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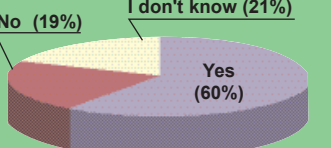
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Increased activities of Yemeni businesswomen

### Readers' Voice

Last edition's question:

A U.S. State Department human rights report exposing corruption and law violations in Yemen has raised tension among authorities. Do you think the report is true?



This edition's question:

Like other government employees, teachers complain of deteriorating living standards and skyrocketing prices. Do you think the current teachers strike will compel the government to raise their salaries?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

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# Journalists' ordeals on the rise

This week witnessed terrible assaults against journalists. Reporter Qaed Al-Tairi was kidnapped, taken to an unpopulated area outside the capital and beaten, while Al-Usbou newspaper Editor-in-Chief Jamal Al-Udaini was detained in jail. The week's events culminated with Yemeni Journalists Syndicate Chief Mahboub Ali tendering his resignation.

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, March 15 — Anonymous individuals kidnapped journalist Qaed Al-Tairi, editor of Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) mouthpiece Al-Thawri weekly, near the Iranian Medical Center in Sana'a on Saturday.

The perpetrators grabbed Al-Tairi, bundled him into a car blindfolded and took him to an area outside the capital called Wadi Thaqban, which lies between Bani Al-Harith and Hamdan. They severely beat him and left him without anyone to take him to the hos-

pital.

Al-Tairi said his abductors tortured him with electric shocks and accused him of being a secessionist and resisting the regime. He was beaten on various parts of his body including his legs, thighs and hands, with one of the perpetrators biting his finger.

The horror-stricken journalist refused to accuse any party of being behind the incident, instead holding the Interior Ministry accountable for protecting journalists.

The YSP released a statement saying Al-Tairi is a prominent opposition



Qaed Al-Tairi



Jamal Al-Udaini



Mahboub Ali

journalist and a member of the party's central committee. The statement stressed that such abuses target press freedom, oppress journalists and prevent them from doing their noble job of uncovering corruption and corrupt individuals.

According to the YSP statement, recurring kidnapping incidents against journalists and political activists impact the democratic process and political plurality. Such illegal practices may lead to the spread of terrorism, oppression and totalitarianism.

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate

(YJS) issued a statement about the attack against Al-Tairi, describing it as a flagrant crime.

It was a well-organized act implemented by professional perpetrators, indicating that the attackers were backed by official parties, Marwan Dammaj, head of the YJS Liberties Committee, said in a statement. "We are concerned about recurring attacks against journalists, which the Interior Ministry records as being committed by unknown individuals."

According to Dammaj, journalist attacks are on the rise as perpetrators

never face the consequences of their actions. Disclosing the perpetrators' identities is the Interior Ministry's task. "Since they have been attributed to anonymous individuals, attacks on journalists are on the rise. Al-Nihar Managing editor Haje' Al-Jihafi , Al-Wasat editor Jamal Amer and many other journalists were subjected to assaults, but no perpetrator stood trial," Dammaj noted. He added the Interior Ministry is concerned with investigating such cases, disclosing perpetrators' identities and transferring them to the judiciary.

The Information Ministry, for which Al-Tairi works, issued a statement condemning the attack on him and demanding the perpetrators be identified.

The YJS also expressed curiosity at the continued closure of Al-Usbou weekly newspaper despite the fact that, under the verdict issued against it last December; the legal closing period has ended. The newspaper was shut down for criticizing a capital education office manager.

*Continued on page 2*

## Technical education employees stage sit-in

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori

SANA'A, March 15 — Technical and training education employees and teachers staged a sit-in Tuesday, March 13 at the Industrial Institute in Sana'a due to lack of response by authorities to their demands for improving their status and not implementing the wages and salaries law. The sit-in came within 10 days of the employees' earlier strike.

Mohamed Yahya Al-Hakeem, head of the Technical Employees Syndicate, explained that the reason for the strike was deteriorating situations of technical education employees. He pointed

out that following last July's rise in petroleum derivatives prices, food-stuffs, rent, water and electric bills, medicine and all necessities prices also increased, whereas salaries only increased 5-10 percent. He said some of the sector's employees didn't receive any increase, adding that the matter exerted more stress upon employees and rendered them unable to do their duties.

Al-Hakeem said the syndicate moved earlier in September, warning that teachers' situations were deteriorating and they may not be able to carry out their duties. He explained that these

were the reasons leading to the sit-in, warning that it may continue for a long time unless their demands are met quickly. He added that they are ready to cease the sit-in if their demands are fulfilled.

Among syndicate demands is halting cancellation of incentives and threats to allowances, letting them continue as a work allowance, as stipulated in Article 30 of the wage law. They also demand transferring education employees and assigning them to corresponding grades according to law and their working years. They also call for fair treatment for experienced technical education

employees with no scientific qualifications, whose experience is equivalent to those obtaining high posts due to their qualifications. They rank from 15 - 20 in the government job ladder.

They also demand the wage structure be restructured so it caters to differences between commencement and end of wages; the government live up to its commitment to implement the law according to determined phases in a limited time, the maximum wage be eight times the minimum, as according to law, and allowances be offered as fixed legal rights.

*Continued on page 2*

## Opposition journalist runs for presidential elections

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, March 13 — Journalist and writer Rasheeda Al-Qaily last Monday nominated herself as a new woman candidate for the upcoming Yemeni presidential elections. She is offering herself as a Yemeni woman intellectual concerned about woes of her people and shares with them pains of their suffering and as a hope for realization of their aspirations, the statement of her nomination mentioned last Friday.

"Out of my faith I my national duty as a Yemeni intellectual I declare myself candidate for the president post in the coming presidential elections."

In her nomination statement Ms Al-Qaily said she was proceeding from the following:

1- In participation in rescuing the course of the republican system, which has become threatened by whims of despotism caused by the ruling family that is handling Yemen's riches I an absolute way, that situation that rendered Yemen as a republic in the outward form and monarchic in essence. He ruling authority is heading forward on the course of bequeathing governance at all possible levels.

2- In contribution to salvage the course of the unity that united all the people of Yemen. However the ruing despotism changed it into a destruction instrument aimed at any existing entity



Rasheeda Al-Qaily

by following the policy of divide and rule and running the country through crises, until fragmentation has reached the souls and feelings. The voices calling for secessionism, sectarianism and regionalism have almost reached the degree of explosion.

3- In contribution to saving the track of democracy whose margin is narrowing and the ruling authority has begun giving its blessing national certificate to whomever extols it and turns blind eye on its mismanagement or to whomever keeps silent against wrongs and prefers personal safety to the safety of the homeland.

The nominee Ms Al-Qaily has therefore called on all the good and the free persons in the country to join forces to rectify the situation.

*Continued on page 2*

## Suspect released, Yemen-KSA Al-Qaeda link disclosed

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A — The Specialized State Security Penal Court acquitted Karama Khamis Monday, March 13. Khamis was freed from the U.S. detention center in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, but Prosecution appealed his release, charging him with drug trafficking.

Two days prior to U.S. troop arrivals in Afghanistan in 2001, Khamis gave himself in pledge to an Afghan drug trafficker. The pledge was in return for 50,000 Saudi Riyals, increased to 100,000 Saudi Riyals upon the deal's completion. Khamis brought 2 million Saudi Riyals worth of drugs into Yemen.



Two of the 17 suspects accused of being of Jordanian Al-Zarqawi group.

PHOTO BY FOUAD AL-HARAZI

After three years' imprisonment at Guantanamo, Yemeni authorities received Khamis in mid-2004. However, he proved to be neither an Al-Qaeda nor a Taliban member. Pakistani troops captured him and

handed him over to the U.S.

In a separate case, the court released Ghalib Al-Zaidi on commercial bail. Al-Zaidi was accused of hiding Mohamed Hamdi Al-Ahdal, Al-Qaeda's number two man in Yemen.

Following the USS Cole attack in Aden, Al-Ahdal hid in Al-Zaidi's house for a month and then in Al-Jawf until his December 2003 capture in Sana'a.

