

## Al-Ahmar declares session over

# Heated arguments over report on gas project

By YASSER AL-MAYASI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

SANA'A - June 21- Heated controversies and debates took place among MPs leading Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar Speaker of the Parliament to declare the session over.

The Controversies were about to develop into quarrels inside the Parliament after a report on situations and developments of gas project presented by the Oil and Minerals Committee. The report was arbitrarily read out as the MPs were discussing the law of jobs and wages.

The controversies were initiated when Yasser al-Awadhi a MP and Vice President of the ruling People's General Congress Parliamentary Bloc objected to the Parliament Speaker's agreement to read out the report of the Oil and Minerals Committee while the session was assigned for discussing another issue.

Al-Awadhi attacked the Parliament

MPs attending one of the Parliament session.

Speaker saying: "this is wrong and there are many reports that have not yet been discussed in spite of listing them in the Parliament agenda.

He added: "we want the Parliament to discuss one subject in a session even once.

Al-Awadhi's criticism inflamed objection of MPs Hussein al-Ahmar, the son of Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar and a member of the People's General Congress Bloc at the Parliament, since it harms his father.

Another heated argument took place when MP Mohammad al-Sha'ef accused the oil report of being incomplete and faulty and this led Hamid al-Ahmar a member at the Oil and Minerals Committee to respond to al-Sha'ef, "this does not concern you". The argument was about to develop

into a quarrel at the Parliament compelling Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar to declare the session over.

Some MPs believe there was no need for opposing reading the oil report that only consists of four pages.

They added numerous reports were read in several sessions without any objection, the last of which was the report of Media and Culture Committee on Monday June 20.

Chairing the session, Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar stressed that his reading the report does not mean an objection to discussing the law of jobs and wages. He emphasized there are many notes from various parties that should be studied and comprehended.

Some Oil and Minerals Committee members affirmed that reading and discussing the oil report in this phase

is very important and they fear the government may sign an contract of gas sale while the Parliament in vacation, particularly the government announced it will sign a contract for gas sale with Total and another company.

The report of the Oil and Minerals Committee revealed that revenues Yemen is about to get by signing the gas sale contract will be disappointing.

The government did not fulfill a previous recommendation stipulating that the Oil and Minerals Committee should present a report on the project every six months.

The report showed the prices included in the gas sale agreement are 50% less than the international gas prices and this means Yemeni will suffer a heavy loss.

## INSIDE

- Half the World: Gender equality and the millenium development goals p5
- Liquid natural gas project will cost \$3 billion, Baraba'a p10
- Tarim in a glance p11
- Facts of Life: How safe are microwave ovens? p12

## After a series of threats

# YJS demands protection of al-Nihar Newspaper

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

SANA'A- June 21- A press release issued by al-Nihar Newspaper affirmed that the newspaper is usually threatened along with its staff by a group of people who are said to be followers of Sheikh Mohammad Ahmad Mansour from al-Ja'ashin and a MP.

Sheikh Mansour sued a legal action against al-Nihar Newspaper over publishing reports harming his reputation and mentioning the oppression and tyranny he practices on his locals. The case was filed to the South Capital Court a few days ago.

The press release emphasized that Sheikh Mansour arrived on Tuesday

with a group of armed men to the office of al-Nihar Newspaper and threatened to storm its office and attack its editorial staff.

The press release mentioned the Sheikh's visit coincided with telephone calls threatening to break into the newspaper's office and beat its editors.

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) claimed the Minister of Interior in a statement to take prompt and serious procedures to protect al-Nihar editors from repeated threats by some of Sheikh Mohammad Mansour followers.

The YJS expressed its concern over the situation of Yemeni journalists

who are subjected to threats and attacks, the last of which took place last Tuesday.

The YJS hold the Ministry of Interior accountable for the protection of al-Nihar's editors and office and sent a copy of its statement to the Attorney General to investigate such tragic developments that violate the Yemeni judiciary.

## Unidentified men kill MP

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

SANA'A- June 22- Mohammad Mujahid Shamar a MP and a member of the Public Health Committee at the Parliament was killed on Wednesday by unidentified men.

Shamar, one of the prominent People's General Congress leaders, won the parliamentary election to be the representative of Constituency No. 199, Dhamar Governorate.

While driving his car in Haddah, south of the capital, the victim was shot dead by anonymous men.

A security source at the Ministry of Interior mentioned that it was at midnight when unidentified men on board a car opened fire on Shamar's car leaving the MP dead.

The security source ascertained the police arrested two people suspected of being involved in the murder of Shamar, one of them is from Bani Matar and the other from al-Hada, Dhamar.

The Parliament decided to form a 5-member committee to investigate the motives behind the terrible murder of Shamar.

Mohammad Mujahid Shamar had a diploma in pharmacology and bachelor degree in business administration, and is the owner of Dar al-Shifa Hospital in Dhamar.

Mohammad Mujahid Shamar

## 3 Wounded in Car Blast

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

SANA'A- June 21- 3 people have been reported wounded in a car blast in front of the Old University campus as they were passing in the street.

The strong blast near the Old University wall had entirely burnt a Cressida car, plate number (32682) belonging to (Ibrahim Al-Bahri) a qat

seller. An official source in the Capital's Security confirmed that the blast had set the car's tank alight a thing that led to its explosion. The security started its investigations. They attribute the blast to personal reasons. The security system is still continuing the investigations to know the details and circumstances of the blast.

## Aden journalists, pressmen discuss journalism draft law

Yemen Times Aden Bureau

Marking the Yemeni Journalism Day, the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate's Aden Office organized a group discussion on the journalism draft law prepared by the Ministry of Information.

At the beginning of the discussion, which was managed by lawyer Raqiah Humaidan, Watheq al-Shatheli, they welcomed the attendants and said it is crucial that journalists discuss the press draft in order to know its plus and minus points.

Raqiah Humaidan presented a number of remarks on the new draft, point-

ing out a number of breaches in the provisions and called for reinforcement of journalists' freedom and independence.

Later, discussion was opened and journalists and pressmen gave vent to their remarks and suggestions regarding the draft, recommending that the YJS as well as the concerned sides be involved in the discussion of the draft before it is submitted to the Parliament.

A committee was set up to compile the remarks on the draft and submit them on behalf of Aden journalists to the YJS leadership and the Ministry of Information to be integrated in the draft law.

## Daughter of YSP founder applies for asylum in Germany

Sources closer to Ms. Asya Abdulfattah Ismail, whose father was the founder of the Yemeni Specialist Party (YSP) and a former president of South Yemen, confirmed that the lady made a bid this week for a human asylum in Germany, the country she headed for a few weeks ago.

YSP sources told the media means that Asya Abdulfattah Ismail suffers from a disease that might take a long time to be cured, and the lady sought the human asylum, as the YSP is unable to help her.

The source indicated that the human asylum would secure her the right to get treatment.

## Drug traffickers sentenced to 25 years

The Court of First-Instance in the city of Hajja passed on Monday June 20 its 25-year sentence on five men convicted of hashish trafficking and smuggling into neighboring countries.

The Court ordered the confiscated

100-kilogram quantity of hashish to be burned.

Security forces had arrested the suspects red-handed in Abs and Meedi districts in the province of Hajja.

## KSA donates to the blind

HRH Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz, Second Deputy Premier Minister, Minister of Defense and Aviation, Inspector General, Chairman of the Cabinet Commission, donated last week an amount of SR 300,000 to 30 blind male and female Yemenis in order for them to perform Haj rituals for the year 1426 Hejra. He also

donated a package of blind textbooks to Aman Society for Female Blinds.

His Excellency Mohammed Mirdas al-Qahtani, Saudi Ambassador to Sana'a, visited Aman's society office where he met with Fatimah al-Aqil, Society Dsirector. He distributed the money to the thirty blinds and handed the books to the Society.

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## Over embezzlement of students' allotments YePHQ Cultural Attache in India suspended

NEW DELHI- June 20- The Yemeni Ambassador to India suspended the Cultural Attaché at the embassy in New Delhi from work because of playing with financial resources allotted for students.

The sources emphasized that the suspension was due to embezzlements of financial resources allocated for the Yemeni students studying in India.

The Yemeni Ambassador to India sent a letter to foreign affairs and higher education ministries notifying

them that the Cultural Attaché Sadiq al-Hazmi has been stopped from working.

The decision was issued two months after a number of Yemeni scholars pursuing their studies in India, sued complaints to some government officials and MPs demanding release of their financial allotments being pocketed by the Cultural Attaché.

The Parliament formed a committee last month to study the problem and detect complaints forwarded to the

government. In turn, the committee traveled to India and presented a report on the issue to the parliament.

It is worth noting the illegal practice by the Cultural Attaché at the Yemeni Embassy in India led to several problems among Yemeni students there and the universities they study in.

In addition, many students were reported to have been suffering difficult economic conditions over the last few months since they did not get their allotments.

## An appeal to stop blood shed

### 15 killed, 70 wounded in ongoing tribal clashes

Khawlan- June 21- Locals from al-Kibs Tribe in Khawlan, 35 km east of Sana'a appealed President Ali Abdullah Saleh to intervene to end the ongoing bloody war between Kibs and Nahd Tribes.

The appeal mentioned the war broke

out ten years ago claiming up to 15 lives and 70 injured tribesmen from both sides.

The locals have shown their concern over the official silence of the government despite the fact the war is taking place in an area which is only 35 km

away from the capital.

The long war between the two sides turned into revenges in which both sides used different types of heavy weapons including mortars, portable missiles and explosives causing damage to numerous houses.

## Taiz University bids farewell to English by-by batch

YEMEN TIMES  
TAIZ BUREAU

The 15th batch from the English Department, Taiz University, held its valediction ceremony at Tawfiq Abdul-Raheem Hall in cooperation with the University's administration, Yemen Times and Family and Development Magazine.

Expressive speeches were delivered at the event by a number of the graduates who talked about their satisfac-

tion having reached such a point of their academic study. A number of teachers spoke on the occasion including Dr. Tiwary, Head of the English Department at Taiz University, who pointed out the distinction of the batch as they took up the English Language which is the most widespread language worldwide.

Dr. Khadeeja al-Saiighi explained the progress achieved by Yemeni education, especially girls' education.

She called on the State to quickly employ the female graduates in order for them to contribute to their building their communities.

The ceremony contained a number of artistic, cultural and sport sections staged by a number of university students and club athletes.

The students praised the role of Yemen Times in supporting English language teaching and disseminating knowledge on this vital language.

## Parliament discusses foreign marriages

SANA'A, June 19- In its session held on Sunday, the Parliament ordered the Islamic Sharia Committee to look into the phenomenon of the foreign marriages that spread in Yemen over the last few days.

This follows several warnings by Newspapers, academics and social specialist of the dangerous consequences of the marring Yemeni girls to tourists mainly during summer holidays.

Ibb University recently held a sym-

posium including 17 papers for discussing the phenomenon and suggesting some possible solutions for it.

A recent scientific study indicated that a high percentage of Yemeni girls between 15 and 24 were reported to have been married to foreign tourists.

The study confirmed that the foreigners who marry Yemeni girls are either aging or businessmen mostly from the Gulf countries. Some of them are pleasure-seekers and favor to make a temporary marriage during vaca-

tions.

The study indicated that 30% of the girls who marry these foreign tourists are secondary school graduates, 22.5% have primary school certificates and 17.5% have preparatory school certificates while 12.5% are university graduates.

The phenomenon of these foreign tourist marriages in Yemen is attributed to poverty and the vulnerable economy of some Yemeni families.

## YJS: Parliament should discuss situation of journalists

SANA'A- June 21- Hafiz al-Bukari, General Secretary of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) ascertained that a YJS delegation met on Tuesday with Speaker of the Parliament Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar and a number

of MPs.

The meeting was intended to discuss the situation of journalists within the framework of the national strategy of wages and salaries currently argued by the Parliament.

Al-Bukari signaled out that the YJS delegation insisted on raising wages, increments and allotments of journalists.

Hafiz has shown curiosity about the national strategy of wages and salaries that drew no attention to the situation of journalists and their payments.

Almost all the Yemeni journalists suffer as there are no laws to ensure their financial allotments and most of them work for journalistic institutions without any working contracts.

Many courts saw over the last few days several legal actions sued by journalists against their institutions over being put down in terms of payment.

### SDGU Voice

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#### This HGLWLR Question:

Do the recent heated arguments taking place at the Parliament express hopes of the Yemeni locals?

Yes  
No  
I GRQWflow

#### Last HGLWLR Question:

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- We need a new educational system — badly 64%
- It is not that effective; the government has to renovate it 24%
- It is good but needs some minor changes 12%

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## Tension goes high over dismissal of employees

SANA'A- June 20- The opposition joint meeting parties denounced the dismissal of a number of civil and military employees from their jobs due to their political affiliations.

The opposition joint meeting parties sent a letter to the Parliament on Monday demanding it to enforce legislations to ensure rights of people who were fired from their jobs.

The letter stressed that the Parliament has to suggest solutions for issues of people who have been fired from their jobs.

The Parliament is currently discussing the law of the system of jobs, wages and salaries.

Thousands of civic and military employees were dismissed from their jobs due to their political affiliations, and most of the victims are Yemeni Socialist Party members.

## Notice

The Yemen Co. for Fisheries and Marine Life announces its interest to appoint a General Manager for the company. Interested applicants for this post should have the technical qualifications as well as technical and administrative experience in the fisheries field.

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*Enhancing Role of Women in Promoting*

# The Millennium Development Goals

Under the auspices of Mr. Ahmed Mohammed Sofan, the deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in partnership with the National Women's Committee organized on Sunday 19 June a workshop on promoting awareness about the MDGs and enhancing the role of women in achieving them, particularly given the momentum the MDG has been in the center of all international development efforts, at the Taj Sheba Hotel, Sana'a. The workshop came as part of a boarder campaign implemented by UNDP with selected national actors targeting different sectors. The purpose was to increase understanding of the MDGs and to stir dialogue on the possibility of achieving them in Yemen.

