar price exceeds 190 riyals
 - Arrest decision against journalist Khalid Salaman
 - Judge al-Hirdi openly apologizes for his soldiers attacks against lawyers Allaw and al-Jaabi
 - Teachers Union denounces statements of the ruling party's secretary-general
- Columnist Rashad al-Sharaabi writes saying at the beginning of the present academic year a day for democratic lesson was announced at classes of all basic education schools in various governorates. Officials in recent years have talked much about the importance of including concepts and culture of democracy, civil education and human rights into education curricula.

There is nothing wrong about that and no one can compete with our government and its officials with regard of theoretical side. Yemen possesses a legal asset, rarely can be found in any other Arab country, besides of its signing of more than 56

international agreements in the area of human rights.

The problem lies in application and this is negatively reflected on souls of the coming generations that seek to be brought up on democracy and human rights. They do not want to live our experience of totalitarian eras and despotism. What supports our opinion is the tragic situation the university teachers and students are experiencing. University and other education stages teachers and students are facing a situation of deprivation of rights and violation of freedoms and imposition of entities by the ruling party and fighting partisan pluralism.

What is happening to students of dentistry college students of rights deprivation and violation of freedoms because of distribution of leaflets criticizing the bad situation and demanding for rights, is but an extension to what is happening in Sana'a University and other universities and institutes and secondary schools.

This situation deserves to be pondered by those concerned first and also by all political forces and civil society organisations.

Al-Nahar weekly, 21 Apr.2005.

Main headlines

- Death sentence to killer of the Russian doctor in Hodeidah
 - Police storm offices of YSP newspaper
 - Journalists Syndicate demands an independent fact-finding committee about situations in Jaashin
 - Official report demands trial of officials contributed to dissemination of sectarian education
 - Committee for reconstruction and repair of those damaged from Saada war
 - Defendant killed at the courtroom
 - Yemen seeks help of Germany in fighting corruption
- Columnist Faisal al-Soufi queries about the external element or factor in the events seen in Saada.

In June 2004, president of the republic affirmed to the Lebanese newspaper al-Mustaqbal that there were external sides offered financial support to Hussein al-Houthi and his followers. After that, the accusation is repeated in person of the president, head of the government and the foreign minister and other officials on different occasions. He latest of those accusations came by the Yemeni ambassador to Algeria, saying that foreign forces offered support and funding to the "Believing Youth".

The officials did not name that foreign side up till now. They have always said at present we do not accuse a certain side but would announce that after the end of investigation.

The supposition of the existence of a foreign side supporting al-Houthi depends on that he had been paying his followers salaries in dollars and he managed to build strongholds, digging trenches and buying weapons and carrying out other activities, such as establishment of religious institutes and centers in addition to organizing symposiums, trips and movable summer camps.

Due to hugeness of expenses, those constituents require and because local potentials are unable to provide this means that the source of those expenses is a foreign side. That side could be a state or society or non-governmental organisation, this is not clear.

I personally refuse the theory of conspiracy and accept the idea that that there is always a foreign enemy. This enemy could be possible while the genuine enemy may be present inside, i.e. we and that the problems that

happen in our reality are mostly of our own making and we have to find a solution for them from inside.

Al Shoura weekly, organ of the Union of People's Forces of Yemen, 20 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines

- JMP denies putting preconditions and sticks to clear mechanism for dialogue
- Al-Thawri condemns the terrorization campaign against it
- In Saada, renewal of engagements, storming of houses and continued arrests
- Dailami and Muftah, deprivation of defence ends with retaining the case for judgment on 29 May
- University teachers launch initiative of a million signatures demanding the president for comprehensive reform
- Aden witnesses sharp crisis of water

Columnist Tawakul Abdulsallam Karman writes saying perhaps the hesitation and non-interaction the opposition parties have shown towards the call for dialogue addressed by the GPC general committee and what followed it of the president forming of a special committee for dialogue chaired by the GPC secretary general, caused by that the opposition parties have become convinced that they are called for a dialogue having no value or meaning for the side that called them.

It is especially so when the opposition does not possess any strong pressure cards. Moreover, the celebration of official media of considering the mere call is a pioneering achievement reflecting the greatness tolerance of the political leadership. This consideration clearly reflects that they are not serious about the dialogue as it is a dialogue between adversaries and enemies rather than a dialogue between partners.

Any call for national alignment is usually not launched unless the regime is witnessing a suffocating crisis in the offing, which the regime fears that the opposition would exploit against the regime.

Al-Isbou weekly, 21 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines

- Citizen killed while standing trial
 - Islah welcomes dialogue with the west, Qahtan: Islamic address needs revising
 - Draft law on investment arouses great controversy
 - Yemen spares strategic reserve to mitigate concern about oil exhaustion
- Columnist Jamal Hassan says in an article the crisis of dialogue is in its non-existence and when it is preceded by strict values: authority and opposition exchanging accusations. While the topic of sitting at the dialogue table by the authority and opposition is still heated, the two parties are exchanging accusations that may reach a degree of betrayal.

Parties of the JMP are taking a strong stand for getting guarantees for the success of the dialogue so that it would not be a mere propaganda.

It seems that a dialogue grouping the ruling party and opposition parties is passing through non-ending complexities. Ruling party and official press attacked the opposition while parties of the JMP denied having put preconditions for dialogue. At any rate, the call for dialogue by the ruling party is an expression of the deep gap between the authority and the opposition.

Instead of dealing with theoretical questions, the two parties should be preoccupied with modernizing their addresses to acquire a more practical

S K E T C H E D O P I N I O N

By Samer A.

Israeli Policy

approach.

Al-Wahda weekly, 20 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines

- Political parties overcome the state of alienation and move to dialogue
- Yemen moves to group of less indebted countries
- German praise of the Yemeni experiment in democratic practice and fighting terror
- Resuming dialogue with Al-Houthi followers
- WB assesses projects it is implementing in Yemen
- Economists warn against continuation of decline in riyal purchasing power
- Part of the strategy of modernizing judiciary, fixing year 2015 a time ceiling to complete building judiciary power

Writer Dr Abdullah Ali al-Fadhli says the security question occupies the first priority and the first of people's interest next to the food safety. General security is the responsibility of the entire society and not only that of security authorities. Society would not be safe and stable without its being collaborates in making security and stability and if it depends only on security apparatuses.