Al-Zaidi's release followed his defense attorney's demand, which stated that he should be released as he had served three years in prison for hiding the first suspect in his house in Sirwah district in Marib. Defense added that Article 190 of the penal law stipulates that whoever hides a suspect should be fined or imprisoned no more than three years.

The court also held a hearing on testimony involving Al-Ahdal nicknamed Abu-Asim. The Attorney General confirmed that Al-Ahdal traveled to Afghanistan and Bosnia and collected money for mujahideen in Chechnya. He was accused of collecting money in Yemen for Chechen fighters under the name of the Caucasus Charitable Society. Prosecution said Al-Ahdal trained in various types of heavy and small weaponry in Pakistan and Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

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## Yemeni fishermen at risk from piracy

By: Amel Al-Ariqi

SANA'A, March 14 — According to the Ministry of Defense's 26 September web site, Yemen's Coast Guard continues searching for a boat (Alzhra) carrying 12 Yemeni fishermen who disappeared two weeks ago. There has been no contact with the boat since March 3 when it was 158 miles from Abdul Kori Island, part of Socotra, a small archipelago in the Indian Ocean off the Horn of Africa.

Ali Ahmed Al-Shiba, director of the Union of Fishing Cooperation, said, "These fishermen's lives are at risk due to food and water shortage."

Yemen's navy has intensified its security measures to protect Yemeni fishermen from potential piracy in the Socotra islands. According to the web site, measures were intensified after Somali pirates kidnapped Yemeni fishing boats and their fishermen on a fishing journey in Yemeni territorial waters near Abdul Kori Island.

"Our Coast Guard and marine forces are on the alert to take necessary action against such piracy," Foreign and Migrant Affairs Minister Abubakr Al-Qirbi said in a news report.

IRIN news service quoted Al-Qirbi as saying that continued piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea is threatening Yemen's fishing industry. "Sea piracy is threatening the stability of the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea," he said.

He also said pirates represent a threat to both tourist cruises and international shipping in the region. "Our problem is the threat they pose to our fishermen as well and their role in trafficking people, drugs and weapons," he added.

Yemen's Saba state news agency recently quoted a Yemeni official as say-



The fishing sector is a major source of employment in Yemen.

ing that Somali pirates abducted 50 fishermen from four boats off Yemen's Abdul-Kori Island on Monday, March 6.

In a statement to Saba, Salim Awadh Misdad, head of Socotra's Fisheries Ministry office, said a source in the Abdul Kori fishery cooperative informed him by telephone that the fishermen were abducted off the island while fishing.

The 26 September web site said 20 fishing boats out of 83 seized by Somali pirates in recent weeks have been freed. But Al-Qirbi said that as some fishermen are released, others are kidnapped.

"Although none of the fishermen were harmed, pirates confiscated their property, including their boats," Al-Qirbi added.

He referred to the fact that Yemen's government already has brought up the matter with Somalia's interim government and influential groups in autonomous regions of the war-torn country, such as Puntland and the self-declared Republic of Somaliland.

Yemen's government requested the

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) intervene to secure the abducted fishermen's release.

"We received an official request from the Yemeni Foreign Ministry to follow the fishermen's case," confirmed Martin Amacher, head of the ICRC delegation to Yemen in Sana'a. "As we aren't in a position to do that from here, our colleagues in Nairobi are following up the case," he added.

After petroleum, the fishing sector is the biggest source of foreign currency, contributing about \$210 million to the Yemeni economy in 2004. The industry is also a major source of employment for the country's poor, especially those inhabiting coastal areas.

According to 2004 Ministry of Fisheries statistics, the fishing sector provided 316,000 job opportunities; 65,000 job opportunities for fishermen and 250,000 for those working in marketing and other fishing industry activities. Workers in this sector provide for 1.7 million people, that is 8.6 percent of Yemen's population.

## FAO: the number of people suffering hunger has increased

SANA'A, March 15 — Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Director-General Jacques Diouf exposed that despite global commitments affirmed at the 2000 Millennium Summit to eliminate hunger and achieve sustainable food security for all, there were 852 million malnourished people in the world in 2000-2002, including 815 million in developing countries, 28 million in countries in transition and nine million in industrialized countries.

"If this trend continues, only South America and the Caribbean will achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The goal of halving the number of people suffering hunger will only be achieved by 2150," Diouf said in a speech delivered Wednesday at the FAO 28th Near East Regional Conference (NERC).

According to World Food Summit targets, Diouf said the Near East region was to reduce its number of malnourished people from 73 million in 1990-1992 to 55 million in 2000-2002 and then to 34 million by 2015.

Regrettably, the number of people suf-

fering hunger and malnutrition increased from 73 million in 1990-1992 to approximately 100 million in 2000-2002. The proportion of malnourished people rose from 13 percent to approximately 15 percent of the total population during the same period.

"Unless strong measures are taken to reverse this alarming trend, particularly through massive agricultural investment, the number of people suffering hunger in the region could reach 143 million by 2015," Diouf said.

Diouf concluded his speech saying that several Near East countries face serious food shortages largely attributable to internal conflicts, unfavorable weather conditions and earthquakes, as is the case in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Sudan. He said some countries also have had to deal with invasion of desert locusts.

NERC concludes its sessions today in Sana'a. The conference began Sunday, March 11 with a meeting for the 23 member countries' senior agricultural officials, in addition to observational members and international organizations.

Members discussed several topics including strengthening regional cooperation in controlling Trans-boundary Animal Diseases — particularly the means to fight bird flu diseases, positive and negative impacts of genetic crops, Near East region fisheries and drought mitigation.

Senior agricultural officials concluded their three-day session Tuesday, March 14, approving reports with recommendations to be presented the following day to the ministerial conference, launched in the presence of Prime Minister Abdul Qadir Bajammal and Diouf.

Bajammal highlighted financial and technical support FAO can offer Yemen, especially in preparing studies and research on increasing productivity, quality, marketing and fighting trans-border epidemics, in addition to enhancing FAO's role in Yemen.

He also expressed Yemen's appreciation for FAO support during the last period, pointing to the importance of increasing such support in the upcoming period, particularly on the technical side to achieve the two sides' common goals.

### Continued from page 1

## Journalists' ordeals on the rise

The YJS demanded the Press and Publications Prosecution initiate necessary procedures to allow the newspaper's reopening, expressing great concern over exploiting the law to shut down newspapers, which results in unexpected material damages.

The YJS released a statement denouncing Al-Usbou Editor-in-Chief Jamal Hassan Al-Udaini's detention at the West Capital Prosecution on a charge of breaking the newspaper's lock.

"We never knew who put the red wax

on the newspaper's door," Al-Udaini said. "I was summoned to the police station on Tuesday and the following day, I was transferred to the Press and Publication Prosecution.

He continued, "I then was taken from the Prosecution to the West Capital Court where I was interrogated about breaking the red wax put on the newspaper's lock. I was released on bail and I returned on Saturday to be jailed for four hours."

### YJS chief tenders his resignation

In a letter to his colleagues, Yemeni Journalists Syndicate Chief Mahboub Ali resigned Sunday due to health reasons.

Ali wrote, "Due to my deteriorating health hampering me from remaining in the post I have occupied since 1999 via two election rounds, it gives me honor to vacate the post for a new face. I am grateful to everyone in the syndicate for cooperating with me for the sake of establishing pillars of the noble profession (journalism) of which we are proud."

## Technical education employees stage sit-in

The syndicate issued a Nov. 8, 2005 statement asking technical and vocational education employees to wear red badges Nov. 8-15 and begin a partial strike Nov. 15 to Dec. 1. A sit-in in front of the Cabinet was staged in cooperation with the teachers' syndicate.

According to promises the syndicates obtained from a committee formed by the Cabinet, the end of January was the deadline for resolving teachers' problems. Strike activities were suspended until the first term ended, but promises were not fulfilled, so employees resumed striking January 21.

The Ministry of Civil Services and

technical education representatives signed a memorandum to suspend the strike until Feb. 25. Nothing in the memorandum was fulfilled, so the syndicate ordered the comprehensive strike's resumption from March 4 until all demands are fulfilled. In a syndicate statement, employees hold authorities accountable for all results of the strike.

