





Monday, 13 February 2006 • Issue No. 920 • Price 30 Yemeni Riyals • Founded in 1991 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

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Inside:



Report: The CEEFME



Readers' Voice

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

Last edition's question:

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

This edition's question:

and not attach importance to this government reshuffle, while others are cautiously optimistic. Do you think the new government will be able to implement reforms and reduce

Go to our website at: yementimes.com/#poll andhave your voice heard Conference

Report: This is



Culture: It is time to open the National Museum

Trial continues, terrorists receive different judgments

For the first time, heated court sessions were held within a week to try three groups accused of terrorism: the first group of 14 suspects is accused of forming an armed gang targeting foreigners; the second is accused of blowing up foreign embassies in Sana'a; whereas the third is on trial for attempting to assassinate former U.S. ambassador Edmund Hall.

Authority stamps used in issuing ID

cards and passports, a computer and

several CDs. Prosecution accused sus-

pects of using the computer to forge ID

A map of sites to be detonated,

another computer, a fan, an old hunting

gun, an explosive belt, a sulfur sub-

stance, a urine substance and several

tins filled with TNT also were among

exhibits.

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Feb. 12 — The Specialist Penal Court for state security held its second session Saturday, Feb. 11, resuming the trial of 14 suspects accused of forming an armed gang and planning to carry out terrorist attacks on Western interests in Yemen.

Items seized with suspects were presented to the court including a mobile telephone connected to a remote control, an electricity measuring device, a device used for encasing identity cards, four Security and Civil Status

Suspects admitting the exhibits were theirs were: Mohamed Abdulaziz Fateeni, Saif Al-Amaari, Sami Al-Shoaibi, Amar Al-Maradi and Ali Mohamed Sofian. Al-Shoaibi denied that the electrical circuit is used in detonation, claiming it is for charging bat-

Several suspects denied accusations against them, while others refused to answer accusations directed at them. Hassan Al-Hada denied prosecution accusations against him, saying they were not his testimony and adding that fingerprints at the bottom of the page also were not his. However, prosecution insists he confessed of his own accord and signed his confession.

Some suspects refused to answer, asking their lawyers to answer on their behalf. Ashraf Al-Anisi, Adnan Wajeeh's lawyer, asked the court to free his client and compensate him, demanding the court formally and substantially accept Waieeh's defense. Al-Anisi claimed his demand is based on several reasons, including lack of material evidence, and that political security broke the law by detaining his client seven months without charge. He added that there is no law preventing Wajeeh's use of an electrical circuit, as he is an electrical engineer. Al-Anisi maintained that Wajeeh did not know what the suspects were planning; besides, he had no connection with them and did not participate in any criminal act. Al-Anisi also criticized the court for denying him access to his

First suspect Sofian's lawyer also demanded his client's release and declaration of his innocence, confirming that Sofian remained in prison a whole year since his capture on Feb. 9, 2004 in clear violation of the law.



Some of the 14 suspects are accused of forming an armed band which targeted foreigners.



Continued on page 2 A group of suspects accused of attacking some western embassies in Yemen.

Broad condemnations against journals and journalists

SANA'A, Feb. 12 — The Southeast Court in Sana'a issued a ruling of imprisonment against Khalid Salman, Editor-in-Chief of Al-Thori newspaper, the Socialist Party mouthpiece. Salman received a two-year prison sentence and is banned from writing in any newspaper for six months, under judgment of arrest.

The court also sentenced journalists Nabil Sobaie and Fikri Qasim to a year's imprisonment and banned them from writing in any newspaper for six months, under stay of execution.

The court issued its rulings on the three journalists in cases filed against them for offending the president by their writings against corruption, deteriorating health and living standards and administration failures.

Following the court's ruling, Basim Al-Sharjabi, lawyer for Al-Thori and the journalists, told media, "The problem of the imprisonment and stay of execution sentences is that they are unnatural sentences in an unjust trial. Al-Thori newspaper writers faced unequaled litigation with the president, who heads the Supreme Court and has the right to appoint and remove judges."

In a statement following the court sentences, the London-based Yemeni Human Rights Organization (YHRO) denounced Yemeni authorities' imprisoning and banning journalists from writing due to their opinions.

YHRO called on journalists and human rights organizations to intervene to stop Yemeni authorities from executing the sentences. It said the rulings were a frustration to international expec-

tations of Yemen's improvement with respect to freedom and human rights. The organization called on President Saleh to live up to his commitment to lift restrictions on journalists and journal-

It added that the trials reveal that Yemeni authorities do not respect their commitments to the international and regional communities. Such commitments, made at conferences held in Yemen, called for respecting human rights and releasing freedoms.

In its meeting at the Women Journalists Without Constraints center, the Civil Society Coalition also condemned instigation of threats against journalists by the weekly Al-Dastoor, a pro-government military and security newspaper.

The international Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) also condemned closure of the Yemen Observer and Al-Raay Al-Aam newspapers.

In related news, press and publication prosecution arrested journalist Mohammed Al-Asaadi, Editor-in-Chief of English newspaper the Yemen Observer, for interrogation about its republishing Danish newspaper caricatures satirizing the prophet Mohamed. Press prosecution also summoned Yemen Observer publisher Faris Al-Sanabani regarding the caricatures' republication.

The Ministry of Information suspended the licenses of three Yemeni newspapers for republishing the drawings: Al-Raay Al-Aam, Al-Huriah and the Yemen

Want service

Cabinet reshuffle oust four ministers

A cabinet reshuffle ousts four ministers, leaving over nine unchanged while the opposition attributed this to the ruling party's panic over the recent Hamas victory

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SANA'A, Feb. 12 — A cabinet reshuffle was formerly declared Sana'a which included 22 portfolios. The reshuffle included 15 new ministers in the newly formed government. The new government included two women, namely Amatelarzag Ali Hamad as the minister of Social affairs and Labor and Dr. Khadija Al-Haisami as the minister of Human Rights.

The Ministries of Foreign affairs and Expatriates were fused together in one sing, with Dr. Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi being the minister. The Ministers of Culture and Tourism were re-separated. Khaled Al-Rwaishan remained the Minister of Culture while the Tourism portfolio went to the Young Minister, Nabil Hassan Al-Fageh.

Ahmed Sofan left Ministry of Planning and Development, with Abdulkereem Al-Arhabi as the new minister. Alawi Al-Salami left the Ministry of Finance to the Shora Council and was replaced by economist Saif Mahiob Al-Asaly from Sana'a University.

Of the new faces that joined the new cabinet are, Mohamed Ahmed Naser Ali, Minister of defense, Dr. Jalal Ibrahim Fakira, Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, Engineer Mahmoud Ibrahim Saghiri, Minister of Fisheries, Dr. Ghazi Shaif Al-Aghbari, Minister of justice, engineer Omar Abdullah Al-Karshami, Minister of Public Works and Roads, Khalid Mahfoodh ,Minister of

Petroleum and Minerals, Abdulrhman Fadhl Al-Iriani, Minister of Water and Environment, Dr. Abdul Kareem Rase, Minister of Health and Population and Dr.Saleh Basura Minister of Higher Education and Research.

In replacements in the new cabinet, Dr. Ali Mohamed Mojawar became Minister of Electricity, from the ministry of Fisheries

Dr. Adnan Al-Jafry left the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Legislation affairs. Dr, Rashad Ahmed Al-Rasas became Minister of Parliamentary affairs coming from the Ministry of Shora Council.

A surprising return of Hassan Ahmed Al-lawzi, a popular writer and poet, to the Ministry of Information was welcomed by journalists and writers, where he came from the Shora Council.

Those who stayed in the government included, Hamoud Al-Sofi Minister of Civil services, Ali Mansour BinSafa'a, Minister of Vocational Education. Dr. Abdulsalam Al-Jofi. Minister of Education, Abdulmalik Al-Ma'lami, Minister of Telecommunications, Omer Hassan Al-Amoodi, Minister of Transport, Sadiq Amin Abu Ras, Minister of Local Administration, Abdulrahman Al-Akwa', Minister of Youth and Sports and Hamoud Obad, Minister of Endowments and Guidance.

Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi is promoted as a deputy Prime Minister and kept his portfolio as Minister of Interior.

In a related issue, the Presidential resolution no (2) for 2006 has appointed Judge Isam Abdulwahab Al-Samawi, as Head of the Supreme Court. Resolution no (4) has also appointed General Abullah Ali Ilaiwa as Consultant of the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, after leaving the Ministry of defense.

Resolution no (8) also appointed Ahmed Mohamed Al-Kohlani as governor of Aden. Dr. Abdulwahab Rawih was appointed Rector of Aden University. He was formerly the Minister of Higher Education. Dr. Yahia Al-Shaibi became Mayor of Sana'a.

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Civil Society Coalition | U.S Navy ships off Yemen denounces violations

Denouncing the violation of human rights and freedom of press, the Civil Society Coalition demands a real protection for journalists.

SANA'A, Feb. 11 — The Civil Society Coalition, which includes syndicates, journals, creative organizations and influential personalities working to defend rights and freedoms, discussed a number of issues at its Feb. 8 meeting.

Tawakkol Karman, head of Without Women Journalists Constraints and the coalition's general coordinator, stated that it is a democratic gathering facilitating civil society institutions. Formed after the September 2005 abduction of journalist Jamal Amir, the coalition consists of 32 of the largest Yemeni organizations and syndicates, in addition to prominent journal and parliamentary personalities working in the fields of rights and

At its meeting, the coalition affirmed its solidarity with several non-governmental organizations in their lawful demands, such as supporting the teacher's syndicate in its endeavor to improve teachers' living status via the new wage law.

Attendees condemned what Radfan Charitable Society was subjected to by Aden's Social Affairs and Work office, which closed the society's premises and confiscated its positions. They considered this an arbitrary measure.

The coalition also condemned recent journalist inconveniences, such as telephone wiretapping and publishing their telephone calls on the internet and via other media outlets. An example involved Al-Jazeera correspondent Ahmed Al-Shalafi, whose telephone calls were tapped.

Coalition members also condemned banning of Abdulhabib Al-Serori's "Destruction Bird," now held up in Sana'a International Airport. The work currently is being published in series by Al-Thoura newspaper.

The coalition also condemned the Danish newspaper's publishing of defamatory drawings satirizing the prophet Mohammed (pbuh). They demanded an official Danish apology and recommended the boycott continue until then.

The Civil Society Coalition founded in September 2005 aiming to coordinate between civil-society establishments such as syndicates and human-rights organizations. 32 of such establishments are members of the Coalition as well as several social and media personnel.

Demonstrations continue denouncesing the Danish newspaper

Prime Minister Dr. Abdulkader Ba Jamal condemned offensive cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) that have displeased Muslim communities, especially Yemenis. Many demonstrations have been held in Yemen protesting against the Danish newspaper and its offensive drawings.

SANA'A, Feb. 12 - The Yemeni Lawyers Syndicate and Judiciary Authority judges and officials held a mass demonstration against offensive cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) published by Danish newspaper Jyllands-Posten.

Hundreds of angry protesters joined the demonstration to protest against blasphemous drawings of the Prophet of Muhammad (pbuh). Demonstrators started the protest from Al-Tahrir Square, then headed to the Cabinet premises where they were welcomed by Prime Minister Dr. Abdulkader Ba

He said Yemen's government condemns any insult to religious beliefs and Islamic holy places. Ba Jamal also met with demonstration representatives. He said, "We don't want to face

hostility with hostility toward other religions," declaring that the Yemeni government pays more attention to dialogue between civilizations and cultures among all nations.

Ba Jamal added that Yemen will do as President Saleh stated and will cooperate with the Organization of Islamic Conferences, the Arab summit and the United Nations in issuing an international decree forbidding insulting religious beliefs and Islamic holy places. He considers the offensive Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) caricatures enemy action against such holy places.

The Lawyers Syndicate and Judiciary Authority officials called on Arab and Muslim peoples to continue official government boycotting of Danish products.

According to Al-Balag newspaper,

Al-Houthi's Believing Youths have stated that Jyllands-Posten's Editor-in-Chief should be murdered. An Al-Houthi Believing Youths spokesman said the statement is not true and denied it, saying the Al-Wahabi group (Islamic creed) is behind the statement.

