

Al-Zindani on top of terror list

Yemen unable to stop supporting terror, US report

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Report of U.S. Secretary of State on international terrorism said the Yemeni government is still unable to stop channeling different kinds of support to terrorists. Although, al-Qaeda Organization in Yemen has become less active, there is a series of attempts and plots that target western interests, added the report.

It pointed out that the Yemeni government never took any procedures to restrict activities of Sheikh Abdulmajeed al-Zindani, nor prevent him from traveling abroad, or freeze his assets according to UN Sanctions Committee that blamed al-Zindani last February for having the will to support

al-Qa'eda Organization.

The text of the report is as follows:

Yemen

In 2004, the Republic of Yemen continued to provide support for the global war on terrorism and took action against al-Qa'ida and local extremists, arresting several individuals suspected of having al-Qa'ida ties and prosecuting the perpetrators of several terrorist acts.

On August 28, the Sana'a Primary Court convicted 14 al-Qa'ida members for the October 2002 attack on the French tanker M/V Limburg, the murder of a Ministry of Interior officer during the November 2002 attack on an oil company helicopter, a plot to attack the

Civil Aviation and

Meteorology Authority, a plot to attack four foreign embassies in Sana'a and to kill the US Ambassador, and for forging documents for the purpose of carrying out terrorism.

Two defendants received death sentences, one in absentia. The other defendants were sentenced to prison terms ranging from three to ten years. Under Yemeni law, both defendants and the prosecution have the right to appeal rulings. All defendants have appealed their sentences, as has the prosecution, the latter arguing that some of the sentences were too light. The appeals process is expected to conclude in early 2005.

On September 10, the Sana'a Primary Court concluded the trial of five defen-

dants for the October 12, 2000, attack on the USS Cole in Aden that killed 17 US sailors and injured 35. This included suspects Jamal al-Badawi and Fahad al-Quso, who were re-apprehended on March 10

by Yemeni authorities following their escape from an Aden prison in April 2003. On September 29, the court issued two death sentences for the ring-leaders of the bombing (al-Badawi and Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri in absentia). Three others were convicted and sentenced to prison terms ranging from five to ten years for their roles in the attack. These cases were under appeal by both the Government and the defense at the end of 2004.

Continued on page 3



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INSIDE

- Marginalized people denied equality —p5
- From the spirit of all the free journalists, so shall we go on! —p8
- Financial Leasing in Yemen —p10
- Thousand years to the Mozambique Island between the two shores of the Indian Ocean —p11

Ordered to leave their houses Al-Nasr inhabitants feel oppressed

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Sana'a, 2 May YT - a number of citizens living in al-Nasr Zone, 45-meter Street came on Monday May 2 to the Yemen Times and filed a complaint against the Secretary General of the Capital and Housing representatives. They were to move from their houses under the pretext of completing the project of rainwater-disposing passage.

Citizens expressed concern about the illegal procedures practiced against them, particularly when housing representatives ordered them on April 1 to evacuate their houses to enable the concerned parties to complete the project of rainwater-disposing passage.

Continued on page 3



Al-Nasr inhabitants assembling before the building of Yemen Times in protest against arbitrary orders.



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Traders appeal against sales tax law

By YASSER AL-MAYYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Sana'a, 2 May YT - The Capital's Chamber of Industry and Trade held on Monday May 2 a press conference with the aim to clarify the stance of the private sector towards sales tax law No. 19 for the year 2001, due to be put into practice next July.

The Chamber of Industry and Trade

filed an appeal claiming invalidity of the sales tax law No. 19 to the Supreme Constitutional Court for the sake of reconsidering it.

The conference was attended by a number of traders and businessmen including Jamal al-Muttarrif, member of the Chamber of Industry and Trade, who, on behalf of businessmen and traders, confirmed the issuance of sale tax law No. 19 is a violation against the law and

the constitution.

He added that the law in its current draft will cause price hikes, discourage the national industries, magnify investment costs and open the door for smuggling that in turn may collapse the national economy.

He further stressed that the PM attacked the private sector and stopped dialogue between the government and the private sector, which caused a prob-

lem without a solution.

The Chamber of Industry and Trade authorized Dr. Hassan Mujalli, Professor of Criminal Law at Sana'a University to file a suit against the sales tax law to the Supreme Constitutional Court.

The press release issued by the press conference called for the amendment and clarification of most of the articles contained in the law, as well as activating the role of judiciary and establishing the monitoring judiciary to protect investors and the private sector. It recommended the implementation of legislative reforms for all the laws associated with private sector activities.

The sales tax law led to fomenting a political crisis over the past few months between the government on the one hand

and objectors of the law on the other, causing a crisis between the government and the opposition Joint Meeting Parties.

People took to the streets in most of Yemeni governorates in protest against the sales tax law and those demonstrations were accompanied by chaos and conflict between civilians and security troops.

Afterwards, accusations were exchanged between the government and the opposition Joint Meeting Parties and the Government-affiliated media means waged campaigns against the opposition parties and accused the Islah Party of being held accountable for a great portion of chaos and violent acts that accompanied the demonstrations.

Continued on page 3

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Unified Arab Traffic Week starts

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Sana'a, 4 May YT- activities of the Arab Traffic Unified Week was inaugurated in all governorates of Yemen on Wednesday 4 May 2005. Observation of this week was held this year under a motto "Safety of Pedestrians, National

Obligation & Common Responsibility". This year's celebrations would include holding many activities at schools, institutes and universities, in addition to holding symposiums, lectures and meetings for information and enlightenment on the issue of traffic.

Continued on page 3



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General Federation of the Yemeni Workers Trade Unions

Labor Day Marked in Yemen

BY FAHMIA AL-FOTIH

World countries celebrated on Sunday 1 May the World Labor Day, Yemen represented by the General Federation of Yemeni Trade Unions organized a big festival to honor 500 workers from economic, commercial, trade institutions and companies. The festival that was sponsored by president Ali Abdullah Saleh took place in the Big Hall of 22 May in Sana'a.

Mr. Abdu rabo Mansour, the vice-president of the republic, Mr. Abdualkareem Al-Arhabi, the minister of Labor and Social Affairs along with a number of ministers, governmental officials, businessmen, heads of different industrial institutions and Arab and foreign diplomats attended as well.

The vice president delivered a welcoming speech in which he greeted all workers who helped in building the prosperity of Yemen.

Mr. Mansour pointed out in his speech that Yemen was one of the pioneer countries that founded the worker unions. The first union was launched in March 1956 in Aden, which had a vital role in fighting the occupiers.

The vice president also revealed that there are 350 worker unions that have 3350 members.



He also said that the government is working on finding a new mechanism of paying those who work in this vital field well.

Mr. Abdu rabo took that chance to reveal the ruling party's interest in calling all the political and national forces and opposition parties for an open dialogue to work together for Yemen's favor. He stressed on the importance of the serious and aiming political dialogue and called for stopping the exchange accusations via media that don't serve Yemen at all.

On his part, Mr. Yahya AL-Kahlani, the head of GFYWTU, delivered a speech in which he displayed the activities of GFYWTU since its foundation and its role in protecting

the workers rights in the republic and stressed on the necessity of establishing unions in all the institutions and called for honest elections in these unions.

On behalf of the women workers Ms. Redh Ahmed Karhash, delivered a speech in which she indicated the importance of woman participation in all work fields and displayed all the stages that Yemeni woman had gone through till she got her rights and started to strongly join the labor forces along with the man.

In the end the, around 500 talented, hardworking workers from various companies, organizations and institutions were honored and given certificates

Training Program on tourism and hotels inaugurated

In the presence of a number of tourism officials and hotel owners, the National Institute for Hotel and Tourism, an institutions belonging to the Ministry of Technical education and Vocational Training, inaugurated last week the training program in a number of hotels and tourist agencies.

The program is aimed at enhancing the important areas in the field of vocational training.

The program was funded 7 million Euros by the European Union, in addition to 1.76 million Euros by the Yemeni Government. This brought the total to 8.76 million Euros for the project, due to be implemented in a 4-year-period.

Many tourism officials and hotels owners confirmed the program achieved a considerable number of achievements in the sectors of tourism and hotels.

European fellowship certificate to Hayel Sa'eed Group

Hayel Sa'eed Group obtained on Wednesday April 28 the Gold European Fellowship Certificate by the European Association for Marketing and Development.

To mark the event Hayel Sa'eed Group of Companies staged a celebration in Taiz. The certificate was submitted to Ali Mohammad Saeed , Chairman of the Board of Directors.

The regional president of the Arab countries at the association, Dr Abdulaziz al-Tarb emphasized that

this certificate is usually awarded to kings and presidents, and it was awarded to this group of companies because it proved able to give a positive profile about Yemen in other countries in the fields of economy and development. It could score a number of achievements inside and outside Yemen.

It is worth mentioning that Hayel Sa'eed Group of Companies is the first one in Yemen as well as in the Arab region to be awarded this certificate.



Management Training House awards graduates

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Sana'a-April 28- The Management Training House has presented honors to the graduates from the Accounting course run by the MTH, for customers of YemenSoft Company.

The certificates were presented by MTH Director General at a ceremony organized within EduTex Exhibition at Sana'a Trading Center last Saturday.

He promised that MTH is committed to providing knowledge and skills required by establishments and individuals in terms of management, computer courses, courses of International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Business Edge courses which are especially prepared for the

Arab World.

Many visitors expressed their concern over high fees of education and study at these universities. This will make education accessed only by people from rich classes, they said.

These universities teach cutting-edge courses in computer science, international piloting license, management sciences, etc.

Malaysian Minister of Education attended the inauguration ceremony of the Exhibition to which Malaysian universities largely contribute besides other Arab and foreign universities.

The Exhibition was organized by Yemen-based EPAM Company in collaboration with a number of local concerned authorities, including Higher Education Ministry.

Prof. Al-Tarb to attend TAEF

Prof. Abdulaziz al-Tarb, President of European Marketing and Promotion Association (EMPA), Arab Region and Chairman of Arab Group for Investment and Development (AGIO), is to participate in the Turkish-Arab Economic Forum (TAEF) scheduled for May 5-6 in the city of Istanbul.

In a statement to the Yemen Times, Prof. Al-Tarb pointed out to the political and economic ties between Arab countries and Turkey which are experiencing touchable developments, as the two sides care for enhancing the

climate required for the reinforcement of bilateral relations.

He mentioned that the Turkish Prime Minister has made the necessary arrangements to sponsor the meeting and that he is personally following up some matters that are planned to be discussed at the meeting.

The forum will be attended by a great number of government dignitaries from both sides, in addition to high-ranking leaders from Turkish and Arab establishments and chairmen of

Arab joint commercial chambers.

It is worth mentioning that this will help reinforce the Arab and Turkish activities and concentrate deeply on the areas related to bilateral ties, investment and joint cooperation.

Prof. Al-Tarb concluded his statement by saying that he always cares for attending such important events, and via which he encourages businesspersons to invest in Yemen and create a distinctive Arab-Turkish partnership for the sake of reaching the establishment of a joint Arab market.

International discussion group on rheumatism fever

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Sana'a- May 5- The international workshop on prevention of rheumatism fever organized by the Middle East Office of the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with the Yemeni Ministry of Public Health was concluded on Thursday May 5.

Some 20 senior experts from 21 countries, 10 of whom are from Yemen, partook in the event.

The workshop is expected to come out with agreed general instructions for the countries of the area to prevent this disease which affects many lives.

Dr. Ahmed al-Mutarrib, coordinator of heart and rheumatism diseases, chairman of the workshop told Yemen Times that lung fever in Yemen hits a large number of people.

"Most of the patients, if students, leave school and undergo open heart surgeries which devastates their lives. Prevention and solutions are easy to

get, that is, sound treatment of throat diseases by specialists, and taking long-effect penicillin injections. With this, the disease can be eradicated."

He further said: "About 77% of the cases which have their heart valves replaced at al-Thawra Hospital during 2003 were the victims of this disease. This shows the size of the problem which we suffer from, as a result of inefficient treatment of throat diseases and the ignorance of health sector staff. Many people don't know how

serious this disease is as it moves to joints and then to the heart."

He recommended a campaign at the national level run by the public, as well as training the health staff on how to effectively treat this disease early.

Dr. al-Mutarrib said that the major problem lies in the budget. "An integrated plan should be set up by the Ministry of Health and provide such a budget enough to encounter this disease and train medical staff to treat it."

Polio outbreak spreads across Yemen - UN press release

Eighteen new cases of polio have today been announced in Yemen, bringing the reported total number associated with an outbreak in the country to 22. Yemen had been polio-free since disease surveillance began in 1996 - a genetic investigation is

ongoing to determine the precise origin of the outbreak. Experts fear that the number of cases will rise in the immediate future.

Teams of WHO and Ministry of Health epidemiologists and pediatricians remain on the ground, to investigate and control the outbreak and to intensify the planning for appropriate supplementary immunization activities.

Four cases of polio were confirmed on 20 April in just one governorate in the south-western part of the country, on the Red Sea coast. The latest 18 cases occurred across five governorates throughout Yemen, including in two districts in the country's capital Sana'a and suggesting the virus had spread across the country. Ongoing field investigations have identified additional suspected polio cases across the affected governorates in Yemen. Low immunization rates among Yemen's children may facilitate the

spread of the virus.

Experts are now planning an outbreak response, using the recently-developed monovalent oral polio vaccine type 1 (mOPV1). This new vaccine enables a precisely tailored immunological response to the type 1 poliovirus that is causing the outbreak. Compared to the commonly-used trivalent OPV, which offers protection against all three types of wild poliovirus, mOPV1 provides a greater immunity to type 1 wild poliovirus with fewer doses. Use of mOPV1 is expected during a nationwide immunization campaign in the second half of May. Yemen had already conducted a mass campaign on 11-14 April, as the country was considered to be at high-risk of polio re-infection from nearby Sudan where an outbreak of polio continues.

Experience in polio eradication demonstrates that outbreaks can be quickly contained with high quality immunization campaigns which reach

every child under five years old.

Dedicated donor support and strong partnerships with the private sector have enabled the previous campaign in Yemen as well as swift development of the mOPV1 vaccine. However, a global funding gap of US\$ 50 million must urgently be filled by July, to finance continued intensification of immunization campaigns in the second half of the year.

Global eradication efforts have reduced the number of polio cases from 350 000 annually in 1988 to 1267 cases in 2004. Six countries remain polio-endemic, with a further six where polio transmission is re-established. Concern is high that the ongoing outbreak of polio in Africa might lead to re-infection of more countries in the polio-free Horn of Africa and the Middle East. Yemen is the most recent of fifteen polio-free countries that have reported cases of polio since the epidemic began in late 2003.

Readers' Voice

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

This edition's question:

Do you think that the Yemeni government is doing well in fighting terrorism?
 Yes
 No
 I don't care

Last edition's question:

Although the government declared military operations in Sa'adah were over, guerrilla raids are still going on. Do you think this policy of the government is on the right track?

No 51%
 Yes 32%
 I don't know 17%

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 and have your voice heard!

Taiz University hosts childhood national conference

Taiz- Under the slogan "For the sake of balanced personalities of children and protecting their abilities, the Childhood and Training Center is to organize the first national childhood conference on May 16-18.

The conference gains its importance from being coincided with setting the strategies of education and looking into the issues of childhood.

The conference aims at make people acquainted with the different characteristics of child development for the purpose of meeting their demands.

The conference will be held at the Faculty of Education, Taiz University in the presence of a number of university officials and people interested in child issues.

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For the first time: Medical sports for women in Sana'a

Under the theme of "empowering women in sports" the Olympic Centre in Sana'a will be conducting the first training course for women between 7-9 of this month. Around 40 female athletes will be participating in this course coming from all around the republic. This event comes in line with the United Nations call for year 2005 to be the year for women's sports. It is designed that an International French expert in medical sports in cooperation with Dr. Mohammed Abdulhalim Haidr head of the Medical Sports Centre.

Air Arabia adds three new routes

Sharjah, UAE, 2 May 2005 - Air Arabia LLC, the Middle East region's first and only low-fares airline, announced three new destinations at a press conference held at their hub, Sharjah International Airport. Kabul will provide a vital link for an increase in trade and tourism to Afghanistan. Sharm El Sheikh and Luxor bring the total number of destinations the airline flies to in Egypt to four. The new routes highlight the carrier's aggressive expansion plans and further demonstrate market demand for affordable travel.

Air Arabia currently flies from Sharjah on nineteen different routes: ten flights weekly to Alexandria; daily to Bahrain, Beirut, Colombo, Damascus, Doha, Mumbai and Muscat; five days a week to Kuwait; four days a week to Dammam; three days a week to Khartoum and Aleppo; and two days a week to Assiut, Jeddah, Kabul, Riyadh, Luxor, Sana'a and Sharm El Sheikh.

Major power outage across Sana'a, Dhamar and parts of Taiz

A major power outage struck simultaneously across Sana'a, Dhamar and parts of Taiz. The power cuts resulted from an accidental explosion of one of the power generators at the central Makha Grid, Taiz.

The problem has been fixed and currently the power supply is stable. It is worth mentioning that this incident had happened earlier especially because of the heavy rain falls due to change of seasons.

Organisation of Asia-Pacific news agencies

HODEIDA, April 30 (Saba)- Staff Brig. Ruweis Mujawar the Commander of the Navy Forces accused his predecessor and former Yemen ambassador to Damascus of failing in his mission in 2000.

