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Officials and MPs: journalists' telephone conversations tapped

SANA'A, Jan. 21 - In a Saturday morning sit-in at the Yemeni Women Journalists Forum, several members of parliament, journalists, officials and members of civic organizations showed their solidarity with Al-Jazeera reporter Ahmed Al-Shalafi, whose telephone conversation was wiretapped and distributed by email to some journalists.

Participants denounced wiretapping as a lawbreaking act and said investigating with wiretaps is unnecessary. MP Ali Hussein Ishal said monitoring journalists' telephone conversations is as old as the security authorities themselves. He added that journalists are attacked because they disclose corruption and defend rights and freedoms.

Mohammed Naji Allaw, Coordinator of Hood Organization for Rights and Freedoms, revealed that Yemeni authorities allow telecommunication companies to operate on condition that they provide devices to monitor customers' telephone conversations.

Prominent Socialist Party leader Ali Al-Sarari affirmed that tapping journalists' telephone conversations is a clear indication of the indecency and lack of morals of those who wiretap. "Wiretapping frequently has been used, but what is new in such a shameful act is that wiretapped telephone conversations now are publicly disclosed," he added. Al-Sarari also stated that wiretapping is a security official's creation and that MPs should hold the government accountable for such an "immoral plan" made to pursue the opposition, journalists and counter-opinion writers.

Abdulrazzaq Al-Hijri, member of Parliament's Constitutional Body, said, "Wiretapping is a clear infringement of the constitution, which ensures privacy of telephone conversations. Telephone wiretapping is a dangerous act of aggression against journalists. By this act, authorities try to undermine the morale of journalists." Al-Hijri urged journalists not to be affected by this new "infringement" and to continue their great and firm stands.

MP Ali Al-Ansi made it clear that the monitoring of Al-Shalafi is a message implying that others' telephone conversations undergo the same treatment.

MPs Al-Ansi, Al-Hijri and Ishal, announced their solidarity with Al-Shalafi, saying they stand on the side of journalists. "We affirm that we will question ministers regarding Al-Shalafi's case to reveal the truth and if they do not respond to our demands, we at least will limit telephone wiretapping," Al-Hijri said.

Yahya Al-Sabri, head of the Nasserite Unionists' Political Unit, also participated in the sit-in, commenting that the Joint Meeting Parties see that monitoring telephone conversations is not new and should be stopped. "What happened to Al-Shalafi is one way to interfere with journalists' privacy and aims to make them mute," he added.

Joel Campagna, Senior Coordinator of the New York-based Committee to



MPs, officials, and journalists who participated in the sit-in held in consolidation with Al-Jazeera reporter, Sana'a office

Protect Journalists (CPI) - Middle East and North Africa Program, also participated in the sit-in. He said two of his colleagues arrive in Yemen this week and will meet journalists and government officials to discuss press freedom issues in Yemen. Campagna stated, "I am here in Yemen to show solidarity with Yemeni journalists and share their concerns.

Though they face acts of aggression, I am optimistic that they still are active. When two of my colleagues arrive in Yemen, we will meet members of the government to discuss the situation of journalists and freedom of press. We hope to get a real picture of the journalistic situation in Yemen."

Murad Hashim, head of Al-Jazeera's

Sana'a office, affirmed the difficulty in accusing a specific party of monitoring Al-Shalafi's telephone conversation. However, his office sent a statement to Parliament questioning the government about the incident and denouncing the wiretapping of Al-Shalafi's conversation. The statement asked the Ministry of Telecommunication and the Ministry of

Interior to investigate the parties involved in monitoring Al-Shalafi.

Lawyer Jamal Al-Ja'bi suggested sending a letter to the head of Political Security, as well as the head of National Security, as these two authorities have monitoring means, or at least should investigate Al-Shalafi's case.

The issue of press freedom in Yemen has been dealt with by many organizations inside and outside the country. At the end of 2005, Women Journalists without Constraints (WJWC) issued a report on freedom of press in Yemen. The report mentioned more than 50 acts of aggression against Yemeni journalists in 2005. Aggression ranged from attacking and kidnapping journalists to attacking newspapers, assaulting and closing newspaper establishments, preventing journalists from writing and cyber piracy.

On November 16, 2005, the CPJ urged President Saleh to publicly condemn brazen attacks against the media and personally ensure that appropriate law enforcement authorities conduct thorough, transparent and expeditious investigations so assailants are held accountable to the full extent of the law. On December 12 of the same year, the CPJ issued a statement concerning attacks on a number of journalists. The statement mentioned, "Government officials and suspected state agents have targeted several Yemeni journalists with threats, brutal assaults, abductions and criminal lawsuits. No one has been held accountable for these acts."

NPWJ urges Yemeni Parliament to approve International Criminal Court law

SANA'A, Jan. 22 - No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ) distributed a press release this week stating that the Yemeni Parliament will consider approving the International Court of Justice's Roman Law at its session next week.

NPWJ, a non-profit organization promoting human rights, was invited to Sana'a to shed more light on international criminal law on the eve of parliamentary vote on the law.

The group's head said in the statement, "We welcome Parliament's scheduling the law and we urge MPs to ratify it."

The NGO head added, "The Parliamentary decision will be in conformity with one of Sana'a regional

conference's important recommendations on democracy, human rights and the International Court's role. The International Court is an international establishment for rule of law and combating immunity, which enables officials to evade their crimes. It is also for the defense of basic human rights."

Roman Law went into effect July 2002. Mexico and 100 other countries worldwide ratified it. "Yemeni ratification of the law will be a promoting step to the International Court in the Arab world. It will place Yemen among major participating countries in the Middle East and North Africa," the group added.

"International Court law is a resilient law set to coexist with different judiciary systems, including Arab ones, which adopt complicated legislation. If ratified, Yemen will be part of the international community promoting democracy on an international level," the statement added.

The release continued, "As international media focuses on Yemen for its wrong orientations, we urge Yemeni legislators to prove their country's readiness to protect democracy's future and human rights."

The statement concluded by thanking the Yemeni government and activists who defend human rights and democracy, saying, "The pledges and commitments signed by the Yemeni government two years ago now are due to be fulfilled."

IPS news agency quoted lawyer Mohamed Naji Alao as saying, "Arab regimes are reluctant to ratify the International Court law because they think the basis of these laws is not in conformity with their people."

He continued, "Abduction, torture and imprisonment without charge or trial are prevalent in the Arab world. The pretexts of these oppressions are aggravated under terror fighting laws."

In a statement to IPS News, Parliament's Human Rights Committee member Shawqi Al-Qadahi criticized Arab countries that signed the agreement and refused to ratify the treaty.

Al-Alimi admits the incapability of the civil defense in rescue operations

SANA'A, Jan. 21 - The First Regional Training in Disaster Management in the Middle East was launched in Sana'a last Saturday. The difficulties the government faced during the rescue operations in the ravaged village of Al-Dhafer were highlighted during the opening ceremony of the training course, as well as the importance of the role of women in the management of such disasters.

The training course was organized by the Islamic Relief organization (Emergency and Preparedness Unit) in Britain, in partnership with Islamic Relief - Yemen Office, UNDP and the Yemeni Civil Defense.

Concerning Al-Dhafer village disaster, the Minister of Interior, Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi said in his speech during the opening ceremony that the situation in the field was totally different. He pointed out that it was only when they were there, he and other officials did realize the difficulty of the rescue operations. He confessed that the civil defense was unable at the beginning to act by itself. The rescue operation started when they received help from the local citizens. He mentioned that there was also a problem with the evaluation of the type and number of necessary equipment needed for the rescue operation. As an example, he

said that around 50 ambulances were sent to the village while only five ambulances were actually needed.

As for the role of women in managing crises, Dr. Al-Alimi, who is also the Chairman of the Civil Defense Supreme Council, indicated that the need of women police was great. "They have done a great job in helping and managing the rescue operation" he added. He stressed on the role of different governmental bodies and other local organization in aiding the work of the civil defense. He gave the example of the absence of clear addresses of houses and streets names in the capital; a problem that makes the work of civil defense, such as the fire brigade, very difficult.

Khalid Al-Mulad, Yemen regional Islamic relief representative, Flavia Pansieri UN regional Coordinator, Micheal Gifford, the British ambassador in Sana'a and Dr. Hani El Banna, the founder and chairman of the Islamic relief addressed the course. They all spoke of the importance of methods of addressing disaster and to find ways of access to specific data, and early warning. They demanded effective dealing with such matters.

In his part, Khalid Al-Mulad, said that the external aid and the international help in managing local disasters can



From left: Micheal Gifford, Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi, Dr. Hani El Banna, Flavia Pansieri and Khalid Al-Mulad

never be as effective and adequate as the local ones, pointing out that time is a crucial factor in the rescue operations. He added: "I am not exaggerating if I

say that the external aid is unable to do anything without a national capability in managing disasters."

Continued on page 3

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GASSQC bans poultry imports for fear of bird flu

SANA'A, Jan. 22 — The General Authority for Specifications, Standards and Quality Control (GASSQC) last week banned entry of refrigerated poultry imported from countries suffering proliferation of bird flu.

The authority permitted importing refrigerated poultry from France and Brazil since both countries are free of bird flu.

GASSQC General Manager Ahmad Al-Bishah noted that the authority follows up the epidemic's development at the international level in cooperation with concerned international organizations.

A committee chaired by the Minister of Public Health Population recently was formed to monitor any proliferation of bird flu, with field teams periodically visiting poultry farms throughout the republic. The committee officially announced that Yemen is free of the epidemic and that the disease cannot be transmitted by consuming chicken or eggs. The disease is transmitted by air; however, the virus dies at 60 degrees



Fahrenheit.

Locally, no campaigns have been launched to raise awareness among poulterers and poultry slaughterhouse workers about risks of the epidemic and the need to use masks to ensure more safety from infection.

Slaughterhouse owner Saleh Ali Ghailan said there is no awareness of the epidemic. He learned from the media that people died of bird flu in some countries, but he never paid attention to the issue since bird flu does not exist in Yemen or in neigh-



boring countries.

Veterinarian and Marib Poultry Firm deputy director Wahib Sa'eed Mansour noted that Yemeni poultry farms are free of avian flu despite the fact that health authorities do not monitor poultry. Many poultry firms

have cooperated with the ministries of agriculture and public health in launching campaigns to develop awareness in poultry farmers.

Concerning some bird deaths in the country, Mansour mentioned that Yemeni birds die from epidemics

Readers' Voice

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

This edition's question:

Do you think that the wiretapping on journalists' telephones is done by Yemeni security?
Yes
No
I don't know

Last edition's question:

Do you think that the authorities will allow fair presidential elections next September

No 70%
Yes 26%
I don't know 4%

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Thirteenth Arab Pediatric conference to convene

ADEN, Jan. 21 — Preparations are underway for Aden University's 13th Arab Pediatric conference March 6-8, under the auspices of President Saleh.

Aden University rector and Arab Pediatric committee head, Dr. Abdulkareem Rase', presided over a high preparation committee meeting to review scientific research. So far, there are 50 scientific research papers prepared by participating pediatric and specialized scientists in Arab universities.

Rase' praised the widespread enthusiasm of pediatric specialists

both inside and outside Yemen to participate in the conference. He pointed out that the conference will be a major scientific phenomenon positively impacting Yemen's pediatric field.

Prominent pediatric conference subjects include: diseases of the heart, kidney, nervous system, immune system, blood, skin, eye, tracts and ductless glands; neurological, infectious, serum and nutritional diseases; infant and general disease; diseases related to environment, tumors, cancers and polio in Yemen.

Bride kidnapping incident denied

AL-MAHWIT, Jan. 22 — A security source denied media reports that armed men kidnapped a bride and killed her groom at a wedding in Al-Mahwit governorate.

Brigadier General Hidra Mohammed Al-Shakri, the district's General Director, confirmed that the story reported in various media sources lacked accuracy. "What happened was that a woman was invited to a wedding in Bani Musa'ed district in Al-Mahwit province. Her ex-husband stormed into the wedding to kidnap her, killing one guest in his attempt to run away with her. However, police managed to arrest him and rescue the woman, who is now in her family's home," according to the source.

The ex-husband wanted to enforce

his divorced woman to remarry him. Therefore he coordinated with her brother and other four men who decided to attack the wedding party and kidnap ex- wife. Two guests (one of them was the mother of the woman) were injured in the attack, and another guest was killed. "We could capture four of them, including the ex-husband and the brother and we are searching

two others" said Alshakri.

Earlier this week, foreign and local news websites reported that five gunmen stormed a wedding, kidnapped the bride, bundled her into a car, drove off at high speed and fired at the groom, named Mastoor Ahmed. According to media sources, the attack, in which five guests were injured, was arranged by a man the bride previously

refused to marry.

The websites linked this incident to Yemeni women's rights, saying, "The press and women's rights activists continue to investigate and denounce violations of women's rights in Yemen." The activists claim that common law, social custom and Islamic Sharia law, as interpreted in Yemen, discriminate against women.

Reproductive health care continues to decline

SANA'A, Jan. 22 — Recent reproductive health field surveys in Amran, Shabwa and Marib, revealed deteriorating care of mothers during pregnancy and after childbirth. The survey also revealed declines in child care, family planning and reproductive health awareness.

Conducted August through October 2005 by the Central Organization for Statistics, the survey was part of the American USAID-funded Catalyst Yemen project. The survey found that 48 percent of women in the project area have access to family planning and reproductive health, while 57 percent do not have any health care access during pregnancy. This figure rises to 61 percent for the entire country.

The survey also found that 90 per-

cent of women receive no post-delivery care, as 79 percent of deliveries occur in the home. It also revealed that 16 percent of women do not know necessary procedures in such cases and 44 percent of husbands ignore the importance of caring for the mother post-delivery.

Field surveys found that 40 percent of infants complete two years of breastfeeding, but only 36 percent begin breastfeeding within the first hour of delivery.

The rate of children completing vaccinations is 34 percent, while 60 percent have no access to health care at all. As for the 58 percent contracting fever and cough, 51 percent do not have health services. Diarrhea also proved to be a major fatal disease.

Family planning and reproductive

health awareness is declining in these governorates. More than 53 percent of reproducing women know nothing about family planning and more than 80 percent use no means of birth control. Women who know about AIDS are 52 percent and 92 percent do not agree with female circumcision.

A project symposium held with the health service, heads of households and community leaders concluded that there is a lack of medical facilities, personnel and some other important departments. There was a consensus among symposium participants that home births mainly are attributed to absence of female medical professionals. The symposium also noted that absence of female teachers in girls' schools is an important factor in girls dropping out of school.

Terms of Reference for AUDIT of NEX Projects

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) office in Sana'a, Yemen, would like to announce for an audit bidding. Interested firms are requested to read the scope and requirements of the audit and respond accordingly. All bids must be submitted no later than February 10th 2006 with a subject of "NEX Audit Proposal" in one of the following methods:

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United Nations Development Programme
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Background

In each country office, the UNDP Resident Representative serves as the Resident Coordinator of Development activities for the United Nations system. Through such coordination, UNDP seeks to ensure the most effective use of UN and international aid resources.

National Execution (NEX) is an agreement whereby UNDP entrust these resources and funds to national government counterparts to undertake and manage UNDP-supported projects. The national government counterpart responsible for the overall management of the project is called the executing agency. These executing agencies are responsible for the management of all UNDP resources of nationally executed projects, and they are accountable to UNDP for the entirety of UNDP resources under their management. Each nationally executed project must be audited at least once in its lifetime. For audit scope and programme size/location information that will be included in this audit exercise please access the following link on our website:

<http://www.undp.org.ye/bids.php>

The auditors must submit the final audit report to the UNDP.

The audit should start 1st March 2006.

The draft audit report should be submitted to UNDP country office by 8th April 2006.

The final audit report should be submitted to UNDP country office by 22nd April 2006.

WNC to celebrate 10th anniversary

SANA'A, Jan. 21 — The Women's National Committee (WNC) celebrates its 10th anniversary this March. Coinciding with the celebration, the group will hold its third women's conference March 6 in Sana'a.

Women activists from different Yemeni governorates are due to participate in the conference. The conference is considered the culmination of successful achievements by the committee, which works to design national women's policies, monitor their implementation and take necessary steps to upgrade women's status in various areas.

Among the committee's achievements is preparing a gender needs report and designing gender policies within the three-year plan for development and poverty alleviation for 2006-2010. Additionally, it adopted the National Strategy for Women's Development, the first of its kind in the Arabian Peninsula.

The WNC made some legal amendments to Yemeni laws discriminating against women and currently is preparing an annual report on the situation of Yemeni women. It plans to distribute the report to all concerned parties working in compliance with its goal to tackle the persistent gender gap.

Supported by Arab Women's Development, the WNC conducted many studies and surveys on women's educational, economic, health and media

issues and will review the results and output at its March conference.

The committee also initiated a campaign encouraging women to participate in decision-making positions and advocated allocating a 30 percent women's share in such positions, the main objective being to push forward the wheels of development.

The WNC exerts extensive efforts to enhance women's participation at local and national levels, occasionally holding consultative meetings with ministries, concerned government bodies, community civic organizations and political parties. Such efforts aim to integrate women's needs according to well-prepared plans, projects and programs.

The WNC often

organizes training courses, sessions and symposiums targeting different social classes throughout Yemen's governorates and issues periodic reports on Yemen's regard for women-related international conventions.

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Hunger and thirst killed African migrants

SANA'A, Jan. 22 - The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office renewed its Jan. 20 appeal for action to stem the flow of those falling prey to smugglers in their flight from Somalia and Ethiopia.

The appeal followed the Jan. 16 appearance of a boat on Yemeni shores carrying 65 people and six dead bodies, UNHCR staff in Sana'a said. Another 14 people reportedly died during the voyage – six who threw themselves into the sea because they could not bear the thirst and another eight who died on board of thirst and hunger and whose bodies were thrown overboard.