Religious scholar and preacher Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi denounced violence and rioting over the cartoons' publication, expressing his sorrow over events occurring in some Muslim countries. "We are vehemently sorry for the situation's deterioration to the point of burning cars, public utilities and harming interests of the people and the French state," Al-Qaradawi said in a statement to Qatar News Agency.

He called upon the Muslim community worldwide to be calm and handle the situation with wisdom and rationality He urged Muslim religious and political leaders to intensify peace efforts and condemned violent demonstrations, calling on Muslims to 'express their anger in a prudent man-

Sheikh Al-Qaradawi, head of the International Association of Muslim Scholars and described as a 'leading hard-line Muslim cleric,' lives in Doha,

Continued from page 1

Trial continues, terrorists receive different judgments

At the end of the session, the court decided to postpone the case until next Saturday to enable prosecution to present its rebuttal to the suspects'

Security detained the 14 suspects since May 9, 2005, where they were captured in Shomila area of Sana'a, accusing them of planning to attack Western interests, as well as military and security personnel.

The Specialist State Security Court's Appeal Department held a session Saturday, Feb. 11, upholding the First Instance Court's judgment against suspects accused of attacking Western embassies of the United States, Britain and Italy and the French Cultural Center. The sentences were: four years' imprisonment for Iraqi national Anwar Al-Jailani, Khalid Al-Batati, three years' imprisonment for Khalid Al-Batati and two

years' imprisonment under judgment of arrest for Omar Al-Fageh. Abdulrahman Ba-Sora was sentenced to three years, four months, while Mohamed Khaity received three years, beginning from their detention date.

The First Instance Court convicted

the six suspects August 8, 2005 of membership in Kataieb Al-Tawheed organization, an Al-Qaeda branch. They were accused of planning to attack Western interests inside and outside Yemen, as well as being accused of attacking the British and Italian embassies. Their trial began March 31, when prosecution accused them of forming an armed gang and planning to kill top government officials, including the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Defense and Interior. They were accused of targeting Gulf interests as well.

In related news, the First Instance dence.

Court withheld yesterday the case of suspects accused of trying to assassinate the former U.S. ambassador in Yemen Edmund Hall, in order to issue its ruling March 5. The last defense was presented in the session prior to issuing the judgment. Prosecution charged Hizam Ali Hassan Al-Mas and Khaled Saleh Hadi with making a criminal deal to attack foreigners.

Prosecution accused suspects of following a car with diplomatic plates carrying passengers, including the U.S. ambassador. Suspects attacked the police car accompanying the ambassador when it stopped near a Hadda Street shop. They targeted the ambassador with a pistol and

Lawyers Adel Al-Himiary and Hilal Al-Shoibi demanded their clients' release due to lack of material evi-

Cabinet reshuffle oust four ministers

Commenting to Yemen Times on the reshuffling process and the timing of it, Ali Al-sarari, secretary of popular organizations in the Socialist party said: "The image of the ruling party is already deformed, and this reshuffle added to it. It is clear that the ruling party was panicked by the success of Hamas in the recent Palestinian elections. It became more nervous and could commit more irrational actions that will complicate its matters. This reshuffle revealed that the ruling party has no hands to play and like a bankrupt

merchant it turned to its old reserve. It chose the vintage anti democratic cadres from among his reserve to use them in an inappropriate time, as the world is pressing Yemen to take daring steps towards democracy. Al-sarari concluded by saying, It is clear that the regime has nothing to present for democracy."

Sultan Al-Barakani, Deputy General Secretary of the People General Congress PGC, head of the Parliamentary group, confirmed that the reshuffle is a good step that brought the technocrats to coup with the reform program. The reshuffle gives the impression that the PGC and its leadership are capable of changing for the better."

Dr. Abdulmalik Al-Motawakil, Deputy Secretary of the Popular Party Union and a Professor in Social sciences at the University of Sana'a said: "There is nothing new in the reshuffle. I can see good faces, but the political will is needed to achieve changes in the general policy. It is not the change of faces that matters, but the political will for reform and change."

Reward for information in hunting Al-Qaeda escapees U.S. Navy ships are helping patrol international waters off Yemen to try to recapture 23 escaped Al-Qaeda suspects, should they attempt to flee by sea, whereas Yemen's government is considering offering a reward for information leading to the fugitives' arrest.

SANA'A, Feb. 12 — The Navy ships are part of Combined Task Force 150, which routinely patrols the area's waters. According to a Pentagon statement, "Ships from CTF 150 are monitoring international waters along the coast of Yemen in an attempt to either block possible maritime escape routes or capture the suspected terrorists if they make this attempt.' No official Yemeni source could confirm or deny the statement.

A White House security official said Thursday that the Al-Qaeda prison escape was of "enormous concern" to the United States. "I find the developments in Yemen not only deeply disappointing but of enormous concern to us, especially given the capabilities and expertise of the people who were there," Homeland Security and counterterrorism adviser Frances Townsend said.

Cooperation and coordination Townsend told reporters that the U.S. ambassador spoke with Yemeni officials, asking for "the strongest and most transparent cooperation so we can help them."

Yemeni pro-government September 26 daily reported, "Close coordination has been established between Yemen. Saudi Arabia and the United States to bar the escapees from

neighboring countries."

In this regard, media reported that 200 of the escapees' relatives, in addition to 80 security personnel at the Central Intelligence Prison in Sana'a, from which the 23 Al-Qaeda suspects escaped last week, have been arrested on suspicion of facilitating the mass escape.

U.S. official reactions

The incident drew anger and astonishment from Washington, with top White House aide Townsend criticizing Yemen for housing prisoners too close together and without enough restrictions. "We are disappointed that they were all housed together. We are disappointed that their prison restrictions weren't more stringent," she stated.

Townsend mentioned that the U.S. also is working with Saudi Arabia, which had turned over to Yemen several of those who now have escaped. "So our allies in Saudi Arabia face as great, if not a greater threat by virtue of this escape than we do," she warned.

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld expressed disappointment that the Al-Qaeda suspects escaped, but remained hopeful they would be "They're dangerous caught. individuals. It's a shame they've escaped. I'm hopeful that they'll be recaptured," he said on the sidelines of an informal meeting of NATO defense ministers in Taormina, southern Italy.

"Certainly, some of them were among the masterminds of the USS Cole attack that killed American sailors,' Rumsfeld said, referring to Jamal Ahmed Badawi, accused of planning the Oct. 12, 2000 bombing of the Norfolk-based destroyer, and Fawaz Al-Rabeei, one of those responsible for attacking the French tanker Limburg in 2002. Badawi was sentenced to death in September 2004 for planning the USS Cole attack that killed 17 sailors and injured 39 others. The FBI confirmed that 39-year-old American Jaber Elbaneh, wanted for allegedly training with the "Lackawanna Six" at an Al-Qaeda camp, was among the escapees. Elbaneh is charged with five other men - dubbed the "Lackawanna Six" for the city where they lived near Buffalo - with providing material support to Al-Qaeda by attending Osama Bin Laden's Al-Farooq training camp in Afghanistan months before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Following those attacks, Yemen joined the U.S.-led "War on Terrorism," launching a campaign against Islamic militants.

Yemen's government will announce a reward in return for information leading to the capture of the 23 escaped Al-Qaeda prisoners. The September 26 web (www.26sep.net) quoted unnamed sources as saying an announcement would be made within hours. An official source said Saturday, "The reward will be tempting," to encourage those with information on the escapees to speak out.

Civic organizations denounce Yemen's deteriorating living standards

TAIZ, Feb. 11 - Vocational and public syndicates in Taiz province said deteriorating living standards, spreading unemployment and lower wages resulted in calamities and terrible incidents in Taiz and other Yemeni provinces.

A statement released by the syndicates said: "It is no wonder corruption, bribery and personal considerations are spreading in government institutions, among them the Ministry of Education, wherein cheating seems to be practiced publicly.'

It added: "Corruption, bribery and personal considerations in the health sector need remedying and reshuffling to rescue such a vital sector from decline and chaos."

Vocational syndicates and public and civic organizations in Taiz vented their anger at the government for deteriorating security and health situations norates and their consequences upon

According to its statement, the

organizations opposed tragic events in the province, the most terrible of which occurred on the eve of Eid Al-Adha. On this eve, some governorate officials exploited mean-spirited people and soldiers to extort citizens, claiming the lives of several innocent people living peacefully in this coun-

Assemblers at the rally opposed the child kidnapping phenomenon that frightens parents, particularly after some women and university students were harassed and abducted.

If the government takes measures to eradicate the trend of child abduction and trafficking, how will kidnappers and traffickers dare pursue such illegal practices, assemblers asked. Child traffickers do whatever they want when they see authorities unable to end foreigner kidnappings and government offering money and posts to perchallenges to security personnel nationwide.

Syndicates of Yemeni women,

teachers, doctors, pharmacists, lawyers and the Human Rights Information and Training Center's Committee to Support Human Rights were among organizations protesting Yemen's declining living standards.

Terrible incidents

News reports mentioned that 13year-old Izdahar Abdullah Omar Saleh disappeared Monday, Feb. 6 after she left home for school. According to Al-Ayyam daily, the case was reported to the Criminal Investigation Bureau, which confirmed it still is investigat-

Another girl, Hanan Al-Selwi, remains lost for a second week. The two kidnapping cases sparked fear among Sana'a residents, particularly as security authorities never investigated the lost child's case, nor did they announce such cases to the public.

demanded the government disclose child trafficking cases and limit such a threatening trend.

Huge demonstration in front of Parliament

Education inspectors and motorcyclists protest

SANA'A, Feb. 11 - Masses of education inspectors and motorcyclists held a huge demonstration in front of Parliament. Inspectors raised signboards while motorcyclists and their sons held gas lamps to protest government decrees against their

The Yemeni Teachers Syndicate (YTS) called for all inspectors to demonstrate against a decree issued by the Ministry of Education (MoE). The MoE issued the decree ordering all Yemeni inspectors to teach in schools again instead of working as inspectors and supervisors. So, the inspectors gathered in front of Parliament requesting the government cancel 2006 Ministerial decree No. 11. YTS considers the decree as an obstacle on employees in the inspection field.

Outraged inspectors stated that the ministerial decree never considered experienced inspectors who spent many hard years working in inspection and evaluation. They claimed the MoE will appoint others who are not as well trained and don't have sufficient experience. The inspectors also pointed out that many authors and consultants appointed by the decree will lose their positions.

Education YTS and the Professionals Syndicate (EPS) will



Motorcyclists waiting for this problem to be

organize protest activities beginning Tuesday throughout all government offices to demand and implement the government's salaries and wages law.

YTS Chairman Ahmed Naser Al-Rabahi said the two syndicates will cooperate to contact all those concerned with protesting. They also will inform authorities about their programs and demonstrations, such as Parliament and ministries and offices of local authorities, according to the Yemeni Constitution and law, which guarantee the right to protest and hold peaceful demonstrations.

Al-Rabahi added that Yemeni teachers' demands are lawful and are based on low salaries and wages. He said the educational profession should be considered so teachers can receive a good standard of living to achieve their educational missions well. If the government will not respond to teachers' demands, they will go on public strike next March.

Motorcyclists' demand the government let them work, now that its one-month parliamentary indulgence has ended. Parliament's Transport and Communication Committee (PTCC) gave the government one month to solve the motorcyclists' problems, but until now, problems still are without reso-

lution. So motorcyclists demonstrated, demanding the government allow them to work in the Capital Secretariat, compensate those motorcyclists who were seized and provide them official jobs. Otherwise, the motorcycles will be returned to their owners.

Last June, the government prohibited motorcyclists from working inside Sana'a and seized 1,500 motorcycles. After motorcyclists held many demonstrations, the government limited the ban to only motorcyclists from outside Sana'a and those without legal license. Motorcyclists demonstrated and rejected PTCC recommendations.