Speaking in a ceremony to debut-operate 10 Australian gunboats, newly introduced into the navy forces, Mujawar said that until 2000, the navy and coastal defense forces didn't even cover 15% of the 2300km-long coastline. "This is because of the failure of the former leadership of the navy, represented by the former commander Ahmad al-Hasani" who was replaced after 17 US sailors were killed in the October 2000 terror bombing of the USS Cole in the Gulf of Aden." The commander of the navy played down al-Hasani for seeking asylum in Britain as the next step after he finished his term as Yemen's ambassador to Damascus.

Polio outbreak in Yemen grows to 22 cases, UN Health Agency says

Yemen, polio-free since 1996, now has an outbreak of 22 confirmed cases, and low immunization rates among the children of the Red Sea country may help the spread of the paralyzing virus, the United Nations public health agency said last Monday.

"Four cases of polio were confirmed on 20 April in just one governorate in the south-western part of the country, on the Red Sea coast. The latest 18 cases occurred across five governorates throughout Yemen, including in two districts in the country's capital, Sanaa, and suggesting that the virus had spread across the country," the World Health Organization (WHO) said.

Additional cases were suspected in the affected governorates, it added.

WHO said it was firming up plans to follow the mass immunization campaign from 11 to 14 April with a new campaign in late May, using the monovalent oral vaccine type (mOPV1) and covering every Yemeni child younger

Yemeni enhances military capacity through equipment

In December 2002 while on a visit to Russia president Ali Abdullah Saleh stated that Yemen would buy six MiG-29 SMT warplanes with ground attack capabilities. Recently Yemen has agreed on delivery of 10 Australian coastal surveillance patrol craft, and is negotiating a deal to buy German warships, the news according to Saba News Agency came as Yemeni President Ali Abdallah Saleh attended an inaugural ceremony of the patrol vessels at the naval base at Hudaiedah.

than 5.

The monovalent vaccine needs fewer doses to provide greater immunity to the type 1 wild virus than does the more commonly used trivalent-OPV, which protects against all three types of wild poliomyelitis virus, it said.

Yemen has been considered at high risk of a polio outbreak since resurgent polio spread to Sudan, with Nigeria accounting for about 60 per cent of the worldwide toll. In February WHO coordinated a mass immunization across 22 African countries.

Global immunization had reduced the annual number of polio cases to 1,267 cases in 2004 from 350,000 in 1988.

KSA funds establishment of 19 technical and vocational institutes in Yemen

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia agreed to fund the establishment of 19 technical and vocational institutes in Yemen a project that is worth 50 million US Dollars. This agreement resulted from last week's meeting when Saudi ambassador to Sana'a Mr. Mohammad Bin Merdass al-Qahtani discussed with the Technical Education and Vocational Training Minister Dr Ali Mansour Safa'a aspects about the technical education and the vocational training and how Yemen could benefit from the Saudi experience in this field this discussion comes under the framework of the 8th round of the Yemeni-Saudi joint commission.

1,200 artifacts rescued from smuggling

Artifacts dating back to the early Islamic and pre-Islamic eras were going to be smuggled outside the country if not for the alarmed airport authorities at Sana'a airport. From December last year to April around 1,200 piece was confiscated and returned back to the Organization of Artifacts and Manuscripts in Sana'a.

Osteoporosis and bone diseases hospital to be constructed

One of the most modern specialized osteoporosis and other bone diseases hospitals in the region would be constructed in Yemen under supervision of Cuban experts. The hospital is intended to have a seating capacity for 224 beds as a first phase and will have state-of-the-art equipment. The number of beds will increase to 300 and brain surgery sections will be introduced to the hospital.

Ministry of Health launches anti-polio campaign

Discussions on an anti-polio campaign planned to be carried out early in June were carried out during a meeting last Sunday headed by the Minister of Public Health & Population Mohammed al-Naomi. The campaign would include extensive vaccination to all children who are under the age of five in all regions of the country.

Turkish military official in Sana'a

Turkish chief of general staff to visit Yemen on May 4.

Chief of General Staff of the Turkish military Mr. Helmi Ozkok has arrived in Sana'a yesterday in a two-day visit in which he would hold talks with a number of officials in the defense ministry and the general staff dealing with military cooperation relations between Yemen and Turkey, including training and exchanging experiences between Yemeni and Turkish armies.

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Continued from page 1

Yemen unable to stop supporting terror, US report

The Yemeni Supreme Court heard appeals on the death sentences of Abed Abdulrazak al-Kamel and Ali Ahmed Mohamed Jarallah for the December 30, 2002, shootings of three American citizens in Jibla. No final decision has been issued in these cases. Yemen has expressed a willingness to fight international terrorists by denying them the use of its territorial seas and

ports. Over the past year, Yemen has increased its maritime security capabilities. The US Government provided extensive training and eight boats to the Yemeni Coast Guard, which is now a visible patrolling force along the coastline. Coast Guard operations are expanding to stem

the use of Yemen as a way station for smuggling of persons, drugs, weapons, and explosives. Land border security along Yemen's extensive frontier with Saudi Arabia remains a major concern. In February, Yemen and Saudi Arabia agreed to bolster cooperation in order

to combat the cross-border smuggling of arms and people. The two countries also agreed to establish joint patrols and increase monitoring. The Government's capacity for stemming terrorism financing remains limited. In February, the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee designated prominent Yemeni sheikh and opposition Islah party leader Abd al-Majid al-

Zindani for his association with al-Qa'ida. The Yemeni Government has taken no action to bar his travel or to freeze his assets in compliance with its UN obligations, and Zindani continues to appear prominently at public events.

Yemen utilized its Islamic Dialogue Committee, headed by a leading judge, to continue its dialogue with detainees arrested for connections to terrorist groups and extremist elements. In a 2004 Ramadan amnesty the Government released over 100 security detainees, claiming that they had been rehabilitated and had made commitments to uphold the Yemeni constitution and laws, the rights of non-Muslims, and the inviolability of foreign interests.

Several terrorist organizations continued to maintain a presence in Yemen throughout 2004. HAMAS and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) are recognized as legal organizations, and HAMAS maintains offices in Yemen.

Neither organization has engaged in any known terrorist activities in Yemen, and PIJ does not have any known operational presence. HAMAS conducts extensive fundraising through mosques and other charitable organizations throughout the country. While al-Qa'ida's operational structure in Yemen has been weakened and dispersed, concerns remain about the organization's attempts to reconstitute operational cells in Yemen.

Traders appeal against sales tax law

In addition, the Ministry of Interior blamed other opposition parties of standing behind violence and fire shooting which occurred during the demonstrations.

The opposition parties hold the view that the crisis was caused by the wrong policies followed by the government as well as the corruption practiced in the administrative and economic sectors.

They blamed the government for being unable to run state affairs. The opposition parties confirmed that they have the enthusiasm to defend civilians, stand by them and enable them to express themselves freely and obtain their rights according to

the law and constitution. Traders believe that the imposition of such a tax is a catastrophe upon them and it will prevent them from achieving successful investments.

On the other hand, the government believes that the majority of traders practice tax evasion to maintain their personal interests at the expense of the public interests.

Besides, monitors hold the view that maker of the sales tax law and the government, could not communicate their message clearly to the population and this in turn cause fear among people that the sales taxes may negatively affect their economic life

Al-Nasr inhabitants feel oppressed

The zone contains around 500 houses, with at least 20 people in each house. Most of the houses consist of two to three stories and the zone is inhabited by civilians from different parts of the country, most of whom are public-sector employees and military and security officers.

Citizens filed several complaints to the Parliament, governmental sides and non-governmental organizations.

The Yemen Times held meetings with some al-Nasr inhabitants.

"We are suffering the arbitrary procedures taken against us by the Secretary General of the Capital and some housing officials who want us to leave our house, although we have been living in this zone for over 20 years," Said Hizam Ali Abdullah, one of al-Nasr inhabitants. "When we met with al-Kuhlani, Secretary General of the Capital, he confirmed that he wants to implement the project of rainwater-disposing passage. We told him the implementation should go on according to the law."

When meeting with a number of concerned officials, we forwarded a number of points to be discussed including that we have been living here for over 20 years, and it is our right to obtain compensations, he added.

Hizam complained they have been threatened that their houses will be destroyed by fire, and electricity was cut off their houses more than once. Moreover, electricity wires were taken

away in the presence of a police vehicle. Today over 700 families endure difficult conditions. This fear has spread among innocent children who could not even attend school.

For his part, Ali Sa'eed al-Mughribi, one of the locals living in the zone, confirmed that he has been living in this place for ten years and all public services, including water, electricity and telephone, were provided to his house. One month ago, he, like other locals, were surprised of being ordered to leave their houses for the construction of rainwater-disposing passage.

According to al-Mughribi, locals emphasized if the public interest necessitates their transition from the zone, it is their right to claim fair compensations according to the constitution and the law.

"As the President Saleh calls for rights of Palestinians and non-Palestinians, how would it be possible for us Yemenis to be denied our rights in spite of living near the President and the Presidential Palace," Ali al-Mughribi commented. "What is of a great concern is that the majority of al-Nasr locals are military and security recruits who spared effort for the sake of national security."

He added: "All of us request the government institutions and media means to make up a committee to look fairly into the issue. We moreover appeal to the President Saleh to intervene in the issue."

Unified Arab Traffic Week starts

There would also be distribution of leaflets and posters depicting information on traffic safety.

Marking this year's celebrations of traffic week coincide with continued escalation in traffic accidents which in 2004 had amounted to 12257 incidents in various areas of Yemen. Those accidents resulted in the death of 1895 males and 354 females. Number of persons inflicted with serious injuries amounted to 5943 and with slight injuries 8174. As for material losses, resulting from those traffic incidents they were estimated at YR two billion, 459 million and 169 thousand.

Traffic incidents in Yemen, especially in centers of major cities and towns, have, in the few past years, become a serious problem affecting seriously the citizen and the state. It is known that there are strict traffic laws in Yemen but the problem lies in the degree of abiding by them by the citi-

zen, motorists and traffic police who supervise implementation of traffic rules. All government establishments specialized in planning of roads, streets, and traffic lights share parts of the responsibility for those tragic events that every day claim lives of innocent people and paralyze many persons as a result of serious injuries. Added to that the great material property losses caused by accidents, causing the state budget billions of hard currency that may be used in development projects in the country.

All efforts by all civilian organizations and media should join to help solve or at least reduce the occurrence of those accidents through launching campaigns of awareness about rules of traffic and abiding by them for the safety of all. Traffic authorities are also requested to strictly implement rules and laws of traffic safety without exception of whosoever violates them.

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Society News

Delegation of the Red Cross met last Tuesday in Sa'ada with the governor Mr. Yihya al-Amri in an attempt to provide the governorate with support and emergency facilities especially that the region had been suffering from conflicts for the last few months.

Amat al-Alim al-Soswa was awarded by the Newsweek Magazine's Arabic edition, issued by the Kuwaiti publisher Al-Watan, last Monday. The Yemeni minister of human rights Amat al-Alim al-Soswa was awarded the prize of the magazine for her efforts in supporting human rights.

A consultative meeting for senior judicial officials was held yesterday to discuss a draft of the strategy for bolstering judiciary, Where more than 150 of heads courts and prosecutors took part in the two-day meeting and discuss the current situation of the judicial authority in the country and procedures needed to overhaul the judiciary.

A delegation from the Arab Monetary Fund in Abu Dhabi will present Yemen with studies in field of financial services during a visit to Sana'a later this month.

Eighty investments projects worth 21 billion Yemeni Riyals Hudeidah in were founded during President Ali Abdallah Salih visit to Hudeidah last week.

A training course in human rights for police officers was conducted in cooperation of the Ministry of Human Rights, the British Embassy, and the Ministry of Interior and UNDP, the Human Rights Information and Training Center (HRTIC). The course focused on human rights for police officers. The first group of 40 officers completed the course last Sunday in Sana'a

In cooperation with the GCC Education office The 1st Education Week for the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States was held on Saturday by Yemen's Ministry of Education

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Resorting to songs for happiness

Marginalized people denied equality

By YASSER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The marginalized and poorest category, people who work as street cleaners and other works which are insulted by other social categories, are deprived from the equalities of life and looked down upon by other higher classes despite the fact that they proved to be more responsible and patient to provide themselves with any minimal standards of living.

Most of the time I tend to question myself about the superiority complex felt by some when dealing with such marginalized people like: "why do many people look down on this category although they offer services that deserves respect?" and "why are they looked down by others when they exert high efforts in collecting wastes to keep our cities tidy and clean?"

The teachings of Islam do not include any social discrimination between classes and so does the Yemeni constitution, but why do these marginalized people feel inferior to others. Their contributions and undeniable efforts compelled me to have a look at their sufferings and the severe circumstances they endure throughout their life.

When I went to one of their residences in the Capital, one of these marginalized people named Hassan, 27, told me that they lead miserable lives and endure difficult situations. He further confirmed that some of these people came by fate from other Gulf countries and that the actual reasons behind their sufferings include poverty, instability, and where no attention is drawn to them by the society.

They came to Yemen several years ago, but over the last few years, the Yemeni government attempted in cooperation with civil society organizations to make changes to their lives.

On the other hand, the World Bank contributes to the construction of social development for these marginalized people with the aim to provide them with basic services such as water and electricity. Houses for these Yemenis were built in Sana'a and Taiz.

At the beginning of the year, the European Union contributed Euro 253 million as a humanitarian support for people who live in small huts scattered in different areas all over the world. The support is aimed at 24 thousand of these marginalized people as an initial step. The issue of these marginalized people deserve to be given more attention by the concerned sides.

Regarding the origin of these marginalized people, many researchers believe that they originate from the historic city of Zabid while many other historians hold the view that they are the remnants of the Ethiopian occupation of Yemen in 525. Afterwards, they became servants of the Zaidia State in Zabid and were led by a president named Najah al-Habashi who exploited the collapse of the Zaidia State to form the so-called "State of Al Najah" (407-554, Islamic Calendar) under his dominance.

This State expanded its dominance over the city of Zabid and Tehama Pain and attracted increasing numbers of Ethiopians. The period of Al Najah's rule was characterized by tyranny and oppression as they used to take other people as servants for their own interests.

Later on, locals in Zabid and Tehama could erupt against the State of Al Najah causing its collapse after long wars. After victory, the leader of Zabid swore to make the remnants of the Al Najah State servants for the Yemeni society and since then they occupied the lower position of the social ladder and became a marginalized category.



The social view of these marginalized people is somehow negative since they are looked at as inferior people without any protection.

Such historical facts are opposed by Mr. Mohammad Ali al-Qair'e who belongs to the marginalized category and pursues extensive efforts to establish a society to defend their rights.

He said such information is incorrect and groundless since, in his viewpoint, the dark-skinned people are the remnants of Arab dynasties who ruled the coastal parts of Yemen in 4000 BC.

Al-Qair'e added the social tyranny against this category is based on the supposition that they are the remnants of the Ethiopian conquest of Yemen that coincided with the Parisian occupation, though there is a huge difference between the former and the latter, and nowadays one cannot realize any cultural discrimination against the Parisian and Turkish remnants.

The social view of the marginalized category

The social view of the marginalized people is somehow negative since they are looked at as inferior people without any protection. The primary problem stems from the fact that the majority of people see these dark-skinned people as immoral and undisciplined and therefore commit uncorrectable mistakes such as eating the flesh of the dead.

Other research groups hold the view that poverty of such people is one of the reasons that make other social classes look down upon them. The marginalized category endures several economic and social problems that lead a miserable life.

Additionally, the historic oppression and tyranny are among the reasons behind poverty of such people as they have been deprived for a long time of the possession of lands and production tools as well as the other components of social development. All these facts reflect the unjust culture practiced against them until they feel compelled to seek other professions respected by the society.

Poverty, lack of awareness and misery are the primary reasons that hinder such people from getting access to education and make them confined within specific locality.

Living in difficult conditions

Severe poverty experienced by this marginalized group compelled them to

Some of the non-governmental organizations received financial aids in the guise of supporting the marginalized people, however in fact, they could not provide any effective programs for the sake of integrating this category into the society.

live in difficult living conditions. Nowadays they are realized to center on shantytowns and some rural areas where their huts are made of cloths, thatch, hay, empty barrels and bins. Their huts, which usually comprises of one room for over ten people, are subjected to several catastrophes like floods. These housing groups are usually called "Mahawi". The word "Mahwa" linguistically means a place for dogs to drink, however many studies indicate that this term was historically used in rural areas that surround the city of Zabid. They refer to the housing groups of servants, which lack health services and give out disgusting smells, where their residents suffer from several epidemics.

Humble professions

Professions pursued by these people are recognized as humble jobs hated by many and their payment is habitually low. The workers receive daily wages and this makes them live without thinking of shaping their future plans. Their life is characterized by humility and happiness as they visualize themselves as kings on earth.

Majority of these marginalized people work on farms for the rich and sheikhs, particularly in the governorates of Ibb and Taiz with very low wages that cannot meet their basic needs.

The cleanliness sector is the most important profession for these marginalized people. Street and sewage cleaners in the main cities come from this category and since they do us a great service, there is no need to look down on them.

Street and sewage cleaners, com-

pared to other public-sector employees, do not enjoy their rights and social insurances as most of them always complain that their wages do not cover the minimal standards of living. Moreover, they became subjected to extortion by their bosses. All such facts make them experience various problems, which increase their daily sufferings leading them to practice beggary in rural areas and some public markets.

Additionally, some of the marginalized people offer untraditional services in wedding parties and many other different occasions.

Despite suffering, they enjoy singing and dancing

Despite the fact their professions are looked down on by other social classes, they usually tend to enjoy beating drums and performing nice songs by both men and women. In this way they attempt to alleviate their sufferings and tragic situations.