“Once again, people are dying trying to reach Yemen aboard smugglers’ boats crossing the Gulf of Aden from Somalia,” UNHCR spokesman William Spindler said in Geneva.

The boat, which left near Bossaso port in Somalia’s Puntland region with little food or water, encountered difficulty



Dead Somali refugees in Yemeni shores

when its engine failed, drifting in the Gulf of Aden for six days.

“That horrific voyage is not unusual,” Spindler told reporters in Geneva. “Smugglers frequently beat their passengers or force them overboard while still well away from shore. In the past, UNHCR has thanked crews of passing

ships who saved people found drifting helplessly in the shark-infested waters.”

UNHCR staff arranged medical assistance for survivors – some of whom had bite marks from crazed fellow passengers – and took 25 others to a transit center.

Last September, the agency called for

international action to stem the flow of desperate people crossing the Gulf of Aden, after at least 150 migrants died in a three-week period.

UNHCR has been working with authorities in northeast Somalia to inform people about the dangers of using smugglers to cross the Gulf of Aden through videos, radio programs and other media.

The agency reiterated that Yemen, one of the region’s few countries to sign the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees, has been generous in receiving migrants and refugees. Yemeni authorities automatically grant refugee status to Somali citizens arriving in Yemen.

According to UNHCR, there are more than 80,000 registered refugees currently in Yemen, some 75,000 of whom are Somalis and possibly hundreds of thousands more who have yet to register.

European Commission provides 2.5 million euro in humanitarian aid to Yemen

SANA'A, Jan. 22 - The European Commission allocated 2.5 million euro to address basic sage water and health care needs in rural Yemen. The aid will bring relief to some of the population’s most vulnerable, with an emphasis on women and children.

Louis Michel, Commissioner of Development and Humanitarian Aid, said, “The humanitarian needs of Yemen are too often forgotten by the donor community. Yet the effects of chronic drought and lack of access to health care on the most

vulnerable are increasingly severe: water-borne diseases are one of the first causes of mortality among children and maternal deaths account for a staggering 42 percent of deaths among women of childbearing age. The commission remains committed to improving access to sage water and primary care for the most vulnerable in Yemen throughout 2006.”

The Yemeni government remains unable to respond to all of the basic needs of its population, especially in rural and remote areas. The commission and its

NGO partners will provide supply systems for potable water to approximately 30,000 beneficiaries. They also will extend support to approximately 70,000 in the health sector. All interventions are expected to strive to achieve sustainability.

Selected health facilities will benefit from simple rehabilitation and medical equipment and crucially from permanent water supply. Basic training will seek to revive mother and child health services. Some activities specifically will target

children under age 5 and women needing prenatal care. Resources will be mobilized to prevent and treat malaria in endemic areas. Education in safe water handling practices and responsible water usage will be emphasized strongly, in connection with health sector activities.

The European Commission is a major donor to Yemen. Over the past five years, it has provided 90 euro million in aid, of which 12.2 euro million was for humanitarian assistance and 34 euro million for food security.

Special penal court tries Watani Bank employees

SANA'A, Jan. 22 – A special penal court held its first session Sunday, hearing the case against Watani Bank chairman, Dr. Ahmed Ali Al-Hamdani, and other employees accused of breaching trust and squandering clients’ deposits.

Hamdani’s lawyer, Abdullah Hashim, maintained the court’s unauthorized to prosecute the case. He pointed out that bank affairs are commercial, whoever the borrowers are, and requested the court commission a special firm to study the case and submit a report.

Hamdani denied all prosecution accusations against him. The other nine suspects, including a Pakistani national, also denied the accusations, demanding to be tried before a specialized court.

Lawyer Nadia Al-Kholaiifi, another member of Hamdani’s defense team, also demanded suspending penal procedures until the case’s commercial aspect is determined. She said the appeal against the Central Bank’s right to seize the Watani Bank is not decided yet. It concerns the Central Bank’s action following its declaration of the Watani Bank’s incompetence to meet depositors’ rights.

Al-Kholaiifi also rejected the Central Bank’s right to refer a civil case to the

court if it is to consider the penal matter. She requested the court lift the ban on her three client’s salaries because they are not included in the Central Bank’s seizure. She also demanded her clients’ release on bail, as their deposits exceeded the value of loans granted to them. The court postponed considering their release and the salary matter until its next session Feb. 6.

The court assigned a translator to the Pakistani suspect who cannot speak Arabic. It also allowed defense lawyers to photocopy case files, but prohibited publicizing case details starting from the next session.

The 10 suspects are accused of embezzling YR 19 billion in bank deposits. They deny the charges, but admit obtaining legal loans and regularly paying their installments.



Watani Bank building in Sana'a

Continued from page 1

Al-Alimi admits the incapability of the civil defense in rescue operations

Dr. Hani El Banna stressed on the importance of educating the local people and enhancing their awareness in dealing with and responding to natural as well as human-made disasters. He again stressed on the importance of women in the relief process since women and children are the most victims of such crises, pointing out that 60-70 percent of the refugees after such crises are women and children.

The 5 days training course, which will end on December 25, includes participants from Islamic Relief staff as well as staff members of other Islamic Relief partners in the region of Middle East. The course is taking place in Kawkban Hall, Sheraton Hotel, Sana'a. The course includes representatives from different Arab countries including Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq, Palestine, Jordan and Egypt, as well as representatives

form the Yemeni Civil Defence, local NGOs and relevant governmental bodies in Yemen.

The course aims at building the capacity as well as enhancing the knowledge of participants of the subjects relating to managing natural disasters. These subjects will include analytical methods of developing the understanding of dealing with disaster and its different aspects such as needs assessment, available resources, principles of humanitarian work, “sphere” as well as working with refugees and IDPs applying the recognized international criteria.

It is worth mentioning that Islamic Relief is an international relief and development charity, which aims to alleviate the suffering of the world’s poorest people. It is an independent Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) founded in the UK in 1984.



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Atomic Energy teams visit Yemen

SANA'A, Jan. 22 - National Atomic Energy Committee (NAEC) chairman Mustafa Bahrani said the visit of two International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) delegations has no political appearance.

The first delegation is headed by the official for technical cooperation with North and East Asian countries, Jone Quiel, who arrived in Sana'a on Friday. “Dr. Quiel and his colleagues are meeting with involved Yemeni institutions, mainly the NAEC, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Oil and Minerals, Ministry of

Electricity and others, to discuss the republic’s priorities and needs for the next 10 years in all areas of peaceful application of atomic energy,” Bahrani stated.

The second delegation, including WHO members, is headed by the agency’s cancer program head and will meet with the committee established to formulate a national cancer control strategy. “Such a strategy will include prevention, early diagnosis and treatment in order to reach the lowest possible level of cancer risk in Yemen,” Bahrani added.

Job Vacancy Executive Manager - AI - 001

Company Interoduction:-

Al Jawdah company is a leading company serving in the fields of consultation and upgrading quality management systems through a well - experienced team of consultants.

Al Jawdah provides Technical and Engineering consultancy, review, recruitment and inspection to qualify industrial and non-industrial companies to meet the requirements of the quality standards [ISO] through upgrading thier quality management systems [QMS].

Deadline: End January 2006.

Position: Executive Manager.

Location: Sana'a.

Minimum Requirements:

- Bachelor Degree in [Business Administration] or equivalent discipline.
- 3 or more years experience in the Administration / Marketing.
- Fluency in written and spoken Arabic and English.
- Good knowledge of computer skills.
- Good knowledge of ISO.

Applicants should send thier CV with a covering letter explaining why they are qualified for the post either to fax no: 445232 or to E-mail: aljawdah@yemen.net.ye.

Candidates selected for interview will be contact by Al-Jawdah.



Embassy of India,
Sana'a

REPUBLIC DAY 2006

The Embassy of India, Sana'a cordially invites all Indian nationals in the Republic of Yemen, along with their families, to join in the celebrations of 57th Republic Day of India on Thursday, the 26th January, 2006 at the Embassy premises (Building No. 12, Djibouti Street, Off-Haddah Street, Sana'a). They are requested to assemble at the Embassy at 0800 hours.

PROGRAMME
0815 Hours

- Flag Hoisting
- National anthem
- Reading of the President's Address
- Patriotic Songs/ Cultural Events organized by the Indian Embassy School, Sana'a.
- Refreshments.

To all members of Indian Community in the Republic of Yemen

PS: (i) The recipient of this circular may kindly circulate the information to other Members of the Indian community known to him/her.
(ii) It is requested that cameras/ bags etc. should not be brought inside the premises. Otherwise these will be kept at checking-point at owner's risk.

Educated Women are lost treasure

In response to an article published in Yemen Times, issue 909 about “educated women cant get married”. I wrote this article

By: Fatma Moh'd Al- Ajel

It is of no doubt that education is important for both genders. Educated people are a national resource and a treasure that every country works to gain. It is also obvious that quality education advances communities economically, politically, culturally...etc. Since society is made of both man and woman, it important that both are well educated, and hence are capable in developing their society. Consequently, schools, universities, and other educational institutes are established for both males and females.

Society and educated women

However, in third world countries such as Yemen, women are still suffering from discrimination when it comes to educational opportunities. In our country, some people associate education with mainly males because the Yemen is a male dominating society. On the other hands, women no matter how educated remain subjected men's control and are not allowed to feel responsible, respected and self-assured. The society judges educated women, that they only strive to achieve high positions in the community or imitate foreign women in their pursue of education and not for education itself.

Misconceptions

This conception is spread among both uneducated and educated Yemeni men. They miss out on the real meaning of education for women. Most men believe that women go out to educational institutions in order to escape from the house confinement, and to

enjoy their time away from domestic chores and in some cases to look for husbands.

Why some men refuse to marry educated women

There are rumors that many educated men decline to marry educated women because they believe educated girls have had relations with their male classmates and they must have fallen in love. Others say that educated women have strong characters and they love authority. Therefore, men prefer to marry an uneducated woman and it is even better if she is from village so that they can dominate and control their wives.

It is tragic to find such thinking in 21st century especially when it comes from highly educated men. Over 55% of university students in Yemen are females and this shows the large number of educated women. It also shows an encouraging trend towards educating females in this country. Yet in spite of this high percentage many Yemeni men in our society still refuse to marry educated women because of traditional typical old fashion reasoning. What Yemeni men forget when they adopt this attitude is that of this 50% of educated women there are their family members whether sister, daughter or relative and those women would be discriminated against in the marriage decision.

Women build the society

There is an Arabic proverb that indicates to the importance of educating and well raising the woman because she is will become the mother who raises the next generations. People, includ-

ing men always repeat this proverb every time and everywhere, but they don't realize its significance. Because if you need to invest in the woman to breed better generations then how can this be achieved without educating women?

Women's double role

Mothers are in essence women, regardless of their education level. So if the society ignores educating women, this will lead to having illiterate mothers who will be unqualified to teach and educated their children. An educated mother is the reason for potential female doctors and teachers or educated females in general. Educating women is not just about producing female doctors or teachers it includes women in all their roles in the society, especially as a mother.

The challenge

Most Yemeni women realize the importance of education. They want to improve themselves and develop their society although they know that by doing so their chances of getting marriage will be less. A student in the university said to me when I asked her why she is studying knowing that she might not get married: “I will not waste my time waiting at home for the future husband. I have to study and improve my self for my sake first and second for my society.”

It seems that lately men started to think seriously about this phenomenon. Ali Mohamed is an accountant commented on this by saying “I regret getting married to an uneducated woman. Ten years ago I disapproved of marrying educated women and I preferred my wife to be illiterate. Now when that my children have grown who go to school, I couldn't find someone to tutor them and attend to their studies especially when I am always busy with my business. I confess that it is my mistake.”

There are many examples in the society that show the selfishness of men when they only think of their own pleasure and don't take the marriage decision seriously. An ironic discovery is that men who marry more than once tend to choose their second wife of



New batch of young female university graduates

higher education than the first. It seems that men had suffered from the illiteracy of their first wives. Yahay is a professor in media who said: “my first wife is illiterate, she couldn't adapt with my community, my kids are not good in their studies. I decided to get married again, but this time I'll marry an educated woman who can understand my needs.”

Victims of selfishness

When the husband works most the time outside the house and the wife is illiterate then the victims of this situation will be the children. Consequence of this, in addition to the feeble education system, is the low standard of students, as sometimes students in upper grades barely know how to read and write. Nabila is a teacher in a public school, she explained: “I can guess the educational levels of the parents through the performance of their children in class. I face a lot of difficulties with students who have illiterate mothers or parents.” She added.

Another woman, a uneducated mother for three kids said: “my children study in a private school, they have to study English, computer, math and other subjects. I can do nothing to help them and it is almost impossible to follow their study progress. The problem is that their father is uneducated as well.”

Mrs. Nawal a doctor's wife said, “my husband spends money on tutors and private lessons without use, no one

can fill in for the mother.”

The contrast

In some rare cases, we find the families where the husband is uneducated while his wife is. The mother looks after her children's education and follows their marriage work. Even as their father is not well educated because of their mothers the children are not affected much.

Mohammed is uneducated man, he just studied up to grade ten. He married a university graduate who works as a teacher. Mohammed talks about his experience by saying: “I have no idea about my children's study because my

wife is the one responsible for their education. I work outside most the time but really my kid's grades are excellent, it is because of the hard work of my wife. She work inside the house as a mother and a teacher in the same time.”

Men have to be serious about their marriage decisions and not indulge in selfish attitudes. Both men and women have to discard harmful ancient thinking and become farsighted in order to have a better future for their children. Our community needs all the help it can get to improve and live up to the international standards of the developed world.



Female university students celebrating their graduation

Vacancies

The Technical Secretary of the National Population Council - UNFPA project and european union project announce the following posts:

1. UNFPA Project Manager

Qualifications:

- University Degree in Accountancy or Administration.
- At least Five years of experience in project management preferably with UN Organization or International Organization.
- Familiar with Microsoft office tools.
- Very good command of English.

2. Financial Officers

Qualifications:

- University Degree in Accountancy.
- At least Five years of experience in Accountancy preferably with UN Organization or International Organization.
- Familiar with Microsoft office tools and financial computer Programmes.
- Very good command of English.

3. Excutive Secretary

Qualification:

- University Degree in Accounting or relevant degree.
- At least Five years of Secretary work.
- Familiar with Microsoft office tools.
- Very good command of English.

Interested persons are requested to submit their C.V's to [The Secretary of the National Population Council] on the followin contact address: within ten days from the date of announcement.

The National Population Council
Amran street, next to the Shura Council
Tel: 231214 - 228654
Fax: 220275 - 231525

[Any inquiries on job description or related information can be discussed with Public Relations Dep. in the National Population Council]

Women's Movement in Yemen

Last few years in Sana'a have seen emergence of several organizations headed by women. These organizations are expanding rapidly, involving women, especially young women, across the capital city in the search for something they may or may not be sure of. At this point I feel it important to raise the issue of the direction, perspectives and ways of working of these organizations. Since most of these organizations claim to be working for women, their understanding of women's situation in Yemen and their ability to unite in order to find ways to improve women's lives and build a base of empowerment of women are critical factors that would determine effectiveness of their work for women.

At present, those involved in these women's organizations are predominantly urban, middle-class and college educated. Their activities tend to be concentrated on holding workshops or seminars on wide ranging issues under the broad umbrellas of poverty and human rights. Their style of organization has tended to be formal with several positions, bylaws and so on. Most of these organizations started as top down structures lacking in a mass base. Some have over a period developed presence in their communities but most have not yet done so.

For these organizations to become a women's movement and to continue to expand in the interest of women, they must develop the ability to overcome differences and develop consensus about what and how they would search together. This coming together is the prerequisite for challenging existing

power relations that prevent Yemeni women from articulating their issues publicly and from having a share in the public and private decision-making. This is an attainable task if the women's organizations can bridge the gaps created by different socio-political affiliations, professional and organizational rivalries, and personal aspirations.

Every now and then, through our work and discourses organized by some of these organizations, we come to know variety of ways in which women are oppressed in Yemen. But these organizations are just beginning to toy with the idea of collaborating to act on women's issues. Collaboration is indeed a good very good idea to work with and also one which would hopefully make a few from these organizations stand up and point out the deficit in their credibility to represent all women from bottom up. Most of these organizations have been engaged at the tertiary and policy levels, discussing international instruments and conventions to protect women's human rights, away from the daily struggles of ordinary women in the villages, small towns and of those who stay within the boundaries of their homes. No doubt these instruments are essential for alleviating women's condition in general and acknowledging the fact that these instruments provide the tools to nail down the government on the issue of its obligations but unless the women's organizations demonstrate their ability to reach to ordinary women they can



By: Nisha

not be regarded as representative voices.

It is important, therefore, that these organizations act on the need to relate to all women's needs, beyond demanding gender mainstreaming in policies. Understanding ways in which they could work with the communities at the local levels to raise awareness as well as consciousness about women's rights, and finding immediate solutions for women's day-to-day problems would go a long way in which these organizations can gain representative power.

Collaborating and gaining representational strength means that women's organizations must create those structures that will enable them to move forward in developing their abilities and skills to collaborate and to bring about change on ground. It also means pooling together individual strengths of organizations and working together on their individual weaknesses. This calls for willingness to be open, to accept that individual identities may get submerged into a collective identity and that certain benefits and recognition would come to the women's movement and its campaigns at large but may not come as direct benefits to individual organizations.

Organizing to be a movement also means that women's organizations must have a clear conception for the kinds of change they would struggle for. Women in Yemeni society may be better off than women in many other Arab countries but this does not take

away the fact that women here have a very little share in both public and private decision-making power. Women's organizations can gain support of ordinary women by making small changes that could pave the way for alteration of power relations at home and in public. This means, as a movement, women's organizations should organize around issues that could be addressed quickly and make demands that can be won in the short term. This strategy does not mean ignoring or bypassing long term change needs. It only means dividing time and energy in a way that would make the idea of a women's movement a reality. Short terms gains won together would give the women's organizations the ability to move further and motivate them to take greater challenge as a movement. I feel that absence of visible successes which have been achieved together is a barrier to developing a faith that women's organizations stand a better chance if they are together and women stand a better chance if they have a movement instead of fragmented efforts of several organizations.

