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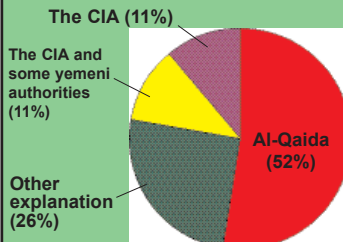
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## Readers' Voice

Yemen Times features "Reader's 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:

Whom do you think was behind the escape of the 23 Al-Qaida prisoners?



### This edition's question:

Prices have increased sharply nowadays, particularly those of foodstuffs. Do you think the government has implemented a dose reform without announcing it or traders are behind such prohibitive prices?

- The government
- Traders
- I don't know

Go to our website at: [yementimes.com/#poll](http://yementimes.com/#poll) and have your voice heard

# Yemeni newspapers closed

The government has shut down two Yemeni newspapers for republishing controversial Danish illustrations of the Prophet Mohammed. Yemeni journalists claim the closures are unlawful.

By: Hamdan Dammag

SANA'A, Feb. 8. - The government gave instructions yesterday to cancel the license of the Yemen Observer after it allegedly republished Danish illustrations depicting the Prophet Mohammed. This came just days after similar government action against Al-Hourriah (The Freedom) newspaper.

In this regard, Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) sources said it will hold an emergency meeting in the next two days to discuss the situation. The YJS also denied suspending Al-Hourriah Editor-in-Chief, Abdul Karim

Sabrah. In a statement, Marwan Dammag, head of the YJS human rights committee, confirmed that "the Syndicate did not discuss this matter in its meeting Monday, Feb. 6."

Yemen's Saba News Agency reported Feb. 6 that the YJS issued a press release confirming suspension of Sabrah's membership for deliberately not adhering to journalism's code of conduct by republishing offensive cartoons of the Prophet Mohamed (pbuh). Private newspaper Al-Hourriah republished some of the controversial illustrations Feb. 2 as part of a campaign against Danish newspaper Jyllands-



Posten. According to NewsYemen, Al-Hourriah then confirmed in a press release that although done in good faith, publishing the illustrations was a mistake.

The Yemen Observer claims it published a full page on the developments from the Danish cartoons in Yemen, wherein fragments of the illustrations were assembled with huge, thick black X marks over the drawings to protest their existence. However, as many readers stated, not all images were covered this way.

Yemen Observer Editor-in-Chief,

Mohammed Al-Asadi, said the action against it resulted from blackmail efforts by private newspaper Al-Shomaa publisher, Saif Al-Hadhiri, "to inflame the angry public against the newspaper."

Ali Al-Jaradi, head of the YJS media committee, claims Muslim journalists would not republish such illustrations with ill intentions. He said if Yemeni

journalists did republish the illustrations, then it was only to show their denouncement of offending the prophet.

In this regard, Marwan Dammag stated that the government is exploiting the public's current feelings of disgrace by unlawfully suspending the newspapers, indicating, "According to law, such actions should only be taken by the court."

## Al-Qaeda prisoners captured

By: Adel Al-Haddad

SANA'A, Feb. 8 - According to unverifiable sources, Yemeni security forces captured some of the escaped Al-Qaeda prisoners in a house Sana'a.

The 23 suspects escaped Friday from Political Security Central Prison in Sana'a. Thirteen are accused of attacking the U.S. Navy Destroyer USS Cole, killing 17 American soldiers, and the French ship Limburg docked in Aden Port.

On Sunday, the International Criminal Police Organization - known as Interpol - released an international alert for escaped fugitive Jamal Al-Badawi, mastermind of the Oct. 12, 2000 USS Cole bombing in Aden. Al-Badawi was sentenced to 150 years in jail but his sentence later was converted to a death sentence. He and 10 other suspected Al-Qaeda prisoners previously escaped from Aden's Political Security Prison in 2003. Al-Badawi was rearrested and returned to the prison.

Yemeni security forces set up checkpoints throughout Sana'a trying to catch the fugitives before they attempted hiding in mountainous tribal territories far from Yemeni government control. Security arrested approximately 200 of the fugitives' relatives and associates for investigation. A security official said combined operations are taking place in areas considered to be extremist group strongholds. The official confirmed that fugitives' relatives and friends have been arrested. Additionally, police distributed



Jamal Al-Badawi behind bars. PHOTO BY MOHAMMED AL-QADI

fugitives' photographs to all checkpoints, police stations and intelligence agents throughout Yemen. The official reported that search efforts concentrated in Abyan province in the south, in addition to remote areas and the capital. The 23 escaped from the prison via a long underground tunnel. In its alert, Interpol said the tunnel was "dug by the prisoners and co-conspirators outside."

The U.S. administration expressed its assistance and concern about the escaped Yemeni terrorists. Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whiteman said Monday that the U.S. State Department is among agencies involved in the matter, adding, "Clearly, the United States government collaborates with nations across the globe and Interpol is a law enforcement type of organization."

## Yemeni markets: crisis of price increase

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Feb. 8 - For several months now, Yemeni markets have witnessed gradual price increases for food and other items. More products joined the list this week, following the surprising price increases for sugar, milk, engine oil and similar products now in vogue. Citizens are at a loss as to the Yemeni market, which continues its unchecked climb.

Observers are critical of the indifferent stance of authorities who are supposed to control such price anarchy. Sana'a University academics and economists criticized the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for its reckless performance in controlling the market, which has known instability for the past few months. This report is a diagnosis of the apparent reasons for this trend which is becoming a serious headache to citizens.

Yemeni markets have been in an unstable state for two months due to random fluctuations in foodstuff prices. The price increases, which inflame public anger, seem to have no logical explanation. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry, which is to control the market, presumably is the last to know of the increases.

Such gradual increases disclose the cunning mentality of merchants and related governmental authorities. Recent

increases were extensive as they directly affected citizens' lives. Beginning with commodities like sugar and milk, they now include motor oils and similar products.

Such increases contribute to inflating other costs. Sugar rates 14th among the 30 most important imports. Its importance lies in the fact that it is the backbone of family food consumption. It is essential to the Yemeni diet in that families depend on coffee and tea as their major meals of breakfast and supper. Housewives widely depend on sugar in making cakes and sweets. Sugar consumption rose when it replaced fruit, following most families' inability to obtain fruit when it became prohibitive.

The sugar price is a blow to Yemeni families' budgets due to its increase from 70 to 130 Riyals per kilo. Families can expect new pricing surprises, as they will have to pay more for sugar, at the expense of other foodstuffs, and deprive



Fluctuating foodstuff prices destabilize Yemeni markets



themselves of other necessities.

Economists have noticed a rise in sugar prices in the past 23 years. They attribute it to high international consumption and a drop in production.

Yemen is affected greatly by climbing sugar prices because it is a non-sugar

producing country. The costs of importing sugar add to its price. The latest statistics for 2005 show that sugar imports reached 500 million kilograms and cost 20 billion YR, an important indication of consumption rates.

Continued on page 2

## Elections disputes reach deadlock

President Saleh's meeting with JMP leaders ended without agreement, while the opposition called for approving a new Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum, adding three opposition members to it.

By: Mustafa Rajeh

SANA'A, Feb. 8 - Disputes between the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) and the ruling General People's Congress (GPC) over the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER) turned to sharp controversy over the upcoming presidential election.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his Vice President met Tuesday with Secretary-Generals from Islah, the Yemeni Socialist and Nasserite parties.

Sources reported that the meeting was serious and frank but failed to settle disputes. Attendees agreed to resume meetings of opposition and ruling party representatives, which were halted some time earlier.

At Tuesday's meeting, the SCER approved its executive timetable for revising and modifying voter registers. However, issues related to forming committees to revise and modify voter registers remained unresolved, as the parties could not agree on the division of their shares on such committees.

When President Saleh insisted the opposition reach a consensus on forming

voter registers modification committees, the opposition magnified the issue, claiming the SCER to be independent.

The opposition demanded several procedures be taken to ensure fair and free elections, including neutrality in public monies and government jobs, transparency and preventing use of state facilities.

"The ruling party has a different viewpoint on the dispute, alleging it erupted between the JMP and the SCER and presenting itself as a mediator, while the opposition believes the never-ending dispute is with the ruling party," Yemeni Socialist Party political office member Ali Al-Sarari said in a statement.

The opposition claims the SCER suffered infringements upon its structure, faced obstacles to its work in the past

and demonstrated total partiality in favoring the ruling party.

According to opposition leaders, the ruling party maintains that the division of main and subordinate committees to conduct the elections should be based on the number of parliamentary seats and the number of votes in the last election.

The opposition presented several suggestions, among them is sacking the current SCER and forming a new one by consensus. Another suggestion is that the present SCER remain in charge, but three JMP members be added to ensure balance.

Regarding forming main and subordinate committees, rules state that all committee members cannot be from the same party. This means the ruling party can have only one representative, the JMP another and the third must be approved by both sides.

In a statement last week by its Shoura Council, the Yemeni Islah Party indicated it may not take part in upcoming elections due to mass violations in complementary elections in the Raimea constituency.



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## More support through Yemeni-European dialogue

SANA'A, Feb. 8 — The 13th round of the joint Yemeni-European partnership committee concluded Wednesday, Feb. 8. Headed by the European Union Foreign Secretary, EU representatives together with their ambassadors in Sana'a participated in the meeting.

Mohamed Ahmed Sofan, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, confirmed the impor-

tance of EU partnership in supporting development plans and fighting poverty. He also highlighted its part in supporting judiciary, wise governance, combating corruption and promoting democracy.

Sofan ascertained that EU support will help decrease Yemen's poverty rate from 49 to 35 percent between 2006 and 2010, in addition to its edu-

cation, health, water and population efforts. Support will concentrate on food, health, social security, the fish sector, promoting democracy and supporting election and civic organizations. The EU announced it will offer 70 million Euros for such programs between 2007 and 2009. EU support to Yemen in the past two years was 30 million Euros.

## HOOD demands investigation in Somali refugee rape cases

SANA'A, Feb. 8 — Following their Feb. 4 release, several Somali refugees complained of horrific treatment they experienced in Yemeni prisons.

Refugees spoke of rapes that occurred to some married women by security forces. They described those committing the rapes and their leaders who instigated them as brutal and awful, lacking Islamic morals.

At HOOD offices, a woman who was raped painfully described the cruel treatment of many Somali men and women: "On the night of Saturday, Dec. 17, 2005, Central Security soldiers stormed the gathering of about 2,000 refugees in front of the UNHCR office in Sana'a.

"I saw many men, women and children dragged and beaten. The soldiers kicked and trod on pregnant women, children and old men who could not move. They also put women and their babies before water hoses and poured cold water on them. They hit them with clubs and gun butts on all body parts without distinction. One man died and they broke the hands, legs and heads of many other men and women," she recounted.

The woman continued: "I fell down and the soldiers dragged me to a nearby building under construction. Several of them began raping me brutally. Some tread on my hands with their heavy leather boots, another pulled my hair, while others raped me. The same thing happened to other Somali women. I never expected this to happen in an Islamic country," she concluded.

Another refugee described his misfortune and that of other refugees with the UNHCR, which was supposed to protect and look after them, but turned out to be a foe instead. The man



The building in which the police raped the Somali women.

demanding UNHCR office managers and the protection office manager be interrogated for their roles in encouraging conflicts between the refugees. He also demanded refugees' voices be heard by UNHCR in Geneva to send a committee to solve their problems. They also demand education, residence, health and legal rights, as well as protection from inhumane prison treatment and appointment of a lawyer to stand with them against what they term Yemeni security harassment.