In the few past years, our country has been exposed to many violations and forms of crimes harming security and stability and inflicted damage on public and private properties whether by local gangs or through alien ones.

The citizen's role is very big in security process through watching, following up and immediate reporting about any dubious activity. Thus, efforts are joined forces between public security and the citizens to protect the homeland from those gangs and crimes that are alien for the Yemeni society.

26 September weekly, organ of Yemen Armed Forces, 21 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines

- Under presidential directives, convoys of food and medical assistance continue reaching areas damaged by sabotage secession
- A new Jordanian ambassador to Yemen
- PM Bajammal: Strict measures for the protection of human and environment and the use of insecticides
- Dangerous gang for drug trafficking and forged currencies discovered

The newspaper editorial is discussing the dialogue proposed by the ruling party with opposition political parties. It says all the people of Yemen, individuals and society, political parties and various other

organisations are partners in this homeland and proceed in all that we do from a genuine and deep feeling the sense of responsibility for its security, stability and development.

In this context came the call by the General People's Congress to the partners of political life, political parties and organisations, for a dialogue. It is not only the shortest of ways for dealing with differences and variances, but also would achieve mutual benefit from what others would submit of ideas and visions and also to determine what is essential and main and what is secondary but does not affect the agreement on it or find a formula leading to a responsible partnership giving the national action patriotic and ethical dimension.

Al-Nidaa weekly, 20 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines

- Information of allowing al-Houthi and Razzami to leave to a neighboring country
 - Government committee to revise amendment draft of press law
 - The international organisation for electoral systems proposes mechanism for funding presidential elections
- The newspaper editorial says sitting

at dialogue table with the ruling party has ignited a fabricated political crisis that engaged the political parties in open press bickering.

Summer of politics this year is racing with official table wanting to stabilize the policy of thresholds for an opposition that has not ridden itself of the complex of inferiority and shortage in understanding the nature of its role.

Dialogue has been launched as a propaganda balloon the GPC has tried to drag all to it and it has succeeded with that. It is as if getting out of a crisis could not be achieved but with drowning others in another crisis. The idea of dialogue has emerged at meetings of the fourth session of the GPC's permanent committee more than a week ago when the task of informing secretaries general of political parties to a submerged member of the permanent committee.

Parties of the JMP have set condition of holding a preparatory meeting for heads of their political offices and the ruling party to define a draft agenda of the dialogue and fix measures guaranteeing its success and achieving its goals, time ceiling and mechanisms of implementation what would be reached, in addition to guarantee its publicity and transparency. The conclusion is that the political crisis in Yemen springs from non-existence of genuine politicians realizing that dialogue could not be imposed by begging at thresholds.

Vacancy

A leading International Construction Company with active contracts in the Republic of Yemen is seeking to fill the position of Project manager and Site manager for its infrastructure projects in Yemen.

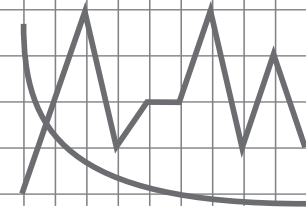
Minimum Qualification Required:

1. BS or Higher Degree in Civil Engineering from a high reputable academic Institution.
2. Minimum 20 years experience as Civil Engineer preferably in Civil Works / Infrastructures / Oil & Gas Sectors.
3. 10 years Project manager experience in large scale Civil Work Projects.
4. Experience in international procurement and tendering Norms & Standards.
5. Excellent bilingual (Arabic/English).
6. Working knowledge of all relevant Software tools related to the field.

Potential candidates interested to apply for the above position should send or fax requests with recent CV to:

P.O. Box: 547, 6DQD< emen
Fax No.: +967 1 472567

YT Business



What have workers achieved on their Day?

BY MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The occasion of Labour Day and celebrating it, is observed each year in Yemen, as it is done in countries recognizing workers' rights. Labour Day comes this year while workers in Yemen are experiencing bad living conditions and their job opportunities are dwindling. Moreover, the role of their federation is absent and has not done anything or taken any measures that would improve their material situation.

A construction worker Hassan Ali from Hassaba area has said that there is no importance in celebrating Labour Day this year while workers' conditions have deteriorated despite the government saying that it is working to increase investment activities in order to flourish and recover conditions of the local labour. He also says that the working class has, throughout its long history, struggled and sacrificed for attaining the legitimate right to celebrate its Day beside the formation of trade unions that have acquired their legitimacy from national legislations. Nevertheless, those unions are presently losing their rights as a result of ready-made reforms coming from

Unemployed workers see no use of celebrating May Day

the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. They are in the form of price doses that would not provide job opportunities for the unemployed workers, but as he says, would only beef up financial capacities of officials who carry out projects

funded by programs and international donor sides.

Another worker says that the weakness of the trade union movement is due to the division inside the federation, unacceptance and respect of the other opinions.

This discloses the reality of the crisis that the labour movement in Yemen is suffering from, especially after the trade unions federation has changed into a semi governmental organisation.

A person working in the

architectural sector says that the urgent task is to come out of the crisis and thinks that it could be achieved by trade unionists to study successful solutions for the problems the workers are suffering from. Taking into consideration that those solutions

Exchange Rate for the Yemeni Rial

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	190.6500	191.0500
Sterling Pound	364.1300	364.9000
Euro	247.4000	247.9200
Saudi Rial	50.8300	50.9400
Kuwaiti Dinar	652.7300	654.1000
UAE Dirhem	51.9100	52.0200
Egyptian Pound	32.8700	32.9400
Bahraini Dinar	505.7000	506.7600
Qatari Rial	52.4000	52.5100
Jordanian Dinar	269.0900	269.6500
Omani Rial	495.2000	496.2400
Swiss Franc	160.2600	160.5900
Swedish Crown	27.0100	27.0700
Japanese Yen	1.7999	1.8036

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

would guarantee their rights in finding job opportunities yielding income to secure the their children's livelihood.

Another worker says that he has been unemployed for some time and has not found a job opportunity in the plumbing field. He also ridicules Yemen's observing the World Labour Day and parties held at all official institutions on the occasion, adding that the government has to develop job opportunities and guarantee for them to lead a good life. He goes on saying that some people think that improving circumstances of workers is of the values and ideals connected to elevating the value of work, recognition of the worker's humanity and status in addition to doing justice to him. Appreciation of his major role in production and development, as being a specialty of the YSP and not the government. This worker thinks such thoughts are mistaken.