The key question apart from the need to come together is determining with women at ground what issues are in the interest of ordinary women and then determining what kinds of reforms are possible. Initiatives to bring the women's organizations and their women members together in a situation of structured interaction and collaborative action, however, must come from the within. Without the need being recognized and acted upon by the women's organizations as matter of their own initiative, a movement is not possible.

The spread of beer, wine and liquor in Yemen

In 1994, and after the civil war that took place between the north and the south, citizens and army troopers together assisted in burning down the Seera Beer Factory of Aden. Sira was the only factory in the country that produced beer, wine, liquor and alcoholic beverages. Many citizens believed that it was the end of the presence of alcohol in Yemen. Ironically 12 years later, more alcohol is being exported and consumed in Yemen than the Aden beer factory could have ever produced.

By: Hakim Almasmari
hakim_almasmari@hotmail.com



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- لطفي المشرفي - احمد ديوه الشرعبي - جميع الزملاء و الاصدقاء .

Palestinian security forces vote in legislative poll

GAZA (Reuters) - Palestinian security forces cast the first ballots on Saturday in the Palestinian Legislative Council election, voting early before the main national poll next week, the first contested by the militant group Hamas.

The security forces are voting from Saturday to Monday to free them for duty on January 25, when Palestinian civilians will cast ballots in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and Arab East Jerusalem, which Israel captured in the 1967 Middle East war and which Palestinians want as capital of a future state.

"This is a very important day for our people because all the parties are participating," said Hisham Saqala, a police officer. "There are many issues that need to be resolved and they will not be resolved except by this election."

At one polling station in a Gaza school, several members from all groups running in the election, including Hamas and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah, monitored voting as officers cast their ballots.

One officer, Nayef Khweitar, said security men would not vote for groups which "opened fire at (police), fired rockets at our police stations and killed officers", referring to lawlessness that has raged in the West Bank and Gaza ahead of the vote.

Saqala and Khweitar said they would vote for Fatah, which is expected to make the strongest gains. Hamas, which is running for seats in the 132-member parliament for the first time, is also expected to garner a strong showing.

Policemen said Hamas had sent campaign leaflets to homes of officers, urging them to vote for the group.

Hamas's popularity
The popularity of Hamas, which is

dedicated to destroying the Jewish state, has grown as a result of the five-year-old Palestinian uprising and Israel's Gaza pullout in September, and amid growing accusations of corruption within Fatah.

Top Hamas leader Ismail Haniyah told supporters on Friday: "We urge our brothers in the Palestinian security services to exercise their right to vote in complete freedom... We assure you that if we win, we will be at your service."

Israel and the United States opposed Hamas's participation in the ballot, the second Palestinian legislative election since 1996, saying Abbas must disarm the group and other militant factions as dictated by a U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan.

Abbas says Israel's military activity against West Bank militants harms efforts by his security forces to control gunmen and combat the lawlessness in the Palestinian territories.

Israel has vowed to continue its West Bank raids against militants after a suicide bomber from Islamic Jihad blew up a Tel Aviv sandwich shop on Thursday.

The bombing posed a challenge for interim Israeli Prime Minister Ehud



A Palestinian militant from the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades fires in the air during a rally in support of Fatah candidates for upcoming Palestinian parliamentary elections, Balata refugee camp near the West Bank city of Nablus Jan. 20. REUTERS

Olmert, who assumed power after Ariel Sharon suffered a stroke on January 4 which has left him comatose. Abbas said the bombing was meant to sabotage the Palestinian vote.

Islamic Jihad, which is not running in the Palestinian elections, has increased its attacks on Israelis in recent months, while other militant groups, including Hamas, have largely halted violence ahead of the legislative ballot.

Bomb wounds 5 on Iraq president's staff

KIRKUK, Iraq (Reuters) - Five members of the Iraqi president's staff were wounded when a roadside bomb struck their motorcade north of Baghdad, police said on Saturday, adding that President Jalal Talabani was not present.

Lieutenant Colonel Abbas Mohammed al-Bayati said the bomb went off as the convoy entered the town of Tuz Khurmatu, 70 km (40 miles) south of the northern oil city of Kirkuk late on Friday. A presidential spokesman declined comment.

Police said an adviser to Talabani was among the wounded, but the extent of his injuries was not known. The convoy had been heading to Baghdad from Kurdistan when it was attacked. Talabani is a Kurd.

Sunni Arab rebels are fighting to overthrow the Shi'ite Islamist- and Kurdish-led government.

Most senior Iraqi officials travel by air as many of Iraq's roads, particularly the main routes leading north out of Baghdad, are too dangerous. The motorcades of Iraqi officials have come under frequent attack.

Sunni Arab rebels were angered by the results of last month's parliamentary elections which confirmed the dominance of the ruling Shi'ite



An Iraqi soldier mans his machinegun at a checkpoint in Baghdad, January 20, 2006. Four bombs hit security patrols in Baghdad on Friday as the city was all but sealed off ahead of the announcement of final election results. REUTERS

Islamist Alliance, accusing the bloc of poll fraud.

Within minutes of the election results being released on Friday, rebels launched mortar attacks on two U.S. bases in the insurgent stronghold of Ramadi, causing minor injuries among U.S. soldiers.

The government on Thursday imposed a 48-hour lockdown on three predominantly Sunni Arab provinces and sealed off Baghdad to guard against insurgent attacks.

The U.S. military had warned they expected a surge in violence when the poll results were released.

Qaeda's Zawahri praises fighters in Afghanistan: Web

DUBAI (Reuters) - Al Qaeda's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahri, praised Islamic fighters in Afghanistan, according to an Internet audiotape posted on Friday, a day after Osama bin Laden warned of attacks in America.

In Washington, a CIA spokeswoman said it was Zawahri's voice on the tape.

A U.S. counterterrorism official initially said the tape was several years old but then retracted the statement, saying that the date of the recording was uncertain.

"I am honored to recite this jihadist poem," Zawahri said, praising mujahideen fighters. "We shall remain true to our oath (with the Afghan mujahideen)."

The message emerged one day after bin Laden, al Qaeda's leader, said the group was preparing attacks in the United States but was open to a conditional truce with the Americans, according to an audiotape attributed to him.

In his 17-minute tape, Zawahri praised an Islamist Afghan poet, Mohebullah Kandahari: "The owner of the sword and pen, who carried both a machine gun and the Koran, known in scholarly circles ... and who could be seen in jihadi arenas from the time of the Russian communist attack on Afghanistan until the crusader raid (led by the United States in 2001)."

The CIA spokeswoman said: "After conducting a technical analysis, the CIA concludes with high confidence that the voice on the tape is that of Ayman al-Zawahri."

The little-known Web site which



A frame grab shows Al Qaeda's second-in-command Ayman al-Zawahri talking in an internet video released Dec. 7. Al Qaeda's second-in-command, Ayman al-Zawahri, praised Islamic fighters in Afghanistan, according to an Internet audio tape posted on Friday. REUTERS

carried the tape said it was new, but the U.S. counter-terrorism official cast doubt on that assertion. "There is no reason to believe it was done recently. It could have been done at any time," the official said.

The United States conducted an air strike in Pakistan last week, which officials said was aimed at Zawahri and in which Pakistani intelligence sources said "a few militants" had been killed.

The last tape attributed to Zawahri was issued earlier this month. He said U.S. President George W. Bush's plans to withdraw troops from Iraq meant Washington had been defeated by the Muslims.

Bin Laden and Zawahri have eluded capture since U.S.-led forces toppled Afghanistan's Taliban government in 2001 after al Qaeda's September 11 attacks on the United States.

Sale of after Islamic gemstone in its final round

SINGAPORE, Jan. 19 - The sale of the much talked about and sought after Islamic gemstone is now in its final rounds in a report issued by the Office of Eli Oliveira. Ever since the Han family made it known that they are going ahead with the sale of their precious heirloom, scores of art collectors, agents and dealers and even some well known museums have indicated their interest in acquiring the prestigious gemstone even though the sale is limited to only those who are invited.

According to the family's close friend Eli Oliveira, CEO and Chairman of the O&S Group who has been asked by the family to manage the sale, "The past six months have been a very busy period for us due to the overwhelming response we got even from those who are not invited. Although many have offered very high prices for the gemstone, to us it is more important that the new owner is some-

one who is a serious collector and truly appreciates the gemstone rather than one who just buy it now to sell it later for a profit. That is why we are taking our time in our decision on who the gemstone may best go to." According to news reports, the highest amount offered for the gemstone is now about USD 100 million but Oliveira declined to comment on who the person is due to the request of the keen buyer to remain anonymous.

The Islamic gemstone is said to be given to a farmer in Cirebon on the island of Java by a mysterious old man in the year 1879, possibly in return for the generosity and benevolence the farmer had shown him over their many years of friendship. Legend has it that in 1850, the old man came by and helped the farmer by removing a large rock pushed down by a group of villains into the stream which the farmer

depended on for his crops with just a prayer. After reciting a prayer, the old man pushed the huge rock hardly with any difficulty, and the farmer was left astounded with what he had seen. It was only after years of friendship did the farmer realize that the old man possessed unexplainable abilities. Twenty nine years later, the old man presented the farmer with a gift wrapped in black cloth and was never seen again. In the cloth was a beautiful looking gemstone that depicted a story, of which is yet unknown. A bearded man with an Turban, seating on a mat in what seems to be a cave, reading. Beside him against the wall, lies a scimitar. When the farmer learned that the depictions had something to do with the Islamic faith, he developed an interest in its studying and eventually was said to have become a Muslim himself. The sale is expected to be finalized by March this year.



The Maternal and Newborn Project (MNH) is in urgent need for the following vacancy:-

POST TITLE: National Logistics Associate / MNH Project
CLOSING DATE: 27 January 2006
DUTY PLACE: Ministry of Public Health and Population (MOPH&P), Extensive (50%) travel expected within and outside Yemen.
DURATION: One year initially (project span 4 years)

Scope: The need for the staff member supporting logistics management for RH commodities was identified and documented under the preparatory phase of the MNH project. In this project the Government of Yemen is supported by a joint UN effort between UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF.

The following constraints related to the supply side of the supply-demand equation have been identified: a poorly organized contraceptives storage and distribution system, shortage of contraceptives resources for existing service points and personnel, lack of assured funding for contraceptive procurement and lack of planning capacity for estimating and costing contraceptive needs over the medium and long term periods.

The successful candidate will enable and assist the Project Manager to quickly and efficiently roll out the following key activities. Increased availability of reproductive health commodities and associated services at Service Delivery Points (SDPs) and among Community Based Distributors(CBD). The position starts from purely assistant's nature of work under the project, which could gradually be transformed into national logistics officer position after the relevant specific training and on-job experience is obtained during the inception phase of the MNH project.

Under the supervision of the MNH Project Manager and the UNFPA office - and working closely with the RH Commodity Manager in the Family Planning Unit of MOPH - the assignment includes the following tasks:

- (1) Assist the project in mapping of the commodity storage and supply deficiencies through support provided to the project manager, international RH commodity logistics consultants and, upon request, RH Commodity Manager of MOPH in facilitating their operations;
- (2) Render assistance in drafting comprehensive logistical plan for each Governorate/District based on each one's specific geography, location of major settlements and transportation routes and hubs and target districts;
- (3) Support international and national consultants in designing and establishing a Logistics Management Information System at central, Governorate and district levels which incorporates data from both supply and performance (service) perspectives in the participating districts and service delivery points;
- (4) Maintain record-keeping and reporting and on the use of the LMIS to appropriate staff at the district, Governorate and central level;
- (5) Conduct physical inventories of UNFPA supplied RH consumables at storages/warehouses in the governorate health departments, district hospitals and health centers for the project records and analysis. This will be carried out in close consultations with relevant MOPH staff at all levels;
- (6) Assist MOPH and UNFPA in the process of competitive selection of the RH commodity distributor.
- (7) Support MOPH and international consultants in development and implementation of the distribution schemes under the guidance of the Project Manager, UNFPA Office and in collaboration with RH Commodity Manager of MOPH. Maintain monthly records and recommendations for the logistics flow and the infrastructure for UNFPA records.
- (8) Maintain ability to operate the future LMIS computer programme and, possibly the network system that is to be developed under the project.
- (9) Assist UNFPA and Population sector in conducting RH commodity security group meetings.
- (10) Perform other duties relevant to the project upon request of MNH project and UNFPA office management.

Job Requirements:
Academic Requirements:
Bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, finance, information technology, economics or related field is preferable.

Experience:
7 years of relevant experience in the public or private sector.

Languages:
Fluency in oral and written Arabic and English. Qualifications and Experience Required:

Other Desirable Skills:
Basic computer skills; proficiency in a second official UNFPA language of the region/country; good negotiation skills; ability to communicate effectively by radio

Note:

1. The TOR could be upgraded to the level of the Project Logistics Expert by the completion of the inception phase of the project and in view of project delivery requirements and environment. If so, the incumbent will have to undergo the new job description matching exercise.
2. preference would be given for those able to take the post immediately

Please note that only candidates who fulfill above requirements will be considered and notified.

White House rejects Democrats on spy program

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The White House on Friday rejected Democratic complaints about President George W. Bush's domestic eavesdropping program and prepared a high-profile campaign next week to defend it ahead of a Senate hearing.

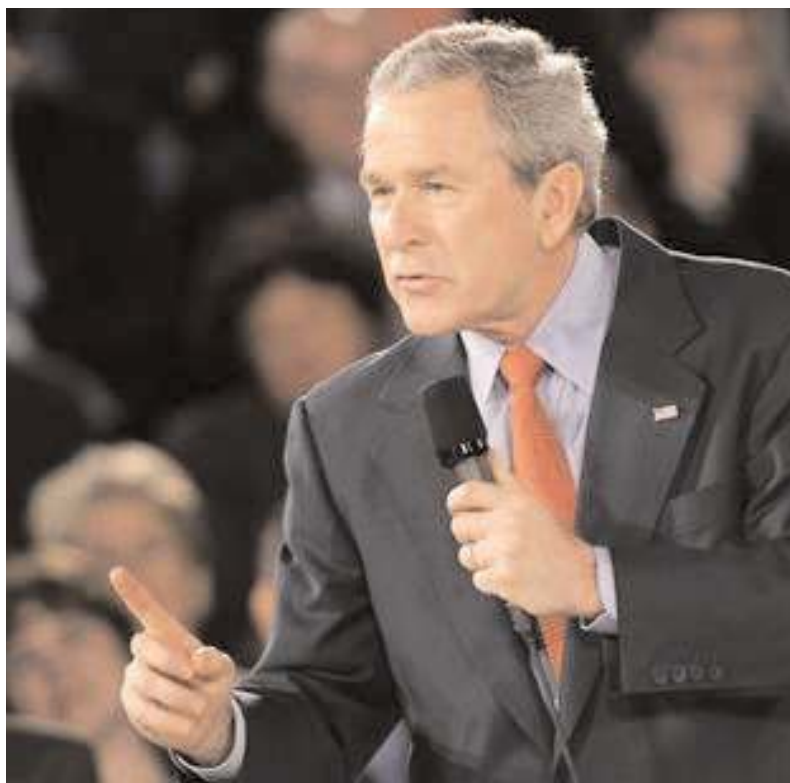
Bush will visit the National Security Agency on Wednesday as part of the effort. Air Force Gen. Michael Hayden, former head of the NSA, will make a speech at the National Press Club on Monday and Attorney General Alberto Gonzales will speak on Tuesday.

Bush is under fire over the highly classified eavesdropping program. It allows the government to bypass warrant requirements and monitor communications, such as e-mail and telephone calls, into and out of the United States by people believed linked to al Qaeda or related terrorist groups.

Democrats contend Bush is overstepping his constitutional powers by approving domestic spying and some Republicans have expressed concerns about it as well.

"Let me be as clear as I can be: President Bush believes if al Qaeda is calling somebody in America, it is in our national security interests to know who they're calling and why," said Deputy White House Chief of Staff Karl Rove, Bush's top political adviser.

Speaking to the Republican National Committee's winter meeting, Rove denounced Democrats for opposing the program with "wild and reckless and false charges" against Bush and said they are living in a pre-September 11



President Bush speaks about the economy during a visit to a moving-and-storage company in Virginia, Jan. 19. REUTERS

world.

"That doesn't make them unpatriotic, not at all," Rove said. "But it does make them wrong, wrong deeply and profoundly and consistently."

As part of the stepped-up effort, several members of Congress attended a classified briefing at the White House, including California Democratic Rep. Jane Harman, a

member of the House of Representatives Intelligence Committee.

Senate hearing

The defense is timed to lay out the administration's case ahead of a Senate Judiciary Committee meeting on February 6 that is to delve into whether Bush has the authority to carry out the

program.

Harman told CNN Congress needs wider briefings and must determine whether a 1978 law against domestic spying is being followed and if not whether it needs to be changed.

Bush and his aides say sufficient authority lies in the president's oath of office in the Constitution that requires he defend and protect the United States.

Besides Bush's constitutional power as commander in chief, the White House says the authorization of military force by the U.S. Congress after the September 11 attacks gave Bush the authority for the domestic surveillance.

Two Senate Democrats, Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and Patrick Leahy of Vermont, introduced a resolution rejecting the notion that the post-September 11 action could be construed as approval for warrantless eavesdropping.

"If President Bush can make his own rules for domestic surveillance, Big Brother has run amok," Kennedy said. "We need a thorough investigation of these activities. Congress and the American people deserve answers, and they deserve answers now."

Polls show a split among the public. A Washington Post-ABC News poll last week found 51 percent favored the program as a way to fight terrorism, while 47 percent did not. A Pew Research Center poll found 48 percent of respondents thought Bush's actions were generally right and 47 percent thought they were generally wrong.