In a related issue, HOOD sent a report to the attorney informing him of the Somali women's rape cases by Central Security soldiers. It also reported refugee complaints against UNHCR and some police stations.

The Yemen Times will publish more details in its next issue about a meeting

with Mohamed Naji Alaw, General Secretary and head of HOOD.

HOOD Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms Executive Director Lawyer Khalid Al-Anesi said to the Yemen Times: "The organization will demand international investigation on activities of the General Commissioner for Refugees' Affairs working in Yemen and detect its role causing quarrels between Somalis and Yemeni security apparatuses during last year's sit-in in protest of the commissioner's behavior toward refugees that claimed lives of several."

He added: "The request raised by the commissioner to police to disperse protesters was illegal and unconstitutional. The commissioner must be held to account for the sufferings of refugees in the Yemeni territory."

## Despite the last kidnapping, Italian delegation head: Sana'a is great



Members of the Italian medical delegation with doctors in Aljumbhori hospital.

SANA'A, Feb. 8 — Italian delegation head Professor Paolo Leponelli called for establishing medical cooperation between the Yemeni and Italian governments. In an interview to be published Monday, he affirmed that Yemen's medical state needs help and support.

Signing a cooperative medical protocol between Al-Jumbhori Hospital in Sana'a and municipal hospitals in Rome, Leponelli hoped such cooperation will open the door to official cooperation between Yemen and Italy. He also referred to the importance of strengthening Yemeni-Italian relations, not just in the medical field but also in

tourism.

He pointed to the kidnapping incident of five Italians in Yemen two months ago. "When the five arrived at Rome airport, they said they will return to Yemen and that was a real motivation for us to come," he said. "Such a generous host cannot be described. We are so happy, so we advise others to visit Sana'a, a city as beautiful as Rome and Berlin," he enthused.

Dr. Hitham Al-Murdhi, Yemeni medical coordinator with Italy, referred to the negative affects of such kidnapping incidents, which create a bad reputation for Yemen, not just on tourism but also on potential medical coopera-

tion between Yemen and other nations. He mentioned that a plastic surgery specialist did not come to Yemen due to such reputation.

The Jan. 1 kidnapping of five Italians was the latest in a series of foreigner kidnappings by armed tribesmen. The Italians were freed unharmed after security forces cornered their captors in the mountains of north Yemen.

The Italian delegation of four professors and four doctors of varying specialties arrived in Sana'a Saturday, Feb. 4 and will leave Friday, Feb. 10. During the visit, they performed many surgeries and medical tests at Al-Jumbhori Hospital.

## YJS condemns Al-Bokari targeting

SANA'A, Feb. 8 — The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) council has refused their general secretary, Hafiz Al-Bokari's, resignation that was made official more than two months ago. The council consensually refused the resignation along with hundreds of YJS members who had sent their refusals to the YJS.

Al-Bokari resigned because the YJS failed to defend the freedom of press and also because of the numerous attacks on journalists including prominent figures in the syndicate as he claimed. He felt that his position in the syndicate was not effective, so he is currently seeking other means to work towards freedom of press in Yemen.

The board also condemned the accusation that was brought on the 26 September newspaper website. Here, Al-Bokari and his wife, journalist Rahma Hujaira, are said to have connections with Denmark. The syndicate considered this as a way to blackmail the two journalists, especially after the



Hafiz Al-Bokari

recent crises regarding the illustrations of the prophet Mohammad in the Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten.

Al-Bokari and Hujaira was a subject

of a defaming publication by Al-Bilad newspaper last year. In a press release, Al-Bokari said to Yemen Times that he has accepted to withdraw his resignation on condition that there should be clear achievements in developing press law and to topple the present press draft law. He also said that the syndicate must be kept intact by avoiding partisan clashes which results in undermining the syndicate activity.

He added "I agreed to go back to the syndicate for the sake of improving the journalists' conditions who are suffering many problems."

Commenting on the news of instigations against him and his wife, Al-Bokari said that he filed a lawsuit but strangely enough the attorney did not respond positively well with the case. He claims that if similar thing happened to high class people or officials in the government then the attorney will respond promptly. "Unfortunately, this is what is happening in our country nowadays," he concluded.

## Yemenis smoke the most

LONDON, Feb. 7 - According to a recent survey by researchers at the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, Yemeni men and women have the highest ratio of smoking among all Muslim countries. Published in the latest issue of the British Medical Journal, the survey reveals that approximately 77 percent of all Yemeni men smoke, as well as 29 percent - almost a third - of Yemeni women.

Entitled "Influence of Islam on Smoking in Muslim Countries," the survey was conducted by Aziz Sheikh among others. In order to encourage Muslim smokers to quit smoking, the report requests Muslim leaders, particularly those in South Asia, issue laws prohibiting smoking. Researchers also call on Muslim religious scholars to participate in anti-tobacco campaigns.

Some religious scholars have issued fatwas (religious statements) stating that smoking is forbidden in Islam. However, according to the study, some religious scholars and Middle Eastern and North African institutions recently declared that smoking is prohibited, while the general view of others is that smoking is "makrooh" (lawful but dis-

couraged).

The study included 30 Muslim countries, as well as countries with significant Muslim populations.

The second highest smoking ratio was recorded in Indonesia, where 69 percent of men and 3 percent of women smoke, while Saudi Arabia recorded the lowest rate with 13 percent of its population smoking (19 percent of men and 8 percent of women). The study also reveals that male smoking rates in Muslim countries generally are higher than those of females.

According to the World Health Organization, smoking is considered



the second leading cause of death worldwide. Five million people die annually from tobacco- and smoking-related diseases.

Continued from page 1

### Yemeni markets: crisis of price increase

Another reason for increased sugar prices is the sugar trade monopoly. Certain merchants control sugar trading, however the Ministry of Trade announced that sugar importing will not be limited and other merchants may import it. This will help promote competition, break the monopoly and meet market needs. Previous measures to break the monopoly failed due to lack of observation methods.

The recent price hikes signal serious defects in official observation. There has been continuous price disorder since the subsidy was lifted last year.

The rise in prices of milk and milk products, the major food of children and the elderly in Yemen, adds to families' miseries. As usual, the Ministry of

Industry attributed the rise to international increase and lifting of subsidies from U.S. and European farmers.

The inclusion of oils, similar products for transport and diesel engines and benzene adds to the plight of Yemeni markets. Oil derivatives merchants say the increase is due to international increase in oil prices. Deceitful merchants are to blame for the further increase due to the absence of follow-up.

Yemeni economists expect price increases for other items due to international changes, lack of responsible observation, arbitrary import and chaotic Yemeni markets. Ultimately, they warn of the aftermath of high-priced items.

### Erratum

We apologize for mentioning UNESCO in the last issue article titled "Limiting child labor in Ibb" where it should be UNICEF instead. Our apology to whom it may concern.

## Yemeni writers mark Algerian Revolution Golden Jubilee

SANA'A, Feb. 1 — Three young Yemeni writers snatched \$1,000 awards in a literary contest organized by the Algerian Embassy in Sana'a to mark the 50th anniversary of the Algerian Revolution.

A collection of poets, writers and intellectuals attended a celebration event Wednesday, Feb. 1 at the Yemeni Writers Union, which included a number of speeches. They pointed out the importance of using literary expression to commemorate great events. They also praised inter-Arab cultural cooperation.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh, Cultural Advisor to the President and Director of the Yemen Center for Research and Study, and Algerian Ambassador to Yemen Sa'd bin Al-'Abid presented awards to the winners.

Some 14 candidates earlier submit-

ted contributions in the fields of poetry, theater and story writing, from which three works were selected and awarded. Ahmed Al-Wafi won the poetry award, Wajdi Al-Ahdal won for theater and Samir Abdulfattah won for story writing.

Winning selections were made by a panel of judges consisting of Al-Maqaleh, Dr. Abdul-Wase' Al-Himiari, Ali Al-Sallal and Dr. Abdullah Hussein Al-Bar. The winning works were chosen in light of certain objective and aesthetic criteria such as artistic elegance and well-knit performance.

Writers Union President Al-Bar expressed his pleasure at the contest, saying the Algerian Revolution was distinguished by a considerable amount of sacrifice indelibly engraved in Arab memory. He noted that Yemeni poets and intellectuals shared in moral-

ly supporting the revolution in the past. "This contest shows the cultural victory of the Yemeni writer and his ability to live up to the contemporary history of his [Arab] nation," he added.

Writers Union Secretary-General Huda Abalan also praised the competition. "The contest revitalizes the memory of the young Yemeni generation by writing on great nationalist issues such as the Algerian Revolution," she said. She hoped that such a cultural activity would be organized annually as it enhances and prompts literary creativity. Embassy sources noted that the literary contest was organized exclusively in Yemen.

Known as the One Million Martyr Revolution, the Algerian Revolution erupted in 1956, ultimately ending French colonization in that part of the Arab world.

## Israeli troops target Islamic Jihad leader

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip - Israeli troops killed a local commander of Islamic Jihad in the West Bank town of Nablus on Tuesday, a Palestinian security source said, a day after Israel killed two other militants in an air strike in Gaza.

The Israeli army said two soldiers were wounded in a gunbattle in Nablus where troops had surrounded a build-

ing to force a wanted gunman inside to surrender. The army could not say whether the militant had been killed.

A Palestinian security source said the troops had killed a local commander of Islamic Jihad, a group bent on Israel's destruction and also responsible for a series of recent suicide bombings in Israel. The Israeli raid was the latest in a spiral of escalating violence.

## U.N. threatens sanctions on Ivory Coast rioters



Charles Ble Goude, leader of the Young Patriots - a group fiercely loyal to President Laurent Gbagbo - talks during an anti-U.N. demonstration in Abidjan, Ivory Coast on Jan. 19.

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast - Leaders of last month's fierce anti-U.N. riots in Ivory Coast have shrugged off the sanctions the world body is expected to impose on them on Tuesday, saying the measures will not prevent more street demonstrations.

Youth leaders Charles Ble Goude and Eugene Djue, fiercely loyal to President Laurent Gbagbo, face trav-

el bans and asset freezes after supporters hurled rocks and petrol bombs at U.N. bases in riots last month that left nearly a dozen dead.

The Security Council has approved sanctions on anyone blocking efforts to reunite a country split in two since a brief 2002-03 civil war, but has not yet imposed them on anybody.

## Hundreds in Iran Protest Muhammad Drawings

TEHRAN, Iran - Hundreds of angry protesters hurled stones and fire bombs at the Danish Embassy in the Iranian capital Monday to protest publication of caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad. Police used tear gas and surrounded the walled villa to hold back the crowd.

On Tuesday in Afghanistan, thousands of rioters clashed with police and NATO peacekeepers in demonstrations against the Prophet Muhammad drawings, officials said. One person was killed and scores wounded.

Norwegian troops fired on hundreds of protesters outside their base in Maymana, a city in the northwest, after the demonstrators shot at them and threw grenades, said provincial Gov. Mohammed Latif.

Also Tuesday in Pakistan, about 5,000 people burned effigies of the Danish prime minister in a northern Pakistani city in a protest against the publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in Western newspapers, police said.

The protesters chanted "Hang the man who insulted the prophet" and "God is great" as they rallied in a bazaar in Peshawar, capital of North West Frontier province. Most were bearded religious students wearing white prayer caps.