The workshop aimed to raise awareness on the MDGs particularly among women's groups and selected government counterparts, and to highlight the efforts that are being exerted to reach the Goals in Yemen, with an emphasis on mainstreaming gender and bridging gender gaps in education. The workshop also highlighted the role played by the National Women's Committee in integrating gender concepts and considerations into policies, plans and national development programs. It is expected that the event will produce an action plan that aims to enhance the achievement of that MDGs, including MDG 3 related to women empowerment and gender equality in education. It should also address some gender-related concerns in relation to the 3<sup>rd</sup> national five-year plan for develop-

ment and poverty reduction (2006-2010).

Furthermore, the workshop highlighted the current efforts within the established Thematic Working Groups in the areas of poverty reduction and fostering economic growth, education, health, environment and water, as well as the infrastructure. Several working papers were presented and discussed on the results of the needs assessment. This needs assessment mapped out the necessary investments and policies to reach the MDGs by 2015. During the Millennium Summit in New York in 2000, the world's leaders, including H.E. President Ali Abdullah Saleh, have committed to achieve the MDGs. The goals set concrete and quantifiable targets that need to be achieved related to reducing rates of extreme poverty

and hunger, improving health and educational trends, ensuring gender quality and empowerment of women, as well as ensuring environmental sustainability and making a global partnership for development.

Currently, Yemen, with support from the UN Millennium Project, UN agencies in Yemen and the donor community, is working with to support national partners to scale up its efforts to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

Mr. Mohammed Sfan along with Ms. Rashida AL-Hamadani, the head of National Women's Committee and Mr. Kaled Ishaq, UNDP Communications Analyst who delivered speech on behalf Ms. Flavia Pansieri, the UNDP representative in Yemen.

## Orientation Session on

# Early Childhood Development

SOUL, Development of Women and Children society, cooperated with the UNCIEF, held on Wednesday 15 June a workshop at the Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood, entitled "Orientation Session on Early Childhood Development Program."

The workshop tried to introduce the concepts of the early childhood development as well as presented the results of Child Rearing Practices Study (CRPS) that was conducted by SOUL, the society for Development of Women and Children.

Ms. Noria AL-Khameri, SOUL representative said, "Of course the aim of this workshop is to raise awareness about the Early Childhood Development concepts in Yemen. We have previously carried out similar workshop in different districts in

Hodiedah and Ibb. We really would like to start to tell people to pay more attention to early childhood issues as it is completely neglected by all governmental non-governmental sides in our society. We wish if there could be space for early childhood in the policies and budget of the state as childhood is much deprived in this country.

About the study she said "SOUL has conducted a study, a first of its kind. The CRPS aims at to analyze the behaviors in health care, nutrition, and early development practices in relation to two age groups of children: the 0-2 year-old group and the 3-5 year-old group. In the absence of similar studies in comparable cultural settings, the CRP is the first of its kind in Yemen (and one of the very few in the region) to identify, characterize and describe

the factors impacting the survival, physical and psycho-social development of the child. In this respect, the CRPS is a ground-breaking study and opens the way for further, more detailed analysis and intervention.

The CRP was designed to cover three regional domains: urban and rural populations in Al-Zaydia as well as AL-Udayn.

The study survey was conducted in 2 districts. Al-Udayn district in Ibb governorate and AL-Zaydia district in AL-Hodaidah governorate.

The study has revealed interestingly many different and common facts about children rearing practices in Yemen. However, because of the geographical and cultural variety of Yemen, it makes difficult to generalize this study."

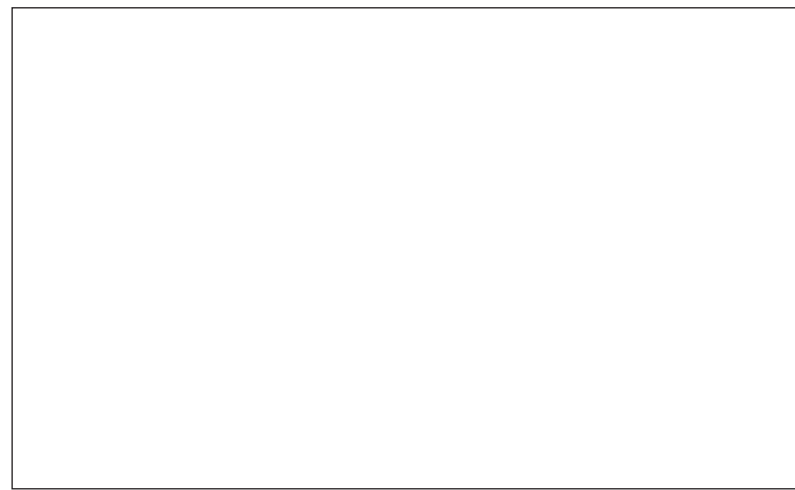
Ms. Najeeba Hadad, the deputy in the Ministry of Culture, commented "We thank SOUL for taking the responsibility of taking care of our children. We here in Yemen do not have special magazines or papers that could serve and deliver the voices of children and deal with their concerns. Sorrowfully, there are not special programs for childhood during the vacation and there is no embracing for children creations and talents. So most of our children either play in the streets or sit in front of TV receiving all the negatives of the TV channels. We are in a dire need for awareness about childhood issues and concerns not only in the cities but also in different districts, rural, remote and isolated areas."

# Deputy German Ambassador and General Secretary of Al-Wahdah Club open volleyball field

On Sunday 19 June 2005, Deputy Head of Mission of the German Embassy in Sana'a, Dr. Stefan Buchwald, and Secretary General of Al-Wahdah Club, Abdullah Al-Kibsi, opened a new outdoor volleyball field on the Al-Wahdah premises in Haddah. Upon initiative by the German

Embassy, the field was built with the generous support of James Stone from Almaz Company on a piece of land kindly made available by Al-Wahdah Club.

During an interview on this occasion, Dr. Stefan highlighted: "The field makes a dream of the German



Embassy's recently formed volleyball team come true to have a regular training area. It is just another example of the excellent state of relations between Yemen and Germany and will surely contribute to further enhance the personal contacts between our peoples." The Embassy welcomes other

teams' interest to join the training and to play some competitive matches. In the friendly opening match, teams of the German Embassy and Al-Wahdah put up a strong fight and eventually shared the points. The opening was followed by a barbecue attended by a large number of enthusiastic fans.

# Society News

In cooperation with the UN Development Program, the National Woman Committee organized on Sunday June 19 a workshop on the enhancement of women's role in achieving the millennium development goals. The workshop aimed at raising awareness of women about the millennium development goals and generalizing them across the country.

A workshop on juvenile and protecting homeless children was concluded Wednesday June 15 in Aden with the participation of 30 participants. The workshop was sponsored by the Social Affairs Office and the Child Care and

Protection Association.

The national human rights report was inaugurated on Wednesday June 22 at the Central Organization of Control and Audit.

A training course on mobile devices maintenance wrapped up Monday June 20 in Aden. The course was organized by the Women Association for Sustainable Development, funded by the Yemeni Development Program and attended by 12 participants.

Under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Health and Population, the

field survey results of ophthalmology assessment all over Yemen were announced in Sana'a Wednesday June 22.

A training course for female teachers on methods of teaching the mentally handicapped kids commenced Monday June 20 at the Handicapped Training Center in Hodeida. As many as 25 female teachers took part in the course.

An extensive meeting was held Monday June 20 in Hajjah with the aim to discuss the phenomenon of outlandishness and child trafficking, par-

ticularly as Hajjah tops the list of Yemeni governorates with respect to smuggling children to work in Saudi Arabia. The meeting was attended by experts and representatives from the International Immigration Organization and the UNICEF, as well as a number of senior Yemeni government officials.

The Tourism and Travel Agencies Association on Monday June 20 elected Hussein al-Sabahi as its president in the presence of over 144 participants from different travel and tourism agencies.

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# Iraq confronts "disastrous" corruption

BRUSSELS, June 21 (Reuters) - Iraq is trying to stamp out an epidemic of corruption, sacking top officials and reviewing major government contracts that have come under criticism for alleged graft, a leading Iraqi politician said on Tuesday.

"The situation has reached disastrous proportions and we are doing something about it," Deputy Parliament Speaker Hussain al-Shahristani said a day before an international conference in Brussels to discuss ways to stabilise and rebuild Iraq.

"A number of inspector generals whose job is to guard public money in ministries even took part in the corruption circle. We have already sacked several," he said, expecting parliament to pass a draft law soon that takes auditing agencies away from government control and makes them answerable to parliament.

Corruption has undermined both Washington-backed governments since the U.S.-led invasion to oust Saddam Hussein, and contributed to a paralysis in rebuilding and shortages in a state-managed food distribution system.

**Iraqis queue up for water at a distribution point in Baghdad June 20. 14 districts situated on the west of the river Tigris, which divides Baghdad, have no running water after a main supply line was damaged by an explosion yesterday, the U.S. Forces said.** REUTERS

One of the first debates in the post-war parliament when it convened two months ago involved procurement after popular demonstrations against the government for distributing Australian wheat allegedly contaminated with iron ore.

Rumours have spread in international markets that senior Iraqi officials have been jailed or prevented from leaving Iraq, but Shahristani said no minister in the previous government had been arrested or had his movements curtailed.

#### No more cash in briefcases

"They understand that they could be called in for questioning any time. Nothing will be untouched. Contracts from oil to food to defence are being reviewed by newly empowered inspectors," he said, referring to Iraq's \$17.5 billion of annual oil sales.

"Iraqi procurement rules are good but they have been abused or disobeyed. All sorts of excuses were made up for shady deals with cash and carrying millions of dollars in briefcases across borders," Shahristani said.

A former nuclear scientist who spent more than a decade as a political prisoner during Saddam's rule, Shahristani has vowed to make cleaning up the government the priority of the 275 member parliament dominated by a Shi'ite bloc he helped found.

He is seen as an outsider, but businessmen say there could be little Shahristani could do in a government divided along sectarian lines with politicians new to power tempted to line their pockets before another election at the end of the year.

Shahristani said Iraq had no choice but to deal with the corruption issue because government and basic services had almost ground to a halt as a result.

"We have heard from donor countries that they have been reluctant to send us money because of corruption," he said, adding that the situation went awry under the U.S. led occupation authority, which ruled Iraq until July 2004.

Several international audits criticised the occupation authority and the Iraqi government that followed for failing to safeguard and account for public funds and oil revenue.

"The occupation authority did away with Iraqi rules but did not follow American standards either," Shahristani said. "As a result they could not even give us a list where billions of dollars were spent."

## Rebels kill 2 Algerian soldiers, wound 11-reports

ALGIERS, June 21 (Reuters) - Algerian Islamic militants, suspected of ties to al Qaeda, have killed two soldiers and wounded 11 others in the latest attacks on the authorities, newspapers reported on Tuesday.

A soldier died and eight others were wounded on Monday in a bomb explosion believed to have been planted by the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC) in the Boumerdes province, some 50 km (30 miles) east of Algiers, Liberte newspaper said.

Another soldier was killed and three more were wounded on Sunday when suspected militants attacked a military convoy during a search operation in the area, newspapers said.

Authorities were not available for comment. The attacks came only days after reports that six Yemeni students were arrested in the east of the country on suspicion of belonging to an unnamed al Qaeda-linked network.

An increasing number of suspected foreign Islamic militants have been arrested in Algeria in recent months, an unusual development which has worried the authorities.

The North African country is emerging from more than a decade of Islamic-linked violence, which has cost the lives of up to 200,000 people and more than \$30 billion in damages.

# Voter manipulation a threat in Iran vote -ministry

TEHRAN, June 21 (Reuters) - Electoral officials said on Tuesday they were guarding against fresh attempts to manipulate voters in Iran's presidential election run-off after charges that military bodies rallied support for a hardline candidate.

Friday's run-off, after an inconclusive first round, pits pragmatic cleric Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani against ultra-conservative Tehran mayor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

The outcome of the race, which analysts say is unpredictable, will probably shape how Iran tackles future ties with the West, including a tense nuclear stand-off, and also determine the fate of domestic reforms.

Reformists complained of vote rigging in last Friday's first round vote and have accused Ahmadinejad of mobilising a block of voters from the Basij, a paramilitary body which sees itself as the guardian of Islamic revolutionary principles.

A spokesman for the reformist-held Interior Ministry said no irregularities in the ballots were found but said it was aware of "the role of certain organisations in mobilising the votes".

"Those who acted against the law in

**An Iranian couple walk past posters of presidential candidate Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Tehran June 20. Electoral authorities on Monday ordered a partial recount of Iran's inconclusive presidential election after reformists accused military organizations of rigging the vote in favour of a hardline candidate.** REUTERS

the first round, might try to do it again in the second round because of their strong will and we will try our best to prevent them," he said, Iran's student news agency ISNA reported.

He said the ministry urged the Revolutionary Guards to prevent such a mobilisation in the second round.

"The Revolutionary Guards and Basijis should not campaign for any of the candidates," Revolutionary Guards Commander Yahya Rahim Safavi said, reported by the newspaper Iran.

Ahmadinejad's aides deny receiving any official backing from the Revolutionary Guards or its subordinate

the Basij.

Analysts say a hardline presidency could remove a moderating influence in Iranian decision-making, even though ultimate power in Iran lies with Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, whose hardline supporters control key supervisory bodies.

#### Destiny of a country

Campaigning resumed on Tuesday after the headline Guardian Council supervisory body confirmed the first round results following a limited recount. It dismissed vote rigging charges. Campaigning stops on Thursday, 24 hours before Friday's run-off.

"We should give the destiny of the country to someone who truly respects freedom and wants to preserve the 27 years of national efforts to have a bright and hopeful future," outgoing reformist President Mohammad Khatami said in a statement, urging a high turnout but without mentioning either candidate.

In the first round, turnout was 63 percent of the 47 million eligible voters in a country where the minimum voting age is 15.

Ahmadinejad, 48, a former Basij

instructor and ex-Revolutionary Guard officer, says Iran did not have a revolution to have democracy. He has played on his Islamic credentials and won over religiously conservative poor Iranians.

Rafsanjani, 70, who was president from 1989 to 1997, has urged voters to support him to "prevent all extremism". He says he has the political savvy and influence to mend ties with the United States, broken after the 1979 Islamic revolution.

Ahmadinejad, who would be Iran's first non-clerical president since 1981, says U.S. ties will not solve Iran's ills.

