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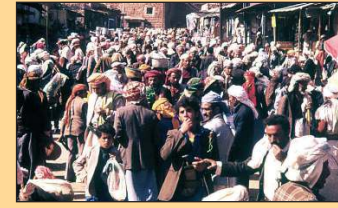
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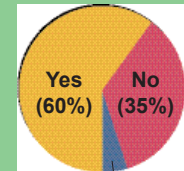
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 Old Sana'a markets
 a top priority in
 tourist promotion

Readers' Voice

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

Last edition's question:

Do you think the outrage of the Muslim world against the Danish newspaper would cause the west to be put off from Islam?



This edition's question:

Was the apology of the Danish prime minister and newspaper sufficient to solve crisis in the Muslim world?
 Yes
 No
 I don't know

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

No attention paid by health officials Epidemics kill dozens of children

By: Mohamed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Feb. 1 — Four patients were transferred to Saber Hospital in Aden for treatment while three others were rushed to capital hospitals due to their serious conditions, local sources told media.

Three women died last Monday in the area of Al-Kaima, 50 km east of Ataq, the provincial capital of Shabwa, as the Ministry of Public Health and Population could not diagnose symptoms of their illness. Medical sources said their symptoms were swelling of the body and low blood pressure, which cause death.

Locals in Al-Jawf province, 520 km northeast of Sana'a, told media that two children died from xerosis symptoms while media reported 15 child deaths last Sunday and Monday from cholera.

Official media reported last Monday that the Ministry of Public Health and Population sent a media team to curb the epidemic's spread in Khab and Sha'ath districts in Al-Jawf. Disease

symptoms were diagnosed by the spread of severe diarrhea among children in the two districts. Medical sources stating that the ministry was informed of the deaths of 10 children, retracted and said only five cases were reported.

Locals in epidemic-affected districts were surprised at different media outlets reporting that the ministry had controlled the disease. They said they had not seen any medical campaigns in their areas in past weeks, claiming that government media discussed areas that may not exist in Yemen.

Polio
 Minister of Public Health and Population, Dr. Mohamed Yahya Al-Numi, affirmed Wednesday that the anti-child polio campaign's first round immunized 72 percent of children under age 5 on Tuesday, the last vaccination day, according to preliminary field reports in targeted governorates.

Some media outlets mentioned that the polio campaign encountered problems convincing Dhamar province



Yemeni disabled children in a health center.

ARCHIVE PHOTO

locals to vaccinate their children for the second consecutive year. Some Dhamar residents stopped vaccinating their children because of a fatwa by a Wahabi Sheikh who advocated boycotting vaccination since it is unclean and comes from the West. The sheikh's fatwa led to depriving hundreds of Dhamar children of the vaccination last year.

Mohamed Bin Abdullah Al-Imam, Sheikh of Dar Al-Hadith in Ma'aber and a prominent Salafi hardliner, abandoned his former viewpoint on the polio vaccination. He accepted it, calling on parents to immunize their children against the epidemic. He described international support in launching the vaccination campaign as a type of cooperation in this regard.

In a letter to his fellow countrymen, Al-Imam said, "We investigated the vaccination and concluded that it is clean medicine and there is no reason why children should not take it." Vaccination teams in Dhamar photocopied the letter and distributed it to those refusing to vaccinate their children.

Shigellosis

In a statement published by Al-Sahwa Net last Wednesday, Dr. Najib Ghanem, head of Parliament's Health and Population Committee, held the Ministry of Public Health and Population accountable for the country's deteriorating health care. "Yemen recently experienced the proliferation of numerous epidemics in more than one area, climaxed with the spread of shigellosis in Al-Jawf province," he noted.

Shigellosis is a bacterial disease infecting the large intestine and the lower small intestine. It is caused by the shigellosis bacillus, which inflates the mucus membrane resulting in pain that may reach the stomach. The disease is diagnosed in different parts throughout the world including tropical and cold areas.

Estimated annual deaths from shigellosis worldwide are 600,000, with more deaths among children under age 10. The disease rarely spreads among breastfed infants under six months old. The disease's microbe is transmitted via contaminated food, drink and dairy. It also is communicat-

ed through polluted hands and fingernails following excretion.

According to Ghanem, the spread of such epidemics reflects an infringement by the ministry. He commented that the ministry appears incapable of supplying the country's necessary medical equipment, and even if supplied, the equipment is not employed in a good manner.

The parliamentary committee visited Al-Jawf, discovering that it lacked preliminary healthcare and medical services, Ghanem reported. "The committee was surprised when it found the province's main hospital closed."

Professor of Medical Sciences at Sana'a University, Ghanem said shigellosis doesn't kill except if the patient is ignored. He explained that it causes severe diarrhea that claims children's lives unless they receive intensive care.

A local Al-Jawf official blamed the governor for being indifferent to curbing the shigellosis epidemic scouring the Khab and Al-Sha'ath districts. Ali Al-Aji said Al-Jawf's governor has not taken serious action to curb the epidemic, as if it does not concern him.

Islah calls on JMP to implement political reform program

SANA'A, Jan. 31 — In a media statement obtained by the Yemen Times, the Yemeni Islah Party's Shura Council (IPSC) called on the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) to work on their political reform program and increase public awareness of it.

The council urged all political and social forces to uphold the reform program proposed by the six main Yemeni opposition parties. The program was announced in the final days of 2005 and aims to shape a better future for Yemen and free it from the crises influencing Yemenis.

The IPSC emphasized the need to reshuffle the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER). It demanded the Islah High Authority and General Secretariat work harder for SCER reshuffling and seriously consider participating in upcoming elections.

IPSC's statement demanded all national forces exert effort to improve Yemen's economic situation, holding the ruling General People's Congress accountable for the economy's deterioration and lack of national security and stability.

The statement called on the government to apply the wage law based on qualifications and years of service, not on other unfair considerations. It added that human rights abuse, restricting public freedoms and other practices in Yemen contravene the law and the Constitution, urging the government to respect human rights, as well as Yemeni citizens' dignity and freedom.

The IPSC condemned illegal practices reflected in combating the role of civil community organizations and parties, confiscating newspapers and other violations. It demanded concerned governmental parties reconsider the new draft press law with the main objective of protecting press freedoms and ensuring journalists' rights.

The council appealed to human rights organizations and governments worldwide to intervene in securing the release of Sheikh Mohamed Al-Moyyad and his aide Mohamed Zayed. It said the U.S. Administration should be pressured to limit such malicious conduct and human rights discrimination.

The IPSC recommended the National Committee defend Al-Moyyad and

Zayed to step up efforts and follow up coordination between governmental bodies and the public to secure the pair's release. It renewed its strong rejection of charges filed by the U.S. against IPSC Chairman and Iman University Rector, Sheikh Abdulmajeed Al-Zindani. It also praised efforts expended by President Saleh during his recent U.S. visit in defending Sheikh Al-Zindani.

The council congratulated Palestinians for successful legislative elections that were an example of integrity, freedom and transparency, despite the fact they were conducted under complicated conditions. It commended Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's role in conducting the legislative poll on time and in a free and transparent manner.

The IPSC praised Hamas's stance and adherence to joint work with all Palestinian forces to fulfill Palestinian ambitions, calling on Arab and Islamic governments to support Palestinians. It also urged the international community to respect Palestinians' will and help them achieve their ambitions.

Women march against Danish newspaper

The Danish drawings of the Prophet Mohammed have upset the Muslim world greatly. On the morning of Feb 1, Yemeni women and girls marched to show their frustration and anger.

By: Stine Exler

SANA'A, Feb. 1 — "We don't want to fight them. We are here in peace to express our love for our messenger," says Isma, one of the many female protesters. She is marching to show the rest of the world that we should all be able to live together with respect. In peace.

On Feb 1, the Al-Saleh Foundation had gathered thousands of girls and

women at Al-Sabaen Square. They marched for two hours to show their discontent with Danish newspaper, Jyllands-Posten and the illustrations of Mohammed that the paper published in September of last year. The atmosphere was thick with chanting and shouting under the big banners reading: "Boycot Danish products".

Western ignorance

The question "why?" was asked again and again among the women, and a lot of the protesters believe that the drawings has to do with ignorance. People in the West do not have enough knowledge about the prophet Mohammed and the place he has in the hearts of Muslims. And all too often, Islam is being linked to terrorism as in some of the drawings.

"If the editor of the newspaper had known about Mohammed's life, he would not have published these draw-

ings," says Manal, who lives in Sana'a. "The people of the West should read about Islam, because then they would understand why we love him so much, and why we feel so insulted by these drawings."

Nadia, a Sana'a student agrees: "There are bad people all over the world. Bad Christians, bad Jews, bad Muslims. We all know that. But the newspaper portrayed Mohammed as a terrorist, and terrorism has nothing to do with Mohammed or with being a Muslim. And it seems like people in the West do not always understand that."

Danish regrets

Both the Danish newspaper and the Danish prime minister have issued public apologies and regrets recently. But some of the women were not aware of this fairly recently development.

One protester said: "If I had known that they had said they were sorry, then



Yemeni women showing their frustration and anger.

PHOTO BY STINE EXLER

I don't think I would have marched today. Their apology means that they know they did something wrong."

Among the people of Denmark, text messages are being sent from phone to phone to apologize to anyone who feels insulted and misunderstood. In Yemen,

the Royal Danish Consulate has sent a letter directly to the Yemen Times saying that they deeply regret the publication of the controversial caricatures of the prophet Mohammed and the way it has hurt the sentiments of Muslims. The letter stresses that Jyllands-Posten

has apologized for the publication, and for its repercussions in the Muslim world. It also mentions the regrets expressed by the Danish Prime Minister through correspondence with the Arab League and the Organisation of Islamic Conferences.

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Dhamar and Al-Beidha medical service worsens

SANA'A, Feb. 1 — A parliamentary report revealed that the medical situation in Dhamar and Al-Beidha governorates has become serious and requires consideration.

Prepared by Parliament's committee on health and population, which visited the governorates, the report confirmed that many medical projects have experienced difficulties for years. Such difficulties prevent the medical sector in those regions from offering good medical service, the report stated.

The report mentioned that the governorates' hospitals and the medical sector lack specialists and technical staff to fix and repair medical equipment

subject to breakdowns. Doctors and nurses also are not distributed well throughout the governorates. According to the report, medical personnel mostly are in main cities, whereas rural regions are lacking.

In this regard, the report referred to Dhamar's public hospital, launched 24 years ago in 1982. Hospital capacity is 250 beds and it continues using the same old damaged medical equipment needing replaced. The committee report said the hospital needs development and medical personnel.

The report also mentioned Al-Thawra Hospital in Al-Beidha governorate, saying it experiences cracking

and rainwater leaks inside hospital rooms. The report also noted the governorate's Motherhood and Childhood Center, whose budget is estimated at 20,000 YR (\$100) monthly, but lacks much medical equipment.

Malaria, bilharzias, tuberculosis and leprosy are the most prevalent diseases in Dhamar governorate, the report found, confirming that malaria is considered the first medical problem, since many governorate provinces and regions are infested with it. Campaigns to fight the disease cover some provinces but do not reach all infected regions.

According to the report, the program

to fight bilharzias is facing many financial obstacles; therefore the disease is widespread in many governorate regions, particularly in Aness province.

The report found that diarrhea, typhoid, malaria, respiratory and urinary infections are the most common diseases in Al-Beidha governorate.

At the end of its report, the committee recommended completing medical projects in these governorates and providing personnel, equipment and furniture as soon as possible. It also called for promoting the medical programs through budgeting and expanding medical services in reproductive health care to include distant rural areas.

Yemeni trader murdered in Djibouti

DJIBOUTI, Jan. 27 — A band backed by a Djibouti big businessman murdered a Yemeni trader over business disputes, a Yemeni official source confirmed Friday.

The source explained to Yemen News, which published the story Sunday, that the Djibouti band deceived the trader, Sa'eed Mohamed Senan Al-Hamadi of Taiz, into going to a remote place and severely beat him until he was comatose.

Al-Hamadi was transported to a Djibouti hospital where he revealed his attackers' identities just moments before he died.