The CEEFME Conference: An earnest effort to correct the incoherent development of the region

On January 29, 2006 YT Senior Political and Economic Editor attended the Conference for the Enrichment of the Economic Future of the Middle East which was held in Doha, Qatar, as an expert on development. This special report covers the Conference in detail and also provides interesting insights as to the rapidly ongoing changes that Doha was witnessing and the role that Yemenis are playing in Qatar's vibrant and energetic effort to become another model of successful development.

By: Hassan M. Al-Haifi

he importance of the Conference for the Enrichment of the Economic Future of the Middle East is not just apparent from the obvious large number of people that were invited as speakers, moderators and participants, but by the goal of the Conference. As a participant, one could not escape from realizing that the CEEFME sought to come out with viable solutions to the problems that stand in the way of the economic and social development of the Middle East. Though the issues involved are many and complex, it was amazing that, within the three days of the Conference, a long list of practicable recommendations were presented that could be used in a regional framework to help solve some of the seemingly perplexing difficulties that are faced by the region in achieving cohesive development.

The CEEFME was co-sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar and the Burkle Center for International Relations in the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) organized by the Conference Organizing Committee of Qatar and Felixia Associates of London. There were some 250 participants, moderators and speakers, who represented a cross-section of relevant authorities in political, economic and social development and a healthy showing from the business communities of both the Middle East and the rest of the world.

The rationale for holding the Conference as related by H. E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar in his inauguration address of the CEEFME was as follows:

"The holding of this conference comes in time where we are badly needing to arrange for the economic concern after the political concern has obtained a great part of the international community in the reform

In other words, the politics of the Middle East should not be the major concern of the international community. It really is time to start to look at the issues that matter the most to most of the people in the region: determining the concrete steps needed to improve their economic well-being, raise their standards of living and eliminate poverty. Such sound rationalization is understandable as the majority of the people of the Middle East cannot really be expected to be concerned about their political situations, when their subsistence is the



Left to Right: Former President Bill Clinton, Sheikh Hamad Bin Jasim Bin Jabr Al-Al-Thani, Fuirst Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Qatar and General Anthony Zinni, Former Commander of CENCOMi at the **Inauguration of Conference.**

prevailing challenge of the day for them. Moreover, it is not possible to expect that regional development in cohesion cannot be achieved, while there is a significant disparity between the levels of achievement reached by some of the countries in the region, not to mention the disparity in wealth.

If the region's economic issues are given greater priority, then there can be greater room for optimism. The factors at play in this context are: the resources are there, the common denominators outweigh the differences among the member countries of the region and the region's strategic position geographically and its importance as a primary source of the energy that most of the economies of the world rely upon for their continued growth. The CEEFME sought to start the activation of these significant factors towards harnessing the potential possibilities of turning the Middle East and North Africa into a dynamic and prosperous economic bloc that presents vast opportunities for the people and the business enterprises of the region, as well as the international community.

The Conference was inaugurated by H. E. Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jabr Al-Thani, First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar, who stressed the importance of the CEEFME in the speech he gave at the inauguration ceremonies.

The special guest speaker at the inauguration of the Conference was former President Bill Clinton of the United States, who spoke stressed the importance of the stability and peace in the region as an important prerogative before any successful reforms can

be implemented. In addition, Mr. Clinton outlined a plan encompassing six points that included expanding infrastructural and capital investment in broad economic sectors; the development of regulatory structures to promote small business, job creation, economic diversity, and the strengthening of the middle class; a system of ongoing investment in education to get more young people in school, increasing opportunities for university education, maximizing the intellectual capacity of the region, including getting more women into the workforce, especially in skilled jobs; guaranteeing more consumer capacity through the creation of minimum wage policies and unemployment insurance; and expanding the capacity of countries to offer business education.

Mr. Clinton also said: "Middle East countries need to diversify their economies and enhance productivity if they are to make optimum use of their Many people in the West and elsewhere in the world believe the Middle East is the hotbed of politics and seat of instability".

The Conference started with a reception and dinner on the eve of the inauguration of the CEEFME. After the inauguration ceremonies, speakers discussed the following topics:

1) Energy and the Dynamics of Regional Development:

Perspectives from Asia and the

Middle East

2) The Middle East Energy Scene: Global Perspective

3) The Business Environment in the

Middle East: Managing Risk, Seizing Opportunities, Private Sector,

Investment, and Diversification 4) Doing Business in the Middle

East: Creating Societies Conducive to Development,

Efficiency, and Productivity

5) The Iraqi Economy: An on the Scene Report

On the following day, the participants split into various specialist panels, to present recommendations for enhancing the development effort in the region and to improve the chances

for the economic cohesion of the region: The panels were 1) The Middle East Energy Scene in Global Perspective

2) Doing Business in the Middle East: What Could Improve: Private Sector, Venture Capital, and Diversification.

3) Doing Business in the Middle

East: Creating Societies Conducive to Development, Efficiency, and Productivity. Ms. Bahiya Hariri, widow of the late

Prime Minister of Lebanon, Rafiq Al-Hariri spoke briefly on the prospects for business in the region.

The final plenary was aptly titled: Looking Ahead: Recommendations and Conclusions. In this session, the recommendations gathered by the specialty panels were summarized as follows (from the Burkle Center at UCLA website):

While affirming that all reform initiatives must be locally designed, and reflect local customs, traditions and circumstances, the conference addressed three key areas of reform: improving the business environment in the Middle East; creating societies conducive to development, efficiency and productivity; and optimizing the energy economy to promote sustainable regional economic growth.

On improving the environment for business creation and economic diversification in the Middle East, participants discussed the need to bring more practical solutions to address the regional deficits in three areas identified by the United Nations Development Program's recent report on regional development in the Middle East region: education and training; women's integration into the skilled workforce; and increasing freedom of expression, association and the press.

Among the initiatives discussed were encouraging governments and businesses in the region to create public/private sector partnerships to provide computers to each student in the region, and in the longer term to each person in the Arab world.

Participants also stressed the importance of enhancing opportunity for and economic empowerment of the region's women, and recommended the adoption of affirmative action programs for women's employment in government, as well as preferential contracts to promote women-owned businesses.

The promulgation of a national "Bills of Rights" elaborating specific freedoms, roles, rights and responsibilities of citizens in the Middle East also was recommend by conference participants.

To enhance international and regional cooperation, participants advocated more people-to-people exchange programs, especially those that facilitate interaction among citizens from the Middle East and else-

Member of Quality Schools International where who share common professionprivate and public sector activities through the region also were recom-

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Arabic program from 12:00 noon - 2:30 p.m.

al interests and activities.

Also recommended were the adop-

tion in the broader Middle East region

of binational research and investment

projects, such as those established by

the United States and Israel to promote

technical research and development, as

well as expanding the Seeds of Peace

program of cross-cultural youth

On energy, the creation of an

International Energy Development

Initiative was proposed, a coalition of

governments, corporations and private

individuals to address the future of

energy resources on a worldwide

basis. Such a forum would provide a

practical and results-oriented mecha-

nism for international coordination

and risk mitigation, and promote inter-

national investment in research and

development in new and alternative

exchanges across the region.

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Conference participants affirmed the importance of existing initiatives to establish a regional central bank to serve as a common forum and meeting place for the region's existing central banks, which would continue to have the same functions and accountabilities they now possess. The new regional central bank could be a venue where all central banks could meet and coordinate policies, especially as regional governments face large and growing surpluses.

Participants also discussed the need for a greater Asian role in the Middle East, necessitated by increasing energy demand, especially in India and China. As economic engagement and trade between the Middle East and Asia increases, so too should Asian govern-



One of the panel discussions attended by the writer.

energy policies, technologies and services, as well as a platform for dialogue among energy producers, distributors and consumers. Conference participants reviewed proposals to enhance greater market stability through such initiatives as selling 20 percent of existing reserves to consumer states. More regional involvement in nuclear technologies also was recommended, in addition to other clean alternative energy sources such as solar and wind

Finally, participants stressed the need to increase scientific and technological education and training throughout the region.

Increasing efforts to support education and training was viewed as one of the critical drivers of business growth in the region, as well as the need to create enduring and strong regulatory regimes to enable job growth, entrepreneurialism, access to risk capital and enhancement of property rights.

New policies and regulatory structures to promote the development of the middle class and small business, and efforts to facilitate greater transparency and good governance in both ments and businesses play increasingly active roles in supporting economic development and assistance in the region.

The coordination for the Conference was undertaken by Felixia Associates of London, with the significant active efforts of Ms. Farida Hashem, Senior Consultant.

Participants from Yemen included:

1) Dr. Hussein Al-Amri UNESCO Yemen Board Associate, Member of Consultative Assembly

2) Dr. Rasheed Barabba'a, Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources

3) Hassan Al-Haifi, Senior Economic and Political Analyst for the Yemen Times 4) Mohammed Al-Baidhani, Deputy

General Manager of Liquefied Natural Gas Company (YLNG) of Yemen. 5) Abdurrahman Hayel Sa'eed Ana'am, Deputy Chairman of Hayel

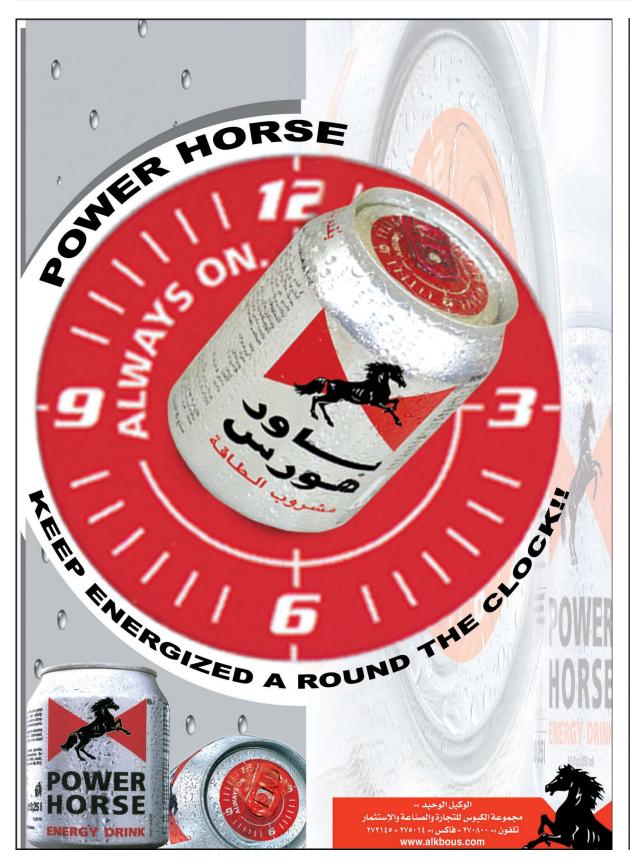
Saeed Ana'am Group. 6) Abdul-Gabbar Hayel Saeed Ana'am, Director of HAS Group.

The report on the Yemeni participation in the Conference and the other aspects of the Doha visit shall be included in the following issue of YT.



Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources of Yemen (left center - in a suit)





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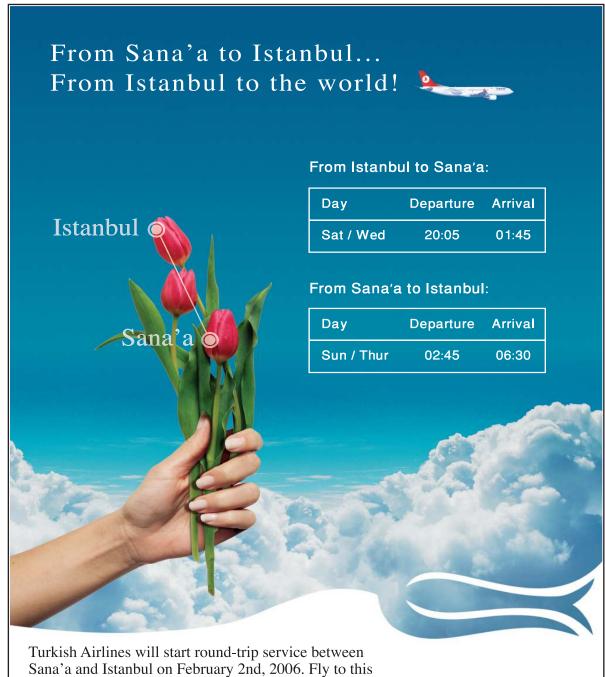
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This is Amina (Part 1 of 2)

This is the true story of a woman who married as a child. She suffered terribly during her married life and after the murder of her husband. In 1998, when she was 14 years old, her husband was murdered. She was forced to confess to the crime, was convicted of killing her husband and imprisoned since then. However, she still maintains her innocence. She is awaiting her death sentence at any moment.