In al-Hegaria, Taiz Governorate, for instance, the existence of these people in wedding parties are one of the main factors for making the occasion a success and due to this they entered the world of their masters.

Cooperation is manifested in their environments and most of their ladies and boys wed at the age of 16 with less wedding expenses. The problem of spinsterhood is rarely realized in their surroundings and some of the marginalized ladies have married men of tribal origin, a fact, which was a taboo in previous days.

These marginalized people have their own traditions and customs that they enjoy at wedding parties. Both males and females keep dancing and

singing together all night through until dawn. On such occasions, they heavily chew qat, which is very important to them as it is the main source of happiness that helps them feel more relaxed and comfortable, enabling them to escape their sufferings.

Marginalization and deprivation

These people's being marginalized and deprived of their rights can be ascribable to a variety of factors, but they themselves should be held accountable for a great part of this suffering. They prefer to live far away from other people and not go beyond their localities which leads to their being marginalized. Additionally, their lack of awareness and lack of interest in education can be one of the factors behind their inferiority complex.

The marginalization of these people magnified when the state and the non-governmental organizations lost the designs of mechanisms of dealing with them. The governmental bodies do not care for this category and enable them to occupy political positions. We realized that over the last few years many strategies were implemented by the government in different areas, however these marginalized people were not included in any. The non-governmental organizations did not play the required role in protecting the marginalized people.

According to many researchers, some of the non-governmental organizations take the issues of marginalized people for serving their own interests and to be well known to other international organizations. These organizations received financial aids in the

guise of supporting the marginalized people, however in fact, they could not provide any effective programs for the sake of integrating this category into the society.

On the other hand, the government tends to pay attention to these marginalized people as they build them houses in one of the suburbs of the capital as well as Taiz. These charitable projects embody the reputation of the state before other countries.

The marginalized are a game of policies for parties

Most of the marginalized people hold the view that they are denied their rights of citizenship and political participation although the constitution ensured the rights of equality and political participation.

The humiliating vision of other social classes toward the marginalized people are one of the primary reasons behind their being deprived of enjoying their rights. The political parties are also responsible for not respecting this category and involving it in the political life. It is regretful to realize that attention is drawn to this category only during the days of elections in order to be exploited to the advantage of a certain candidate. Some of these marginalized people living in cities were forcibly taken by tribal sheikhs to rural areas in order to vote for them.

Some of these marginalized people are found to affiliate to political parties though they do not care for policy, and how it is possible for a hungry person to have a motive for policy. Poverty is one of the reasons that prevents them from being involved in the political representation.

Before the Re-unification, these marginalized people were deprived from enjoying their rights. In 1985 for instance during the experience of local authority, one of the candidates belonging to the marginalized class in al-Higera, Taiz, was denied the post after he scored an overwhelming majority due to their great existence in his constituency. After he won, he could not pursue his duties since he was not backed by tribal sheikhs and therefore the election committee in the constituency rejected his victory.

The issue of these marginalized people is both terrible and simple as there is no attention drawn to them by the non-governmental organizations and the political and press platforms in the country. These organizations are accused of exploiting the situation of the marginalized for serving their own interests and receiving grants from international organizations to be allegedly delivered to the marginalized category.

It is everyone's duty to help these marginalized people and make them feel equal to others, as well as to break the bridge that separates them from other social classes, in spite of being accused of marginalizing themselves by some university professors.

Recently the government took a positive step in building houses for around 185 marginalized families in the capital. This step is recommended to be followed by different steps to help these marginalized people to abolish any expected difficulties.

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U.S. pilot killed in F-18 crash in Iraq: military

BAGHDAD, May 3 (Reuters) - Search teams have found the body of a U.S. Marine pilot whose F-18 crashed in Iraq, but a second warplane is still missing, the U.S. military said on Tuesday.

The two F-18s disappeared on Monday night while flying missions from the nuclear-powered USS Carl Vinson, which is based in the Gulf off southern Iraq.

A military spokesman said there were no indications the planes had come down under hostile fire.

It was not clear if they might have collided during a heavy sand and lightning storm that hit central Iraq around the time they went missing.

Washington hopes to reduce its losses in Iraq by pulling out troops, but that is unlikely to happen until Iraqi forces, who have lost hundreds of comrades, prove they can secure the country on their own.

At least 14 civilians were killed when U.S. forces and Iraqi National Guardsmen battled insurgents in the city of Ramadi on Tuesday, said a hospital official in the guerrilla stronghold.

Though Iraqi troops have been trained by U.S. forces, they are still incapable of carrying out major operations against insurgents without the

backing of the Americans.

U.S. forces killed 12 suspected insurgents in a firefight and bombing on Monday in the city of Qaim, a trouble spot near the Syrian border.

The military said six American soldiers were wounded in the fight near the border against suspected members of al Qaeda's wing in Iraq, which is headed by Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

American troops killed nine insurgents and three people were killed by a coalition airstrike, the military said.

A six-year-old girl and a guerrilla were wounded in the battle.

The millions of Iraqis who braved suicide bombs to vote in the Jan. 30 elections hoped they would be rewarded by new leaders who would build up security forces that can start tackling violence.

But it took haggling politicians three months to form a partial cabinet, emboldening insurgents who have stepped up attacks since the government was formed.

That government, still not fully formed, was expected to be sworn in later on Tuesday.

Car and roadside bombs have killed nearly 150 Iraqis and wounded around 200 since the cabinet was announced

six days ago, constituting Iraq's first democratically elected government since Saddam Hussein's overthrow.

Political indecision

Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari has yet to name permanent ministers to five ministries — including the key defence and oil portfolios — and two deputy prime ministers.

A list of candidates for those posts was expected to be handed to the three-man Presidential Council for approval before Tuesday's swearing in ceremony.

Choosing ministers is a highly sensitive task in Iraq, where a new Shi'ite Muslim political order has replaced decades of dictatorship under Saddam, a Sunni.

The power shift has contributed to rising sectarian divisions.

Shi'ites and Kurds, the two big gainers from January's election, are trying to bring Sunnis into government and hope this will staunch support for the Sunni-led insurgency, but there is little evidence so far that the tactic is working.

Guerrillas shot dead three Iraqi policemen in the northern town of Samarra on Tuesday, part of the new wave of violence that has hit Iraq since

the government was announced.

Car bombs killed 24 people, including three policemen, in two attacks on Monday.

Security fears also hit Baghdad's airport, which is often targeted by guerrilla mortar attacks.

The Jordanian flag carrier Royal Jordanian (RJ) has suspended its daily flights to Baghdad after being told by the U.S. military that it could not land there on safety grounds, a company official said in Amman.

"U.S. military authorities told RJ that there was no clearance on safety grounds until further notice," the official told Reuters.

The airline had suspended its two daily flights to Baghdad airport on Sunday, he added.

Mounting violence has put pressure on U.S. troops to tighten security but such measures can backfire, not only with Iraqis, who complain American soldiers are too quick to fire, but also with some of the United States' staunchest allies.

Italy criticised the U.S. military on Monday for failing to establish better rules for checkpoints in Iraq, saying nervous U.S. troops manning a haphazard road block were to blame for the killing of an Italian agent near

Baghdad in March.

In a 52-page report on the "friendly fire" incident, Italy said the shooting of intelligence officer Nicola Calipari was not intentional, but it took issue with U.S. findings released at the weekend

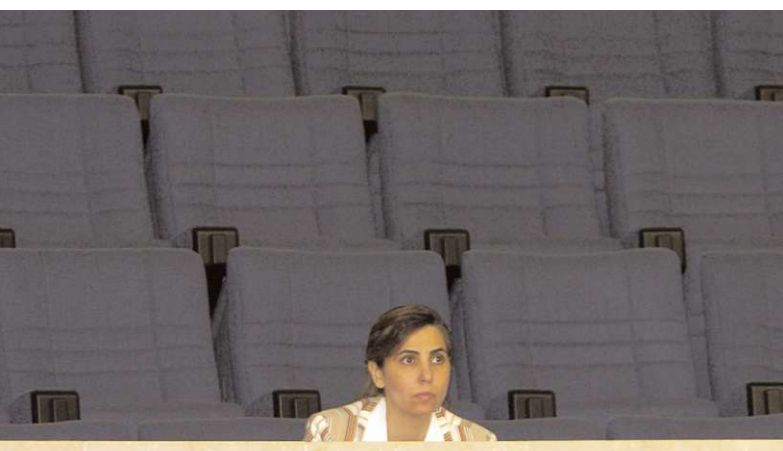
that exonerated the American forces.

Calipari was shot by a U.S. soldier on the night of March 4, as he was escorting an Italian hostage to freedom on the notoriously dangerous road to Baghdad's airport.



Iraqi men help a wounded man following a shoot-out in Ramadi, west of Baghdad, May 3. At least 14 civilians were killed when U.S. forces and Iraqi National Guardsmen battled insurgents in the city of Ramadi on Tuesday, a hospital official said. REUTERS

Women won't vote in 2005 local elections: official says



Kuwaiti economist and women's activist, Roula Dashti listens alone in the 'women's section' of the Kuwait Parliament on May 3. REUTERS

KUWAIT, May 3 (Reuters) - Opposition to a bill allowing women to participate in Kuwait's local elections has kept them out of this year's polls, parliament speaker Jassem al-Kharafi said on Tuesday.

Parliament failed on Monday to pass the bill because many Islamist and conservative MPs abstained in what some lawmakers said was a delaying tactic.

"Women will not participate in this

(year's elections) but if the law is approved women would take part in the coming polls," Kharafi told reporters.

He said that parliament decided on Tuesday to delay for two weeks the vote on granting women the right to participate or run and that would be possible first in the next round of municipal elections due to take place in 2009.

Lebanon Druze leader wants ex-rival Christian freed

BEIRUT, May 3 (Reuters) - Lebanon's Druze opposition leader called on Tuesday for the release of an anti-Syrian Christian militia leader, saying his freedom after 11 years imprisonment was key to national reconciliation.

"We must end this impasse for the sake of comprehensive national reconciliation," Walid Jumblatt said after a visit to the wife of Samir Geagea to back calls for his release. Jumblatt's Druze fighters and Geagea's Maronite Christian Lebanese Forces (LF) militia fought one of the fiercest battles of Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war.

Hundreds were killed in the 1983 battle that ended in a resounding defeat of the LF and the displacement of thousands of Christians from the Chouf mountains southeast of Beirut.

Geagea, 52, is serving multiple life sentences for a string of political assassinations — including that of Prime Minister Rashid Karami in 1987 — during the war, while other Lebanese warlords have climbed the political ranks under a postwar

amnesty that cleared their bloody records.

Many Maronites say the arrest of Geagea and the exile of former general Michel Aoun symbolise the targeting of their community by a Syrian-dominated order after the war.

With the Syrians completing a full withdrawal from Lebanon in April, Paris-based Aoun has said he would return to Lebanon on May 7. Many politicians and members of parliament have demanded the release of Geagea.

A draft amendment to the amnesty law that would allow Geagea to be freed has not yet been passed by parliament with the family of the slain Karami refusing to drop charges against him.

A charismatic militia leader, Geagea still commands respect among some Maronites who swear allegiance to his now banned LF party and blame Syrian interference for his imprisonment, saying Damascus saw his anti-Syrian stance as a threat.

Syria, Lebanon to probe location of border post

DAMASCUS, May 3 (Reuters) - Syria, which ended 29 years of military presence in Lebanon last month, said on Tuesday a joint Syrian-Lebanese military committee would check to see if an old Syrian border post was on right side of the frontier.

An Arab satellite channel has shown footage of the post near a village in the Bekaa Valley and said Syrian troops were still present in Lebanon.

"An official source said that the general command of the army and armed forces has decided in coordination with the leadership of the Lebanese army to form a joint military committee that includes officers and topography experts to probe this issue," the official Syrian Arab News Agency reported.

The agency said the source was commenting on reports that said "a number of Syrian soldiers have crossed the Syrian-Lebanese border in the area of Deir al-Ashayier and the east of Kfar Kouk".

The post has been near the village

of Deir al-Ashayier since before 1976 when Syria rushed troops into Lebanon to help end the 1975-1990 civil war. Some Lebanese say it is about 300 metres (yards) inside Lebanon, others say it is in Syria.

Syria said in April that it had completed the withdrawal of all of its troops and intelligence agents from Lebanon in line with a U.N. Security Council resolution that also requires the Arab state to end its sway over Lebanese politics.

A United Nations team is verifying the Syrian withdrawal.

The agency said separately Lebanon's new prime minister Najib Mikati would visit Syria on Wednesday to discuss ties with Damascus.

Sources said Mikati was expected to meet Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

Mikati's new government, which won a vote of confidence in parliament on Wednesday, is preparing for parliamentary elections on May 29, the first without a Syrian military presence for 33 years.

Iran vows to resume some nuclear activities

TEHRAN, May 3 (Reuters) - Iran reiterated on Tuesday it would shortly resume sensitive nuclear work that could be used to make atomic arms, despite the risk of being sent to the U.N. Security Council.

In a deal with Britain, Germany and France last November Tehran agreed to suspend all nuclear fuel-related activities while both sides tried to negotiate a long-term solution regarding Iran's atomic ambitions.

The EU trio have warned Iran, which says its nuclear programme will never be used to make bombs, that they would back U.S. calls to send Iran's case to the Security Council for possible sanctions if it resumed sensitive nuclear work.

Mohamed ElBaradei, head of the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, also urged Iran at a conference on nuclear proliferation in New York on Monday, not to "take a unilateral decision to initiate any activities that are currently suspended".

But Tehran, unhappy with the slow pace of its talks with the EU trio, said it was sticking by its decision to resume some enrichment-related work.

"We will definitely restart some activities," Foreign Ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told a weekly news conference.

Iranian officials have suggested Iran will probably resume work at the



Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura (R) greets Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi at the United Nations in New York, May 2. The UN met to discuss the treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. REUTERS

Ispahan Uranium Conversion Facility, where uranium is processed into uranium hexafluoride gas.

It would, however, maintain its freeze on actual enrichment of that gas, a process which can be used to make bomb-grade material.

"Right now the issue of resuming enrichment is not on the table.

We don't want to do that now," Asefi said.

He said Iran had warned that even that suspension was not indefinite.

"(Enrichment) suspension is voluntary and temporary ... With or without

an agreement (with the EU trio) it will resume one day," he said.

EU diplomats said Iran has used such tactics before, resuming sensitive nuclear work in 2003 in a bid to provoke a "controlled crisis" and squeeze more concessions from the Europeans at the negotiating table.

Tehran is betting that a resumption of uranium processing, but not enrichment itself, will strengthen its bargaining position without provoking the EU trio to back Washington's call for Security Council referral, the diplomats said.

Palestinians arrest, then free Hamas men

GAZA, May 3 (Reuters) - Palestinian police, enforcing a ceasefire with Israel, arrested two men from a suspected Hamas rocket squad after a gun battle in the Gaza Strip but freed the militants soon after, officials said on Tuesday.

Commenting on the release, Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Regev said Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation could succeed only if the Palestinian Authority mounted a "continuous, ongoing effort against the terrorists".

"If we start seeing a revolving door, as we saw in the past ... this would not be a good sign," Regev said, alluding to Israeli complaints that Palestinian authorities under the late Yasser Arafat released suspected militants too quickly.

Hamas said the pair detained in the northern Gaza Strip were not planning to fire rockets but confirmed that they were armed — defying a recent order that only Palestinian security forces should carry weapons on the streets.

The clash late on Monday was the first between Palestinian police and militants since Arafat's successor, President Mahmoud Abbas, ordered an "iron fist" crackdown on April 28. Rocket fire into Israel has become much rarer but it has not stopped.

News of the incident, which coincided with renewed calls by Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for Abbas to disarm militants to meet the terms of the U.S.-backed peace "road map", sent tension soaring in Gaza, Hamas's main powerbase.

Palestinian Interior Ministry

spokesman Toufiq Abu Khoussa said the men were let go on Tuesday following intervention by an Egyptian official in Gaza.

In return for their freedom, the two militants, promised to abide by an agreement that militant factions reached with Abbas in Cairo in March to respect the ceasefire the Palestinian leader declared along with Sharon in February, Abu Khoussa said.

Gunfight

Describing the clash, Abu Khoussa said, a third militant had escaped arrest: "The three were in a car, en route to fire rockets, when police waved for them to stop.

Gunmen opened fire at the police, forcing policemen to fire back.

"Policemen controlled the situation, took away the car, arrested the gunmen and took away their arms," he said, adding that the third man ran away and avoided the police.

A Palestinian security official said police found rockets in the vehicle.

The Hamas gunmen accused the police of opening fire first and said there was no plan to launch rockets.

Another militant group, Islamic Jihad, said it carried out a rocket attack on Israel from nearby shortly before the Hamas men were arrested.

Hamas, which is sworn to destroying Israel, said it was committed to "maintaining calm" and accused the Palestinian Authority of trying to curry favour with Washington at the expense of local unity.

Israel rejects Abbas's approach that it is better to use persuasion than force to get the militants to stop attacks. Sharon has refused to hold peace negotiations until the militant Palestinian factions have been dismantled.

Abbas has pledged to ensure quiet during Israel's planned withdrawal from settlements in the Gaza Strip this summer to end 38 years of occupation.

The pullout has been hailed as a possible step towards reviving peace negotiations.

Jordanian airline suspends flights to Baghdad

AMMAN, May 3 (Reuters) - The Jordanian flag carrier Royal Jordanian (RJ) has suspended its daily flights to Baghdad after being told by the U.S. military that it could not land there on safety grounds, a company official said on Tuesday.

"U.S. military authorities told RJ that there was no clearance on safety grounds until further notice," the official told Reuters.