According to the source, Yemeni Ambassador to Djibouti and Minister of Expatriates' Affairs, Abdul Ali Al-

Qubati, is closely following up case procedures. Al-Qubati informed Djibouti's interior and foreign ministries and security authorities of the incident and called for them to arrest the perpetrators immediately and refer them to the court.

The ministry is expected to compile a complete case file and present it to the Foreign Ministry for contacting Djibouti authorities to discuss the case.

Al-Hamadi's relatives fear the case will be buried, as the perpetrators are prominent Djibouti businessmen. They mentioned that he had worked in Djibouti since the 1970s and regularly traveled between the two countries, as a Yemeni doing business in Djibouti.

Sugar disappears following price rise

SANA'A, Feb. 1 — Yemeni markets witnessed recent price hikes in foodstuffs, particularly sugar, which suddenly jumped to 120 riyals, surprising citizens seemingly out of the blue.

The increase from 70 riyals per kilogram raised the price of a 50 kilogram bag to 5,600 riyals and 6,000 riyals in some remote towns.

The increased sugar price affected most families, as Yemenis greatly depend on sugar. The increase raised the price of many foodstuffs, such as juice, and problems arose between citizens and owners of businesses selling

sugar-related commodities.

Government silence on the recent price hikes has fueled public outrage. Economists attribute the increases to confused economic policy. Most economists criticized the Ministry of Trade and Industry's remonstrative statements holding merchants responsible for the increase. A statement from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Sana'a assured that the increase in sugar prices is due to international increase.

The disappearance of sugar is attributed to merchant expectation of future price increases.

AIDS awareness course concludes

ADEN, Jan. 31 — A three-day AIDS awareness course, organized by the Women's Society for Sustainable Development and the Women's Society for Health Awareness and Psychological Guidance, concluded in Aden Tues., Jan. 31.

Coordinated by Aden's Public Health Office, the course was funded by the International Cooperation Development Organization. The 25

participants were from the information, security, education, health and civil society sectors.

The course trained participants how to provide accurate AIDS information to the local community. It also aimed to correct misconceptions about AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases and protection methods.

Organizers and trainers lecturing in

the course included Dr. Nabee Abdulrab, Manager of the National Program to Fight AIDS; Mohamed Arfan, Program Coordinator and Representative of the International Development Cooperation Organization; Nabel Mocbel, head of the Central Laboratory's AIDS examination unit and Psychological Clinic Consultant Shafiq Ali Noman.

Participants were divided into

groups to prepare a plan to fight AIDS and decrease its threat, as well as prepare content for a community awareness message using the media.

The course concluded with speeches about trained participants' role in joint protection efforts. Speakers determined that field work will be conducted in target areas to promote and begin applying behavioral and health guidance.

Social Fund launches "Business Edge" program in Yemen

SANA'A, Jan. 29 — The Social Fund for Development officially launched the "Business Edge" program (BEP) for small and micro enterprises (SMEs) in Yemen. The fund's Small Micro Enterprises Development Unit (SMEDU) will conduct the program, sponsored by the Dutch government in cooperation with International Finance Corporation (IFC) World Bank Group.

The program will be offered in Yemen for the first time by many organizations, including New Horizons, NIIT, SMMC, CMT House and the Taiz Chamber of Commerce. "Business EDGE," meaning Education for Global Executives, contains courses on management, leadership, human resources, marketing, customer care, accounting and finance. It is designed to combine various business and non-business courses by applying theory to real business problems. The program helps students to understand the rising impact of international competition



and how to operate in the global marketplace.

The Dutch Ambassador to Yemen

said the program's benefits will have huge effects on Yemeni SMEs and development projects by raising aware-

ness about SMEs, which help create new job opportunities and projects.

SMEDU Executive Director, Wisam Abdullah Mohammed, pointed out that the program will contribute to reducing Yemeni unemployment by employing more than 495 workers. The program aims to increase incomes of the poor and small businesses by training and supporting them technically and financially. It also aims to achieve a sustainable training market in SMEs.

Dutch investor and CMT House General Manager, Arco De Leede, said CMT is the first institute in Yemen to offer "Business Edge" tailored specifically to small to medium enterprises. Through the program, trainees receive higher education for global executives and learn how to be good administrative leaders. The program provides valuable business insight and knowledge through a structured and supportive situation that includes suitable training and resource access.

Saudi Arabia grants Yemen investment loans

SANA'A, Feb. 1 — The Saudi Development Fund agreed to grant Yemen five loans of 392,500 million Saudi Riyals to finance several development projects.

Loans are dedicated for Hodiedah Central Hospital, Taiz Faculty of Medicine and Medical Sciences and a road in Sa'ada governorate.

The loans come under Saudi soft loans provided through the 16th round of the Yemeni-Saudi coordinating council. The Saudi ambassador in Sana'a delivered the funds consent to Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Mohamed Ahmed Sofan.

The Saudi Development Fund has provided several grants and executed numerous projects in Yemen. Saudi fund aid previously was affected by fluctuating Yemeni-Saudi relations.

Muslim nation celebrates Hijra new year

Yemen Times Staff

Muslims throughout the world celebrated Tues., Jan. 31, the first day of the Islamic calendar's New Year 1427 based on the Prophet Mohammed's migration from Mecca to Medina toward the end of the sixth century.

In Yemen, celebrations took place at mosques with people reciting verses from the Qur'an and chanting religious hymns. Clerics and scholars spoke on the meaning of the occasion, which represents the starting point for Islam's spread from Mecca and carrying its message to other parts of the world. Speeches also underscored the profound implications of the prophet's migration.

Some preachers seized the opportunity to lash out, referring to recent outrage caused by Danish and Norwegian newspapers, which published slanderous cartoons against the Prophet Mohammed.

"That disgraceful act is a violation of all moral and human values and an outright breach of international conventions, which prohibit any insult against religions, faiths or prophets," the speakers said.

In other parts of the world, Muslims marked Islam's New Year with thanksgiving, food offerings and giving zakat (alms) to the poor. Some Muslims sent SMS text messages to each other with New Year's wishes. As a non-working holiday, people celebrate and spend it fasting.

The lunar Hijra calendar turned to the year 1427 when the new moon appeared. The first day of the new year also marks the first day of Muharram, the Islamic year's first month.

This year, East Asian Muslims will welcome two new years back-to-back — Chinese lunar New Year and Islamic New Year. However, both are of different significance. Chinese New Year is not a religious festival but rather a tradition, whereas for Muharram, it is of religious significance where Muslims fast. Muharram is important because God distinguished it by many significant events, such as pardoning Adam on that day.

The Islamic calendar is a purely lunar calendar, based on the motion of the moon. Its months have no permanent connection to seasons, thus Muslim religious celebrations may occur at any date on the Gregorian calendar.

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Foreign troops in Iraq below 100,000 this year: NYT

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The number of foreign soldiers in Iraq will fall below 100,000 by the end of the year, Iraq's national security adviser told The New York Times in a report posted Monday on the paper's Web site.

Mowaffak Al-Rubaie, who is also chairman of a joint-Iraq-American group planning the transfer of security responsibilities to Iraqi troops from American, said the overwhelming majority of foreign troops would be out in two years, The Times said in a report from Baghdad.

The Times said Rubaie's statements offer the strongest indication yet that the Bush administration is preparing to carry out significant reductions in American forces this year.

"I believe, according to this conditions-based agreement, that the multinational forces will be reduced" to fewer than 100,000 by the end of the year, he told The Times.

"By the end of 2007, the overwhelming majority of the multinational forces will have left the country," he added.

There are now about 160,000 foreign troops in Iraq, including about 140,000 U.S. troops, according to The Times.



U.S. Marines with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) walk across the desert at midday as they conduct a patrol near the western Iraqi town of Hit Jan. 30. Marine patrols are conducting daily operations in and around the town of Hit and along the Euphrates River in an attempt to stem insurgent activities and locate weapons caches. REUTERS

Several countries with small contingents have announced intentions to withdraw troops this year.

U.S. officials have said any withdrawal of forces would be contingent on whether Iraqi military units were capable of taking charge of the war against the guerrilla insurgency and maintaining order.

Rubaie told The Times there were detailed plans, now complete, to begin that withdrawal. "It's like an instruction book," he said.

The committee Rubaie is on also includes Gen. George Casey Jr., the top American commander in Iraq, and Zalmay Khalilzad, the American ambassador.

Indonesia looks for new group's links to al Qaeda

JAKARTA (Reuters) - Indonesian police are investigating possible links between a purported new militant network with al Qaeda, with initial indications showing it was set up by two key Malaysian radicals, police said on Tuesday.

On Monday, Indonesia's police chief told parliamentarians that documents seized in November showed Noordin M. Top had proclaimed himself leader of a group called Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad network, or Organization for the Basis of Jihad.

Top has been Southeast Asia's most wanted Islamic militant since Indonesian anti-terrorism police killed his sidekick, Malaysian Azahari bin Husin, in a shootout in East Java province that coincided with raids in which the documents were found.

An expert in recruiting young suicide bombers among Indonesia's impoverished masses, Top eluded capture at the time but was still in the country, deputy national police spokesman Brigadier General Anton Bachrul Alam said on Tuesday.

Asked what links Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad had to groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah, a shadowy network long seen as the regional arm of al Qaeda, Alam said: "This (Tanzim) was their group -- Noordin and Azahari. They have long been involved in terrorism."

Top and Azahari were also key mem-



An Indonesian police officer stands guard in Jakarta, Dec. 30. Indonesian police are investigating possible links between a purported new militant network with al Qaeda, with initial indications showing it was set up by two key Malaysian radicals, police said on Tuesday. REUTERS

bers of Jemaah Islamiyah.

The seized documents did not give details about Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad, Alam added, although security experts have said Jemaah Islamiyah has recently splintered, with concern among some that bombing attacks were drawing too

much attention.

The previously unheard of Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad encompassed Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines and several other countries, police chief General Sutanto said late on Monday.

Investigators were checking to see if it had links to al Qaeda, police said.

Indonesia's chief of detectives, Makbul Padmanegara, however, told reporters that Tanzim Qaedat al-Jihad was not a new organization and might be part of Jemaah Islamiyah.

"There is no new grouping. But the people in it might be new ... they have to recruit," Padmanegara said.

Indonesian authorities have blamed Jemaah Islamiyah for a number of major bombings against Western targets in recent years. Top has been key player in most attacks, police say.

A number of junior militants linked to Top have been arrested in the past couple of months in Indonesia, since police killed Azahari, who was Jemaah Islamiyah's master bombmaker.

The two men worked closely together on several attacks, police have said, using their charisma and cash to induct budding militants into their anti-Western cause.

Western governments have warned that Jemaah Islamiyah was still a threat, despite a series of arrests of various members and the killing of Azahari.

Second U.S. soldier found guilty of Afghan assault

KABUL (Reuters) - A U.S. military court found a second soldier guilty of mistreating detainees in Afghanistan in July and sentenced him to six months in detention, the U.S. military said.

Sergeant Kevin D. Myricks was found guilty of conspiracy to maltreat a detainee and maltreatment of two detainees at a hearing at a U.S. base in Afghanistan on Monday.

The court martial and subsequent punishment of the soldier reflected the seriousness with which the military viewed the incident, said Major General Jason Kamiya, commander of U.S.-led forces fighting insurgents in Afghanistan.

Myricks, demoted to the rank of private, was being held at the main U.S. base at Bagram, north of Kabul, pending transfer to Kuwait for detention, the U.S. military said in a statement.

Another U.S. soldier, Army Specialist James Hayes, involved in the



U.S. soldiers are seen during a dust storm in Ghanzi, Afghanistan, April 7. REUTERS

same incident in the restive central province of Uruzgan, was accused of punching detainees in the chest, arms and shoulders.

Hayes was found guilty on Friday of one count of conspiracy to maltreat and two counts of maltreatment. He was sentenced to four months in detention and also demoted to the rank of private.

Human rights groups and former detainees have criticized the U.S. military for abusing prisoners in Afghanistan and at the U.S. detention center at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.

The U.S. military denies any widespread abuse and says soldiers who mistreat detainees will be punished.

"We are fully committed to investigating all allegations of detainee mistreatment and will hold accountable those who are found to have acted inappropriately," Kamiya said.