By: Shadha Mohammed Nasser

mina is a beautiful woman with brown eyes. Although uneducated, she is very intelligent and speaks confidently with others. I visited her March 2005 at the Central Prison in Sana'a and she told me about her case, noting that she may be executed at any moment. I could not obtain a copy of her case file, so I left.

In my second visit, she came to me bareheaded and this time her countenance appealed to me as she asked, "Will you help me?" I really did pity her. I asked, "Is this your child?" "Yes it is," she whispered, with sorrow in her eyes.

I returned home. Thinking of her, I could not sleep that night, wishing the weekend would end soon. At last, Saturday came and I met a friend with whom I discussed Amina's case so we might bring her to life again.

Like other village girls, Amina did not receive education, as there were neither schools nor teachers. She only memorized some verses from the Qur'an with the help of a man who voluntarily taught villagers, studying only two months.

Amina has never known any type of plaything, which is why one of her prison friends suggested I bring her a talking doll. Amina stressed that girls in her village are raised for household and agricultural work. The following is Amina's story.

My father decided to help my elder brother marry, as recurring problems had ensued between them. He came to know



a man named Hassan Qaba'il from another village and asked his daughter's hand for my brother. The girl's father agreed on condition that his son Hizam marry me. The two fathers agreed to the marriages and I was pledged to Hizam, although I was too young to be a wife, as was nine years old at the time. Qaba'il assured my family that I would become familiar with the new family and intimacy would grow between me and my husband. It was important to them that my brother married their daughter who seemingly was as old as he. So, I married, although still too young to understand what marriage was and how to make a family. My only interest was the

for me. I also was happy with the party they arranged for me.

Marriage party

My brother's marriage ceremony was different than mine. He was an adult, so those attending his wedding ceremony were adults as well. Those who attended my wedding party were all children, except my family members.

I still remember being put on the marriage chair. Not knowing what a bride or marriage were, I left my party and went outside to play, but was brought back inside. People laughed at me as, indeed, I was a child. My poor mother wept over my marriage at such an early age, trying to conceal her feelings by saying they were tears of joy.

Moving to my husband's house

After my marriage party, my family took me to my husband's house in another village. We met my husband's family midway, where they took me and handed over their daughter, my brother's wife, to my family. At that moment, I burst into tears and asked my mother to accompany me. Counter to societal traditions, she stayed with me in my husband's house. However, a week later, she decided to leave and I insisted on returning with her.

As I was weeping and insisting on

new dress, gold and other gifts brought going with my mother, they confined me in a room, but I managed to run away that evening. I walked, but went astray when I climbed a mountain I did not know. I was scared and found nothing to eat or drink. I fainted while trying to reach my village, which was five hours' walk from there. After hours searching for me, my husband and his family found me fainted on the ground and brought me back.

Upon hearing of this incident, the village sheikh was upset and asked Oaba'il to return me to my family. "You should let her live with her family until she grows up; otherwise, she will die or harm herself," he said. They agreed to return me to my family and took my brother's wife accordingly. In fact, my brother and his wife had a mutual understanding.

I stayed with my family for four months, after which my father returned me to my husband, allowing my sisters to come with me. My brother's wife returned with my father. After two months, my sisters left me. People tried to make me understand my life, for they thought I was mad.

Qaba'il did not like my visits to my family. He threatened me not to visit them again and put a black substance onto my eyes. I was unable to see anything for two weeks. When my father learned of this, he took me to a Sana'a

hospital. I had three eye operations and the doctor advised me not to return to my husband for fear of complications with my eyes. For two months, I remained with my family for medical attention. In return, Qaba'il again took his daughter, my brother's wife.

Once again, my brother returned me to my husband and took his wife. Two months later, I got pregnant and gave birth to a girl. It was a difficult delivery and I suffered bitterly for two days. At first, I refused to take my daughter because I was not mature enough to understand her rights. However, my mother-in-law helped me, explaining how to look after her, and after that, I began to love my daughter very much.

My husband

My husband Hizam was two or three years older than me. They said he was 14 at the time of our marriage. He was kind to me and I loved him, but neither of us understood the meaning of married life. I helped him on the farm. He was poor, never even having 2,000 Riyals. We depended on the grain we raised on the farm. My father gave me whatever I

Amina's story will continue in Part 2 published in the next issue.

Shadha Mohammed Nasser is a Supreme Court lawyer.

A 110-year-old mother and her sick daughter

Culture in this part of the world dictates that women are due full physical and financial support from men, especially as they age. Husbands, parents, children, relatives and others ensure that women are secure financially.] Here we meet 110-year-old Fatima Al-Sawari. Her youngest daughter, 80-year-old Taqi'yah, is paralyzed and being nursed and cared for by her only remaining family, her century-old mother.

Hakim Almasmari hakim_almasmari@hotmail.com

overty and the poor health

system are two of the numerous fears crossing the minds of Yemeni families. Last year, Yemen was rated the unhealthiest Arab nation in an Associated Press report – yet another step backward.] Fatima Al-Sawari, believed to be 110 years old, never lived the life of which she dreamed. For the past 30 years, she has cared for her paralyzed daughter Taqi'yah, now age 80. She claims to be living with 13 different sicknesses throughout her

Originally from Bani Matar, Fatima has lived below the poverty line for the

past 100 years. She lived in Bani Matar the first part of her life until her house was destroyed due to its weak infrastructure, leaving her with no choice but to abandon it with her sick daughter. They moved from one city to another, having neither a roof to sleep under nor a family to care for them.

The loving mother said, "I had a son who at least tried to help us, but he died. I wish he was still alive. That way, I could have someone to count on." Fatima has sacrificed her time and wealth for 30 years hoping that one day her daughter will live like any other. "I have reached the age where I can't even take care of myself. God forbid if I die. What will happen to my lovely daughter? In my eyes, she is still my

With no one to care for them, their only hope lies in God's hands. "My husband is dead. My son is dead and I only have this daughter left. My father died more than 50 years ago. I was destined to live this life, so I thank God," she said.

Fatima has given her daughter medical attention for many years now leaving no stone unturned in trying to find a possible cure for her daughter's innumerable sicknesses. There is no proper health system available for those who cannot afford it and have nowhere else

Recently, after selling all her possessions, Fatima has considered giving up. "How can you give someone medical attention in this country without money? People like us have no place in society. I have no more money to spare," she lamented. "Officials are building mansions and palaces while we can't even build ourselves a wooden room or a roof to cover our heads."

With great pain, her daughter Taqi'yah, who cannot even stand on her feet, said, weeping long and quietly, "My mom is so great. If it had not been for her, I don't know what would have happened to me. I owe my life to her. Will I ever be able to repay her? If not, surely God will not forget her sacrifice for me."

The two women never buy food as all is given to them by their caring neighbor and relative, Mohammed Al-Sawari. Rent is 6000YR monthly for this family with no financial income. Life has reached the extreme for this

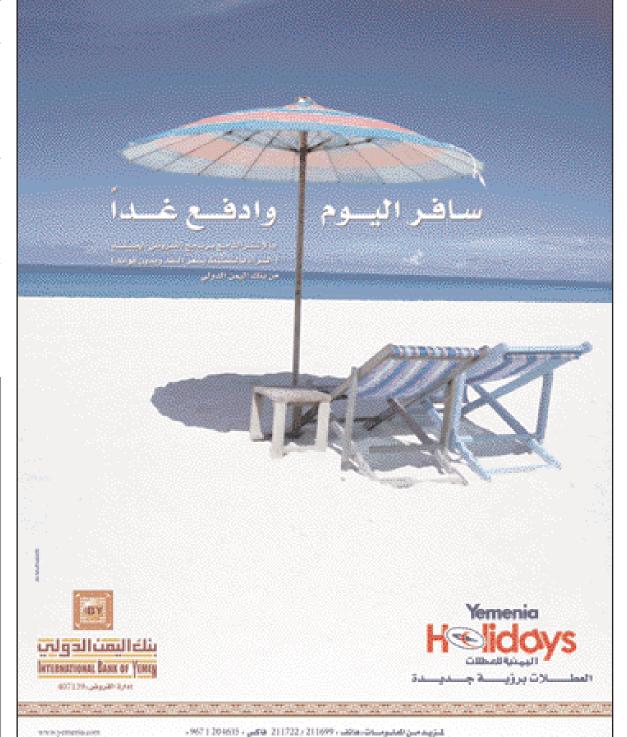
family. They share the one 20-year-old blanket they possess, keeping them together and warm during the cold nights of their long battle against poverty.

Every now and then, street workers volunteer to clean the bathroom for the two women, who together are nearly 200 years old. "Two years ago, I was kicked out of my small, shabby apartment. I couldn't come up with the rent so I was brutally thrown in the streets," Fatima said. "The neighborhood here is nicer. Old ladies often pass by and offer us some bread."

Stories like this surely are heartbreaking and make you realize the severity of the problem we are suffering. Many Yemeni families hover between life and death, but honor and respect for themselves stops them from reporting such news. Fatima and Taqi'yah are two of nearly 11 million Yemenis living near or below the poverty line, as mentioned in the United Nations report. Will all poor people in Yemen need to openly cry out before the government offers a helping hand to these proud, desperate citi-



Fatima (left) hopes her daughter will get better one day, as time is running out for both.





Words of Wisdom



The rate of population growth is an extremely vital factor in the ability of the country to successfully develop. It is imperative that the government, Non government organizations, the media, educationists, and intellectuals join hands to make it clear to families that a large number of children is a burden which neither the parents nor the society can handle

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



OUR OPINION

News or entertainment?

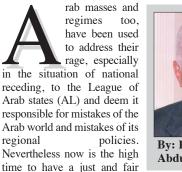
hould newspapers give readers what they need or what they want? The difference between tabloid and serious newspapers is decreasing by the day. "Readers want to read hot, sensational topics and we should give them that!" said one of my enthusiastic reporters in the last Yemen Times editorial meeting. But is it really fair to create a fuss out of nothing and dramatize the news to sell papers? What happened to good news judgment? The crises the world is witnessing today regarding the controversial Danish caricatures are being overblown by both print and mass media. More and more newspapers are republishing the caricatures, even in Muslim countries. Before this controversial issue came to life, many newspapers - even in Yemen – opted to defame certain celebrities or society figures or spread scandalous rumors to make that issue a best-seller. Eventually, it all boils down to pol-

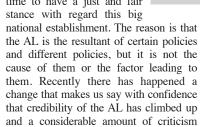
I believe the purpose of constructive journalism has been lost somewhere amid circulation figures and bank accounts of publishing houses. It is not that journalists should refrain from reporting controversial or so-called hot stories; it is more about keeping a balance and providing useful information. Competition and expanding media channels probably have to do with this tabloid-like trend. It is much easier to stand out by quoting something outrageous or publishing a taboo picture than to work hard on a good investigative report. For example, Yemenis mostly are moved by two issues: religion and politics. This is why many Yemeni journalists tend to ignore other potential stories regarding development, gender or even culture, considering them less attractive domains. People apparently have less time to read today than they used to. Moreover, with the increasing burdens of life, they want to read something light and entertaining, not something to ponder or requiring critical thinking.

However, if media continues giving readers what they want - or rather, what they think they want where will we be next? For example, causing an international crisis through publishing and republishing the controversial Danish caricatures really is getting us nowhere. The same goes for pushing angry masses toward the edge of sanity and leading them to destroy public and diplomatic premises. There is a social responsibility that comes with being able to influence others, whether through newspapers, television, radio or other mass communication. A constructive message must be conveyed and media members should be the first to enhance awareness and promote tolerance, even if that means selling fewer papers. If all media came together for this purpose, readers eventually would come around and we would have a better, more intellectual and tolerant society in the end.