Syndicate General Secretary Abdurrahman Al-Sanhani explained that the strike drew authorities' attention to take care of technical education employees and teachers. They said they do not like striking, but they were forced to because teachers' status was not improved according to the law.

Jamilah, a teacher at the institute,

said the strike is a message to authorities to live up to their commitments and improve teachers' status like that of Ministry of Education employees. She pointed out that authorities are interested in students and the strike means stopping teaching.

Teacher Yasser explained that a teacher's salary is not enough to rent a house, confirming that the strike is aimed at improving technical employees' status. He said they do not demand to be equal with Ministry of Education teachers, but with those of higher education, adding that technical education is productive. He asked that care first be taken for human elements prior to equipment and buildings.

## Opposition journalist runs for presidential elections

She called them to give her their votes so that to carry the nation's woes to the positions of decision-making. Ms Al-Qaily said she finds herself committed to look for the sincere expression of the homeland's ideology and culture and the people. She said she is quite certain that the Yemeni people have comprehended the lessons

of the past and their bitter experiments would prevent them from repeating them, especially that those whom they experienced have proved their corrupt. Ms Al-Qaily has also expressed her confidence that the people will not accept anymore to say oppressed under tyranny and they who had the pioneering role in Islam will not hesitate from

supporting a woman who works for their dignity, as their ancestors had done with their Queen Bigis.

There have been two Yemeni women nominated themselves run for the Yemeni coming presidential elections before Ms Al-Qaily, namely, Sumayah Ali Raja and Thikra Ahmed Ali.

## Suspect released, Yemen-KSA Al-Qaeda link disclosed

The Attorney General affirmed that Al-Ahdal had connections with a man in Saudi Arabia who sent him three cars and money for transporting Al-Qaeda members in Yemen. Al-Ahdal also collected 61,000 Saudi Riyals from some Saudi citizens to distribute among martyrs, prisoners and Guantanamo detainees' families.

Prosecution confirmed that Al-Ahdal met Abu Ali-Harithi after 2001 and became his companion. While living in Al-Huson area, through Al-Harithi, Al-Ahdal became acquainted with two Saudis who traveled to Iran and Afghanistan via Hadramout's Raian Airport.

Prosecution mentioned that Al-Ahdal met an Al-Qaeda financial official at the house of an Al-Qaeda mujahideen named Abdulraziq Al-Amir. He also met Al-Qaeda leaders while in Saudi Arabia. Prosecution disclosed that Al-Ahdal was imprisoned in Saudi Arabia for more than a year for charging some youth with infidelity.

### Suspects stand trial over Al-Zarqawi

Last Saturday March 12, the State Security Specialized Penal Court held its third session to try 17 suspects

accused of forming an armed band affiliated with Jordanian Abu Mus'ab Al-Zarqawi. The band, which includes Saudi nationals, is charged with plotting terrorist acts targeting senior government officials and foreigners residing in Yemen.

At the hearing, the court allowed suspect No. 1 to affirm his allegation that he voluntarily surrendered electrical circuits to political security, while suspect No. 13, Musa'ed Mohamed Al-Barbari, was transferred to a legitimate physician.

The court also allowed defense team head Abdulaziz Al-Samawi to defend his clients and have a copy of the indictment against Ali Al-Harithi and Mohamed Sa'eed Al-Qabsh. According to Al-Samawi, the indictment is untrue.

Al-Samawi said the Attorney General accused the suspects of forming an armed band and planning to travel to Iraq. He pointed out that there are more than 130 court cases attributed to individuals accused of forming armed bands, with approximately 30 suspects in each case, as if all Yemenis have transformed into armed bands.

Al-Samawi cast doubt on the authenticity of charges attributed to his clients, saying such harms

Yemen's independence and unity. He commented that authorities filed charges against his clients in response to U.S. Administration demands pressuring Yemen to prevent the suspects from traveling to Iraq.

The defense team head said the U.S. Administration exploits terrorism's spread to exert pressure on Arab regimes to fulfill its demands. He told the court chief to be brave and do the right thing.

Al-Samawi noted that the indictment says the suspects were planning to travel to Iraq for jihad. "Jihad is mandatory for every Muslim in such circumstances when we see British troops beating Iraqi children and U.S. soldiers inflicting sexual abuse on Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib Prison," he added.

Seized arms including a gun, a pistol and three cartridges were displayed at the hearing. The court adjourned until concluding appeals at its final sitting Saturday, March 25.

The 17 suspects face charges of targeting foreigners and senior government officials, which, according to the court, exposes society to risk. They use forged identity cards and passports and claim they belong to Al-Zarqawi's group.

## First Sana'a University award granted

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, March 15 — In a ceremony yesterday at Sana'a University, Rector Khaled Al-Tameem and Minister of Higher Education Saleh Basurrah awarded Faculty of Science chair and chemistry professor Ali Jum'an Al-Shukail a 2005 certificate of recognition and a YR one million prize, the first such award granted under a new program.

In a speech, Al-Shukail underscored the pragmatic importance of scientific research. "Scientific research is more magnificent when it serves the community and yields fruits that have direct impact on people's lives," he said.

"Encouragement is the shortest way to creativity," he quipped and modestly recognized the efforts of his students who helped him be entitled to such an honor. "This award is partly attributed to my students," he acknowledged.

Award board chairman Ahmed Al-Kibsi said of the award, "It is recognition of university teachers and their contribution to human knowledge." Formed pursuant to a decree by former rector Nasser Al-Awlaqi, the award board previously was chaired by Dr. Abdullah Al-Junaid before he was appointed Hodeidah University rector. Other board members are professors Tawfiq Sifian, Azzah Ghanem, Mutahar Al-Izzi, Abdullah Al-Shaibah, Ali Al-Ashwal, Dr. Amedea Sha'lan and Ahmed Abdul-Wahab.



Prof. Ali Jum'an Al-Shukail.

The award was to be presented in two fields: pure science and economic and political science. It was granted in the former but withheld in the latter, as criteria were unmet.

The board also announced that it is ready to receive applications for the 2006 award, which covers literature, Islamic studies engineering science and medical science.

Arbiters of the award are professors from Arab countries including Egypt, Syria and Sudan who took into account criteria established in accordance with standards adopted by recognized Western academic institutions.

This was the first such award given as the program launched just last year. The long-awaited award is expected to boost scientific research, create a competitive atmosphere, enrich intellectual

life on local and international levels and connect Sana'a University to the local community.

The university also honored its former rectors and deputies, who attended the ceremony, in recognition of their efforts and academic achievements. A large audience of university staff and students attended as well.

The state-owned Sana'a University is Yemen's largest university. Established in 1970 comprising only two faculties, it now has all the basic faculties with a variety of specializations. It also contains faculties in other areas such as the Faculties of Education in Arhab and Khawlan and the Faculty of Commerce in Khamir. Estimated student enrollment for academic year 2004-2005 was 78,737, which included 16,485 women.

## Islamic Relief Visits Saa'da

SAA'DA, March 12 — A delegation from Islamic Relief Yemen carried out a field visit to the governorate of Saa'da. Khalid Almulad, the head of Islamic Relief in Yemen stated that their visit was to assess the need and the stability in the region and to introduce their service to the local authorities there. He added that an assessment must be carried out to identify the needs, and areas Islamic relief may engage with future work, highlighting the importance of participation of the local community as well as the local council.

During the visit, the delegation met the Governor Yahya Al-Shami who stated that Saa'da governorate has been through a rough period with the war and conflicts but has regained peace and stability amongst all. He added that the governorate needs a lot of development work in all sectors and encouraged such initiative from NGOs such as Islamic Relief.

The delegation then accompanied the governor on a visit to Al Boqaa (North of Saa'da) border with Saudi Arabia where floods hit the area on Saturday night due to heavy rainfalls



Floods in Al-Boqaa.

PHOTO BY IR

which caused destruction to some of the houses, while roads were blocked and people could not get access to their shops in the local market due to the area being flooded. The governor set up a committee to assess the damage caused by the floods and update him

with a full report.