There are about 18,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan fighting Taliban and al Qaeda militants and hunting for their leaders.

U.S. and Afghan opposition forces overthrew the Taliban in late 2001 after they refused to hand over al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

Israel likely to freeze tax payment to Palestinians

JERUSALEM (Reuters) - In a potential blow to the cash-strapped Palestinian Authority, Israel said on Tuesday it expects to suspend monthly tax payments during a policy review after the shock election victory of the Islamist group Hamas.

Palestinian Economy Minister Mazen Sonoqrot decried what he called "an irresponsible and grave decision" and said it would have "negative economic and social consequences on the Palestinians".

Hamas spokesman Mushir al-Masri accused Israel of "trying to steal Palestinian money".

The Quartet of major powers trying to broker Middle East peace said on Monday that international donors would continue to aid the caretaker government of President Mahmoud Abbas, at least until Hamas formed a new administration.

The Quartet — Russia, the European Union, the United States and the United Nations — said Hamas must reject violence and recognize Israel or risk losing aid in future.

Israel collects customs revenue on behalf of the Palestinians and hands it over to the Authority, and the next automatic payment falls due on Wednesday, February 1.

The transfers typically total about \$50 million a month — this month's payment was expected to be \$55 million — and the salaries of about 140,000 Palestinian employees depend to a large extent on receipt of the money.

"Acting Prime Minister (Ehud) Olmert has ordered a policy review on whether or not automatic transfers should continue. That review is ongoing and has not reached final decisions," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Mark Reggev.

"Pending final decision, it is most likely that automatic transfers will not continue," he said.



A senior leader and head of Hamas' list of candidates, Ismail Haniyeh, talks during his news conference in Gaza City, Jan. 30. REUTERS

Boycott Hamas government

Olmert said on Sunday Israel would boycott a Palestinian government that included Hamas, which scored a victory over the long-dominant Fatah party in Wednesday's parliamentary election.

Fatah leaders have so far rejected joining any coalition with Hamas, whose anti-corruption platform, charity network and strong resistance to Israel since the Palestinian uprising began in 2000 propelled it to victory.

Reggev said he could not say how long the review of the Israeli tax payments would take. The Palestinian Authority faces a financial crunch if Israel withholds the money.

Unemployment in the Palestinian territories runs high, at 22 percent, and half the Palestinian population live in poverty. In the Gaza Strip, many Palestinians live on an average of \$2 a day.

Reggev said Israel's position on the tax payment was "in synch" with the international consensus.

Hamas has rejected as "blackmail" the Quartet's demands it renounce violence against Israel or risk losing aid. It also suggested it could look for alternative sources of funding in the Arab world and beyond.

"The Quartet decision was unjust and a punishment to our people for using their freedom of choice in a democratic and fair election," said Hamas spokesman Masri.

But he added: "Hamas seeks to build bridges of trust with all international parties."

Jihad al-Wazir, the acting Palestinian minister of finance, said Israeli officials had promised in talks on Sunday to make the tax payment on schedule, but that Israel told the Palestinians on Monday it would suspend the transfer.

"We contacted the Quartet and the U.S., telling them that the money is due for past requirements. The money is not going to Hamas but to employees," Wazir said.

U.S. officials had no immediate comment on the issue.



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Only in Yemen: Children as traffic police!

Earlier this week, a child took charge of directing traffic at one of the capital's busiest intersections after noticing the absence of all traffic police who were supposed to be on duty at the time. The phenomenon of government employees shirking their duties has grown tremendously.

By: Hakim Almasmari
hakim_almasmari@hotmail.com

As Yemen desperately tries to instill the importance of law in the eyes of its citizens, the government seems to head in the opposite direction. Problems and disorganization in all government institutions form the core of this ongoing dilemma.

A major concern of Yemenis living in large cities is problems faced when dealing with traffic police, as police domination and oppression against poor Yemenis occurs daily. Blackmailing citizens for money is common and widespread. If citizens do not cooperate, they risk receiving imaginary fines totaling three days' hard-earned salary. Such threats and behavior worry many Yemenis.

Recently, at one of the capital's busiest traffic posts at the intersection of Zubairi and Hadda streets, instead of traffic police, a child under age 10 stood directing traffic. During the incident, there was no sign of any traffic police to stop the child from taking control, as all on-duty police were at least 50 meters away from the post, some chewing qat while others laughed and mingled on neighboring streets. Minutes later, after the child got bored of his part-time job, he

stepped down and headed home.

When asked to comment on the reason why he took over the traffic post, the young child said, "It was really fun. Sometimes the drivers looked at me and praised my work. I want to do it again." He seemed nervous at first, but opened up as our conversation continued. "When I grow up, I will show them how to stick to their job and take responsibility," he added, proud of what he'd done.

At the capital's main intersections, like the one mentioned above, between five and 10 traffic police are on duty throughout the day, giving them full opportunity to leave their posts when necessary. Many locals, including myself, were shocked at this scenario. I took the accompanying photo to prove such a case, clearly showing the intersection and traffic jammed at the height of Sana'a's rush hour.

A growing phenomenon in this country is feared more when the government and its employees, who really are in charge of enforcing law, are the first to disobey such laws. The government is given no importance whatsoever, as people have lost hope in change.

"The people fighting corruption in this country are the cause and core of corruption in Yemen. They act as if they are above the law," said Salim Abdul Basit, a worried Yemeni seeking

positive change. "Only in Yemen will you notice that laws and regulations have no meaning," he added.

Traffic police regularly tend to leave their posts for long periods and, in some cases, don't attend their posts all day long. Between afternoon and evening, some even are observed chewing qat on a side street curb, away from their traffic responsibilities.

"After Asr (midday) prayer, the number of traffic police decreases so much. Why would they stay if they already collected their qat money in the morning from poor bus drivers?" Nagi Al-Sabahi said. "Should we import traffic police from foreign countries like we did when we hired street sweepers from Ethiopia, teachers from Sudan and Egypt and nurses from India? This is ridiculous," he added, angry at Yemen's overall situation.

There is no government employee discipline against such a socially destructive phenomenon, as no real sensor is present to watch them. Yemenis are greatly concerned about non-stop daily corruption not just among traffic police, but in many – if not all – government institutions.

"Look at all our neighboring countries. Look at Saudi Arabia, for instance. Traffic police there have more respect and fear in the eyes of the people because they themselves respect and fear the law!" Al-Sabahi



A boy that volunteered to direct traffic in the absence of traffic officers.

added. While countries worldwide strive for success, Yemen still is lost in an ongoing fairytale. Citizens tend to believe that improvement is noticeable and change is on its way, while only backward steps are visible in reality.

After unification, the government promised a life full of opportunities

and chances, but since then, only poverty has expanded its wings to different areas, while corruption has spread like never before. Yemen is rated one of the most corrupt countries by Transparency International and one of the poorest according to the United Nations Annual Report. Change is possible, but requires more than a

miracle.

"If this is what government employees are doing, then I have lost all hope in change," said Taher Ba-Mutaa, who has sought change and reform in Yemen for more than 30 years. "We can live with poverty, for that is destined by God, but we cannot live with corruption," he concluded.

Yemen's random education and deteriorating output

The advancement of nations can be measured against the quality of education states provide their people. Education is the real nucleus in development of nations to become like more developed countries in economic, cultural, social and political areas. Developing countries are advised to pay close attention to modern and advanced syllabuses dealing with gradual education stages, from nursery and to university. Opportunities should be offered to every learner according to his or her major and area of interest.

Education in Yemen still experiences a state of confusion and random processes in the sense of changing educational syllabuses and unwise selection of specialized educators, in addition to marginalizing the primary stage, one of the most important to students' progress. This stage suffers from a lack of well-qualified teachers, padded syllabuses and large classes that hinder students' comprehension.

To learn more about the reality of education in Aden province, we conducted the following probe.

Corruption in education

Mariam Ahmad Saleh of Aden says corruption has become rampant in numerous education offices and schools at the expense of a teacher's personality and status in the eyes of his students.

In the past, the teacher enjoyed a strong personality and educational status which made his students to respect him. No one could find a teacher to corrupt or receive bribery because he was an honest and discreet educator, she said. Nowadays, that teacher has become corrupt, exploiting the absence of firm administration to hold him accountable. Some teachers were found to be receiving money from families to help their children pass to the next stage.

Education in Yemen is slow to progress and cannot cope with the era's changes and advancements, she added. Students tend to receive words and instruction from their teacher without any hard work while teachers pursue traditional methods and tech-

Padded syllabuses and absence of well-qualified teachers lead to declining quality of primary education output.



A classroom full of students, which makes it difficult for them to understand what the teacher is saying.

niques in futile classes.

In some cases, one finds boys and girls memorizing verses from the Holy Qur'an while at the same time, they cannot write them. Syllabuses are padded and have no gradability, teachability or correlation.

Saleh concluded, saying, "One can question the fate of the general budget allocated for education. We always hear the Vice President stating to the media that the education budget exceeds that of the army. Meanwhile, there are large numbers of students who study outdoors with outdated boards and others in classes with no power or toilets."

Schoolgirls complain

When we began investigating, coinciding with first-semester exams at Ibn Khaldon Primary School in Al-

Tawahi district, we met sixth-grader Manal Abdullah. We asked her about exams and the subjects she had that semester.

After just completing the Qur'anic exam, she responded, "I studied mathematics, geometry, Islamic education, Arabic language and sociology, which covers nationalism, geography and history. Then we have an exam on the three books at once."

Q. Do you have difficulty understanding the syllabuses?

A. We have difficulties mainly in mathematics, which includes two books, arithmetic and geometry. In other subjects, we have books filled with information that seems futile and we have trouble understanding the content in large classes, as the number of students exceeds 50 per small classroom. This makes it difficult for

us to understand what the teacher is saying.

Q. What is your family back-

ground?

A. My family is composed of eight children. My father is a simple worker at the port and my mother has no work. All of us live in a single room. We sit and study at home only during exams, but other times we play with other children in the streets or watch TV. I love watching boxing – George Batistina is my favorite boxer. I also pursue other activities and participate in children songs.

Abdullah said her family's economic situation is stable, as her father works as an expatriate in the United Arab Emirates, and that she is interested in magazines like "Zahrat Al-Khaleej" and "Al-Yaqada wa Al-Sada." She concluded by wishing all her primary school classmates rapid progress in their educational acquisitions.

Cheating is a means to success

In assessing the level of Yemeni students, high school statistics teacher Mohamed Ahmad Al-Azazi said, "Students' level has declined for a variety of reasons, such as large class-

es and the fact that a majority of students achieve marks through group cheating in all Aden province schools.

"When we mark student answer books," he explained, "we find them identical due to collective cheating in all subjects, with no exception. In marking student answer books, we usually find numerous dictation errors students should have overcome in early stages of education. Some secondary level students have not mastered addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, but still pass secondary school exams."

Al-Azazi continued, "I have worked in the teaching field for 12 years and through my experience, I found the level of students declined in passing years due to group cheating, lack of attention by students' parents and television programs. All these drew students' attention away from study and sometimes made them deviate."

"We call on education authorities to end the phenomenon of cheating," he added.

Asked about test items included on high school exams, Al-Azazi replied that when he previously marked answer books of the literary section of Lahj, Shabwa, Abyan and Al-Dhale' provinces, he found that "questions differed from one governorate to another, although ministerial exams are supposed to be uniform. Because of this, some students complain about an unjust system," he added.

Al-Azazi referred to errors in new editions of statistics books assigned for the third secondary grade, pointing out, "We find mistakes in the printing, as well as in the style of setting mathematical laws. So how can a student score high marks in randomly set subjects?"

Summing up, Al-Azazi insisted on the need to eradicate cheating and said cheats should not be allowed to pass to the next grade unless they prove to be hard-working and eligible to pass. He

recommended that concerned governmental parties organize training courses for teachers, study their areas of weakness and suggest possible solutions to improve them. According to Al-Azazi, the Ministry of Education should hold monthly workshops to discuss the education situation, difficulties teachers face and activate the role of school administrations.