> Nadia Al-Sakkaf Editor-in-Chief

The different performance of the Arab League





against it is no longer proper. The visit of the AL Secretary-General Amr Mousa to Iraq and the balanced performance during the visit and preparation for it makes us mention that the image of the AL has changed and it is unfair to accuse it of negligence. The Secretary-General's visit has shifted the Iraqi question from the international arena to the regional arena and clearly presented the importance of Iraq's Arab dimension and its future in addition to the objective handling that the Secretary-General has focused in his visit and his dealing with all the Iraqi political spectrum. He started in that with Sayyid Ali al-Sistani, al-Hakim to president Talabani and the leader Masud al-Barazani and through all leaders of the Sunni Arabs in Iraq. That visit, in our opinion, bears many indications and implications to tackle with in the following

Iraq has been and maybe is still on the verge of a hole of national collapse and disintegration of identity and maybe probabilities of dismembering the state and consolidating the spirit of division in the state, as a result of long years of human suffering, continuous wars and successive confrontations. All that had led some forces to dare to impinge on Iraq's Arab affiliation and its integrity under bloody violence unprecedented in the region as a

The AL's role before the visit of the Secretary-General resulted in a tangible impact in the direction of peaceful settlement of that bloody conflict. The AL has contributed to enrich the dialogue on the new Iraqi constitution and more than that it has succeeded in giving an indication on Iraq's Arab identity, though that did not meet the Arab ambitions. Nevertheless, it remains to be an embodiment of Iraq's identity as it is one of the countries that founded the AL. this indication does not contradict other nationalities in Iraq but represents a guarantee to them.

The Secretary-General mission has succeeded in alleviating the crisis of trust that was prevalent in the Iraqi spirit towards the Arab brethren. His visit to all Iraqi leaderships and addressing the Kurdish parliament was as a cordial message on coexistence between the Arab and Kurdish

Yemeni Jails

Yemenis has been through

in jail for a long time with no

crime except that they abuse

the US policy in the rejoin or

they support Al-huthy even by

mouth!! The question is how

can the Yemeni government

free our brother in the US jails

while we cannot free the hon-

It's a shame too to hold sev-

eral people because "they was

preparing to assassinate the

US ambassador" so did they

assassinate him? We know

that he is alive and free to go

any city in the so called

It is our duty to seek justice

and urge the authority to stay

away from illegal action

against the Yemeni people in

side there own country.

Kidnapping and 'terrorist act'

come due to hash treatment to

those Yemeni who is behind

Need information about the

Queen of Sheba

y name is Amira Ahmed Al Madami and I'm 14

years old. My father is from

Abdul karim aljalani

aljalani@yahoo.com

'YEMARECAN"

est Yemeni's in Sana'a jails?

is shame that so many



By: Prof. **Abdulaziz Al-Tarb**

nationalities. His call for reconciliation was as an Arab call that all cal gather behind for support.

The Arab League action has also become an indicator for the United States and the west in general that the Arabs would stand hand folded and would not abandon Iraq, the great Arab country with its history and potentials. The Arab League

entering into the arena of conflict in Iraq has prepared the minds on possibility of Iraqi reconciliation and stopping the violence that has exceeded all the limits.

The Arab League efforts before, during and after the visit of its Secretary-General proved that ethical pluralism is not contradiction of Arabism and coexistence of nationalities does not threat Iraq's integrity and national cohesion. It is especially so under international and regional circumstances that all suggest the absence of Arab joint action and disappearance of efforts aimed at delivering the region from a deteriorated situation to a better one to get out from violence and ethnic and religious

The Arab League role in Iraq opens the way for regional dialogue surpassing national boundaries to approach the geography partners in Iran and possibly in Turkey too, as they play a role they don't seem in full control of because of the national division in Iraq. It is a role reminding us of the AL's similar efforts in

The step taken by the AL towards the Iraqi question represents an approach to the question of the Gulf security and gives the AL a special situation before states whose relationship with this national establishment is almost changing to a faint light. The reason is that the Gulf Cooperation Council has managed to create a regional status diminishing effectiveness of the national role of the AL in the Gulf region.s

We believe that activation of the AL role in the Iraqi issue opens a hopeful door to the conflicting Iraqi forces. It was eyecatching that the big acts of violence relatively stopped or calmed down during the presence of the AL Secretary-General on the Iraqi territories. This is something to add to his asset.

The bridges the AL built with the Arab Shiites and Kurdish Sunnis was a step on the right course. Severance of communication with the effective forces in any crisis is a big historical mistake. Therefore the AL has made a required inroad, despite of all precautions. I have to admit that the mission of the Arab League did not fully succeed. On the Iraqi side there are some backing down by some forces, suspicions by other some and reservations by some. We cannot perceive that solution of the Iraqi issue can be achieved within weeks or even months because the wounds are so en the circumstances are undulated and conflicts continuous.

Those have been same remarks on the national performance of the Arab League *Investment and Development*.

under its Secretary-General Amr Mousa and the increasing activity of its general secretariat in the late months. It is a mater suggesting trust and calling for satisfaction and also gives the AL credibility it is in need of. It has a direct impact on the Iraqi people who feel to be isolated from their Arab nation and possibilities of dividing them is something probable in the tone of some of the forces participating in the Iraqi political process.

No doubt, the role of the Arab League in Iraq represents a qualitative transfer for it. It is no longer just an establishment receiving news then issuing statements that denounce and condemn. It suggests to have become an effective national tool in a balanced framework. I presume that the genuine job of the Arab League is embodied in such initiatives that are considered positive and different from all negative reactions the Arabs have known about their official establishments over the past decades. I may here submit three impor-

First, I am one of those who think that Israel is the major mastermind of the American policies in the region. This includes fostering of Iraq invasion from the beginning and fabrication of the story of weapons of mass destruction. Thus it is normal for the Arab League to shoulder an essential responsibility in dealing with the Iraqi question as it is an Arab national matter not less important than the Palestinian

Second, The Kurdish fears from Arabism of Iraq becomes meaningless under openness of the Arab League towards that sisterly nationality, taking into account the joint human heritage between the Arabs and the Kurds throughout various stages of history. The greatest leader in the history of the Arabs Saladin al-Ayoubi who liberated Jerusalem from the Crusades is a Kurd.

Third, Efforts of the Arab League come in a time when there is a talk about holding an emergency Arab summit, an idea that has become dead. Now we are waiting for holding the regular annual summit, as defined the amendment adopted in 2000.

In conclusion, we want to welcome the initiative taken by the Arab League Secretary-General, deeming it a change in the traditional course of the League role. We also admit that the asset and chance of the Arab League in solving problems seems very limited. Therefore, we address the Arab mind in its awakening that has begun to reflect on steps of political reform and realization of goals related to the national security and the higher interest of the homeland. I would like to add that the efforts exerted by the Arab League will contribute to improve the image of the AL and to be added to its positives related to it throughout years. They will also be witness on Iraq's Arabism and in defense and protection of it.

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

COMMONSENSE By: Hassan Al-Haifi

The spiritual versus the mundane

he United States of America, unlike the other states that were formed out of the colonized Americas was born out of people who fled the misery and persecution unleashed upon them by their respective societies of origin and thus sought to be able to worship God Al-Mighty as they saw fit. Over time, these seekers of freedom, or their descendents were able to get together and establish a society that rested on the foundations of human rights and civil liberties. This society was soon to be copied by other "western" states and thus create a world where the mundane has taken prominence over religious beliefs and values that had withered away over the ages were compromised for a materialistic and secular existence to take thier place. Religion in western societies took on no more than eremonial renditions that almost lost significance in governing people's lives and attitudes. In fact, to a certain extent, religious and spiritual and moral inclinations almost took a back seat in the West, with emphasis given to material supremacy and the ability to attain economic superiority. This has been to a certain extent a contributing factor to allowing a 'melting pot" of people emanating from various backgrounds to come together in a cohesive regime of conformity to a system of laws and regulations that set in the appropriate means for people to interact together, but almost left moral and ethical behavior to voluntary persuasion and adherence.

On the other hand, in the East, which during the same time period, had fallen to become the resource base and markets for the rapidly advancing and demanding production and consumption oriented regimes of the West, had maintained its strong dependence on the spiritual norms that have governed the societies of the East (properly or improperly) without seeking avenues to refine these moral foundations to adapt to the rapidly changing world that the West has set for itself. Even with may of the countries of the East (Africa and Asia) under western domination for centuries sometimes, there was limited transfer of progress in the political, social and scientific spheres. Spiritual inclinations were allowed to exist as long as they did not get in the way of the imperialist power to do as it deemed fit to serve its economic and strategic interests. One might also surmise that access of the people of eastern colonies to the avenues for progress was very restricted, if it existed at all for the vast majority of the peoples in the many colonies that fell to European imperialistic controls. Therefore most of them remained in the dark and incapable of coping or keeping pace with the progress realized by their colonialist masters.

Notwithstanding all this, the people in the East still clung to their spiritual values stubbornly and as such continued to regard themselves as morally and spiritually inspired, whereas the West has lost all semblance of understanding the significance of moral and spiritual drives in a society. Having said that, it should be noted that such attachment to proper moral and spiritual decorum could not be embedded institutionally in the regimes that replaced the imperialist administrations that governed these areas of the world, because these regimes sought to imitate the West in adhering to a secular order per se, but without the proper checks and balances and controls that would guarantee the smooth functioning of these secular orders and without the ability to enforce the very laws or regulations that supposedly governed the societies under these

This is the paradox that most Moslem countries are now suffering from where the people have a very good inkling of the moral and spiritual strength of their faith, but are unable to translate such norms into the fabric of the order supposedly upheld by the ruling regimes in their country. While some of the more traditional states in these Moslem countries have managed to infuse religious and spiritual norms into the system of governance they rely upon to maintain their rule, they have set limits that would render the people behind these regimes immune to any accountability for any excessive misuse of authority.

It is not difficult to feel the strong bind between the general populations and the religious beliefs they adhere to and a Moslem could easily discern this anywhere that chance would take him/her in the Moslem World. It is also not difficult for the observer to notice that most Moslems within the general populations of Moslem countries are not at all pleased with the way the governing regimes have conducted themselves or conducted public affairs in their respective countries and many see their rulers as mere puppets of their former colonialist rulers or the new powers that have the wherewithal to impose their will on these regimes.

In such a universal context then, it is easy to understand that the inclination towards the secular would make westerners less reactive to any violations of spiritual sanctity and would even go further than that by suggesting secular norms should prevail over any spiritual sensitivities. This is not a sign of good health in a society, but rather a decadence of humanistic attachment to the Devine and a surrender to meaningless mundane illusions. On the other hand Moslems succumbing to the corruptions instituted by the prevailing regimes in their societies are finding that they are also falling short of adhering to their spiritual values and norms, by allowing incompetence and corruption to thrive in their own midst, which is contrary to true Islamic social dogma. This is what brought on the Hamas victory in Palestine, as democracy finally gave the Palestinians the chance to reflect their abhorrence for the failures of their entrusted leadership for so many years and to seek an alternative that has all along insisted on understanding their people's spiritual and moral inclinations. The pattern could easily be repeated in any country of the Moslem world today if these countries could be given the chance to enjoy real democratic elections - an unlikely hope as long as the ruling regimes insist on an eternal mandate for the suppression of

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

Independent Cultural, Economic & Political Weekly First English Newspaper in Yemen, founded in 1991 by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

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

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KSA: Saudi Distribution Co. Jeddah, Tel: 6530909 Tlx: 605350 P. O. Box: 13195 Dar Al-Sharq Printing, Publishing & Distribution Tel: 4654265, Fax: 4661865 Dar Al-Hikma Tel: 00971506589158 P. O. Box 2007

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Yemen and my mother from Bulgaria. I live in Bulgaria and study in the National Highschool for Ancient Languages and Cultures. We're been given a task from the school to write a report about a famous person from the ancient history. So I decided to write about the Queen of Sheba. I'm very interested in this celebrity, but I can't find enough information. That's why I'm asking you to send me some facts about her origin and how did she become a queen I need more information about the period she ruled, about her kingdom, her son Menelek and what happens with her after she gave birth to him, and how did she

this information Amira Al Madami amibami@abv.bg

Testing the Boundaries Nadia in her "Testing the Boundaries" editorial missed the point of Denmark's Freedom of Press laws. Why should MY or any Muslim's religious or personal boundaries apply by force to some

die. I hope you could send me

one else? Muslims say "God is Great"

Letters to the Editor and God is Highest" in our prayers, but we often act like we don't really believe it. We boycott Denmark products and make a stink over inappropriate cartoons, as if God could not protect His own name. God's Book said "God will shut the mouth of those who speak lies." We take revenge over land, insults, and money... all things temporary and destined to perish - making our selves less than honourable to others. This country has enough lies and insults in our own papers to shame us without having to dirty further our poor image overseas. Let God protect

> abujason@yahoo.com Trouble on land

> > Thave read the Common Sense section-article "Trouble on land and in the Sea" of our brother Hassan Al-Haifi with grief and sad-

and in the Sea

Himself - He will judge and

condemn. Let us just be nicer.