Those who are unemployed see that the stand of Islam towards work, workers and social justice in general as important and full of values, principles and ideals doing justice to workers. Those looking for jobs also add that if the state shoulders a high political and legal responsibility towards workers that do not exempt political forces from bearing any part of that responsibility.

Ministry of Public Health and Population Health Reform Support Project Health Reform Support Project (HRSP) Credit 3625 Credit Administration Unit

Request for Expressions of Interest

Consultancy Services to Develop Institutional Capacity of NCHEI in Planning, M&E, Supervision & Time Management

This request for expressions of interest follows the general procurement notice of the Health Reform Support Project that appeared in the United Nations Development Business (UNDB) issue number 607 on 16th May 2003, Al-Thawra newspaper issue number 13944 on 28th May 2003, and Yemen Times issue number 641 on 12th June 2003.

The government of the Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of its Health Reform Support Project (HRSP), and intends to apply the proceeds of this credit for the procurement of consultancy services for the National Centre for Health Education and Information.

The Ministry of Public Health and Population now invites eligible consultants to express their interest in providing consultancy services to develop institutional capacity of the NCHEI in training, monitoring and evaluation, supervision, and time management.

The activities/responsibilities of this consultant will be as follows:

- 1- Provide training and develop the skills of NCHEI staff in planning.
- 2- Provide training for NCHEI staff on monitoring and evaluation of administrative and managerial activities.
- 3- Provide training for NCHEI staff on time management.
- 4- Provide training NCHEI staff on report writing.
- 5- Develop a management training needs assessment tool and on-the-job management skills development training plan (theoretical and practical) for NCHEI staff.
- 6- To introduce monitoring and evaluation systems for supervision of the NCHEI management activities at the national level.

Interested consultants must provide information indicating they are qualified to perform the required services and have the relevant experience. Interested consultants may obtain additional information from the CAU during official working days form 8:30am to 2:30pm.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank guidelines; *Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, January 1997 (revised September 1997, January 1999, and May 2000)*

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by 18th May 2005. Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours form 8:30 am to 3:00 pm.

Credit Administration Unit
Health Reform Support Project
Ministry of Public Health and Population
P.O. Box 1330 - Al-Hasabah - Sanaa - Republic of Yemen
Tel: +967(1) 252224 - Fax: +967(1) 251622
Email:hrsp@y.net.ye

Yemeni-German talks to be held in May, Increase in German annual support for Yemen

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The German government has decided to increase its support for Yemen through raising the total German annual support for the Yemeni Republic to 40 million euros at both official and government levels. Yemeni-German annual talks are to be held next May to discuss relations of bilateral cooperation. The talks would include technological, social and financial areas.

The German ambassador to Sana'a said that the talks would discuss all German-funded projects under construction in Yemen and stage of accomplishment in addition to the

discussion of new projects to be implemented in the near future through cooperation of both sides.

The German ambassador has made it clear that raising the German support comes within the frame of development of Yemeni-German relations that have been enhanced by the visit of the German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder to Sana'a last March.

That visit was followed by other high-level exchanged visits to both Sana'a and Berlin, explaining that there was an intensified and close coordination regarding various issues of interest to both countries.

The German ambassador has also praised the democratic development in

Yemen, saying Yemen has followed the right course to democracy and taken big steps towards it, adding it is in need of continued consolidation. He has also extolled the positive participation of the Yemeni women in the political process, political parties and other Yemeni organisations interest in enhancement that participation in future.

The German ambassador expressed appreciation of the German government for Yemen's efforts in the field of fighting terror and the results that have been attained. He pointed out to the existing cooperation between Yemen and Germany in security area for the success of fighting the organized crime and terrorism.

Dresdner Bank celebrates another decade of success in Middle East region, Marks 10th anniversary of GCC representative office

Dubai - 16 April 2005 - Dresdner Bank, a 100%-subsidiary of Allianz, one of the world's largest financial services providers, on 13 April 2005 celebrated another decade of success in the Middle East and Gulf region with the 10th anniversary of its local representative office based in Dubai, which serves the entire GCC including Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia as well as Yemen.

The close relationship between the Arab world and Dresdner Bank dates back to 1954 when the Bank opened its Cairo representative office - only the

second Dresdner representative office to be established outside Germany, with the first located in Istanbul. This was followed by the opening of the Beirut office (1964), the Tehran office (1973) and the Bahrain office (1976), which was subsequently moved to Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE) in 1995.

Dresdner Bank's Corporate Banking division maintains long standing relationships with key financial institutions throughout the Middle East and, in cooperation with these institutions, provides trade finance products for German and European corporates. For a large number of institutions in the region, Dresdner Bank is a clearing bank. Dresdner Bank also provides

advisory services and financing for infrastructure projects to selective clients in the Middle East.

In February of this year, DrKW lead managed a US\$750 million five-year benchmark bond issue for Emirates Bank International - the largest-ever international bond transaction for a financial institution in the Middle East.

In Private Banking, Dresdner Bank sees a significant market development in the Middle East with a growing demand for highly sophisticated and customised solutions. Dresdner's private banking activities in this region build on strong traditional relationships of trust and mutual respect and reflect the traditional values of discretion and confidentiality.

Celebrating Prophet's Birthday (PBUH)

By SALAH SALEH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

As the 12th of Rabe'ul Awal drew nearer and nearer, Muslims all over the globe made the necessary arrangement to celebrate the 1426th birth day of Prophet Mohammad Bin Abdullah (Peace be upon him). Such exalted occasion has been anxiously awaited in many Arab and Muslim countries, particularly Sudan and Djibouti who mark the occasion for three to four days. All the Yemeni people were in tenterhooks to mark such a great religious occasion.

Locals in Tihama have their own rituals to celebrate the occasion and they gather in mosques and in houses to hold festival. "After Adhan of Isha'a Prayer, we start to hold rituals while the atmosphere is prevailed with the nice smell of incense. This is followed by the recitation of some verses from the Holy Qur'an as well as reading out the

biography of the Great Prophet (Peace be upon him)." said Sa'eed al-Kori, Deputy Manager of the High Institute for Medical Sciences in Hodeidah.