Education needs restructuring

Abdulqawi Abdullah Saleh, General Manager of Al-Tawahi Education Office in Aden, discussed exams, "First semester exams proceeded normally in different Al-

Tawahi schools with no problems observed. We toured district schools and applied a control system using secret seat numbers on students' answer sheets. We tried to apply this system in a better way to ensure competent educational output."

According to Saleh, education suffers fluctuating conditions that should be dealt with seriously. "When we have to reach top-quality education in order to serve the country's development, we must pay closer attention to curricula form and content. Top priority should be given to teachers and their qualifications, as they are the cornerstone of the learning process. From the teacher, we can make a successful example of driving forward the wheels of development in our country."

Concerning complaints by students' parents about their children's deteriorating progress, Saleh said, "This is a problem and we have a plan for teachers to closely monitor and observe students' progress beginning from early stages of education and then identify and check their areas of interest."

There are problems galore in Yemen's education system, as some exploit the process to gain unlawful subsistence while other teachers quit classes and work as bodyguards for senior government officials. Additionally, many Yemeni teachers gave up the profession and immigrated to Gulf countries in search of work and material gain.

Group cheating has become an illegible means to success. Lahj province occupies top place in this issue.

Varying high school exams from one governorate to another is unjust to students.

Words of Wisdom



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

OUR
OPINION

Will the Arabs continue playing in the timeout?

The Arabs are preordained to live in an inflammable region. Thus it is predestined that they have to get used to the lava gushing out of that volcano, then to surrender to that situation and convince themselves that they are powerless victims unable to face the dangers or at least fortify themselves and protect their interests.

This false conviction has brought with it all forms of meekness, indifference and weakness. It has generated a stance that ascribes all their problems and crises to fate and consequently to foreign schemes and imperialistic conspiracies as well as external factors. No one admits of neglectfulness in performing responsibility and duties. None wants to stand up in defense of the land and honor at this critical stage the nation is experiencing and suffering from injustice, from both foreign and the kith and kin. This is how the Arab scene looks as troubled, instable and burdened with concerns and problems. And thus seems the Arab entity, submissive and receiving successive blows without showing any defensive response. Those who have the decision-making in their hands have come out with a decision of playing in the time-out, going to extremes in the game of hopeless waiting and wrongly using them. Any observer of those practices can see clearly those indicators. Among those disgraceful practices are:

-exaggeration in unleashing resounding slogans and phrases that have intoxicated the Arabs for more than sixty years. There are always words without being followed by acts, not even a kind of formalism, to give them some kind of credibility and objectivity. Even those words are stripped of their objectivity and meanings. What an official says is not as important as how and when he says it. What he says is valueless without being followed by decisions, stances and radical curing. How and when the leader practices his acts is more valuable than the act itself.

-with absence of accuracy and timing, deception and enlargement of lies have changed to addiction of another plague, i.e. the entertainment of submissiveness in every walk of life, our decisions and acts. The role of being active has become something of a marvel for the Arabs, if not among the impossible.

-paralysis has affected the Arab joint action and has influenced most of internal activities related to it and the big issues as well. All effective and serious initiatives have frozen, except some beautifying operations and token movements for keeping situations as they are and calming down crises.

-those practices changed into a habit exhausting Arab potentials and disappointing them. They work under effect of intoxication is leading to taming the Arab masses and makes them used to surrender to the bitter reality under the absence of the spirit of responsibility and sacredness of duty.

-absence of the sense of responsibility has led to avoid treatments and refusal of recognizing the present and future dangers. This situation has led to stabiliza-



By: Prof.
Abdulaziz al-Tarb

tion of the state of disunity and fragmentation and to be a reality we have to endure.

Not one reasonable will deny the existence of hostile foreign schemes planned beforehand, stemming from enmity or certain purposes machinated by several world and Zionist forces. The question is where our duties, responsibilities, and plans are, and where are our resolution, decisions and efforts to unite the ranks for confrontation and defeating the enemies in defense of our rights, lands and interests. It seems there is no ray of hope or light at the end of the long dark tunnel. There are only words without acts and illusions without efforts and surrender to the "general" time as a weapon; some claim it had achieved what was hoped for many times in the past.

In occupied Palestine the alleged farce of democracy is repeated. One government falls, early elections are held and a new government comes to resume implementing the same Zionist scheme. The Israelis make fool of us and of the world after they exchange roles and alternatively put on the masks of hawks and doves. Directing this farce contains demonic details and bribes of alliance with remnants of the Likud, and remains of the Labor. Between them lie the small rightist parties performing the role of blocker to any decision or step to be taken. As for the Palestinians and the Arabs they have only to play in the time-out.

In Iraq there are elections succeeding elections and constitutions follow a constitution. Meanwhile, the country is drowned in labyrinths of massacres, sectarian seditions, and plots of partition. Terrorism influence is aggravating and the occupation is enhancing its bases and realizing its goals despite the losses it sustains and difficulties it is facing. Frequent postponements and frequent promises, conferences, mediations and initiatives are active whereas the innocent blood is shed and the Iraqi wealth is being exhausted and the nation's destiny faces more dangers. Nevertheless, we have to wait and hope for soon solutions to salvage what is possible of Iraq.

In Syria and Lebanon, there are successive postponements to decide the situation and disclose the fact about the assassination of Lebanese former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. We have to wait for many months. Months should be dedicated for work of the international investigation committee, the state of watching, anxiety and stagnation in the two countries, crises, exhaustion of energies and freezing of projects, more rifts in Lebanese-Syrian relations, instigation of sectarian seditions, threats to national unity and spread of despair and disappointment. Even the resistance in Lebanon began to lose some of its capabilities and state of unanimity, by virtue of which it had scored victory over Israel and forced it to withdraw from Lebanon.

Intrigues in Egypt began after the parliamentary elections, defeat of opposition parties such as the Nasserites and al-Wafd, non-nomination of Copts and

women by the ruling National Party and success of the Muslim Brotherhood by more than 20% of parliament seats. Also in Egypt there are the sentence of five years imprisonment against Aymen Nour, the United States demand for his release and granting the opposition and civil society organisations more freedoms in work, in line with the principle of democracy.

In Yemen there are the return of bloody battles in Saada, the ruling GPC party comes out of its 7th conference by accusing the opposition parties- the JMP- of bidding in their initiative about the program of comprehensive reform needed at this stage. Also there is the president's back down from not nominating for the upcoming presidential elections. The year 2006 in Yemen is witnessing local elections in April and presidential elections in September. The economic situation pushes the public to demand for food security, security, medicine and curbing unemployment and inflation. We have to wait for what happens after interference of the Central Bank and taking control of one of the national banks that was distinguished in areas of credit and development and granting small tradesmen and contractors facilities to carry out projects and employment of labor.

Those samples of issues give a clear-cut image of the Arabs' condition nowadays and their loss in oceans of crises and secondary details and western illusions. Against all that, the right is lost, the land usurped, the fact hidden, interests confiscated and the citizen's needs neglected and his hopes disappointed.

The process of retreat continues and the Arabs are prevented from catching up with developments of the age and benefiting from its scientific wealth and exploiting their available riches.

What I dread most is that after the end of playing in the timeout we will discover we have to return to it and enter into its whirlwinds. The days of decision are coming tomorrow, or in months or a year. Are we going to look for another timeout and gamble with our interests and destinies of the people; in their present and future?

These sad words are not meant for taking part in a process of self-torture while we are receiving the year 2006. They are meant for pinpointing the points of disease and describing our present situation and agonies that are torturing every Arab human. They are meant to be a call for reawakening and preparation for the great imperative tasks and surprises expected from the current course of events. Is there an Arab strategy being planned for this stage? This is a call for the Khartoum Arab Summit. Are there initiatives for joining forces and fortification of fronts while waiting for what consequences there are going to be in Palestine, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, Sudan and Yemen and in various parts of the Arab land, which possesses riches and all resources of development?

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.

COMMON
SENSE

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

Unnecessary Provocations & some important corrections

What is with Europe?

The European Community was thought to be really mature in not letting itself become driven to creating an aura of friction between the continent and the entire Moslem World. In fact, one would think that with sizable Moslem communities in Europe, any European would think twice about suggesting any form of intimidation that would provoke anger amongst not only Moslems outside the Moslem continent, but also within the European Community, many of whom are also citizens of European countries. Why all this fuss about some silly cartoons drawn by persons who were not just merely showing "their freedom of self expression". One would wonder why any cartoonist far away in Denmark would find it necessary to waste his talent on intimidating illustrations of hate and prejudice, without reason or cause, especially as Moslems have never brought any harm to him or to Denmark, as far as anyone knows.

But, had it all ended there, it would not have been so dramatic. But why should there be a systematic effort to make sure that all of Europe is embroiled in such obvious efforts to foment hatred and bigotry and to break the sanctity of people who have found that imagery in religion is counter-productive and leads to unfortunate misunderstandings. This is not freedom of speech at all but really a well organized effort to test the European's people taste for meaningless hate mongering disguised as "freedom of speech" or freedom of the press. Someone or some people are certainly behind this evil streak that has been allowed to stain the modular attitude that modern Europeans have generally displayed in dealing with the peoples of other religions and cultures. Is it really in interest of the Europeans also to join the Zionist - Evangelical "Crusade" in order to protect some mischievous cartoonist, who must have been driven by lucrative offers to foment such an ugly project, certainly drawn by those who thrive on human conflict. One would almost be ready to say that such mischievous minds are neither serving the ideals of free speech or the hopes for world peace, which is what the observer believes is not what the mind set of most Europeans would find "enjoyable". This observer was not at all impressed by a "Frenchman" who suggested that no one should prevent the Europeans from enjoying the "right to laugh", as if religion has now become no more than a laughing matter to this and those many others, who view intimidating cartoons on other people's sacred personalities as laughing matters. For fifteen hundred years, Moslems have avoided projecting any images of their revered Islamic heroes or messengers (including Jesus, Zachariah and the many apostles revered both by Christianity and Islam, not to mention the many prophets and messengers of the Old Testament, including Jacob, Ishmael and Isaac and the patriarch of all prophets, Ibrahim), for no other reason except to make sure that Moslems do not succumb to idol worship of any form; i.e. to keep their monotheism sacrosanct and intact. For fifteen hundred years, real faithful Moslems never defied the sanctity of religious edifices of other religious persuasions in their midst and have insured that other people's religious beliefs are tolerated with all due respect. Surely, modern Europeans can not fail to realize that it is not in anyone's interest to succumb to the prodding of those with evil inclinations, who have found it worthwhile to serve their narrow and bigoted interest by fomenting religious strife in this world, without any rational explanation for unleashing such factional strife.

There is an obvious desire with some people to increase anti-Moslem hatred in Europe, in the wake of Europeans being cold to supporting the repression with which the Israelis have continued to "govern" the occupied territories of Palestine and it is not difficult to discern that an evil Zionist hand is behind all this hate mongering. As Abdul-Bari Atwan of London based Al-Quds Newspaper said, Moslems living in Europe have always applauded the tolerance that Moslems have enjoyed in Europe and have used Europe as a model of tolerance that would put most of the repressive regimes in the Arab World to shame in this modern age. No one would find any meaningful justifications for such senseless provocation, without succumbing to the notion that there must be an evil intent behind all this desire to ignite European - Moslem animosity and there is no laughing matter in this for anyone, not even for those who want to enjoy laughing at the expense of the deeply felt spiritual inclinations of other human beings.

Corrections to last Common Sense on the Doha Conference

While reporting on the Doha, Qatar Conference on Enriching the Middle East's Economic Future in the Common Sense of Issue 917, please note the following corrections:

The Conference was inaugurated by speeches by HE Sheikh Hamad Bin Jasim Jabr Al-Thani, First Deputy Prime Minister and foreign Minister of Qatar and Former President Bill Clinton of the United States.

The participants from Yemen also included Mr. Abdul-Rahman Hayel Sa'eed An'am (Vice Chairman of Hayel Saeed An'am Group) and Mr. Abdul-Rahman Hayel Saeed An'am, Director of HSA, in addition to Mr. Mohammed Al-Ba'adani, Deputy General Manager of Yemen Liquefied Natural Gas Company (YLNG), whose names were inadvertently erased from the article.