The 1978 law, the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, makes it illegal to spy on U.S. citizens in the United States without the approval of a special secret court. Bush secretly gave the NSA authority to intercept the communications without such approval.

Africa split over Sudan's bid to head AU

KHARTOUM (Reuters) - African nations were split on Saturday over Khartoum's bid to head the African Union, a move which could scuttle peace talks in Sudan's Darfur region and damage Africa's efforts to improve its image abroad.

Khartoum, which is under fire for human rights abuses, is hosting a two-day AU summit starting on Monday. Sudan is seeking to take over from Nigeria as chairman, based on a tradition that the summit host becomes the next head.

Sudan says it has East Africa's backing in the AU, where nations tend to work in blocs. But diplomats said southern, central and western African states were still undecided.

"This risks dividing Africa," said one West African government official, asking not to be named. "One of the options that the regional bodies could propose to the heads of state is asking Sudan to withdraw its candidature."

Sudan is the only country to have nominated itself for the position so far and a Sudanese official said his government would not withdraw.

"Sudan is definitely going to win the support of the African heads of state," Ali Tamim Fartak, Sudanese presidential adviser, told Reuters.

But diplomats said another candidate could emerge or a decision could be deferred, leaving Nigeria to continue as head.

Consultations

The 53-nation AU, set up in 2002 to encourage democracy, development and human rights

across Africa, has won plaudits for sending peacekeepers to Darfur and promoting better governance through a peer review system of African countries.

Analysts say this good work could be undone by choosing Sudan as head when a 7,000-strong AU force is monitoring a shaky ceasefire in Darfur and when the government faces widespread criticism for its handling of the conflict there.

One southern African diplomat said his country was against Sudan's bid, but would vote with whatever the southern bloc decided. "These consultations will be held at the level of the heads of state," he said.

The United States, which has put pressure on Sudan to end fighting in Darfur, said there would be "certain contradictions" if Sudan was chosen when the AU force was trying to protect Sudanese citizens "in part from the government of Sudan".

Darfur's two main rebel groups have said they would quit AU-sponsored peace talks in Abuja if Sudan becomes head, although Sudan says Nigeria would still host the talks even if it was no longer chairing the AU.

One official said the AU presidency was supposed to be chosen by a vote, but Mohamed Ibn Chambas, executive secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), said heads of state should reach a consensus to avoid a split.

"We don't think that this issue should be allowed to divide Africa," he said.

Afghan protesters denounce bombings, Pakistan

GHAZNI, Afghanistan (Reuters) - Hundreds of Afghans staged a protest on Saturday to denounce a wave of suicide bomb attacks, with many of the protesters blaming neighboring Pakistan for the violence.

"We condemn these suicide attacks," protesters shouted outside the provincial governor's offices in the city of Ghazni, 140 km (90 miles) south of the capital, Kabul.

There have been 13 suicide blasts since November, the worst last Monday when 23 people were killed in the town of Spin Boldak, on the border with Pakistan.

The government blames foreign al Qaeda and Taliban supporters for the violence.

U.S. forces in Afghanistan say the bombings show the insurgents are becoming increasingly desperate, after suffering heavy losses in their guerrilla campaign last year, and are now going after soft targets.

Security analysts suspect the Taliban have stepped up suicide attacks after seeing al Qaeda's success in Iraq.

Many ordinary Afghans blame Pakistan, which backed the Taliban before the September 11 attacks on the United States, for the violence.

"Death to Pakistan, death to ISI," the protesters shouted on Saturday, referring to Pakistan's main Inter-Services Intelligence agency.

"The U.N. should stop Pakistan from interfering in Afghanistan," Qari Baba, a former governor of Ghazni province, told the crowd.

Pakistan, an important ally in the U.S.-led war on terrorism, rejects accusations that Afghan insurgents get help on the Pakistani side of the border.

It says it has reinforced the border to prevent militants from crossing back and forth but a small number might be able to slip through the porous frontier.

Huge bomb defused

On Monday, shortly before the suicide blast in Spin Boldak, a suicide bomber threw himself in front of an Afghan army vehicle in the southern city of Kandahar, killing three soldiers and two civilians.

An apparent suicide attack on a Canadian military convoy in Kandahar last Sunday killed a Canadian foreign affairs official and two Afghans.

On Thursday, Canadian forces in Kandahar dismantled a huge car bomb.

The improvised bomb, consisting of a dozen 122 mm mortar bombs and other explosives, would have caused significant damage had it gone off, said Captain Francois Giroux, a spokesman for Canadian forces in the southern city.

The bomb took 10 hours to defuse but Giroux declined to give details of the device, saying it was under investigation.

The attacks have come as the United States hopes to cut back its troop strength in Afghanistan from about 18,000 to 16,500 in the next few months.

Members of NATO, who have an Afghan peacekeeping force of nearly 10,000, are due to increase their numbers to 15,000 and take over responsibilities from U.S. forces in the restive south.

But the plan has been thrown into limbo by Dutch doubts about sending 1,200 soldiers to a region far more dangerous than the north, west and Kabul, where the NATO peacekeeping force now operates.

The government says the insurgents appear to be trying to frighten NATO members from their expansion and to unsettle Afghanistan's foreign backers who will meet in London at the end of the month to draw up a long-term plan to help the country.



Job Vacancy

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

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The position is located in the Public Diplomacy Office, American Embassy, under the general supervision of the Public Affairs Officer (PAO) and Assistant Public Affairs Officer (A/PAO). Incumbent will serve as the senior FSN advisor and specialist to the Public Affairs Officer and the A/PAO in planning and implementing Embassy Sana'a information media and journalist programs and is the Mission's primary source for information on Yemeni media trends.

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How to apply: Interested applicants should complete OF-612 or submit a current C.V. (with awards, recommendation letters, copies of degrees earned) that addresses the qualification requirements of the position as listed above and contact the Embassy Human Resources, American Embassy, Dhahr Himyar Street, Sanaa. Tel: 755-2050 & Fax No. 303-182, no later than January 30, 2006.

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Words of Wisdom



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

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

OUR
OPINIONDo women make
better leaders?

A recent BBC poll came up with this question after voters in Chile, Germany and Liberia recently elected their first female heads of state. Liberia's Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf is Africa's first elected female president. Michelle Bachelet is Chile's first elected female president and could be considered the first successful president in South America. The only relatively similar experience in North America was in Canada where Kim Campbell was elected prime minister in 1993 but ousted just six months later. There are speculations that Hillary Clinton will be hard to beat in the 2008 U.S. presidential elections. Europe is full of examples of female leaders: Britain had Margaret Thatcher, Germany has Angela Merkel and France could get lucky with Segolene Royal. Tansu Çiller was Turkey's only female prime minister, not to mention popular female presidents in Finland and Norway. Asia has had many experiences with powerful women: India, Pakistan, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sri Lanka. The only country in the Middle East with a potential female rising star is recently-appointed Israeli Foreign Minister Zippi Livni. Iran has had its share of powerful females, beginning in 1951 with its first female ambassador, Mehrangiz Dawlatshahi. Eight women nominated themselves as candidates in the 1997 Iranian presidential elections, but the Council of Guardians rejected them all.

However, women in the Arab world have not had their fair chance to participate effectively in politics. For example, Yemen has witnessed several attempts by women to participate in the political sphere yet, many times, their attempts were aborted or paralyzed. The common complaint is that Yemen's socio-political system is not yet ready to accept women leaders. Still, if Yemeni women did get the chance to become national leaders, would they make better leaders than men? Today, the world seems to be recognizing women's leadership abilities more than ever. Will this trend affect Yemen's system now that a new government is about to be restructured in less than eight months? Especially since the only female minister, Amat Al-Aleem Al-Sosowa, is heading to New York to work with the United Nations, vacating her Yemeni government post. Moreover, the only female ambassador is Yemen's ambassador to Turkey, Nouria Al-Hamami. Unfortunately, there were more names and positions held by women in the past. Some say this is because Yemeni women cannot get together for the same cause. Apparently, according to a number of political analysts, Yemen's women's movement has not developed and evolved enough to promote women's leadership and encourage them to compete with men. So the question will remain unanswered in our country until such a movement develops or the quota system is enforced, as demanded by the country's women's organizations.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf
Editor-in-Chief



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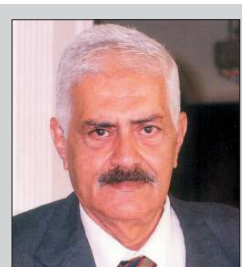
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Why the uncalled-for
interference in Syria?

By: Prof.
Abdulaziz al-Tarb

Syria is not unaware of the fact that there is an American political agenda progressing with steady steps to the end of laying siege to Syria, isolate and impose sanctions on it. Syria fully comprehends that the Bush administration relates that to what goes on in the region more than linking it to Mehli's report which certainly helped the American agenda. The Bush administration was planning the targeting of Syria even before the assassination of the Lebanese ex-prime minister Hariri and the formation of the international investigating committee under the UN Security Council Resolution 1595.

America began its actual provocation against Syria since it had invaded Iraq. It had delegated Colin Powell, its then secretary of State on a visit to Syria on May 2, 2003. Powell's visit coincided with appointment of Paul Bremer as High Commissioner in Iraq and with dividing Iraq into three security zones. Powell's visit also came at time when Bush administration was in dire need of the Syrian support. Therefore, Powell had then submitted a group of demands to Syria and they actually were a number of dictates. In the first place was the support for the American occupation of Iraq through putting an end to the resistance. Other demands were that Syria lifts its hand from Lebanon, to help disarmament of Hezbollah and closure of Palestinian fac-

tions' offices in Damascus. When Damascus had not responded to those dictates and did not meet the demands that contradict Syria's constants, America started a fierce war on Syria and used all kinds of maneuvers. Those provocative maneuvers could be traced as beginning from the Syria Accountability Act, through imposition of sanctions on Syria and the attempt of its isolation and ending with the UN resolution 1559, which France had participated in passing it. The resolution obliged Syria to withdraw Lebanon. That resolution was followed with the UN resolution 1595 that stipulated the formation of the international investigation committee into Hariri assassination, chaired by investigator Mehli's and it was followed with resolution 1636 that granted Mehli's unlimited authorities. It was inevitable to set in motion the American-Zionist scheme with the maneuver of Hariri assassination on 14 February 2005. The timing has implied indication of targeting Lebanon and Syria together. The plot succeeded and Hariri assassination had led to sabotage the relationship between the two neighboring countries and further resulted in causing schism inside the Lebanese politics embodied by one side supporting Syria and another against it.

Syria had pulled out of Lebanon but

that was not satisfactory enough for America because it wants more than that. America wants to eliminate any relation between the two countries in prelude to impose international mandate on Lebanon. America wanted to take vengeance for Syria's non-abiding by its demands that were submitted by Powell in May 2003. Israel on its part wanted to punish Syria for its support for Hezbollah, representing the Lebanese resistance that forced the Zionist state to withdraw from Lebanon on May 24, 2000.

The major objective is to besiege Syria and isolate it. America and Israel intend to gain their single leverage on Lebanon to realize more than one deal, mainly to put squeeze on Syria. America and Israel intend to bury alive Hezbollah, destroy the Palestinian resistance, and pave the way for imposing international guardianship on Lebanon. The maneuver has not come to a halt and the scheme has not yet achieved all its goals.

The question is when the region and the Arab and Muslim leaders would read comprehensively this scenario and get prepared for adoption of plans to resist it, so that Syria could not be left alone or to avoid the scenario being extended to another country?

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Tarb is an economist and a professor in Political Science and an expert in administrative development. He is the head of a number of professional associations, such as the Arab Group for Investment and Development.

Education system in Yemen

By: Kelly C. Wentworth
kcwentworth@myway.com

When studying Islamic history, especially during the time of Islamic expansion, one thing that always struck me was how well Muslims adapted to the new environments they encountered. They adapted without losing the core of their beliefs and culture. In your article entitled, "Yemeni American Women Striving for Education", Ms. Ali seems to have lost some spirit of this. In my opinion, she also, however unintentionally, misrepresents America in general, especially in regards to her perceived notion of culture and education.

American culture is not some "Western" behemoth that is an unreachable goal for outsiders. On the contrary, since the number of foreign-born individuals has reached 35.2 million people and make up for over 12.1 percent of the population, according to a recent Center for Immigration Studies Report (2005), there can be no set "American culture", as such influences would logically create a more dynamic than stagnant culture. If there are 700,000 Yemenis living in the U.S. as Ms. Ali states, then they too could have an amazing impact on American culture. If people in her area are having trouble with someone living in the bounds of their native culture, then I suggest reaching out to those neighbors and educating them on why one would choose to follow one's own culture rather than having to fully become part of the majority culture.

Americans, in general, are surprisingly open and curious about other cultures, especially ones that are very different from what they are used to experiencing. On the other hand, it is important not to become culturally isolated, especially in a place that allows for and has the opportunity to experience so many different traditions.

While education is an important factor in being successful in American culture, it

is not a necessity. Bill Gates, founder of Microsoft and one of the richest men in the world, is a familiar example. He became a success despite having dropped out of college before completing his degree. I am not trying to downplay what I see as the importance of a good, basic education, but not all people seem to benefit from a traditional education. The nice part about the U.S. is if you have the drive and motivation, then you can succeed without education or even social status. Contrast that to Yemen, where even if one has completed a doctorate or beyond, one is not guaranteed a stable, good-paying job. Having been a former resident of Yemen, I have witnessed this first hand many times. Oftentimes, one is even further limited because of social status or even skin color. Ms. Ali did touch on this in her interview, but seemed to only emphasize success for those who have an education.

Being a Muslim woman leader in the U.S. is not an impossible endeavor either. There are many groups, such as the Muslim Women's League and Azizah Magazine, which work hard to promote Muslim women leaders. I have often seen examples of Muslim women being unable to pursue leadership in the U.S. because of pressure from their own cultural and religious groups. If a person, whether man or woman, wants to pursue a leadership position in the U.S., then there are many groups, Muslim and non-Muslim, that allow for such a thing. I encourage Ms. Ali and others similar to her to do a little research and get involved in such organizations.

Also, if there is an activity that one finds objectionable to her religious and/or cultural boundaries being offered to her children, then she could do what many groups and individuals do in the U.S., which is either try to change it or offer an alternative. When one's children are face with prom, for example, one could offer to throw a prom alternative party that is more in-line with one's tradition. You might even be surprised as to how many

of your neighbors might like to participate in such an activity!

When I lived in Yemen, I observed that when it came to basics, American families and Yemeni families were much more similar than different. I do not know where Ms. Ali lives in the U.S., but in my area of the country, the values taught to American children are very close to those taught to children brought up in Islamic households. There are, again, several groups that would help her foster pride in her children not only in the American culture, but also in the Yemeni and Islamic cultures. Muslim Scouts, which are connected to the international Scouts programs in the U.S. and elsewhere, is one group that is great for such a goal. If there is not such a group in Ms. Ali's area, then she could either start a Muslim Scouts group or some other group that would help her foster support for the family's different cultures.

Balancing life as a working mother is also not an impossible endeavor in the U.S. There are often working mother groups that help support those who must work and without encroaching too much on a touchy cultural issue, in a household where both spouses work, it should be natural for the man to help in such things. Islam's own Prophet Mohammed, often helped in such matters, according to traditions ascribed to him. There are also many areas of the U.S. that have a nice enough standard of living where a couple can live comfortably without having to have both spouses working. There are many families that have chosen this way and have done well.

I applaud Ms. Ali's efforts to promote education among Yemenis both inside and outside of the Yemeni community. In promoting education, however, one should do their best not to promote already harmful stereotypes that many Yemeni people hold against American people, and vice versa. It is by finding the similarities in the differences between two cultures that one can ultimately hope to promote education and understanding.

Letters to the Editor

Yemen a holiday
destination

I just started reading and learning about your country, via the website BBC World News, with the idea of possibly making it my holiday destination next year.

I do not know the details as to why the motorcyclists are not allowed to use their vehicle for business reasons. But when the owner is duly licensed and taxed, he or she should be able to make a living with it. I recently returned from India, where I hired the

services of a nice man with a motorcycle. Together we toured the country. I had a wonderful journey and the money I paid him for his services during my three weeks holiday, amounted to a sum he would have had a difficult time earning were it not for his old but very reliable motorcycle.

I am a tourist who believes in sharing my money with local people, rather than giving it to overseas travel agencies.

I hope Yemeni people will soon be allowed the privilege of making a living!

And maybe I will experience the beauty of your country.

Mia Venster
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Bin Laden's Truce

Although bin Laden has offered Bush a truce, the conditions of the truce would result in the loss of income for Bush's friends. Presently, the occupation of Iraq has created hundreds and perhaps thousands of millionaires - all of them Bush's friends and, in turn, much money from these

friends will be donated back to Bush and Cheney. Also, the majority of the US population still favors the continuation of the occupation by Bush's mercenary forces.

The occupation of Iraq is a goldmine for the Bush administration and, even if bin Laden were to surrender, the occupation would continue for years to come.

Nothing can stop Bush in his desire to destroy the Moslem world. Nothing except thousands more suicide bombers.