The airline had suspended its two daily flights to Baghdad airport on Sunday, he added.

Iraqi insurgents often fire mortar bombs at the airport.

"As soon as there is clearance, RJ will resume its flights," the official said.

Afghans hunt for survivors of deadly arms blast

PAJGA, Afghanistan, May 3 (Reuters) - Hundreds of Afghan villagers and police searched through smoking rubble of flattened homes on Tuesday for any survivors of an explosion that killed 29 people and wounded 70 at an illegal ammunition dump.

Monday's blast at the home of a former militia commander in Pajga village of Baghlan province, 120 km (80 miles) north of the capital, Kabul, left a huge, smoking pile of broken rocks and bricks, the remains of seven homes.

"The search is going on for survivors and authorities are still investigating what caused it," said Interior Ministry spokesman Lutfullah Mashal.

"One suspicion is that it could have been sabotage, the result of a factional

difference," he said.

Insurgents from the ousted Taliban regime do not operate in that part of Afghanistan and were not suspected of being involved.

At the blast site, men lined up in a row tossing away rocks one by one in their search for survivors.

"It was six in the morning and I was returning from the mosque when I heard a massive explosion. I was knocked unconscious, fell down and was brought to hospital," one of the wounded said in hospital in the provincial capital, Pul-i-Khumri.

The ammunition was hidden by Jalal Bajgaye, a former commander who was demobilised in a government drive to disarm factional forces but kept the ordnance, including artillery rounds

and mortar bombs, in a pit next to his house.

The commander was not killed in the blast, as reported earlier, Mashal said. He was out shopping, but 13 members of his family were among the dead.

President Hamid Karzai said that he was deeply saddened by the deaths and he had ordered an investigation.

Afghanistan is awash with weapons and old stocks of ammunition after decades of conflict.

The government launched the drive to disarm militias and take away their heavy weapons and ammunition in 2003 but much ordnance remains uncollected.

There have been several blasts at arms depots in recent years but Monday's was the most deadly.



Afghans search for survivors through the ruins of a house destroyed by a blast at an illegal ammunition dump which on Monday killed 29 people and wounded 70 others in Pajga village in the northern province of Baghlan, 120 km (80 miles) north of the capital Kabul, May 3. REUTERS

Blair stands firm on Iraq as poll lead grows

LONDON, May 3 (Reuters) - Prime Minister Tony Blair entered the final two days of Britain's election campaign on Tuesday still under fire over Iraq but with polls showing him on course for an historic third straight term in office.

After a week of attacks over his integrity and support for the U.S.-led invasion, a MORI survey showed his Labour party has a comfortable 10-point lead in the run-up to Thursday's poll.

The main opposition Conservative Party has accused Blair of lying over the advice he received from the government's top lawyer on the legality of the 2003 war. But the impact has been muted by the Conservatives' consistent support for the invasion.

"I think the action that was taken was the right action. I think it was wrong of Mr Blair not to tell the truth about the intelligence," Conservative chief Michael Howard told BBC Radio.

Blair has spent much of the past two years defending himself against charges he exaggerated the threat posed by Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein as no stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction were found in Iraq following his ouster.

The widow of British soldier Anthony Wakefield, who died on Monday after a roadside bomb attack in southern Iraq, added to the pressure by blaming him for her husband's death.

"You should not have sent the troops over," Wakefield's wife Ann Toward said in a message to Blair.

And the brother of Ken Bigley, a British engineer held hostage and slain in Iraq last year, also called for an anti-Blair protest vote.

"I urge everyone who has lost loved ones in Iraq to ensure that Mr Blair is not re-elected," Paul Bigley wrote, backing independent candidate Reg Keys, who is standing against Blair in his northern Sedgfield constituency in



Britain's Liberal Democrat party leader Charles Kennedy speaks during election campaigning in Hythe, Kent, southern England, May 3. REUTERS

honour of his son who died on military duty.

Large majority

Blair expressed his condolences for Wakefield's death on Monday, but later defended his decision to go to war in Iraq.

"I don't expect you to agree with that but I do expect you at least to understand I took the decision in good faith because I believed it was right," he told an ITV studio audience.

Polls suggest Iraq has done little to harm Blair's lead as he tries to secure an unprecedented third successive election victory for the centre-left Labour party.

The MORI/Financial Times poll put Labour on 39 percent, up three points on last week, the right-wing Conservatives down five on 29 and the centrist Liberal Democrats down one on 22.

If repeated on May 5, Blair would win a still-massive 146-seat parliamentary majority, down from 161 now, MORI said.

Analysts say the crucial electoral factor has been the prime minister's move to patch relations up with finance minister Gordon Brown, now the more popular man according to the polls.

Brown, favourite to succeed Blair, has repeatedly backed his boss during the campaign and did so again on Tuesday.

"Of course we have lessons to learn, as Tony Blair has said, about the way things were done ... but at the end of the day we wanted the security of Britain and the British national interest to be advanced," Brown said of the Iraq war on BBC Television.

Votes are still up for grabs. MORI found more than a third of voters said they may change their minds.

Greek commandos find no pirates on Norwegian ship

ATHENS, May 3 (Reuters) - The captain of a Norwegian cargo ship who sparked a major Greek rescue operation after sending a coded signal that pirates had boarded his vessel issued the alert by mistake, officials said on Tuesday.

Two Greek naval helicopters, a plane and a frigate carrying special forces were sent late on Monday to aid the ship which was sailing in the southern Aegean.

"It was a mistake by the captain who accidentally got his code wrong," a spokeswoman for the Greek merchant marine ministry said.

"Special navy forces which raided the ship early on Tuesday followed all procedures as if there were pirates on board, checked all 19 crew's identities and interviewed the captain only to

discover there were no pirates on board." The ship was ordered to change course for the port of Pinos in the Peloponnese for security reasons.

The ship, the KCL Banner, carrying cement from Turkey to Italy had sent a message to its owners on Monday afternoon which in turn alerted Greek authorities.

"However unusual the incident was, pirates or no pirates, we had to take every precaution and security measure to find out what exactly had happened and deal with the situation," a defence ministry official said.

Greece has considerably boosted security in its territorial waters in the past three years to tackle a sharp rise of illegal immigrants attempting to enter the country by boat.

Putin to try to repair shaky image at VE-day feast

MOSCOW, May 3 (Reuters) - Vladimir Putin will seek to improve his image abroad when Moscow hosts world leaders in three days of high diplomacy to mark World War Two victory, after sharp U.S. criticism and tensions with pro-Western ex-Soviet allies.

The May 8-10 ceremonies and summitry around the 60th jubilee will give the Russian leader a stage to play the statesman before a world cast that includes U.S. President George W. Bush.

But the diplomatic feast will throw into relief the new, and awkward, geopolitical reality in which Russia finds itself.

Former Soviet neighbours are in turmoil, with three of them - Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova - slipping from Moscow's orbit.

Relations with Washington are faltering, amid competition for influence in areas like the Caucasus and the Middle East and complaints over Kremlin treatment of individuals and businesses.

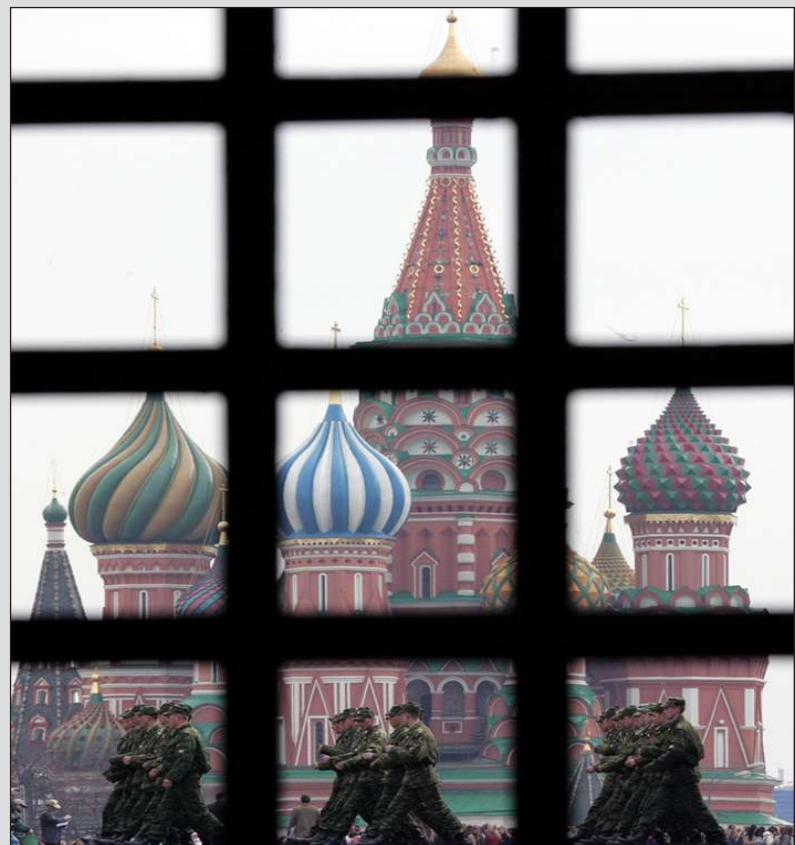
Moscow is also only slowly coming to terms with an enlarged European Union whose new, ex-communist members are among Moscow's sharpest critics.

While an elusive agreement to strengthen ties with the EU may be concluded next week, few breakthroughs are on the cards. But clues may emerge over how much Putin's Kremlin is ready to adapt to a changing world.

Analysts say the Kremlin is at pains to improve the atmosphere before the diplomatic rollercoaster starts on Sunday.

For one thing, it is signalling it is ready for an early withdrawal of its troops based in Georgia - a shrewd move since Bush will visit the Caucasus country straight after Moscow.

"A major goal for President Putin is to put on a big show for his foreign guests and the rest of the world which will bring greater respect and help assuage some of the problems Russia has had with its image particularly in the West," said Andrew Kuchins, director of the Carnegie Moscow Centre.



Russian soldiers march during a rehearsal of the military parade in Moscow's Red square May 3. Russia prepares to celebrate the Victory Day on May 9. REUTERS

U.S. ties in question?

The 52-year-old Putin, a year into his second four-year term, is at the peak of his political authority.

But in the past year his international image has been damaged by fallout from the Beslan school hostage seizure, when 330 adults and children were killed, the trial of oil magnate Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Putin's clumsy, and unsuccessful, bid to influence Ukraine's presidential election.

More particularly, his highly-prized special relationship with Bush could now be in question.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza

Rice, changing of tack, said in Moscow last month Putin had too much power and warned him against seeking an, as of now unconstitutional, third term.

"Russian diplomacy today badly needs a success in terms of international image," said Thomas Gomart at the IFRI institute in Paris.

Politics are likely to take a back seat on May 9 itself, as world leaders pay homage to Russia's role in the defeat of Nazi Germany and to the 26.6 million Soviet war dead.

Russia will mark the end of its "Great Patriotic War" - still the most solemn milestone in its calendar - with a Red

Square military parade and wreath-laying ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Apart from Bush, the guest list includes Chinese President Hu Jintao, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and a host of other leaders.

But some notable absentees highlight underlying tensions.

New EU members Lithuania and Estonia, which were reconquered by the Soviet Union in 1944, are boycotting the party since they see May 9 as the date when Soviet occupation resumed.

Meanwhile, a border dispute has suddenly re-emerged to strain Russia's relations with the third Baltic state, Latvia, even though it says it will attend the Moscow festivities.

CIS strains

On the eve of Monday's Victory Day parades, Putin will hold what could be an uneasy meeting of leaders of the club of ex-Soviet countries, the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Peaceful pro-Western revolutions in Ukraine and Georgia, and a revolt in Kyrgyzstan, sent shockwaves through the 12-nation body. Ex-Soviet Moldova is also wanting to turn westwards.

It is not clear whether this will be the moment when Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova turn in their membership cards.

The pragmatic Putin will try to avoid being overbearing on the issue. But he will argue that the CIS can still be of use as a forum for discussing regional problems, analysts say.

One silver lining in the diplomatic clouds is the strong likelihood that Russia and the EU will now agree a complete overhaul of relations when they meet on May 10.

An agreement has been held up for months but Russia recently gave ground on a key EU demand that the European bloc had a role to play in resolving "frozen conflicts" in ex-Soviet states such as Georgia and Moldova.

Nepali media calls for freedom after emergency ends

KATHMANDU, May 3 (Reuters) - Hundreds of Nepali journalists marched in the capital on Tuesday demanding the removal of curbs on press freedom and the release of detained colleagues, three days after the king ended emergency rule in the kingdom.

About 1,000 journalists participated in the rally in Kathmandu to mark World Press Freedom day as riot police, armed with bamboo batons, kept a close watch but did not intervene.

"Stop the crackdown on the media and guarantee uninterrupted press freedom," read a placard held up by one demonstrator. "Release the jailed journalists," others said.

King Gyanendra imposed a state of emergency on Feb. 1, sacked the multi-party government, detained political leaders, suspended civil rights and clamped strict curbs on the media, saying the moves were needed to control a Maoist guerrilla revolt that has killed more than 11,000 people since 1996.

Bowing to international pressure, the king lifted the emergency at the weekend, followed by the release of some political leaders, but has retained the extraordinary powers he seized.

"Press freedom in Nepal is facing the most serious crisis in its history right now," Taranath Dahal, the chief of the

Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ), told a meeting after the march.

Dahal said curbs on the press were still in place and that 10 journalists had been detained since the state of emergency came in force.

Authorities have refused to comment on the detention of journalists. The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists has urged the royalist government to lift press curbs and release journalists under detention in the impoverished country.

The FNJ said many journalists had also been questioned by police and hundreds of reporters had lost their jobs as the government had barred independent radio stations from broadcasting news.

Editors have been told by authorities not to write anything critical of the king or about the Maoist rebels, who want to set up a one-party communist republic in the world's only officially Hindu nation by toppling the monarchy.

On Monday, the royalist government restored some mobile phone services in Kathmandu for the first time in three months and freed two senior communist party leaders from house arrest in order to ease international criticism of the king's move.

But political parties said hundreds of their activists were still being detention.

Words of Wisdom



Parents and family elders are not providing good role models, either. Many adults spend their time chewing qat and watching satellite TV programs that represent the lowest common denominator, the children's recreational needs are mostly neglected, leaving them to wander off into the streets and mix with bad company.

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

OUR
OPINIONFrom the spirit
of all the free
journalists, so
shall we go on!

Two days ago, on the 3rd of May the whole world including Yemen celebrated the World Press Freedom Day. I don't know what we were celebrating in Yemen, but still the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate organized a workshop on freedom of press in Yemen on this occasion celebrating the freedom of press presumably exists in Yemen.

What we should celebrate is the legends all around the world who sacrificed everything for the sake of freedom. No matter how suppressing regimes are the candle those heroes lighted will go on.

The men and women who have made themselves role models to follow in the road to freedom. To live their passion for truth, triggered by strong faith that we owe it to our nations to voice their concerns and to demand their rights. It's not about covering workshops or telling a bedtime stories about this issue of that or polishing the image of an authority figure; it's about delivering an honest message from the people.

A free journalist feels the hurt of the wounded, the sorrow of the depressed and hunger of the needy. Then voice these feelings through words or even screams if needed!

Nevertheless, sometimes the truth is buried below mountains of dirt and because we want to be faithful to our profession have to dig deep, bear the dirt, the tiredness and the pain and haul the truth out in order to show it to the world. We cannot give up; it's just not an option.

For the sake of all those who walked the first miles, paved the road for us, it's just not possible to give up now. We have to move on for the sake of Dr. Abdulaziz al-Saqqaf who gave up his life defending his principles and believing in message of truth.

Third of May this year may not be a day for celebrating in the world and is definitely not so in Yemen. But perhaps it is a day to restore our faith in ourselves, remember the ones who left us and to promise to continue this journey of freedom, from the spirit of all the free journalists, so shall we go on!

Editor

Political reform: Our
gate to the future (1/2)

BY ALI HASSAN SAIF

"You have no time and don't think that someone is going to help you once your country collapses. You would be left alone." This was the statement of Mr. Wolvinston, World Bank President, at a discussion meeting with Yemeni government in his last visit to Yemen.

"Administration has to stop Yemen becoming a failed country." This was among the recommendations of US Presidency's Report for the year released by Washington Institute for Near East Studies.

Many people among whom is the writer of this article have warned of challenges ahead threatening the future of Yemen. I dubbed it "Yemeni Horror Equation," and identified its sides as the impending exhaustion of Yemen's most important resources including water and oil and the other side is the population explosion. Between the two sides falls corruption which serves as an effective catalyst and prevents the whole Yemeni society with its political, economic and social forces and citizens in general from participation and taking the initiative to cope with the challenges and stop Yemen's deterioration as well as to find out how to ensure a normal future based proportionately upon available Yemen's economic and human resources.

On the political level, all of us saw a historical political scene gathering together the Executive and Legislative Authorities represented by the Prime Minister accompanied by a host of ministers and the 412 members of Parliament and Shura Council, the overwhelming majority of whom are affiliated to the Ruling Party. Both sides held an exceptional meeting a few months ago to discuss the economic reform program of the government.

"The coming is more than bitter" was the last statement of Prime Minister's report read out before the congregation. The reply was "the present is more than corrupt and you are neither qualified nor reliable to carry out reform."

That was the conclusion of the meeting. Later, both sides agreed to keep their interests intact by maintaining the current situation as it is. Thus, Yemen's official political scene froze with a present more than corrupt and future more than bitter.