Almulad states that "since the last conflict in Saa'da, Islamic Relief Yemen is the 1st International NGO to visit the area." Islamic Relief is an international relief and development charity founded in the UK in 1984.



# Europe's schools lag behind US and Asia

EUOBSERVER / BRUSSELS — Europe is falling further behind the US and Asia in education, with Germany and France no longer among world leaders in developing knowledge, according to a new report by the Paris-based economic institute, the OECD.

According to Andreas Schleicher, the author of the report, Europe's educational systems should “be made more flexible, more effective and more easily accessible to a wider range of people,” to stand up to global competition.

He points out that pressure is mounting not only due to the US and Japan, but also due to emerging Asian superpowers, China and India, which are starting to deliver “high skills at low costs and at an ever increasing pace”.

While some European countries, like Ireland, Portugal and Spain have improved their relative standing, most of the major economies – including France, Italy and the UK – “only held their ground or, in the case of Germany, significantly fell.”

Mr Schleicher said both Germany and France are falling behind in terms of a number of people with high-skill qualifications, which he views as a sign that both countries “which make up 35% of the EU's 11.6 trillion economy, are no longer among the world's leaders in developing knowledge and skills.”

One of the main reasons behind the gloomy trends is lower investment in education in Europe at every level.

“The US outspends Europe on tertiary level education by more than 50% per student, and much of that difference is due to larger US contributions from tuition-paying students and the private sector,” noted the OECD paper.

On the other hand, it stressed that most continental European countries do not allow their universities to charge tuition fees but at the same time do not support them with the required public investment.

“European countries tend to argue that charging fees for university education would be unfair or inequitable, but many of the very same countries charge fees for childhood and other primary education, where equity really is at stake,” writes Mr Schleicher.

Despite European ideals like equality and equity, several OECD's studies reveal that “social background plays a larger role in determining a student's performance in countries such as Germany, France and Italy than in the US.”

“Europeans from difficult socio-economic backgrounds don't receive the same educational opportunities as children from rich and middle-class families,” notes the paper.

On the same topic David Rennie in Brussels wrote saying, the most powerful economies of “Old Europe”, including France, Britain and Germany, are struggling to keep up with a huge expansion of higher education in Asia, a new report has found.

The survey, by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, warns the members of the European Union to increase spending on schools and universities and tackle a crippling lack of social mobility within their societies, or put future economic growth in jeopardy.

“The time when Europe competed



France and Germany are no longer great knowledge builders.

mostly with countries that offered low-skilled work at low wages has gone.

Today, countries like China and India are starting to deliver high skills at low costs,” the report said.

There is “no way” that Europe can stop rapidly developing countries from producing “wave after wave of highly skilled graduates ... This is profoundly changing the rules of the game,” said the study, compiled for the Lisbon Council, a Brussels-based think tank which aims to make Europe more competitive.

“France and Germany, which make up 35 per cent of the European Union's 11.6 trillion [£7.37 trillion] economy, are no longer among the world's leaders in developing knowledge and skills,” the study says.

Of the world's top 20 universities, using the most widely cited index, only two - Oxford and Cambridge - are situated in Europe, the report notes.

It is not just down to extra funding, but universities should also become more flexible, and responsive to the needs of employers, it says. Higher education of even a short duration appears to produce dividends.

“Countries that give individuals one additional year of education can boost productivity and raise economic output by three per cent to six per cent over time,” the report says.

Britain has increased its numbers of university-level students markedly in recent years, but there is no data yet on whether the new students are receiving a quality education, the report's author, Andreas Schleicher, said.

But his survey points to spectacular growth in graduate numbers around the globe, not only in Asian nations such as China, Japan, and Korea, but in southern Europe, so that Britain's own expansion in student numbers merely allows it to maintain its relative position in the league tables.

Dr. Schleicher said: “The United Kingdom has seen a lot of progress, but you need to look at the extraordinary progress of countries like Korea and Finland which were not even on the education map a few years ago.”

In the 1960s, South Korea had the same gross domestic product as Afghanistan.

Today, 97 per cent of Koreans aged between 25 and 34 have received a high-school education - the best performance of any leading industrialised nation.

The report said that class distinctions - notably in Germany, France and Italy -

make it much harder for poor European children to overcome their backgrounds and succeed, than is the case for similar children in the United States.

“Europeans from difficult socio-economic backgrounds don't receive the same educational opportunities as children from rich and middle-class families,” the study said.

Dr. Schleicher added that the same criticism holds true for Britain, which shows wide differences in the quality of education received by children from different backgrounds.

Released on Monday, the study, by Andreas Schleicher from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), warns Europe to revolutionise its schools and universities and tackle class bias.

“The time when Europe competed mostly with countries that offered low-skilled work at low wages has gone. Today, countries like China and India are starting to deliver high skills at low costs,” Schleicher wrote.

“This is profoundly changing the rules of the game,” said the study, compiled for the Lisbon Council, a Brussels-based think-tank that aims to make Europe more competitive.

Schleicher claims that increased spending on education, particularly at secondary and tertiary school levels, brings economic benefits that outstrip inflation, not just for individuals but entire countries.

Class distinctions Schleicher points to the “miracle” of South Korea, which in the 1960s had lower income rates than all South American countries yet now has the highest rate of education - 97% - among people aged 25-34 in the industrialised world.

Meanwhile most of the big European economies, including Britain, France and Italy, are struggling to hold their rank while Germany has even fallen.

“France and Germany, which make up 35% of the European Union's 11.6 trillion euro economy, are no longer among the world's leaders in developing knowledge and skills,” the study said.

Lessons can be learned further north, though.

Finland is credited with moving to the head of the PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) list following a radical overhaul of its education system, said Schleicher, who leads that programme for the OECD.

High on the list of complaints was class distinctions - notably in Germany,

France and Italy - that are preventing young people from getting ahead.

Inequities

“Europeans from difficult socio-economic backgrounds don't receive the same educational opportunities as children from rich and middle-class families,” the study said.

“In many countries, the data suggest that European schools reinforce existing socio-economic inequities.”

“The time when Europe competed mostly with countries that offered low-skilled work at low wages has gone”

## OECD report

Germany is singled out for dividing children between vocational and academic tracks from as young as 10 years old.

“Those from white-collar families have a four-fold better chance of heading down the path to a tertiary institution.

Educators themselves are also targeted for refusing to change the way they work despite the recommendations of researchers.

“Education in Europe continues as a cottage industry, with practitioners working in isolation and building their practice on folk wisdom about what works,” the study said.

## Recommendations

To turn Europe around, Schleicher makes five main recommendations.

He said countries must set up a network of diverse, high-quality institutions free to respond to demand and accountable for their results.

Access to schools, which are better and fairer, has to be improved and public and private funding must be encouraged.

Universities must also evolve in a way that matches their strategies to those of modern enterprises, the report said, recommending that they be governed by bodies other than just academic ones.

“Europe's universities are unlikely to catch up unless our governments succeed in creating and maintaining a system of diverse, sustainable, and high-quality institutions with the freedom to respond to demand and the accountability for outcomes they produce,” the study said.

Mr Martin Walker, UPI Editor has tackled the subject and wrote:

The European media pounced on the echoes of the French student revolt of May 1968, when the riot police stormed the Sorbonne University over the weekend, to evict students who had occupied the venerable buildings on Paris's Left Bank.

But the modern ironies were more telling, as the police crashed through the barricades to evict and arrest the students of the only French institution that gets into the list of the world top 100 universities -- just as a new report suggests that education and skills in Asia are starting to overtake the Europeans.

And the Sorbonne students were occupying their university in protest at a new law that aims to make it easier for young people to get jobs and to bring down France's steep 23 percent youth unemployment rate.

French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin insisted on French TV Sunday

night that his labor market reforms would continue, including the controversial new law that has sparked the protests. It seeks to make it easier for employers to hire young people by allowing them to be fired within two years, this removing the strong job protections that is said to dissuade companies from hiring new staff.

“This is a slave contract,” shouted one of the students being arrested at the Sorbonne.

A series of demonstrations by French students and labor unions against the new law have carried banners that proclaim “They want to make us disposable like paper tissues.” Three more demonstrations are planned for this week.