Robert Lindh
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COMMON
SENSE

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

*Notwithstanding the
apologies of the evangelists:*

There is no sympathy
for Sharon here

Many people would think that this is really a mean statement to say and that this comes out of sheer hatred and lack of human feeling. As far as the majority of Arabs are concerned Ariel Sharon was absent of human feeling almost all his life with respect to Arabs in general and Palestinians, in particular. Sharon was responsible for a lot of the dirty work of Zionist dogmatists, who sought to cleanse the Holy Land of any of its indigenous residents. In more simpler words, Sharon's hands were stained with Arab blood - particularly those of helpless unarmed civilians, or even unarmed soldiers who have surrendered to the "Israeli Defense Forces", in Sinai and other places. Even conscientious Israelis saw in Ariel Sharon a mean dogmatist and after he engineered the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian camp massacres in Lebanon, some 400,000 Israelis demonstrated demanding that the Israeli Government remove him from his position as Minister of Defense then and hold him accountable for the death of so many innocent unarmed men, women and children (the massacre took place in December 1982 and took the lives of some 1,500 Palestinians killed in their sleep, by Lebanese agents sent by no other than Ariel Sharon). Just when there was some hope that Ariel Sharon was indeed going to be called to questioning by an independent Court in Belgium, under a Belgian Law that permits bringing international criminals against humanity to be tried in Belgium, the latter was called off due to some heavy pressure on poor Belgium by the United States and the assassination of the man who was going to be the star witness in the case. Eli Hobeika, the Lebanese Commander of the Lebanese Maronite militias that were ordered by Sharon to go into the camp "to look for Palestine Liberation Organization militiamen", as Sharon was later to unabashedly admit, was blown to pieces by a "mysterious" bomb that was placed in his car. This was right after he was ready to testify that indeed he acted under orders from Ariel Sharon to carry out the massacre. As if that was not enough, the United States put on its pressure machine and literally forced the case to be suspended by the Belgian Justice Department. Talk about protecting terrorists. This was in the early days of Sharon's Premiership in the early years of the new Millennium! Just for the record, Sharon was also responsible, directly or indirectly, for engineering, or creating the conditions for also the following massacres in Lebanon: Black Saturday-Karantina Massacre-Damour massacre-Tel al-Zaatar Massacre-War of the Camps.

Ariel Sharon has a long history of what most Arabs, especially the Palestinians, see as criminal activity, especially against innocent human beings, who were already refugees of a previous forced displacement from their original homes, as well as having partaken in the killing of Arab soldiers, who were already prisoners of war. This is something known to every Arab in the street and there is no educational background required for hating a man who hates your people so much. Yet, one is surprised that if so many Israelis in the early 1980s came out to the streets to protest against Ariel Sharon as Defense Minister, why did they "vote" him into office in the early part of this Century and have literally given him a full mandate to do whatever he likes in the West Bank and Gaza, except make peace with the Palestinians. Many think that the election of President George W. Bush had a lot to do with it. George W. Bush, as Governor of Texas, had gone to Israel in 1998 and Ariel Sharon then was his escort and guide. It seemed that they had a lot of mutual ideas to exchange and obviously both had mutual plans drawn up for their coming ascent into the leadership of their respective countries.

Back a few decades ago, Ariel Sharon was noticed quite early by the "founding father" of Israel, David Ben Gurion, after displaying his unabashed militant Zionist inclinations and the latter did not hesitate to bring the young fanatical Zionist into his own care and custody to further strengthen the ideological tendencies of this promising "hero", when he heard about the kinds of sadistic tendencies that Ariel Sharon had against innocent Arab citizens. Ever since then, Sharon was well protected by the international Zionist establishment, no matter what he did.

One is truly amazed to watch the US coverage of the Israeli Prime Minister's latest illness and how little mention, if any, is ever given of the black record that Sharon has accumulated over the years. On the contrary there were efforts made to paint the man as having turned to the only "hope for peace", as he has shown by his unilateral decision to get the settlements out of Gaza. Nothing could be further than the truth. If you ask anyone in Gaza, they will tell you that not much has changed since the Israelis "withdrew", as they are confronted with daily killings, encroachments, assaults and what have you, to make life as miserable for the residents of Gaza as possible. Not to mention that the withdrawal from Gaza was never going to be complete anyway as a "security buffer" is now being permanently annexed to Israel. On the other hand, Ariel Sharon killed all the steps that have been achieved in more than a decade of negotiations between the Palestinians and Israelis, with international backing, including American deep involvement, that almost culminated in a final peace accord. Sharon was not ready yet for that at all, as he had plans for the West Bank that, for all intents and purposes left the Palestinians with little left to form a state of any kind. Even that which is left is going to be broken up into little pockets here and there with the Israelis in full control of the air, sea and ground access to any of these pockets. In other words, Sharon has turned the remaining parts of Arab Palestine into several prisons, wherein life would be so miserable for the Palestinians, that by sheer logic frustration is bound to keep the region in heat for some time to come. With American blind support to Sharon, the Holy Land is far from being the haven of peaceful coexistence, originally envisioned by the several negotiators who took part in the peace process, before the unpaved "road map" washed all those efforts aside. Just to add more of the bloody taints on Sharon, under Sharon, Israeli troops and Caterpillar tractors killed more international reporters and peace activists than at any other time in Israel's black history. Among the casualties: the American activist martyr Rachel Corrie, God have mercy on her soul, and CNN's Ben Wedemeyer, who was shot in the back, but thanks to the Almighty, miraculously survived. How can any conscientious human being find any sympathy for a man with such a blood stained record?

Hassan Al-Haifi has been a Yemeni political economist and journalist for more than 20 years.

Yemen Press Review

By: Mohammed Khidhr



As-Sahwa weekly
19 Jan. 2006

Main headlines

- Islah party: Rima elections flagrant falsification of the people will, we will think before participation in any future democratic process
- GPC government inaugurates the New Year with rise in prices
- Islah sends condolences on Kuwait's Emir Decease
- Amid official secrecy, confrontations between Al-Huthi supporters and government forces renewed in Saada
- International report, no economic freedom and corruption a Yemeni outstanding problem
- Urgent need to change it, Elections supreme Commission biased to the ruling party
- Teachers Union Higher Council holds session to take decision regarding resuming of protests
- Head of Health Committee accuses the government of negligence, demands for preventive measures against bird flu
- The government refers the free zone agreement to the parliament

Columnist Zaid al-Shami says in his article that advocates of reform mostly stick to the right and sacrifice for it but in most cases do not care about what comes after that. They may win and achieve their goals in removing the wrong and then leave the stage of life to others. In many cases, opportunists would come forward to invest efforts of the strugglers and believers in principles and noble values to resume making of falsity anew and thus efforts of reformers go in vain.

Owners of calls and principles self-denial towards taking part in building the life and establishment of the state is a kind of improper self-denial. It might be an escape from shouldering the responsibility. It is illogical that the sincere should escape and should not give in to pressures of accusations that make them distance themselves. Success is made by facing the reality and overcoming of desires and instincts of the self. Power is not a target by itself but rather the most successful and powerful means for the realization of principles and service of the society. And this is a question very difficult to be carried out by individuals, groups or political parties whatever their capabilities were.

We hear nowadays some call show-

ing pity and keenness towards Islamic movements taking part in the political life under the assumption that they would submerge their brilliant struggling history and would be unable to achieve something on the ground. This opinion I see as unwise. For instance, no one can question the strife of Hamas movement in resisting the occupation, as one of the fruits of that resistance was withdrawal of the Israeli occupation from Gaza Strip. Is then a shame for Hamas to participate today in the political life and the task of building and construction?



Ath-Thawri weekly
Organ of the YSP19 Jan. 2006

Main headlines

- The Washington Post: Yemen tribes, poverty, bullets and absent development
- YSP assistant secretary-general stresses the party stand regarding the case of Jarallah Omar assassination
- Political and social organizations in Aden denounce closure of Radafan Society and freezing of its assets
- Trial of defendants in kidnapping 5 Italian tourists in Mareb, begins
- Names of children registered in voters' record
- Employees of Hudeida Land Office begin open strike

On the Joint Meeting Parties initiative for the political reform, columnist Najib Abdulrahman Saeed writes saying at last the parties of the JMP have presented their vision of the reform of the political situation through an initiative called initiative for the comprehensive political reform. My concern here is not to study or analyze what the initiative has contained but rather I would try to read it and deduce its implications.

The initiative bears more than one indication and introduces important things mainly:

- The opposition parties have put their foot on the right course of true opposition away from courtesies or fear or ambition. The proof are the subjects it has presented including constitutional reforms, accountability of the president of the republic and his authorities, calling for reducing them, the necessity of the army and security forces being under responsibility of the cabinet.
- The opposition parties have given priority to the national interest against

all partisan or personal interests, taking forward steps and realized lessons of the past.

- Touching on the issue of removing sequels of the 1994war as a demanded question in the reform of the political situation in Yemen is considered a strategic dimension of this initiative.

- Introduction of the initiative under the present social, economic and political circumstances that are leading to comprehensive deterioration in institutions of the state have founded an essential basis for the initiative, marginalizing the value of he past differences.

Success or failure of this initiative depends on the extent of the opposition power of firmness in protecting its alignment and resisting all upcoming temptations. The opposition has to stage a peaceful struggle for the sake of translating it realistically.

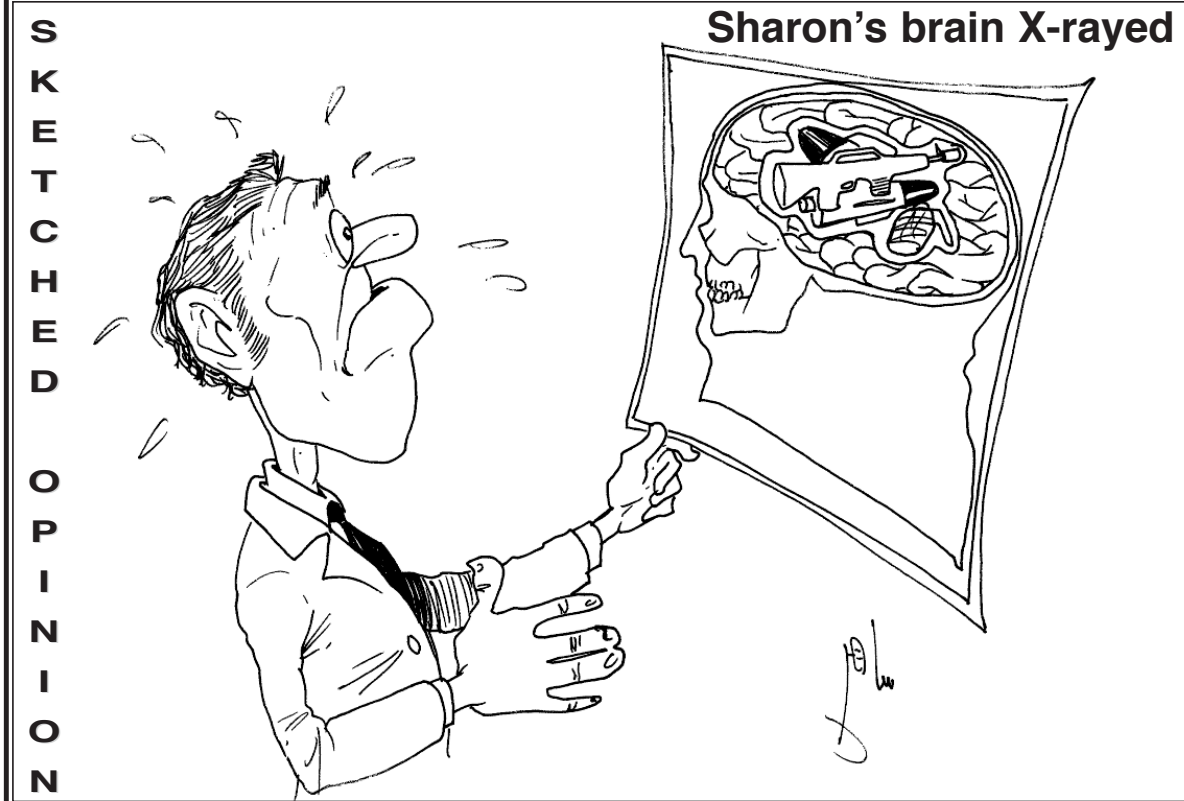


Al-Mithaq weekly
Organ of the General People's Congress
16 Jan.2006

Main headlines

- The president left for Kuwait to offer condolences on the decease of Emir of Kuwait Sheikh Jaber Al-Sabah
- With participation of Journalists syndicate, The Shoura Council discusses the press draft law
- Suggestions for developing the freedom of the press
- Political parties dialogue resumes next week, the higher committee sets alternative if dispute is not settled
- Ambassadors of European Union and Japan say flow of tourists to continue, the Yemeni people have depicted a real image of their utter refusal of kidnapping incidents
- Container port in Aden to be converted into international station

Remarks on the new year is the title of an article by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh in which he says the Arab human existence is no longer forming something important for the world and all his role is represented by his being a first-class consumer. The writer presents his second remark that says the Arab regimes that succeeded to ruling the Arab homeland in the twentieth century have not been able to work out a project for the national renaissance in which the citizen would take part for its achievement. Time is measured by



accomplishments achieved by peoples who in turn define the extent of their development and response to the internal and external challenges. The writer's third remark says that we as a nation have lived for a long time accustomed to a culture of praising and derision. We extol those we love though they do not deserve it and deride who we hate even if they do not deserve it. Out of this deep-rooted culture in the Arab conscience, we began to look at the passing years either from a perspective of being bad and dark or good and white without subjecting our judgments to the logic of reason and analysis. The fourth remark is about the high profile information that last year spread widely. This has included more than one Arab country mainly Egypt and Lebanon. It is the orientation of welcoming the political solution at the hands of the foreigner. It has injured the Arab intellectual, formed a shock to the public, and made the people more and more skeptical of stances of the intellectuals, considering them all propagating for occupation and they are no longer advocates of freedom and revolt against all that threatens independence and sovereignty.



26 September weekly
Organ if the Yemen Armed Forces
19 Jan. 2006.

Main headlines

- In a phone conversation with Arab League Secretary-General, President Saleh calls for speeding up Arab commitments towards building the Somali state
- Yemen refuses military option, calls for dialogue and diplomatic language in dealing with Iranian

nuclear file

- In the trial of Italian tourists kidnapping, prosecution accuses kidnappers of forming an armed gang for kidnapping foreigners

The newspaper has devoted its editorial to Yemen's efforts with regard to Arab efforts for a serious support for peace and stability in Somalia. Yemen's efforts spring from deep realization of the importance of bringing to success efforts exerted for reconciliation among the Somali factions of conflict.

Stability in Somalia acquires Arab and international dimension but the Arab support is the most imperative dictated by fraternity and neighborhood. Above that is the importance of this African country restoration of its healthy identity especially under the present difficult and complicated circumstances. In this context come Yemen's efforts for overcoming difficulties facing Somali reconciliation, bearing in mind however big the efforts are could not make be alternative to any Arab collective effort to help Somalia seriously to surmount its crisis.



Aden: the potential of promising city

Many people flock to the city of Aden, mainly during the Eid vacations to enjoy its beauty and nice climate. I dropped to Aden during this Eid holiday. I was full of hope and optimism while going around with my wife and kids in the streets of the city. I remembered what Robert Hundle, former World Bank country representative, told me when I interviewed him some years ago. He said that Yemen's future lies in Aden and its port which was during the British rule the second important port in the world. Hundle was questioning and showing worry over the future of the country after the oil runs out. He stressed it is only the investment of the Aden port that can be a potential source of income.

This is completely true as the port can be a good source of income to the country's national economy if attention is given to it by the people in charge. Aden, as city of civilized people, has a promising future. I have seen and felt that during my last visit, maybe because of the wonderful weather which gave the chance to explore the beauty of the city. However, everybody can really notice and feel the change that city is going through. It is growing and expanding; it is also becoming cleaner and cleaner for which we should give a round of applause to the hardworking governor Yahia al-Shuaibi.

Truly, the man needs the thanks and support of all for his good job to be able to work further. But, the man who commands the respect of a lot of the people nationwide can not work further without having the support of the big guys at the power center. Al-Shuaibi should be given the authority to whip out all illegal constructions to build by influential guys who do not respect any law expect that of power and influence. We have heard a lot of stories about the looting of big chunks of land by military and tribal figures even in important positions on the sea shore. This chaos of building without following the design of the city and looting of pieces of lands of the ordinary citizens should stop. Also, the constructions in the new areas of the city should be done according to designs and not randomly.

One of the reasons why the World Bank cut its support to Yemen by 34% is that the failure of the government to create a good environment for investment. Yes, investments guys. There is no way for this people to improve their living standards expect through foreign investments operating in the country. The regime should not bet on the support of the donors or the joining of the Gulf Cooperation Council. It should work harder to bring foreign investments into the country. This, of course, will not take place without the rule of law, fair and independent judiciary and security. Foreign investors need to feel that their money safe.

As I said earlier, everybody see the promising future of Aden which can concretize, if the people in charge work to that end. Let us cross our fingers in the hope that our officials are now more aware of this fact and work accordingly.

Another point that I would like to strike here is the harassment exercised by some policemen against the people. I visited Taiz before the Eid. While I was driving my car with the company of my wife and little daughter, I was chased up by a police car which I was not aware of. The policemen stopped me and asked me to step down from car. I was asked to follow them to the car which I refused before knowing why. The guy said: "we have reports on a missing car." I showed him the ownership documents and even my press card. They left. I thought they were right and doing their job. But, the people in the area complained to me the harassment of the same car moving around in Kalabah and Usaifrah areas, mainly at night. They stop everybody driving a car with a woman and start questioning about the identity of her and their relationship or sometimes use "we have reports on a missing car" phrase the people are getting familiar with.

I believe you agree this nuisance is illegal. Policemen do not have the right to stop people and start asking about their identity for nothing but to blackmail. The minister of interior and security officer of Taiz should stop such practice which gives a very bad impression about their policemen who forget about their real business in providing security to the citizens and turn to act like highwaymen.

Inequality and discontent

By: Ralf Dahrendorf

In the last two decades, the world as a whole has gotten richer, but, while some national economies have advanced sharply, others have fallen farther behind. The increase in aggregate wealth has not led to the abolition, or even reduction, of poverty.

Much the same is true within countries. Almost everywhere, globalization has produced both a new class of multi-millionaires and an underclass comprising people who are not just poor in the statistical sense of earning less than half the national average, but who are excluded from opportunities that are supposed to be open to all. Globalization's dynamism has benefited many, but it has also increased inequality.

Is that necessarily a bad thing? There are many who think so. In fact, entire countries have a built-in egalitarian streak. They dislike the business leaders who take home huge sums even when they fail, and they hate to see poor and excluded people in their midst.