Meanwhile, opposition's political scene represented by Yemen opposition parties appeared as passively opportunist. In my opinion, that was the result of two factors: inadequate knowledge of most opposition leaders which made them unable to define and counteract the serious future challenges. They are unwilling and unready to think of alternatives to confront challenges. Due to the effect of this factor, many opposition leaders have seriously developed what we call the negative political opportunism. This value made them passively lurk waiting for the moment of collapse when each side mistakenly thinks it can rise to power, stop collapse, and face challenges with magical (delicious) solutions brought from beyond the limits of logic, science, and human power in gener-

al.

At this point, I have to note that a non-Yemeni reader may understand the nature of challenges before Yemen but may be puzzled at the stances of Yemen's system of government and opposition which I described above. Therefore, it is necessary to explain and practically prove what I mentioned by citing actual reactions of a sample of top government and opposition leaders to a research symposium proposal. A Political Development Forum's symposium was intended to be organized under the slogan "A Look at the Future," to diagnose and study the major strategic challenges expected to face Yemen in the next ten years and to conjure them in front of the active and influential Yemeni decision-makers. The response of Ruling Party's top figures varied from utter ignoring of the invitation to acceptance followed later by declination.

However, an influential opposition leader was clearer and more candid, reflecting the reality I mentioned above. "All Yemenis, both statesmen and opposition, are not qualified and able to make use of accurate scientific diagnosis of future challenges. It is only ...and...who will benefit from the result of such a symposium."

His reply was enough to make us reconsider organizing the symposium and think of other ways to highlight those challenges and set them right in front of the political system. This article may be part of the alternatives.

In spite of this critical state of the political stance of the state and the opposition, and my belief that it is good to send alerts and conduct treatment by means of shocks especially when danger mounts to such a level as that posed by challenges set before Yemen by human needs and requirements, yet to satisfy oneself by mere identification of challenges is no less a peril than the challenges themselves. To spot fatal challenges in this manner would lead to a serious and negative consequence, exacerbating the sense of despair and hopelessness as well as the spirit of opportunism. It would tempt people to search for private rather than collective solutions. This would accelerate impetuosity and draw us closer to the point of collapse.

It is difficult and sensitive easy-to-upset equation. However, to put off facing up challenges and try to cover them by no means an accessible alternative and it is a disgusting collusion with challenges and betrayal of one's knowledge.

Although, this abstract aims to expose future challenges and their seriousness in a proportionate way, I feel inclined to briefly list human and natural resources enjoyed by Yemen as well as political, cultural, and social resources that have been accumulating throughout Yemen's contemporary development era.

Natural, environmental, cultural, social and political diversity can provide the basis to cope with challenges. The prerequisites of any comprehensive development project include good governance, sound thinking, economization of natural resources, and meeting people's needs.

Now, I think, after this elaborate introduction, I have settled the dispute over whether Yemen needs reform or not and proved that reform is not a better alternative only; it is a question of existence.

WB President did not say "your government." Similarly, the US Presidency's Report recommended preventing not the

Yemeni government but Yemen from becoming a failure. This means that matter does not concern only the Yemeni government but the whole people. Facing challenges is the responsibility of the Yemeni society with all its political and social components. It is literally a national challenge.

The right and safe approach to tackle this challenge starts with adoption of a national political and cultural reform program to enable the Yemeni society to participate actively in political to encounter the historical challenge.

Overlapping between the cultural and the political in Yemen is so tricky and complicated that political and cultural reforms should go equivalently together.

Before going into the main theme, I think it is useful to share with you wisdom from India. The parable says that someone saw a large herd of elephants walking together in an organized way with only very thin string linking them. The person asked the elephants' owner how he could make the strong elephants disciplined with a thin string. The response was "When young, these elephants tried futilely to sever the string. They despaired to get rid of it and therefore have stopped trying that."

This parable symbolizes clearly the situation in the disadvantaged countries deprived of freedom. We give ourselves up to a despair residing at the bottom of our psyche.

What I want to say is that it is time we shook off the obsession of our "thin string" which is feeble and decayed.

Here we go into the subject. First, I would rather point out the conditions of political reform included herein:

- It is crucial to agree about the nature of the current stage of building Yemen's democratic system. I believe that Yemen is still building and has not yet started running the democratic system. Running comes upon completion of construction. Two features distinguish the process of building form running the democratic system: a) all parties to the political system must contribute to this stage; b) presence of earnest and honest will in all parties to accomplish the task. Emphasizing the importance of all parties having the will, it is exceptionally important that his Excellency President of the Republic has the same will because he is the one possessing the political tools that can positively or negatively influence the program of completing the Yemeni democratic system. It is crucial that the national will for reform tally with the international partnership.

- The goal behind political reform program is to fulfill democratic transformation by the exceptional intervention of the collective national volition so as to provide Yemen's democratic project with the factors of survival and self-development. The main characteristics of the political reform program to be discussed later are basic in nature, presenting nothing but a general frame. They do not comprise the cultural, social, economic and administrative procedures of reform because such issues are determined by the diverse programs of political system's parties.

- The sincere implementation of these reforms in the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Authorities will ensure the acceptable minimum of the most crucial basic principle in the democratic political system: separation and balance between the three authorities and rejuvenating them.

undertakes serious reforms, combats corruption, adopts democracy and encourages foreign investment. However, other governments in the world have succeeded to secure more confidence than we did; which means that we are falling behind as an economy, this is represented in the exchange rate mechanism and the value of the Riyal against other dominant currencies. A good example is in the fluctuation of the Japanese yen during the last two decades.

So how can Yemen become rich? Unless massive natural resources are discovered, a lot of reform has to be done, because reforming and changing now is less painful than a foreseeable economic disaster for our local economy and in turn, on us as individuals.

We are all shareholders in this country and are seriously affected by its economy, so lets work together to help our country help us; There is no secret recipe on how to get rich; it's a matter of simple economics, for the individual to have a better understanding of the local economy, and for the nation to understand the global economy and undertake what it takes for economic revival as a whole.

COMMON
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

In government, the press
and the private sectorLet's let women
have a go at it

I am not quite certain that it is always correct to justify our inability to cope with our incompetence on so many fronts because of inherited traits or complications. Nor does this observer believe that our traditions and values are excuses for or inability to set up the right management that indicates that we can get things done and in the right way. Quite often, men in Yemen tend to look down upon women and I am not talking about the "uneducated" or those who hail from rural areas. I tend to believe Yemeni women deserve a lot more credit and appreciation and indeed a lot more enablement and empowerment.

In my management experience in both the private sector and the public sector, I have managed departments or whole institutions with women in my staff and I must categorically admit they were astute and diligent employees. They were never hesitant in following instructions and even if they were not familiar with the matter at hand, they went out of their way to find out the crux of the matter and carried on their duty.

Historically, Yemenis should remember that history has given two epochs in our history, with Yemeni women at the helms and the country was at a peak in prosperity. The Holy Quran revealed to us the splendor that the Kingdom of Saba enjoyed under the Queen of Sheba (reputably named Bilquis). Not only did she rule a magnificent kingdom, but the Quran relates that she ruled in a democratic manner, insisting that all decisions should be made through consultations with all the relevant concerned people or entities. Even when King Solomon (PBAUH) beckoned her to meet and discuss the issues of the day in those ancient times, she insisted on meeting her counsel of advisors and awaited to hear what they thought their queen should do.

Then came Queen Arwa who ruled at the height of the Sulaihi Era around the 10th Century and the Town of Jibla became one of the most outstanding cultural centers in the Islamic World at the time.

These two women were not prevented from taking their place in destiny by traditions and customs that are often used as an excuse to block progress, because there are some die hard conservatives, who fear for their power or simply have no common sense to regard change as inevitable and often called for to get us out of many of the predicaments we are facing.

In our times, I would like to point out some situations where this observer has personally detected a very positive venue for the simple reason that there are women in these situations that do make a difference.

In Government, we have a woman as the Minister of Human Rights. This is a very difficult and sensitive position and undoubtedly no man would envy the courageous and capable Amat Al-Alim Al-Susawa for taking the post. Yet, she accepted knowing the challenge it entails and the obvious difficulties and the awesome cultural hurdles that must be overcome (not to mention the political paradoxes). She not only took it, she really made something out of it. She is taking her position with a high sense of responsibility and the hope that indeed the message of human rights can have a lasting impression on our culture. I wish her the best of luck and I dare say, she should expect from the press all the support she needs to make her efforts easier.

In our own enterprise, the Yemen Times, this observer had the pleasure to work with two fine ladies, who took on the leadership of the paper. Once was with Haifa Abdul-Aziz Al-Saqaaf, who was Acting Editor In Chief for a couple of months last Summer. There was no problem that seemed to defy solution, if presented to Haifa in the right way and she made her decisions based on a rational deduction from the facts that were presented to her. If she did not feel sure about something she would ask the right people before a decision was made.

Then comes the periods when Nadia Abdul-Aziz Al-Saqaaf took the helms. I did not deal with the paper at the management level the first time she acted as Editor in Chief, but the staff reported to me that they did not have problems getting things done. This time, however, I had a greater opportunity to watch as Nadia takes the helms from her capable brother, Walid without so much as a worry or apprehension. One is already pleased at some of the changes that have taken place. First there was the attention to appearance. The premises is getting a paint job and some rearrangement of furniture. Customers are cooperating with the paper on payments. Staff are getting their dues on time. Editorial and news content is getting the attention it deserves. The Yemen Times is as Nadia said: "going to be a recognized media channel at the forefront". One can believe that, because as always, success begins with determination.

Needless to say, Yemeni women have always been at the forefront I managing their homes. In fact, even in the traditional rural areas, it is often women who run the homes and farms alone, as the men are either working overseas or in the cities, for weeks, months and sometimes years.

If one takes a look at the independent or partisan press, one will find some women writers who have spoken their minds more courageously than most men writers would dare become. Rashida Al-Qealy for example has written candidly about the excesses of the executive branch and the lot of the people under a system that makes the rich richer and the poor poorer and erases anything in between.

There is talk of trying to get quotas for elected positions to be set for women. I think the problem lies in that the election system does not allow for candidates to have a chance to present their positions in due time to the voters. Nor does it allow for true go out and get the vote campaigning. Otherwise, women would be able to meet with voters for a longer period of time and explain their platforms better. They should have no problems getting votes, because the voters already know that the men haven't performed up to par!

In the private sector this observer had a problem returning a defective part within the guarantee period. I have come and gone to the CEW headquarters on a number of occasions, not to mention telephone calls. By chance I met the Marketing Manager there. She herself asked me what the problem. When I explained to her the situation, she simply took the pen an issued the instructions that smoothed the whole matter out in seconds. Now that is competence and sound management.

The point is that we should look more favorably and proudly on our women. We should only have to give them a chance to be free and to have access to positions of management and responsibility. Leave the rest to them. They will do just fine.

To be rich is glorious

BY RAIDAN ABDULAZIZ AL-SAQQAF
alsaqqaf@gmail.com

This is just a thought on the importance of financial literacy in the everyday life of my Yemeni countrymen. To get rich you have to understand basic economics. Because every time you go to work, buy a car or even do your grocery shopping; you are actually taking part in the global economy. The primary reason why it is important to understand basic economics is to protect yourself and your own finances from the ups and down of the economy.

Economics is a cycle, it hits its' highest point and then it comes down to bust, these two points are relative to the specific items and commodities you have in mind, for example in the local economy, you can see how the prices of certain vegetables fluctuate time and again. Or airline fares' fluctuation; which also have peak seasons and discount periods, this applies in every industry, local or globally.

The reasons behind such a behavior may vary; depending if it was a rainy sea-

son in the local vegetable market allowing a larger harvest of vegetables to be sold in the same market or an increase in the Jet fuel prices for the airline industry.

Regardless of the reason for the price fluctuation, managing your own personal money allows you better fit in the context of the local economy and in turn the global economy. For that, you have to understand the behavior of your own money and the impact of the global economy on your currency - the Yemeni Riyal for example.

What is the actual value for the Yemeni Riyal? In the old days, currency was backed by hard assets such as gold or property, but now the value of money is based on the government's monetary policy and global confidence in our government; because it is the government that backs up the value of its currency and promise to deliver the value mentioned on the currency note, the more this promised value is, the richer you become as a holder of a Yemeni currency and vice-versa.

Our government has been trying hard to stimulate the economy and enhance global confidence in the Riyal, as it

undertakes serious reforms, combats corruption, adopts democracy and encourages foreign investment. However, other governments in the world have succeeded to secure more confidence than we did; which means that we are falling behind as an economy, this is represented in the exchange rate mechanism and the value of the Riyal against other dominant currencies. A good example is in the fluctuation of the Japanese yen during the last two decades.

So how can Yemen become rich? Unless massive natural resources are discovered, a lot of reform has to be done, because reforming and changing now is less painful than a foreseeable economic disaster for our local economy and in turn, on us as individuals.

We are all shareholders in this country and are seriously affected by its economy, so lets work together to help our country help us; There is no secret recipe on how to get rich; it's a matter of simple economics, for the individual to have a better understanding of the local economy, and for the nation to understand the global economy and undertake what it takes for economic revival as a whole.



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Publisher & Editor-in-Chief:
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Saqaaf

Head office:
Telephone: +967 (1) 268-661
Fax: +967 (1) 268-276
P.O. Box 2579, Sana'a

Email: yementimes@yementimes.com
Website: http://www.yementimes.com

Branches:
Aden Bureau Chief: Ridhwan Alawi Ahmed
Tel: +967 (2) 347-057, 346596;
Tel: +967 (2) 347-056
Fax: +967 (2) 347-056
Email: ytdaden@y.net.ye

Taiz Bureau Chief:
Imad Ahmed Abdullah
Tel: +967 (4) 217-156
Tel: +967 (4) 217-157
Tel: +967 (4) 217-157
P.O.Box: 5086, Taiz
Email: ytaiz@y.net.ye

Hodeidah Bureau Chief:
Imad Ahmed Abdullah
Tel: +967 (3) 206-886

Regional Distributors

KSA:
Saudi Distribution Co.
Jeddah, Tel: 6530909
Tlx: 605350
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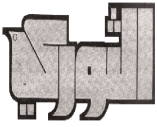
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Tel: 00971506589158
P. O. Box 2007

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Yemeni Press, A week in review

Presented by Mohammed Khidr



Al-Thawra weekly,
28 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines:

- In the wake of acquitting the murderers of Jarallah Omar, a demand for an international investigation and exert pressure on the Yemeni government to stop liquidation of opponents
- A demand for election of a new parliamentary presidential body
- Head of YSP parliament bloc criticizes the government stance towards universities strike
- Sana'a university maintains its strike
- "Al-Nahar" newspaper on trial for lawsuits of Al-Thawra hospital and Jaashin sheik

Columnist Ibrahim Hassan says in an article the Yemeni center for documentation and information is conducting preparations for holding symposiums, among them one "Yemen and Normalization" and 15 years of Yemen Unity.

The question of Yemeni official normalization with Israel is old and new and has many channels and men. For a very long time, Israel has not carried out any hostile acts against Yemen and the Yemeni official address towards Israel does no longer with that strength. While the popular condemnation, under the slogan of "death to Israel" has become banned and praying against it is no longer commendable.

If an opinion poll were to be conducted with a random sample of people in Yemen about official normalization with Israel, the results, according to an impartial reading of the popular temperament and monitoring politicians' orientations in Yemen, would be 70% with normalization with Israel.

Normalization is not necessarily a free service, the calculation of profits and losses has to be taken into account as important. Experts of politics, economy and culture are capable of defining the asset. The asset should not necessarily be in the form of creditor or debtor. The Yemeni-Israeli trading accountancy would be just and according to each party's capability.

I am definite that the authority in Yemen wants to cross towards normalization but it exaggerates in estimation of the opposition's response, which is a modest one regarding such an affair. I am also certain that the opposition may bid because it does not such an accomplishment to be recorded in favour of authority.



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

Main headlines:

- PM stresses on enhancement of efforts for radiation safety
- Cabinet discusses final results for operating the container port beginning of June
- In implementation of the president's directives, a regional bone surgery hospital is to be built by Cuban expertise
- Confirming the person who hurled the bomb in front of customs building from al-Houthi followers, security source denies that General Ali Siyani was the target
- 45 Saudi companies take part in the second forum of Saudi and Yemeni businessmen
- Seizure of two ferries active in smuggling migrants, 1800 infiltrators and illegal residents seized since the beginning of last April

Columnist Abdulsamad al-Qaleesi says in an article that he has thought the application of health insurance was an easy matter and to be easily gained. He says the time I pondered the subject I found out that it is a wide-ranged topic. The constitution of

the Yemeni republic stipulates the right of the citizen to health care and the state is obliged to guarantee this right. But the constitutional text has left it to the law to organize the citizen's obtaining free health care, and that the law has not been issued yet.

There is a draft law on health insurance and another for the establishment of the state authority for health insurance prepared by the ministry of health. The two drafts were presented to the Shoura Council that presented its remarks in prelude to submit to the cabinet and then to parliament.

The point is that the draft laws do not meet the end and would not realize the goal. There are experts in the field of health insurance who have expressed their important remarks about them. I think the specialized parties should take them into consideration and rather reconsider the text of the two draft laws.

The major problem in the subject is the government employees and the acute decline in the level of their salaries. If a large installment were deducted from their salaries for health insurance, they and their families would need to cover expenses of the minimum level of living, even if the government would pay 50% of those installments.

On the other hand, if deducted installments were little, the insurance companies would not accept that. This would either cause their loss or impose on them to set a low ceiling of medical service, which would not offer actual care for the employee.

The second problem is that the health insurance mentioned in both draft laws is confined to the employee alone without his family. In this case who would undertake treatment of his family and how?