Reformers fear Ahmadinejad could fill government posts with loyalists, in the same way that he swept away old managers as Tehran mayor and put in young recruits in municipal bodies.

"Today we witness the presence of organised networks propagating moral corruption and I don't know what the intelligence, interior and culture ministries are doing," Ahmadinejad told a meeting of MPs, referring to three ministries in the hands of reformists.

Reformers have swung behind Rafsanjani. But analysts say such support may not be enough to derail Ahmadinejad. They say many of Iran's religious poor see him challenging the vested business interests Rafsanjani.

## hSaudi forces shoot dead policeman's killers -TV

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia, June 21 (Reuters) - Saudi security forces on Tuesday shot dead two suspected militants who killed a policeman in the Muslim holy city of Mecca, state television reported.

The dead men were members of the "deviant group", Saudi TV said, a phrase which officials use to describe al Qaeda supporters who have waged a two-year campaign of violence against Westerners and Saudi security forces.

Quoting an Interior Ministry source, it said security forces identified the two men as they were driving near the Red Sea city of Jeddah early on Tuesday.

After a chase they were surrounded in a building and shot dead in a clash which also injured three members of the security forces, one seriously.

The dead men were behind the shooting on Saturday of Mubarak al-Sowat, the head of a police investigations department, outside his home in Mecca, the source said.

## Egyptian state media ignore U.S. calls for reform

CAIRO, June 22 (Reuters) - Egypt's state media are largely ignoring U.S. criticism of the government and calls for more political freedom in what observers see as a losing battle to quell debate on reform in the largest Arab country.

On Monday, U.S. Secretary State Condoleezza Rice directed strong criticism at Egypt in a major policy speech in Cairo on Arab reform. However, state media ignored her call for an end to emergency laws and the need to replace "arbitrary justice" with an independent judiciary.

The newspaper Al-Ahram on its front page quoted Rice as saying President Hosni Mubarak had "unlocked the door for change" through his decision to allow the first multi-candidate presidential elections this year.

However, it left out her subsequent remarks: "But now, the Egyptian government must put its faith in its own people."

"We are all concerned for the future of Egypt's reforms when peaceful supporters of democracy - men and women - are not free from violence," she said, referring to attacks in May by Mubarak loyalists on opposition protesters.

State media, which portray Mubarak as wise and benevolent, also ignored a meeting Rice held with reformers.

"This is an indicator of how much in denial this regime is. This was all over the satellite stations," said Hisham Kassem, vice-chairman of the independent newspaper al Masry al Youm, who attended the meeting with Rice.

In the past month the state press has faithfully stuck to the line given by Egyptian officials after their talks with Washington and ignored contradictory White House statements on what was said on reform.

A phone call earlier this month in which U.S. President George W. Bush said he urged Mubarak to hold free and fair elections had, according to al-Ahram, dealt with Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking and bilateral ties.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit told Rice on Monday the vote would be free and fair. Rice said Egypt must allow international election monitors to observe presidential and parliamentary elections this year.

Al-Ahram in May reported Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif's remark that talks with Bush had not touched on the issue of international election monitors. It ignored a White House spokesman who said Bush urged Nazif to allow monitoring.

"This is what you have to expect from a media owned by a government," political scientist Hassan Nafaa said.

However, the state media are losing their power to control popular debate, under the influence of Arab satellite stations, Web sites and a growing number of opposition newspapers.

"When it comes to the formation of public opinion, private and party papers have become much more influential," said political analyst Mohamed el-Sayed Said, a proponent of reform.

## UN investigator quizzes Lebanon security chief

BEIRUT, June 21 (Reuters) - A United Nations investigator questioned the head of Lebanon's presidential guard on Tuesday as part of an international probe into the killing of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, a U.N. official said.

He said German investigator Detlev Mehlis quizzed Colonel Mustafa Hamdan after obtaining permission from Lebanon's pro-Syrian president. Hamdan is the highest profile pro-Syrian security official to keep his job following Hariri's killing on Feb. 14.

U.N. staff went to Hamdan's house and his office in the presidential palace to pick him up and searched both, the U.N. official said.

Anti-Syrian politicians blame Damascus and the Lebanese security chiefs it backs for Hariri's assassination and have called for both Hamdan and President Emile Lahoud to resign.

Lebanon's powerful pro-Syrian security chief Jamil al-Sayyed

resigned in April as Syria bowed to international and Lebanese pressure to pull out its last military and intelligence units.

The international probe, which started late last week, was also in response to the anti-Syrian movement's demands.

An explosion killed anti-Syrian politician George Hawi on Tuesday, witnesses and security sources said.

Hawi, a former leader of the Lebanese Communist Party, died when a bomb ripped through his car in a suburb of Beirut.

It was the second killing of an anti-Syrian figure in Beirut this month. Newspaper columnist Samir Kassir was killed on June 2 in a similar explosion.

A U.N. resolution authorising the investigation restricts Mehlis's work to Hariri's assassination. Washington wanted the probe expanded to include Kassir's death, but dropped its plans, which would have required U.N. Security Council approval.

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# Japan PM leaves Seoul after "gloomy" summit

SEOUL, June 21 (Reuters) - Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi left South Korea on Tuesday with little to show from talks with President Roh Moo-hyun that newspapers in both countries criticised as disappointing and one called "gloomy".

Newspapers in Japan and South Korea said little was achieved except possibly to halt a further slide in relations.

"It was an extremely gloomy summit," the liberal Asahi Shimbun newspaper said in Japan. "It was clear that the gap between the two leaders was too deep and they were unable to bridge it in the talks."

Seoul is angry at what it sees as Tokyo's failure to face up to its militarism during World War Two, symbolised by Koizumi's annual visits to a shrine for Japanese war dead as well as perceived lapses in a school history textbook in Japan.

Neither leader gave much ground on Monday. Koizumi departed on Tuesday after an overnight stay at a heavily guarded hotel.

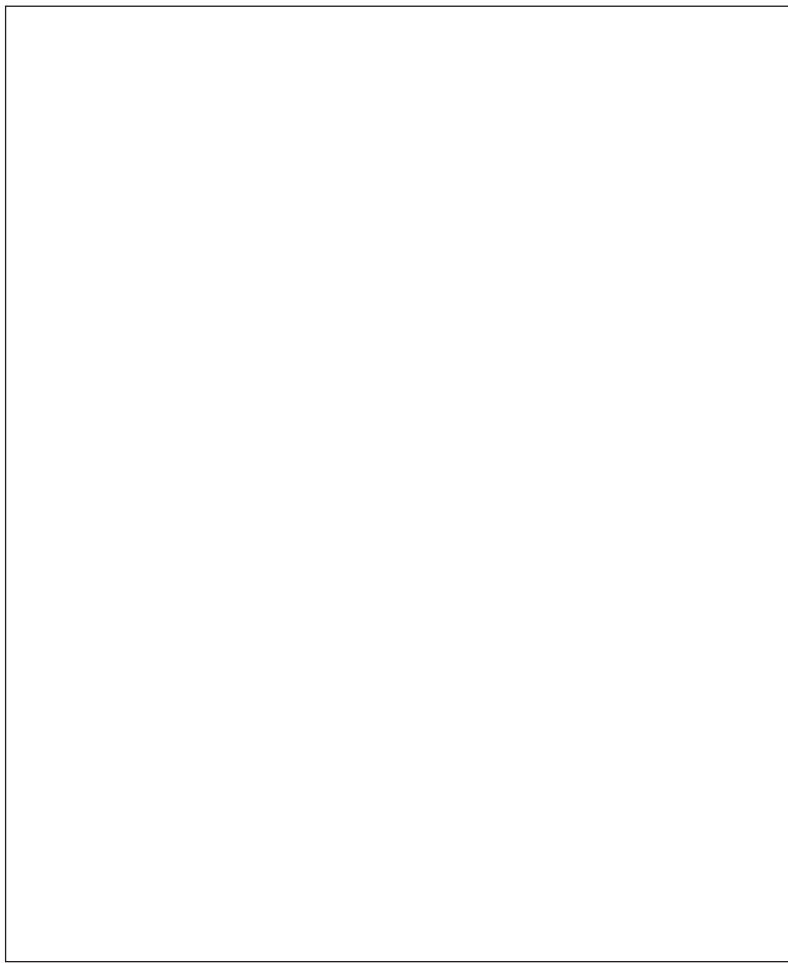
"By most signs, the two leaders met to prevent bilateral relations from spiraling out of control, in which they succeeded," said the Korea Times. "But historical conflict is a drawn-out war and cannot be resolved in a single meeting."

Speaking at a briefing after talks in a guesthouse in the presidential Blue House compound, Roh said he and Koizumi spent most of their time talking about history.

"There is much to be regretted about yesterday's summit," said the JoongAng Daily, a South Korean English-language newspaper. It said relations had a bearing on Northeast Asia.

The JoongAng Daily urged Koizumi to make a courageous decision on history while the Asahi said South Korean officials should try to find a constructive way to improve relations.

"We had a very candid and serious dialogue and made efforts to under-



Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (R) waves as he boards a plane to return to Japan at a military airport south of Seoul June 21. Koizumi and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun failed to agree on Monday over how to patch up ties frayed by disputes over their FRQWULHWHer history, Roh said. REUTERS

stand each other," Roh said. "But this failed to yield any agreements."

A Japanese official quoted Roh as telling Koizumi the Japanese leader's visit to Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine, where some convicted war criminals are honoured along with other Japanese war dead, constitute the "very heart" of the history dispute.

Koizumi said he understood Roh wanted him to stop the pilgrimage. But

he said the visits were meant to show respect for the war dead and to vow never again to wage a war.

Besides Yasukuni, Tokyo and Seoul have a series of disputes stemming from their past, including a row over the ownership of a pair of rocky islets and over a Japanese history textbook that South Korea says whitewashes Japan's wartime atrocities and its 1910-1945 colonial rule over Korea.

# Cardinal Sin, People Power icon, dead

MANILA, June 21 (Reuters) - The Philippines' Cardinal Jaime Sin, a driving force behind popular revolts that unseated two presidents, died early on Tuesday after a long illness. He was 76.

Sin, once called "the divine commander in chief" by former President Fidel Ramos, had been in intensive care for two days with an infection related to a long-standing kidney problem.

"History will mark this day of sadness when a great liberator of the Filipino people and a champion of God passed away," President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo said in a statement. "Cardinal Sin leaves a legacy of freedom and justice forged in deep personal courage."

The main Roman Catholic radio station played hymns to mourn Sin, who retired as archbishop of Manila in 2003, and said a wake would be held at Manila cathedral.

"I am sad, but I am certain he is now with our Lord," said Agnes Sanchez, a devout Catholic.

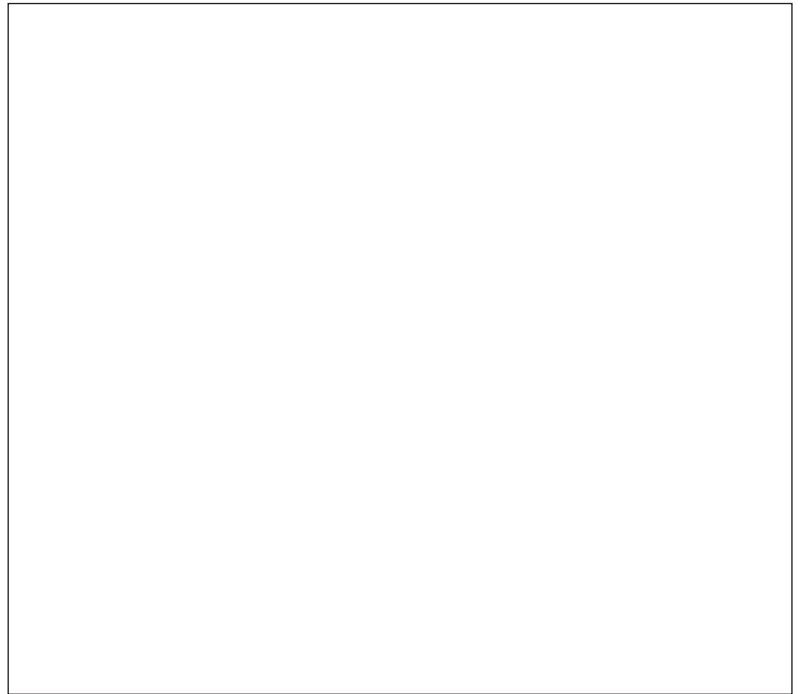
An ethnic Chinese, Sin shot to global prominence in 1986 when he rallied a million people to form human barricades on Manila's main highway and protect a puny band of 300 army rebels against advancing tanks loyal to dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

His radio broadcasts in support of mutineers ignited the now legendary "People Power" revolt that drove Marcos into exile and swept political novice Corazon Aquino to the presidency.

Current president Arroyo rose to the presidency in the second "People Power" mass protests that ousted former movie star Joseph Estrada in 2001. She now faces allegations of electoral fraud that the government says are part of a plot to unseat her.

## MIXED LEGACY

"My duty is to put Christ in politics. Politics without Christ is the greatest scourge of our nation," Sin said at the



Filipino Cardinal Jaime Sin, the then Archbishop of Manila, waves to the crowd during a prayer rally demanding the immediate resignation of the then President Joseph Estrada at the EDSA shrine in Manila in this January 17, 2001 file photo. Sin, the former Archbishop of Manila who played a pivotal role in the ousting of Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986, died in hospital on June 21, Church officials said. He was 77 years old and had been suffering from a kidney ailment. REUTERS

ceremony for his retirement as Manila archbishop.

Some say Sin's legacy is mixed. The 2001 uprising has been portrayed by some as an unconstitutional power grab by the Church and political elite angry at Estrada's sweeping election win on a pro-poor agenda.

Analysts say the uprisings have left the Philippines with an unstable system in which politicians are quick to use the threat of "People Power" as a weapon against the incumbent president.

"His record, for me, would always be mixed," said Nelson Navarro, an expert on Church affairs.

"He was correct in taking the Church to tackle the issues of the day.

But he got enamoured with power and became a power broker."

Sin's departure from the office he had held for 27 years marked the end of an unprecedented period of political activism by the Church, although it remains a potent force and a key backer of Arroyo.