But, while it is comfortable to live in the social-democratic world of Scandinavia, Germany, and other European countries, many of them have

purchased their equality on credit from future generations.

Moreover, an egalitarian climate does not promote innovation and a sense of dynamic development. Creative individuals tend to leave societies in which there is strong pressure not to be different. Inequality is not merely compatible with freedom, but is often a result of and stimulus for freedom.

Is that the choice we have to make then: freedom or equality? Things are not quite so simple. A free society recognizes two limits to economic and general inequality. Both raise quite difficult practical questions, though they are clear in principle.

Inequality is incompatible with freedom if it limits individuals' chances of participation in the political community, in the market, and in civil society. At the lower end of the social scale, this raises the old and vexing question of equality of opportunity. What is clear is that everyone must have access to elections and political parties, to education and the labor market, and to the associations of civil society.

In short, citizenship in the full sense of the word requires basic rights and the ability to enforce them. It also requires a basic economic status, including an income guarantee, which can be pro-

vided in a variety of ways.

One difficult question is where, exactly, to draw the line that defines the basic status to which all citizens are entitled. In most countries, it should probably be higher than it is now. Another difficult question is how the basic status is to be guaranteed. The debate about individual income supplements versus general public services has become lively everywhere. It may well be resolved with different answers that accord with different countries' traditions, although tax credits and similar additions to people's incomes are more compatible with free societies.

At the upper end of the social and economic scale, a different issue arises. Many people object to business managers who take away in pay, bonuses, and stock options hundreds of millions of dollars from their companies. Indeed, there is a legitimate question whether the behavior of today's capitalists promotes the general acceptance of capitalism. But individual wealth becomes a problem only if and when it can be used to restrict others' chances of participation.

When wealth turns into unchecked power, something must be done to restrict it. What has come to be called money laundering, that is, the attempt to turn illicit gains into legitimate rich-

es, provides one example of the need for action. There are others, including the question of inheritance taxes, which have long been regarded as a necessary component of a free society.

Nevertheless, while a free society recognizes limits to inequality, it also accepts that inequality exists, for it provides hope for many by showing what one might achieve with ability and luck—or perhaps even luck alone. Inequality adds color and variety to societies; it is one of the marks of lively, flexible, and innovative countries. It is thus not bad in itself, even if its excesses must be capped in the name of citizenship for all.

Social exclusion and personalized power through wealth are always unacceptable. But if we want freedom, then social and economic inequalities are a legitimate, and necessary, price to pay.

Ralf Dahrendorf, author of numerous books and a former European Commissioner from Germany, is a member of the British House of Lords, a former Rector of the London School of Economics, and a former Warden of St. Antony's College, Oxford.

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Iron and steel factory project underway in Rayan

Iron and steel factory's targeted annual production capacity is 300,000 tons. Phase one of production is to employ 300 workers from the domestic workforce.

Authorities presently are in the process of completing construction of an iron and steel plant in the city of Rayan, 50 kilometers northeast of Mukalla in Hadramout governorate. The project occupies an area of 180,000 square meters at a total cost of \$26 million. The project's first batch of equipment and machines is scheduled for March delivery in Mukalla port. This investment activity comes at a time when Yemen needs iron and steel products due to increased consumption of such products by public and private sector establishments, in line with noticeable building and construction growth throughout Yemen.

Omar Abdulrahman Bajarsh, chairman of the board of directors of Hadramout Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said, "The \$26 million project is financed by a number of Yemeni investors and expected to begin production by the end of this year." The factory's initial production

capacity is expected to be 120,000 tons, rising to 300,000 tons annually by completion of the project's future stages. The factory is designed to produce construction steel bars of differing diameters, steel used in hangar construction and various other steel structures. Factory production will meet the needs of Hadramout and nearby governorates. In its first phase, the factory will employ 300 domestic workers.

The factory is one of the strategic investments established in Hadramout governorate and it will be managed with high western technology expertise. This investment project is among this year's other Hadramout projects, including a cement plant, oil refinery and two residential and tourist cities in Durat Al-Mukalla and Jawharat Al-Mukalla.

Bajarsh believes the increased demand for investment in Hadramout is a product of efforts made by the Hadramout Chamber of Commerce and Industry in domestic and international promotion of investment

projects. Yemeni businessmen and contractors previously criticized the government for increased iron prices, which is imported from abroad, especially from Turkey. They said iron prices were too high for consumers trying to build houses or small businesses for cereals, commercial goods or water storage.

A report prepared by a branch of the General Authority for Investment in Hadramout desert and valley recently indicated that several factories will be constructed in the governorate this year, such as a date packaging plant in Sayoun, a drug plant and factories for marble and red brick. The report was presented to the Hadramout valley and desert executive bureau at its regular session to review floundering projects.

The bureau studied a brief account of the district's 2006 investment program for the third five-year plan of development and poverty alleviation. The program aims to achieve sustainable development rates, besides economic and social development aspects, as well as improve living standards and create new job opportunities. It also aims to enhance partnership with local development donors and partners and take advantage of available investment privileges and investment opportunities, besides encouraging private sector development.



An iron and steel factory.

Absenteeism at state institutions doubles corruption

Despite the end of Eid Al-Adha holidays, 295 public sector executive managers were absent from government offices, disrupting public services.

By: Mahyoub Al-Kamali

Absence of senior government officials particularly reduces administrative performance quality and encourages further expansion of already widespread corruption inside Yemeni government establishments. Many people complain that officials' absence from work affects public services productivity, especially economic institutions.

Oddly enough, some influential executive managers at government establishments consider public service as a gift granted them by the state because they are ruling party affiliates. Consequently, this attitude doubles corruption in those establishments, leading to impeded production and declining economic activities in the country.

Despite the Civil Service Ministry's effort to modernize admin-

istration and implement an administrative and financial reform program, official sources recently pointed out that 246 government officials in senior administrative posts inside the Capital Secretariat were absent after Eid Al-Adha holidays ended January 14. Sources in the Civil Service Ministry's Monitoring and Inspection Department noted that punitive measures will be taken against the absentees. They explained that three day's wages will be deducted from senior administrative officials' salaries for being absent January 15, the first work day after the Eid, and a two-day salary deduction from those absent the second work day, January 16.

As for other government institutions, the highest proportion of senior administrative official absence was at the Ministry of Expatriate Affairs, where 19 senior officials were absent the two days after Eid. In second place were officials at the General Authority for Martyrs Affairs, regis-

tering 16 senior officials absent, and in third place were 14 senior executive managers absent in the Ministry of Health and Population.

According to official statistics on the number of administrative leadership absentees in government institutions inside the Capital Secretariat January 15 and 16, the minimum percentage was recorded in four government institutions: the Heritage Fund, the Ministry of Electricity, the Capital Mayoralty and Al-Thawra Establishment for Press. They each averaged one absent senior official.

The absenteeism phenomenon of senior government officials usually is repeated on ordinary work days and national holidays. This type of negligence is widespread in some public services and productive authorities and consequently, hinders production, work activity development and export development. Some senior officials mistakenly deem their posts a gift offered them by the state in return for their partisan services. This wrong assumption impedes development, keeps Yemen backward and negatively affects the country's revenues and gross product.

The chimera of Russia's gas power

By: Joseph S. Nye

Russia began 2006 by cutting off natural gas exports to Ukraine after its government refused to pay a fourfold increase in the subsidized price. The crisis in Ukraine, many of whose Soviet-era industries depend on cheap Russian gas, soon spread to Europe, which consumes 80% of Russian gas exports, when Ukraine began to divert gas from the pipeline that crosses its territory.

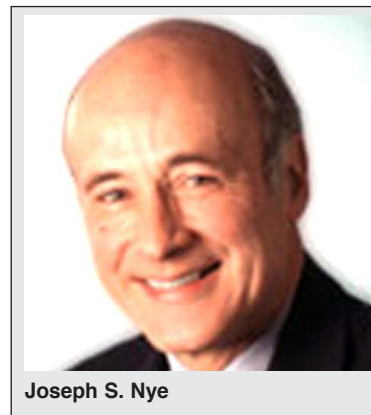
Ironically, 2006 is also the year that Russia takes over the chair of the Group of Eight industrialized countries, which is set to meet in Moscow this spring. The improbable theme that Russian President Vladimir Putin chose for the conference is energy security.

Even though it is no longer a global superpower, Russia's vast oil and gas reserves make it an energy superpower, and Putin seems intent on playing that card. Oil provides somewhat less economic power than gas because it is a fungible commodity, and interruptions of supply can be made up by purchases on world markets. But gas is expensive to transport, for it depends on costly pipelines or gas liquefaction facilities that cannot be replaced quickly when flows are interrupted.

Gas provides a tempting form of leverage, and Russia had already used it against Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Moldova. But when Gazprom, the Russian state gas monopoly, followed Putin's instructions to turn off the spigot to Ukraine, Russia crossed a new threshold.

At first glance, this looks like a classic case of a large country bullying a small country into submission. As Thucydides put it in his history of the Peloponnesian War, "The strong do as they will and the weak suffer what they must."

Russia had supported the losing side in Ukraine's "Orange Revolution" a year ago, and it was time for payback. But, as it turned out, Putin miscalculated. He underestimated both Ukraine's leverage as the primary conduit for Russian gas exports to Europe and Europe's influence as the major



Joseph S. Nye

consumer of Russian gas. In the process, he damaged Russia's reputation as a reliable supplier of natural gas.

The result was a hastily patched together deal in which Russia and Ukraine each gave ground on price, and a shadowy Swiss-based company half-owned by Gazprom rolled supplies of cheap gas from Turkmenistan into the equation. Some analysts, as well as former Ukrainian prime minister Yuliya Tymoshenko, raised accusations of corruption against the company, RosUkrEnerg.

But, charges of corruption aside, this outcome indicates that gas is not such an easy source of hard economic power as it would first appear. Some economists argue that there is little power in relationships where buyers and sellers consent to a price that clears a market. However, in cases where buyers and sellers are not equally dependent upon the relationship, the greater vulnerability of the more dependent party can be used as a source of coercive power by the less dependent party. Russia thought it was less dependent than Ukraine, and decided to exercise that power.

But it is one thing to hold the high hand in a game that you play only once. For the game to go on indefinitely, you must maintain the trust of the other players. In other words, the shadow of the future suggests that a moderate strategy is best.

Russia quickly discovered that its threats against Ukraine were too costly to its reputation as a reliable supplier for Europe. When considered in this wider European context, there was

more symmetry in the Russia-Ukraine energy relationship than the simple numbers on energy dependence implied at first glance.

Where does this leave Europe's energy security? Germany's Economics Minister, Michael Glos, has said that Russia's questionable dependability means that the time has come to explore other energy sources. That will not be easy. Gas provides nearly a quarter of Europe's energy, compared to 14% for nuclear power. Even if governments rethink their ban on new nuclear plants, accelerate development of windmills and solar panels, and search for new gas supplies, Europe will remain dependent on Russian gas for more than a decade.

At the same time, as Europe's largest consumer of Russian gas, Germany has built its hopes for energy security on developing a rich web of economic ties with Russia. Former Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder even became chair of a Russian-German consortium to build a new gas pipeline from Russia to Germany. But, as the Ukraine episode indicates, pipelines dedicated to a single country may be less reliable than those that run through several countries.

If Russia is going to throw its weight around, it is better to have allies among those affected. The key to energy security is diversity – of pipelines as well as sources of supply. Small neighbors without options will suffer, but Europe may not.

In the end, the next decade will be marked by a delicate balance in which Europe remains dependent on Russian gas, but Russia's need for export revenues will also make it dependent on Europe. The lesson from the Ukraine episode is that while Russia is less of a gas superpower than it would appear, Europe would be wise for to start building greater diversity into the energy relationship.

Joseph S. Nye is a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. His latest book is The Power Game: A Washington Novel.

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In some government institutions, offices are almost empty because of employees' absence from work even after the end of Eid holidays.

Pilgrims' homecoming met with kinsmen's joy

Yemeni pilgrims return home after performing the pilgrimage rituals. They are received with firecrackers and homely celebrations.

By: Ali Al-Qadhi

Pilgrims travel to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, to perform the pilgrimage rituals. They visit the holy shrines and circle the Kaaba. When they leave their homes, their families say goodbye to them, remaining on tenterhooks until they return. Last week, Yemeni pilgrims began pouring back by air, land and sea and were received warmly.

Haj Mohammed Hussein, 72, was received at a Sana'a bus station by his children, grandchildren and many other relatives. They had been sitting

until the bus arrived from Saudi Arabia. Seeing him descend from the bus, they hastened to hug him with expressions of extreme joy overcoming their faces. The old man was supposed to have come a day earlier, but was delayed. Some others looked around for their returning relatives, but might have to wait for some time. Haj Hussein and his family got into a pick-up truck and set off for their village in Dhamar province.

It is interesting the way pilgrims are hailed and welcomed. The joyous heartening reception at the bus stop is not the end of the welcome package.

Fireworks and gunfire

When vehicles set off, passengers begin chanting verses of folk poetry recited in a chorus. Greeters also use fireworks and noisemakers used at weddings to add flavor to the pilgrim's reception.

"We should celebrate the return of our pilgrims," said 25-year-old Ibrahim Al-Maqdashi. "It is a well-established tradition that a pilgrim must be hailed when he or she arrives."

Large quantities of fireworks are used, guns are fired into the air in rural areas and a festival marks the occasion.

When the pilgrim arrives at the village, they slaughter goats or sheep and

make a feast served to villagers to honor the returnee. Afterward, they gather in their sheikh's large sitting room and listen attentively to the pilgrim's narration of his journey to the sacred land. Women pilgrims do not gather with men but sit with their fellow women in a separate place.

Pilgrims most often distribute rosaries, hats and other tokens bought in Mecca to their relatives.

According to 30-year-old Ali Ahmed, the reason for this extraordinary reception is, "In the past, going to Mecca was a very difficult task that entailed undergoing many difficulties such as fatigue, travel expense, food, etc. There also was the risk of being robbed by highwaymen. Only a few people could perform these holy rites. They had to prepare a lot of money to spend on the several-month trip by selling part of their lands or properties."

He continued, "Thus, people held those who performed the pilgrimage in much respect and regarded them as very fortunate and pious. On the departure day, villagers would accompany departing pilgrims for some distance. While pilgrims were gone, their families and relatives would wait impatiently until they came back safely."

Although today's pilgrimage doesn't require as much effort as it did in the past, people still highly respect pilgrims because, after all, they are lucky enough to have performed one of Islam's five fundamental pillars and visited the holy shrines.

Stampedes don't frighten pilgrims

Pilgrims consider themselves martyrs and wish to die in Mecca. Although a stampede may be a good reason for relatives to worry, pilgrims do not worry much about it. Haj Qayid Abdullah said he would be lucky to meet his fate in Mecca because it would bring him eternal happiness in Paradise. However, he admitted that a Muslim shouldn't intentionally put himself in harm's way because that would be committing suicide, which is forbidden in Islam. The risk of stampedes adds to the impatience of relatives and, hence, to the warmth of the returnee's reception.

The swing tradition

The swing is a game children like. However, this same game is used by grownups as well. It is interesting to note that it also is associated with the solemn religious ritual of pilgrimage.

After pilgrims leave for Mecca, families at home set up a swing either indoors, in their garden or in a nearby public yard, especially in Sana'a. They swing until the pilgrims return, chanting poetic verses that verbalize their emotions and feelings. The swing's rhythmic movement symbolically represents the relatives' inner unrest, anxiety and longing for the absent pilgrim. The pilgrim's clothes sometimes are hung on the swing. People also make sure the swing is strong enough, as it's a bad omen if it breaks.

Heritage conservation activists worry this tradition may disappear. With modern telecommunications, people can now know about the safety and conditions of their pilgrims. Unlike the past, today there is a national television team following pilgrims' movements, reporting on their situation and airing short interviews with some of them. Moreover, there are cassettes in the market containing songs and anthems expressing the emotional state of relatives, thus giving them some solace.

Unquestionably, performing the pilgrimage once in his or her lifetime is every Muslim's duty, if capable, but some do it more than once. Many pilgrims are old people who hope to erase their record of misdeeds and gain God's blessings, forgiveness and mercy. Nevertheless, the young are similarly committed and make up a good portion of the congregation.

It is important to note that the social traditions associated with this religious ritual are remarkable, as they show the spirit of togetherness and intimacy among Muslims and exhibit a facet of Yemen's long-lived social conventions.



Children swing until the pilgrims return home.

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The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam 12

Translated by Edward FitzGerald

"How sweet is mortal
sovranty"!-think some:
Others;"How blest the
paradise to come!"
Ah, take the cash in hand
and waive the rest;
Oh, the brave music of a
distant drum!

Literary Corner

By: Abu Al-Kalmah Al-Tayyibah

The Full Poetic Collection (final part)

Author: Ali Abdul-Rahman Jahhaf
Language: Arabic
Publisher: Ministry of Culture and Tourism
Year Published: 2004

In his poem, Poetry "As It Seems to Me", Ali Abdurrahman Jahhaf clearly spells out what poetry means to him:

If my feelings do not dance to a poem,
And if its discourse and rhythm, my ears are not pleased by.
Then poetry it is not, and call it whatever you want,
Except that poetry, which is sought by all nations.
Poetry is then that which excites my sides,
And removes from my soul depression and pain
...
And rejuvenates me with feelings and enriches my pleasures
And creates in me the smile, which did not hence exist.