Meanwhile, the attack on a Western mission in Tehran was the second of two on Monday. Earlier in the day, 200 student demonstrators threw stones at the Austrian Embassy, breaking windows and starting small fires. The mission was targeted because Austria holds the presidency of the European Union.

Thousands more people joined violent demonstrations across the world to protest publication of the caricatures of Muhammad, and the Bush administration appealed to Saudi Arabia to use its influence among Arabs to help ease tensions in the Middle East and Europe.

Afghan troops shot and killed four protesters, some as they tried to storm a U.S. military base outside Bagram - the first time a protest over the issue



Protesters burn a Danish flag in front of the Danish embassy in Tehran, Monday Feb. 6. Police used tear gas to disperse hundreds of angry protesters who hurled stones and fire bombs at the Danish Embassy, AP

has targeted the United States. A teenage boy was killed when protesters stampeded in Somalia.

The EU issued stern reminders to 18 Arab and other Muslim countries that they are under treaty obligations to protect foreign embassies.

Lebanon apologized to Denmark - where the cartoons were first published - a day after protesters set fire to a building housing the Danish mission in Beirut. The attack "harmed Lebanon's reputation and its civilized image," Lebanese Information Minister Ghazi Aridi said.

In the Iranian capital, police encircled the Danish Embassy but were unable to hold back 400 demonstrators as they tossed stones and Molotov cocktails at the walled brick villa. At least nine protesters were hurt, police said.

About an hour into the protest, police fired tear gas, driving the demonstrators into a nearby park. Later, about 20 people returned and tried to break through police lines to enter the embassy compound but were blocked by security forces.

As the tear gas dissipated, most of the crowd filtered back to the embassy, where they burned Danish flags and chanted anti-Danish slogans and "God is great."

Two trees inside the embassy com-

pound were set on fire by the gasoline bombs. The embassy gate was burned, as was a police booth along the wall protecting the building.

The Danish Foreign Ministry said it was not aware of any staff inside the building, which closed for the day before the demonstration.

Ambassador Claus Juul Nielsen told DR public television in Denmark that the protesters vandalized the ground floor of the embassy, which included the trade and the visa departments.

The crowd, which included about 100 women, ignored police orders to disperse and kept hurling fire bombs until being hit by tear gas. The crowd dispersed by midnight.

Also Monday, 200 members of Iran's parliament issued a statement warning that those who published the cartoons should remember the case of Salman Rushdie - the British author against whom the late Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued a death warrant for his novel "The Satanic Verses."

The angry demonstrations in Iran recall the Nov. 4, 1979, seizure of the American Embassy in Tehran after the Islamic revolution that overthrew U.S. ally Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

The students who held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days faced little or no police resistance in the post-revolution-

ary turmoil that had brought Shiite theologian Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and an Islamic government to power.

There has been a wave of protests across the Islamic world over caricatures first published in September by a Danish paper. They have since been reprinted by other media, mostly in Europe.

The drawings - including one depicting the prophet wearing a turban shaped as a bomb - have touched a raw nerve in part because Islamic law forbids any illustrations of the Prophet Muhammad for fear they could lead to idolatry.

In a meeting with local authors, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad condemned the cartoons and addressed the West: "Insulting the Prophet Muhammad would not promote your position," the official Iranian news agency quoted him as saying.

The Bush administration urged Saudi Arabia to help stem protests. "Certainly the leaders of the Saudi government might be individuals who might fulfill that role," spokesman Sean McCormack said. "There are others in the region who also might fulfill that role as well."

White House spokesman Scott McClellan issued a broad appeal to "all governments to take steps to lower tensions and prevent violence."

The worst of the violence in Afghanistan was outside Bagram, the main U.S. base, with Afghan police firing on some 2,000 protesters as they tried to break into the heavily guarded facility, said Kabir Ahmed, the local government chief.

Two demonstrators were killed and 13 people, including eight police, were wounded, he said. No U.S. troops were involved, the military said.

Afghan police also fired on protesters in the central city of Miharlam after a man in the crowd shot at them and others threw stones and knives. Interior Ministry spokesman Dad Mohammed Rasa said. Two protesters were killed and three people were wounded, including two police, officials said.

## Four U.S. Marines Killed in Iraq Bombings

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Four U.S. Marines died in a pair of roadside bombings in western Iraq's volatile Anbar province, the military said Tuesday. Another explosion killed two Iraqi civilians south of Baghdad.

Also Tuesday, two bombs exploded minutes apart near a square in central Baghdad, killing at least seven people and wounding about 20, police and hospital officials said.

The first bomb was in a plastic bag placed near a CD vendor's stand close to Tahrir Square by a man who fled seconds before the explosion at 9:55 a.m., said Capt. Mohammed Abdel Ghani.

The blasts highlight the constant danger posed by homemade bombs across Iraq, which have become the deadliest weapon used by mainly Sunni Arab insurgents against the U.S.-led military presence in the country.

Three Marines were killed by a bomb blast Monday in Hit, 85 miles west of Baghdad, according to a statement.

The victims were assigned to the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit that has operated in Anbar province since mid-December with an Iraqi army battalion.

Another Marine, attached to the 2nd Marine Division, II Marine Expeditionary Force, died from wounds caused by a bomb blast Sunday in an unspecified location within Anbar, which includes the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi.

The latest deaths take the number of U.S. military personnel killed to at least 2,257 since the Iraq war began in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count.

Early Tuesday, a roadside bomb struck a pickup truck south of Baghdad and killed two Iraqi civilians, while gunmen shot dead a sup-



Iraqi soldiers stand guard in front of the Shiite shrine in Baghdad's Kazimiyah northern suburb, Monday, Feb. 6. Iraqi authorities set up new checkpoints and warned inkeepers to watch for suspicious people - all part of security measures to protect Shiites marking the holiest day of their calendar this week. The measures were put in place Sunday ahead of the feast of Ashoura to prevent a repeat of suicide bombings by al-Qaida in Iraq.

porter of fiery anti-U.S. cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, police said.

The blast happened near a bridge in Youssifiyah, 12 miles south of Baghdad, and destroyed the vehicle the two people were traveling in, said Capt. Muthana Khaled. It was unclear if the civilians were the target of the attack.

Drive-by gunmen killed a supporter of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr in Baghdad's southern Dora neighborhood, said Lt. Maitham Abdul-Razzaq. The victim worked at al-Sadr's office in Mahmudiya, about 20 miles south of Baghdad.

The incident appeared to be the latest bout in a spate of sectarian-related killings carried out by rival armed

Shiite and Sunni Arab groups vying for ascendancy in post-Saddam Hussein Iraq.

The killings also come amid efforts to form a national unity government comprising members of the country's Shiite, Sunni Arab and Kurdish communities. The United States hopes such a government could help reduce the incessant violence.

Another roadside bomb wounded four policemen in western Basra, 340 miles southeast of Baghdad, said police Lt. Col. Karim al-Zubaidi said.

A homemade bomb exploded in a bin in the western Baghdad neighborhood of Jihad, blowing an oil refinery worker's hand off, said Abdul-Razzaq.

## Relatives of drowned victims say company not forthcoming

SAFAGA, Egypt - Relatives of passengers on a ferry that sank in the Red Sea attacked the offices of the ships owners Monday, throwing furniture into the street and burning the company's sign. Riot police fired tear gas to restore order.

The relatives are desperate to know whether their loved ones were among the more than 1,000 who drowned and they say El Salam Maritime still has not released the victims names. They also accuse Egypt's government of mishandling the rescue.

The Al-Salaam Boccaccio 98 sank in the Red Sea early Friday on its way from Saudi Arabia to the Egyptian port of Safaga. Only 401 of the more than 1,400 people on board are known to have survived. Most of the passengers were low-income Egyptians returning from working in Saudi Arabia other Persian Gulf countries.

Hundreds of people took part in the attack early Monday on the company's offices in this Red Sea port. The crowd threw everything in the offices into the street and set fire to a large picture of one of the company's ferries. They also tore down the company's sign from the front of the building.

Riot police who were guarding the nearby port gates arrived on the scene and dispersed the crowd with tear gas. Afterward, one civilian was seen holding his head in pain. It was not immediately known how he was injured. Some rioters set fire to tires on roads leading to the port.

The governor of Red Sea province, Bakr Al-Rashidi, told The Associated Press he was not aware of the violence.

### Mubarak criticized

Independent Egyptian newspapers have accused Mubarak's government of protecting the ships owner, who they say is close to a top official in government.

Fire broke out in the ships parking bay as it was about 20 miles from the Saudi shore, survivors said Sunday. The crew decided to push across the Red Sea to try



Egyptians wait in Cairo on Monday to hear news of their relatives who are missing after a ferry sank outside the Red Sea port of Saf

to reach Egypt's shores 110 miles away.

As it burned, many passengers moved to one side of the ship. An explosion was heard, and high winds helped topple the unbalanced vessel.

Initial offers of help in the rescue effort from the United States and Britain were rejected, and four Egyptian ships reached the scene only by Friday afternoon, about 10 hours after the ferry was believed to have capsized.

Survivors came forward Sunday with more tales of crew errors before the sinking.

Khaled Hassan, a 27-year-old survivor from the village of al-Dhobiyah near Luxor who was traveling home after working in Kuwait, said he saw the ships captain jump into a lifeboat as passengers were left behind. His story could not be verified.

Abdul Muhsin Rayan, a 35-year-old from Sohag who had been working in Saudi Arabia, said as smoke engulfed the ship, crew members told the passengers not to put on life jackets that were nearby, because that would panic women and children.

From the captain on down, no one gave us any instructions on what to do, he said from a hospital bed.

Tens of thousands of Egyptians work in Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf countries - many of them from impover-

ished families in southern Egypt who spend years abroad to earn money. They often travel by ship to and from Saudi Arabia.

### Other safety problems

The weekly independent paper Soutelomma said two other ferries owned by the company had sunk in the past 10 years, without the government properly investigating or putting the company's owner on trial.

Mustafa al-Bakri, part of a delegation of 20 members of parliament who went to Safaga, said lawmakers would try to investigate why Egyptian officials received no distress call from the ship.

He also said the same company operated ships involved in past tragedies, including one that sank last year.

Mubarak spokesman Suleiman Awad said the ferry did not have enough lifeboats and an investigation was under way into the ships seaworthiness.

But Maj. Gen. Sherin Hasan, chairman of the maritime section of the Transportation Ministry, said there were more than enough lifeboats for the number of passengers on the ferry.

El Salam Maritime issued a statement declaring it complied with all the international safety regulations and treaties and (was) certified to make international voyages.

# Yemenis outraged over Europe's insult to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH)

By: Hakim Almasmari  
Hakim\_almasmari@hotmail.com

Citizens nationwide have expressed their anger and serious displeasure over cartoons published in a Danish newspaper depicting the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) as a terrorist and a brutal personality.

Ironically, this happened more than three months ago, but only now is news of it spreading. The dispute began September 30, 2005 when Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten published 12 cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) depicting him as a terrorist.

Late last year, Jyllands-Posten held a contest for the best drawings of the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh). It published 12 cartoons, one of which showed him wearing a bomb-shaped turban with a burning fuse. Another portrayed him with a bushy, gray beard and wielding a sword, his eyes covered by a black rectangle. A third pictured a middle-aged Prophet (pbuh) in the desert with a walking stick in front of a donkey and a sunset. From a religious aspect, Islam bars any depiction of the Prophet (pbuh), even respectful ones, out of concern that such images could lead to idolatry.