The demonstrations came as a new report was published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development that condemns France and Germany for education systems for failing their young people and benefiting mainly middle class youth and effectively abandoning poor and working class young people.

The OECD reports adds that China

Netherlands, at 41. The highest-ranked French university is Paris at 46, and the highest German is Munich at 52. The highest Italian is Roma's La Sapienza at 97, and no Spanish university makes the top 100. There are more British universities in the global Top 100 than all other EU universities combined.

“Education in Europe continues as a cottage industry, with practitioners working in isolation and building their practice on folk wisdom about what works,” the OECD report says.

By contrast, it praises the “miracle” of South Korea -- a country which a generation ago was near the bottom of the OECD assessment educational skills. Today South Korea has the highest rate of high school graduates among young workers among major industrialized countries.

“When demand for education began to outpace supply, students were not sent home,” the OECD paper says of South Korea's example. “Instead, class size and schooling hours were extended....The incentives driving these reforms forward was a plethora of



The OECD report supports public and private funding of education.

and India, by contrast, are making effective investments in education that are already producing a new generation with “high skills at low costs and at an ever increasing pace”.

“There is no way for Europe to stop these rapidly developing countries from producing wave after wave of highly skilled graduates,” writes OECD economist Andreas Schleicher in the report, “The economics of knowledge: Why education is key for Europe's success.”

“If Europe wants to retain its competitive edge at the top of the global-value-added chain, the education system must be made more flexible, more effective and more easily accessible to a wider range of people,” Schleicher adds.

France and Germany, he notes, “which make up 35 percent of the European Union's \$13,000 billion economy, are no longer among the world's leaders in developing knowledge and skills.”

Britain excepted, Europe does very poorly from a widely-used international ranking of the world's best universities, compiled annually by Shanghai's Jiao Tong University. Of the Top 20, 17 are American, 2 are British (Oxford and Cambridge) and one is Japanese (University of Tokyo.)

The highest ranked university from the European Union is Utrecht from the

merit-based learning opportunities where progress depended on what children were able to do, not where they came from.”

By contrast in Europe, students “from difficult socio-economic backgrounds don't receive the same educational opportunities as children from rich and middle-class families, the OECD reports adds.

“In many countries, the data suggest that European schools reinforce existing socio-economic inequities,” it continues, citing German where students from middle class families are four times more likely to go on to higher education.

The OECD report recommends giving EU universities more funds and more freedom to manage and more responsibility for educational outcomes, more financial aid for students, and more input from employers and schools into university decision-making.

The report notes that the EU countries spend 1.1 percent of GDP on higher education, less than half the proportion (2.7 percent) spent by the United States. Not accidentally, therefore, 35 of the world's top 50 universities are American, and they currently employ more than two-thirds of the world's Nobel prize-winners and produce one third of the world's published articles on science and engineering.

## Brazil to host an OECD global conference

PARIS, March 14, 2006 — The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OCDE) has announced in Paris that it is Brazil that will host on March 27-30 an OECD global conference on the financing of small and medium-sized businesses.

In announcing the venue for the conference, an OECD spokeswoman noted that the principal problem to be tackled by the Brazil-based international conference will be “the access to finance” and how it is what she characterized as “one of the biggest obstacles to the creation, growth and development of small businesses,” and this, she added, “according to OECD analysis,” adding that “banks are often wary of lending to SMEs. Assets and collateral may not be big enough to underwrite the loans and the track records of small companies - particularly those developing a new idea or technology -

are often patchy.”

Conferees will also study “how governments can help entrepreneurs get the funds to develop their businesses,” during a conference that is being jointly organized by the OECD and Brazil's Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade, with Brazilian head of state Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, a close personal friend of French President Jacques Chirac, inaugurating the event, which will see the presence in his country of several ministers from OECD and non-OECD countries. Also, said the spokeswoman, the conference will bring together experts from governments and international organisations, as well as representatives from business and civil society, with, in total, “more than 80 countries” represented at the talks.

The conference “aims to assess the needs of entrepreneurs and SMEs and to find out which policies have been

most successful at bridging the apparent gap between the requirements of small businesses and those of investors. The meeting will also explore new ways of solving funding problems,” the spokeswoman added, before noting that the event “builds on two OECD ministerial conferences on SMEs: in Bologna, Italy, in 2000, where 48 countries adopted the Bologna Charter, and in Istanbul, Turkey, in 2004, where 72 countries outlined ways of boosting the competitiveness of small businesses in a globalised economy in the Istanbul Ministerial Declaration. The Brasilia conference, she insisted, “takes place in the framework of the OECD Bologna Process on SME and Entrepreneurship Policies which brings together OECD and non-OECD economies for strengthened dialogue and co-operation to foster entrepreneurship and SME competitiveness at the global level.”

## France, visibly upset at Human Rights reported by the Department

PARIS, March 14 — Demonstrating, more than ever, that the exchanges that take place in Paris on a near-daily basis between the principal foreign policy spokesman of France and diplomatic reporters assigned to cover the Quai d'Orsay's press briefings, have become as accurate a bellwether as any as to what is truly going in French politics - the daily media briefing, for example, having been one of the rare fora at which it has become evident that France has undertaken at last the revolutionary step of “inflecting” its Middle East policy towards Israel and away from the Arab World - France, visibly upset at the way it is treated in the just-released annual report on Human Rights published by the United States

Department of State, has had difficulty saying what evidently it really feels on the subject, and this as it bends over backwards to warm its ties with Washington.

As reporters were able to observe at the most recent (i.e., that of Friday, Mar. 10, 2006) media briefing of the Quai d'Orsay, French diplomats, who have in recent months been doing their utmost to attempt to persuade Washington that Paris has always been its faithful ally, as it was before the unleashing of the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003, indeed after, have been having a difficult time attempting to play down their disagreements with the unfair images they consider are being given of France and of French domestic security policy, which Paris feels is traditionally off-limits to the observers, albeit of an official nature, of a country that calls itself the oldest ally of France, the French having come to the support of the fledgling United States back in 1778 at Saratoga, at the very moment where their support made the difference between the American triumph that gave the nascent United

States a lease on life, and a British victory that, had it happened, would have led to a nation today under the aegis of London, as much, in any case, as in Canada, the neighbour to the north that doesn't hide its own belief that in effect its true mother country is not Great Britain, but the United States, especially in light of the French-assisted US defeat of Britain in 1778, which is why when replying to a suggestion that France publish its own report on human rights violations in the United States, or indeed encourage the European Union to undertake such a task, official foreign policy spokesman Jean-Baptiste Mattei replied simply that “those reports already exist,” implying that the situation of human rights in the United States is far from rosy, and that organizations, like Amnesty International, have soundly and regularly condemned the sorry state of rights on the other side of the Atlantic.





The Sana'a Country Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is announcing the following vacancy:

**Post Title: Operations Adviser** (consultancy for 3 months, with possible extension):

This position is open to all qualified and interested persons residing in Yemen. Qualified women are encouraged to apply.

The Operations Unit is responsible for the administrative/procurement/financial/human resource operations of the UNFPA Country Office, including its portfolio of projects, programmes and activities. An Operations Adviser is needed in view of the expected upcoming larger scale operations, as well as the new UN joint payment modality.

The incumbent will work under the direct supervision of UNFPA Representative and be responsible for:

- The review of existing working processes and operational modalities of the Operations Unit, resulting in clear implementable recommendations in order to strengthen and streamline operational processes for office and programme/project implementation;
- Overseeing the effective introduction and implementation of these recommendations and on-the-job training of office staff.

#### Qualification and Requirements

- Master of Business Administration/Public Administration or Finance;
- Thorough knowledge of computer applications and information technology;
- Minimum of 3 to 5 years increasingly responsible experience in the field of management/business administration;
- Excellent command of spoken and written English, including drafting ability;
- Initiative and sound judgment, ability to organize work and to work under pressure;
- Interpersonal skills and ability to work in harmony with colleagues.

UNFPA offers an attractive compensation package commensurate with experience.

Please send your application to: UNFPA, Sana'a, P.O. Box 7272, Algeria St.