Celebration in the city of Hodeidah is held in certain zones, and preparations for the occasion start at earlier time. Women are seen to make cakes, sweets and other dashes and wear the newest of their garments as well as to cover their hands with henna.

According to Mohannad Sadiq, the celebrators do not forget to make the necessary arrangements; rather, they bring all the requirements including incense, perfume, henna and flowers.

In other Yemeni areas, celebrators offer certain amounts of money and other things such as presents to religious and tribal sheikhs and mosque preachers.

Ahmad Hashim al-Edrisi, a graduate from the Faculty of Legal Sciences, Hodeidah University commented: "The religious groups who are affected by the Saudi syllabus (al-Wahhabi) consider celebrating the occasion as a contrivance

or something that contradicts the teachings of Islam, however we believe that marking the occasion is a loveable thing.

He added: There is a lack of interest toward the occasion that can be ascribable to comments made by al-Wahhabi groups as well as the change of livings among people and the availability of video and television.

"The occasion has its significance that stems from the significance of the birth of Great Prophet (Peace be upon him) and it has a variety of benefits that are reflected in acquainting generations with the life of Prophet Mohammad and the hardships he endured while calling people to Islam," noted Ibrahim al-Edrisi, a teacher at the High Institute for Medical Sciences in Hodeidah.

Marking the birthday of Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) is pondered upon as a remembrance of the messenger of humanity who was the symbol of moral values, integrity and cultivated behavior.

The queen of sheba (4/5)

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY DAVID BEN-ABRAHAM
DAVIDBENABRAHAM@YAHOO.COM

Summary of part 1 -3:

King Solomon checks his army of creatures of all kinds and misses the hoopoe bird, he threatens to punish it for not being present in the parade, when the hoopoe appears coming from Yemen where he had seen a queen that worships not the true God. King Solomon sends the hoopoe bird with a letter back to the Queen of Sheba. The Queen reads the letter and decides to travel from Yemen to the King in Jerusalem. When she meets him there he amazes her with the powers God has bestowed on him and she duels with him in an intelligent conversation.

Part IV:

The queen, not yet convinced of the king's wisdom, answered: "My lord the king, this may have been but a simple trial of character for thee, yet perchance other questions and hard riddles will prove thy wisdom most consummately. Allow me, therefore, to ask thee three questions, which if thou shalt answer correctly, disclosing the secret meanings of my words, I shall know indeed that thou art a wise man of uncommon wisdom. Yet, if thou shalt fail, you shall be esteemed as all other men of regal order.

Tell me, if you can, since we have heard that thou art wise also in the natural sciences, what is like unto a wooden well, the contents of which are drawn up, as it were, by a bucket of iron; that thing taken up no more than stones, which

forthwith are irrigated by water?

Answered the king: "The reed container, or vial, which carrieth the black antimony known as stibium, which stone when crushed is used by women in painting their eyelids, and by men as a remedy in eye ailments, and which they apply to themselves by wetting the iron pin with their spittle. 5

Correct! said the queen, and then proceeded to ask the king another question, saying: What is like dust, in that it cometh forth from the earth? Yet, when it comes forth, its food becomes the earth upon which we stand. It is split as water, and causes the house to be seen?

Answered the king: Kerosene! 6

Correct! said the queen, and then propounded an even harder riddle to ask the king, saying: Whenever there is a strong gale, this thing is always at the forefront. It makes a great and bitter

shout, and bows down its head as a bulrush. 7 It is a thing lauded by the rich and wealthy, yet deplored by the poor; a thing of praise to the dead, yet strongly detested by the living. It is the happiness of birds, yet the grief of all fishes. What is it?

Answered the king: Flax linen! 8 For a strong gale can only mean that it is used in making sails for ships, which same sails are driven by strong winds.

Now these linen stalks, after soaking, are first pounded and beaten in order to expose the good fibers, hence the great and bitter shout it makes. (Like bulrushes, the head of its stalks are split open, appearing to bow down.) The rich laud it, because they are able to afford the softest and most fine quality of linen produced, whilst the poor cannot afford to buy it, and settle for a poorer quality, which causes them great discomfort

when first worn by them, until the fabric of the linen cloth is broken in by long wear.

Moreover, when men die, only the rich can afford to buy coloured linen shrouds to bury their dead, whilst the poor cannot afford it. 9 A dead man who is wrapped in a burial shroud finds praise from men, but woe unto the living man who wears a burial shroud! Birds eat the flax seeds and make their nests from its fibers, and they are made happy thereby. But fish are caught in nets made of linen cords, and are grieved thereby.

The queen of Sheba, not being able to conceal her amazement at the ease with which the king answered her questions, propensed to ask him yet other questions, saying: Seven are departing. Nine are entering in. Two are giving drink, but only one is drinking. What are they?

Now the king thought within his heart,

no man will speak upon a matter except that which is closest to him in his heart. So, too, this woman will ask none other than that which is in her heart, and a woman's heart is mostly on child bearing and children, jewellery, perfumes and cosmetics and clothing. So the king answered her: continued next week

5 Id est, the stibium clings to the spittle on the iron pin.

6 Distilled from petroleum, and used in burning lamps since ancient times.

7 To-day, these plants are more commonly called Cattails.

8 Linum usitatissimum

9 For which reason, Rabbah Gamaliel the elder later changed the practice, and made it compulsory that all men, whether poor or rich, buy and make use of only non-coloured burial shrouds to bury their dead, so as not to shame those who were poor.

Republic of Yemen Ministry of Public Health and Population Health Reform Support Project (HRSP)

Request for Expressions of Interest

Consultancy Services to Develop a Communication for Behaviour Change (CBC) Programme and to Develop the CBC Research Capacity of the Staff of the Health Education, Information and Population Centre

This request for expressions of interest follows the general procurement notice of the Health Reform Support Project that appeared in the United Nations Development Business (UNDB) issue number 607 on 16th May 2003, Al-Thawra newspaper issue number 13944 on 28th May 2003, and Yemen Times issue number 641 on 12th June 2003.

The government of the Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of its Health Reform Support Project (HRSP), and intends to apply the proceeds of this credit for the procurement of consultancy services for the National Centre for Health Education, Information, and Population.