Ordained in 1954, Sin became the youngest member of the Vatican's College of Cardinals when he was made a prince of the church at the age of 47.

Sin was a staunch opponent of artificial birth control, and in August 1994, he mobilised hundreds of thousands of people in a rally denouncing a state policy encouraging use of condoms and pills to curb rapid population growth.

## Russian space rocket crashes with military payload

MOSCOW, June 21 (Reuters) - A Russian rocket carrying a military satellite into orbit crashed to earth in Siberia soon after launch on Tuesday, Russian news agencies reported.

Officials said they believed no one on the ground had been hurt when the unmanned Molnia-M rocket came down in the thinly-populated Tyumen region in western Siberia.

The rocket was launched from the Plesetsk military cosmodrome. Helicopters were being used to help search for wreckage from the rocket, officials said.

"The military communications satellite has not been delivered into orbit because the rocket ... suffered engine failure," Itar Tass news agency quoted Alexei Kuznetsov, a spokesman for Russia's military space programme, as saying.

# Thai shooting shows threat from tsunami land grabs

BAN NAM KHEM, Thailand, June 21 (Reuters) - Journalist Manop Rattanacharungporn has no doubt the gunshot wound in his leg was a direct result of his stories on illegal land grabs in tsunami-hit Thailand. "I don't know exactly who wanted to kill me, but they must have thought that everything would be over after I was dead," Manop told Reuters in a hotel room guarded by two plainclothes policemen.

The veteran journalist had been investigating illegal land grabs by criminal groups in Phang Nga province, where most of Thailand's 5,395 deaths occurred, when he was shot outside his home on June 1.

Reporters Without Borders, the Paris-based press freedom group, condemned the attack "apparently in reprisal for his reporting on illegal land appropriations".

Police say they are still investigating the incident, which Manop believes was intended to send a signal to anyone probing land grabs by criminal gangs, powerful businessmen and politicians.

"Public land or forests in every district in Phang Nga are being encroached on by local mafias and national politicians," said Manop, who has covered the province for 21 years.

Phang Nga began its transformation



David Heaton, a volunteer from Canada, lays bricks on a road in Phi Phi Don Island, Thailand, June 18. REUTERS

from an old tin mining region into a tropical paradise a few years ago, its unspoiled beaches at Khao Lak and tranquil forests rivalling its overdeveloped neighbour Phuket, the country's main tourist island.

The Dec. 26 tsunami killed thousands on Khao Lak as it swept through luxury hotels and fishing villages dotting 30 km (20 mile) of coastline.

## DEATH THREATS

Some landlords have filed lawsuits

against squatters who moved onto forgotten plots years ago and eventually became legal owners under Thai law.

In the devastated fishing village of Ban Nam Khem, Lamai Rodson — who lost her husband, two fishing boats and a house — said she and 70 other residents were feeling the heat from two companies seeking to reclaim the land and build a pier.

Lamai, 48, has lived on her 3-acre (1.2-hectare) plot on an abandoned mine site since 1972 and won a court ruling that upheld her rights to the land in 1994.

But she says gangsters have made death threats against the group and a fresh lawsuit has prevented her family from receiving any government or private aid.

"I can't get a new house from the government or even from generous Westerners because my land is still problematic," said Lamai, who lives with her two sons who earn meagre wages from construction work.

On Phi Phi Island, the idyllic paradise made famous by the cult movie "The Beach", residents say the threat of a massive land grab appears to have petered out.

John Heike, a British dive shop operator on Phi Phi, said a consortium of powerful private investors believed to be planning to buy up the entire island for hotel development seemed to have backed off.

"I think they realised they were in for a real fight," Heike said. Residents were still awaiting government permission to rebuild their properties and businesses, although there now appeared to be nothing sinister behind the delays, he said.

# Malaysia ruling party moves on vote-buying: Paper

KUALA LUMPUR, June 21 (Reuters) - Malaysia's ruling party has summonsed senior members to answer claims of vote-buying at party elections, a newspaper said on Tuesday, referring to polls seen to have embarrassed the prime minister in his fight against graft.

At least seven members of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) have been given "show cause" letters to appear before the party's disciplinary board on Thursday and Friday, the New Straits Times reported, citing party sources.

The officials include some who ran

for UMNO's three powerful vice-presidents' posts and some who were elected to the party's policy-making supreme council, the report said.

The UMNO elections last year were marred by allegations of vote-buying, called into question Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's control over his own party and raised doubts that he had enough support among his own rank and file to fight corruption.

Only months before, Abdullah had led the party to a huge election victory on a campaign to clean up corruption.

Since the UMNO general assembly in September, when four of Abdullah's

ministers lost out in elections to the supreme council and vice-presidencies, the government has faced growing impatience for more results in its anti-corruption drive.

Abdullah said he was unaware of the identities of those to be questioned and would not interfere in the matter.

"Many people have the impression that UMNO will act only against the small fry," the prime minister was quoted as saying.

"We will act against anybody, regardless of their position, because UMNO's disciplinary rules are meant for all and not for certain people

only."

UMNO leads the multi-ethnic Barisan Nasional coalition, which has ruled Malaysia since independence from Britain in 1957.

Abdullah has been criticised for targeting only low-ranking politicians and government officials in his anti-graft campaign.

He has likened himself to a new broom sweeping through Malaysia since taking charge in October 2003. His government has brought one minister to court for corruption and some former corporate chiefs have also been charged with graft.

# Cleared 9/11 suspect leaves Germany

HANOVER, Germany, June 21 (Reuters) - A Moroccan man cleared of involvement in the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States but ordered to leave Germany because he posed a security threat has left two days ahead of a court deadline, police said on Tuesday.

Abdelghani Mzoudi's acquittal was confirmed by a federal court two weeks ago but Hamburg city authorities gave him two weeks to leave the country or face being arrested and deported.

"I can confirm he has gone," a border police spokesman said in

Hanover, without giving any more details.

The court turned down an appeal by the prosecution, which had argued the verdict was flawed and sought a new trial.

Germany, where three of the suicide hijack pilots in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks were based, introduced a new law on Jan. 1 making it easier to expel suspected foreign militants.

Last Wednesday Mzoudi's lawyer said he was seeking money from his country's embassy to pay for his flight home.





# Don't blame the euro

BY MELVYN KRAUSS

The euro is one of the unambiguous success stories of the European Union. Yet, it has become a favorite whipping boy in the "blame game" taking place following the Dutch and French rejection of the proposed EU Constitution. Italy's welfare minister, Roberto Maroni, has gone so far as to suggest that Italy leave the euro-zone economy and return to the lira.

Who's he kidding? Maroni's nostalgia for the lira is little more than a transparent — and irresponsible — election ploy by Italy's Northern League, an attempt to divert blame for the country's present economic troubles onto Romano Prodi, former EU Commission president and center left candidate in the forthcoming general elections. A return to the lira would be "economic suicide" for Italy according to ECB chief economist Otmar Issing.

The euro has made Italian government bonds as good as German government bonds, because the ECB is willing to accept both on an equal basis as collateral for ECB loans. This has dramatically reduced the cost of

borrowing for the Italian government. Has the Italian minister thought for a minute how his government would pay for all its public spending on welfare, and other items, if Italy's interest rates no longer were subsidized by the ECB?

Perhaps Maroni wants to go back to the lira so that Italy can de-value it. This suggests an important advantage of the euro for Germany, where misplaced nostalgia for the deutsche mark — no doubt aided by the steady invective against the common currency by government officials — is growing. The euro stops countries like France and Italy from playing their old protectionist game of devaluing their currencies at German expense.

Because of this, the competitive advantages Germany recently gained from its economic reforms are being protected by the euro from offsetting currency devaluations inside the euro-zone. This is good news. Improved competitiveness facilitated by the euro bodes well for Germany's medium term economic prospects.

The German public — hungry for economic recovery and tired of excuses — has not been fooled by the euro and ECB bashing of its present government, and handed German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder a

decisive defeat in the recent North Rhine-Westphalia elections. (Had they been fooled, perhaps they would have been more forgiving.) Jacques Chirac — another of Europe's great euro and ECB bashers — also suffered a severe personal reversal at the polls when the French rejected the EU Constitution. The public seems to be saying to the on-their-way-out leaders of the Franco-German alliance: Stop the excuses, and start getting our economies working again.

Does anyone really believe the French would have voted No had France's economic growth rates been double or triple their current levels?

The same is true in the Netherlands where the EU Constitution was also rejected. Unlike the French, however, the Dutch have not been euro bashers even though, as a medium sized country, the Netherlands do have some legitimate grievances against the EU — namely, how the so-called "Stability Pact" to control fiscal deficits is being enforced. Holland has played by the stability pact rules but, so far, the big countries — France, Italy and Germany — have been getting a free pass from the responsible authorities.

This is neither fair nor smart — and no doubt contributed, to some extent,

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Journalism suppressed

Are you saying that there is no democracy in the country?

By Samer A.

to the Dutch No vote. France, on the other hand, has been the beneficiary of this discrimination — yet it bashes the euro and votes No into the bargain.

The good news for Europe is that the big country politicians — Schroeder in Germany, Chirac in France and Silvio Berlusconi in Italy — all are on the way out. The path will soon be clear for a new set of leaders to get Europe's economic growth engines going again.

The bad news is that all three

politicians are lame ducks unlikely to undertake the reforms Europe so badly needs before their final goodbyes. This is a point made most recently by former ECB president Wim Duisenberg in a CNN interview — Europe must wait before its dormant growth engine re-ignites.

In the meantime, the euro has come down in the foreign exchanges, and there has been scare talk in some quarters — correctly labeled as "absurd" by Otmar Issing and

Bundesbank president Axel Weber — that the "European project" is in danger. As the currency declined, Asian central banks have been seen buying euros hand over fist to bolster their euro reserve assets. Smart money is buying the euro — not bashing it.

*Melvyn Krauss is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.*

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# A Europe for all

BY YULIYA TYMOSHENKO

Longtime members of the European Union now seem to doubt the Union's future, but we in Ukraine look at the European Union with hope and admiration. To join in the EU's progress is the basic object of our foreign policy, for Ukraine has discovered that nationhood is not an end, but a beginning.

Indeed, European unity is indivisible: when one nation is ostracized, all are not free. We Europeans are caught in an inescapable net, tied in a single garment of destiny. Every aspect of our shared culture, if not the last century of shared suffering, confirms that for us. Whatever affects one European directly, affects all indirectly.

Never again can we afford to live with the narrow notion of two Europes, of haves and have-nots, of

insiders and outsiders. Anyone who lives within the European continent cannot — indeed, must not — be considered a stranger to its Union. Today's great Pax Europa and today's pan-European prosperity depend on this.

Of course, some people mutter that Ukraine is not Europe. Let them come to Kyiv and speak to the people, young and old, factory worker, farmer's wife, the lawyers and doctors and teachers who stood and stayed in the cold and snow for weeks on end last winter to defend their freedoms.

Are they not united with those who stood alongside General de Gaulle in the French Resistance? Are they not one with those who died fighting for the Spanish Republic in the 1930's, who liberated Budapest in 1956 and ended fascism in Spain and Portugal in the 1970's? Are they not animated by the same spirit as Poland's Solidarity and the peaceful masses that created Prague's Velvet Revolution in 1989? That is the true

European spirit, and no doubts can crush it.

To those who say that Ukraine is too backward for EU membership, I say: Let them, too, come to my country and see the mothers who stay late at night at work teaching their children to use their workplace computer. Let them come to the language classes in every village and city where young people are readying themselves for Europe by learning French and German and English. Those who doubt Ukraine's European vocation should understand that Europe is not a matter of hardware and superhighways; it is the unquenchable desire for freedom, prosperity, and solidarity.

I believe that our future is as promising as Europe's past is proud, and that our destiny lies not as a forgotten borderland on a troubled region, but as a maker and shaper of Europe's peace and Europe's unity. Self-determination no longer means isolation, because achieving national

independence nowadays means only to return to the world scene with a new status.

New nations can build with their former occupiers the same kind of fruitful relationship that France established with Germany — a relationship founded on equality and mutual interests. That is the type of relationship that my government seeks with Russia, and achieving it is how we can help extend the zone of Europe's peace.

Of course, it is premature to do more than indicate the high regard with which we view the prospect of EU membership. We know that our part in that great edifice will not be built overnight. We know that the great works of European unification lay not in documents and declarations, but in innovative action designed to better the lives and insure the security of all Europeans.

Building a Ukraine worthy of EU membership will not be easy, cheap, or fast. But, like the Union itself, it

will be built and it will be done. We know the challenge is great, but the prize is worth the struggle, and Europe should know that this is our goal.

Part of the work of renewing Ukraine is a creative battle to put an end to a nightmarish century during which fascism and communism — ideologies born in the heart of Europe — battled for mastery. Only a few months ago, in cities throughout Ukraine, our children and our parents confronted armed troops, snarling dogs, and even death. Only a few years ago, a young journalist, Georgi Gongadze, seeking to inform the public about our old regime's corruption, was brutalized and beheaded by that regime's thugs.

But our Orange Revolution last winter shows that Ukraine's people prevailed. So, despite today's doubts and difficulties, I retain an abiding faith in Europe. I refuse to accept despair as the final response to the ambiguities and horrors of Ukraine's history. I refuse to accept the view

that Ukraine is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of communism's legacy that we can never see the bright daybreak of peace and true European unity.

When the EU's citizens ponder Ukraine's place in Europe, they should look both beyond and more closely at the face they see. They should look beyond the ravaged wastelands that communism inflicted, beyond the poverty, and beyond the social divisions through which our discarded ex-leaders sought to prolong their misrule.

Instead, they should look closely at the face of our president, Viktor Yushchenko, ravaged by poison during last year's election campaign, and recall the words of the great Frenchman André Malraux, for whom "the most beautiful faces are those that have been wounded."

*Yuliya Tymoshenko is Prime Minister of Ukraine.*

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## The mania of Summer vacation

BY ABU TALIB

"Daddy, if you fancy buying me something in case I pass all my exams, please buy me a football." This is what many parents confess that their sons keep on saying as the examinations come to an end and summer holidays knock at the door. For many school boys, streets have become their main arena where they can practice all sorts of base and roguish behavior. Most often, they trouble the passers-by, annoy their neighbors, involve themselves in gangs and end up in prison.