Tel: No. 209003/4, Fax: 209005

Deadline for application is: 22nd of March, 2006.

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

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# A prostitute reveals her story (Part 1 of 2)

By: Hakim Almasmari  
hakim\_almasmari@hotmail.com

On a warm night in the heart of Sana'a, streets were filled with locals and visitors enjoying the capital's beautiful night views. The weather was idyllic.

On my way home from work at around 10 p.m., I thought to grab a quick snack from a nearby restaurant. I entered and gave my order. I wanted to eat as quickly as possible, fearing that it was getting too late.

I was sitting across from the restaurant's window when something unexpected happened. I noticed a young teenaged girl looking toward my direction. I completely ignored her, but I couldn't eat with someone staring at me. I asked for my food to be wrapped up, deciding to eat at home rather than in the restaurant.

As I walked outside, I felt like someone was trying to tell me something. I turned around and saw the same teenaged girl following me. She said nervously, "Could you please help me?"

I turned around and handed her the food I had, thinking she was hungry,

but she didn't accept it. I put my hand in my wallet and offered her some money, but she refused that as well. "Thank you, but I only want to speak to you. Please help me," she said as she wept.

I couldn't believe my eyes. I never imagined being put in an awkward situation where I didn't know how to react. I asked her peacefully and calmly, "What's the matter?" She replied, "Can we go somewhere alone? I need to talk to you."

I hesitated at first because I didn't know her, but her emotions and sadness bought out my mercy, so I agreed to sit with her in a nearby restaurant. I didn't order food, fearing it might open unwanted doors. Water was the only thing on our table. She finally looked at me shyly and helplessly and began talking.

*The following story is narrated as heard from the lost teenager who calls herself S.M.R.*

I am originally from a well-respected family in Taiz. Never did I think my life would turn out as it is now. My parents loved me very much because I was all they had in life.

Very smart in school and loved by teachers and friends, I enjoyed my young life as a teenager, experiencing new and different things each day. I was only 17 at that time.

Unfortunately, my mother passed away when I was young and my father was a poor old man who could support us only to a certain point due to his low salary and the many expenses of everyday life. Two years after my mother died, my father decided to marry again. I lived with my father and his wife and life was as normal as it could be. My father was always very kind and loving, always wanting what was better for me in the future.

Months later, he became very ill and we spent a lot of money treating him. Our financial situation got worse. I couldn't get what I wanted most of the time; however, I was pleased with the little we had.



Over the months, many relatives and neighbors came to ask for my hand in marriage. Unfortunately, one after the other, all were refused. When I turned 18, life worsened for my family and things began to change dramatically for the worst.

While living in that critical situation, a rich businessman suddenly came to ask for my hand in marriage. I was very happy, even though I had no information about the type of person he was. From my point of view, it was enough that he was rich, as he could at least help make our financial situation better.

Two weeks later, my father approached me openly and told me the truth. He said the man was 53 years old, nearly three times my age. At that moment, I instantly refused.

My father and aunt

began reasoning with me, saying, "We are a poor family. At least he will guarantee you a life far from the poverty and low standard of life you have now." I thought it over carefully and understood what my father meant, so I willingly agreed to marry the businessman.

Our wedding took place three weeks later and it was a day to remember. My husband and I had a wonderful time together and shared many great experiences. I got almost everything I ever wanted. I felt like I was the most blessed woman in the world. My way of life changed so quickly that it felt as if it was a dream.

Five months after my marriage, my father became very ill and passed away after three days of hospitalization. My aunt suffered the most, as she was left alone with no one to take care of her after my father's death.

I politely asked my husband if my aunt could move in with us so I could take care of her. He happily agreed with no hesitation. I was relieved, but little did I know this would turn out to be the most tragic mistake of my young life... *To be continued in the next issue.*

## Street children: change into the worst

By: Samar Mujaly

When walking main city streets, one notices dozens of children with dirty clothes, hands and faces playing freely and in groups. They fight and form small gangs looking for trouble. Such children in Yemen have become a major issue requiring immediate attention.

### Street children

"Street children" is a well-known name for many Yemeni children resulting from them spending long hours in the streets rather than at home. The name directly indicates these children's bad behavior and attitude as they worsen daily.

Children think they become more mature like their fathers and big brothers by cursing and fighting, while some think it's their way of getting the attention they need as children. However, when they spend most of their time on the streets, they eventually become emotionally weak.

"Home is everything for children. When they lose the warmth of home, they try every possible way to gain it back. Their ways of doing that are not obvious to parents. Parents think it's bad behavior when it's really the need for loving parents," local doctor and father of four Mohammed Saleh said.

Street children practice several bad activities that cause chaos in some situations. They go to candy shops in groups and distract the shop owner as they steal money and candy. This stealing habit develops over time until they begin stealing from their own homes and then from their neighbors.

"I used to see my children with a lot of money. When I asked them where it came from, they refused to tell me. I later found out they had been stealing from a meat shop owner," mother of eight Fatima Humeed said, noting a negative change in their behavior.

"They put nails in the street. They throw little stones and dirt at passing cars. They even throw themselves in front of cars to frighten drivers. They also bother their neighbors by knocking on doors and running, putting garbage in front of their houses and by shouting and disturbing them," she added.

### Their first home

Children spend more time on the streets than at home. The streets have become a place where they learn to act and to deal with people. For many children, from the moment they awaken, they spend their time on the streets, only returning home at mealtimes to eat quickly and go out again.

What is more shocking is that little girls are doing the same thing. Girls often are more vulnerable than boys, so they are kept home to be raised well.



Two boys fighting in the street.

PHOTO BY HAKIM ALMASMARI

But this is not what's happening. In some instances, young girls spend as much time on the streets as boys.

School is a very strange place for these types of children. For them, it is a boring place to torture them, when they could be spending time having fun with their friends. It is never explained to such children the benefits and importance of studying. "Why should they learn? They will grow up and find no jobs. It's a waste of time, energy and money," a father of seven complained.

Many parents only realize the importance of education for their children during exams month. Parents lock their children at home to make them study, but unfortunately, it's too late. Children become aggressive and violent when they spend their time on the streets and since they hate school and studying, they don't study for exams. At this point, parents begin losing control over their children, but it is control they never had due to allowing them total freedom.

### Future bad effects

Living in a bad environment has numerous bad effects. Boys grow up to be careless and violent, continuing a lifestyle to which they're accustomed. They continue spending time on the streets but with a new way of harassing others. They start chasing girls and going down the wrong path. They develop fighting habits and begin possessing guns and different types of weapons. They start forming larger gangs and picking senseless fights with passersby until it worsens.

Girls also grow up to be poorly behaved as a result of spending time with boys who are like them on the streets, as well as having no other care than getting into other people's business and gossiping about everyone.

### Whose fault?

Parents are the ones who mold a child's character and behavior. When they do this poorly, it remains with the child for

life, even if they attempt to change it. It is like a genetic imprint, as it's nearly impossible to change.

Ironically, Yemeni parents love having many children but unfortunately, they don't like the responsibilities that come with it. Fathers chew qat with friends without disturbance and mothers go out visiting others and gossiping, while children are sent to the street to do whatever they want.

"Parents who raise their children poorly are without minds. They not only raise their children to be bad, they destroy their future and any chance they have to be good people. We see a lot of boys and girls today who commit crimes and do very bad things to their families and society," senior college student Jamal Shaef said, worrying when imagining his children in this situation.

Many parents nowadays complain about the amount of responsibility they must take, but didn't they think about that before getting married?

## VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position:

**Post Title: Radio Operator/SC-3**

### Responsibilities

- Daily monitoring of Radio Calls (Listening and replying per policy)
- Stay in contact with local police control room.
- Daily activities report (fill reports Forms accordingly)
- Occasional dispatching and giving location directions etc.
- Stay in contact with other commercial and Diplomatic entities such as Nexen Oil, Safer Oil.
- Research the Internet when needed (daily global /local Current affairs, Security related news).
- Monitor TV, news papers for Security related matters.
- Report Breaking Security related News to UN-DSS Office.
- Prepare a situation Report for Owen shift.
- Tracking of all missions within, and outside Sana'a.
- Generate a timely report about the tracking of all missions who have been granted Security clearance.
- Perform any other assigned tasks by the Security Adviser.