Yes, for Jahhaf poetry was indeed his way of enriching his life, but the enrichment he made to our lives by his poetry is even more worth citing. What is also worth citing is that Jahhaf not only recited his poetry to enrich Yemeni literature, but also to deliver a spiritual message to his people (the Yemeni people, his nation (the Arab nation) and to deliver a message of peace and justice to the world at large. He wrote several poems addressing his people advising them to safeguard their spiritual heritage and not to be suckered into falling in love with the mundane. He points out time and again that it is through an ongoing one to one relationship with God that happiness can come here in this world and in the world to come. His religious devotion was not a tendency to lean towards the extreme, but a moderate conviction based on reasoning and logic: if one is not convinced by religious ordinance, then one cannot be faithful, as God would want one to be. The cause that Jahhaf adopted was the removal of oppression and injustice and the cause was a universal one for him. Even his praises for Hezbollah in his poetry can be seen as a praise for those who sacrifice their lives for the freedom of their land, for the defeat of the arrogant aggressor, who has been reputed to be an unbeatable tiger, amidst a nation that has forgotten its honor and devotion to its cause. Jahhaf sees Hezbollah, as a link in the long line of those who have sacrificed their lives for a different world that their children should live in: a world free from plunderers who have come from afar to take that which is not theirs and to do so with tortuous agony to anyone who may stand in their way. Like all Arabs and most Moslems, the victory of Hezbollah is Southern Lebanon was a respite amidst so much failure by an Arab leadership that has forgotten its root, a leadership that has forgotten that it also must have a cause

to uphold and defend, or else all it can ever expect to see is failure:

Thanks to those who told Tel Aviv "no"!

Is not that the word of the honest, courageous and the adamant.

Thanks to those who defeated arrogance,
And destroyed the saying about the enemy,

That they are the invincible.
Thanks to those from whom we have learned

That the tigers of Tel Aviv are just paper tigers.

This may sound unpleasant to many a western ear, but this is how most Arabs viewed the victory of Hezbollah in driving the Israelis out of Southern Lebanon and for most Arabs, the Israelis are viewed with the same disdain that the American right wing views Al-Qaeda terrorists. After all, the Israelis are the plunderers of the Holy Land, as most Arabs and Moslems see them. Notwithstanding the phony peace which is being sold to most Arab leaders by the United States and her Allies, with a lot more persistence from the former, without justice and without disciplining the Israelis there can be no peace. Poets have always echoed how the Arabs "in the street" really feel about events at home and in the world, and it should be expected that Jahhaf would not be any different from the Syrian poet, Nazar Qabbani, who also echoed the feelings of most Arabs in their contempt for their leaders and in the pleading to God to relieve them from all the frustrations of defeat and foreign plunder of their land, their resources and even their own way of living.

Finally, we come to some of the verses in which Jahhaf reveals his universal inclinations. The poem is called "Let Us Pray":

For a world full of love and faith that enjoys happiness and prosperity.

For justice to exist to rise and the nights of sufferings to end!

Let us pray, my brothers2, so that the air of brotherhood in our lives shall prevail.

Let us pray, my brother in humanity,, to God, who raised the sky.

For a world, wherein no beasts of the jungle3 live, void of fear with abundant growth.

Wherein men shall not oppress brother men, or in which violence has no place in life and by which life is not ridiculed.

Let us pray my brothers, for a world wherein peace, joy are not threatened by wretchedness;

A world free of arms of destruction and all the tools of annihilation.

Let us pray to the Creator of life, Who ordained the law for his creation.

So that men, under the shadow of the Lord, may enjoy with all their upheld rights.

1 I.e., literally, my rib cage (the chest).

2 In mankind.

3 The barbarians of men.

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حان الوقت لتطلق ليديك العنان
مع برنامج التأهيل للشهادة الدولية للحاسب والإنترنت IC3

نقدم مراكز نيوهورايزن برنامج تدريبي للتأهيل للحصول على الشهادة الدولية للحاسب والإنترنت IC3 وهي شهادة دولية لا غنى عنها، لكل الناس، وتعتبر معياراً دولياً يؤكد أن حامل الشهادة يملك المعرفة والمهارات الأساسية للحاسب والإنترنت. يتم الحصول على الشهادة بعد اجتياز ثلاثة اختبارات بنجاح.

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- يمكن للمندربين الإلتحاق بالاختبارات في أماكن مختلفة في العالم.

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Burn victims need health care

There are many burn victims in Yemen, but there are only two centers specialized in treating such victims.

By: Amel Mohammed Ariqi
amel11ariqi@yahoo

Three months ago, 35-year-old Ahmed Alzaidi saved his neighbors' lives when he put out a fire that flared up in their cottage. He got three children and their mother out of the cottage; however, he couldn't protect himself from the heat of the flames. He was taken from his home in Marib to Al-Jumhuri Hospital in Sana'a where he passed away. "He died because of lack of medicine and health care in the hospital," his brother said sadly. "However, he was not the only one suffering burn pains...There are a lot," he added.

Victims every day

Alzaidi is one of many victims who die from burn-related injuries. Dr. Saleh Alaidhani, deputy director of Al-Jumhuri's burn and disfigure treatment center, confirmed that the hospital daily receives many patients suffering disfigurement resulting from burn accidents. "Eighty-five to 90 percent of patients are victims of a gas leak leading to an outbreak of fire. Hot liquids, direct contact with hot liquids, hot solids, caustic chemicals and electricity are other causes leading to burn injuries," he said. "Most victims are from rural regions," he added.

Two centers

According to Alaidhani, the Al-Jumhuri center has 24 beds in addition to surgery and intensive care. He confessed the center's capacity is not enough to receive all patients. "We receive only the emergency cases whose injuries are within the first 48 hours. Patients who arrive later and suffer heat destruction of the skin and infection, mostly are sent to a hospital that has a section, containing 40 beds, for this purpose," he said.

The Al-Jumhuri center has three departments: men's, women's and children's. Most victims are women.

Alaidhani said there are no specialized burn centers in Yemen except his and another in Taiz. Both centers are new and need expert staff. "Despite the fact that, internationally, for every three million people, there is supposed to be a special center to treat emergency burn cases. The center must be connected with hospitals in the same region containing at least 10 sections ready to receive these victims," he said. "In Yemen, where more 19 million people live, there are just two centers," he added.

One killer

Gas leaks cause many victims' injuries. Three such victims were in the women's department.

The plight of 26-year-old Warda was very serious. She couldn't see, hear or speak. Her blind mother was the only one



to tell her daughter's story. "My daughter is the mother of four children. We live in a village. When my daughter was injured, we traveled a long distance on a very long road and spent a long time reaching this center, since there is no doctor specialized in treating burns."

Chief of nurses Abdulkhalik described Warda's situation as "very serious" in that 93 percent of her body is burned. "We have no idea yet if she can survive," he added.

Asia, 28, is the mother of four children. She insisted she didn't smell the gas when she struck a match to cook dinner. "It took three hours to reach this center," she said.

When she arrived, she suffered great pain, as her burns exceeded 83 percent, according to Abdulkhalik. "Her survival is a miracle," he added.

Fatama, 17, was luckier, according to

Abdulkhalik, since she hurt only her hands "She will go home soon," he noted.

Alaidhani said many victims insist they don't know how to deal with a gas leak. "Most victims are women who cook using gas. Because of the lack of awareness, most women have no idea how to act in such circumstances."

Other killers

Hamdi, age 3, was injured while playing beside firewood his mother used for cooking. Abdulsalam, age 4, was injured by hot liquids, whereas 35-year-old maintenance worker Ismail was injured by electricity. "There are no safety programs that can significantly reduce the incidence of burn injuries in Yemen. Mass media does not play an effective role in this regard."

According to Alaidhani, national

television and radio programs, whose audiences are mostly from rural regions, do not provide enough information in this regard.

Disappointment and stress

Abdulkhalik noted the depression and hopelessness many victims experience, particularly women, who are terrified of the marks and deformity that burns leave.

Alaidhani mentioned the importance of psychological treatment, saying, "Psychological treatment must be associated with physical treatment, particularly for burn victims. Such treatment will help to raise their spirits and reflect positively on their condition."

"Unfortunately, the center has no psychologists. There are also no specialists in natural therapy to rehabilitate patients," he added.

Also a burn and plastic surgery consultant, Alaidhani confessed that plastic surgery is very new in Yemen and field experts are very few. "However, the most important thing victims arrive is to treat infection, the most common cause of death for extensively burned victims, as bodily fluids and minerals are lost through the wound. The heart, lungs, liver and kidneys are affected by infection and fluid loss, so we focus on saving victims' lives first."

Treatment

Burn treatment, as Abdulkhalik said, depends on the extent of burns. Burns covering 15 percent or less of the body's surface usually are treated by removing dead tissue, dressing with antibiotic

cream and administering oral pain medication. Burns of 15 to 25 percent often require hospitalization to provide intravenous fluids and avoid complications. Burns of more than 25 percent usually are treated in specialized burn centers where aggressive surgical management is directed toward early skin grafting and avoiding complications such as dehydration, pneumonia, kidney failure and infection. Pain control with intravenous narcotics frequently is required. The markedly increased metabolic rate of severely burned patients requires high-protein nutritional supplements given orally and intravenously. Extensive scarring from deep burns may cause disfigurement and limited joint movement. Therefore, plastic surgery often is required to reduce scarring effects.

Abdulkhalik also noted the stress he and his center colleagues felt due to staff shortages. "We are only four nurses in this center, working 24 hours a day, trying to cover the needs of patients."

More is needed

It is difficult to find studies focusing on Yemeni burn victims, as there are no prevention activities. Many victims asked why they must travel to receive medicine, in stead of being treated in their local hospital. Doctors and nurses confessed that many times they were unable to deal with many cases due to the shortage of medicine or experts. Alaidhani said, "These people are victims not just of the incredible burn pains, but they are the victims of others' ignorance."

Hard truths about bird flu

By Henry I. Miller

The issues surrounding the possibility of a pandemic of the H5N1 strain of avian flu are extraordinarily complex, encompassing medicine, epidemiology, virology, and even politics and ethics. Moreover, there is tremendous uncertainty about exactly when H5N1, which now primarily affects birds, might mutate into a form that is transmissible between humans, and how infectious and lethal it might be.

It is thus hardly surprising that commentaries about avian flu often miss the mark. A recent *New York Times* editorial, for example, decried wealthy countries' "me first" attitude toward a possible H5N1 pandemic, because "[t]he best hope of stopping a pandemic, or at least buying time to respond, is to improve surveillance and health practices in East Africa and Asia, where one would probably begin."

To be sure, good surveillance is needed in order to obtain early warning that a strain of H5N1 flu transmissible between humans has been detected, so that nations around the world can rapidly initiate a variety of public health measures, including a program to produce large amounts of vaccine against that strain. But the massive undertaking required to "improve health practices in the poorest countries of the world" plays better on the editorial page than on the ground.

Intensive animal husbandry procedures that place billions of poultry and swine in close proximity to humans, combined with unsanitary conditions, poverty, and grossly inadequate public health infrastructure of all kinds, make it unlikely that a pandemic can be prevented or contained at the source. It is noteworthy that China's chaotic effort to vaccinate 14 billion chickens has been compromised by counterfeit vaccines and the absence of protective gear for vaccination teams, which might actually spread disease by carrying fecal material on their shoes from one farm to another.

In theory, it is possible to contain a flu pandemic in its early stages by performing "ring prophylaxis" – using anti-flu drugs and quarantine aggressively to isolate relatively small outbreaks of a human-to-human transmissible strain of H5N1. According to Johns Hopkins University virologist Donald S. Burke, "it may be possible to identify a human outbreak at the earliest stage, while there are fewer than 100



cases, and deploy international resources – such as a WHO stockpile of antiviral drugs – to rapidly quench it. This 'tipping point' strategy is highly cost-effective."

However, a strategy can be "cost-effective" only if it is feasible. Although ring prophylaxis might work in Minneapolis, Toronto, or Zurich, in the parts of the world where flu pandemics begin, the probability of success approaches zero. In places like Vietnam, Indonesia, and China – where the pandemic strain will likely originate – expertise, coordination, discipline, and infrastructure are lacking.

The response in Turkey – where as many as 50 possible cases have appeared in the eastern part of the country – is instructive. Officials in that region warned the government on December 16 of a surge in bird deaths, but it took 12 days for an investigation to begin. When a fourteen-year-old boy became Turkey's first avian flu mortality last week (soon followed by two siblings), a government spokesman criticized doctors for mentioning the disease because they were "damaging Turkey's reputation." This is ominously reminiscent of China's initial response to SARS in 2003.

For now, it seems that all of the human H5N1 infections have been contracted from contact with infected poultry. But the situation in Turkey is what the outbreak of a human to human pandemic could look like at its earliest stages: the rapid spread of confirmed cases (and deaths) from an initial site to nearby villages and cities. We would expect to see a large number of illnesses among both employees and patients in hospitals where the victims are treated, and soon someone (perhaps even a carrier who is not ill) would spread it to Ankara, Istanbul, Tbilisi, Damascus,

Baghdad, and beyond.

The anti-flu drugs Tamiflu and Relenza are extremely expensive and in short supply. History suggests that if we were to make these drugs available to poor countries for ring prophylaxis, they would often be administered improperly – such as in sub-optimal doses – in a way that would promote viral resistance and only intensify a pandemic. Or perhaps they would be sold on the black market to enrich corrupt government officials.

A politically incorrect but rational strategy would be for rich countries to devote resources to developing countries primarily for surveillance. They would obtain timely warning of the existence of an H5N1 strain that is transmissible from human to human, but would focus the vast majority of their funding on parallel, low- and high-tech approaches – vaccines, drugs, and other public health measures – that would primarily benefit themselves.

If the pandemic were to begin relatively soon – say, within a year or two – there would be little that could be done to attenuate significantly the first wave of infections. But, if we're ready to rush the pandemic strain into an emergency program to manufacture vaccine, we could possibly blunt the second wave.

A flu pandemic will require triage on many levels, including not only decisions about which patients are likely to benefit from scarce commodities such as drugs, vaccines, and ventilators, but also broader public policy choices about how best – among, literally, a world of possibilities – to expend resources.

Henry Miller is a physician and fellow at the Hoover Institution and the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

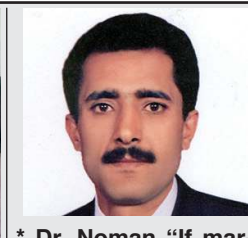
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Apology

Yemen Times would like to bring to your attention that in last issue number 913, there was a mistake in confusing names of Dr. Noman with Dr. Al-Shihari in the picture captions and quotations. We apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.



* Dr. Abdulkhalik "authority's role is to control drug marketing"



* Dr. Noman "If market need is met with appropriate quality and price, the smuggler and the forger will be defeated in a natural manner."



* Dr. Al-Shihari "there are 70 kinds of drugs now being manufactured and exported"

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Please refrain from calling after sending the application. Please note that only short listed candidates will be contacted. Interviews will be held the second half of Jan. 2006, latest the first half of Feb. 2006.

ELT Panorama

History of the Riche Chevesaile

If Adam and Eve were the first humans on Earth, then what must Eve have used to charm her way into Adam's heart? Well if this doesn't raise a storm in your brain, it sure will tickle your funny bone. That's right. We are referring to one of the earliest forms of jewelry in the world - the necklace, a piece of jewelry that has been romanticized to the extent of becoming the paradigm of feminine beauty, chastity, grace and grandeur, as much as of decadence. If collars and chains were the marks of nobility and the velvety, beaded and sequined chokers were aesthetically erotic, the rosary, symbolizing the Virgin Mary invoked strength, power and peace by bestowing conscious understanding. The neckwear has been one of the most fascinating pieces of jewelry, not because it is often crafted beautifully but because it holds a timeless appeal and exudes a magical charm to entice both the wearer and the beholder.

Essentially a necklace is a large ring worn around the neck or near the region of the heart. Because of its positioning around the torso, it is believed that the necklace can accentuate one's communicative skills. It is also a repository of positive energy that is beneficial for the heart and the lungs. Popularly known as the 'Adam and Eve of jewelry', the necklace enjoys the status of being one of the most sought after and prized ornaments through centuries, besides being the first man-made object for wearing round the neck. The prerogative of the rich, the elite and the aristocrats, 5000 years ago this coquettish ornament suggested 'clothing' for men and women. Fundamentally, necklaces functioned as apparel. The pre-historic norm of dressing up the



Amrita Satapathy

neck and torso was in the form of fibulae (the ancient safety pin), necklaces, brooches, pectorals (breastplates) and belts, etc. They were used to clasp the layers of clothing or to pin them for the sake of convenience. The accessorizing of the necklace and its use as an adornment came into vogue only after the Middle Ages. Medieval necklaces or neckbands were practical and rather simple. The 14th, 15th and 16th centuries witnessed the glamorization of the neckwear as they metamorphosed into sophisticated and intricately designed chains and collars to suit the needs of ladies, damsels, mistresses and lovers. Great legends and stories have been spun around the neckwear. Of all the ornaments that adorn a lady's boudoir it is indeed the glitziest of all, flaunting an equally flexible attitude. After all it was only a necklace that led to the downfall of an ancient French regime. The famous 'Affair of the Necklace' scandal in the court of Louis XVI was quite an intriguing one as it involved an adventuress - the beautiful Countess de la Motte, the Queen Marie-Antoinette and a diamond necklace worth 1,600,000 livres! It was a mysterious event in the 1780s that incurred the French populace's displeasure, and finally culminated in the momentous French Revolution. In neighbouring Britain, the Earl of Leicester, enamoured by the virgin Queen Elizabeth is said to have gifted her a chain of gold, adorned with diamonds of all shapes and sizes. The necklace had an ornamental diamond studded clock attached to it.