Ra'ed Abujason

It is truly unacceptable humanly and authoritive wise that human lives are lost so dearly and barely at the same

This situation has kept pace with the trouble in the country now and then over the past quasi two decades largely because of the increased banditry, loss of belief, principle and faith. Piracy on land and in the sea, use of drugs and thirsty of getting enriched in the crash of next soul; you name it, and it is there, whose fault? Both people and communities should loudly say on open sky: Enough IS Enough!!!

And be accountable dependable, responsible and liable of all the misacts and wrong doing that is keeping freely passing by well observed. And we are always come across atrocity and call for the International Tribune for those responsible of genocide.

Thank you brother Hassan AL-Haifi, I have being following the cases and events thousands miles and miles far from the Arabian Peninsula and the troubles waters of the Red Sea. Hope the Almighty bless the lost lives and punish the culprits.

> Hassan Abdi abdi815@yahoo.com

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emen Press Re By: Mohammed Khidhr



September weekly, organ of the Yemen Armed Forces, 9 Feb.

Main headlines

- During his meeting with U.U., U.K., German and Dutch ambassadors to Yemen, President Saleh praises the American and European support for democracy and development in Yemen. "We call for an international participation to oversee the upcoming local and presidential elections. All political forces are to take part in electoral process for free elections"
- European support for Yemen accession to the World Trade Organization
- Economic conference discusses investment opportunities in Aden, end of March
- New stage of cooperation with Kuwait - Yemen and Morocco sign 14 and protocols agreements cooperation
- Investigation with elements accused of negligence completed, Hunting down runaway al-Qaeda elements continues,
- escape was through a 44-meter tunnel - The UN, EU and OIC condemn cartoons offending the Messenger Mohammed, FM al-Qirbi: Yemen-Islamic-European consultations, Solana in Jeddah Monday
- Information Ministry cancels three newspapers licenses for violation of publication rules, Yemen Observer newspaper denies accusations against it, demanding impartial investigation

The newspaper's editorial discusses the freedom of expression and opinion, saying their boundaries end at the point of exceeding others freedom; individuals, groups and nations. The worst of all violations of this freedom is that of impinging on sanctities and beliefs of faith. Respect of them expresses the comprehension of religious and cultural

Publication of some images offending the Prophet Mohammed by some western newspapers, beginning by the Danish newspaper, promotes the concept of civilizations conflict that some western thinkers have propagated after the end of the cold war describing it as something inevitable especially between the western and eastern civilizations, particularly the Islamic civilization. The aim behind publication of those cartoons is the creation of non-existing enmity between the Islamic world and the west and to emphasize that there is a difference in value and culture between those two

worlds, taking the form of conflict between two civilizations, which is untrue. This is really promoted by extremists seeking for inflaming conflict and instigating rancor in the souls and between civilizations and cultures.

No doubt, the freedom of opinion and democracy does not mean offense and encroachment of sanctities of a nation that spread the values of justice, respect of human freedom and safeguarding his dignity and contributed in building the civilization with science and knowledge.



Annas weekly, 6

Main headlines

- Large number of escapees from al-Qaeda organization and al-Houthi supporters arouses suspicions
- Clinical death of the parliament because of the speaker" illness and the president's objection to the new parliament's bill
- JMP in Rima demands investigation with the corrupt in the governorate
- Security man and officials represent Sana'a University students in Youth Festival in Cairo
- Father kills his son under pretext of poverty

Writer Nasser Yahya says in his article it is a bad fortune for those who justify offenses against the Prophet of Islam by the freedom of opinion and expression because no one believes in that. They themselves are certain that when such freedom touches the Zionists and their old and new superstitions, those freedoms melt like wax on fire.

What deserves the study most are the popoular reactions hat confirmed anew that this nation does not die. It may become weak or be preoccupied in other things from its great goals but the torch of good remains live and aglow in the hearts.

Whatever the nature of the end of this crisis, this mass uprising in the Islamic and Arab societies has very important indications. It is a future stock that will be for the nation's issues. The movement of boycotting the Danish goods has revealed that the Islamic and Arab boycott could be an effective peaceful weapon. It has also affirmed the importance of the unified stance, both Islamic and Arab, as well as official and popular. In order not to expose those protests and popular stances to international relations negatives affecting government decisions, it is better for the Arab and Islamic regimes to officially keep aloof of popular protest and

boycotting movements and could suffice themselves to verbal protests and summoning ambassadors or any of diplomatic acts. In this way there would not be a western hypocrite able to accuse Arab and Islamic regimes of being dictatorial and oppressive regarding freedoms or threaten to sue those regimes with the World Trade Organization.

I wish these movements of protest and boycotting are to be accompanied by holding conferences and symposiums on superstition of the holocaust and its exaggerated lies. It would be also preferable to put posters on walls of western embassies refuting the Zionists lies on the holocaust.



Al-Mithaq weekly, organ of the General People's Congress (GPC), 6 Feb. 2006.

Main headlines

- GPC Higher Committee The emphasizes the necessity of adhering to constitution and the law in all stages of the elections
- The Lebanese International University opens a branch in Yemen
- Trial of 14 persons plotted to assassinate Yemeni personalities and foreign citizens
- Industry and Trade Ministry: Yemen market affected by rise in world prices, some merchants is exploiters

Columnist Dr Abdulaziz al-Maqaleh writes an article on Bush's one-dimension democracy saying the white House and its administration promotes a kind of democracy void of principles and values. It is merely slogans similar to the lies that have deceived some people for some time but cannot deceive all people for all the time. The response of the White House to the free democratic elections in Palestine is the best evidence on that.

The Palestinian legislative elections took place with the presence of tens of international observers, especially the former American president Jimmy Carter. All have witnessed they were free and decent elections that realized ambition of the majority opinion. The international community and America in particular should have admitted the right of the winner in running the governance even if its stands do not satisfy some parties. However, the White House refuses to recognize these elections results because it believes in a special kind. It should be a democracy in agreement with its goals. If peoples behaved unlike the desire of the White House and its administration and chose according to their freedom those who they want to rule them, then the democracy would not be acceptable and has no place on the agenda of the new world order.

Hamas

Movement

Undoubtedly, the conditions and criteria the American administration put for application of its special democracy, would constitute many problems for this administration and the world and the peoples. Those peoples who have suffered much in their longing to the right democracy where nothing can control but the will of peoples and balloting boxes. No one has ever thought that democracy as a political and social value will one day be a goal to appease his international power or that. It is meant for establishment of justice and achievement of peoples' dreams and deliverance from nightmares of dictatorships. It seems the type of democracy the White House exports oppressively to will deform the genuine democracy and makes many peoples sty away from.



Main headlines

- Aden University pensions professors
- Prospects of tempestuous session of the YSP central committee
- Qahtan, head of the political office of Islah party: The way to change is through decent elections run by impartial commission
- Preparatory meetings for the Yemeni-Saudi Coordination Council concluded
- Saudi ambassador to Washington; Yemeni security will return the escapes
- Education profession union to stage an

By: Mohammed Hatem al-Qadhi mhalqadhi@hotmail.com An appeal for

Messenger.

verybody has been following the consequences of the controversy of the ple take to the streets and call for Prophet Mohammed carreform and democracy, putting an end toons published by to authoritarian regimes that have been Danish newspaper Jyllands Posten and some other European newspapers. In ized by Muslims worldwide were fine and displayed their anger. This was okay. These people had the right to

Our stance

depends on U.S.

directives

open nationwide strike in March

Writer Arif al-Dhurgham says the

hysterical campaign a Danish newspaper

had started for offending the great Prophet

Mohammed and was followed by other

newspapers in France, Norway, Spain and

others western countries reflects a hidden

hatred against Islam, the Muslims and

their Messenger. It is especially so after

the Islam has become a world religion

At last the west has taken off its mask

and showed the real face of the western

democracy and the west has unveiled its

enmity towards Islam and Muslims. It has

not given a hoot to the principle of

peaceful coexistence with religions or

what they call dialogue of religions. The

crusade tendency has now controlled the

spread to Europe and the west.

the beginning, peaceful protests organshout and protest against the prophet Mohammed caricatures. Their argument was stronger and was heard. But later, these protests turned to chaos and a mob never serving the cause of the angry masses. Wise people can never accept the

destruction and damage of the Danish and Norwegian embassies in Tehran, Damascus and Beirut. This is not a proper representation of one's anger. People should not lose their nerves and behave in a mad way. Crazy people moved by passion and sentiments can defend just causes. Undoubtedly, there are people who love fostering hostilities, starting and fueling fires everywhere. Voices calling for confrontation and clashes between civilizations try to use such moments to widen the gap between nations simply to justify their beliefs in violence and killing.

I believe some of these demonstrations were motivated politically and revoked. We know well that in some of these Arab countries, the tyrannical regimes do not even allow people to speak or voice their concerns, let alone organize protests. In other words, these regimes have found this a chance to drive people away from the real political and economic challenges. The people are suffering all kinds of oppression and face severe economic hardships. Yet, they can never take to the streets and protest against them. Public opinion in some Muslim countries has been mobilized by unwise state-run media. Political parties have begun competing with each other in protesting the cartoons and pushing people to the streets, instead of calming them and calling for peace and dialogue. This is not a demonstration of religious passion or anger, but maneuvers meant to serve only political purposes. We all have been angered by the cartoons, but

dialogue and tolerance not to the extent of fermenting violence and destruction of everything Danish or Norwegian. Can these peo-

leaders

western mentality after they have seen

that the religion of Islam is spreading

they believe in, it is embodied by insulting

and offending others and their religions,

particularly the religion of Islam. This is

not the first time the west attacks Islam

but rather came as continuation of a series

of offenses and enmity gradually

The boycotting of Danish goods is the

simplest means of exerting Arab and

Muslims pressure on this country and

those followed its suit. Stepping up the

boycott must continue even if it led to

sever the diplomatic relations with those

countries in defense of our great

SILVER

revealing itself against this religion.

This is the freedom and democracy

everywhere in the world.

in power for decades? What happened in Syria, Lebanon and Iran can never help establish understanding between Muslim and Western countries. Rather, it establishes more stereotypical images people have about us as violent and savage people. This comes at a time when more efforts are needed to clarify this image drawn mainly after the September 11 U.S. terrorist attacks. This is not a call to forget about these insulting cartoons, but we can protest them through democratic and peaceful channels. We should be responsible and behave in accordance with the law.

I was happy watching a BBC debate between a Jyllands Posten journalist and a leading Muslim cleric in Denmark. It was a wonderful argument where the mind and reason were present. The Muslim cleric completely objected to the mob demonstrations in some Muslim countries and openly said such acts will never help the cause of Danish Muslims who were angered by the prophet Mohammed caricatures, noting how important it is to defuse tensions. He called for a realistic and rational debate with Danish people to explain to them what it means to Muslims to abuse religious institutions and symbols. This is complete wisdom and rationality that can lead to fruitful results.