### Qualification

- Minimum Completion of Secondary Education.
- Minimum two years experience in radio operating
- Fluency in English and Arabic.
- Computer literate MS office E-mail Internet (Basic knowledge is a must)
- Highly motivated and hard working maintains discipline & diligence towards his/her duties.
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Interested candidates are requested to visit our website at:

<http://www.undp.org/ye/undp-vacancies.htm> for detailed term of reference of the position and may submit their applications indicating the title of the post applied for by mail to Human Resources Unit and response will only be made to short listed candidates. UNDP is an equal opportunity organization and female candidates are encouraged to apply.

UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448841/E-mail: (registry.ye@undp.org)  
The deadline for receiving applications is Saturday, 25 March 2006



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## Vacancy Adv.

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**Interested, please send your CV with a cover to  
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# The regained power of the press

After several weeks of captivity, the little girl Hanan returned to her family in Taiz. With Hanan's return, public confidence in the press was restored. The press is again the beacon shedding light on perennial issues related to people and their everyday lives. Thus, this is more than a case ending in a family's happiness. The press, public opinion and officials expressed solidarity with the victim. Without solidarity, the vacuum turns into a desert of silence and due to its silence, people will find themselves in dark scattered islands.

Solidarity is the pillar of civil society, be it in the form of syndicates and organizations in charge of defending citizens'



By: Mustafa Ragih

rights or in the role played by the press, considered a mirror reflecting society's reality.

From this perspective, the press reclaims its value as an independent authority. It is a power driving the wheels of justice and the voice of a single citizen, having no tribal connection or authority to rescue him. Also from this perspective, public opinion intervenes, realizing people as a social entity, with its moral and legal influence.

Hanan should have been forgotten. Her case might have melted in with other victims' cases troubling citizens' everyday lives. However, the press and public support shifted the way the case proceeded to restore life to Hanan and her family, as well as confidence in and effective-

ness of the press and public opinion.

This is not an exaggeration. To prove this is correct, we find more than one case and more than one issue. In Amran, the little girl Sawsen was raped barbarically and found nobody to save her. The issue of shepherding Sawsen's rape was thrown in officials' cupboards; and instead of punishing the human beast who committed this crime and seemingly has influential connections, security authorities imprisoned Sawsen's grandfather in order not to follow up the case's procedures. The image has changed as the press made the victim's issue more prominent by publishing it on front pages.

The Taiz Security Department chief and other officials accused the press of inciting public opinion and fabricating false stories on the kidnapping of little girls, leading the chief to say that Hanan's abductor was afraid to return

her as a result of terrorism practiced by the press. The official press eventually began publishing the issue, concerned parties began searching and Hanan was found in the town of Ma'abar, approximately 250 kilometers from Taiz. Her captor later was arrested in the town of Shabwah.

Most issues dealt with by the press require follow-up until the end, as they will be forgotten if there is no media coverage. Many issues have emerged over the past few years – some died an early death while others vanished due to lack of solidarity. The press is in need of change. Media institutions are recommended to follow and monitor people's sufferings in a regular and continuous manner.

Do you remember Wade'e Al-Shabani about whom the press published multiple articles and Amnesty International and other human rights organizations adopt-

ed his case in 1997? He was tortured to death in an Aden prison. Where did the issue go after that? It deliberately was forgotten. His mother died after a long pursuit of officials and the case file was thrown into the cupboards of oblivion without knowing what happened. Was the issue investigated? A few months ago, Al-Shabani's lawyer spoke of a legitimate doctor's report confirming that he died as a result of torture. The way in which the case was handled did not allow Al-Shabani to rest in his grave.

Qat seller Mujahed Al-Samhi was killed by municipality soldiers last year. His case drew the attention of press and human rights organizations. Public pressure led to the case being referred to the court since the crime was committed by official employees. What is new now? Interest in this issue has waned. This not only will cause Al-Samhi's family to lose confidence in public support and solidar-

ity, but it will lead to the case being tossed out due to prolonged judicial procedures.

News of political parties and their confrontation with the authority has dominated the political scene since the Joint Meeting Parties announced their political reforms program. These events came after two years of the parties hiding behind journalists. During this period, the press played a primary role in fueling political controversy and raising the ceiling of freedom of expression. The press sometimes seems to play the role that's supposed to be played by political parties: "Presenting the political program."

The situation now is gradually returning to normal, with political parties giving more priority to political argument in the country and the press acting as a mirror for everything.

Mustafa Ragih is a Yemeni journalist.

## Double standards and lack of tolerance

By: M. Vijaykumar  
vijayden@hotmail.com

Let me start by emphasizing on the vital need for tolerance and mutual respect among religions and people of different origin and ethnicity. The recent hue and cry in the Muslim world engendered by the offensive caricatures initially published by a Danish newspaper and later reprinted by some other newspapers in Europe do certainly necessitate some rational thinking by all concerned. If we look into the pros and cons of the crisis in a clear-headed and discerning manner, we will realize that the current generation lacks tolerance and mutual respect without which the world is not safe and sustainable.

Of course, the customs and values of Europe which provide its media and people absolute freedom of expression and speech are not compatible with that of the Muslim world and the only way out is to respect each other and come to terms with the reality. However, the freedom of expression is in no way a license to insult any religion or prophet and the press especially in a civilized country is bound to realize that it cannot cross the so-called red-lines. Indeed, freedom of speech also entails some responsibility

ty, upon whoever uses it, to exercise discretion and ensure not to hurt the sensibilities of religions, beliefs or even an individual unreasonably. Discretion is very important and inevitable among the media people. No sensible person would have supported publications of drawings that could knowingly or unknowingly insult any religion or prophet, for that matter.

Nevertheless, to err is human and one has to understand that Jyllands-Posten, which published the controversial drawings, is a small newspaper in Denmark read by less than 5% of the Danish population and does not represent the whole country. Therefore, it would have been prudent had the apology made by the newspaper been accepted in order to make a reconciliation of the crisis possible instead of lashing out violence at the Danish/European Embassies and Consulates abroad. It now sounds like an apparently minor issue being blown out of proportion due to the intense propaganda and violent protests causing reciprocating repercussions. It should not be forgotten that only constructive and meaningful dialogue would lead to an ultimate solution, but not violent confrontations. Violence will not lead us anywhere, but it can only make things worse. Our aim and

efforts should be directed at alleviating the crisis and not aggravating it. For the very same reason, it is imperative that people understand that the only way forward is through dialogues.

By over-reacting to the cartoon issue, the core problem is forgotten. Terrorism is today's main evil and so is America's hegemony. It is a vicious circle! I don't think anyone on earth can accept or appreciate terrorist plots like the September 11 attacks in the US, 2004 Madrid train blast, July 2005 explosions in London and the numerous bomb blasts in several countries in Asia. People who resort to terrorist activities killing innocent people must take a second thought. Terrorism is not the path to peace, prosperity and stability, but to destruction and hatred. Terrorism is not the answer to any mistakes or wrongdoings, but it is awfully agonizing as it takes away valuable lives of innocent people.

Similarly, the tenacious and unilateral decision of America to wage war against Iraq without a UN approval was also unacceptable and lamentable. The fact that the US weapon inspectors repeatedly confirmed that Iraq did not possess any WMD unequivocally proved the US invasion of Iraq to be an unforgivable offense. Many thousands of innocent Iraqis killed and

many others who lost limbs in US airstrikes, insurgent attacks and suicide bomb explosions since 2002 are reminders of a great crime committed by the US that even used in its war banned material such as white Phosphorus and depleted Uranium. No wonder if the Venezuelan President compared Bush to Hitler! (Perhaps more precisely, Hitler of the 21st century!).

Finally, one would not forget and forgive the inhuman treatments at Guantanamo Bay prison and Abu Garaib prison. The news and pictures of sordid atrocities carried out by the US and British soldiers in Iraq, recently displayed in the media, are gruesome and will send tremors through the hearts and minds of any sensitive human being. Why is the Muslim world not showing strong indignation against these very indecent and inhuman acts? Why no concerted initiatives are taken by the Muslim countries and Islamic organizations against this deplorable and despicable situation in Iraq created by its invaders? Is it that human lives in Iraq are not so important? Is it because Denmark is an easy target and America and UK are not so?