In fact, summer vacation has become a horrible obsession for parents.

Many families receive phone calls by the police saying that wards sons

have been caught rioting or involved in a crime. Prison, of course, is their destination where they can spend their quiet holidays!!

In short, summer vacation is no longer interesting. Some say that it is dull.

They argue that there is nothing innovative their children can do or occupy themselves with, while some others send their elder children to summer camps or send them back to their villages where they look after cattle or help on the farms. On the other hand, some, but few, of the students enroll themselves in language or computer institutes, but they keep on grumbling that these institutes charge them a lot of money, as only some can afford to pay such a high fee. Furthermore, the students are fed up with the texts books. Most of the school boys turn to be the black sheep of their families due to their lazy times after

the exams.

Hence, revising the students summer schedule is of vital importance..

Ministry of Education along with ministry of youths should lend a helping hand. Holidays should be a fruitful time for students so that they can entertain themselves as well as benefitting from an educational environment.

The status quo is disappointing. Students lose more than they gain. They completely leave behind what they learnt as soon as they finish their exams. With the advent of the new academic year, they come back to school forgetting everything they learnt the previous year. Is this the situation we look forward to? Specialists should answer.

ABDU TALIB  
TAIZ UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

## This is my opinion

BY TARIQ AL-NAGGAR

I would like to comment on the forth coming does or with the so-called latest news of price hikes. Logically speaking, is it even useful for us to write about it? What I want to say namely, is that many writers and publishers write about it even though some of them called it "The formidable dose". In fact, if there is any forth coming dose, our government should be implemented on the grand of reality, since our government knows well with its

dangerous consequences and followings.

But, the bloated propaganda of media is the problem that preceded the saying before actions, which published during the few days by government and non-government media. In spite of the fact that they are merely rumors, in other words, is "something premature". What I mean is that on the one hand the media is a great medium between true and false to speak out and say the social problems — but, they have to view the problem — through the right perspective not to merely make it more exciting on the other. As I mentioned above, the

media have played the essential role to make governments think about it, as it is a good idea to get out of its current impasse including the political and economical reform. Further more, it gives vent to merchants to monopolies the prices as they want.

In my opinion, the media have to view the problem properly. To convey the tiding before making sure by more than one wonder, that will it flow or pour this tiding into public interest, are we in the right direction to treat the problem without any side effects and so on again this is my opinion not even more.

## Youth dreams in Yemen

BY FATIMA AL-MAQTARI

They may call the youth period "Dreams and ambitions period". Every young person has his/her own special view of life.

Thus youth have dreams that they are looking forward to achieving.

While studying in Sana'a community college, I noticed that almost every youth, especially the boys, dream about going out of Yemen in order to reach their goals. They believe that Yemen has nothing. Everything in Yemen is only a

disappointment and frustration. They are certain that living in western countries or European countries will be the solution for all of their problems. Many of them said it would be the starting point of their life. They've never thought about the difficulties which will certainly face them.

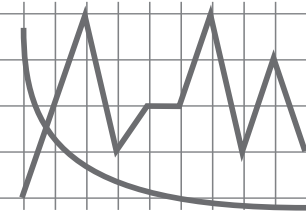
When you ask any one of them why they want to travel outside of Yemen, he immediately says: "I just want to travel and live in any other country forever."

No matter what to study or do. The most important thing is to get out of Yemen. Some dream of travelling

abroad to study and come back to Yemen to improve their selves and develop their country. But others travel only for the sake of entertainment and living differently.

I'm not against their dream. Everyone has the full right to dream. It's really good that you're dreaming, because without dreams no one can plan for the future. In my point of view, we all must realize how important Yemen is. We must change our way of thinking. It is because of our behaviors and doings that Yemen has become like this. We should know that WE make Yemen perfect and not the other way around.

# YT Business



## Liquid natural gas project will cost \$3 billion, %DUDED

### Exchange Rate for the Yemeni Rial

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	193.2300	193.5400
Sterling Pound	353.7800	354.3500
Euro	237.2100	237.5900
Saudi Rial	51.5200	51.6000
Kuwaiti Dinar	661.6300	662.6900
UAE Dirhem	52.6100	52.6900
Egyptian Pound	33.3300	33.3900
Bahraini Dinar	512.5400	513.3600
Qatari Rial	53.0800	53.1600
Jordanian Dinar	272.8300	273.2700
Yemeni Rial	501.9100	502.7100
Swiss Franc	153.6900	153.9300
Swedish Crown	25.7500	25.7900
Japanese Yen	1.7782	1.7811

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

BY MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

**Y**emeni Minister of Oil and Minerals announced that the project of liquid natural gas will cost the government around \$3 billion to be spent during implementation of the project that may take up to five years.

In his inaugural speech at the special workshop on the project of liquid natural gas, Dr. Rashid Baraba'a stressed the importance of the project and the revenues it is expected to add to the national economy, pointing out that the annual production of the project will come at 6.7 million tons.

The top officials of oil and minerals in Yemen said that around 16.3 trillion cubic feet is the general reserve of gas in Yemen.

Concerning components of the project, Dr Baraba'a indicated the establishment of public facilities of oil blocks in Marib and stretching the 320km-long gas pipe from Marib to Shabwah, as well as the establishment of cisterns and sea tongues at the import port in Bilhaf.

With respect to the search for world markets for the Yemeni gas, the Minister of Oil and Minerals confirmed that his government is due to sign the purchase of 7 million of the project's production. The first carriage will be delivered to a Korean company in December 2008 while a US company will get its carriage in June 2009.

The Yemeni Parliament agreed upon five oil contracts between the Ministry of Oil and Minerals and 7 foreign companies, in addition the General Corporation for Oil and Gas in blocks 69, 70, 71, 72 and 73 located in Shabwah and Harmout.

The Parliament approved of the contracts after the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Oil and Minerals pledged to abide by recommendations of the Oil and Minerals Committee's report.

The MPs gave orders to the government not to sell any shares to the General Corporation for Oil Minerals, one of the partners covered by the agreement, unless there is an approval from the Parliament and to monitor activities of the operating companies to protect the environment from pollutants.

The total service establishments reached 24,774, where 23,617 of these are profitable establishments, whereas 1,157 are non profitable. The number of employees in these establishments was 96,105, of these 85,147 work in profitable establishments, and 10,958 work in non profitable establishments. The total payments of the workers was 9,765,277, of these payments, 8,888,740 were for those in profitable establishments, and 876,537 were for the non profitable establishments' workers, in 2003.

The report said that, the total product for the establishments were surveyed at 76,081,473 where 74,315,662 of this total was for those profitable establishments, where 1,730,825 was the product of non profitable ones. The total medium consumption was 30,476,042, where of this total 29,730,825 was the consumption of the profitable establishments and 745,217 was of those non profitable establishments. The total added value was 45,605,430. The net fees and customs were 369,898, and the total consumption, 1,952,898, where all amounts were counted in YR.

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## Derivative Industries Constitute 91.3% of Total Establishments

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

**A** governmental report revealed that derivative industry in Yemen dominates industry with a total of 91.3%, in comparison with 1.2% for the extract industries. However, the percentage of the water and electricity is 7.5%. The hotels had occupied 61.54% of the services. The final report for the industrial survey, issued by the central body for statistics, went on saying that, the total product for the big establishments represents 552.7 milliard YR, in 2003, which constitutes 88% of the

total product. There comes after it the smaller Establishments, with 57.6 milliard YR, constituting 9% of the total product. The medium industries/yield is 17.5milliard YR constituting 3%.

The report pointed out that the smaller establishments occupied the first grade in employment. It attracted 48% of the total employment in industrial sector. There came after it, the bigger establishments with 39% and the medium industries 13%.The report pointed out that, drink and food industries in addition to petrochemical derivatives, cloths and tobacco, dominate derivative industry, where its number reach 22.2 thousands, and

represents 64.8% of the total number of establishments. The number of derivative industries are 34.3 establishments, whereas its production was 577.2 milliard YR.

The report said that the number of establishments had risen to 37.5 thousand establishments, and their income is 627.8 milliard YR. The number of employees increased to 136 thousand workers.

According to the report, the bigger establishments increased to 551 compared to 376 in 2001. The number of medium establishments was 2661, compared with 1249 establishment in 2001. The number of smaller estab-

lishments increased to 34383 compared with 31978 in 2001.

The restaurants and the hotels have obtained the highest contribution to the added value, where it reached about 52.75%, and there comes after it the health services whose contribution was 18.99. Education activity came in third position with a rate of 7.75%. Then came the personal services with 6.53%. The report said that the average annual wage for a worker in the establishments covered by the survey was 174 thousand YR, that is 900 dollars.

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*As an official report warns of poverty*

## MPs criticizes wages strategy

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

**A** recent government report warned that around 2 million Yemeni workers might fall prey to poverty unless serious steps are taken to expand the coverage of social insurance of private sector workers.

In its vote of the law draft on jobs and wages, the Parliament linked between poverty line and the surveys of family budget that is estimated between YR 40-45 thousand per month, taking into consideration that the average family members are seven.

A broad controversy took place concerning the definition of poverty line and the Article No. 8, where the MPs voted in favor of the article of poverty line definition.

Minister of Civil Service Hamoud al-Sofi has been impressed by the law since it has an economic definition and its being limited to a particular value is not accepted since prices keep on changing from time to time.

Some MPs mentioned the law might cause fear among members and political organizations that many employees may be fired, and have shown concern that the political affiliation is the measure to be adopted while manipulating wages of employees.

The MPs commented: "we know that some employees were fired in the past due to their political affiliation and others were retired early.

They added the article of the poverty line definition contained ambiguous statements and never showed an attempt to tackle the issue.

Regarding the national strategy for wages and salaries, the MPs said: "the strategy was unanimously rejected since it lacks many rules necessary for the administrative and financial areas.

On the other hand, official statistical indicators clarified that the number private sector workers whose insurance is obligatory reached 64,181 with an insurance rate of 2.2% till 2003.

Meanwhile, there are over 2,868,000 out of 2,914,000 private sector workers, making up 97.8% of the overall number of private sector workers, who are not included by the social insurance.

Specialists estimate the number of public and private sector employees are supposed to be obligatorily involved in the social insurance at 771,497 up until 2003.

Although the obligatory social insurance coverage was estimated at 21.3%, Mohammad al-Afandi, a famous Yemeni academic, considered it very low and a limited percentage and therefore can not achieve the social goal sought by social insurance authorities.

On the level of different sectors, according to figures of social role indicators, the obligatory social insurance coverage in the public sector has not exceeded 19.5%.

In the private sector, the social insurance coverage is comparatively low as it never exceeded 1.8% of the total number of workers, and this to a

great extent clarifies that a large number of private sector workers are not included in the social insurance.

Public and private sector workers involved in the social insurance numbered up to 412,000 in 2003, compared to 400,000 workers in 2000, making up around 58.2% out of the workforce.

According to the official statistical indicators, there is about 42% of the workforce who are not yet involved in the social insurance. Though the effective indicator of the social insurance coverage confirmed the number of private sector workers involved in the social insurance rose from 45,305 in 2000 to 46,297 in 2003, with an annual average growth of 12.4%, up until 2003, the real number of workers registered in the social insurance did go beyond 1.8% of the total number of workers in the economic sector and 2.2% of the entire private sector workforce.

The social insurance coverage indicator reveals that 98% of private sector workers are not involved in the social insurance.

A government report, presented as a work paper of a symposium on the role of civil service in alleviating poverty, showed that Taiz tops the list of governorates in terms of job seekers with 14.4% of the overall number of applicants, and is followed by Ibb Governorate with 7.57% and then Hodeida with 6.98%. Al-Jawf Governorate occupies the bottom of the list in terms of job seekers.

# Tarim in a glance

BY: HASAN SAEED BA UDHAN  
HASSANBAUDHAN@YAHOO.COM  
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

**T**arim is one of the most historic cities of Yemen. It gained a lot of fame and merits throughout history. It is well known for religion, scholars, Islamic institutes, art of architecture, history, trade etc.

Historians differed on the name of Tarim. Some say Tarim is one of the two cities of Hadhramout as Hadhramout includes Tarim and Shebam, and they are names of the two tribes that lived there. While others said that Tarim is the name of its founder, Tarim the son of Hadhramout.

Tarim was called "Al-Ghanna" as it used to have farms, gardens, and parks. In addition, date palm trees were spread in the farms, gardens, houses, and parks. It was said that an empty basket would be filled with dropping fruits while a woman carried it on her head from her home to her farm.

It is also called "Al-Sudique City" belonging to Abu-Bakr Al-Sudique, the first caliph after the Prophet. He prayed for this city so that Allah would increase its scholars and water, as its citizens stood with him in fighting the apostates after the prophet's death.