Citizens are outraged and devastated as they still try to understand why the Danish government would allow such pictures to be published. "Our hands are tied and our power is limited. It is the government's responsibility to take a firm and strong stance in protecting the rights of all Muslims," said local citizen Sameer Abdul Baset, who was shocked after seeing the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) cartoons that hurt millions of Muslims around the world.

"We as Muslims respect all religions and prophets. You will never see a Muslim say or do anything to insult a different religion. This is how Islam teaches us to act when dealing with other religions," he added. Islam is Denmark's second largest religion after the Protestant Lutheran church followed by 80 percent of the population.



Yemeni women in a demonstration last week calling for boycotting Danish products

Muslim organizations in Yemen and around the world demanded the Danish government openly to apologize, but until last Sunday, it has apologized only to the Saudi people, not to all Muslims. Saudi Arabia is major consumer of Danish dairy products and Denmark fears that a Saudi boycott of its products seriously could harm its economy. The Saudi and Libyan governments both recalled their ambassadors from Denmark in protest of this matter.

"We always blame Saudi Arabia for its negligence toward many issues, but this incident clearly has shown its sincerity toward Islamic issues," said Mohammed Ali, a lecturer and preacher in the Shumaila zone of Sana'a. "I have never respected the Saudi regime like I do now. It has shown seriousness and love for the Prophet more than any other Muslim nation," he added.

One of Europe's largest dairy producers, Arla Foods announced that its Saudi distributors have stopped selling its dairy products and begun boycotting Danish goods. In Yemen, where Danish products are not as widespread, many shop owners announced a complete boycott of all Danish products as a way to show their displeasure and protest this action. "I will not sell or buy Danish products as long as I live. They have

insulted every Muslim and still refuse to apologize for their mistake," said Yemeni merchant Ali Kholani, who previously sold many Danish products.

Ten Muslim ambassadors wrote a joint letter to Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen asking him to take a stand on the issue, which he refused to do. Citing Denmark's free and independent press, he refused to intervene.

Earlier this week, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) criticized Danish authorities for their inaction and lack of apology for the Prophet Mohammad (pbuh) depictions. The OIC represents 57 Muslim countries worldwide.

Hundreds of thousands of fliers were distributed nationwide explaining to citizens the magnitude of this issue. Millions of emails condemned Jyllands-Posten as citizens tried to do whatever possible to ensure justice in this matter. In the past, there have been cartoons depicting Islamic places and personalities, but never before has the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) been insulted.

Many people feel that Islamic governments have not done enough in this case, as only a handful have taken a firm and strong stance against Denmark. They argue that in a situation as critical

as this, Muslims worldwide are demanding more than just an apology.

"Even if they apologize, do you think this matter will end? How could the government even allow such a contest? As a result, this shows their approval and prior knowledge of the case," said Ahmad Al-Rada'i, who claims to have printed and distributed more than 5,000 fliers informing locals of the issue and defending the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh).

These developments occur at a time when Muslims are trying to build a relationship with the West, as demands for reforms and democracy grow stronger. Local analyst Mukhtar Ali believes there is a hidden agenda behind this incident, as there is no other possible interpretation. "Denmark is a country not known to start trouble with other nations. This insult did not hurt a country or a group of people but the whole Islamic nation numbering more than a billion," he said.

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**Press release**  
**Regarding Tender Bids**  
**For Aden container terminal and Maalla container**  
**Terminal in Aden Port**

In order to clarify to the people of Yemen and their honorable leadership KGL Ports International-Kuwaiti limited shareholding company - wishes to publish comparison tables for the bids of the three applicant companies“(1) KGL-Kuwait, (2) Dubai Ports Authority-(Dubai Ports), (3) ICTSI company- philippine “ which were submitted, and related to Aden Container terminal and Maalla Container terminal in Aden Port.

**First : Yemen Government Dues:**

Details	Dubai Ports	ICTSI	KGL-Kuwait
		<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
1. Cost of equipments	35,000,000	35,800,000	34,043,000
2. Land rent	77,000,000	102,500,000	104,844,000
3. Guaranteed income	372,000,000	310,646,000	280,560,000
4. Other Income (sharing revenue)	76,536,000	111,003,000	391,730,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>560,536,000</b>	<b>559,949,000</b>	<b>811,177,000</b>
5. Royalty fees per ctn., After the guaranteed qty of Containers is reached:			
Above guaranteed qty upto-750,000 ctn.	6	8.08	6 \$ per ctn.
from 750,000- 1,200,000 containers	5.25	5.08	7 \$ per ctn.
from 1,200,000-2,000,000 containers	4.5	6.08	8 \$ per ctn.
from 2,000,000 containers and above	3.75	6.88	9 \$ per ctn.
6. Sharing Revenue Payable to Yemeni Gov. in addition to the above revenue			
Above guaranteed qty upto 750,000 ctn.	Nothing	Nothing	4 \$ per ctn.
From 750,000-1,200,000 containers	Nothing	Nothing	8 \$ per ctn.
From 1,200,000-2,000,000 containers	Nothing	Nothing	10 \$ per ctn.
From 2,000,000 containers and above	Nothing	Nothing	18 \$ per ctn.

<b>Second : Investment Plan for Port Development.</b>	<b>Dubai Ports</b>	<b>ICTSI</b>	<b>KGL-KUWAIT</b>
Port expansion to accommodate the annual need.	3.5 million container	3 million container	5 million container

**Third: Banking Guarantee to secure Yemeni Government entitlements.**

<b>Banking guarantee to secure Yemeni government Payments.</b>	<b>US\$23,000,000</b>	<b>US\$5,000,000</b>	US\$55,000,000 banking Guarantee from Kuwait Commercial Bank.  US\$55,000,000 banking Guarantee from Kuwait Financial Center  US\$53,000,000 banking Guarantee from International Monetary Company-World Bank
			<b>US\$163,000,000</b>

# Why do they hate us?

Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, people throughout the world have sought an answer to the question: "Why do they hate us?" Answers to this question have varied, except for a relevant one saying, "The U.S. and Europe have been responsible for supporting dictatorships in the Arab region for 60 years now." As a result, millions of youths have become frustrated.



By: Ali Al-Garadi

briefed to spread freedom and support comprehensive reforms in the region. But the situation still is unclear. The U.S. does not want to abandon any everlasting totalitarian regimes and dictatorships breeding numerous cancers that dominate lands stretching between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf. U.S. support for these regimes is clear-cut evidence and its acceptance of formal reforms engenders the same personalities and instruments once again through counterfeit polls. Then people will

have to face a new fact: that is, the arrival of oppressive regimes through the polls.

With their formal democracy, Arab regimes resort to using power and employing public money, army, media and basic services to their advantage in any poll, coupled with executive authority employees choosing to form committees responsible for running elections.

For instance, Yemen has experienced a plural political regime and formal democracy for 15 years based on an individual constituency system allowing the ruling party to win elections, in addition to a supreme electoral committee authorized by the regime to breach voting regulations.

On the other hand, opposition

parties pursue their roles hesitantly and risks increase significantly when the supreme committee acknowledges practicing such infringements publicly in favor of the ruling party. Moreover, a committee spokesman said, "Why does the opposition criticize us now since we practiced such violations in previous electoral rounds?"

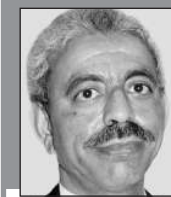
There is an obstacle facing election progress while international organizations and Yemeni parties become synonymous with oppression and dictatorship, resulting in a fake image of democracy no longer tolerated by Yemeni citizens. Development-related damage follows spending billions of Riyals on electoral processes and vote result appeals, in

addition to other billions of Riyals spent on vote-buying and gaining political and social allegiances in favor of ruling party candidates.

Our democracy never yields peaceful transfer of power—even in elections for sports club presidents. So, will Westerners bear in mind this question: "Why do they hate us?"

As far as I know, Arabs never hate anyone. They only look for a happy life. But when Western countries support dictatorships and fake democracies, Arabs will raise a question similar to the above.

Ali Al-Garadi is a Yemeni journalist and the head of the media committee of Yemeni Journalist Syndicate.



## COMMON SENSE

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

### More on Danish Cartoons: Freedom of the Press and Journalistic Responsibility

While this observer does not have any desire to set limits on freedom of expression and freedom of the press, it goes without saying that journalism is a profession that has a profound effect on people's lives and inclinations. There are obvious reasons why the press or journalism are sometimes called the Fourth Authority or Branch of Government, although the ideal framework of a democracy is that the press should be free from any government interference. It is imperative that journalism and the press must bear an important responsibility to insure that the journalistic output should serve a meaningful purpose and work to enhance freedom, world peace and respect for the rights of all decent peace loving people in this world.

It is not yet clear why a Danish (and other European) elements of the press would find it in their best interest to produce provocative and intimidating material that work to create suspicions and ill feelings amongst a sizable share of the world's population. Isn't it enough that the so called "War on Terror" has victimized the Moslems of the world on a scale never before witnessed by any elements of the world's population?

What sane logic and what professional astuteness can explain the desire of deranged journalists, who probably haven't the faintest idea about Islam or Moslems, to seek to enrage faithful Moslems by transcending the boundaries of responsible journalism, and misuse the privilege of free "expressions of opinion" to serve evil inclinations of a mysterious foreboding that reeks of an ominous nature and works toward counterproductive consequences.

Yes, the privilege of a free press is one of the greatest gains in the management of public affairs, but then the press, like any other profession that touches on people's lives en masse, has its ethical mores and sphere of responsible behavior and conduct as well. As a vital public service, the different press media must ensure that they adhere to their sacred mission of providing informative and meaningful output that does not infringe upon the sanctities of religious and spiritual beliefs of any religious congregation. The press is a medium of disseminating meaningful information that helps to bring people closer together, rather than to plant the seeds of hostility between people. When the latter is a consequence of apparently uncalled for hate mongering and initiating biases and stereotypes, then surely one can categorically state that cartoons depicted by heretofore unknown persons, who probably has never done anything of substance that contributes to the welfare of their own people, let alone other peoples of the world. What has Islam done to our hate mongering cartoonists of Europe, who seem to be energized by a systematic, deliberate and planned campaign to foment hatred of Islam for ulterior motives, engineered by people, with whom international peace and cohesion are the farthest thing on their mind.

What is bugging the forces that stand behind such an ugly campaign? While many would shrug off the idea of a "conspiracy theory" behind all this, there is no escape from asserting that there are well entrenched institutional forces at work that thrive on the world remaining in perpetual conflict.

It is no secret that the end of the Soviet bloc has created a vacuum for these forces, that used to thrive on their claims to work for the defense of "western ideals and principles" and Israel was portrayed as an important factor in the East-West balance of power that prevailed in the Cold War. Israel and her international supporters in the international Zionist Establishment were able to generate much of the backing (to exaggerated levels), which Israel enjoyed during the Cold War and the aftermath of the "Holocaust" (which has been made to appear to be a tragedy monopolized by Jews, by the very same establishment).

With most Europeans, according to many polls, finding Israel the leading cause of disturbances in the Holy Land and Israeli aggressive policy in Palestine to be the major obstacle to peace in the Middle East, the International Zionist Establishment has worked diligently to upset any positive advances in relations between the European public and the Moslem World. There is no reason to believe that these ugly menacing jobs at Moslem beliefs and convictions, disguised as "free expressions of opinion" are the latest of the efforts by the IZE to create an aura of friction between the Europeans and the Moslems of the world (which they have succeeded to considerable length in the US), so as to create a bipolar cultural aura of antagonism that both Europe and the Moslem World could do well without.