I believe the world community now needs more understanding, tolerance and reason so as to live together in peace and harmony. Western society does not know much about Islam and Muslims, except stereotypes of some for which we are to be responsible. I think one advantage of this big controversy is drawing attention toward the need for dialogue and debate in sorting out misunderstandings between Muslims and the West. Now that the Danish and Norwegian newspapers have apologized to Muslims for such caricatures, people should calm down. The voice of debate should be stronger than that of confrontation, don't you

Build bridges, don't burn them

By: Alex Hansen

negative correlation between radical and fundamentalist views and consensus-building is well documented. The ability to reach out and dialogue is essential in an effort to find common ground.

Lack of the same seems characteristic of the current situation which, in the wake of the published prophet Mohammed drawings, has sparked a worrying uprise around the Middle East and beyond. The opinion expressed in this paper by Hassan Al-Haifi is a clear example. It is easy to see it as an opportunity to further a political agenda.

is important to be well-informed, use several sources of information, evaluate their validity, etc. - journalism basics which should not be necessary to tell an experienced writer. When information is used on a selective basis to drive a political agenda and fit a specific viewpoint, it instantly loses its credibility.

The drawings were published September 30, 2005, and the current situation can be attributed to a lot of spin. In Denmark, Abu Laban, the religious leader and centerpiece in the ordeal, has made an important contribution to the conflict by making contradicting statements in the Danish and Arabic press,

respectively. He plays with the advan-kilometers away more than four months To get a balanced view of matters, it tage that not many people in Denmark ago. understand his Arabic statements and not many people in Muslim parts of the world understand Danish.

Publishing the 12 images was probably undoubtedly an offensive act. But does it justify the acts of vandalism against Western European properties (including countries with absolutely no involvement other than being located suspiciously close to Denmark on a world map) in several Muslim-dominated countries around the globe? It seems disproportionate when Muslims kill each other in demonstrations in Afghanistan or Sudan over illustrations published in a newspaper thousands of

My best guess is that Muslim anger runs deeper and goes beyond the drawings. Such anger may or may not be justifiable. But the road to mutual understanding goes though conversation not confrontation. It is time to turn the page, sit down around the table, clarify the issues and move on.

As for Al-Haifi's specific knowledge of what led to the images' publication in Jyllands Posten, the column illustrates all too well that he lacks information. But in the spirit of finding common ground, let's not go there.

Alex Hansen is a Danish journalist



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Italian delegation: Yemeni medical personnel need training

By: Amel Mohammed Al-Ariqi amel11ariqi@yahoo.com

l-Jumhori Hospital in Sana'a is considered one of the largest hospitals in Yemen, daily receiving thousands of patients, accident victims and emergency cases from various governorates and regions. The hospital recently hosted an Italian delegation of eight doctors and surgeons of varying specialties. They stayed at the hospital six days, performing many surgeries and diagnosing many patients.

Since the medical state at Al-Jumhori Hospital mostly reflects the medical state of many government hospitals, the Yemen Times interviewed delegation members about their experiences during their time there.

Bilateral cooperation

Delegation head, Professor Paola Leponelli, explained the reason behind their visit to Al-Jumhori Hospital, Yemeni medical coordinator, Dr. Hathim Al-Murdhi, to visit the hospital. After a while, we came up with the idea of establishing bilateral cooperation between Al-Jumhori Hospital and the hospitals we represent in Rome."

According to Leponelli, this cooperation will concentrate on providing Al-Jumhori with experts, training, medical equipment and rehabilitation of the hospital's medical personnel.

He pointed out that Yemen's medical state needs support and aid. "It is clear that Yemen's medical state needs help, so we hope such cooperation will not be centralized only between the hospitals, but will expand to become official cooperation between our government and Yemen's government."

Randomness and lack of knowledge

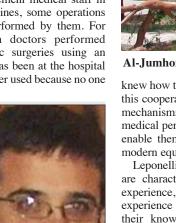
Leponelli described the hospital's inner working mechanism as semi-random. "There is no arranged mechanism inside the hospital to receive patients. There is

saying, "We received a request from no way to link the patient with his or her doctor," he wondered.

Such randomness negatively affects the hospital's service level. "We will do our best with our government and our medical administration to develop this cooperation to reflect upon the hospital's achievement and service level," he said.

Leponelli referred to the existence of some medical equipment that has been in the hospital for years, however no one uses them, no one knows how to use them and no one knows the purpose of their existence at the hospital. On other hand, some departments lack tools and equipment.

According to Leponelli the surgeries performed by the Italian team were not rare or difficult; however, due to lack of experience by Yemeni medical staff in using such machines, some operations could not be performed by them. For example, Italian doctors performed many endoscopic surgeries using an instrument that has been at the hospital for a year but never used because no one



Luigi Lorido: Yemeni gynecologists, lack medical facilities and equipment. Sometimes there are no surgical gloves or threads."



Leponelli: We seek to implement mechanisms to improve the abilities of medical personnel inside the hospital to enable them to use medical tools and modern equipment."



Lombardi: "Providing the hospital with skilled human personnel able to use such techniques, besides financial support to buy such instruments, are the main things to generalize in the





Referring to the skills of Yemeni

gynecologists, Lorido said, "Whatever

they undertake, they lack medical

facilities and equipment. Sometimes

there are no surgical gloves or threads."

Last Thursday Al-Jumhori Hospital and

the Italian delegation representing

Italian hospitals Sant'eugenio and the

Traumatic Orthopedic Center (CTO)

Al-Jumhori Hospital in Sana'a receives thousands of patients daily.

sharply reduced."

Protocols

knew how to use it. "Therefore, through this cooperation, we seek to implement mechanisms to improve the abilities of medical personnel inside the hospital to enable them to use medical tools and modern equipment."

Leponelli said the hospital's doctors are characterized by good talent and experience, however they need more experience and they need to develop their knowledge of what is new in medicine. "In this regard, we are thinking of preparing training courses for hospital medical personnel. These courses could be in Italy or at Al-Jumhori Hospital, under Italian professors' supervision," he added.

General surgeon professor Marco Lombardi referred to the new technique of using an endoscope by which many operations can be performed easily. "By using this technique, patients who were supposed to sleep in hospital beds for 10 days can now go home after two days," he asserted. "This technique means less pain and fast recovery," he added.

Lombardi confirmed that such a technique can be generalized in all surgical departments. "Providing the hospital with skilled human personnel able to use such techniques, besides financial support to buy such instruments, are the main things to generalize in the hospital."

Family doctors and suffering women Leponelli noted that there is no "family doctor or neighborhood doctor" in

Yemen. The patient arrives at the hospital suffering a lot of pain due to his advanced condition. "To protect from disease in any society, medicines and A hospital like Al-Jumhori is supposed to be for emergency cases."

According to Leponelli, because Al-Jumhori is a government hospital, its medical personnel treat patients for free, which causes increased numbers of patients. "Huge numbers of patients arrive at the hospital, there are huge pressures and limited facilities and all that creates a state of mass confusion," he said. "We [doctors] feel sorry for the poor patients," he added.

Gynecology specialist Dr. Luigi Lorido described the medical state of Yemeni women as "very serious and difficult." He said there are many advanced cases whose diagnoses were very late. "Most female patients I diagnosed were experiencing uterine tumors at 30 or 35 years old," he noted.

He affirmed that such diseases are not found among European women under age 40. "My advice to Yemeni women is to do regular testing, like taking a sample from the tumor and measuring the hormone level to avoid such a serious problem." According to Lorido, such tumors are treated easily and at minimal cost if discovered early.

He pointed to the problem of Yemeni tradition and costume that make it difficult for women to do regular medical testing, particularly with male doctors. "There is no awareness by Yemeni women of the importance of such tests. We experienced this problem 50 years ago in Italy, but we started to launch awareness campaigns through media, seminars and lectures. We established a health system to educate Italian women. Many women shared in raising the awareness of other women. Therefore, the tumors' rate in Italian women has been remarkably and

signed a protocol for medical cooperation. It includes 33 annual scholarships for Al-Jumhori medical personnel to receive training in Italy and aims to connect Al-Jumhori with Italy's

largest hospitals.

Moreover, it states that Italian hospitals will receive Al-Jumhori's incurable cases for medical procedures. The protocol also aims to have Italian medical teams conduct medical operations at Al-Jumhori.

UNDP Project on Strengthening National Human Rights Capacity Terms of Reference Project Manager – Gender Equality Activities

Position : Project Manager – Gender Equality Activities **Project Title** : Strengthening National Capacity in Human Rights

: YEM/03/006/34/A Project No. **Budget Line**

: 12 months **Duration**

Background:

The UNDP Project for Strengthening National Human Rights Capacity (hereinafter referred to as the Project) aims at strengthening national capacity (both governmental and non-governmental) to promote, protect, and respect human rights in Yemen. The promotion and protection of human rights is a commitment professed by the Government in its Constitution, international obligations and the many organs that have been created for that specific objective. A new Human Rights Ministry has been created to oversee the realization of this objective. The main objectives of the project

- To strengthen the national institutional capacity to advance, in a meaningful way, protection and promotion of human rights through fulfillment of international obligations mainstreaming human rights into national
- To strengthen the capacity of civil society to enable it to develop its advocacy and networking skills for promoting and defending human rights.

A new and substantial component on women's human rights has been added to the UNDP Project. The services of a Yemeni gender specialist with the ability to function in both Arabic and English is needed to manage activities under this new component..

Expected results:

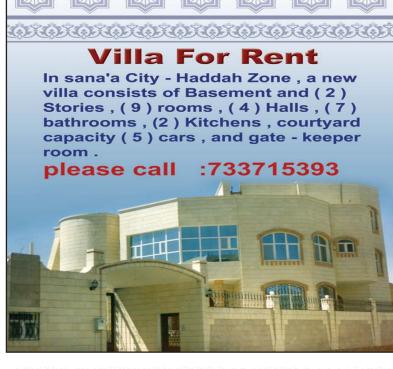
The provision of technical assistance and support to MHR, UNDP Project and other partners on women's rights and gender equality and management of UNDP Project gender activities.

Specific Tasks: Under the direct supervision of the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) of the Human Rights Project, the gender equality project manager will undertake the following specific tasks:

- Develop comprehensive work plans for gender activities under the Human Rights Project;
- Supervise the implementation of gender activities under the Human Rights Project;
- Prepare first drafts of reports (both financial and narrative) for donors;
- Provide advise to the CTA and the rest of the Human Rights Project Team with regard gender equality and women's human rights;
- Supervise the activities of the designated project assistance;
- Undertake any other tasks assigned by the CTA.

- Possess a master's degree in social sciences, preferably women studies and human rights are assets Human rights experience/knowledge is an asset
- Excellent command of the English and Arabic languages.
- Excellent Communication and writing skills (in both languages).
- Proficiency in major computer software (Microsoft Word, Excel and Power Point), database use and development, and advanced Internet search engine tools.
- Minimum of 5 years of experience in project management (preferably UNDP's) and gender activities.













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It is time to open the National Museum

By: Yemen Times Staff

t is remarkable that Yemen's National Museum has been closed to the public for nearly three years. Although there are other museums in Sana'a such as the Military Museum and the Popular Heritage Museum, it is the National Museum that cherishes within it an archeological collection best reflecting Yemen's glorious history. It is this country's landmark, containing its treasures, promoting its tourism and contributing to its national income. Previously a palace of Yemen's Imam, the National Museum with its attractive exhibits introduces Yemen to foreigners.

Closed for maintenance

"I wish I could open it this month, but the decision is not mine," museum director Abdulaziz Al-Gendari said.

He described renovation and maintenance works to which he attributed the three-year shutdown. He particularly noted that building a warehouse was the real reason behind the museum's inaccessibility.



Abdulaziz Al-Gendari



The National Museum in Sana'a.

"We built a seven-meter-deep underground warehouse. That took about three years while other renovations only began in 2004. The problem lay in digging the warehouse, which isolated the museum and prevented visitors from coming in," Al-Gendari said.