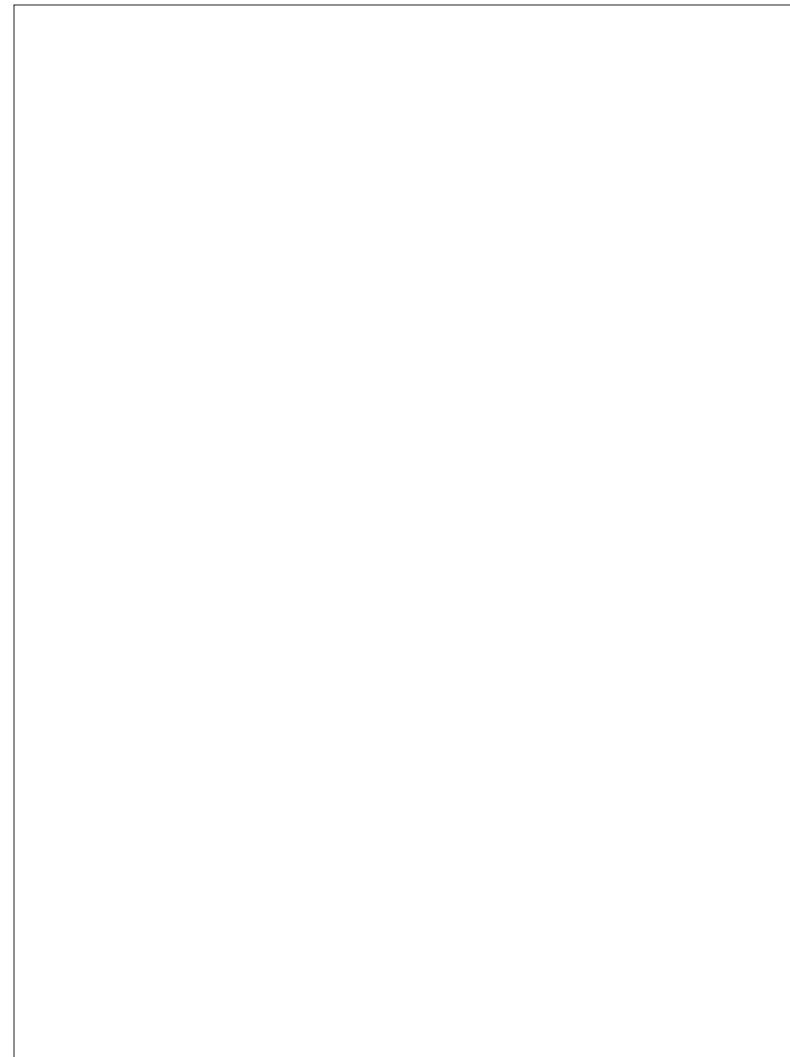
A battle took place in Al-Nujir

fortress in which many of the prophet's companions were injured and taken to Tarim for treatment. Some of them were martyred and buried in Zambal Cemetery in Tarim.

The Arab historians pointed out that Tarim was established in the fourth century of Hijra. The citizens of Tarim converted to Islam in the early days of Islam when the delegation of Hadhramout met the Prophet in Al-Madina Al-Munawara in the tenth year of Hijra. Tarim is considered the religious capital of Hadhramout since it was an illuminating Islamic center in the past and present.

Many Islamic institutes and centers were held for teaching jurisprudence, Quran, and other Islamic and Arabic sciences. Tarim is the home of many scholars, writers, and artists. That is why it is a destination of many knowledge seekers from Yemen, neighboring countries, the Farthest East, East Africa and other countries.

"Rabat Tarim" is one of the oldest Islamic centers that still opens its doors for students from inside and outside Yemen. It was built in 1305 A.H. It teaches different Islamic and Arabic sciences. Another famous institute is "Abu-Muraim Institutes for Quran Memorization", which was established in the sixth century of Hijra. In the present time, many institutes were established. The most reputable one is "Dar-Almustafa for Islamic studies", which became an



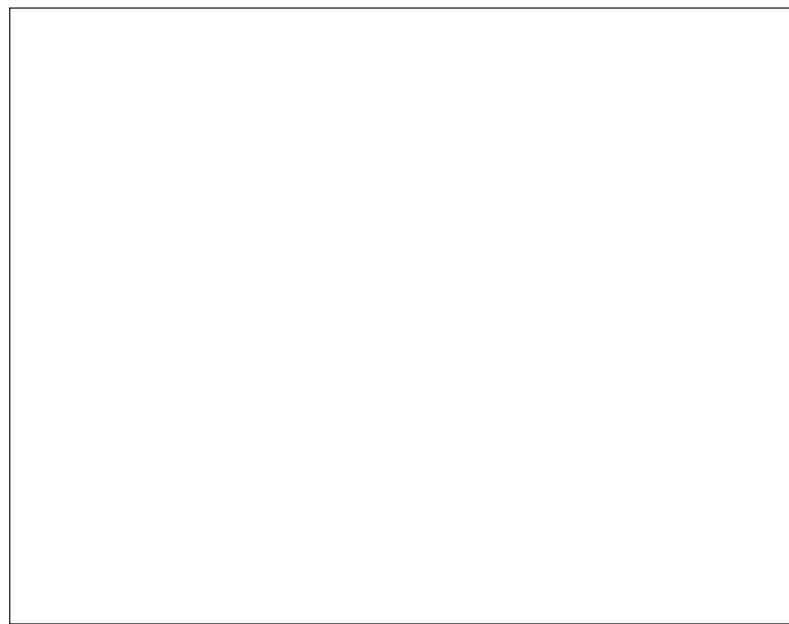
outstanding landmark in Yemen.

Among the recognized landmarks in Tarim is the large number of mosques. It is said that it used to have 360 mosques, but the ones existing now are only around a hundred. "Al-Muhdhar Mosque" is unique as is renowned of its long minaret (125 ft. high) built of mud in 1333 A.H. (1915 A.D.). It is considered as one of the most important landmarks in Yemen.

Moreover, Tarim is illustrious of large palaces built of mud and local building materials by proficient local laborers. It is worth mentioning that many of the citizens of Tarim migrated to Africa and South-East Asia. They worked there as traders and played a great role in spreading Islam in these countries. These traders became men of means and wealthy. Some of them came back home and built many palaces, which were clearly influenced by architect styles of South-East Asia.

These palaces are like (Eshsha, Dar-Assalam, Tawahi and Hamtoot) those belong to Al-Kaf family, while al-"Moneisoora" of Bin Yahya family. A long time ago, (Al-Rind fortress) was used as the governors' residence. It dates back to four hundred years before Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him). Tarim's laborers are the most reputable ones in Hadhramout; skillful in dealing with mud buildings and decorations.

The city is also famous of its valuable rare manuscripts, which were collected from special libraries and put in one big library called "Al-Ahraf Library". It is attached to "Al-Jame'a Mosque" from the north. It contains more than 5000 manuscripts in the various fields of knowledge. It comes in second place after the "Sana'a Library." Visitors come from different countries to see this significant milestone.



Al-Mehdhar mosque in Tarim

## Science between the hammer of history and anvil of philosophy

BY DR. AMR ADEL JAWI  
ADEN UNIVERSITY

**S**cience is one of the most serious phenomena of the human civilization. It is the greatest in terms of representing the existence of man - the rational creature- in this universe. In the twentieth century, the benefits of science multiplied so much that science became the most effective factor in shaping both mind and reality. The philosophy of science has become the most significant branch of philosophy in the 20th Century, expressing the cognitive surge of the era.

The question that needs a full answer is how the 20th Century inherited the philosophy of science, how did it develop that philosophy and how was it eventually passed down to the 21st Century.

These few lines are attempting a discussion of science in terms of its relation to philosophy and history. Hedger said that "Science itself doesn't think". We may add to this statement that science is not concerned with its memory and therefore it does not look back at its history.

The sole concern of science is to reform and renew itself and transcend the present reality let alone the past. Therefore, the relation between science and its history wasn't similar to that of other civilized components which consider it as a chronicle that contains their identity. Such components variably get detached from their history but that is only when they desire.

As the history of philosophy is philosophy itself, the gap between science and its history becomes inevitably clear. As science doesn't think of itself, it is then the duty of science philosophy to take up this task and think of the very nature of science, its methodology, cognitive characteristics, conditions, states, and factors.

With science oblivious to its past, the philosophy of science is not far

from the historical dimension of the science phenomenon. It has become very concerned with the history of science.

On the wide course that stretched up until the end of the Medieval Ages, old science has advanced considerably. It must have been the strong and necessary background which eventually gave birth to the powerful form of the modern science creating the contemporary world for the contemporary man. In conclusion, old science was entrapped within the cultural frame and was not an independent institution with independent standards, norms and people. It was rare to find a scientist devoted to his scientific research. This, too, was true about the Islamic civilization which pioneered old science. Changes came around in different arenas: religious, political, economic, social and commercial with promising minds that started to glean new discoveries in natural sciences.

Modern science with its rich contents and its philosophical reflections has been the palpable heritage handed to the 20th Century. The 20th Century managed such property well and invested it wisely in a way that went incredibly beyond limits. The spirit of science was zealous and ambitious.

As it is known, the relation between philosophy and science is strong. There is a dialogue between them extending along the history of human civilization. In the past, philosophy was the tender mother under which all other sciences were residing. Other sciences were considered as its extension.

The establishment of branches of the modern science one after the other made them independent of philosophy. In the modern era, philosophy and science are two distinct currents. Nevertheless, the spirit that feeds the modern autonomous and full-fledged science is reflected in the modern philosophy that temporally goes abreast with modern science.

Continued from back page

## Sierra Leone: Building on a hard-won peace

A Truth and Reconciliation Commission recently completed its work, recommending compensation for war victims and reconciliation among factions.

- Sierra Leoneans remain concerned that the closure of the UN mission would threaten the fragile peace and give reason for supporters of the war crimes indictees to cause mischief.
- A border dispute with neighbouring Guinea, which is teetering on the brink of violence, could threaten stability if it remains unresolved. External security is less than assured unless the army is well-equipped and better-trained.
- Unemployment, especially among the youth, who make up the majority of the population, is rampant. Mismanagement of natural resources, including diamonds, could be a source of conflict as poverty levels rise.

For further information United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL): Sheila Dallas, Officer-in-Charge, Public Information Section, Tel: +1 212 963 9588, ext. 6583, E-mail: [dallas@un.org](mailto:dallas@un.org); Daniel Adekera, Spokesman, Tel: +1 212 963 6588, ext. 6817, E-

mail: [adekera@un.org](mailto:adekera@un.org) United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations: Nick Birnback, External Relations/Media Affairs Officer, Phone: 1-917-367-5044, E-mail: [birnback@un.org](mailto:birnback@un.org) United Nations Department of Public Information Susan Manuel, Chief, Peace and Security Section, Phone: 1-212-963-1262, E-mail: [manuel@un.org](mailto:manuel@un.org) Sierra Leone Special Court: Allison Cooper, Chief, Press and Public Affairs, Tel: +39 083 1257 034; 1 212 963 9915 x1787034, Mobile: +232 76 655 237, Fax: +39 0831 257001,

E-mail: [coopera@un.org](mailto:coopera@un.org); SCSL-pressoffice@un.org United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): Cassandra Waldon, Communications Specialist, English- and Portuguese-speaking Africa (New York), Tel: +1 212 906-6499, E-mail: [cassandra.waldon@undp.org](mailto:cassandra.waldon@undp.org) Peter Ngu-Tayong, Communications and External Relations Specialist (Sierra Leone), Tel: +232-76 865691, E-mail: [peter.ngu.tayong@undp.org](mailto:peter.ngu.tayong@undp.org); Zoe Dugal, Information Officer for UNDP's Arms for Development initiative (Sierra Leone), Tel: +232-76 662290, E-mail: [dugal@undpaf.org](mailto:dugal@undpaf.org)

# The Timelessness and the universality of the Gita

BY DR. R.VIVEKAANANDHAN  
GRAMMARTEACHER@HOTMAIL.COM  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, AL NADIRAH, IBB UNIVERSITY

**L**ike previous years, Prof. Damodar Thakur recently presented a stimulating and enlightening discourse on the ageless Indian classic 'The Bhagavad Gita at the Indian Embassy Auditorium before a packed audience comprising Indian expatriates from all walks of life drawn from different parts of Yemen. Dr. Thakur began by mentioning the two broad categories of philosophy, namely, the Philosophy of 'And' and the Philosophy of 'either... or'. The Philosophy of 'And' is based on the principle of integration, showing mutual respect. But the Philosophy of 'either...or' is based on the principle of subordination.

The Philosophy of The Gita is a Philosophy of 'And', which underscores the fact that we should not disintegrate or fragmentize our perspectives but harmonize them. The Gita emphasizes the integration of the apparent 'opposites'. It is an embodiment of a harmonious synthesis of Science and Spirituality, revitalizing and reinvigorating each other. The Gita guides us to 'Shri Vijay', "The Blessed Victory", which

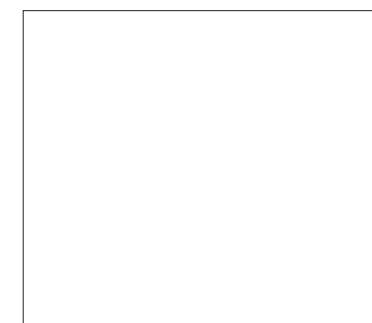
comes not only from the battlefield, but emanates from a peaceful life as well. Thus, The Gita, as a Philosophy of 'And', symbolizes the integration or harmony of different perspectives. It combines many myths - rational and spiritual and lives as a Philosophy of Harmony and not that of isolation.

The second part of his discourse dwelt, at length, on the timelessness and 'the modern ness' of the Gita, of its relevance to us even today, though it was written two thousand years ago. In spite of its being a work of philosophy, it contains a lot of scientific ideas.

Dr. Thakur extensively quoted from the Gita to illustrate its seminal contributions to the modern quantum Physics theory. It is amazing that the Newtonian idea that matter and energy are different had been anticipated by the Gita. The Gita enunciates that the reality of the Universe is not a matter of mere conglomeration of different parts.

The reality can be understood only in terms of interconnectedness or interwoven ness. Hopenhammer an eminent scientist conceded that Gita had highlighted the interconnectedness of things much before Physics explained this.

The Gita's declaration of the ultimate reality as "Everything is in everything else", namely, everything in the Universe is connected with



Prof. Damodar Thakur

everything else, is the same theory put forward by modern Physics. It was Einstein's most famous formula  $E = mc^2$ , which dislodged Newtonian ideas. It demolished the earlier view of Newton that matter and energy are two different things, and affirmed that matter and energy are not two different things but the manifestation of the same. The common division of the world into 'Subject' and 'Object' is no longer adequate. 'Subject' and 'Object' are one and the same. Krishna and Arjuna are ONE though apparent reality may view them to be two.

Talking about the Gita as a forerunner of Managerial Sciences, Dr.Thakur amplified how the Gita has visualized thousands of years ago, the scientific approaches to effective management. A Manager, more than anyone needs to maintain equanimity

-- not to be elated by success or frustrated at failure. The Gita guides one precisely towards that equipoise. 'Fear' and 'Anger' are two negative emotions that effective managers should give up. Much the same as the Managerial Sciences today, the Gita stresses the importance of "the Present time" and advises us not to brood over the past (or the future.). Effective and efficient Doers/Managers do not postpone things and are guided by the principle of positivism. The Gita insists on 'attachment' to things and illustrates that effective management can be ensured only when the managers learn the art of getting their colleagues involved in their jobs.