Of course, freedom of the press should be protected at all costs and by all means, but responsible journalism should not succumb to the proddings of evil Zionist dogmatists, who would not stop at anything to further their evil intentions in the Holy Land and the rest of the world. The missions of responsible journalism are not served by the instigation of conflict on a global scale by cheap provocatory techniques, which the IZE is working actively to make generic throughout Europe.

The United States has imposed directly or indirectly certain guidelines on press freedom in the name of fighting terror, but when it comes to victimization of Moslems throughout the world, the War on Terror is forgotten. What logic is there in providing the rationale for extremists to unleash their unorthodox methods of reacting to such distasteful provocations and intimidations, which are unproductive in any efforts to end "terrorism", which to the proponents of this war simply means "Islamic terrorism"?

One would think that the European governments would not easily become gullible in thinking that they should uphold such degenerate tasteless work, disguised as "freedom of expression", when such work produces the antithesis of the "War on Terror".

Moslem communities and peace loving advocates in Europe and throughout the world should actively seek judicial rulings that obviate the harm to Moslem communities that such intimidating journalistic efforts cause and surely the right of religious freedom are more important than the rights of degenerate journalists, who can be bought with nickels and dimes by a well resourced IZE and their opportunistic allies.

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

## Yemen Judiciary in the agenda of reforms

Six years ago, President Saleh promised not to head the Supreme Judiciary Committee. Now the government has amended Article 104 while many look forward to witnessing more reforms.

Peaceful transfer of the presidency is impossible in Yemen. Of course, elections are held, but in reality they are conducted arbitrarily. This is why nearly everyone is completely convinced that the presidency depends on current political trends more than public will. This is not confined to the situation in Yemen, but rather it is common in the systems of all Arab states. Thus, internal change is impossible, for there are no powers qualified enough to bring about changes. On the other hand, change carried out from outside the country is no more democratic and leads to invasion, aggression and disorder, as is clear in Iraq. Such findings lead to arranging the conditions of democracy in Yemen before thinking of making a change.

It is difficult to change President Saleh, but opposition powers and foreign pressure can do something, namely in the fields of reforming the judiciary system, enhancing press freedom and creating civil community organizations.

Authorities frequently argue that a change will bring fundamentalists and chaos alike. But such



By: Mustafa Ragih

justifications are not valid in the presence of demands for reforms, with the exception of the presidency.

Egypt's President Mubarak had to amend Article 76 to allow competitors to run for president and presidential voting would then not be conducted by referendum. Such occurred under foreign pressure, which thereafter resulted in the success of 88 candidates from Egypt's largest Islamic group, namely the Muslim Brotherhood movement. Here in Yemen, the opposition's ambitions, as well as the popular powers, are much greater. In case the ruling party intends to take possible steps and procedures to limit such ambitions, the following is likely to happen:

- Some nominees will be selected to run for president by recommendation of ruling party MPs.
- Complete judicial reform.
- Dealing with cases related to press freedom violations and ignoring the draft press law now delegated to the Shoura Council.
- Governors will be elected rather than appointed, as is the case now.

While the Egyptian judiciary

system represents the bright side of a non-democratic state, Yemen's judiciary system remains the biggest obstacle to democracy. To put it more clearly, the judiciary system still is used as a tool at the hand of politics, while judges seem to be government employees rather than working in independent authority. Legally speaking, there is no problem in the judiciary system being independent. In 1995, the Constitution granted the judiciary independent authority. However, the 1991 judiciary authority law did not pay much attention to judiciary independence and this conflicts with the Constitution.

The president still heads the judiciary authority. Although the government announced two weeks ago that henceforth a judge will head the judiciary authority presidency, this still is doubted. According to these changes, the Minister of Justice will have exceptional powers making him not only a government representative but also the most powerful judiciary figure. Thus, he has the right to deputize and remove judges and have a say in judiciary budget and promotions. He also can stop judges from working and file a disciplinary suit against them. Such powers make him a judiciary dominator, while the judiciary movement that takes

place every two years remains under his influence, as well as that of the most influential politicians. This movement is empowered to appoint, promote and replace judges from one court to another. It also, so to speak, represents a punitive tool against those judges issuing judgments running counter to ruling party interests.

In the second half of the 1990s, some judges brightly portrayed the judiciary system in Yemen. These judges were involved in looking into press-related cases, most notably opinion articles and cases regarding political parties. Most notable among them are the cases of the Yemen Times newspaper (known as the Sana'a University land case), Al-Shoura newspaper, voter registration invalidity and university fees.

Judges dealing with such cases were removed to governorates outside Sana'a, such as Judge Hahmoud Al-Hitar (moved to Dhamar), Judge Haikal Othman (moved to Hodeidah) and Judge Al-Jindari (moved to the Judicial Inspection Staff), who looked into the Yemen Times case.

Executive power's dominance over judiciary authority had dreadful consequences for press freedom. In the past 10 years, official bodies referred dozens of cases against newspapers to courts. Practically speaking, most cases were groundless and deceptive.

Some cases are reserved as pressure cards to be used when needed. A year and a half was enough for Al-Usbou newspaper's editor to forget the suit filed against it when he was summoned to stand trial, as his writings began exceeding per-

missible limits. Similarly, cases involving Al-Wahdawi and Al-Thawra newspapers are reserved until needed. Meanwhile, state-run and ruling party-affiliated newspapers badmouth social personalities, institutions and parties, shifting public attention away from any information ministry issues.

President Saleh's quitting the Supreme Judicial Council presidency represents a step forward, but reshuffling the council by vote of provincial appeals court judges is required. The council's current structure includes four executive authority members and three others also are appointed.

Above all, the law does not require council nomination or council member approval in appointing the attorney-general, the first lawyer, irrespective of appointing judges and assistants of attorney-general members. The Council of Ministers enjoys remittances related to modifying salaries and allowances of judges and prosecutors.

Due to judiciary law's current state, the situation necessitates amending the law or changing it fully, not just amending Article 104 as the government did. Until now, judges still have no voice to popularize their issues, nor do they have a syndicate to bring them together. A praiseworthy attempt was made between 1995 and 1997 when Judge Hamoud Al-Hitar and some other judges tried to found the judiciary forum as a judges syndicate, but the attempt went awry.

Mustafa Ragih is a Yemeni journalist

## Letters to the Editor

### Defending our prophet

The topic was wonderful and what I have said is totally correct, as I believe we are not getting our rights always. No one should forgive or even forget what those people said about our honourable prophet Mohammad (PBUH). We never in our religion insult anyone or a religion everyone has a believe but ours is the most true of all on mankind. Thanks for saying it loud and I'm really proud of it I copied the article and send it as opinion to all the Muslims I knew...no one should think that we are afraid of them of what they are thinking about us.

**Ikram Afif**  
Qatar  
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### Hamazation of the Middle East

The sweeping victory of hamas in Palestinian elections sends messages in various directions. The first message is to the west that I cannot tell nations who should be their rulers. If I r serious about democracy, then u have to accept its

**Dr. Abdulrahman Alhuthaifi,**  
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arahmanhezam@yahoo.com

**Yemeni Jews**

I am a fan-reader of Yemen Times. It is an absolutely wonderful newspaper that covers much of the on-going

results and respect the will of the people. There is no doubt that the west especially the U.S. is in a dilemma. It has considered hamas a terrorist group and now it has to deal with it sooner or later

The second and more important message is to Arab rulers that any true democratic election will mean the end of their grip on power. The result in Palestine is a victory for Mahmoud Abbass who is now the first Arab leader to held fair elections. A comparison between the attitude of Fatah and that of the ruling party in Egypt shows that Fatah has also won the admiration of the Arab masses for being the first Arab ruling party to give up power in elections.

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**Hamazation of the Middle East**

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**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

**Hamazation of the Middle East**

I believe my country, the U.S., should work with Hamas to attain peace in the region. I have long realized how terribly the people of Palestine were wronged by

the establishment of the Jewish state in 1948.

There is no denying the Holocaust. But what happened in 1948 was so utterly historically wrong and can be likened to a corrupt judge who leans that one party (the Jews) have been wronged (the Holocaust) and tells his bailiff to go take land from an innocent third party (Palestine) and give it to the injured party (the Jews) as their compensation for what they suffered from the criminal (the Nazis).

A good judge does not force an innocent third party to suffer grievous loss of land to make amends to any injured individual, even though the Jews had coveted Palestine for so many centuries, based on those spurious claims in the Old Testament.

Thus, Hamas is simply the result of the great wrongs suffered by the Palestinian people since 1948 and Hamas deserves a chance to represent their country.

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## YEMEN TIMES

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First English Newspaper in Yemen, founded in 1991  
by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Sakkaf

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# World Report 2006 – Part Two

## Of the Human Rights Watch

This report is Human Rights Watch's sixteenth annual review of human rights practices around the globe. It summarizes key human rights issues in sixty-eight countries, drawing on events through November 2005.

Each country entry identifies significant human rights issues, examines the freedom of local human rights defenders to conduct their work, and surveys the response of key international actors, such as the United Nations, European Union, Japan, the United States, and various regional and international organizations and institutions.

### Torture and Inhumane Treatment: A Deliberate U.S. Policy

International human rights law contains no more basic prohibition than the absolute, unconditional ban on torture and what is known as "cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment." Even the right to life admits exceptions, such as the killing of combatants allowed in wartime. But torture and inhumane treatment are forbidden unconditionally, whether in time of peace or war, whether at the local police station or in the face of a major security threat. Yet in 2005, evidence emerged showing that several of the world's leading powers now consider torture, in various guises, a serious policy option. Any discussion of detainee abuse in 2005 must begin with the United States, not because it is the worst violator but because it is the most influential. New evidence demonstrated that the problem was much greater than it first appeared after the shocking revelations of abuse at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. Indeed, the sexual degradation glimpsed in the Abu Ghraib photos was so outlandish that it made it easier for the Bush administration to deny having had anything to do with it—to pretend that the abuse erupted spontaneously at the lowest levels of the military chain of command and could be corrected with the prosecution of a handful of privates and sergeants.

As Human Rights Watch noted in last year's World Report, that explanation was always inadequate. For one thing, the abuse at Abu Ghraib paralleled similar if not worse abuse in Afghanistan,

**In 2005 it became disturbingly clear that the abuse of detainees had become a deliberate, central part of the Bush administration's strategy for interrogating terrorist suspects.**

Guantanamo, elsewhere in Iraq, and in the chain of secret detention facilities where the U.S. government holds its "high value" detainees. For another, these abuses were, at the very least, the predictable consequence of an environment created by various policy decisions taken at the highest levels of the U.S. government to loosen constraints on interrogators. Those decisions included ruling that combatants seized in the "global war on terrorism" were unprotected by any part of the Geneva Conventions (not simply the sections on prisoners of war); adopting a definition of torture that rendered the prohibition virtually meaningless; not prosecuting offenders until the Abu Ghraib photos became public, even then refusing to permit independent scrutiny of the role of senior policy makers; and making the claim, still not repudiated, that President Bush had commander-in-chief authority to order torture. Still, it is one thing to create an environment in which abuse of detainees flourishes, quite another to order that abuse directly.