The Ministry of Public Health and Population now invites eligible consultants to express their interest in providing consultancy services to develop a CBC programme and to develop the CBC research capacity of the staff of the health education, information and population centre.

The Activities/responsibilities of this consultant will be as follows:

- 1- Prepare a work-plan and methodology for planning and implementing a communication for behaviour change programme.
- 2- Prepare a work-plan for conducting research on health related behavior (as well as attitudes and practices) within the general population, and evaluating the impact of health messages and programmes on the general population, through measurable indicators.
- 3- Carry out workshops for training of the centre's staff on planning, preparing, conducting and implementing research.
- 4- Provide training for the centre's staff on the basics and methodology of communication research.
- 5- Provide a framework/methodology for the supervision of field research on CBC for trained staff.

Interested consultants must provide information indicating they are qualified to perform the required services and have the relevant experience.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank guidelines; *selection and employment of consultants by World Bank Borrowers, January 1997 (revised September 1997, January 1999, and May 2000)*

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by 18th May 2005. interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm.

Credit Administration Unit
Health Reform Support Project
4th Floor-Ministry of Public Health and Population
P.O. Box 1330-Al-Hasabah-Sana'a- Republic of Yemen
Tel: +967(1) 252224- Fax: +967(1) 251622-Email: hrsp@y.net.ye

Invitation for Bids Republic Of Yemen

Ministry of Public Health and Population Health Reform Support Project HRSP Credit 3625

SUPPLY, TRANSPORTATION and INSTALLATION of Basic Essential Needs for Sana'a, Al- Hodeidah and Ibb

This invitation for bids follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in United Nations Development Business (UNDB) issue no. (607) on 16th May 2003, Al-Thawra Newspaper issue no. (13944) on 28th May 2003, and Yemen Times issue no. (641) on 12th June 2003.

The Republic Of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Health Reform Support Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit for payments under the contract for Supply, Transportation and Installation of Basic Essential Needs for Sana'a, Al-Hodeidah, and Ibb governates.

The Credit Administration Unit (CAU) now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for Procuring Equipment Consisting the following: -

Basic Essential Needs for Sana'a, Al-Hodeidah and Ibb Consisting the following Lots: -

- Lot No. 1 - Nursing Ward Supply
- Lot No. 2 - Hospital Ward Supply
- Lot No. 3 - Sterilizing & Autoclaving
- Lot No. 4 - Medical Equipment
- Lot No. 5 - Laboratory Room (Equipment)
- Lot No. 6 - Office Equipment
- Lot No. 7 - Office Furniture
- Lot No. 8 - Ward Furniture
- Lot No. 9 - Electrical Equipment
- Lot No. 10 - Surgical Instrument

Bidding will be conducted through the national competitive bidding procedures specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IDA Credits, and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Credit Administration Unit (CAU) and inspect the bidding documents at the address below from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm.

A complete set of bidding documents in English language may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of USD \$ 50.00 The method of payment will be in cash. The document will be submit by hand.

Bids must be delivered to the address below by 11:00 a.m on 29th May 2005. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of minimum 2.5% of bid price. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 11:00 a.m 29th May 2005.

Credit Administration Unit
Health Reform Support Project (HRSP)
Ministry Of Public Health & Population
P.O. Box 1330 - Al Hasabah - 4th Floor Sana'a - Republic of Yemen
Tel : + 967-1-252224 - Fax: + 967 - 1 - 251622 - E-mail: hrsp@y.net.ye

Dr. Abdullah Nadeem Al-Siri to Yemen Times

“No body could imagine how I was smuggled into the Cardiology Department!”

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

People complain of the maltreatment they have been experiencing in medical institutions in our country. Instead of finding mercy to decrease their sufferings and a mild hand to cure patients, they suffer additional bad treatment.

This is reflected on lack of services, intentional negligence for the patient without mercy, humanity and conscience on the part of doctors.

A patient reaches a hospital, with a life and death situation, to find no available bed to lie on, while the staff remain unmoved even though he may drop dead anytime in front of the hospital's entrance in order to maintain what remains of his health. This kind of suffering increases, when you see most hospitals' keep the dead in fridges that are mostly out of use.

Since the ordinary person's testimony is not conceivable, we had an interview with one of the famous medical leaders, Dr. Abdullah Nadeem Al-Siri, Deputy Director of Al-Thawra Hospital in Taiz, who has been suffering from a cardiac disease. He refused to get medical treatment, opposing the maltreatment faced by him at Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a and here he is presenting his experience to add to the

Q: Could you tell us about your health? What are the reasons behind your strike?

A: I have been suffering from emphysema in the blood artery, and have a medical report issued from the Supreme Medical Committee in Sana'a. My case required carrying out an operation of catheterization. I came to Sana'a believing that the cost would be covered by the Ministry of Finance, Cardiology department but the operation couldn't be carried out in Al-Thawra Hospital, Sana'a.

INHUMANE TREATMENT

Q: What happened in Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a?

A: My knowledge about such things is that some physicians, who went to Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a, came back from its gate. The Hospital's officials deal with people severely and savagely. Anyway, their reply was that they were busy and that I should come back within 14 days, though the diagnosis only took ten minutes. I wanted to know, throughout the operation, what the reason was for the emphysema blockage, but to no avail. After eight days I suffered again from angina and was rushed to the hospital by the ambulance for the second time.

Dr. Abdulmalik Al-Sayani, Hospital's Manager, offered all facilities to me. I expected my colleagues to welcome me and present their services, not for the fact that I was a physician, but for the fact that I was a human being in need for treatment. I then asked myself what was missing. Since I had the medical files, official documents, and recommendations via

phones. I did not know!

I prepared myself the previous night, fasting and ready for the operation that should have been carried out at three in the afternoon the next day. I was in the ambulance while eight of my relatives were preparing all procedures enabling me to enter the Cardiology Department.

Dr. Abdulmalik Al-Sayani was contacting his deputy to take action. I expected them to have mercy on me because I know that in any system of the world, if there is an individual gesturing to his chest with his finger, a physician should leave whatever he is doing and run to him offering the required service. This law is adopted in countries of all different cultures. What about our Arab Islamic community?

Q: It is known that Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a is the most equipped in the republic, and its services are offered throughout the hour?