Earlier, Dr.A.K. Sharma, in his introductory speech said that the Gita is such a deep and profound philosophical work that any act of its re-reading unequivocally yields a feeling that neither the book nor the reader is the same. He lauded Dr.Thakur's eclectic approach which subsumes a philosophic, literary, scientific and allegoric approach to the study of the Gita

His Excellency, Mr. Karuppiah, the Indian Ambassador to Yemen, thanked and praised Dr.Thakur for spiritually recharging the batteries of the spectators by his enlightening discourse. Dr.Abraham proposed a vote of thanks.

# Do you know scoliosis?

Everyone's spine has natural curves. These curves round our shoulders and make our lower back curve slightly inward. But some people have spines that also curve from side to side. Unlike poor posture, these curves can't be corrected simply by learning to stand up straight. This condition of side-to-side spinal curves is called scoliosis. On an X-ray, the spine of an individual with scoliosis looks more like an "S" or a "C" than a straight line. Some of the bones in a scoliotic spine also may have rotated slightly, making the person's waist or shoulders appear uneven. It does not usually cause any pain, however, if left untreated, scoliosis exceeding 50 degrees can be problematic in the long-term. Progressive deterioration of the curve can occur, which in some cases can lead to diminished lung capacity and the development of restrictive lung disease. Cosmetic concerns are significant to many patients. The incidence of back pain among patients with scoliosis approximates that of the general population.

## Who gets scoliosis?

Scoliosis impacts infants, adolescents and adults worldwide with little regard to race or socio-economic status. The primary age for ones for scoliosis 10-15 years old, occurring equally among both genders. However females are eight times more likely to progress to a curve magnitude that requires treatment.

## The causes of scoliosis?

The vast majority of scoliosis is "idiopathic," meaning its cause is unknown. It usually develops in middle or late childhood, before puberty,

- uneven waist
- elevated hips
- leaning to one side

## Diagnosis of scoliosis:

- Requires a thorough medical history to determine if any other problems may be causing

the spine to curve.

- Includes a comprehensive physical examination. The doctor will ask your child to bend forward, which will show any deformities. He or she will also check for any limb-length discrepancies, abdominal muscle strain or other potential causes.

- Is confirmed with an X-ray of the spine. The physician will measure the degree of the curve as shown on the X-ray. The type of treatment required depends on the kind and degree of the curve, the child's age, the number of years of growing until the child reaches skeletal maturity and the type of scoliosis.

## Treatment options

In planning treatment for each patient, an orthopedist will carefully consider a variety of factors, including the history of scoliosis in the family, the age at which the curve began, the curve's location and severity of the curve.

**Observation:** This option is appropriate when the curve is mild (less than 20 degrees) or if the child is near skeletal maturity. However, the doctor will want to recheck the curve on a regular basis to see that it is not progressively getting worse. The patient may be

asked to return every 3 to 6 months for re-examination. Most cases of scoliosis referred through school screening will fall into this category.

**Bracing:** The goal of bracing is to prevent curves from getting worse. Bracing can be effective if the child is still growing and has a spinal curvature between 25 and 45 degrees. There are several types of braces, most being underarm. The orthopedist will recommend a brace and tell the patient how long it should be worn each day.

**Surgery:** If the curve is more than 45 degrees and the child is still growing, the doctor may recommend surgery. If growth is finished, surgery may still be recommended for curves that exceed 50-55 degrees. Before the operation, the patient may be asked to donate blood (which will be used during the surgery as needed). The surgery requires a bone graft from the hip, ribs or a bone bank. A series of rods, hooks, screws or wires are used to straighten the spine. Following surgery, patients are walking without a brace by the second or third day, are discharged from the hospital within a week and can rapidly resume their daily activities. A return to some sports is possible in 6 to 9 months.

## Complications

- emotional problems or lowered self-esteem may occur as a result of the condition or its treatment (specifically bracing)
- spinal cord or nerve damage from surgery or severe, uncorrected curve
- failure of the bone to fuse (very rare in idiopathic scoliosis)
- spine infection after surgery
- low back arthritis and pain as an adult
- respiratory dysfunction from severe curve.

# Taking drug safety seriously

By Curt D. Furberg

Health hazards – nuclear reactors, guns, and contaminated foods – surround all of us, so governments take an active role in limiting these hazards through regulations, which, in many cases, are very successful. But the situation is far different concerning the safety of prescription drugs. Indeed, as far as protecting the public is concerned, drug safety is the regulator's neglected stepchild.

The magnitude of the problem is huge. In the United States alone, it is estimated that every year up to 100,000 patients die due to serious adverse drug reactions (ADRs). If true, drug-induced death would qualify as the fourth or fifth leading cause of death (depending on which mortality estimates are used). Moreover, the direct annual hospital costs attributable to ADRs run into the billions of dollars, and this does not include all the suffering that ADRs cause that does not lead to hospitalization (or death).

The difficulties in determining cause and effect must be acknowledged. Whether a patient's death or hospitalization is due to a particular drug, the underlying illness, or a combination of the two can be hard to determine. But this makes drug safety all the more important.

Inherent to drug safety is the fact that all drugs, in addition to their benefits, cause harm in certain patients.

Drug approval and use requires a careful weighing of desirable and undesirable effects. These judgments vary, depending on whether they are made by a drug company, which stands to benefit from sales, or a patient at risk of suffering a serious adverse effect.

Incomplete knowledge complicates this assessment. The rush to get new drugs to market often leads to inadequate safety documentation. More than half of all approved drugs produce a serious adverse reaction that is not known at the time of regulatory approval.

For example, when the new class of painkillers called Cox-2 inhibitors was introduced, regulators, physicians, and patients were unaware that these drugs could cause heart attacks and strokes. Tens of thousands of innocent patients – perhaps more – suffered such ADRs before the first two drugs of this class were withdrawn.

Proper and complete documentation of harmful drug effects is difficult. Spontaneous reporting rates to regulatory agencies are low – approximately 1% – and ongoing monitoring is passive in many countries.

There is also a general reluctance to report unfavorable drug effects. Physicians may feel guilty and fear litigation, drug companies worry about the threat to corporate profits and regulatory agencies must face the question: "Why was the drug approved in the first place?"

It is especially difficult to attribute an adverse reaction to a drug if the medical event is common in the user's

age group or in the condition being treated. Because the risk of heart attacks is high in older people, many of whom have arthritis pain requiring treatment with painkillers, it took six years to link Cox-2 inhibitors to a two- to three-fold increase in the risk of heart attacks.

A recent Harris Survey in the US concluded that 60% of adults are either not confident at all or not very confident that drug makers will publicly and in a timely manner disclose data on their products' adverse effects. Their skepticism is hardly groundless: internal documents obtained in recent lawsuits reveal that drug companies often fail to submit critical safety information to regulatory agencies, as required by law, and fail to communicate such information to physicians and patients.

One problem is that the consequences for neglecting drug safety are non-existing or minimal. The time has come to get serious:

- Citizens and government must make drug safety a priority and commit adequate resources to fixing the problems;
- Penalties for drug companies' failure to report and communicate safety information must be increased dramatically if they are to serve as effective deterrents;
- Regulatory agencies need enforcement authority so that stricter rules can be implemented;
- The drug-safety problem must be seen as a systemic failure. It is unfair to blame clinicians for serious ADRs, particularly in the absence of

complete safety information. Fixing the problem requires full cooperation from clinicians, but this requires ending their fear of litigation. This approach works well in the airline industry: pilots reporting near misses are not penalized;

- Patients need to be better informed about the risks of prescription drugs and more involved in detection and reporting. Package inserts in fine print are useless;

- Monitoring of ADRs must be more pro-active. This requires more funding, which should come from the main beneficiary of drug sales – the pharmaceutical industry – just as oversight of aviation safety is funded by the airlines.

Above all, the success of any comprehensive effort to improve drug safety hinges upon establishing an independent office of drug safety to advocate, coordinate, and provide direction to the regulatory agenda. Such an office exists in the United Kingdom. Other governments should follow this model in order to fulfill their neglected role as guardian of public health.

Curt D. Furberg, a member of the US FDA Advisory Committee on Drug Safety and Risk Management, worked for 11 years at the US National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and now teaches at Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

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## Increase in number of dengue fever in Shabwa

The health conditions, has been reviewed in Shabwa Governorate, in light of the increase of Dengue fever in the Governorate. The Governorate's plan to combat the disease has also been reviewed.

Yemen Times has met doctor Arif Ban-nafi, General Manager of Ataq Hospital. Doctor Arif said:

A medical team from the Hospital has headed to Khora town to see and treat patients there. Doctor Arif pointed out that, it is the second team that has been sent to this infected area.

Reports say that the fever has claimed two new lives, one in Nasab,

and another in Al-Rauda. Cases have increased in Khorah, where they reached 67 cases, 27 of them are suspected cases of Dengue fever. There are also 15 cases in Alraud and 14 in Nasab.

Doctor Naser Muhsen Bau'm, local general secretary of Shabwa has met the technical team, which was sent to Shabwa, by the Ministry of Health, for fact finding. The team consists of Dr. Abdul Hakiem Al Kuhlani, General Manager of epidemic Surveillance, and Dr. Jamal Ghailan, General Manager of Malaria Combat, in addition to a number of other executives. The meeting was attended by Dr. Yesalam Mansour, General Manager of the Health and Population

in Shabwa. Dr. Yaslam told Yemen Times that, the Ministry has agreed on the Governorate's plan to combat and control Dengue fever and stop its spread. He added that the plan has been implemented where the teams began spraying insecticides in each of the towns of Ataq, Azan and Maifa'a.

The local authorities in Al-Dhali had formed a follow up committee, headed by Abdul Wahid Al-Rubie' Commissioner of Al-Dhali to combat Dengue fever.

The last statistics issued by the Modia General Hospital declared that there were 681 cases which the hospital received during the last few days, of which 123 cases were malaria, and 558 are Dengue fever.

## Facts of Life

By: Dr. Khaled alNsour  
For the Yemen Times

# How safe are microwave ovens?

Microwaves used in microwave ovens oscillate at 2450 million cycles per second (MHz), which could be considered safely within the NON-ionizing region. However, it is important to note: Although microwaves do not carry enough energy to be ionizing, they can be dangerous. Non-ionizing radiation is very different from ionizing radiation. Ionizing radiation is extraordinarily high in frequency (millions of trillions of cycles per second). It is, therefore, extremely powerful and penetrating. Even at low levels, ionizing radiation can damage the cells of living tissue. In fact, these dangerous rays, have enough energy and intensity to actually change (ionize) the molecular structure of matter. In sufficient doses, ionizing radiation can even cause genetic mutations. As shown on the frequency spectrum, the ionizing range of frequencies includes X-rays, gamma rays, and cosmic rays. Ionizing radiation is the sort of radiation we associate with radioactive substances like uranium, radium, and the fall-out from atomic and thermonuclear explosions.

Non-ionizing radiation is very different. Because of the lower frequencies and reduced energy, it does not have the same damaging and cumulative properties as ionizing radiation. Microwave radiation (at 2450 MHz) is non-ionizing, and in sufficient intensity will simply cause the molecules in matter to vibrate, thereby causing friction, which produces the heat that cooks the food.

If microwaves can cook a piece of beef, these waves will also have the same effect on human tissue if it is exposed to high enough intensities for a long enough period of time. Certain body organs are particularly sensitive to this thermal effect. "Thermal" means heat. Thus, it is the heat produced by a hot stove that causes the careless cook to utter a sudden unsavory expletive. Likewise, it is the heat generated by the microwaves that creates the hazard in this case.

For example, if the lens of the eye were exposed to excessive heat from microwaves, its circulatory system would be unable to provide sufficient cooling, and it would cook like the white of an egg. Also, the stomach, intestines, and bladder are especially sensitive to thermal damage from high levels of microwaves. Similarly, the testes are very sensitive to changes in temperature, because sperm can be formed only at temperatures lower than that of the body itself. Therefore, accidental exposure to high levels of microwave energy can alter or kill sperm, producing temporary sterility.

## What Are Safe Levels of Exposure?

No one really knows for sure. Several laboratories have found that low level exposure to microwaves can cause cumulative effects to the eyes, resulting in cataracts. Research also reports a reduction in personnel efficiency, and even a possible link to cancer. As painstaking experimentation continues, one thing is certain: There is a non-thermal effect from microwaves that many people are exposed to on a daily basis. What degree of danger does this non-thermal effect represent? The answer to that question has to do with the controversial difference between a simple biological effect, and a serious biological hazard. For example, a reduction in the ability to perform certain tasks may be the effect, but at what point does that effect constitute a hazard?

The effects of long term exposure to low levels of microwaves, and their significance to human health, will become clear only after large numbers of people who are being exposed to

microwaves are studied for many years. Studies are being done with animals, but it is difficult to translate the effects of microwaves on animals to possible effects on humans. With animals, for example, researchers find it difficult to simulate the conditions under which people use microwave ovens. Because no one can say with certainty what levels of exposure are safe, the course of wisdom is to avoid "exposure to any unneeded radiation.

## How Far Away Is Safe?

One pertinent characteristic of microwaves is that they disperse and dissipate very quickly in the atmosphere. Under Federal guidelines set by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the maximum allowable leakage from a microwave oven [after the sale] is 5 milliwatts [or 5 thousandths of a watt] per square centimeter [or within the area the size of an aspirin tablet], as measured at about 2 inches from the oven surface. However, as you move away from the oven, the level of exposure to any energy that may be leaking decreases dramatically. This may be likened to the difference between holding your hand just inches above a burning candle, and then moving it 10 or 12 inches away. To illustrate: Let's say you are standing just 2 inches away from an operating microwave where you are being zapped by 5 milliwatts of microwave radiation. Then, you wisely step back to a distance of 20 inches, or roughly an arm's length away. Your level of exposure would drop by a factor of 100 [the square of the distance] to an infinitesimal .05 milliwatts. When you consider that the typical cooking power of a microwave oven is in the range 600 to 700 watts, and even higher in some models, .05 milliwatts is clearly a tiny amount.