In 2005 it became disturbingly clear that the abuse of detainees had become a deliberate, central part of the Bush administration's strategy for interrogating terrorist suspects. President Bush continued to offer deceptive reassurance that the United States does not "torture" suspects, but that reassurance rang hollow. To begin with, the administration's understanding of the term "torture" remained unclear. The United Nations' widely ratified Convention against Torture defines the term as "any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person." Yet as of August 2002, the administration had defined torture as nothing short of pain "equivalent... to that... associated with serious physical injury so severe that death, organ failure, or permanent damage resulting in a loss of significant body

function will likely result." In December 2004, the administration repudiated this absurdly narrow definition, but it offered no alternative definition. The classic forms of torture that the administration continued to defend suggested that its definition remained inadequate. Other governments obviously subject detainees to such treatment or worse, but they do so clandestinely. The Bush administration is the only government in the world known to claim this power openly, as a matter of official policy, and to pretend that it is lawful.

### A Compromised U.S. Defense of Human Rights

Needless to say, this embrace of abusive interrogation techniques—not as an indirect consequence of official policy but as a deliberate tool—has significantly weakened the U.S. government's credibility as a defender of human rights. In 2005, even the exception proved the rule. An important success story in late 2004 and early 2005 was the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, where U.S. pressure for reform and support for Ukrainian civil society and political pluralism played a positive role. In the Middle East, for example, the Bush administration stepped up efforts to engage Arab countries on a range of rights issues, something that no past U.S. administration has done. The limited pressure it brought to bear helped create more space for some dissidents and genuinely independent political and civic organizations. But its success was circumscribed by its own human rights record. One indication of that credibility problem was that when the Bush administration tried to promote certain rights, the poverty of its own record meant it largely had to avoid the term "human rights." Instead, it supported "democracy" and "freedom"—important goals, but ones that do not encompass the full range of human rights protections and are notably devoid of reference to international legal standards that might inconveniently bind the United States.

### Egypt

The Bush administration's efforts in 2005 remained focused mainly on the electoral realm. In Egypt, U.S. officials



By Samer A.

**When the Egyptian government imprisoned the leading opposition candidate, Ayman Nour, on trumped-up charges, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice cancelled a February visit to Egypt. Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick warned that the administration would withhold \$200 million in U.S. aid until Egypt released Nour.**

detainees forced it to limit the kind of democracy it promoted.

The administration, for example, usefully pressed President Hosni Mubarak to allow competitive presidential elections for the first time. When the Egyptian government imprisoned the leading opposition candidate, Ayman Nour, on trumped-up charges, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice cancelled a February visit to Egypt. Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick warned that the administration would withhold \$200 million in U.S. aid until Egypt released Nour. President Bush at the time "embraced" President Mubarak's decision to hold competitive elections and criticized beatings of dissidents by ruling-party vigilantes. Secretary Rice even went so far as to urge replacement of Egypt's decades-old emergency rule, the legal backdrop for many of Egypt's worst abuses, with the rule of law. But the Bush administration's own record of mistreating

detainees forced it to limit the kind of democracy it promoted.

### Saudi Arabia

A similar dynamic was evident with respect to Saudi Arabia. The U.S. Congress conducted hearings on religious freedom in Saudi Arabia and discussed the Saudi Accountability Act, which seeks to compel compliance with anti-terrorism measures and a ban on hate speech.

But, with one notable exception, discussed below, there was rare mention of such unseemly topics as domestic repression through torture and arbitrary arrest of Saudi dissidents, let alone such matters as executions, floggings, and routine discrimination against and denial of justice to Saudi women and migrant workers.

### Iraq

In Iraq, where the United States also made promotion of democracy the cornerstone of its efforts, U.S. authorities in November helped uncover and shut down an Iraqi Interior Ministry secret detention and torture center in Baghdad, but the administration's actions won it little praise in light of its own practices in Iraq and elsewhere.

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.

**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 justice. Human Rights Watch investigates and exposes human rights violations and holds 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.**

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.

# Back to Afghanistan

By: George Soros

While the unremitting violence in Iraq grabs the world's headlines, Afghanistan still struggles for peace. The country's parliament is packed with warlords, the drug trade is thriving, and violence is on the rise.

This week, world leaders have an opportunity to steer developments onto a new and more hopeful path when they meet in London to forge a new compact with Afghanistan. The compact builds on the 2001 Bonn Agreement, which laid the framework for a democratic Afghanistan but left much to be done to overcome that war-torn country's tragic legacy.

The need for renewed attention to Afghanistan could hardly be greater. Decades of neglect coupled with foreign intervention left the country in ruins, with reverberations across the world. It is now in everyone's interest to help Afghanistan rebuild.

The drug trade exemplifies the far-reaching impact of domestic instability. Last year, the value of drugs produced in Afghanistan—the world's largest supplier of opiates—is estimated to have reached up to 25% of GDP.

Security, too, remains a serious concern. In 2005, more than 125 Coalition troops were killed, while suicide bombing emerged as a new and increasingly common tactic of the insurgency. Corruption is rampant, with government officials accused of cronyism and drug trafficking. Several members of the newly elected parliament are known warlords with bloody records. With international aid poorly coordinated and the United States reducing its troop strength, many Afghans believe that the outside world is abandoning them.

But the massive scale of the challenges facing Afghanistan should not overshadow the opportunities for positive change. The Bonn process established the principle of democratic accountability, gave Afghanistan its

first directly elected president, and provided a new constitution that—approved after genuine debate and compromise—created a legitimate central government. It also paved the way for a parliament in which over a quarter of the members are women—this in a country where, just five years ago, women were not even allowed to leave the house without a male relative.

Moreover, most of the 20,000 village councils were elected through secret ballot. In a nod to the importance of the councils to realizing change at the most local level, the World Bank and its partners have adopted a highly innovative program that channels rural development aid through the councils, which have been empowered to decide how the funds will be spent. At the national level, the government recently approved a new development strategy that goes far to advance a vision for Afghanistan's future stability and growth.

Public opinion reflects widespread support for the latest changes. A recent poll shows that Afghans overwhelmingly favor their country's new direction—backing the participation of women in public life and international intervention against al Qaeda, the Taliban, and the drug economy.

But Afghanistan's potential for progress must be bolstered by concerted international action. At the London Conference, world leaders should support the counter-narcotics strategy recently approved by the Afghan government, which would reduce economic dependence on opium production, punish traffickers and dealers, and provide sustainable economic alternatives for poppy farmers. Afghanistan is grappling with the world's biggest narcotics problem and donors must commit to a long-term drug control strategy. The conference should follow up on a resolution by the European Parliament to consider whether Afghanistan should become one of the countries licensed to produce opium for medical purposes.

Furthermore, instead of pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into technical assistance and short-term capacity-building programs, the London conference should strive to help meet the Afghan government's benchmark for equipping young people with the skills and education necessary to lead their nation to a future of peace and prosperity. International support could help educate 40,000 Afghans each year in urgently needed fields, such as engineering, management, agriculture, law, and economics.

Judicial reform is another pressing issue. Currently, the judiciary is incapable of trying a case of petty theft much less of ensuring human rights. A Supreme Court dominated by conservative factions has selected judges and prosecutors, and Afghans have little legal redress in a system that allows local commanders, who hold sway over the judiciary, to act with impunity.

Without a viable legal system, foreign investment will remain elusive. Even Afghan expatriates in the Gulf states, who have invested roughly \$5 billion in regional and global trading networks, are reluctant to invest in their homeland.

Reform is nonetheless clearly possible. Last month, the Afghan leadership finally adopted—albeit halfheartedly—a transitional justice plan that could remove from power the biggest war criminals who have consolidated their grip on the country over the past five years. Implementation of this plan would not only give a boost to the rule of law, but also would enhance security and lead to better governance.

Failure to act would mean a betrayal of the Afghan people, who in 2001 welcomed the US army and NATO forces as liberators. For their sake, and ours, we must not let them down.

George Soros is Chairman the Open Society Institute and Soros Fund Management. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2006. www.project-syndicate.org

# The Great Firewall of China

By: Rebecca MacKinnon

Writing from 1930's Shanghai, China's great essayist Lu Xun once observed: "Today there are all kinds of weeklies. Although their distribution is not very wide, they are shining in the darkness like daggers, letting their comrades know who is attacking the old, strong castles." Muckraking broadsheets in the first half of the last century played cat-and-mouse games with Chinese government censors, ultimately helping to expose the corruption and moral bankruptcy of the Nationalist (KMT) government and contributing to the Communist victory in 1949.

If that sounds familiar, it is because the Chinese Communist Party never forgets its history—and is determined to prevent history from repeating itself. Thus, China's rulers acted in character last December, when they cracked down on news organizations that were getting a bit too assertive. The editor and deputy editors of *Beijing News*, a relatively new tabloid with a national reputation for exposing corruption and official abuse, were fired. In protest, more than 100 members of the newspaper's staff walked out.

Most Chinese might not have known about the walkout if it hadn't been for Chinese bloggers. An editorial assistant at the *New York Times*, Zhao Jing, writing under the pen name Michael Anti, broke the news on his widely read Chinese-language blog. He exposed details of behind-the-scenes politics and called for a public boycott of the newspaper, evoking strong public sympathy for the journalists, expressed online in chatrooms and blogs.

Zhao's blog wasn't under the direct control of the Party's Propaganda Department. It was published through a Chinese-language blog-hosting service run by Microsoft's MSN Spaces. On December 30, Zhao's blog disappeared. Since then, Microsoft has confirmed that its staff removed the blog

from an MSN Internet server, citing the need to respect Chinese law when doing business in China.

Microsoft's contribution to Chinese political repression follows Yahoo's role in the sentencing of a dissident reporter and Google's decision not to display search results that are blocked by what has become known as the "Great Chinese Firewall." Indeed, China has developed the world's most sophisticated system of Internet blocking and censorship, thereby hiding information unfavorable to China's rulers from all but the most technologically savvy. The system is bolstered by human surveillance and censorship carried out not only by government employees, but also by private service providers.

Some liken Microsoft's behavior to IBM's infamous collaboration with the Nazis in Germany. Human rights activists in the United States are calling for legislation that would prevent American companies from engaging in business practices that help repressive regimes stifle democratic movements.

But the companies argue that there is absolutely no other way to compete—they must either comply with censorship or discontinue business. If MSN Spaces did not censor its Chinese blogs, Microsoft argues, the Great Chinese Firewall would simply be programmed to block Chinese Internet users from accessing its service.

In fact, most international blog-hosting services are blocked in China, which provides a competitive boon to several hundred domestic blog-hosting services. These services, with names like Bokee.com, Blogbus.com and Blogcn.com, all comply with Chinese government censorship requirements. Software prevents users from posting politically sensitive words, and provocative content that gets past the automated controls is frequently removed. These businesses would not be allowed to exist otherwise.

Despite the censorship, the Chinese blogosphere is blossoming, with probably somewhere between 5-10 million active blogs. The Chinese public has

grown expert over the years at finding plenty of things to do and talk about while avoiding politically dangerous issues. Chinese bloggers are no different. New pop cultural celebrities are emerging online, and people are creating their own radio and even TV shows.

Naturally, the Chinese companies that provide most of the tools used to create and host this content have censorship built into their software, management structure, and business models. But most Chinese bloggers accept this as part of the reality of life in China. They are not willing to fight for greater freedom of speech and are even willing to censor each other in order to preserve what they have.

Which brings us back to China's greatest modern writer, Lu Xun. In 1921, he wrote a biting piece of social criticism, "The True Story of Ah Q," about a hapless character who adjusts his values to whatever the circumstances and people around him seem to demand.

Unfortunately, faced with a choice between protecting the long-term interests and human rights of their customers and complying with laws implemented by unelected power-holders, technology firms like Microsoft, Yahoo, and Google seem to have embraced the Ah Q spirit. They have made it clear that when it comes to free expression, their priorities lie on the side of surrender.