A: I heard about some complaints by people of Al-Thawra Hospital reporting that they deal with patients in a boring and inhumane routine. I used to deny such facts till I tried it myself. They said that the letter of Al-Thawra Hospital in Taiz is incomplete, though the minute was there; they claimed that the hospital should have sent a guarantee that the money would be paid. Anyway, all those procedures were done. If we estimated the cost of the operation it would be YR 65,000 for an ordinary person, yet the cost in the letter to the hospital and the approval of the Ministry of Finance was US\$ 1000 (which means more than 180,000).

I have been suffering from diabetes and

high blood pressure for 15 years. The Ministry of Health has not once offered me the cost of a tablet.

The problem here is not my personal experience but the treatment in general. If I, their colleague, was treated this way, what would the common man face?

I hope my voice reaches all ears when saying that the medical profession is in danger.

Q: Is the Cardiology Department absolutely independent?

A: All colleagues in Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a adopt a killing routine. The Cardiology Department though, is completely independent. Nobody knows except for Al-Na'ami, Minister of Health, who on the other hand, should be a father to all.

Q: What were the reasons that made them treat you this way? Can it be described to a specific political affair or party membership?

A: Some phoned me and asked whether I had a personal problem with the Minister of Health or with Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a. I told them that I only dealt with them by papers as the Deputy Manager of Al-Thawra Hospital in Taiz. They don't know my voice or face! There was no quarrel with any one.

One of my colleagues was suffering from the same problem and was rejected from the hospital's gates. He suffered until he died without being cured. In brief, there is discrimination by both the Ministry of Health and Al-Thawra Hospital in Sana'a between people as well as doctors.

ENTERING CASE TO THE CARDIOLOGY DEPARTMENT

Q: Were all attempts to let you enter the Cardiology Department in vain?

A: The most important point I want to mention is that some friends tried to convince me that the only way was to be trafficked into the department. Can you imagine it? A doctor trafficked into the Cardiology Department in order to rescue him, because no doctor agreed to sign him to lie on a bed.

I say outspokenly now that it became a personal matter between the Minister of Health and myself, having nothing to do with politics and parties. Even if there was such a thing, the hospital should care for me as a patient regardless of my being a friend or an enemy. I am expressing my feelings of anger because I have been refusing to take a single tablet of cardiac diseases for 13 days opposing this treatment. I found that death is more honorable. Anyway, when I agreed to be trafficked into the Cardiology Department, another story developed. When I entered the department, the officials contacted Dr. Abdulkarim Thamer who is considered as one of the key doctors there. I didn't know at the time that he is the Chief of the Physician Syndicate. I talked to him that night informing him about my status. He told me to come the next day at 7:30 a.m. and that I would be the first one to enter the department. What happened was that, he never came and I still haven't met him, until now. I was left on chairs when there were four vacant beds to lie on. I appealed to the nurse to lie on a bed but she told me that my name was not enlisted and that she had instructions that could not be dis-

obeyed.

“I WILL SUE THE MINISTER OF HEALTH”

Dr. Abdullah Nadeem said: before the catheterization operation, we gave them CDs to record the operation on the computer; they said that they were not required and that they needed Sony tapes. Concerning blood analysis, they received instructions not to expose check ups.

If the patient has an operation today why don't they ask for check ups from labs today?

I warned them not to forget that I was trafficked into the department.

I now intend to file a suit against the Minister of Health and hope that my voice will reach the president and all the honorable people of this country.

Q: Was there anyone who felt sympathetic towards your case, either family members or others?

A: There was a single physician whom I am grateful; Dr. Mohammed Hassan Agha. He left his work and went from one place to another in order to facilitate the procedures. Dr. Agha brought me the guarantee for the cost of the operation. The other person whom I am thankful for is Dr. Abdulqadir Hatem, Taiz Assistant Deputy Governor, who called me every day to check on my health.

Q: Tell us frankly, how do you deal with your patients in Al-Thawra Hospital in Taiz?

A: We are not angels; of course we commit mistakes but our mistakes do not reach the level of other hospitals. We have fired a physician who was working in the hospital because he was the cause of some death cases. The problem does not lie in committing mistakes but the great shame lies in repeating them, making circumstances worse.

Q: Do you have any last comments?

A: What I want to confirm is that such Cardiac Centers should be available in all provinces in order not to increase the patient's sufferings in traveling to Sana'a where physicians treat patients mercilessly. Some doctors are considered psychologically sick, especially those who work at Al-Thawra Hospital. On behalf of all physicians and in the name of the honor and sacredness of the profession, I appeal to the president to clean the Ministry of Health and to remove its corruption. I would also like to thank you as well as all honorable pens.

In conclusion, we reinforce the reopening of the files of the public medical institutions that are drowning in the administrative corruption and the bad medical circumstances. Being silent to such affairs means contributing to corruption.

It is a patients' cry, and it should be heard by the government to clean up such places. We as pressmen should devote our efforts in order to show the truth.

Facts of Life

By: Dr. Khaled alNsour
For the Yemen Times

Electrical stunning of animals

Does electrical stunning mitigate the slaughter or does it constitute a form of torture for the animal?

At present, there are no conclusive proof that electrical stunning is totally comfortable from the animal's point of view. However, there have been findings to enhance the probability that it does eliminate pain. Studies have indicated that electrical stunning applied anywhere on the animal other than on the head does not induce epilepsy and cause pain.

Effective electrical stunning is dependent on inducing an epileptic seizure in the animal, which is believed to lead to a loss of consciousness and subsequent loss of pain sensation due to the following reasons. During epileptic activity of the brain according to the electroencephalogram was shown to be grossly abnormal in comparison with its activity during the normal state of consciousness. It also indicates an absence of sensation under induced epilepsy.

But Does electrical stunning of animals lead to death? Comprehensive studies in developed countries, especially New Zealand, have shown that, when applied to the head only, electrical stunning of animals do not cause death, since it is a reversible and recoverable state. If not slaughtered, the stunned animal would make a full recovery. Heart failure would not, under normal conditions, occur, especially if the electrodes are only applied in a temporal position so as to avoid the flow of electric current through the body and the heart. In the case of calves, the frontal-occipital position was also found to be possible.

However, there are exceptions and any animal that suffers heart failure for any unforeseeable reason should be clearly identified during slaughter and rejected as not suitable for consumption by Muslims. For, when the heart function stops, blood from the carotid arteries is no longer pulsatile and bleeding is slower than in animals that are slaughtered while still alive. These symptoms are clearly and easily recognizable at the time of slaughter.