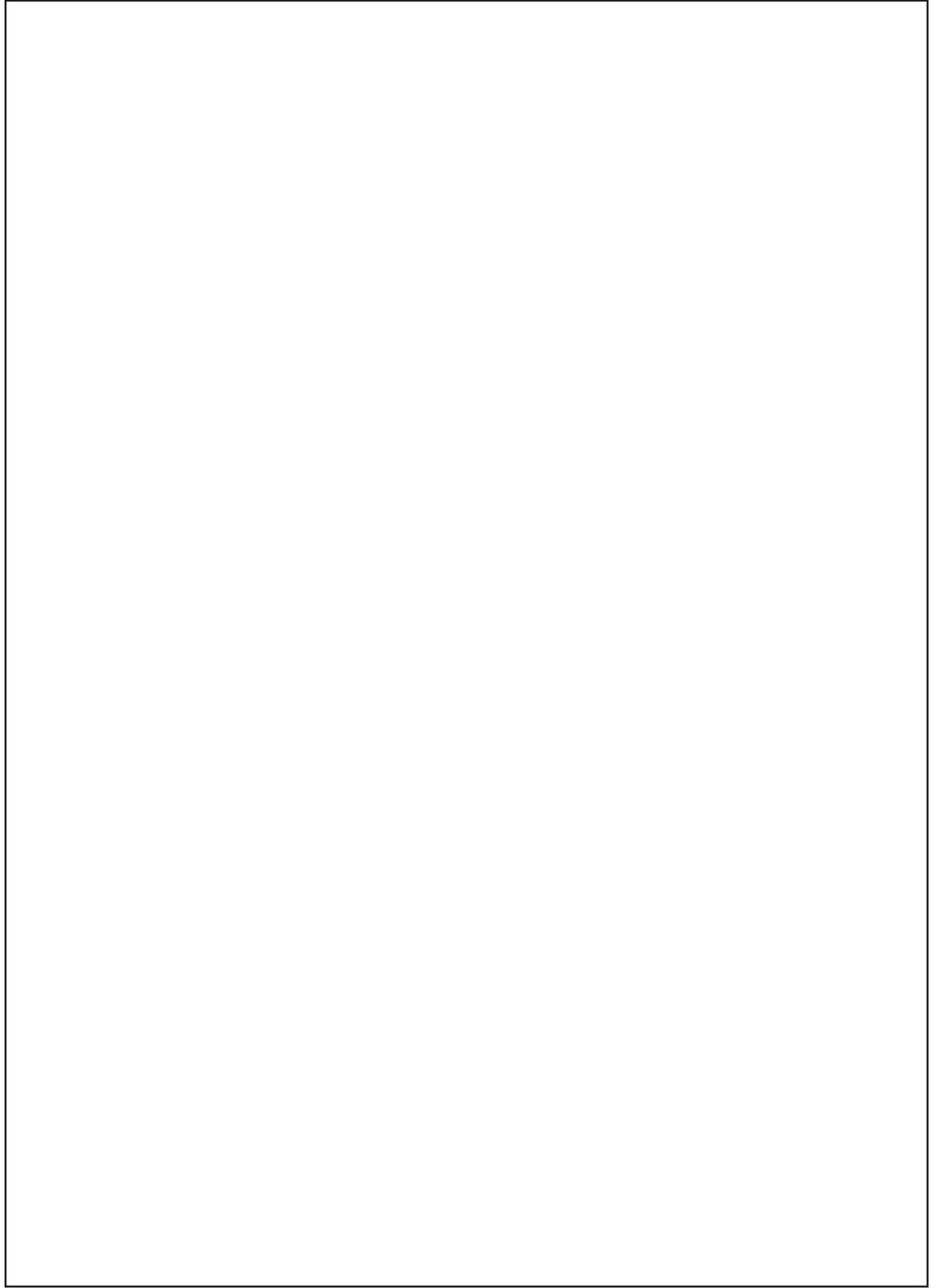
## Unsettling Reports

Yet, the question remains: Is exposure to low levels of microwave radiation dangerous to humans? Soviet research has yielded some rather unsettling reports. Rather than concentrating on the effects of high-intensity levels, scientists in the U.S.S.R have focused their efforts on the effects of prolonged or repeated exposure to low levels of microwaves. Their studies show that long-term exposure to low levels of microwave energy could result in unpleasant effects that are not attributable to the thermal (heating) effect alone. So, the U.S.S.R and other European countries have set their own strict guidelines for microwave safety, concluding that Western safety standards are simply not safe. For instance, Russian workers are required to wear special goggles any time they are temporarily exposed to a microwave radiation level of 1 milliwatt per square centimeter. Remember, the U.S. Federal Standard is 5 milliwatts per square centimeter. (It should be noted that some manufacturers have voluntarily established their own, more stringent, standards. For example, Amana, Menumaster, Caloric, Modern Maid, and Sharp have lowered the maximum allowable leakage from 5 mw/cm<sup>2</sup> to 4 mw/cm<sup>2</sup>.)

Inasmuch as the significance for humans of repeated exposure to low levels of microwave radiation is still unclear, there is enough evidence to warrant certain commonsense precautions:

1. Stay at least an arm's length away from an operating microwave oven
2. Do not operate an oven when it is empty
3. Do not operate an oven if the door will not close properly or is in any way damaged
4. Never tamper with the safety interlock switches or the fuse

Source: gallawa.com.



# Pistons grind out Game Six victory to level series

SAN ANTONIO (Reuters) - Richard Hamilton had 23 points and Chauncey Billups added 21 as the Detroit Pistons ensured a deciding game in the NBA Finals with a dramatic 95-86 win over the San Antonio Spurs on Tuesday.

The defending champion Pistons evened the best-of-seven series at 3-3 with the Game Six win, while denying the Spurs an opportunity to capture their third NBA title in seven seasons.

Game Seven is in San Antonio on Thursday.

The Pistons punished the Spurs with great shooting from outside the arc and had eight three-pointers in the contest, after combining for that amount in the first five games of the series.

"We happened to make them tonight and they didn't," Detroit coach Larry Brown said about.

"We had a lot of guys come off the bench to give us some quality minutes. That's what this team is all about."

Rasheed Wallace added 16 points for Detroit, despite being in foul trouble most of the night as five Pistons notched double-digit performances.

Detroit also improved to 5-0 in the past two seasons in games where they faced elimination.

"We put ourselves in that position and don't give ourselves any choice but to come out and compete," Brown said.

Tim Duncan had 21 points and 15 rebounds for the Spurs while Manu Ginobili added 21 points and 10 assists, but San Antonio could not match the Pistons's intensity, especially in the fourth quarter.

"They're at their best when they are facing elimination and they are down," Duncan said.

"We played all year for this opportunity to have a home game in Game Seven and we're just going to come in here on Thursday night."

#### Executed well

After four blow-out games to open the series, Game Six was another nail-biter, similar to San Antonio's 96-95 Game Five win at Detroit.

San Antonio Spurs forward Tim Duncan puts up a shot against the Detroit Pistons during Game 6 of the 2005 NBA Finals in San Antonio, Texas June 21, 2005. The Pistons defeated the Spurs 95-86 to force a Game 7 on Thursday.

"They really executed well," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said.

"That's why they're the NBA champs, you just expect them to do that."

The teams went back and forth all night and were tied 23-23 after one quarter.

San Antonio managed to grab a one-point lead at halftime, but the Pistons took over in the third quarter to lead by four heading into the final 12 minute period, 71-67.

The Pistons continued hitting their three-pointers and led by as many as seven points with 6:10 to play, but the Spurs rallied to cut the lead down to one with 2:15 on the clock.

However, Tayshaun Prince and Rasheed Wallace both hit late baskets to keep the Pistons ahead and silence a raucous home crowd.

"We just wanted to take it to Game Seven and we did," Rasheed Wallace said. "We can fight any odds."

Billups said he never doubted Detroit's ability to rebound from the Game Five defeat, even though they had lost 10 straight games in San Antonio heading into Tuesday's contest.

"We're just tough man, we're as tough as nails. We make it tough on ourselves but we just get out of that fox-hole."

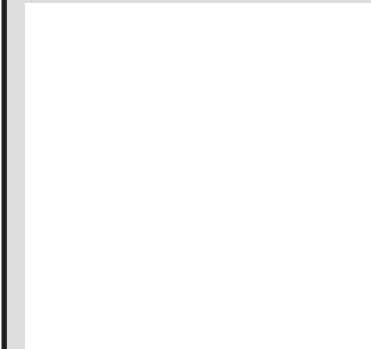
This year's NBA Finals are the first in 11 seasons to require a maximum seven games.

## Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

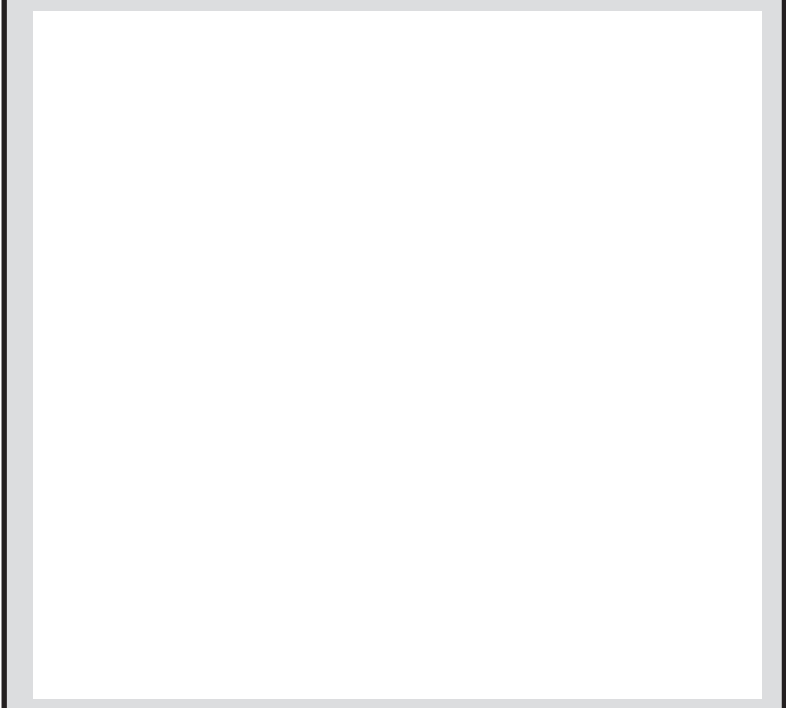
ACROSS	23 They make blocks	43 Boggy area	Fields film title
1 Ruffle some feathers	24 Noise from the farm	44 Print source?	12 "The Elder" of history
5 Shills for, e.g.	26 Vivacious	45 X-ray unit	13 As opposed to
10 Pt. of IRA	actress West	46 Raw information	21 Kind of wave
14 Strong as ___	27 Barbecue rod	48 Dunce	25 Part of TGIF
15 1978 Peace Prize winner	29 Bowlike curve	52 Trumps, perhaps	27 Take by force
16 ADWROCKed-ecessor	32 ___GDUW	54 Period of suspended activity	28 Fancy chopped liver
17 ___ It	35 Rosary items	57 Needle apertures	30 Laugh heartily
5RPDQWLF	36 Arrived lifeless, briefly	58 Sing the praises of	31 What some plants produce
18 Poppycock	37 Plain of Jars locale	59 In ___ (bored with things)	32 Patron saint of Norway
19 Fillable bread	38 Prepares to cast	60 One in a million	33 Bag of diamonds?
20 1978 Best Picture (with 7KH)	39 Nurture	61 Wheel brace	34 Plow pioneer
22 The "dismal sci-HQFH" for short	40 Tough wood	62 Desperate	35 What some people jump
	41 It may be grand	63 Addition column	38 With the most breadth
	42 Round parts?	64 Chromatic nuances	39 Lucille Ball and many others
		65 Divination practitioner	41 Western time
			42 Roseanne, before Tom
			45 Searches through
			47 Hinny and ninny, e.g.
			48 Pig in ___
			49 Ghastly strange
			50 Color of a clear sky
			51 Dissuade
			52 Aviation prefix
			53 Primary color in photography
			55 Public art show
			56 British school

### PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER



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### "DEE-LIGHTFUL" by Orn Halverson



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## Sierra Leone: Building on a hard-won peace

**T**hey have ended the conflict, disarmed thousands of combatants, freed 20,000 child soldiers and watched over democratic elections. But now that the 81 peacekeepers are leaving the world must remain committed to helping the country overcome the many challenges to its fragile peace.

**The Story**  
UN peacekeepers are leaving Sierra Leone after a five-year mission that has brought peace

and raised hopes for a better future. But while the media focus might have shifted to other crises, the world must remain committed as the country battles to overcome the many challenges that remain.

UNAMSIL has been one of the 81's most visible successes, having deployed in the wake of a brutal civil conflict that left at least 75,000 dead and many more maimed. The UN disarmed more than 70,000 combatants — including some 20,000 child soldiers — and shepherded a peace process towards the creation of a new national government. It has worked to regularize the trade in diamonds - the fuel for its bitter conflict — for the benefit of the entire country. However, Sierra Leone remains one of the poorest countries, and the UN-supported peace is fragile. The borders are porous, the surrounding West Africa sub-region is unstable, unemployment is widespread and there is a large pool of ex-combatants who could take up arms again.

**The Context**  
• The last peacekeepers are to leave by December 2005. At its maximum strength, the UN deployed 17,500 blue helmets to Sierra Leone. They maintained security as government forces were re-constituted.

### “Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About”

In 2004, the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) launched an initiative called “Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About” to draw attention to important international developments and issues that fall outside the media spotlight. The list includes stories on an array of issues and from several geographical regions. Some of the stories on the list focus on troubling humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations, but they also highlight such vital areas as human rights, health and development. Every issue, we will bring a new story to you, hoping that our little effort to advocate for human rights all over the world would make a difference, some how, some way... **The editor**

Civilian UN workers disarmed combatants, oversaw democratic elections and resettled thousands of refugees. Peace is not sustainable with-

out justice: The UN-founded Special Court for Sierra Leone began war crimes trials in 2004 against 13 indictees.

**Continued on page 11.**