In the long run, this does not bode well for their global reputations, which depend on users' trust in the openness and independence of their products and services. One day, perhaps, censorship will no longer make good business sense anywhere.

Rebecca MacKinnon, a former Beijing bureau chief for CNN, is a Research Fellow at Harvard Law School's Berkman Center for Internet and Society, where she directs a global citizens' media project, GlobalVoicesOnline.org, and studies the impact of China on the Internet. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2006. www.project-syndicate.org

## Yemen's labor market: its needs and requirements

A human resources development strategy is underway to tackle Yemen's labor market situation and its requirements. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor is drafting a public sector labor plan to amend the labor law in keeping pace with international agreements.

By: Mahyoub Al-Kamali

Many are the needs and requirements of Yemen's labor market, necessitating deliberation, study and exploration of proper solutions. The Yemeni labor market is in need of organization, creation of serious job opportunities and working to solve social problems resulting from an increased unemployment rate.

The situation requires a financed strategy to provide and implement solutions for the unemployed. In this regard, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor overseeing the workforce sector is devising a plan for the current public sector. The plan will concentrate on amending the labor law according to labor market requirements and international agreements. It also aims to establish a unified labor market information system among Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states. The ministry also will formulate an executive employment strategy in light of outcomes from a Nov. 22-24, 2005 workshop in Sana'a.

The ministry plan includes finalizing a version of the human resources development strategy to refer it to the govern-



Thousands of unemployed, especially unskilled laborers, wait long hours, if not days, for a chance at being hired for temporary work.

ment for national committee ratification. A committee of ministry and civil service representatives also will be activated. The committee is specialized in organizing and regulating conditions of non-Yemeni laborers working for state administration institutions. The intention also is to revive a committee specialized in discussing and ratifying annual plans of companies working in the oil and gas field. The committee was formed in 1989 by the Ministries of Labor and Oil and Mineral Wealth under Yemeni cabinet decree.

Sources at the Ministry of Social

Affairs and Labor said employment offices will be linked to a labor market information network to facilitate their employment process tasks and improve their mechanism. Employment office employees also will be trained to upgrade their skills. The central statistics apparatus and the social development fund will join the ministry in surveying this sector, as well as analyzing survey and census results from a 2004 workforce sampling. Results will be connected to the workforce survey in order to develop a professional classification system compatible

with the GCC's classification system.

There also are plans to develop general management's abilities, women working in central government and in governorates, as well as prepare a national social dialogue strategy. The ministry will participate in meetings regarding development goals, a poverty alleviation strategy and the national committee of women. It will meet with relevant ministries and institutions to coordinate implementing the national strategy on women's work, as well as conduct an evaluation of the status of working women in relevant ministries.

Ministry sources also said there will be a plan to end child labor by enhancing the abilities of the unit fighting child labor to be able to draft policies and follow up implementation of the child protection law. It also will reconsider legislation regarding its suitability in providing protection to children in line with International Labor Organization criteria.

Civic organizations will be engaged in efforts to face the worst forms of child labor and their help sought in gathering and updating statements on the volume of child labor, particularly in risky jobs.

It is believed that such policies will help reduce the proportion of unemployment and improve working conditions. To do this, the labor situation requires organization, funding and implementing policies at the ground level.

## Wave of anger escalates over Danish affront

By: Yemen Times Staff

The Yemeni Society for Consumer Protection has called on the public to boycott Danish and Norwegian products and buy alternative goods available in markets. It said the measure is a minimal expression in confronting what it described as dangerous attacks on Muslims by some Danish and Norwegian newspapers in publishing blasphemous cartoons against the Prophet Mohammed.

In a statement, the society said that the newspapers published was by all means a criminal act because it aimed deliberately to insult the prophet and the Islamic nation. It considers the cartoons' publication by Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten, in particular, a dangerous aggression against Islam and Muslims and a grave insult to values of respect and coexistence among religions. The society expressed its hope that the

Danish and Norwegian governments would undertake their moral duty to make the two newspapers apologize publicly for what they have caused by insulting the Islamic religion and its prophet.

Several Yemeni societies also have called for boycotting Danish products. A number of Yemeni consumers stated their intention to boycott the country's products and exchange them for goods produced in countries respecting Mohammed and other prophets.

Grocer Abdullah Ali said, "Denmark is a friendly country, but allowing the insult against our prophet compels us to boycott its products until it takes measures restoring prestige to the Islamic nation and punishing its citizens who affronted our prophet."

The feeling of boycotting Danish goods appeared very strong among Yemeni consumers. At the same time, Yemen's government and Parliament have strongly criticized the Danish press's blasphemy against the Prophet Mohammed.



Angry over blasphemous cartoons published by a Danish newspaper, Muslims burn piles of boycotted Danish goods as an expression of their wrath.

## On the Science of Marketing

By: Bakr Hamud Al-Junaid  
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Due to the overwhelming rapid growth in digital technology, GSM operators worldwide have become a main contributor in the communication link between and within countries. I am a GSM employee and I'd like to give a brief account of proper marketing concepts in general.

There is little difference between beehives and the marketplace in terms of structure, work, productions, etc. Bees have a Queen Bee, which is the marketing director, and worker bees are the employees. Bees collect nectar from flowers and produce services like honey, whereas we collect more than a million customers in four years.

I've been working in such a marketplace and have come to realize that one can be most productive when surrounded by loving staffers under the umbrella of reliable, straightforward, honest and visionary managers.

**What does marketing mean? What are the most important points in marketing?**

Many web sites claim to be knowledgeable about marketing. In fact, if you type 'marketing' into a search engine like Google, more than 16,000,000 web pages will be returned! When you have that many people claiming to be marketing experts, it's difficult to even know what marketing means. That's one of the problems with the web.

I noticed an article on a well-known marketing web site similarly entitled, "Just what is marketing?" It's a very good question and the answer typically ends up (as in the aforementioned article) listing tactics like advertising, brand management, sales, service, pricing, E-mail marketing, etc. That's a good start, but far from complete.

In my opinion, marketing is not tactics and I'll tell you why. When most people think of marketing, they think marketing tactics. They associate marketing with tactics, partly because they're fun. Advertising is fun, promotions are fun and so are E-mail campaigns and every other similar tactic. However tactics, while the most prominent aspect of marketing, are similar to sports tactics. They're very important, but useless without a sound knowledge base. So it is with marketing.

Marketing is far more than tactics. Marketing is analysis and a sound marketing strategy is based on this analysis. The type of analysis I am talking about is customer analysis, for example. Having a solid understanding of customers means having a solid understanding of how they behave - their perceptions, motivations and preferences. It means correctly segmenting the market and not the way most companies think about segmentation (if they even do). It means having a profound understanding of their attitudes, emotions and knowledge. Without such knowledge, marketing tactics are just blowing in the wind. You'll hope the tactics work, but you'll be blissfully unaware as to whether anyone wants to listen or pay attention.

I'd also like to discuss competitive analysis. Rarely do we see marketing sites deal with competitive analysis. Marketing also is about understanding competition, but not just listing one's competitors. It

means thinking about their competitive objectives, reactions and capabilities, as well as understanding an industry's competitive forces. Too often I see firms acting as monopolies, as if their competitors are unlikely to react or have little interest in capturing a market. The internet provides a good example. How many internet companies really think seriously about entrenched players' potential competitive reactions? Do any of them consider long-term competitive reactions? What about creating robust plans toward future competitive reactions? No, marketing also is about competitive analysis, not just the "fun and interesting" tactics permeating the web.

**What about company capabilities?**

Once again, to think about marketing you also need to consider a company's ability to actually survive in the market. I'm not talking about financial ability, although that is part of the story. What about culture, sales force compensation, relationships with distributors, suppliers, etc? Some companies focus squarely on customers and don't even think about competitors. But these same companies often forget their ability to provide what customers need or incentives in their distribution system to actually get the job done. No, marketing is not just about tactics, it's also about understanding your own company, its abilities and weaknesses.

**So, what is marketing?**

The following is the proper definition I discovered from our director, Pier Emad. Marketing is analysis of customers, competitors and companies, combining such understanding into an overall understanding of what segments exist, determining the most profitable segments to target, positioning your product and then doing whatever necessary to deliver on that position.

How do you deliver on a position? This is where tactics enter - by branding and advertising correctly, communicating via E-mail, letter, SMS or whatever, but all in a way consistent with the analysis for which marketing really is responsible. It's fine if you want to get involved in tactics. Consider artists, sports figures, doctors and scientists and ask yourself if it is just as necessary to understand tactics in these areas, which are as creative as marketing.

Tactics alone won't get you very far, but tactics along with a strategy based on great analysis will get you exactly where you want to go. So before you go hiring consultants and networking with other marketers, make sure you understand what marketing is so you don't just become a tactical pawn, but rather someone who ultimately can direct an entire marketing campaign like our director Emad.

Although customer satisfaction increasingly is seen as an important business objective, the extent to which it is taken seriously varies. Its measurement is problematic and the precise nature of its impact on financial performance and shareholder value remain the subject of debate.

While the existence of a link between customer satisfaction and business performance clearly is a central tenet of marketing theory, evaluating the existence, nature and strength of this relationship at a company level has proven problematic. Researchers have had much greater success when focusing on individual behavioral constructs such as quality and satis-

faction and satisfaction and loyalty, and rather less success when exploring the link between behavioral outcomes and financial performance.

The American Consumer Satisfaction Index aimed to evaluate empirically the direct relationship between customer satisfaction and a range of financial performance measures. In general, data results suggested that customer satisfaction does have a positive financial impact but direct effects generally are small.

**Telemarketing**

In telemarketing, marketers contact customers via telephone. One of the original attractions of telemarketing was the speed with which marketing campaigns could be executed. While direct mail is cost-effective, it is relatively slow, as marketing pieces must be mailed. Telemarketing lends itself well to products and services that are complex to buy, such as switching to another telephone company or purchasing a financial service. While certain types of transactions also may be subject to government regulation, telemarketing permits a company representative to walk customers through the purchase while ensuring compliance with laws. While not as varied as direct mail, telemarketing can take several forms:

- \* Outbound telemarketing: Calls made to customers using auto dialers and predictive dialers, thus call centers can phone a large number of customers.
- \* Inbound telemarketing: Promotions and offers are made when a customer calls the center.
- \* Voice messages: A number of firms employ special technology to call customers' answering machines.

**Direct marketing**

Direct marketing is a form of marketing that attempts to send its message directly to consumers using "addressable" media like mail. It differs from regular advertising in that it does not place its message on a third-party medium or in the marketplace as would a billboard or radio commercial. Instead, the marketed service or commodity is addressed directly to the end consumer.

Direct marketing is attractive to many marketers because its effectiveness can be measured directly in many cases. For example, if a marketer sends a million mail solicitations and 10,000 customers respond to it, the marketer can say with some confidence that the campaign directly led to the responses. In contrast, other media often must be measured indirectly, as there is no direct response from consumers.

**What can direct marketing do for my business?**

A marketer's first duty is to avoid loss. Direct marketing can minimize risk because before you mail, E-mail or advertise to a large number, you always test on a small number. This can increase profitability because you always should test one approach against another, going with whichever makes the most money.

I began my article by defining marketing, so I'll end it with definitions and advice from director Emad: "Marketing is the management process that identifies, anticipates and satisfies customer requirements profitably. Marketing is human activity directed at satisfying human needs and wants through an exchange process.