On another note, Ms. Farida Hashem (the name was also inadvertently erased in the article), Senior Consultant of Felixia Associates of London played a significant role in helping to coordinate the project between the various parties involved.

The Conference will have more detailed coverage in this and/or the next issue of YT, as the complete final recommendations and results have just been publicized.

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

Letters to the Editor

Yemeni Jews

I am a fan-reader of Yemen Times. It is an absolutely wonderful newspaper that covers much of the on-going affairs of Yemen. I was born and raised here in the United States to Yemenite Jewish parents. We still have a strong sense of Yemenite tradition. I would like to know, is it possible that Yemen Times could make an article dedicated to the Yemenite Jews? I am not sure how many there are left in Yemen, but some figures put it at 600-1,000. I have been to Yemen and I simply could not leave it. Because of my profound love and amazement of the land and people, I stayed another month over my expected return to the States. I personally share yementimes.com with many of my friends here and elsewhere. But, we would appreciate it if more articles

could be brought up and written about Yehude Teymen, or Hebrew for Yemenite Jews.

Deen Gollani
ezra_el_0203@yahoo.com

Fear of human disaster in Red Sea

As we know there is always some very hazardous trip which the only horn African refugees pay its prize while crossing the 300km gulf of Aden, the latest one approximately 400 desperate refugee had lost their lives, during the latest two months of the last year. its running from Death and to death was the day to day activities which always happens in that death Sea. Moreover we had heard the calls of international human rights organizations expressing their deep concern about that tragedy and as usual this does not change the ways and rea-

sons, which causes the death of the desperate refugees before its beginning in 1992, the first was Goobweyn Ship which was the first to sail from Somali to Yemen during the onset of the civil war in Somalia.

The sole explanations were the poor infrastructures of both the source and target countries which could not make possible to contain that everlasting human tragedy on one hand. And the unwillingness of the international community to effectively address the root cause of the problem fo at least to diminish.

We believe as a Somali refugee intellectuals in Yemen that if the international community does not take a preventive and responsive steps towards these desperate horn African refugees there would be a real human disaster which will happen during the

upcoming months. This has few explanations:

First a prolonged drought that hit the southern west of Somalia had a wide impacts of the great new influx to Yemen for the upcoming months particularly from The region of Geode in Southern Somalia was the hardest-hit by the regional drought that had affected the neighbouring Ethiopia and its epicentre in northern Kenya.

People living mainly from rearing cattle sold to their Kenyan neighbours to buy grain, their animals had started dying by the hundred and thousands. Inter-ethnic clan fighting had worsened as rival clans battled for the few remaining water points in the barren region, as aid workers said the crisis was as much a water crisis as it was for food. as said by aid worker

Second: the Somalis has



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WORLD REPORT 2006 (Part One)

Of the Human Rights Watch

Late in 2005, increasing global attention to the U.S. policy of holding some terror suspects as "ghost detainees"—indefinitely, incommunicado, and without charges at undisclosed locations outside of the United States—further damaged U.S. credibility. Key U.S. allies such as Britain and Canada compounded the leadership problem in 2005 by seeking to undermine certain critical international rights protections. Britain sought to justify sending terrorist suspects to countries that torture, and Canada worked aggressively to dilute key provisions of a new treaty on enforced disappearances.

Human rights violations generate indignation and outrage that spur terrorist recruitment, undermine the public cooperation with law-enforcement officials that is essential to exposing secret terrorist cells, and cede the moral high ground for those combating the terrorist scourge.

ished human rights leadership. Fighting terrorism is central to the human rights cause. Any deliberate attack on civilians is an affront to fundamental values of the human rights movement. And acts of terrorism took an appalling toll in 2005.

In Iraq attacks on civilians occurred nearly every day, killing thousands, while other terror attacks claimed the lives of civilians in Afghanistan, Britain, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Israel, Jordan, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, and the United Kingdom. But the willingness to flout human rights to fight terrorism is not only illegal and wrong; it is counterproductive. These human rights violations generate indignation and outrage that spur terrorist recruitment, undermine the public cooperation with law-enforcement officials that is essential to exposing secret terrorist cells, and cede the moral high ground for those combating the terrorist scourge.

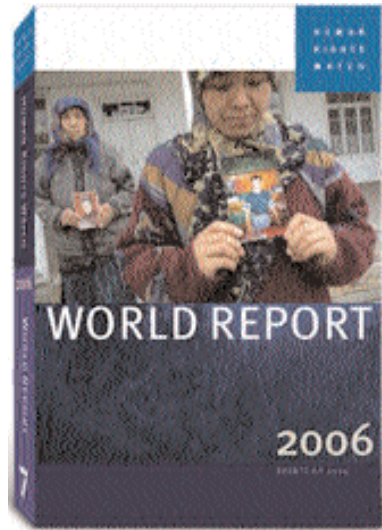
Among other pressing challenges in 2005 were the Uzbekistan government's massacre of hundreds of demonstrators in Andijan in May; the Sudanese government's consolidation of ethnic cleansing in Darfur, in western Sudan; continued severe repression in Burma, North Korea, Turkmenistan, and Tibet and Xinjiang in China; tight restrictions on civil society in Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Vietnam; persistent atrocities in the Democratic Republic of Congo ("DRC") and the Russian republic of Chechnya; and massive, politically motivated forced evictions in Zimbabwe. Although the United States responded to several of these developments, its impact was seriously undercut by its diminished credibility. The effect was most immediate on issues of torture and indefinite deten-

tion (indeed, the administration rarely even raised concerns about torture by other countries and would have been labeled a hypocrite if it had), but even when the administration spoke out in defense of human rights or acted commendably, its initiatives made less headway as a result of the credibility gap.

European and other powers, meanwhile, had their own credibility problems or did far too little to correct the balance. The result was a global leadership void when it came to defending human rights. Sadly, Russia and China were all too happy to fill that void by building economic, political, and military alliances without regard to the human rights practices of their partners. China's rise as an economic power, and Russia's determination to halt democratizing trends in the former Soviet Union, meant that many governments around the world confronted a political landscape significantly realigned to the detriment of human rights protection. China's and Russia's disregard for human rights in their foreign relations created, in turn, further pressure for Western governments to do likewise for fear of losing economic opportunities and political allies. Against this bleak backdrop, certain bright spots could still be found in the global system for defending human rights. Sometimes the major Western powers still managed to stand up for human rights, as in Burma, North Korea, and Sudan.

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Other times, governments from the developing world stepped in. India, for example, played a constructive role in opposing the king of Nepal's takeover of the government in February and his crackdown on political parties and civil society (although India continued lending support to Burma's murderous generals).



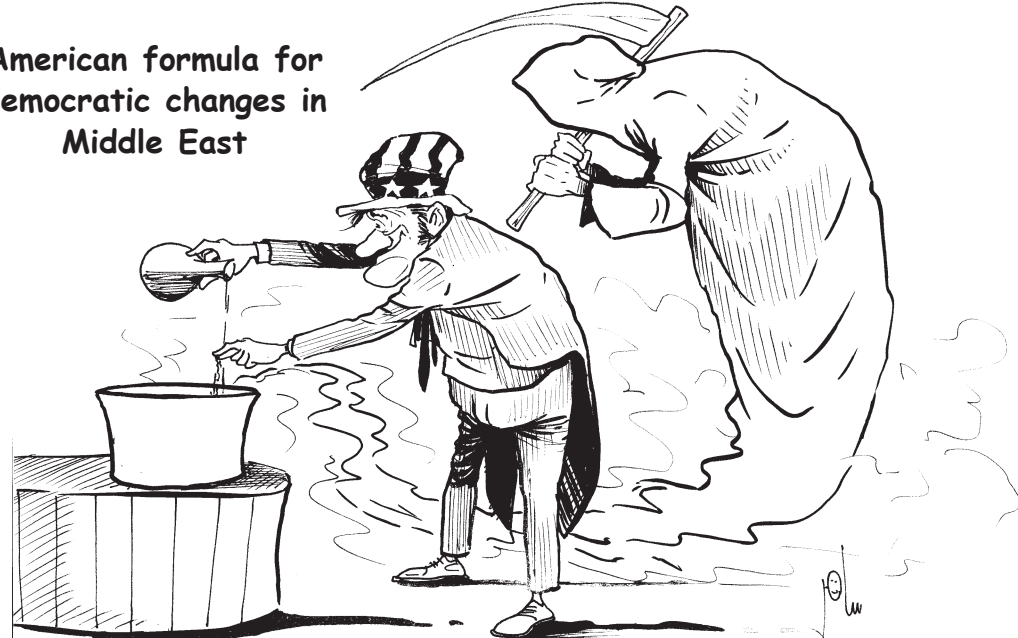
These governments, as well as other members of the European Union, also continued to subordinate human rights in their relations with others whom they deemed useful in fighting terrorism or pursuing other goals.

Fighting terrorism is central to the human rights cause. Any deliberate attack on civilians is an affront to fundamental values of the human rights movement. And acts of terrorism took an appalling toll in 2005.

That tendency, coupled with the European Union's continued difficulty in responding firmly to even serious human rights violations, meant that the E.U. did not compensate for this dimin-

SKETCHED OPINION

American formula for democratic changes in Middle East



By Samer A.

A U.N. committee concluded negotiations on a new convention to combat enforced disappearances, and fifteen African countries adopted a new protocol on the rights of women.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) did better with Burma, successfully pressuring it to relinquish its 2006 chairmanship because of its disastrous human rights record. Mexico took the lead in convincing the United Nations Commission on Human Rights to maintain a special rapporteur on protecting human rights while countering terrorism. Kyrgyzstan stood up to intense pressure from its powerful neighbor, Uzbekistan, to rescue all but four of 443 refugees from the Andijan massacre, and Romania accepted the rescued refugees for temporary resettlement pending long-term relocation. Still, governments from the developing world were hardly consistent themselves in defending human rights. Some of them took the lead, for example, in undermining the U.N. Commission on Human Rights and trying to prevent the emergence of an improved successor, the proposed U.N. Human Rights Council. Others prevented the U.N. General Assembly from

condemning ongoing ethnic cleansing in Darfur. Moreover, even those that showed a genuine commitment to human rights lacked the influence to make up for reduced Western backing. At the multilateral level, there was also some good news to report in 2005.

The International Criminal Court advanced with the filing of its first indictments—on Uganda—and the U.N. Security Council's first referral to it of a case—Darfur. A U.N. committee concluded negotiations on a new convention to combat enforced disappearances, and fifteen African countries adopted a new protocol on the rights of women. A summit of world leaders at the United Nations endorsed a Canadian-sponsored concept of a global "responsibility to protect" people facing mass slaughter, and took preliminary steps toward strengthening the organization's human rights machinery, but as this report went to press in late November, major questions remained about the fate and definition of the proposed Human Rights Council.

Human Rights Watch is dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world. It stands with victims and activists to prevent discrimination, to uphold political freedom, to protect people from inhumane conduct in wartime, and to bring offenders to jus-

In 2005, evidence emerged showing that several of the world's leading powers now consider torture, in various guises, a serious policy option.

tice. Human Rights Watch investigates and exposes human rights violations and hold abusers accountable. It challenges governments and those who hold power to end abusive practices and respect international human rights law. It also enlists the public and the international community to support the cause of human rights for all.

Human Rights Watch began in 1978 with the founding of its Europe and Central Asia division (then known as Helsinki Watch). Today, it also includes divisions covering Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Middle East. In addition, it includes three thematic divisions on arms, children's rights, and women's rights. It maintains offices in Berlin, Brussels, Geneva, London, Los Angeles, Moscow, New York, San Francisco, Tashkent, Toronto, and Washington. Human Rights Watch is an independent, nongovernmental organization, supported by contributions from private individuals and foundations worldwide. It accepts no government funds, directly or indirectly.

The Forgotten Side of the War on Terrorism

By: Fidel Ramos

During the past decade—particularly since the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States—Westerners have generally considered international terrorism to be the most urgent threat to human security. Accordingly, vast resources have been mobilized and expended to counter its many forms. Unfortunately, however, the US-led invasion of Afghanistan and the subsequent invasion—without UN authority—of Iraq underscore the primacy of military solutions in the strategic thinking of affluent nations. At the same time, developing countries have continued to grapple with the persistence of mass poverty, endemic disease, malnutrition, environmental degradation, and gross income inequality, all of which have caused a degree of human suffering that far exceeds what has been caused by terrorist attacks.