Among the remarks displayed by the Shoura council there is a phrase saying each participant would contribute according to his financial potentiality and gets health services according to his need. The state has to reconsider the so-called the society contribution to expenses of health care as the citizen is now obliged to pay 75% of the costs of examinations and treatment, which is a matter very unfair.



Al-Wahda weekly,
27 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines:

- 27 April luminous point in Yemen's democratic march
- Cabinet decides to subject employment to civil service ministry endorsement
- Oil undersecretary: Inauguration of the project of sector 51 installations in May
- Civil service undersecretary: Until last March, 33 thousand employees pensioned
- Medicines & insecticides topping the list, 34 cases of smuggling before courts
- More than 13 thousand antiquities discovered in Mareb
- YR 750 million for implementation of 15 water barriers in Mareb
- From agriculture lending bank capital, more than YR 150 million loans lost in Mareb and al-Jawf governorates
- Regional workshop for water desalination

Columnist Dr Ali Mohammed al-Ashmouri writes saying there would be no future for the homeland but with the future of all there must be total participation for discovering and building it.

The file of dialogue called for by the General People's Congress is considered a qualitative step in political history of ruling parties. This is a radical change required from the other to respond in order to treat issues that are far from the game of conflict between the positions and roles that represent a national concern and common responsibility.

The option of dialogue is the safest

of all choices and having the least losses and less dangerous ramifications, it accommodates all types of political spectrum of the country.



Al-Isbou weekly,
28 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines:

- Journalists syndicate would ignore the law, information ministry demands for suggestions to the law
- Execution against killer of al-Mikhlafi inside the court
- Ahmed Bazaraa: State withdraws from being a major provider for job opportunities
- Escape of al-Houthi outside the country, ruled out
- Partisan crisis at universities
- Fish wealth ministry sues 20 fishing companies.

On its back page the newspaper published an article saying when al-Houthi sparked confrontations with the authority last year he was actually having hopes of an imamate rule with which he had inspired hundreds of his followers.

It was not only mere suicidal confrontation in the most rugged mountains of Yemen. Al-Houthi had pursued the legend of the return of the imam, which was then appeared to be repeated after the revolution by supporters of the monarchy.

The legend says the imam would return after forty years of the revolution and more than one thousand years before the state of imamate appeared in Saada. Hussein Badruddin al-Houthi repeated the slogan of "Death to America and Israel".

For some years, he was preparing his supplies in valleys of Mran Mountains. It was one of the reasons behind flourishing of weapons trade in the governorate situated on borders with Saudi Arabia.

Was the AL-Houthi dreaming of repeating al-Khumeini's experiment of hostility to America and Israel? Al-Houthi was not able to wait, despite that some of his followers saw that he was hasty in his confrontation after he had ignited it.

Months later the spark of al-Houthi returned, as the legend was still tickling their dreams. The authorities have to thank al-Houthi. He has awakened it to hidden intentions, with all what they would bring with them of problems and chaos.

But as a nightmare for it, the authority has to pay attention to development, upgrading education and health and the living condition. These are the stronger weapons so that such a small legend could become a costing and disturbing situation.



An-Nahar weekly,
28 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines:

- A campaign to topple a new draft for press law proposed by the ministry of information
- Al-Nahar newspaper on trial for lawsuits from al-Thawra hospital and sheik al-Jaashin
- Torrents cut the Yemen-Saudi highway
- 86 cases of polio in Hodeidah and fears of spread to other governorates
- Education unions crisis re-emerge

Writer Mohammed al-Qadhi describes in an article the press draft law presented by the ministry of information as totalitarian and disastrous. He says it has disclosed intentions of the government towards journalists and the press, adding that they have not yet comprehended the reality of the ongoing international changes and tempest blowing on the Middle East.

The government would not produce but such a press law that would restrain the word and renders the

SKETCHED OPINION



By Samer A.



As-Sahwa weekly,
28 Apr. 2005.

Main headlines:

- Because of violations amounted to more than YR two billion, Parliamentary report stresses on referring information ministry to public property prosecution
- At the second anniversary of Yemeni Democracy Day, Yemeni opposition parties demanded for comprehensive political reforms
- Opposition blocs: GPC statements, an outbidding not respecting the other opinion
- In Hodeidah, 86 cases of polio
- Parliamentary committee fails to oblige Sana'a University to back down from its unconstitutional decisions
- Possibility of filing a lawsuit against it, Official press not neutral in covering news
- Judges demand amendment, others complain of much talk about the lost independence of judiciary
- Politicians demand election of districts and governorates governors
- Sana'a University's teaching staff declares continuation of strike

Columnist Zaid al-Shami says in his article that people on this earth either come to agreement and cooperate or differ and coexist, as an

alternative to conflict, war and destruction. As full agreement is a kind of impossibility, difference remains as a norm pushes the rational to look for means for coexistence and acceptance of the other along with recognition of his peculiarity.

Recently, the call has come from the European Union and statements of some American officials, calling for opening dialogue with Islamic movements. However, this has come rather late but it indicates the listening to the call of reason, logic and common interest.

Those Islamic movements have active presence and big influence. They work openly wherever they are allowing and demanding for freedom to declare themselves. They have their visions for building the man and reform the state as well as the relationship with the other. Not to recognize these movements does not mean wiping them out of the map of public life.

It is regrettable in this regard that the west comprehends the variables and developments and reaches at a conviction of opening dialogue with who it sees as adversaries, whereas some regimes in both Arab and Islamic worlds still believe in expulsion, prisons, detentions, despotism and gagging mouths.

They think those ways are more useful than dialogue. Is it now not the best time for turning the chapter of the past and its conflicts to move to horizons of dialogue and building, and not to wait for others to impose that on us?

جمعية زوجات رؤساء البعثات الدبلوماسية (هومسا)

Heads of Missions Spouses Association (HOMSA)

البازار الخيري السنوي

ANNUL CHARITY BAZAAR

Thursday 12th May 2005.

Venue: Police Officer Club

Time: From 10:00 a.m.

5:00 p.m.

Ticket Cost: YR 300

الخميس، ١٢ مايو ٢٠٠٥ م

المكان: نادي ضباط الشرطة

الوقت: من ١٠ صباحاً إلى ٥ عصر

سعر التذكرة: ٣٠٠ ريال

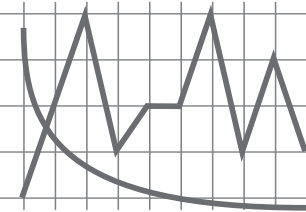
Children Under 12 Free Entry

Raffle & auction from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

الدخول مجاني للأطفال تحت الثانية عشرة

السحب والمزاد من ٣:٠٠ - ٥:٠٠ عصر

YT Business



Exchange Rate for the Yemeni Rial

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	190.9500	191.3000
Sterling Pound	363.4900	364.1600
Euro	245.6800	246.1300
Saudi Rial	50.9200	51.0100
Kuwaiti Dinar	653.7600	654.9600
UAE Dirhem	51.9900	52.0800
Egyptian Pound	32.9100	32.9700
Bahraini Dinar	506.5100	507.4400
Qatari Rial	52.4500	52.5500
Jordanian Dinar	269.6100	270.1000
Omani Rial	495.9700	496.8800
Swiss Franc	159.5500	159.8400
Swedish Crown	26.7300	26.7800
Japanese Yen	1.8126	1.8159

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

International Conference on

Financial Leasing in Yemen

BY FAHMIA AL-FOTIH

It is a popular instrument in Muslim countries as it is a rent-based financial facility. Actually, some of the transactions carried out today by some Yemeni businessmen, especially those practicing Islamic banking principles, are very similar in their substance to financial leasing operations.

In a number of countries, leasing plays a vital and increasing role providing finance for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), as it holds attractive features such as the fact that collateral is not required by banks to extend a loan, as the bank holds the title to the equipment, making enforcement more secure. As a result, many small and medium enterprises are now able to obtain financing for their business activities.

Introducing financial leasing in Yemen will have a wider impact than just a financial sector development and easy access to finance for SMEs. It will also contribute to invigorating the Yemeni economy as a result of the

financing of capital investments. Thereby creating more business and jobs, increasing the tax base and accelerating economic growth.

However, there are various constraints to the introduction and development of leasing in Yemen. The weak legislative and regulatory framework for such type of transaction, may limit potential investors in the leasing market. Moreover, potential uneven fiscal treatment which would make leasing less competitive than other forms of financing such as traditional bank loans, Murabaha, Mudaraba, etc.

Not only the lack of experience and skills by potential lessees or providers of leasing, but also the lack of awareness by potential clients of this product, since leasing is particularly non-existent in Yemen, and is a relatively new financing instrument in many countries and particularly those in the region.

On the legal aspects, the Central Bank of Yemen prepared a draft law for financial leasing which was presented to the Cabinet and is now in its final



stages of being passed. This is one of the requirements of the Financial Sector Adjustment Credit, which was extended by the World Bank to Yemen in 1997. The CBY has relied on its preparation on a draft prepared by the International Finance Corporation IFC back in 1997, and a number of the laws of neighboring countries.

To introduce leasing term as well as

it being the beginning of the spread of awareness, and the importance of this type of activity, under the auspices of Prime Minister Abdul Qader Bajammal, the Central Bank of Yemen CBY along with the International Finance Corporation IFC, World Bank Group, held on 25 April at an international conference on "Leasing for Small and Medium Enterprises Development" that took place at the Police Officers club.

Through the five sessions of conference a number of topics were presented.

The First session was about general presentation of leasing in which Mr. Fritz Peter presented a paper "Leasing Global Prospects (History of European & U.S. markets & prospects). Talking about definition and characteristics of leasing Mrs. Houria Sammari, MENA leasing program manager and IFC team presented "Key benefits of financial leasing for lessees, lessors, country development leasing in the MENA Region"

The second session was about Experiences of regional leasing companies in which Mr. Abderrazak

Trabelsi, general manager of Arab leasing corporation, Agiers, introduced a paper entitled "Experience of recently established leasing company in Algeria."

While Mr. Shaheen Amin, chief executive officer of Saudi ORIX leasing, Riyadh displayed his paper "Experience of an international leasing company in Saudi Arabia, Oman and Egypt-ORIX leasing"

In the third session the topic was about legal and regulatory framework. Ms. Kamila Makhmudova, leasing legislative expert at IFC, and Mr. Khalid Abdullah, IFC legal counsel in Yemen, both presented a paper "Legal aspects of leasing-International best practices".

Mr. M. Seif Kaid, legal advisor at CBY, and Mr. E.H. Mohammed Said, legal advisor at International Bank of Yemen, presented respectively two papers, which were "Leasing legislative framework in Yemen" and "Leasing legal aspects"

The topic of the fourth session was tax and accounting treatment. Mr. Umedjan Umarov, leasing and accounting expert at IFC, and Mr. Mohammed Zahdi, accounting expert at KPMG, Sana'a, presented a paper about "Tax aspect of leasing" and "International best practices and Yemen applications."

Another two papers were introduced, entitled "Accounting aspects of leasing" and "International best practices and Yemen application"

The issue of the fifth session was about "next steps for leasing development in Yemen".

Ms. Jasmina Vignjevic, business development officer, south Eastern Europe leasing program manager IFC, presented a paper "Presentation of IFC leasing work (technical assistance) in other regions."

Finally the last paper was about "What are the next steps towards proper

leasing development in Yemen.

The participants came up with a number of recommendations most of which were:

- 1-Hastily issuing the law related to financial leasing and giving it to the parliament to approve it according to the constitution.
- 2-The Commercial and Islamic Banks should start establishing leasing institutions and involving this type of activities in their financial activities.
- 3-Private sectors should practice leasing and benefit with the technical support of IFC.
- 4-Universities should incorporate the financial leasing within the curricula of the special faculties.
- 5-Institutions should hold training courses, workshops and seminars about the financial leasing.
- 6-IFC should start implementing the program of participating in developing the small and medium enterprises in Yemen, as well as to take part in encouraging and supporting the private sectors. Giving loans and facilities for the successful investment projects that enhance in economic and social development with creating job opportunities and decreasing poverty.
- 7-The speeches delivered in the conference were considered one of the conference papers.

Abdul Qader Bajammal, Mr. Saad Sabrah, representative IFC-Yemen, Mr. Mohammed Ali, president of Banking Association of Yemen, Mr. Abdulrahman AL-Samawi, governor of CBY along with a number of financial experts and specialists from Yemen and abroad attended the conference.



Modern study mentions,

Technical cheating spreads in Yemeni market

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A study specialized in marketing affairs emphasized that technical swindling is increasing in the Yemeni market through influx of expired commodities and smuggled goods which are not abiding by national specifications and standardization, especially regarding technical cheating. This is mainly related to electronics and electrical apparatuses. The study focused that those goods are among the most widespread commodities in Yemeni markets and have great influence on consumer, tradesman, environment and the national economy.

The study also mentioned that technical cheating constituted as one of the most wide-spread phenomena that accompany the international trade movement and its impact noticeably appears at

markets where there is low levels of monitoring on quality of goods incoming across borders. A well as to constitute material burden on Yemeni consumer who has become victim to the trade of electronic and electric goods.

The study has also disclosed that phenomena of trade swindling emerges mainly in citizens' complaints about expensive and costing malfunctions occurring to apparatuses and their accessories, such as computers, typewriters, facsimiles, telephone sets, cameras, recorders, television sets, TV receivers and others. The study also disclosed that prices of those tools and appliances are very high compared to costs of buying the same types of those apparatuses. The major problem, the study says, is in the accessories of computers of such printers. One finds in the market certain types of printers at price of around \$200 to 250, but after a short while of using the print-

er it is malfunctioned. Nevertheless, this is not the sole problem, it is mainly in the price of spare parts to be replaced and that costs between \$ 105 to 200, which is expensive compared to the price of the printer itself. This situation mostly pushes the consumer to buy a new printer instead of repairing the previous one.

Cheating in the trade of electronics and electrical apparatuses has become very clear and includes TV dishes and receivers that the market contains tens of their types, very little of them are commercially known and for most of them, the country of origin is unknown.

The study considered that a reason behind this cheating is mainly the openness of Yemeni markets, which is considered among the main markets in the region where commercial cheating is apparent. It includes all commodities demanded in the market, mainly electronics and electric apparatuses.

To face importation of cooking oils,

Annual YR11 worth investment opportunities

BY MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemeni official sources have revealed that Yemen imports cooking oils from external markets at a cost of around YR 11 billion. Thus, there is a need of investors in agricultural sector specialized in plantation of crops related to extraction and production of oils and their refinery to sell and export them.

The sources told the Yemen Times that there were directives issued by high-ranking authorities to the end of paying a prime attention to agriculture of sunflower plants to obtain seeds from which oil is extracted. The proportion of oil in this plant ranges between 30-50% and yields good economic revenues to farmers, as the value of one ton of such oils is more than \$850.

The sources added that the oil of sunflower plant is considered rich in vitamins, especially vitamin B and is characterized by good flavor and pure color. Therefore, it is considered as major source for vegetable oils used in cooking. Industrially, the oil is also used in soap and paint industries. After extraction of oil from sunflower seeds, the remains could be used in feeding animals as it contains 30-35% of proteins, 20% of carbohydrates and 6% oil. Stalks of the plant contain a high percentage of nitrogen, calcium and potassium.

After harvesting the plant and ploughing the soil, the remains of the plant increase organic material in the soil and improves its fertility. Growing of sunflower plants help increase pro-

duction of honey, as bees pollinate the plant and such their nectar.

Growing sunflower plants would also lead to diversification and development of the Yemeni farmer's income through the increase in his economic revenues due to the high economic return of this crop which is deemed as one of the oil crops that can stand hard climatic circumstances and drought. It is also characterized by economizing in the use of irrigation water for its growth

On the other hand, the sources confirmed the significance of the private sector participation in providing local raw materials for the industrialization of vegetable oils and fodders to make these contribute to covering part of national requirements for these essen-

tial goods.

They pointed out that Yemen imports YR11 billion worth of vegetable oil from abroad. This urges the need for supply and industrialization of those oils locally through increasing agricultural production of the sunflower crop, cottonseeds, sesame and others in a manner benefiting the farmers and the national economy.

It is to be pointed out that some private sector investors have gone ahead of the government in investment in this field and need support from official authorities as well as offering facilities to them. Particularly regarding irrigation and arable lands in order to expand in production of oils to cover the need of the Yemeni market of this commodity.

Sana'a First International Fair, preparations

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The ministry of Industry and Trade held a plenary meeting in Sana'a which included a number of commercial attaches, officials of trade relations and diplomatic missions accredited to Yemen. The meeting was devoted to acquaint participants with underway preparations for holding Sana'a's 1st International Fair to be organized by the ministry on 1-7 September at Expos Fair in Sana'a.

Sources of the ministry of industry and trade have told Yemen Times that the fair is considered a giant and important economic activity as it would include a number of Arab and foreign countries seeking

through their participation to display their best quality products. They would consequently open new markets for their products in Yemeni markets.

The fair would also discuss the possibility of conducting trade exchange with businessmen from those countries and their Yemeni counterparts. The sources indicated that the ministry was working directly with the Apollo fair and that it was continuing in coordination and cooperation for the success of this international event that was coinciding with the Yemeni people's celebrations of the 26 September revolution day as it is the first international fair to be held in Yemen.

The fair, according to the sources of the industry ministry, acquires a great importance, as it would include a number

of world economic companies, international pavilions, and well-known trademarks.

They affirm that holding the fair comes after the Yemeni government has taken serious and practical steps in development of its trade and economic relations with most of world countries, especially industrial ones.