If man was so enamoured by this interesting piece of embellishment, could the Gods be left far behind? According to an old Norse legend,

The Brosings' jewel was a necklace, which had been crafted by Brisingas for the Goddess Frejya, the wife of Odin and the goddess of love, fecundity and death. In Greek mythology, Harmonia, (daughter of the Goddess Aphrodite and God of storms Ares), was gifted with a necklace made by Hephaestus on her wedding day. The necklace bestowed irresistible beauty upon the wearer. In ancient Greece, priestesses wore beaded amber necklaces because it was believed that these necklaces were the repositories of exalted energy. It is believed that Eurymachus, an Ithacan nobleman and one of the many suitors of the beautiful Penelope, had presented her a gold necklace entwined with amber. Richly ornamented and gorgeous necklaces formed an integral part of the attire of the ancient Egyptians' life and prominently featured in their folklore. According to the Egyptian mythology, the Ankh was worn as a necklace with a pendant. It was the amulet of life. An indispensable part of the ancient Egyptians was the powerful 'Menet necklace'. The necklace was characteristically associated with the goddess Hathor and her son Ihy. The belief goes that this necklace radiated the powers of Hathor. The queen is often shown as the high priestess of Hathor in Egyptian lore. Thus the 'Great Menet' as it was known, embodied such positive concepts as life, potency, fertility, birth and renewal. Worn as an amulet it was believed, the 'Menat' brought joy and wealth to the wearer.

Let us make a detour and head for the 'Gateway to the East', in our quest for the necklace. For centuries the Arabian Peninsula has enticed its inhabitants as well as outsiders to its mesmerizing array of exquisite and ornate pieces of jewelry. It is a glittering world of silver bells, shining turquoises, deep-red garnets, glimmering gold, sparkling pearls, and jin-

gling coins. The traditional tribal or contemporary chic necklaces along with other jewellery form an obligatory part of the rich Arabian dress code and culture. In the Arabian tradition, the neckwear, unlike the bangles and bracelets or rings, is more than just an item of personal embellishment. It is a form of security, and it is also an important social and economic marker. Most necklaces in this region are made of silver or silver alloys; they are intricately designed, carefully handcrafted and exquisitely encrusted with precious and semi-precious stones. The decoration on the necklaces is done using the techniques of 'embossing', 'repousse' and 'granulation'. The delicate Filigree work, which has been a popular form of Indian art for centuries, is also a familiar modus operandi with the Arabian artisans. The lovely Arabian jewelry owes its opulent appeal to the Bedouins. They are not only aesthetically gratifying but also steeped in history. Its necklaces and other forms of jewelry are direct reflections of skills and styles of long lost civilizations. They are supposed to be the most rapidly evolving of accessories show-casing the influences that migration and trade had on their region. Bedouin necklaces are a harmonious amalgamation of the styles of the Phoenicians, the Etruscans and the Egyptians. 'Arabesque' patterns in the form of esoteric symbols like crescents, geometric shapes, and natural motifs like leaves, flowers and animals and also Quranic inscriptions are heavily used to design them. This practice owes its genesis to Islamic calligraphy. Prevalent in the ancient times they are still a preferred choice in contemporary neckwear. The souqs are filled with a dazzling display of long filigreed chains with gold coins suspending from them. Turquoise embellished necklaces are also a popular pick. Traditionally turquoise is believed to possess the power to ward off evil. Some necklaces are adorned with little bells to frighten away malevolent spirits. Saudi necklaces use a symbol of a hand as a talisman. This is a century old tradition. It represents the 5 tenets of Islam. A sign of wealth, dowry, a gift, a ritualistic ornament or simple decorative piece, the necklaces of the Arabian world are as priceless as myrrh and frankincense.

Dating back to the days of the Indus Valley Civilization, the necklace has all along been an indispensable part of the Indian way of life. The idea of the necklace as 'the accessory' of feminine grandeur and grace is evident from the figurine of the Harappan Naked Dancer, the cave paintings of Ajanta to the many masterpieces of modern day artists. Generations of women have only carried the hoary tradition forward and made it very contemporary. The antique Hindu amulet, 'nauratan', made of a gold

A letter to the teachers of English: 104 Conversation skills (4)

A friendly student and an unfriendly teacher

(Sabri, a student comes late to class; Waleed, the teacher is teaching)

Sabri: May I come in, sir?

Teacher: You are always coming late to my class, aren't you?

Sabri: No sir. I've never come late to any class.

Teacher: No. You are telling a lie. You came late last class.

Sabri: Sorry sir, I didn't come late at all. This is the first time I am late to class.

Teacher: Why are you late today?

Sabri: The bus I came by hit a small boy on the way; I had to go to the hospital with

that boy. I had to phone that boy's father and stay with him till his father came.

Teacher: There was no one in the bus to help him.

Sabri: All of them left without helping



PROF. M.N.K. BOSE mnk_bose@hotmail.com Professor of English, Faculty of Arts, Ibb

him. So I had to stay. Teacher: Is it true or a lie?

Sabri: True. I have the number of the bus and the driver's name, if you want.

Teacher: OK..Ok. Come in. Don't come late again. OK?

Sabri: Thank you, sir.

Activity:

You must have come across such situations quite often. Can you prepare a conversation between you and a student, in which he/she narrates an event in which he/she was helpful to someone?

Good luck.

Judge your listeners while you speak.

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

plaque with nine precious stones is used to form the famous Nauratan Haar or Necklace. With the passage of time this ornament acquired specific traits of the local craftsmen and folk influences. Thus we have the elaborate silver Filigree necklaces from Orissa, enamelled and Meenakari of Rajasthan, the Kundan necklaces from Delhi and the Nagercoil Temple necklaces. Though the Meenakari and Kundan reflect Mughal influences, they are fashioned into the very modish chokers that go well with Indo-Western fusion wear. The Nagercoil necklaces are traditional with red and green precious stones set on them. They are usually offered to the Gods. In Assam one finds the interesting motifs of orchids, the local flora and fauna on necklaces and pendants. The range of Indian necklaces extend from religious and the domestic to the aesthetic. Temple complexes abound in little shops selling sanctified trinkets. Popular among them are the beaded necklaces- scented sandalwood bead neckwear, rudraksh malas, or the multicoloured silk and gold thread necklaces. One also comes across chains with pendants as lucky charms or divine cures. These are looked upon with veneration as they are supposed to ward off evil. The 'Mangal sutra' (a combination of black beads and gold pendant) is another variety of the ornament for the neck worn by married Hindu women. It symbolizes love in holy matrimony. In Hindu, Jain and Sikh communities a necklace is generally considered as 'Streedhan' ('Stree' meaning woman and 'Dhan' meaning wealth). This is because women usually do not inherit the landed property of their families, so jewellery in the form of necklaces, bangles and rings is their means of security and investment. Amongst tribals and nomads necklaces, chokers and pendants are types of identity markers, assets, decorations and currency. A necklace is often a cherished gift from the elders to welcome the new-born in the family.

The beaded necklace was known as the Tamasay or Tamasai in ancient Japan. The Ainu women wore it during special occasions. If the necklace had a medallion it was known as the Shitoki. Fashioned out of large glass beads, the Shitoki represented the white-tailed sea-eagles that the Ainu tribe hunted. The more the strands and beads the more valuable the necklace. Highly treasured, this necklace was a kind of heirloom that was passed on from generation to generation. It was worn during ceremonies and rituals, because it protected the wearer from evil spirits. In some parts of Japan, women also wore a necklace called 'Rekutunpe'. This was a long, narrow strip of cloth with metal plaques attached to them. For the Chinese, Jade necklaces were a very common ornament. Jade was considered to bring good luck as it represented nobility, perfection, constancy, and immortality. So most necklaces were carved with a Jade figure or an

ideogram. The belief goes that a Jade worn by a person will gradually darken as it absorbs good energy from the wearer. And in times of need, it will break or lighten to release the energy and protect the wearer from bad influences.

The neckwear has undergone a sea change in the present context. Once upon a time necklaces used to be fashioned out of ivory, horns, berries, seeds, stone beads and other indigenous materials. The oldest known necklace dated over 25,000 years old is made of fish vertebrae!!! But nowadays it has innovative nomenclatures attached to it. Enter the dazzling world of Costume neckwear, Cocktail neckwear, Funky neckbands and Junk necklaces. The idea is to wear your attitude around your necks with panache. Commonality is out and individuality is in. Unlike the older generation, women prefer to swap their party and daily neckwear as they straddle across their multidimensional lives. Necklaces with semi precious stones, swarovski crystals, feng-shui charms, coloured stones and beads are now considered as hip and happening. These days necklaces are being aptly teamed with capris and a T-shirt to suit the fashion sensibility of the chic gal. It is no longer mandatory to wear them with traditional attire. The Gen Y has learnt to adapt the age-old accessories with new-age couture trends. They like their necklaces to be ethnic- a blend of the old and the new. The Neo-Man, too does not shirk away from sporting a pendant with a shark teeth, a bullet, or a medallion with inscriptions. It's the statement of the 'cool dude'. Every famous young thing is endorsing them like crazy.

The necklace has fanned the imaginative genius of many a poet, writer and moviemaker. How can one not remember the necklace that becomes the turning point in the life of Mathilde Loisel? The fake necklace that poor Mathilde mistakes for a real diamond one. We are talking of Guy de Maupassant's 'The Diamond Necklace'. Maupassant brilliantly uses the motif of a diamond necklace to create a story of female vanity and pride. It is indeed a profound study of the female psyche that yearns for the beautiful things in life. One night's extravagance robs the stunning Mathilde of her beauty, her youth and fills her life with sorrow. The sellers of candyfloss dreams on the silver screen placed the necklace on a pedestal when it was presented as "The Heart of the Ocean", in the film Titanic. The blue diamond necklace that Rose wears captured the imagination of many a beating heart. It became the ultimate symbol of everlasting love. As a tribute to this stunning piece of jewelry one can only say what Geoffrey Chaucer says of the necklace, or chevesaile as known in French in 'The Romaunt of the Rose', "About her necke of gentle entaile, Was set the riche chevesaile, In which there was full great plenty Of stones fair and clear to see."

ELT Tips

Speaking English fluently (Part 1)

The importance of English can hardly be overemphasized. Its use in Travel, Tourism, Teaching technology and Trade is universally accepted. Yet it is a matter of concern for people like me that a significant chunk of school and university student population find it rather hard to speak English elegantly. Here are a few practical tips for such people to speak English fluently.

1. Speak in a natural way

Speak in idea units naturally and spontaneously. Divide a sentence into idea units. Speak in word-groups that contain an idea unit.

2. Train your speech organs

Acquire the power of pronunciation

skill because English is a stress-timed language as against Arabic or Hindi which are syllable-timed languages. The speech organs such as your tongue, lips, throat and some other parts of your mouth need special treatment and training for this purpose.

3. Practice material

Practice makes man perfect is a well-known adage. Bank upon good practice material. There is no need to learn the practice material by heart, but you should read it ALOUD several times. It gives a clear picture of patterns of general frames of word groups. It also forms



Dr. Ramakanta Sahu University of Science and Technology, Sana'a

the habit of natural speech, enabling your organs of speech and mind to work in harmony.

4. Learn to use the right word in the right place

Increase your word power, not by looking up meanings of unfamiliar words from the dictionary, but by trying to guess their meanings from the context. An elementary knowledge of morphological process of word derivation from roots can help significantly. Acquire core words and cultivate the skill of generating more words. Take care to build up your own vocabulary bank slowly and steadily.

WONDERWORD by DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: First read the list of words, then look at the puzzle. The words are in all directions — vertically, horizontally, diagonally, backward. Circle each letter of a word found and strike it off the list. The letters are often used more than once, so do not cross them out. It is best to find the big words first. When you find all the words listed in the clues, you'll have a number of letters left over that spell the Wonderword.

CLUES

- | | | | | |
|-------------|---------|-----------|-------------|----------|
| Acts | Extinct | Lesson | Press | Spills |
| Aerosol | Face | Lions | Rain forest | Stage |
| Agriculture | Factory | Lobby | Raise | Story |
| Birds | Farming | Mammals | Rally | Study |
| Boats | Fines | Mining | Real | Support |
| Books | Fish | Nature | Reduce | Swim |
| Bulletin | Food | Needs | Reef | Tent |
| Cars | Freedom | Nuclear | Reform | Test |
| Cause | Funds | Oceans | Refuge | Tiger |
| Coal | Furs | Oils | Rely | Tour |
| Crop | Future | Ozone | Ships | Toxin |
| Dawn | Gases | Paper | Show | Travel |
| Dolphins | Global | Park | Signs | Trip |
| Donate | Green | Path | Smog | View |
| Dumps | Group | Petition | Smoke | Warnings |
| Earth | Heal | Picket | Snow | Waste |
| Ecology | Home | Plastic | Soil | Water |
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ANSWER NEXT WEEK

Last Week's Answer: Computer

ENVIRONMENTALISTS										Solution: 10 letters									
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T	R	O	P	P	U	S	P	H	T	R	A	E	P	E	B	I	R	D	S
S	S	U	L	O	H	L	U	A	T	O	T	L	N	L	T	O	E	A	T
A	P	E	T	I	T	I	O	N	C	A	U	S	E	E	T	N	E	W	S
W	I	E	P	L	O	B	R	S	W	T	P	V	L	S	E	S	F	N	A
S	L	S	E	S	U	S	G	L	O	B	A	L	E	T	N	R	O	U	O
M	L	E	T	C	D	C	M	N	E	R	U	T	A	N	T	W	G	C	S
O	S	A	K	U	H	H	I	C	T	B	E	N	E	R	G	Y	E	L	N
D	G	E	M	O	O	U	N	R	I	S	O	A	S	T	C	A	T	E	G
E	A	P	N	M	M	S	I	O	G	D	E	X	T	I	N	C	T	A	I
E	S	O	E	I	A	S	N	P	E	A	W	R	B	S	M	O	G	R	S
R	E	L	F	N	F	M	G	I	R	O	Y	G	O	L	O	C	E	S	E
F	S	I	O	T	O	X	I	N	H	D	R	L	O	F	A	C	E	G	L
U	R	C	O	S	I	Z	I	S	U	P	A	M	K	A	N	R	S	N	A
T	E	E	D	D	F	S	O	T	L	R	L	R	S	R	P	I	I	H	
U	F	M	D	N	S	I	S	A	U	A	L	O	P	M	P	S	A	N	W
R	U	I	F	U	R	S	S	O	E	O	Y	F	D	I	A	O	R	R	L
E	G	W	E	F	C	T	T	H	B	S	D	E	E	N	R	E	P	A	P
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Qat guardrooms

By: Mohammed Al-Jabri
jabr2003@yahoo.co.uk

In qat fields, there are always special guardrooms to protect qat trees from being stolen. At times, farmers keep watch over their qat fields to prevent their enemies from destroying the trees.

In fact, the growing interest in qat and the increasing number of qat addicts has led many farmers to plant more qat fields. Qat trees, in turn, require protection and care. This can be achieved by building and using guardrooms as a means of control.

Over the past 20 years, qat addicts have increased remarkably. Most belong to the lower class, while some are jobless. Consequently, sometimes they are obliged to go to qat fields and steal as much as they can. Others steal qat just to get money from selling it. This is why most qat farmers spend their nights guarding their trees.

However, looking back at history, before the September 26 Revolution, people did not steal or destroy qat fields. At that time, qat was not as important as it is now and people did not sell it at high prices.

Most qat guardrooms are small, with a five- or six-person capacity. They are four meters high, with at least three small windows. A qat guardroom is best built on a strategic site overlooking the entire field, especially in mountainous areas.

If a qat field is planted on a plain, then the guardroom is built on a base and raised to enable the watchman to view the entire field. Sometimes, a farmer's house is built within the qat field itself, so no guardroom is necessary.

In some mountainous areas, farmers are satisfied to simply set up a tent instead of building a guardroom. They say this method is easy, though dangerous, as they put tents in different corners of the field, thus puzzling thieves as to where the guard actually is located.

Inside a qat guardroom is a simple carpet with a few arm-resting pillows. A gun, a strong thick stick, a thick jacket and a lantern hang on the wall. Some guardrooms have doors and some do not. Some guardrooms were built years ago, while others are modern. Old guardrooms are made of mud and large stones, while modern guardrooms are made of concrete and cement. If the qat field is very big, farmers affix a large torch atop the guardroom.

In general, qat guardrooms have a special atmosphere, as they overlook natural scenes. They are a good place for friends to meet and some students



A farmer carrying his gun in his qat field

find a chance to review their lessons in these guardrooms. Usually, young men gather and get involved in endless discussions, especially on social and political topics. In some areas like Khawlan, talented people gather in guardrooms to recite poems or hold poetry debates. But nowadays this practice is beginning to disappear as most farmers bring televisions and radios into their guardrooms, while others prefer playing cards or chess.

At night, silence falls upon the qat fields. Nearly everything is calm and the task of guarding qat might seem frightening and dangerous. In mountainous areas, farmers sometimes are threatened by recurring fierce animals like tigers, hyenas and wolves. Such animals frequently visit qat fields in search of prey and it may be that the farmer himself is the prey. Those spending their nights in guardrooms are armed with a gun and they immediately shut the door upon hearing a fierce animal. Upon hearing or suspecting an approaching fierce animal, guards readily fire three to five shots in the air. Those guarding from tents are most exposed to danger. A fierce animal can approach a tent and easily attack those inside.

If there is a fierce animal, farmers unite and launch organized attacks against it, entrenching themselves

along the animal's trodden path. This takes much time because fierce animals are cautious, but in the end, the farmers win.

Camouflage

Farmers employ different methods and tricks in guarding qat fields. Some turn on a radio or television or switch on the guardroom light and then leave, making it look as if someone is there. Others who guard from their houses occasionally fire warning shots at potential qat thieves.

Qat tales

Four young men once went to a qat field. Two went to the guardroom and convinced the farmer to let them stay with him. They talked, laughed and succeeded in distracting the farmer's attention from watching the qat trees. The other two men safely stole as much qat as they could carry!

A farmer wanted to know whether his son (who guarded the qat fields) was cautious and courageous. One day, he went to the qat field his son was guarding and threw stones at the guardroom windows. The son was more than courageous. Armed with a strong stick and a gun, he left the guardroom to search for a thief. Finally, he saw his father, but did not recognize him because he was

disguised. The son immediately hit him with the stick and carried the swooning man to the guardroom, where he was shocked to discover he had hit his own father!



A view of a qat guardroom overlooking qat trees



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