We need, therefore, to revisit today's global challenges from a Third-World perspective. Indeed, a fundamental lesson of terrorist attacks and insurgencies, we now know, is that no nation, however self-sufficient, can afford to remain heedless of whether others sink or swim.

For much of the developing world, the basic instability of international relations—owing to terrorist strikes, guerrilla warfare, and the preemptive wars that America threatens on its enemies—is aggravating socioeconomic anxieties and fueling doubts about the benefits of globalization. Certainly, we are all beginning to realize how precarious that process is—how easily market mechanisms can be rolled back by cultural resentments stemming from economic exploitation, political oppression, and social injustice.

People in the industrialized countries

are already an estimated 74 times richer per capita than those in the poorest countries. Today, one-quarter of the world's population still lives on the equivalent of less than one US dollar a day, and the World Bank says that the daily spending power of 1.2 billion people is roughly equal to the price of a hamburger, two soft drinks, or three candy bars in the West. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 815 million people, including 200 million children under the age of five, go to bed hungry each night. Obviously, there must be an intensification of efforts to reduce global poverty, which has become a breeding ground of resentment, envy, and despair—hence, a ready producer of violence and suicide bombers.

The G-8 countries' agreement last year to a debt write-off for the 18 poorest states—16 in Africa and two in Latin America—is a splendid, but insufficient, beginning. The 100 most indebted countries still find the burden of servicing their collective \$2.3 trillion in official debt increasingly hard to bear, leaving them hard put to finance national programs spelled out by the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), which seek to halve global poverty by 2015.

If we are to close the global gap in personal security and economic well-being, the community of nations will need to cultivate a new ethos of mutual responsibility. The Philippine government has proposed that half of all scheduled debt payments be withheld for a specified period, to be invested in reforestation, clean water, housing, food production, primary healthcare, sanitation, basic education, farm-to-market roads, ecologically sound tourism, micro-finance, and related MDG projects. For lenders, debt could be converted, wherever possible, into equity in MDG projects with earning potential, while building up poor countries'

capacity for self-reliance.

But self-reliance will be impossible to achieve as long as the rich countries favor free markets and free trade only when it suits them. Even UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan has warned that the unrestrained tide of globalization might not raise all boats, but only the yachts—while overturning a lot of canoes.

The most glaring injustice in this respect has been the failure of the US and the European Union to deliver substantially on their promises of market access to agricultural exports from poor countries. Bimal Ghosh, a former director of the UN Development Program, famously calculated that the daily subsidy for every cow in the EU—currently amounting to \$2.50—exceeds the daily income of millions of poor people around the world. The poor countries argue that broader liberalization in the EU, the US, and Japan alone would yield benefits worth up to \$142 billion by 2015.

The G-8 nations and the global alliance that America leads must aim not merely to defeat terrorism. They must address all aspects of human security, including people's well-being and safety in their homes, neighborhoods, and workplaces. And they must win people's allegiance by the power of their values and their ideals—not only by isolating terrorists and extremists, but also by helping, in meaningful ways, poor countries to prosper.

Above all, those who lead us today must create a genuinely new global order in which all peoples take part—with dignity and an assurance of fairness.

Fidel Valdez Ramos was President of the Philippines and is currently chairman of the Ramos Peace and Development Foundation and the Boao Forum for Asia.

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Hamas in Power

By: Shlomo Avineri

The victory of the fundamentalist Hamas in the Palestinian elections will have far-reaching consequences for the region, some totally unexpected. Two aspects, however, are already visible.

The Hamas victory is, first and foremost, an indication of the total failure of the traditional Palestinian leadership to create a body politic. Palestine is not yet a state, but it is already a failed one.

Since the Oslo Accords of 1993 between Israel and the PLO, the Palestinians enjoyed limited transitional autonomy. To be sure, the new Palestinian Authority (PA) took power under difficult conditions, but which new liberation movement does not face serious challenges when it finally must govern?

The PA had an opportunity to lay the institutional foundations for a functioning state. But, instead of supplying the population with the necessary infrastructure—economic development, education, welfare, medical services, housing, and refugee rehabilitation—Yasser Arafat's Fatah-led PA spent more than 70% of its meager budget on a dozen competing security and intelligence services, neglecting all other spheres of activity. It created what is called in Arabic a *Mukhabarat* (security services) state, very much like what is prevalent in almost all Arab countries—Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, republics and monarchies alike.

The vacuum that the PA left elsewhere, including the social sphere, was filled by Hamas. Indeed, its popularity is due not only to its

fundamentalist Islamic ideology and its commitment to the destruction of Israel. The high esteem in which Palestinians hold Hamas also grew out of what Hamas actually did for them while the PA squandered its resources.

It was not only the endemic corruption of the official Palestinian leadership that turned so many Palestinians from it. Hamas set up better schools, kindergartens, crèches for mothers, medical centers, welfare services, and programs for youth and women—all of this in addition giving special grants to the families of suicide bombers. In the elections, Hamas received its dividend for doing what the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority failed to do.

It is still an open question whether Hamas in government will become more pragmatic and less committed to terrorism: it certainly is a possibility, and one should not prejudge the outcome. But nor, on the other hand, is it clear that the existing organs of the Palestinian Authority—especially the security services at its disposal—will allow a peaceful transfer of power. Indeed, no such precedent exists: there has never been a peaceful transfer of power in any of the Arab League's 22 member states.

Israel's response to Hamas's victory will obviously be complicated by its own elections on March 28, and by a government headed by an interim prime minister, Ehud Olmert, owing to Sharon's incapacitation just weeks after leaving Likud and founding a new, centrist party, Kadima (Forward).

Despite Sharon's absence, Kadima maintains its lead in public opinion polls—the most recent gave it 44 of the Knesset's 120 seats, compared to 21 for Labor and 14 for the right-wing rump-Likud, under Binyamin Netanyahu.

Kadima's success is due to Sharon's main innovation in Israeli politics: the successful unilateral disengagement from Gaza.

That withdrawal was based on the conviction that the gaps between the Israeli and Palestinian positions are too wide to enable meaningful negotiations. Hence, Israel must start deciding the future boundaries of the country unilaterally, hoping for eventual negotiations at a later stage.

This is also the line adopted by Olmert. But Hamas's victory suggests that the gaps between the Israeli and Palestinian sides will grow even wider, and that the chances for a negotiated settlement will recede even farther into the future. This leaves further unilateral Israeli moves—such as a partial set of withdrawals from selected areas in the West Bank—as the only feasible option. Realistic conflict management will replace utopian hopes for conflict resolution.

In a region full of paradoxes, the Hamas victory may have added another one: usually, when extremists on one side become stronger, it plays into the hands of extremists on the other side, producing a dangerous spiral effect. In this case, however, the victory of the extremist Hamas may strengthen not the extremists of Likud, but, surprisingly, the more moderate centrists of Kadima. One cannot be certain of such an outcome, of course, but it is now the best that one can realistically hope for.

Shlomo Avineri is Professor of Political Science at the Hebrew University and former Director-General of Israel's Foreign Ministry.

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Old Sana'a markets a top priority in tourist promotion

Markets in the Old City of Sana'a simultaneously embody a combination of trading importance and tourist attraction.

By: Mahyoub Al-Kamali

The General Authority for Tourist Development exerts much effort in promoting markets in the Old City of Sana'a as part of

promoting Old Sana'a markets is part of a plan to diversify tourism to meet the desires of a large number of available European and other tourist markets. He noted that Old Sana'a has been a UNESCO world heritage landmark since 1986. Since then, continuous



Old Sana'a markets are the main attraction of Arab and foreign tourists

the tourism product aimed at a large sector of foreign tourists.

Culture and Tourism Undersecretary Mohammed Mohammed Mutahar said

efforts have been exerted to protect and preserve the area to maintain its traditional architectural style, markets and other aspects.

According to a recent field survey of European tour organizers, Yemen is considered a target filled with huge potential to attract tourists. Survey results revealed that 70 percent of organizers considered Yemen a tourist attraction due to its unique architectural heritage; 65 percent attributed it to Yemen's deep-rooted history; 56 percent attributed it to Yemen being virgin territory and a not yet fully discovered country maintaining its original stamp and flavor; and 16 percent attributed it to Yemen being a suitable temptation for adventure travelers.

Survey results pointed out that the Old City always remains crowded with tourists. It captures their eyes and cameras and because of its wonderful handicraft products. Above all, the markets provide a good opportunity to observe lifestyles and practices that mostly have vanished.

Market life and activity begins with the first rays of sunlight and continues until late at night. Peddlers display their wares on old stone sidewalks and tourists snap photos of them with astonishment and smiles on their faces. There are women, children and variously-attired people of all ages and features. The one who reads what Jamaludin Al-Shahari, who died in 1176 H.D., wrote about Old Sana'a markets in his book will realize the markets' true loyalty to their past and the extent of their relationship with their origins.

Old Sana'a markets were and still are reputed for all kinds of Arab beverages and sweets served with coffee. The confectionery industry still preserves its original flavor despite new materials introduced like artificial colors and flavors. Additionally, Old



View of old Sana'a, the walled city with its unique architecture style.

Sana'a markets are famous for their trade in traditional medical herbs and drugs still widely used. Thus, it is no wonder Sana'a markets are targeted by Arab and Western tourists and indispensable to those searching for the perfumes of the history and magic of ancient oriental nights.

Such interest has moved some Old City inhabitants to convert their houses into much-visited tourist hotels competing with five-star hotels. Tourists

are served traditional Yemeni meals and there are sessions for coffee drinking, listening to Sana'ani music and singing. Sana'ani family house visits are organized for tour groups to take part in qat-chewing sessions and live the traditional life of Old Sana'a inhabitants.

Old Sana'a markets still blend a balanced and comfortable rhythm between old and new architectural styles. Even introducing businesses with glass

showrooms into the markets has not influenced their originality and beauty. They represent a continuous heritage and history, where past meets present in close relationship, giving visitors the opportunity to see and experience it with their own eyes. The markets are a renewable historical landmark of ancient Arabian life and considered a living museum, documenting many popular traditions and customs mostly extinct in other Arab countries.

Yemen & Egypt at threshold of more developed cooperation

Yemeni-Egyptian Joint Higher Committee meetings at the beginning of March to discuss 20 draft agreements in various areas of cooperation.

Yemen Times Staff

Preparations are underway for meetings of the sixth session of the Yemeni-Egyptian Joint Higher Committee March 1 and 2 in Sana'a. Meetings will be co-chaired by Yemeni Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal and his Egyptian counterpart, Dr. Ahmed Nadhif.

Sources close to the committee said the two-day meetings will discuss more than 20 drafts of cooperation agreements, protocols, memoranda of understanding and executive programs. They include trade and economy, information, judiciary, roads, housing, youth and sport, media, scientific and technical research, water resources and irrigation areas.

Sources mentioned that arrange-

ments to convene the committee were the focus and topic of a Jan. 25 meeting between Yemen's Minister of Industry and Trade, Dr. Khalid Rajih Sheikh, and Egyptian ambassador to Yemen, Dr. Mohammed Badrudin. During the meeting, both Yemeni and Egyptian officials discussed preparation stages for successful committee meetings guaranteeing positive results for enhanced relations between the two countries.

Trade sources said there are meeting preparations for ad hoc committees Feb. 25 and 26 in Sana'a followed by a ministerial preparatory committee meeting Feb. 27 and 28, also in Sana'a. The ministerial committee meeting will be chaired by Rajih Sheikh representing the Yemeni side and Dr. Faiza Abulnaja, Minister of International Cooperation on the Egyptian side. The sources added that political, economic, technical and cultural committees also will meet, as well as two consular and cooperation and drafting committees.

Efforts to increase Yemen-China volume of trade exchange to \$3 billion

In meetings of the seventh session of the Yemeni-Chinese Joint Committee, the two countries agreed to consolidate their cooperation in economic, trade, oil and investment fields.