Electrical stunning of ducks, source: FAO

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Arsenal derby win makes Chelsea wait

Tottenham Hotspur's Erik Edman (R) blocks Arsenal's shot during their English Premier League soccer match at Highbury, London April 25. REUTERS

LONDON (Reuters) - Chelsea's celebrations were put on hold after Arsenal beat Tottenham Hotspur 1-0 in a robust north London derby on Monday to keep alive their own slender hopes of retaining their Premier League title.

Chelsea, who have 85 points to Arsenal's 74, will clinch their first title since 1955 with a win at Bolton Wanderers on Saturday no matter what Arsenal do in their last four matches.

Jose Mourinho's side would have been crowned champions if Spurs had prevented Arsenal winning at Highbury.

That rarely looked likely after Spanish striker Jose Antonio Reyes, who missed a first-minute sitter with

the goal at his mercy, had rifled Arsenal ahead after 22 minutes after being set free by Francesc Fabregas.

Arsenal continued creating the better chances and Brazilian substitute Edu hit the post during the second half and also fired into the side-netting when it looked easier to score.

However Spurs, desperate for points to boost their hopes of a place in next season's UEFA Cup, were always in contention as they defended resolutely with Michael Dawson outstanding.

Arsenal, playing without injured top scorer Thierry Henry and Fredrik Ljungberg, almost paid for their profligacy in front of goal when Spurs substitute Robbie Keane headed wide from close range three minutes from

time.

A goal then would have handed the title to Chelsea, but Arsenal held on to win and stretch their unbeaten run in all matches to 11 and maintain their record of scoring in every home league match this season.

"As long as we have a one percent chance (of keeping the title) we will fight for it," Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger told Sky Sports News.

"Our pride is to do as well as we can.

"Today we have 74 points.

If you look at any other league we would be top. But Chelsea have got more points and we have to respect that.

But it doesn't mean that we have to give up."

Wade, Jones on fire as Heat take opener

TORONTO (Reuters) - Dwyane Wade scored 32 points and Damon Jones added 30 as the top-seeded Heat cruised to a 116-98 win over the New Jersey Nets in Eastern Conference quarter-final playoff play in Miami on Sunday.

Shaquille O'Neal shook off a deep thigh bruise to add 17 points and 11 rebounds in 32 minutes for the Heat, but Miami did not need a big performance from their big star to take the opening game of the best-of-seven series.

Game Two is in Miami on Tuesday. Thanks to Wade and Jones, the Heat had two players score more than 30 points in a playoff game for the first time in franchise history.

The duo were sharp with their shooting as O'Neal worked his way slowly back into the line-up after suffering the thigh injury a week ago.

Wade finished 12-for-18 from the field and added eight assists, while Jones was 10-for-12, including 7-for-9 from three-point range for Miami.

Udonis Haslem added 11 points and had 11 rebounds for the Heat, the heavy favorites over the eighth-seeded Nets, who needed 15 wins in their final 19 games just to make the playoffs.

Vince Carter led New Jersey with 27 points and 10 rebounds, but the Nets never got to within single-digits of Miami's lead in the second half.

Jason Kidd added 18 points for the Nets, while Travis Best, Clifford Robinson and Nenad Krstic all had 11 points for New Jersey.

All-Star forward Richard Jefferson returned to the Nets line-up after missing the final 49 games of the season with a wrist injury.

Jefferson contributed nine points in 23 minutes.

In other games, Ben Gordon scored

Miami Heat guard Dwayne Wade(R) is fouled by New Jersey Nets guard Vince Carter(15) during the first period of Round 1 of the NBA playoffs in Miami, Florida, April 24, 2005. Reuters

30 points as the Bulls won their first playoff game since the days of Michael Jordan in 1998 with a 103-94 win over the Washington Wizards in Chicago.

Andres Nocioni added 25 points

and 18 rebounds while playing all 48 minutes for the Bulls, who took the opening game of the best-of-seven Eastern Conference quarter-final series.

Game Two is in Chicago on

Wednesday.

Kirk Hinrich added 17 points for the Bulls, who are without injured stars Eddy Curry and Luol Deng for the series.

Larry Hughes led Washington with 31 points, while Antawn Jamison added 14 points and seven rebounds.

In San Antonio, Andre Miller scored 31 points as the Denver Nuggets stunned the Spurs 93-87 in the first game of their Western Conference quarter-final.

Carmelo Anthony added 14 points despite foul trouble for the seventh-seeded Nuggets, while Marcus Camby had 12 points and 12 rebounds for Denver.

Manu Ginobili led the second-seeded Spurs with 23 points, but San Antonio missed its last 18 shots from the floor in a sloppy performance that cost the team homecourt advantage against the Nuggets, who went 32-8 to end the season under new coach George Karl.

The Spurs did not have a field goal in the final 10 minutes.

Tim Duncan had 18 points and 11 rebounds for the Spurs, while Nazr Mohammed chipped in with 15 points and had 15 rebounds.

Game Two is in San Antonio on Wednesday.

In Phoenix, Shawn Marion had 26 points and 13 rebounds as the Suns opened their Western Conference quarter-final with a 114-103 win over the Memphis Grizzlies.

Quentin Richardson added 22 points for the top-seeded Suns, while Steve Nash dished out 13 assists with 11 points and Stephen Hunter added 16 points off the bench.

Mike Miller had 19 points, Jason Williams added 17 and Pau Gasol chipped in with 16 for Memphis.

Game Two of the series is in Phoenix on Wednesday.

Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ACROSS | spread | 26 Salty salute | 42 Model T accessory |
| 1 "Lonely" singer | 57 Half-cocked | 27 AVW mistress | 43 Develop |
| 5 Kennel features | 58 astronomical body | 28 "W" catchy | 44 Harbinger |
| 9 Meet customs requirements | 60 Superman portrayer | 29 Place to turn in, perhaps | 45 Delphi prophet |
| 14 Cummings attraction? | 61 Symbol of liberty | 30 Out of sorts | 46 Welty novel "The Ponder BB" |
| 15 Word of hearty concurrence | 62 Russian river | 33 Famous canal | 47 Stage direction |
| 16 Large crowd | 63 Squared up | 34 Reverse command on a computer | 48 Bye-bye, in Burgundy |
| 17 Crab Nebula origins | 64 Rectangle part | 35 Henry 9,'s school | 51 Slackens |
| 19 Florida city | 65 Numerous | 37 They may run on gas | 53 Fish bait |
| 20 Supplicate | | 38 Word with bobby or firing | 54 Joyous round dance |
| 21 Formulated | DOWN | 39 -DFNL | 55 Distinctive flair |
| 23 City north of Des Moines | 1 Vaulted recess | 41 Turned inside out | 59 Luau loop |
| 25 Old Westerns | 2 Parser part | | |
| 26 Positron, e.g. | 3 Retained for oneself | | |
| 31 Ends of a new moon | 4 Pt. of U.S.A. | | |
| 32 Actress Sommer | 5 Central American country | | |
| 33 Be litigious | 6 Expressive one | | |
| 36 Algerian city | 7 36th st. | | |
| 37 Australian gemstones | 8 Break sharply | | |
| 39 Em, for one | 9 Harmonized hymn | | |
| 40 Jabber | 10 Track down | | |
| 41 ULPCs forte | 11 Delete | | |
| 42 Belief | 12 Austrian psychiatrist Alfred | | |
| 43 Demarcation line for 58-Across | 13 Has a novel experience? | | |
| 46 HO: s abode | 18 Obtains from effort | | |
| 49 +HEHs mom | 22 Cuts of ham | | |
| 50 Give the rubber stamp | 24 Covert movement | | |
| 52 One with a | | | |

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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"MAKE SPACE" by Gayle Dean

Liverpool "must overcome mental block"

LIVERPOOL (Reuters) - Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez says his team must not develop a mental block about playing Chelsea when the sides meet in the Champions League semi-finals.

Liverpool have lost to their Premier League rivals by one goal three times this season, including the League Cup final, and Benitez admits the London side are favourites to reach the final.

"We have lost three games to Chelsea but the fact it was just one goal shows how close we are to them," Benitez told reporters on Tuesday, the eve of the first leg at Stamford Bridge.

"We are talking two games now. We are not talking nine months where their squad of good players are important.

"Now we are playing against them for two games, when away goals can count as double, it is a different proposition.

"It is the Champions League and two legs, not the Premiership. If you lose in the Premiership, you lose. If you lose by the same score in the Champions League it may be okay.

"It will not be a big problem if we lose 1-0 at Chelsea as that means we

have a chance at Anfield."

Benitez will continue to use the tricks he learned when winning the 2004 UEFA Cup with Valencia to maintain Liverpool's impressive away form in Europe.

Liverpool won at Bayer Leverkusen and drew at Juventus in their last two Champions League outings, but they have lost 10 times on their travels in the Premier League, including a 1-0 defeat at lowly Crystal Palace on Saturday.

"We have done a lot of things in the Champions League that we did at Valencia," Benitez said.

"I will continue to do the same in terms of training and preparation to give the players confidence.

"We want to win. We know that away from home we are not playing so well, but we will try and do the same as we have in past Champions League games."

Benitez will name Harry Kewell among his substitutes despite criticising the Australian winger for refusing to travel to Leverkusen because of back and hamstring injuries.

Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez says his team must not develop a mental block about playing Chelsea when the sides meet in the Champions League semi-finals. REUTERS

"Harry has been training with us for 20 days but it's not hard training," Benitez said.

"He cannot play 90 minutes or 45 minutes but maybe 30 minutes. I asked him yesterday about his health and he said he was not 100 per cent fit but wanted to play."

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Taiz, agate maker talks

Agate: stone of indifferent country

By SHAKER MOHAMMED
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In a small workshop at the end of a lane off the main street of al-Bab al-Kabir in the city of Taiz, he sits hitting at pieces of stone with a small hammer, dipping them from time to time into a bowl of water to better discern images inside them and shape them accordingly.

"I have been practicing this profession for more than ten years," said Abdussalam Ahmed, a young craftsman who carves wonderfully smooth and colorful pieces of agate out of rough stones.

"I learned it in 6DQD at the National Center for Handicrafts. There, I

acquainted myself with the types of agate and the professional ways of making them."

Now he resides in Taiz and has established the first agate workshop. Around him are piles of sacks full of raw stones and walls covered with whitish dust coming from processes of stone cutting and polishing.

He skillfully makes agate into small and medium sized pieces which are used mostly to ornament rings, necklaces, and silverware. He then sells them to traders in the nearby shops.

"Taiz agate dealers used to come to 6DQD to purchase agates. I thought it would be profitable to move to Taiz where I might find a new market and promote the profession. Now they do

Abdussalam examining a piece of agate to see how to handle it properly before putting it to the grindstone

not need to go outside the city. 6DQD was the only source for agate and people depended on it mainly. Anis was thought to be the sole source of raw agate. However, now we are producing agate and have discovered new ores in new districts in the provinces of Ibb, Taiz, and Lahj. In Anis, there are top-quality mines but the newly discovered ones are sufficiently good."

A few centuries ago, agate was of the main local commodities exported by Yemen. Today, it has been affected by negligence and non-Yemeni types which flood markets.

Many people buy agate because of their own beliefs. Some buy it because they think it contains magical properties such as bringing wealth or making one lucky. Others buy it from a religious perspective quoting a 3URSKH saying that urges people to wear agate-set rings. People, however, have different tastes when it comes to the color of the stone. Some prefer it to be red whereas others want specific images in it.

"Many people, especially from the Gulf States ask for stones images but such stones are naturally rare and their price varies according to clarity."

Abdussalam complains about the indifference on the part of the concerned authorities who do not pay attention to "the sacred stone of our land. Its reputation is damaged by cheap and manufactured sorts of agate which comes into the country while the layman cannot tell which is which."

Abdussalam says that craftsmen are not supported to improve their profession and help boost the status of Yemeni traditional crafts, especially with the fact that the price of their goods is controlled by traders who monopolize the market.

"Our resources are limited," he says as he points to the small grindstone which is not designed for stone cutting and the locally improvised electric polishing machine consisting of assembled kitchen tools: a cooker body, bowl and plate. The setbacks to tourism over the previous years have affected their position to a great extent.

A bunch of colorful raw agate prior to cutting and polishing