The sources have expected that most of the Arab countries would take part in the fair, particularly after the announcement of the Arab agreement on the exemption of all Arab products from customs and support of trade exchange among Arab countries, indicating that Apollo Center takes part in many exhibits that are held in a number of Arab and foreign countries.



Thousand years to the Mozambique Island between the two shores of the Indian Ocean

By IRENA KNEHTL
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

It is an emerald set in a sapphire sea. A small coral island at the mouth of Mossurill Bay in the Mozambique channel in the Indian Ocean. Its natural harbor was used by Arab merchants as a maritime trading station.

It served as an important link in the East African trade routes that stretched along the coast. Much of the gold found its way to the island on the sea route from Europe to the East Indies. This island harbor, four km off the coast of Africa, just opposite of Madagascar, for hundreds of years was a major center of intercontinental maritime trade. First mentioned in Arab writings in 10th century, today it is a World heritage site.

The Arab sources recorded waves that here break rhythmically along its broad, pearl sand beaches. The first Arab settlers probably came from the Hadhramaut region in Yemen.

Since the beginning of civilization man has used the Arabian Sea as a trading route to the world's wealth. The first sea-trading route known to man passed through this sea.

Shortly after 3000 BC ships raced along the coast from and to southern Arabia and India, exchanging copper from Oman, teakwood from India, incense from Yemen for wheat and



barley. The Yemeni pre-Islamic kingdom probably traded by sea, but definitely in the Sabean kingdom.

While civilization spread around the world, the Arabian Sea remained a center of commerce. Empires reached its shores and crumbled through centuries. A regular half-yearly alternation of weather conditions and winds plays a more important role on the Arabian Sea than in any other sea on earth.

From October to May the favorable trade/wind blows across the sea and brings a strong south westerly current. When the strong southwest monsoon blows from June to September, they would sail home again to Arabia.

The Arabs had known since ancient times that they could rely on prevailing winds for long voyages beyond sight of land and were hazarding their lives on

the deep water beyond their shores. Their dhow, an oceangoing vessel, was usually constructed of coconut wood or teak, the hardest and most durable timber.

It was entirely seaworthy amid the comparatively mild waves of the Indian Ocean. Its triangular lateen sail was adapted to catch the slightest breeze and lend the ships maneuverability in treacherous coastal waters. Even perishable goods could be transported safely.

Their remarkable meteorology of the Indian Ocean and the way in which the Arab navigators had been exploiting it for centuries made them true scientists of the sea, experienced in navigation, meteorology, geography.

Adept at taking advantage of good sailing conditions on a regular seasonal schedule. As early as the 8th century Arab traders entered the region along the Zambezi river in the East African interior. They brought ceramics, cloth, glass, beads, salt and metal in exchange for gold, palm, oil, rhinoceros horn, amber, valuable skins, and ivory.

The dhows from Mozambique island station carried incense, gold, pearls, glass and ornaments of every variety. They returned with their holds full of rich and spicy perfumes, silk, cotton, diamonds and teakwood. The city of Sofala, the present day, Beira, on land to the Mozambique island, developed into a trade center.

It used to be a city of warehouses and trading goods for East Africa and India. From Sofala, much before the 15th century, Arabs, Indians and Swahilis traded up the Zambezi, Save and Limpopo river valleys with the old Zimbabwean empire and the stone-building peoples of Southern Africa and Botswana, a powerful indigenous African gold-trading empire in the interior of Southern Africa.

The gold of southern Africa has always been fabulous. It fuelled trade in the western Indian Ocean for at least 500 years before European explorers arrived there.

Buried in the sands of the coast, there should be another older Sofala, of coral stone palaces and fine mosques. Sofala emerged as a Muslim city built by an Arab Muslim ruler Musa bin as-Sembiq, though his name was erroneously corrupted to Mozambique and of which both the present day Republic of Mozambique and the

Mozambique island derive their name

Sand, sea, sky

A full moon rose out of the sea as the sun set behind the sea. Coral reef listening to the wash of waves far down the beach where the spring tide had taken the sea. Black silhouettes of uncovered reef and dark patches of water. Past Islands of the Moon, the Comoros islands to Mozambique island, these were the last marts of Azania on the right hand from the land of Bernike.

For after those places the unexplored ocean curves round to the west, and extending southwards in the opposite direction. Cape of Currents was the traditional southern limit of navigation in the Indian Ocean prescribed by Arab navigators. Their dhows were designed for the greater tropical seas and predictable season of the monsoon. Beyond that point the weather deteriorated.

The regular wind systems became unreliable. The land rose gradually above the level. A great low-tide plain of yellow sand before them. Watching the moon and listening to singing of the coral sands in the silver sea as they approach Ilha de Mozambique, today part of Republic of Mozambique.

Water of memory

The Mozambique island, has been brought to world attention by its classification as a World heritage site, aiming to preserve and stimulate the conservation of the wonderful old buildings, some of which are made out of coral. The entire island has been proclaimed a World heritage site.

A maze of narrow streets hemmed by tall buildings with a bustling harbor and markets. At the ocean side the fresh monsoon breeze blew every day. A long roll of history bearing the heavy burden of a strategic position, on an old crossroad on the Indian Ocean. Not so much a different place, but a different time.

From the dhow, the island looks like a floating city, an African version of a tragic Venice. A meeting point of cultures, flat roofs, designed to collect rainwater and compensate for the islands lack of freshwater spring. Smaller houses roofed with palm leaves.

The Portuguese made it to the focal point of their trade and industry during 15th century. Tons of limestone were shipped in from Portugal to build what was one of the most formidable forts in Africa. It was never conquered.

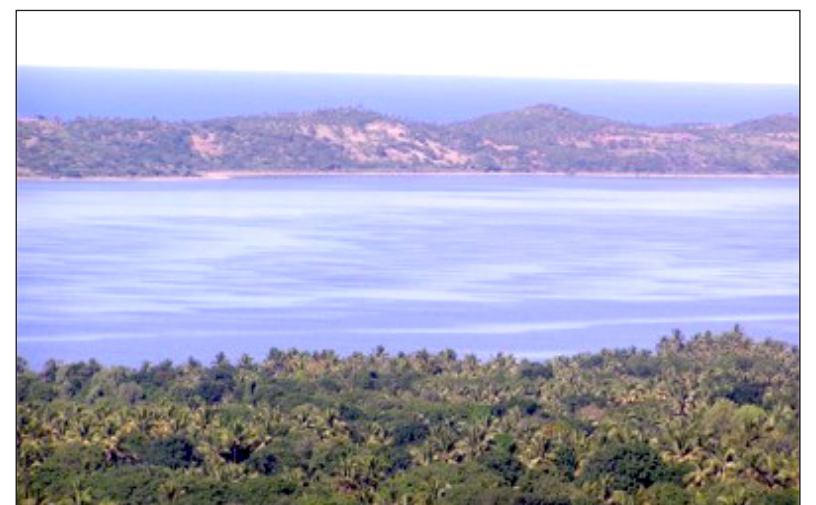
Today the fort is empty and haunted. The Mozambique island is a low lying coral island almost equidistant between Sofala and Zanzibar, convenient, safe and secure port on the route from Kilwa, the city which ruled the southern African trade, and Sofala, the base for contact with the gold of Zimbabwe.

The deep tankers and graceful dhows



which sail into the harbor retain some flavors of old kingdoms, of Sindbad, the sailor, and Arab merchants from antiquity, and of Arabia Felix, sailing in search for wealth, knowledge and discovery.

They seem to bring twentieth century prosperity to the people who carry on the tradition of an ancient sea.



About Mozambique

The Republic of Mozambique is located on the southeastern coast of Africa and covers a total of 799,380 sq kilometers. Incredibly diverse and scenic landscape.

The country has natural attractions, offering 2500 km of unspoilt coastline and a string of

sub-tropical Indian Ocean islands forming. The Bazaruto Archipelago, located about 10 km off the coast is said to be one of the most beautiful places on the African continent. The whole area is now protected as a world class conservation area

The country also boasts many stunning game parks, lakes,

mountains and historical towns.

Natural resources include titanium, natural gas and hydropower

Capital: Maputo

People: 99 percent African.

Mozambiquans are renowned for being the friendliest people in Africa
Official language: Portuguese.



Who Is It? A story to be told - - (1/4)

By SALWA YEHIA AL-ERYANI
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

I ran with wearing one slipper while the other bare foot. I reach the house of the leader of the area within seven minutes. I ran out of breath and nearly fell down. My heart was beating so fast and loud. It was like drums in my ears, especially because it was dark and silent. I knocked on the door but no one answered.

I kept banging on the door with my fist and kicking it with my feet violently. At last, the door was opened. I asked the guard to allow me to see the leader. He pointed at his watch and said "Now!" I was so short-tempered, I shouted "No, tomorrow!" He smiled an irritating smile and replied, "Well, come back tomorrow then." I spread my arm to stop him from closing the door and said "Come

on, Of course now. It is urgent. Please quickly."

The leader himself came down with his pajamas and looked very disturbed and said "What happened? Who are you?" I replied, "I am the lady living in the house behind your house. I am a neighbor. Tonight I heard sounds and voices from around my house. I am afraid a thief is trying to enter my house, I recognized feet landing in my garden ground.

The thief obviously has jumped over the fence. When I shouted who's there? I heard the feet stamps run away. I am certain that he will try again until he succeeds in entering the house. As long as the thieves know our address they'll keep coming until they find what they are looking for. You know sir that I am living alone."

The leader calmed me down "Don't panic, I will inform the police station to be ready at all times incase we call

them tomorrow, Please don't be nervous and don't exaggerate." I interrupted him "No sir, oh, no no this is not enough.

I suggest that a police car makes several rounds in this area during night upon a regular basis. This would, actually it should fear the thieves." He looked fed up and said shortly to end the conversation, "Fine, I'll think about it. Now go home." I did what I was ordered to do, As if I had any other solution! I felt that he was deceiving me and that he will not talk with any police. In other words he was lying.

It was hilarious and funny to see someone lie to you, while you have to act like you believe him. This is what our life has taught us to do. Life has taught us to lie, deceive and act. I went home and read about three paragraphs from a novel and then fell asleep.

The Second Night

The next night I was confident that the thief was not as stupid to coming back after what had happened last night. I boiled some milk and filled my mug to drink milk in front of the TV. I watched the news but couldn't hear a word of it. I must admit that all my senses were trying to catch any sound around my house.

As soon as I took a sip I definitely heard someone shaking the gate. I froze in my place. Then I heard sounds of keys being tried on a door. How daring! Not only did he yesterday climb the fence and jump into my garden but also he's trying today several keys to see which one would open the house's door.

Oh my God I heard one of the keys click. I put the mug aside with a shaking hand. I squeaked from my place "who is it?" No one answered. I strengthened my knees and got up to

the kitchen's window that looked on to the gate. I yelled "If you don't go away right now I am going to call the Police!" I remembered that addresses here in Yemen are hard to solve, like puzzles. The thief might laugh, as he knows that the police will spend a couple of hours to find the house.

So I decided to say "The police came to my house before. So you better disappear." I heard the footsteps run away until I couldn't hear them. I took a deep breath and relaxed on the chair as my muscles were all cramped. I then took the phone and called the leader of the area. As soon as I heard his voice I became nervous again I shouted "Sir, the thief today opened the door of the gate which, he jumped over yesterday.

He is advancing quickly. I am terrified. Please sir, what arrangements have you made to assure my safety?" He answered me in

a grumbling voice "I now have guests for dinner, I'll see what precautionary procedures could be taken for you when I discuss this problem with the dancer, oops I mean with the Police."

I interrupted "Yes, but when?" He lost his patience and screamed, "I don't know when. Listen this is not the proper time for chatting". That rude creature didn't even say goodbye. I stared at my telephone. It felt like receiving a slap on the face. People who have been slapped on the face said about this likeness. I haven't, but now I feel I have. I burst into tears.

When you don't have a solution, this is what you do as a female. I did that not only because I was insulted but also because I was afraid. Will this crazy leader leave me until I am robbed or killed? Oh, no, no, no. I will take care of myself. I can't understand this negligence and underestimation.

Desalination & renewable energy training course & workshop

BY NAZEEH ABDULLAH
YEMEN TIMES STAFF
ADEN BUREAU

A training course and workshop on desalination and renewable energy was held in Aden on 23-28 April, 2005. The event was organized by Yemeni Ministry of Water and Environment in cooperation with the Italian Ministry of Environment and Territory and the UNESCO. At the closing meetings of the event, sponsors and participants issued conclusions and recommendations on the theme of the training course.

The participants welcomed and appreciated the cooperation between the Ministry of Water and Environment of Yemen and the Ministry of Environment and Territory of Italy, and collaboration of UNESCO. The UNESCO was instrumental in the organization of the workshop. We call for furthering this cooperation to implement pilot projects and capacity building projects in Desalination and Renewable Energy. In particular we request UNESCO-Paris to consider supporting the implementation of the follow up of this workshop.

We, the participants of the workshop, also call donors, international and Bilateral Cooperation, UN Organizations, GEF and the World Bank to provide their support. In this regard, the participants recognize Yemen's need for support, particularly in view of the following facts:

- Yemen's water sources situation reveals that annual per capita water availability of 120-150 cubic meters per annum is far below the regional average of 1,250 cubic meters per capita per annum. Uncontrolled groundwater abstraction, of which 90 percent goes to agriculture, is largely responsible for the over exploitation of Yemen's scarce water resources. Estimates indicate an annual water deficit of over billion cubic meters/ year. Studies show that the country's 200 mm average annual rainfall is simply insufficient to recharge age old aquifers and meet the demands of both rural and urban populations. In several critical areas, water tables are dropping by as much as six meters per year. Water quality is also deteriorating due to sea water intrusion in coastal aquifers. As a result of excessive abstraction of groundwater, the imbalance between water demand and water availability poses a real problem for agricultural production in rural areas, threatening the basis of the rural economy. High population growth of 3.05% and a total population of 19.8 million according to the 2004 census adds to the complexity of the problem.

- Full implementation of Integrated Water Source Management is strongly recommended in Yemen, including (i) water reuse e.g. for agriculture to save groundwater resources, (ii) the use of non-conventional water resources e.g. desalination of brackish and seawater to increase available water resources, (iii) campaigns to use water wisely, (iv) full

cost recovery and progressive tariff domestic water sector, which is very important because the cost of desalinated water is much higher than groundwater.

- Yemen's "vision 2000-2025" indicates that future economic development will take place in coastal areas of Yemen. It is becoming clear that water quality in coastal areas is deteriorating. It is therefore highly recommended that Yemen should start immediately and gradually with the construction of "pilot" sea water desalination plants mixing the output of these plants with groundwater to improve water quality and enable water corporations not to make high tariff adjustments.

It is strongly recommended to select the most energy efficient desalination technology for brackish and seawater desalination in Yemen. The desalination of brackish water with reverse osmosis membrane technology is more energy efficient than seawater desalination plants, outside the Middle East region, are almost exclusively membrane technology because the energy consumption and the investment costs are lower than for thermal technology.

It is also strongly recommended that the environmental impact of desalination technology, and in particular the disposal concentrate (brine), is carefully assessed. Measures should be taken to ensure that chemical compounds used to control scaling in thermal and membrane systems should be biodegradable

and non-toxic and that concentrate is diluted with sufficient seawater to avoid upsetting the marine environment.

The participants recognize and endorse that fact the private sector involvement is needed in desalination projects in Yemen. This trend is evident worldwide, as more and more BOT/BOO/BOOT contracts are given for brackish and seawater desalination plants, and these staff can be provided and trained (initially) by the private sector.

Capacity building in desalination and renewable energy at all levels is also urgently required in Yemen. National Research Institution's capacity should be strengthened to support long term national water and energy strategies. In the short term, technicians will need short training courses to become familiar with desalination and renewable energy technology, and technical staff will need to be educated to MSC level in water supply engineering, with emphasis on desalination and renewable energy technology. In addition, staff training in the legal, financial and technical aspects of desalination will be needed to judge potential contracts with the private sector.

The international community is urged to provide additional research and development to make renewable energy more affordable for desalination projects. Nevertheless, the use of renewable energy should be encouraged in Yemen because of the particular characteristics of the country.

First global report on efforts to roll back malaria highlights progress and challenges

More people are accessing prevention and treatment services for malaria, sparking hope that the number of people who become sick and die from malaria will begin to decline. However, challenges remain to reduce the burden of the disease, which still kills one million people every year, most of those in Africa, according to the 2005 World Malaria Report.

The report, released today by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), finds that progress has been made in preventing and treating malaria since 2000. It finds that more countries are introducing the newest medicines to treat malaria, and that more people are receiving long-lasting insecticide-treated mosquito nets through innovative new programmes. The report analyzes malaria data collected through 2004 and represents the most comprehensive effort ever made to present the available evidence on malaria worldwide.

"Many countries are moving forward with malaria control programmes, and even those with limited resources and a heavy malaria burden now have a better opportunity to gain ground against this disease," said Dr LEE Jong-wook, Director-General of WHO. "However, proven interventions such as insecticide-treated nets, and the latest artemisinin-based combination therapies must reach many more people before we can have a real impact on malaria."

Due to the difficulties involved in gathering reliable information about malaria in most affected countries—and because those countries have intensified their efforts only in the past



Burden of malaria still worst in Africa, but prevention and treatment reaching more people

few years—it is too soon to measure the impact on illness and death of the recent expansion of malaria control strategies, the report states. A measurable effect should become apparent about three years after widespread implementation.