Yemen Times Staff

In a Jan. 25 meeting in Beijing between Yemen's Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Abdulmalik Ismael Al-Maalami, and his Chinese counterpart, the two ministers discussed bilateral cooperation in areas of communications, information technology and exchange of expertise.

Al-Maalami also reviewed with the Chinese minister China's technological capabilities and Yemen's prospects of benefiting from them, in addition to information technology and communications development.

The two ministers met on the sidelines of meetings of the seventh session of the Yemeni-Chinese Joint Committee for Economic, Trade and Technical Cooperation January 23-25 in Beijing.

At the meeting's conclusion, the two sides signed session minutes containing results they reached, focusing on consolidating cooperation in various fields. Main fields agreed upon were economic, trade, oil, loans and future investment programs. The minutes also included special preparations for Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh's expected visit to China this year, as well as celebration



preparations for the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The volume of trade exchange between Yemen and China currently



Mr. Abdulmalik Ismael Al-Maalami

amounts to \$1.6 billion; however, this does not correspond with the two countries' high level of cooperation. Thus, they intend to intensify efforts to expand the relationship to increase volume of trade exchange from \$1.9 to \$3 billion by the Chinese government's encouraging its firms to invest in Yemen.

Cooperation between Yemen and China has witnessed great improvement in the areas of crude oil, natural gas, energy, industry and communications, among others. In this regard, the two countries recently signed \$36 million in agreements.

What Corporate Tax for Europe?

By: Stephano Micossi

The European Commission is considering a common model of corporate taxation for the European Union that cannot possibly work. Instead, it should consider a simpler, and more viable, alternative that already exists.

Corporate income in the EU is currently taxed under widely divergent national rules, based on separate accounting (SA) of income earned in each country. Cross-border intra-company transactions are accounted for according to market prices for similar transactions – the so-called "arm's-length principle" (ALP).

The system is complex, expensive to administer, and can result in double taxation because members usually do not allow full write-offs for losses and tax liabilities incurred abroad. It is also prone to tax evasion, owing to different definitions of corporate income in the member states and the vast opportunities for cheating offered by ALP (since reference market prices often do not exist), not to mention profit-shifting to low-tax

jurisdictions.

The Commission is now proposing that EU companies operating in more than one member state be taxed on a common definition of earned income – the Common Consolidated Base Taxation (CCBT). Earned income would be calculated on a consolidated basis for the group and then "apportioned" among the member states according to a formula reflecting each business unit's contribution to overall group income. The formula could include such factors as sales, payroll, and tangible assets, as in Canada and the United States, or value-added, adjusted to exclude imports in order to measure the value-added "produced" in each country. Each member state would remain free to decide the tax rate applicable to its portion of group income.

Under this approach, taxable income would be determined from the consolidated accounts based on international accounting standards (IAS), which since 2005 have become legally binding for EU-listed companies' financial reports. This offers full tax write-offs for losses within company groups, and transfer prices would no longer matter.

Even so, the Commission's proposal

has fatal shortcomings. For one thing, the factors included in the apportionment formula would in practice be taxed at the national rates, creating fresh incentives for factor- and profit-shifting.

But it is two other obstacles that render CCBT hopeless. First, the IAS responds to the information needs of financial investors, but it does not provide a reliable definition of income for tax purposes. The accrual principle typical of financial accounting is incompatible with tax systems' realization principle. Moreover, the IAS leaves the allocation of profit and losses to different fiscal years largely undetermined, with each member state choosing different solutions.

Second, common legal rules on group consolidation do not exist; indeed, many EU countries' commercial law contains no legal definition of a group. The attribution of companies to a common group would need to be based on legal control, that is, ownership of some defined threshold of equity – 51% or higher. But a much lower share of equity often is sufficient to secure de facto control, thus encouraging groups to adapt their capital structure – moving firms in and out of

the group's boundaries – to minimize tax liabilities.

Clearly, CCBT is a non-starter. But this doesn't mean that EU companies are condemned to live with 25 different national tax systems. The idea of a common tax base must be preserved in order to simplify the system and narrow the scope for profit-shifting. However, a radical change in approach is required: the notion of income as a basis for corporate taxation should be scrapped altogether.

Referring to corporate income made sense when company taxation was seen as a "back stop" within a system of progressive taxation of personal incomes. But most countries have now adopted "dual" income taxation that treat the fruits of capital more leniently than other personal income. More importantly, the notion of corporate income is inherently arbitrary, for it is based on correct measurement of capital consumption in each tax period, which has become less and less reliable owing to the increased importance of intangibles in the value of companies.

Moreover, any tax whose proceeds increase in line with company returns is

bound to discourage investment. This disincentive disappears if the corporate tax base is decoupled from current profits and linked to some broad measure of activity. Indeed, this would create an incentive for each company to outperform the average, since above-average profits would go untaxed.

Another reason to scrap income and move to presumptive taxation of corporate activities stems from the EU's decentralized nature. While taxing the return on capital at the national level could discourage investment, taxing companies in exchange for location advantages might not. Countries that offer world-class infrastructure, high-skill staff, and simple business rules may be well entitled to ask companies to pay a commensurate tax in return.

In sum, the EU "federal" corporate tax should be thought of as a benefit tax, based on a broad measure of activity, applied at a moderate rate, and unrelated to current returns; nor should it be deductible from other taxes. Among the various options under consideration, the value-added tax base – perhaps averaged over a number of years – looks best, since the accounting and tax-assessment

infrastructures already exist.

Of course, value-added includes profits, and to this extent the incentive for companies to manipulate transfer prices may reappear. But the incentive would be much weakened, because gross returns typically represent a fairly small share of total value-added.

This model leaves the assessment and administration of corporate taxes entirely in the hands of member states, and would not require harmonization of legal and accounting rules. It would be transparent, simple, and easy to administer. The gigantic apparatus for managing transfer prices and tax credit claims with foreign tax authorities could be dismantled.

Indeed, the only losers would be Europe's outsized army of tax lawyers and accountants.

Stefano Micossi, a former Director General of Industry at the European Commission, is Managing Director of Assonime, a business association and think tank in Rome.

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للمرة الأولى في اليمن سباقون تتخطى حاجز المليون مشترك

أعرب الأخ الشيخ حمود بن عبد الله الأحمر رئيس مجلس إدارة الشركة اليمنية للهاتف النقال " سباقون " عن سعادته بتخطي سباقون حاجز المليون مشترك، وذلك للمرة الأولى في اليمن، فهناك كل أعضاء عائلة سباقون بهذا الإقبال العظيم الذي يدل على المستوى الرابع الذي يشهده الشركة خلال فترة وجودها . وأروع الشيوخ حمود الأحمر تلك المساندة الرفيعة التي عاينها سباقون التي توفيق الله عز وجل لم يوجد العاشقين في الشركة ولقد نبهنا خدمات متميزة أصيبتها ثقة المشركين وسعة خبرة طلي المسعوديين المعطي والآلعيين، وذلك المتاح رفعة الخدمة الجغرافية الشديدة، بالإضافة إلى المتابعة بعلاقات ممتازة مع فروع الشركات العاملة في قطاع الاتصالات.

شكراً هذا التجزئة سباقون في مجال تطوير بنيتها التحتية، والتزود بالتمتت تقنيات الهاتف النقال وتقديم أفضل الخدمات ذات الجودة العالية، بالإضافة على شبكة الاتصالات من الدرجة الأولى لسرعة معالجة من الاتصالات ذات القدرة العالي، ومن خلال تلبية اسرار التوجه الاستراتيجية الوطنية لخدمات الهاتف النقال من خلال تقديم خدمات متميزة من الخدمات الصالحية والأساسية والتقنية والرقمية تمكن من الخدمات الهاتف النقال المعروفة في الأسواق العالمية وأخرها تقنية الجيل من 3G إلى 3.5G ، وغيرها من الخدمات المتطورة والتغير مسبوقة في اليمن، والتي تقدم جميعها بأسعار تعد أفضل تكلفة الاتصالات من أي أم في الوطن العربي.

وقال : هذا السباقون في تقديم متمم - إن لم تكن كل - الخدمات المتوفرة حاليا في السوق اليمنية وسألتنا لفرده بتقديم بعضنا منها . حتى الآن - بما اعتاد لبرنامج مرابي منظمة التي مستوي الخدمة اليمنية في مجال ربط الخدمات والتكنولوجيا الموجودة لدينا . كما اعتمدت الشركة بالتوسيع رفعة تغطيتها في عموم مناطق الجمهورية . وتعدت "سباقون" وإلى فترة قريبة في استكمال إنشاء محطات الهاتف والتغطية لتشمل كافة المدن والقرى والمناطق والقرى الرئيسية . من الخدمات تغطيتها إلى مناطق جديدة لم تعرف أي نوع من خدمات الهاتف الثابت أو النقال من قبل . وذلك وفق خطة مدروسة لتوزيع الخدمة بالمسعى عاصمة . وأوضح رئيس مجلس الإدارة أن "سباقون " تكسر بأولها الأولى في تحقيق أكبر مساهمة تقنية من أي أم في اليمن ، بعد الإقبال الكبير على خدماتها ، وبمساندة من الشركة بواجبها تجاه وساهم ما العريضة التي تشاكرها الترويج . وبخاصة توفير خدماتها وزيادة فعاليتها التي حازت حنين قلوبنا ، فمعلقا في وضع سائق ما تم تحقيقه في عدة قطوع . وما تزال تواصل ربطها في السوق اليمنية تتنام الخامس على التوالي وهي في مواقع الصدارة بفضل خدماتها المتميزة وكافة مشاريعها الأخرى التي تعزز بها قوتها . وأنها الطريق من الخطط المستقبلية الطموحة الرامية لتزويد السوق اليمنية بأحدث وأفضل ما وصل إليه العلم في قطاع الاتصالات والتكنولوجيا المعلومات المتميز بالمهنية والتطور السريع والعدل والتي حول فترة الأربعة إلى قرية تقنية متطورة.

شؤون تقوية:

شخصياً ذكره أن " سباقون " تعد الشركة الأولى للهاتف النقال والأكثر انتشاراً في السوق اليمنية من حيث المساهمة الجغرافية لتغطية واتساع خدماتها وامتداد مشاريعها . وإلى الآن ما تزال تتصدر عن جدارة واستحقاق سوق الهاتف النقال منذ تأسيسها وتشييدها بخدمات الـ 1000 في 11 شهر أبريل 2005 ، 70 مليون مشترك للهاتف النقال في اليمن.



Future Youth

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Liberated dialogue

By: Shadi Radman
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This is in response to Mr. Nabeel Albadany who criticized Mr. Clint Carruth for supporting sexual freedom and rights. Mr. Albadany wrote about the myth of sexual freedom and its influence on people in America. From his response I find he shows similarities to a person with a narrow-minded attitude on the world, no offence to Mr. Albadany. It does seem he is generalizing the condition of a population based on the shortcomings of a minority. For example he refers to the people he works with and people around him as having relation-

ship and marital issues due in part to their sexual freedom, alcoholism etc, which may or may not be the case. But does that entail that America in general could be in social distress because of their promiscuity or sexual preferences? I do not think so.

Let's take an example, let's say you are a male in a culture which socially pressures you into having relationships with other males, because that is the norm. Although you're not attracted to males (for unknown reasons), what would your reaction be in this situation? Of course you would be dissatisfied. Since this is a personal preference that could be innate, genetic, psychological, we don't know yet. But let me make it clear, an individual's sexual orientation

or preference is unique to that individual same as physiology, personality, behaviour etc. I have not mentioned the position of any religion in my discussion because it is a complex and sensitive subject, and also because what I am speaking about is a matter of human nature. You can disagree with me on this, but we can not define what is normal and what is not, just try and look for that definition in areas of biological, medical, psychological science today and you will see what I mean. And from the humanistic perspective one should not judge or discriminate others in a different way just because they have a different sexual orientation. Keep in mind that not that long ago people used to discriminate against others just because

of their skin colour and religion.

I believe journalists should have the right to discuss anything that concerns the public without favouritism and without fear of harassment. They should be able to talk about corruption in the government openly, and they should be able to shed new light on the civil rights and freedoms of individuals without personal fear. I think about these issues which are of significance in our society with tolerance and an open mind. As a Yemeni Muslim I do not want other people to decide for me. I believe we should think for ourselves and exchange and discuss those ideas. We need to be critical thinking Muslims not robots with fixed attitudes and mindsets.