Marketing is a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they want and need through creating, offering and exchanging products of value with others." Emad gives five very important marketing concepts:

- " Choosing and targeting appropriate customers
  - " Positioning your offer
  - " Interacting with those customers
  - " Controlling the marketing effort
  - " Continuity of performance
- Emad added that successful marketing is:
- " Profitable
  - " Offensive (rather than defensive)
  - " Integrated
  - " Strategic (future-orientated)
  - " Effective (gets results)

So, marketing is the right product, in the right place, at the right time and at the right price.

(( وبشر الصابرين الذين اذا اصابتهم مصيبة قالوا انا لله وانا اليه راجعون ))

صدق الله العظيم

بقلوب مؤمنة بقضاء الله وقدره تتقدم بأحر التعازي  
القلبية إلى :

معالي الأستاذ / عبد العزيز عبد الغني

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وإخوانه واسرته جميعاً

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## My Warm Sun

By: Fuad Noman  
nomanfuad@hotmail.com

Exactly, at the moment of sunset,  
A smart ask I've met  
"What is your opinion towards me?"  
For her  
As my heart can see  
In brief is my reply:  
If I feel dark,  
your moony face is my brightness  
If I am so sad,  
your existence is my realistic happiness

If I have badly-done,  
you are my correct performance  
If I am disabled,  
you are my sound competence  
If I am hopeless,  
you are my first confidence  
If I am lost,  
your soul is my existence  
If I am occupied,  
you are my final independence  
If I am absent-minded,  
you are my realistic presence

If I am chained, you are my freedom  
If I am prisoned,  
your heart is my kingdom  
If I am so confused,  
you are my clear wisdom

If I am bankrupt,  
your mind is my money  
If I feel bitter,  
your lips are my preferable honey  
If my life is hot,  
your soft touch makes me sunny  
If I feel so bored,  
you are my jubilant fun  
If I am so cold,  
you are my warm sun

If I am homeless,  
your heart is my stability  
If I am rebel, you are my loyalty  
If I am angry, you are my tranquility  
If am exiled,  
your hugs are my home's identity

If I am thirsty, you are my soft drink  
If I am out of reach, you are my fast link  
If my pen is empty,  
the color of your eyes is my golden ink

If I am deprived, you are my own right  
If I am blind you are only my insight

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## Job Vacancy

The Small Enterprise Development Fund (SEDF), a governmental financial institution serving the small and medium sized businesses in Yemen, has job openings in the first half of 2006 in the following areas on management (deputy head) and senior management level:

### Finance, Legal Affairs, Operations, Research, and on Branch Level

#### Responsibilities

- Managing the daily tasks of the resp. department or directly supporting the head of the department
- Leading and motivating the team of the department
- Improving the performance of the department, through e.g. development of new products, work flow processes and best practices
- Lead SEDF towards applying private business principles
- Close cooperation with the other departments of SEDF and the General Manager to improve SEDF performance

#### Qualifications/Requirements:

- Bachelors or Masters Degree in Administration, Finance or Law
- At least five years relevant work experience in the field you are applying for, work experience in the private sector (esp. banking and finance) and/or in an international environment would be an asset
- Proven leadership skills
- Fluent in English and Arabic, oral and written, an exception might be made for the position in legal affairs
- Very good knowledge of MS office, especially Excel and Power Point and Internet Research
- Strong communication skills, well organised and hard working

Though SEDF is a governmental institution, SEDF hires on private contract base.

If you are interested, please send your application in English only and with your salary expectations in YRL to us. Applications for the position in Legal Affairs are also accepted in Arabic.

Please send your application, preferred as Email, but also paper mail or fax are accepted, to:

**Hisham Al-Hakimi, Human Resource Manager**

**Email: [HRDept@sedf-yemen.com](mailto:HRDept@sedf-yemen.com) or**

**SEDF**

**Hisham Al-Hakimi, Human Resources Manager**

**P.O.Box 15233, Sana'a**

**Fax: 01 500474**

**For inquiries before sending your application please call Hisham Al-Hakimi  
Tel.no. 01 260642/3, ext. 106 or 733778604.**

**Deadline for sending the application is 10 days after publication.**

Please refrain from calling after sending the application. Please note that only applications in English (except for Legal Affairs) and with salary expectations in YRL will be considered. Please note also that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted further.

**For further information about SEDF visit our homepage: [www.sedf-yemen.com](http://www.sedf-yemen.com)**

(( وبشر الصابرين الذين اذا اصابتهم مصيبة  
قالوا انا لله وانا اليه راجعون ))

صدق الله العظيم

بقلوب مؤمنة بقضاء الله وقدره نتقدم بخالص العزاء  
وصادق المواساة إلى:

معالي الأستاذ / **عبد العزيز عبد الغني**

رئيس مجلس الشورى

واخوانه وكافة أسرته

في وفاة المغفور له بإذن الله تعالى /

**جلال عبد الغني**

سائلين الله العلي القدير أن يتعمد الفقيد بواسع رحمته

وأن يسكنه فسيح جناته وأن يلهم أهله وذويه الصبر والسلوان ..

ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله العلي العظيم

المعزون:

أ / نادية عبدالعزيز السقاف

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وكافة موظفي مؤسسة يمن تايمز للصحافة والطباعة والنشر



## VACANCY Programme Accountant (Based in Sana'a)

Oxfam's office in Yemen is a part of the regional office of the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and the Common Independent States (MEEECIS). Oxfam is implementing the following Programmes in Yemen:

- Community-based Primary Health Care Program,
- Promoting Pro-poor and Engendered Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) Implementation and Monitoring,
- Legal Protection and Advocacy Programme,
- Integrated Action on Poverty and Early Marriage, and
- Humanitarian Preparedness Programme.

As the Programme Accountant, you will report to the PRSP Programme Manager and will provide assistance to the Oxfam project team and finance staff in the grant making and monitoring of the partners of the program to ensure financial standards and management are met but also ensuring budget integrity in Oxfam's systems and proper coding in the system.

We are looking for someone with the ability to implement office and finance systems with a financial/accounting background. You must have procedural and legal knowledge on various administrative and finance functions especially pertaining to the NGO ensuring deadlines are met. Ability to work with others and as part of the team is essential as well as fluency in Arabic, English and writing skills. Knowledge and skills in computer usage and willingness/ fitness to travel for periods of time will be an added advantage.

**Please send a copy of your CV latest 18<sup>th</sup> February 2006 to:**

The Country Programme Manager, Oxfam GB Yemen P.O. Box 1045, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

**Fax no: 01 445 650 or**

**E-mail: [habass@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:habass@oxfam.org.uk)**

**Women are encouraged to apply**

## Terms of Reference for AUDIT of NEX Projects

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) office in Sana'a, Yemen, would like to announce for an audit bidding. Interested firms are requested to read the scope and requirements of the audit and respond accordingly. All bids must be submitted no later than February 17<sup>th</sup> 2006 with a subject of "NEX Audit Proposal" in one of the following methods:

### By Mail:

Ms. Samira A. Al-Farah  
United Nations Development Programme  
P.O.Box 551  
Off sixty road, near Alawqaf complex  
Sana'a, Yemen  
By Fax: +967 1 448841

**By Email: [registry.ye@undp.org](mailto:registry.ye@undp.org)**

### Background

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

National Execution (NEX) is an agreement whereby UNDP entrust these resources and funds to national government counterparts to undertake and manage UNDP-supported projects. The national government counterpart responsible for the overall management of the project is called the executing agency. These executing agencies are responsible for the management of all UNDP resources of nationally executed projects, and they are accountable to UNDP for the entirety of UNDP resources under their management. For audit Terms of Reference, Full Request for Proposal and Project List that will be included in this audit exercise please access the following link on our website:

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

**The audit should start 1<sup>st</sup> March 2006.**

**The draft audit report should be submitted to UNDP country office by 8<sup>th</sup> April 2006.**

**The final audit report should be submitted to UNDP country office by 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2006.**

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



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## Husseinia Horse and Camel Racing Festival concludes

HODEIDA, Jan. 7 - The Al-Husseinia Horse and Camel Racing Festival (Al-Hajn) concluded last Saturday in Husseinia, Hodeida province. The event involved horses and camels from different governorates, horseracing clubs, military academies and those interested in horse taming.

Nabil Al-Mahbashi, General Manager of Al-Hodeida Youth and Sports Office, pointed out that the festival is the first of its kind in the sense of its immense participation. He indicated the six-day festival drew approximately 200 horse racers and 300

camel racers competing in 1,200-meter, 1,600-meter and 2,200-meter distances.

He mentioned that camel jumpers numbered 38, indicating that jumping over six camels was the contest's top-most prize. The most prominent jumpers are Buttaili, Buhaider and Fishini. The festival included participants from Hodeida, Taiz, Abyan, Ibb, Al-Jawf and Marib.

On Saturday, President Ali Abdullah Saleh inaugurated the Husseinia Racetrack for horse and camel racing. Incorporating separate tracks for each, the venue was designed according to



A participant jumping over four Camels in the festival.

PHOTO BY FOUAD AL-HARAZI

international standards and specifications. It includes three main stages with the capacity for 40,000 fans, plus 28 stables with service annexes at a total cost of 359 million Yemeni Riyals.

The festival's concluding ceremony included popular dance, various events' sporting parades and prize distribution to winners.

President Saleh ordered appropriate parties to adopt the festival and hold it annually with the main objective of upgrading horse and camel racing skills levels.

Al-Husseinia is located north of

Zabid city in Rama'a Valley, 80 km from Hodeida. Formerly known as Fashal, it currently is named for Hussein Bin Salman Bin Abi Qasem Al-Ahdal, the town's first inhabitant in 870 Hijra calendar. The town later was expanded by Al-Zaraniq tribe, a prominent Tihama tribe.

"Al-Zaraniq" was an adjective branded upon Tihama desert inhabitants. Al-Zaraniq tribesmen characteristics have not changed since olden times, when they were known to possess slim physiques and were famed as good runners.



President Saleh rewarding some of the winners in the Husseinia Festival.

PHOTO BY FOUAD AL-HARAZI

## Miniature houses: innovative handicraft

By :Mohammed Al-Jabri

The beauty of the Old City in Sana'a has attracted and inspired the work of many artists and poets. The area has been immortalized in their paintings, poems and literary works. Its markets and neighborhoods also impress visitors to the city. What strikes them most is the way its houses and mosques are built.

Some have tried to portray the area by photographing its buildings, markets and neighborhoods and sending such images worldwide. Ten years ago, it occurred to some Yemeni craftsmen that it would be good to depict the Old City in the



A view of miniature houses that resemble old sana'a city houses

castles and other regional features.

The idea was welcomed greatly and thereafter, craftsmen began holding special workshops on making miniature houses. Both locals and tourists were eager for the models. Yemenis like to buy such houses as gifts and for special occasions. They like having miniature houses in their homes, often displaying them in the living room. Likewise, some businessmen prefer putting a model on their office desk.

Miniatures generally are made of plaster, which is poured into molds until it dries. Afterward, having taken the form of a house, the plaster is removed from the mold. The cast then is hand painted and windows and doors affixed, with the complete work resembling a real man-made construction. Miniatures vary in size from small to medium to large.



A model of a small mosque in a village

form of miniature houses.

The first such houses portrayed the area's most striking buildings and its famed Bab Al-Yemen (Yemen Gate)

entrance. But later on, some craftsmen wanted to focus not only on Old Sana'a, but to depict other prominent Yemeni monuments like

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