However, one might question the time spent, even if such a warehouse has the following specifications. It is equipped with fire-proof walls, armored doors, central ventilation and high-tech surveillance devices, as well as emergency pumps in case of flooding. It also can accommodate more than a million archeological finds and contains a safe for the most precious pieces.

Because the warehouse was built in front of the museum's main building, it prevented visitor entry. Its roof, which is the museum's front yard, was paved with stones in a way facilitating smooth visitor movement. Thanks to renovation, wheelchair-bound disabled citizens also may now visit the museum as there are suitable passages, as well as an elevator to all floors.

Warehouse construction and the yard were financed by the Social Fund for Development while remaining renovations were financed by the Heritage and Culture Development Fund, a body of the Ministry of Culture

Finished but not open

The perplexing issue is that although the maintenance work is finished, the museum has not opened officially. "On Jan. 21, we were directed by the head of the General Authority for Antiquities and Museums to allow tourist groups into the museum. A considerable number of tourists have visited the museum and are pleased Al-Gendari Nevertheless, he cannot predict when the museum will open to all visitors, but "I hope it will open this month."

He further described other renovation and maintenance work to the museum which he thinks has

appealing.
"We restructured and redesigned the

museum building, restoring old halls and making new ones and supplying them with extra archeological pieces. On the ground floor, we redesigned the interior and furnished it with a new collection of Yemeni scriptures written in ancient Musnad Yemeni script. Engraved in the plough style, i.e., from right to left, then left to right and so on, the scripts are sacrificial and were presented to ancient Yemeni deities. Some date back to the seventh century B.C., while others date to the sixth century B.C.," Al-Gendari explained.

First floor renovations to the pre-Islamic section include adding two new halls for the Hadramawt Kingdom and for pre-Islamic archeological gifts given to President Saleh. The level's remaining halls were supplied artifacts according to their specialties.

Two halls also were constructed for Yemeni coins and for illumination, featuring pre-electric means such as traditional candlesticks, oil lamps, lanterns, etc.

Additional renovations include adding two halls to the Popular Heritage section, the first for Yemeni architecture, featuring many types of traditional Yemeni architectural models such as that of the Old City of Sana'a. The section's second new hall is dedicated to ornaments worn head to toe by Yemeni women.

No historical superiority

Al-Gendari personally does not believe any one artifact is historically more important than another.

"I am commonly asked which one is the best. I answer that any two archeological finds have equal historical importance because they give us information about history." He gave the example of a small coin which 'actually has bearing on many aspects. If it is made of gold, that tells us the state was prosperous. The date also shows the time span. If there is more than one city for minting, that shows the state's power and the areas it ruled. A coin also tells us about the king who ordered its minting," Al-Gendari explained.

Another example he cited is that of a statue which, by examining the type of attire on it, tells us about the costumes of a certain time period. "The way it was made gives us an inkling about how dexterous the people were and so on and so forth," he added.

Archeological work unstopped

According to Al-Gendari, work did not stop during the museum's closure. "Yemeni specialists restored some 1,300 archeological wood and bronze pieces. We take pride in this, as the team comprises only Yemeni nationals who have been trained locally and abroad.

"Documentation is conducted professionally and meticulously. We give every piece that comes to us an ID with a special number, a description of its dimensions, type, original location, source, etc. This information is entered into a database, which allows us to retrieve any stolen piece from anywhere in the world because we have proof that it is ours," Al-Gendari explained.

He said the museum's archeological finds exceed 25,000 and come from a variety of sources such as the two committees of the General Authority for Antiquities and Museums and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, artifacts confiscation at Yemen's exits, police seizures, state excavations and foreign expeditions who have agreements with the state.

In the end, Al-Gendari complained that Yemen has relatively few museums compared to the glamour of its history and civilization. He urged establishing more museums to better promote Yemeni culture locally and internationally.

The Sana'a-based National Museum was established in 1971 at Dar Al-Shukr, a pre-revolutionary imamate palace. It originally contained two sections for ancient antiquities and for popular heritage. In the course of its development, it came to include an Islamic artifacts division as well. As it expanded, authorities thought to transfer it to a more spacious location and consequently, it was moved to Dar Al-Sa'dah, another palace.

Translated by Edward FitzGerald Think in this batter'd caravanserai Whose doorways are alternate night and day, How sultan after sultan

The Rubaiyat of

Omar Khayyam 16

Abode his hour or two, and went his way.

with his pomp

Literary Corner By: Abu Al-Kalmah Al-Tayyibah

The Qur'an and the universe

From the Big Bang to the Great Contrition* (I)

Author: Usamah Ali Al-Khadhir

Language: Arabic Publisher: Ministry of Culture and

Year Published: 2004 No. of Pages: 833

he Qur'an is indeed one of the most phenomenal spiritual texts of all time. For one thing it is the latest of the spiritual texts that are the textbooks of faith of the three prominent monotheistic religions, the Torah (Jews), the Bible (Old and New Testament – Christians) and the Qur'an (Moslems). For another thing, the Qur'an has underwent hundreds of interpretations by Moslem and non-Moslem scholars, all of which try to decipher the vast fields that Qur'anic text cover. The powerful language of the Qur'an has also remained unaltered since its first publication during the period of the Third Orthodox Caliph, or successor to the Prophet Mohammed (Peace of Allah be upon him) some twenty years or so after the latter passed away, thus insuring its authenticity with the revealed verses delivered to the Prophet.

A French scholar (Dr. Maurice Baucaille) has previously written a remarkable comparative analysis of the Qur'an with the spiritual books of the other monotheistic faiths (See LC in Yemen Times Issues 844, 846 and 848). In that analysis, the author could not help but conclude that the Our'an indeed is consistent with most of the scientific discoveries about this universe and he could not find anything that would render the book in any way conflicting with even the most recent scientific discoveries.

The book under scrutiny here seeks to bring the Qur'an in congruence with all the physical laws and suppositions concerning the vast expanse of the universe of which, the Earth and its human dwellers represent a miniscule almost negligible combination in the limitless expanse that sometimes is called the cosmos. This includes the chemical, physical, mechanical and astronomical attributes of the world and its vast surroundings. The effort is worthy of recognition as a monumental feat by someone who has delved into the many aspects that govern the existence and continuity of the universe and our existence amidst it and is very familiar with the scientific knowledge that has accumulated about the nature of the universe since ancient times. In the Introduction the author explains his objective:

"The major purpose of this treatise is to show the full impressive consistency and conformity between the modern scientific discoveries in the various fields of physics, astronomy and cosmology and to show the miracle of Mohammed Bin Abdullah (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) in the Holy Qur'an."

Furthermore, the author explains that his motive is not to seek rationales for the irrational behavior of modern man in many spheres that govern human life, but to underscore the fact that the suffer-

Book: The Qur'an and the Universe: ing we see throughout the world and the arrogance of humankind are to a large extent due to a denial of the spiritual orientations that the Creator has laid out to help mankind regulate their existence in this tumultuous world. This stems partly from a poor understanding of the religious doctrine that has been evolving over the ages, with generations of prophets and messengers designated by the Al-Mighty to bring enlightenment to mankind and set the appropriate moral and legislative guidelines that will ensure that peace, justice and harmony are the acceptable norms of human existence. Without mankind recognizing the spiritual forces at play in our own lives and throughout the vast universe we live in, there is little chance that we will succumb to the Ultimate Being, who is responsible for making it all happen.

Thus, the author is seeking to underscore the fact that all that we are noticing in our own limited spheres and beyond the blue and black of day and night that separate us from the almost infinite number and kinds of celestial bodies of which only a very small sampling have become identifiable to our meek capacity to observe and absorb. But that such an enormous agglomeration of force, energy and matter existing and interacting in such a smooth and systematic cohesion surely warrants greater scrutiny as to their origin and intricate arrangement. For the author, relying on scientific observations of some of the greatest scientists spanning the ages of human existence, the Holy Qur'an is far beyond being simply a guide book towards the achievement of spiritual bliss. It is a phenomenal textbook of the science that we have come to know and have yet to fully explore to explain our existence and the intricacies of the universe that are necessary for such existence and continuity. Accordingly, if the universe must be subject to the Awesome Powers of the Al-Mighty to govern their existence and regulate their continuity, then surely mankind must also submit to the ordinances of their Creator, if they are to find peace and tranquility in this life. Furthermore, with the ability of the Al-Mighty to bring us into being in such a vast Cosmos of inter-celestial bodies and forces, there should be no second thoughts about the ability of God Al-Mighty to bring us about in another era of existence that has its own governing ordinances and which entail the elements of reward and punishment for mankind in terms of how they have truly been true to heart in their faith and belief in their Creator and their adherence to the sound rules and guidelines He has set for us to make our limited mundane existence a rewarding one in the here and now and in the hereafter. We start our exploration of this inter-

esting mix of the spiritual and scientific in the next issue.

* Actually the Arabic word "insihaq" could also mean "grounding" to a powder, but contrition would be more fitting with the spiritual context of the book, when we all realize that we probably missed the chance to make peace with



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Puppets: the innocent theater

"All of the arts, poetry, music, ritual, the visible arts, the theater, must singly and together create the most comprehensive art of all, a humanized society, and its masterpiece, free man." -**Bernard Berenson**

By: Mohammed Al-Jabri

puppet is a doll with a hollow head of a person or animal and a cloth body, intended to fit over the hand and be manipulated with the fingers.

The idea of puppets dates back thousands of years - nearly 2,000 years ago - as mentioned in Greek philosophy. Puppets are an artistic medium used to communicate, instruct, delight and convey messages for both entertainment and education.

Puppets are characters, not real people, and most are small and childsized. A puppet figure has a face with eyes, nose and a mouth. The puppeteer must use his hand to move them and use his voice to make them speak. So, in a puppet show, we see a character that moves and speaks, representing a hero, a villain or a tragic figure.

Puppets and children

Generally speaking, children like



Two puppet characters during a show in the Puppet Theater.

dolls and different kinds of toys with which to play. A child talks with the doll, takes care of it, laughs at it, treats it kindly or badly, walks it, puts it in bed and sleeps with it. This experience makes children love puppets the most and is why they are very much interested in puppet television series. For them, puppets can demonstrate simply what is typical of their simple natures. In puppets, they can discover what they feel, think and love. A puppet show can inculcate children with values, principles and teach them good life lessons. There are different kinds of puppets, such as marionettes, hand puppets, backlight puppets, shadow

puppets and light curtain puppets.

Puppet Theater in Yemen

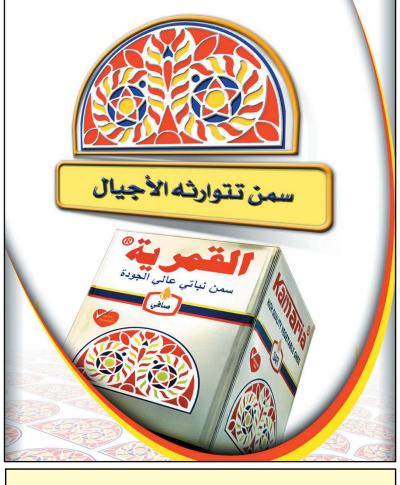
In Yemen, most families do not take notice of any type of art, including puppets, because they must look after their livelihood. Likewise, the government does not much care about children's arts and theaters either. Even in schools, the absence of puppet shows and other arts is markedly obvious. Additionally, there are no special theaters designed for puppet shows. In effect, this deprives children of demonstrating their abilities to express their feelings and improve their skills, as well as encouraging them to mix with society.

But recently, some non-governmental organizations have begun to provide for children and help them develop their talents in various arts. Ebhar PHOTO BY : EBHAR FOUNDATION

Foundation for Childhood and Creativeness is very involved with Puppet Theater and other art forms, conducting a number of workshops to train children in Puppet Theater, puppet making and drama basics.

Such a workshop was held last month, funded by UNICEF in coordination with the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood. It was part of the foundation's Puppet Theater project initiated in 2005.

Maha Naji Salah, Chairman of Ebhar Foundation, said the puppet project, in all its various phases, aims to defy violence against children on the street, at school and at home. It encourages children who are subjected to violence to express their feelings through Puppet Theater.





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