If she doesn't know where you from, don't bring her home

By: Waddah Al-Yemen
Email: waddahn@gmail.com

Hello to my follow beloved people and country.. I am in a dilemma The subject is: marriage. My mom may god protect her carved in my heart not to marry from the west. That was the last thing she said to me before I packed my luggage to my journey abroad. Here I am mom 11 years later still single.

Single in the sense of marriage (God forgive us all and let's not go to the details).

The problem is I have changed so much in this time, no matter how much you fight it, if you have been out of the country for more than 3 years: You have changed without even knowing it.

I found that out after my first visit back home, I just start thinking differently.

Things that I may have viewed as wrong became so right to the point that

I don't even remember why I used to think that way? And vice versa.

That was the point of my life where I started questioning the reason of my mother's request. I could not find an answer. That is when I started planning on marrying Amy an American woman.

Six months into it I had a change of heart for one reason and one reason only my kids. I knew I will have no control over the way they will grow up especially if I continue living in the US. I am not saying it would have been impossible to raise them as Yemenis, but it would have been very heard.

As much as we would like to think that marriage is about two people getting married it is not. It is a lot more than that. It is kids, culture, families, and most of all believe between both sides. It is also about the small things such as hearing your name being pronounced the way it was supposed to be pronounced.

Funny I guess I am no longer in a dilemma, Yemen here I come. Thank you to the best and kindest people on earth.

Yemen's way to get a perpetual membership in the Gulf corporation council

By: Sulaiman A. S. Alnasser
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Over the past years which followed the Yemeni consolidation, Yemen have been drawing Avery serious attention towards joining the GCC. Yemen authority highlighted that by implementing certain roles and activities towards an indication of positive willingness. Thus, some of the Gulf States have drawn apposite reactions to the Yemeni initiatives translated in Avery outstanding covenants which is suppose to be an approach to a full membership in the GCC. Besides, benefits which are generated in terms of

trade, in this time which is considered as the semi initial stage in the period of the GCC and Yemen are very tremendous.

Although the Yemeni and gulf countries are moving towards a better coordination especially in the financial and security sectors. It is been observed that Yemen and gulf press are not playing their positive roles in motivating the coordination. In addition, there is clear diversification in the declarations and reports issued by unrelated sides to the issue. Meanwhile, the oppositions press should play its role in motivating the issue towards apposite result. The atmosphere of a free press in Yemen is required to be regulated in terms of justifications of media sources. On the other

hand, the GCC presses are not taking into consideration the importance of the coordination between Yemen and GCC.

The last visit of the GCC main director to Sana indicates the demand for Yemen to be in GCC as far as the public of various nations is waiting for the issue to be in existence. In addition to what he mentioned about the exchange opportunities in investments. It's to be notified that, it's all about securing the future of the different nations where decision can be unified towards better sakes. Generations of the different countries should come to appoint where their futures are together secured and the past which had been forgotten and not to be redone because now there is an existence

of a real corporation.

The Yemen waiting for the full membership in the gulf council should be done through a proper legalizations of the investment security and loyalty in the factors affecting the gulf region. Recent gulf countries have gone through Avery typical experiences of the incidents that affected the region positively or vice versa in the past, those incidents should have clarified the demand of unity between them and Yemen. Because it's the result that already drawn in the minds of the gulf nations. I wish for a prosper coming agenda that says Yemen is converted from semi membership to a permanent membership of the gulf corporation council.

The awakening

By: Yousef Al-Aater
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Eve can have the man she admire
The wood-porter danced with the lass
The poet had the naiad in his bed
The maiden is no more by the scrutinizer
But all these trials I didn't let pass
When my animalistic urges contented
The stars were still radiant

The ocean was still affluent
And the wood was still abundant
My pleasure was much to be described
Because I had my sanity satisfied
With the stars my eyes were confined
To the surf my ears had listened
And the thorn I sniffed
Eve can have the man she admire
And at this time
The thing that went astray
Is now at hand

Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS

- 1 Wine-producing city
- 5 They may sting
- 9 Away from the speaker
- 14 Vandyke site
- 15 Parisian lady friend
- 16 Moth-___ (stale)
- 17 Legal wrongdoing
- 18 Attorney's aides
- 20 Song featured in several films
- 22 Split in two
- 23 Room for 9-Down, perhaps
- 24 Insects' sensors
- 27 "Look before you leap," e.g.
- 30 Ernie on the fairway
- 33 Noted channel swimmer
- 35 What a wahine may pluck, for short
- 36 Discontinue
- 37 First Emmy-winning song
- 40 Weigh station concern
- 41 Go one better
- 42 One of four in a year

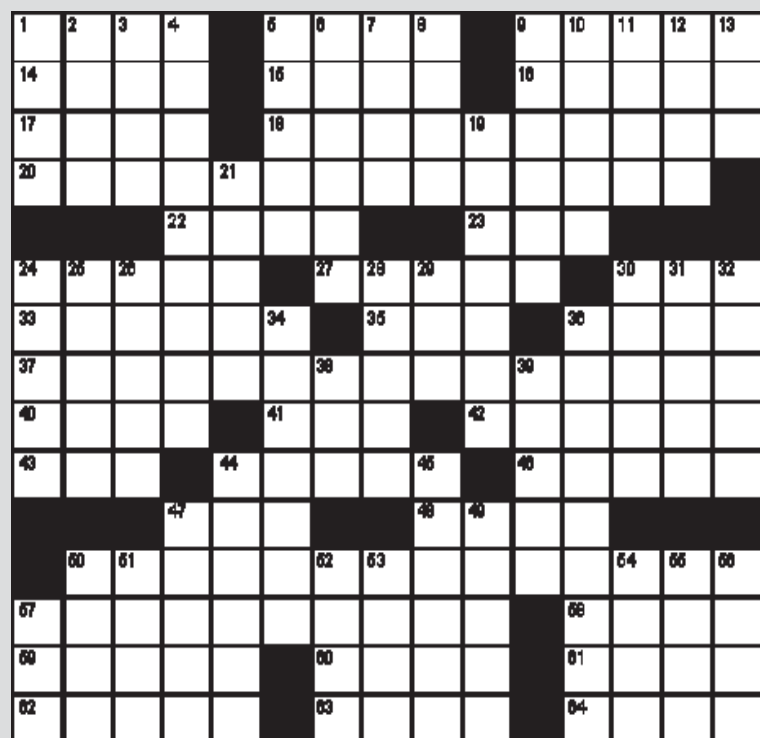
- 43 French condiment
- 44 It's unmetred
- 46 Hollywood mover
- 47 It has a wet floor
- 48 Lorre film persona
- 50 Rodgers and Hart ballad
- 57 Wife of Louis XVI
- 58 It sailed to Colchis
- 59 "Get going!"
- 60 Caught in the act
- 61 British emblem
- 62 Fashion focus
- 63 Pre-'91 republics
- 64 Paying for exercise?

DOWN

- 1 The five of "Macbeth"
- 2 Type of business
- 3 One for the road?
- 4 Translate
- 5 Hard, black varnish
- 6 Gunsmoke's Kitty
- 7 Grosbeak, for one
- 8 It may bark

- 9 Entertainment for many millions, informally
- 10 Uta of the theater
- 11 Card catalog abbr.
- 12 Depend (on)
- 13 40 percent of ninety-nine?
- 19 Paying guests
- 21 Edison rival
- 24 Assaults with snowballs
- 25 Be extremely fond of
- 26 Carpentry tool
- 28 Trash collectors?
- 29 Crime report initials, perhaps
- 30 Press the backspace
- 31 Begin an Internet session
- 32 Dog-tired
- 34 Board Amtrak
- 36 Oblique lines
- 38 Prelude to a hickey
- 39 Cow catcher (Var.)
- 44 Diminutive
- 45 Scenery chewer
- 47 Pesky neighbor
- 49 Signs of the future
- 50 Rainfall measurement
- 51 Promenade site of yore
- 52 Hardy role
- 53 Numbered rds.
- 54 Dixie Chicks, e.g.
- 55 "Petrushka" composer Stravinsky
- 56 Peak shape
- 57 Beast of burden

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PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER



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Meeting friends at a café has a special flavor

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi
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Yemen knew cafés from earlier times. They were places where coffee, tea and other beverages were served and their appearance was linked to the history of Yemen's coffee trade monopoly. However, as time lapsed, they gradually evolved into 'semi-parliaments' for exchanging opinions. Yemenis of different thoughts and classes met there, breaking all social, political and economic barriers. Such café meetings were simple and unpretentious and contributed to the spread of witty jokes and humor.

Yemen's most reputed café cities were Aden, Sana'a, Taiz, Hodaidah and Hadramout; however, they first appeared in Aden. Research indicates that Aden's oldest café was Sialn (Ceylon) in Craitor. There also was Kashir Café, owned by Hashim Al-Saqaf. Other Aden cafés were the Alshajara (tree) and another called Alqomairi.

Aden residents used to see their leaders drinking tea and coffee



A group of friends in a local café.

amongst ordinary citizens in these cafés, breaking social barriers – one of whom was president Salmeen.

Cafés in Aden and other parts of

Yemen used to be open all day until late at night. Yemenis gathered to drink coffee, tea and other beverages while becoming absorbed in political, cultural, social, literary and sports discussions. They also listened to songs there, with most composers introducing their new songs in special café sessions. Many such composers gained a reputation and became famous through café audiences. Customers also listened to news on the café's radio and newspapers read aloud, as most were illiterate. Writers also wrote their literary works there, as such cafés inspired them.

Cafés also were the meeting places of free liberals who attacked colonization. Some café owners resisted colonization and the Imam's regime, which is why they often were under surveillance by the rulers' intelligence. Most activists were arrested in such cafés.

Cafés in Aden and many other Yemeni cities still serve tea in the traditional manner, as they did in the past. Café establishments are on the rise due to the distinct flavor of the tea they

serve. Many people pass their leisure time in cafés due to the enjoyment they find in playing dominos and cards with their friends.

A friend in Sana'a acknowledged that he often goes to meet friends and chat while drinking tea in Tahrir Square. He said tea has a special taste in cafés, especially when he and his friends reminisce about the good old days of childhood and school. He added that the tea he drinks at home has no such taste.



A customer enjoying his reading in the café.

Yemeni football in crisis



Al-Telal football team, winner of the 2005 league with the president of the Republic.

By: Ismail Al-Ghabiri

SANA'A, Jan. 30 - Yemeni football witnessed a new crisis last week following some teams' refusal to participate in governorate matches, representing the league's failure in its first week.

Teams attribute their stance to objecting to the Football Association's illegal provisional committee. They demand electing a new committee before commencing any internal or

external activities.

Sports critics think the dispute between the association and opposing football clubs will negatively impact the league and other sports. In their view, the clubs' arguments contain some justification while others are unjustified; however, they believe clubs must defend their rights.

Other critics believe the current crisis is the aftermath of previous disputes and splits culminating in FIFA-imposed punishments. Still others attribute it to absence of laws regulating Yemeni

football. The previous dispute between the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Hussein Al-Ahmar's former provisional committee also was due to lack of regulations. The current crisis between the interim fifth committee and those clubs which disrupted the league is a problem of regulations as well.

Yemeni football is now a victim of moods. Clubs opposed to resuming the league did not consider the sport's benefit, which was to conform to regional and international contests about to finish their first phase.



A journalist colleague I met in a small café on Hadda Street in Sana'a affirmed that he and many other friends like drinking tea with milk after the evening prayer. They discuss many matters, especially their career affairs, and get acquainted with new friends. Such café meetings are natural and people speak freely away from artificial conduct.

Cafés remain attractive places for those who love to meet and discuss their private affairs with their friends around tea tables. They are a legacy of which most Yemeni urban areas are proud. They represent small rest houses in which social barriers are defeated. They are places where Yemenis enjoy innocent entertainment and they also are the base from which jokes and anecdotes are initiated. Finally, cafés are places where you can meet friends whom you've missed for a long time.

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