A number of countries are now engaged in intense antimalarial campaigns. In particular, more and more people are protected with insecticide-treated nets—a highly effective method of malaria prevention. In Africa, all countries reporting on nets collectively had a 10-fold increase in the number of insecticide-treated nets distributed over the last three years.

After a 2003 campaign to distribute treated nets in five districts of Zambia at least 80% of children under five were sleeping under the nets. A similar campaign across Togo in December 2004 succeeded in raising the overall percentage of households owning at least one treated net from 8% to 62%.

At present malaria remains the infectious disease that takes more lives of children in Africa than any other—three times as many as HIV infection, said Ann M. Veneman, Executive Director of UNICEF. If we are going to dramatically reduce child deaths in the next decade, we need to put more focus on combating malaria.

Countries where the former mainstays of malaria treatment, such as chloroquine, are no longer effective are also moving forward on new therapies. Since 2001, 42 malaria-endemic countries, 23 of them in Africa, have adopted artemisinin-based combination therapies recommended by WHO. These are the latest generation of antimalarial medicines and the most effective treatment against falciparum malaria, the deadliest form of the disease. An additional 14 countries are in the process of changing their malaria treatment policy; and 22 have embarked on home-care programmes, which enable fami-

lies and other care-givers to manage malaria.

The recent shortage of artemisinin-based combination therapies has hindered efforts to reduce the impact of the disease, but sufficient supplies to meet demand are expected to be available by the end of 2005, thanks to the combined efforts of UN agencies, other multilateral agencies, non-profit groups and corporations working together under the umbrella of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership.

The report finds that in 2003, some 350 to 500 million people worldwide became ill with malaria—a slight revision of the estimate of 300 to 500 million annual cases that WHO has used since 2000. The reasons for this difference are advances in data collection methods and increases in the world's population. Current methods do not allow for a more precise estimate, given that malaria is most often not diagnosed with certainty as well as the scarcity of reliable data from the communities where it occurs.

Halting and reversing the incidence of malaria by 2015 is a target of the Millennium Development Goals. The more immediate goal of Roll Back Malaria is to halve the burden of malaria worldwide by 2010. A major obstacle to achieving that goal, the report explains, is a lack of funds. The report estimates that US\$ 3.2 billion per year is needed to effectively combat malaria in the 82 countries with the highest disease burden. This year, US\$ 600 million was made available for global malaria control. WHO and UNICEF welcome the recent World Bank announcement of its plan to commit US\$ 500 million to US\$ 1 billion over the next five years, which will help more people get access to essential malaria prevention and treatment.

Facts of Life



By: Dr. Khaled alNsour
For the Yemen Times

Handling cats during pregnancy: is it a concern?

Your cat is a part of the family, but you wonder if it's safe to keep it if you're pregnant. If this is a concern of yours, and it is a common one, you can relax. Your kitty can stay right where she belongs. However, there are some precautions you will want to take if you are pregnant.

Toxoplasmosis, a disease of cats and other mammalian species, is caused by a parasitic protozoan, *Toxoplasma gondii* (*T. gondii*). It is not a new disease, having first been discovered in 1908. Since its discovery, toxoplasmosis has been found in virtually all warm-blooded animals including most pets, livestock, and human beings. Nearly one-third of all adults in the U.S. and in Europe have antibodies to *Toxoplasma*, which means they have been exposed to this parasite.

Toxoplasmosis is a zoonotic disease. It is transported from animals to humans. There are two populations at high risk for infection with *Toxoplasma*; pregnant women and immunodeficient individuals. It has been estimated that *Toxoplasma* is responsible for over three thousand human congenital infections in the United States each year, most of which are symptomless. Congenital infection is of greatest concern in humans. About one-third to one-half of infants born to mothers who have *Toxoplasma* during that pregnancy are infected. "In general, *Toxoplasma* infection of the fetus is least common (but disease is most severe) if the maternal infection occurs during the first trimester of pregnancy. Fetal infection is most common (but disease is least severe, often without symptoms) if the maternal infection occurs during the third trimester."

Although the majority of infected infants show no symptoms of toxoplasmosis at birth, many are likely to develop signs of the infection later in their life. Loss of vision, mental retardation, loss of hearing, and death in severe cases, are the symptoms of toxoplasmosis in congenitally infected children. The life cycle of *T. gondii* has been reviewed extensively. Cats usually become infected with *T. gondii* by ingestion of encysted organisms present in the tissues of a chronically infected intermediate host (see figure 1 & 2). The cyst wall is digested by the cat, releasing infectious organisms into the intestinal lumen.

How do people become infected with Toxoplasmosis? There are 3 principal ways that *Toxoplasma* can be transmitted:

1. Directly from pregnant mothers to unborn children if the mother becomes infected with *Toxoplasma* during pregnancy.
2. Consumption and handling of undercooked or raw meat from infected animals.
3. Ingestion of food or water or inhalation of dust contaminated with a very resistant form of

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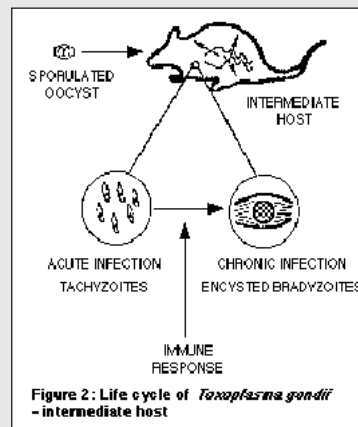


Figure 2: Life cycle of *Toxoplasma gondii* - intermediate host

Toxoplasma called the oocyst, during a period called Stage F.

Cats previously unexposed to *T. gondii* usually begin shedding oocysts between 3 and 10 days after ingestion of infected tissue, and continue shedding for around 10-14 days, during which time many millions of oocysts may be produced. Once a cat has developed an immune response, further shedding of oocysts is extremely rare.

To help prevent *Toxoplasma* infection in cats, follow these steps:

1. Keep cats indoors and do not allow them to hunt rodents and birds.
2. Feed cats only cooked meat or processed food from commercial sources.
3. Secure trash containers to prevent your cat from scavenging the garbage.
4. Remove carcasses of rodents or birds before your cat can get to them.

Specific Recommendations for Pregnant Women

- Exclude rare or undercooked meat and unpasteurized dairy products from the diet.
- Protect cats from infection (or reinfection) by preventing access to birds, rodents, uncooked meat, and unpasteurized dairy products.
- Avoid handling any cat showing signs of illness.
- Wear rubber gloves if working with garden soil. Uncooked vegetables, whether grown in a home garden or supplied commercially, they should be washed thoroughly before ingestion, in case cat feces have contaminated them.
- Make a habit of vigorously and thoroughly washing hands with soap and water after contact with soil, cats, unpasteurized dairy products or uncooked meat or vegetables.
- When cooking, avoid tasting meat before it is fully cooked. Cook meat thoroughly until the internal temperature reaches 152°F (66°C) in a conventional oven. Micro waving is not a sure way to kill *Toxoplasma* in meat.

Wish you a healthy pregnancy!

Cornell Feline Health Center, Cornell University, College of Veterinary Medicine, Ithaca, New York



نلفت إنتباه المشاركين في

مسابقة أجمل صورة

بأنه سوف يتم الإعلان عن أسماء الفائزين في المسابقة وكذلك موعد تسليم الجوائز في ٢٠٠٥/٥/١٦م

BEST-PHOTO CONTEST

We would like to draw our readers' attention that the winners of the contest, as well as the date of giving their prizes will be announced in 16/5/2005

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Ex-boxing champ Naseem Hamed bailed after crash

LONDON, May 3 (Reuters) - Britain's "Prince" Naseem Hamed, the former WBO world featherweight boxing champion, was released on bail on Tuesday after a man was seriously injured in a car crash involving the boxer's Mercedes, police said.

Hamed, 31, was arrested on Monday along with two other men on suspicion of leaving the scene of an accident involving injury and allegations they tried to pervert the course of justice.

Hamed's Mercedes collided with a Ford Mondeo and a Volkswagen Golf on a road in Sheffield, northern England at around 2:30 p.m. (1330 GMT).

"Three men arrested in connection with this incident have this morning been released on police bail until August pending further inquiries," a police spokeswoman said.

A man in the Volkswagen suffered broken arms and a broken leg, while a woman with him sustained cuts and bruises.

One of the arrested 26-year-old men was taken to hospital suffering chest pains.

Hamed was as famous for his flamboyant entrances to the boxing ring, as for his bold and unique combination of speed and power inside it.

He was undefeated in 35 professional bouts before losing his World Boxing Organisation title to Mexico's Marco Antonio Barrera in 2001.



عيلاد عيلاد سعيد
أجمل التهاني والتبريكات مهداة للطفلة الجيوية
سمير مراد الخليلي
بمناسبة إطفائها الشمعة التاسعة
فائف ألف مبروك
المعشور:
بابا وماما ومن صابرين ووسيم وأسرار ومن كافة الأهل والأصدقاء

تهانينا
أكايل الورد. وأجمل التهاني والتبريكات
نهديها الأخ
رمزي طاهر العبسي
الخطوبة وقرب الزفاف
المعشور:
شاكر الملصي. بسام أحمد. عادل الخولاني.
صدام محسن. عبدا لله صغير. أحمد الهاللي
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Liverpool and Chelsea face defining moment

LONDON (Reuters) - Liverpool have home advantage, but Chelsea have the league title in their cabinet and an unshakeable belief in their own destiny heading into the second leg of the Champions League semi-final at Anfield on Tuesday.

A goalless draw in last Wednesday's first leg at Stamford Bridge would, in normal circumstances, have left Liverpool feeling very positive about their chances of reaching the final against either AC Milan or PSV Eindhoven in Istanbul on May 25.

But they face a Chelsea side brimming with confidence after clinching the championship for the first time for 50 years on Saturday with a 2-0 win at Bolton Wanderers.

Chelsea stayed in the north for the second leg and despite a few knocks and bruises, coach Jose Mourinho will send out his strongest squad at Anfield as he attempts to repeat with Chelsea what he did with Porto last season.

Twelve months ago Porto drew 0-0 at home in the first leg of their Champions League semi-final against Deportivo Coruna before winning the away leg 1-0 en route to a winning 3-0 finale against AS Monaco.

He will be hoping to do the same but could well be without Dutchman Arjen Robben again after he took a knock when he came on as substitute in the first leg.

The 21-year-old winger, who has played only about an hour's football for Chelsea since the first of a series of foot injuries suffered on February 2, said he did not know whether he would be fit. He missed Saturday's Championship winning match at Bolton.

Damien Duff is Mourinho's other worry and he missed both the first leg and the Bolton match after tweaking a hamstring.

With both first-choice full backs and both wingers out of action, Chelsea lack natural width though they are still likely to play with Mourinho's preferred 4-3-3 formation.



Liverpool's squad arrive for practice at their training ground at Melwood, Liverpool, May 2, 2005. Liverpool are due to face Chelsea in the Champions League second leg semi-final on Tuesday. REUTERS

William Gallas, a central defender drafted in to play left back after Wayne Bridge's broken ankle in February, is playing with a back strain.

Mourinho is bidding to become only the third man in history to win the European Cup with two different clubs after Ernst Happel (Feyenoord 1970 and SV Hamburg 1983) and Ottmar Hitzfeld (Borussia Dortmund 1997 and Bayern Munich 2001).

But skipper John Terry believes Chelsea are capable of realising their dream of a treble haul of trophies following their League Cup win over Liverpool and the title.

Terry said: "Winning the championship gives us confidence for Liverpool, but there's a bit more pressure on us now."

"It's a chance to win one of the best competitions in Europe. We're not going to throw that chance away."

Chelsea went out at this stage last season when they lost 3-1 at Monaco and drew 2-2 at home after some rash substitutions by then manager Claudio

Ranieri. Terry, temporarily blinded in one eye after a collision at Bolton, recalled that defeat "being the worst feeling ever" and will be determined to right that wrong if he possibly can.

Determined Liverpool
Liverpool, however, will be just as determined to reach the European Cup final for the first time since 1985 and although they continue to disappoint in the league, their home support and their history could count for plenty.

They will miss the suspended Xabi Alonso after his unfortunate yellow card late in the first leg, but his expected replacement Didier Hamann should lessen any perceived weaknesses in the Liverpool midfield.

With Djibril Cisse also back from a leg fracture and likely to be used as a substitute at some stage, and skipper Steven Gerrard driving his team on, the match, the setting, the crowd, could all turn the night into a classic occasion.

Gerrard, who scored an outstanding

goal in Saturday's 1-1 draw with Middlesbrough says that although Liverpool avoided defeat at Chelsea, the tie is still finely balanced.

"We know we are not home and dry, its only halftime. We both have tremendous respect for each other and it might be a little bit cagey at times, but I am sure once we have a couple of chances on goal and the crowd make some noise, they'll pull one in for us."

"It will be a special night — the first Champions League semi at Anfield and we have a great chance."

The atmosphere at Anfield was electric when Juventus were beaten 2-1 in the first leg of the quarter-final a month ago, and under Spanish coach Rafael Benitez, Liverpool have reserved all their best football for Europe this season.

Chelsea are now champions of England, but a premier league club could yet derail their hopes of conquering Europe.

It promises to be a night to remember at Anfield on Tuesday.

Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS

1 Sonic boomerang
5 It'll hold water
9 Style is important here
14 "___ she blows!"
15 Lexicographer Webster
16 "Fantasy Island" sighting
17 Honey of a spot
18 Granny Smith throwaway
19 Start of a famous Schwarzenegger quote
20 Common contraction
21 What a film director does?
23 Decennial count
25 Like many a contrast
26 Fable monsters
28 Shrimp habitat
32 Some artists' studios
34 Chief Norse god
37 Painting type
38 Zoo attraction
39 Exertions
42 Chinese cosmic principle
43 It's drawn with a rifle?
45 It's fit to be tied
46 Duke of drama
48 Manuscript copyist
50 Mormon founder
52 Third word of 19-Across
55 Lets down, maybe
58 What a skydiver does?
62 Emolument
63 Conspicuous
64 Steal money or the money stolen
65 Wear a hole in the rug
66 Dentist's direction
67 Kind of wolf
68 Way around London
69 Michaelmas daisy
70 Runners support it
71 They travel with the band

DOWN

1 Rule of conduct
2 Baked potato topper
3 What superheroes do?
4 Miner's quest
5 Sheathe
6 Word with steel or virgin
7 British peers
8 Mitchell's Butler
9 Area of influence
10 Like a malamute
11 Corporal punishment unit
12 Clued-in
13 Carefully written
21 Invoke misfortune
22 Lacks, in brief
24 York or Pepper (Abbr.)
27 Postprandial seat, perhaps
29 What a sharecropper may do?
30 Cut features
31 Abnegate
32 Science class adjuncts
33 Trade org. since 1960
35 A dwarf
36 Hot tempers
40 Type of wound
41 Restaurant faux pas
44 Heterogeneous
47 Sprint alternative
49 Tongue-burning
51 Soda fountain offering
53 Goes public
54 "___ and his money ..."
56 Condensed wrap-up
57 "___ like old times"
58 Part of a WWII exclamation
59 Nero's bird
60 County on the Strait of Dover
61 First-class
65 Harper Valley org.

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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"DO THIS, DO THAT" by Ron Halverson

Britain handed Federer test in Davis Cup

LONDON (Reuters) - World number one Roger Federer is expected to return to Davis Cup action for Switzerland after his country was drawn to play Britain in a World Group playoff in September.

Federer skipped Switzerland's defeat by the Netherlands in March but is likely to feature in the home tie against a British side that will have to make do without leading player Tim Henman, who has retired from Davis Cup duty.

Federer said he would keep his options open for later matches in the men's team competition as long as they fit in with his schedule and a home tie against the British after all four 2005 grand slam tournaments have been completed is likely to suit him.

Britain, who squeezed past Israel 3-2 in a Euro/Africa zonal match in March, will be underdogs for the trip to Switzerland.

Tuesday's draw at the headquarters of the International Tennis Federation also

paired the United States away to Belgium while Sweden visit India to retain their top-flight status.

A glittering U.S. team featuring Andy Roddick and Andre Agassi were shocked 3-2 by Croatia in California in March and will be desperate to make amends with victory over the Belgians.

Costly failure

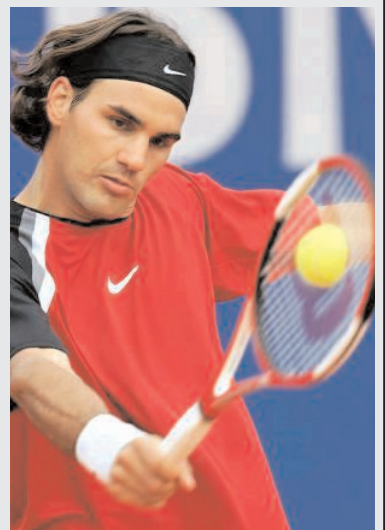
Failure to beat the Belgians would leave the U.S. playing outside the elite 16-nation World Group for the first time since 1988.

Champions Spain, who beat the U.S. to win the 2004 title in Seville, were stunned by Slovakia in Bratislava in the first round and must overcome Italy and a partisan home crowd to stay in the World Group.

Germany are away to the Czech Republic while Pakistan — in a World Group play-off for the first time — must visit claycourt specialists Chile.

Austria host Ecuador and Canada

host Belarus to complete the playoffs.



Roger Federer, pictured in a file photo, is expected to return to Davis Cup action for Switzerland after his country was drawn to play Britain in a World Group playoff in September. REUTERS

calvin and hobbes

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- Tie together (4) k
- Get a goal (5) s
- Incorrect (5) w
- Look closely at(7) e
- Ève gave one to Adam(5) a
- Six-foot bug (6) i

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