M.Vijaykumar is an expatriate worker in Yemen.

## Flattery-prone teachers

"I'm the best teacher you've ever had. I challenge any other teacher in Yemen to perform the job like me."

With the above claims, my teacher ended his lecture, his heart full of pride. The lecture was as dry as dust because of his unbearable garrulousness. We as his students were accustomed to hearing him praise himself in front of us but not as outrageously as this. We all were surprised how he had the audacity to patently lie.

However, the students did not have the courage to tell him the truth to his face. Although they have the right to do so, they knew full well that if they lodged a complaint to those in charge, they would be the underdogs. They had learned a lesson from other students who volunteered to initiate but became scapegoats, their complaints thrust aside and ignored. Additionally, there is no student union to bring them together through thick or thin. As a result, they have no alternative except to lick their teachers' boots.

When I was in college, I myself refrained from talking about this because I was not prepared to go against the current. I knew if I wrote, I would touch my teacher's raw nerve.

The first thing that may pop into the reader's mind is that my college is

brimming with flattery-prone teachers. However, this is not true because "Every rose has a thorn."

Many of my friends from different Yemeni universities told me the same. They described how their teachers spent most of their time praising and describing their heydays in Europe or the U.S. A friend of mine said his teacher uses half his lecture on efforts to shape the lecture from different sources. However, he discovered that he used only one source that contradicts what he said.

It's a serious problem deserving serious study. Under no circumstances should it be neglected. Yemen suffers greatly from this malady, not only in higher education but also in general education.

The question must be raised: Why do they cheapen themselves by such behavior? In my humble opinion, I think lack of knowledge and inferiority complexes are the main reasons behind this problem. First of all, flattery is used as a mask to conceal their gross failure to be like consummate teachers. Only shallow-minded teachers endeavor to create an imaginative character in students' minds that contradicts reality. If



By: Saeed Al-Batati

these types of teachers get angry, they can be soothed easily by flattery. When they later abandon hope of improving themselves to be the best, they resort to flattery to show off their non-existent personalities. Of course, students pay the price, inheriting from such teachers meager information and an unsound mind. I am now a teacher and I feel there is no point in saying things about which I'm not sure. I would never lie or make false claims.

On the other hand, hardworking teachers deserve a pat on the back for all their sincere work. People can be measured by what they do, not what they say. Wise men say, "Actions speak louder than words." In other words, one's actions prove whether one is good or bad. Let others judge a teacher's worth, as no one should judge himself. It is shameful to see a teacher in his 60s, proud as a peacock, constantly concerned about how to appear before his students to impress them. So do not be surprised if you hear one such teacher say, "I am an encyclopedia," as he or she seems to realize slowly the magnitude of his misdeeds.

It is unjust to put those teachers who waste their lives in laziness on par with others who burn the midnight oil. If we do so, I am afraid genuine teachers' dignity is at stake. Selecting the right type of teachers is a time-consuming effort, but no stone should be left unturned in achieving this goal.

The next generation's teachers really should be modeled on this generation's gifted, committed and scholarly teachers. Good teachers also will be models for their students. Surely, there are talented teachers who engage in various other activities like creative writing, publishing in reputable journals, newspapers, etc. But such teachers will never blow their own trumpets. Instead, others will sing their glory for generations. Remember, great teachers are a beacon of light.

Regarding the role of university presidents, they should play a key role in ending this farce, as they are the only ones with the power to stop it. If I was in their shoes, I never would have chosen teachers just based on their certificates, but on their competence as well. Every new teacher should take an exam. My opinion may appear irrational at first glance, but to all purposes, it is rational.

Saeed Al-Batati is a Yemeni journalist, he is Yemen Times correspondent in Hadramout. (albatati88@yahoo.com)

## Letter to the Editor

COMMENTS ON SLIVER LINING:  
THE RAPPED COUNTRY

Do not rely on /blame other country

We Somalis need not blame other countries of the problem we/Qabiil created. So do not blame other people what ever happened to our people is tragedy because we strayed away from our religion. For Kufar Siyad Barre, Allah will make him pay all the things he did to our country—so forgot about the past look to the future. Tell your readers not to dhagaan qabiil and tell them: we Somalis need to build our country not others.

Ahmad Waamo  
ahmadwaamo@yahoo.com

Well done Al-Qadhi

You really pointed out an important point; the problems that we all Somalis face in strange world that we were not used to; however, I would suggest that we come to a time when we stop pointing the fingers at each other. For example, your argument that Siyad Bare is responsible for what is happening in Somalia may alienate many people. I am not defending Siyad Bare. I really appreciate the fact that his regime had collapsed, but my point is we need unity at this time, and we need to avoid assigning responsibility. Just move on. Another point that I think you missed is the fact that the world has attempted to help Somali people. I was in Somalia in 1992 when the United States sent 32000 marines, and I worked with them. I know what had happened then. Also, with regards to your comments on the Somali refugees who were raped and die in the sea on daily basis, I would have liked if you would discuss the many Somalis who move their families from the west to Arab States where they are treated sub-humans.

No offence just trying point out some areas where I felt you should upon. Thanks brother and keep your patriotism.

Barea  
barea@u.washington.edu

Saddam and Mohamed Siad Bare

With due respect I am expressing what I knew then in Somalia and what I know now. In your article you berated Siad Bare (to my perspective) you sounded like Hawiye but your name seems an Arab (Isn't that weird or are we in an abnegated world??) Mohamed Siad Bare and Saddam Hussein built their countries, educated their people, They were Dictators of course and had some faulty stories in their live, nevertheless they were (Muwadinin).

I am Somali born and raised in Mogadishu, I just came back from Egypt, Syria, Saudi and Somalia. What is going in Somalia today

caused by ignorance of Kabiir and Jaahiliin, who are immoral. People thought they will be better off the given dictators, but they regret today for what I have observed not for what I read from concocted fraudulent Media stating "The UN has not moved to do something to the Somalis as it did somewhere else. The Arab States and the super power countries including the US just keep watching the dilemma of this people as there is no interest that can attract them there."

Responding to the above mentioned paragraph, USA and UN, dedicated themselves to help Somalia (Not in Iraq), unlike Arab World who created this saga, and the self eccentric egos along with Al-Jaahil has chosen to remain passive living disgraced life.

Majority of the parliament members are illiterates who never attended school, never been in a civilized state or region, majority of them are from the country sides, they are ignorant people. Finally Mohamed Siad Bare And Saddam they both had and will have my heart for ever, they been trapped by their egos who they thought once was their best friend.

Christine A.Adam  
gaalo2000@yahoo.com

Yemen compliant with Bush

I recently received an E-mail from a reader questioning the authenticity of a report on Iraqi Muslim women being raped by Bush's hired thugs. I invite all readers to review the following site: <http://www.globalwomenstrike.net/English2004/BloodNorRapforOil.htm>

Secondly, I would suggest that Bush has a great amount of audacity to ask Yemen to prosecute its citizens for any alleged act of terrorism when he himself has ordered the murder, torture and rape of tens of thousands of Muslims. Bush is the world's number one war criminal and any leader of any country who furnishes him military help or even complies politically with him is also a war criminal.

The question for the world Islamic community is how to respond to the bloodthirsty Bush. What are you going to do to revenge the slaughter, torture and rape of tens of thousands of Muslim women and children in Iraq and Afghanistan? Bush's European friends will not help you and his business friends in the Arab world will not help you. It is time for Muslims to join together and take action.

Thirdly, I would say that Yemen is becoming compliant with Bush. You allow him to set up his fascist embassy in your country, complete with spies and hired thugs. What do you think this embassy does? It buys your political leaders with cash. Soon Bush will not ask you to prosecute your citizens; he will do it for you.

Robert Lindh  
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# Behind the Wire (2/2)

## An Update to Ending Secret Detentions

The number of U.S. detentions worldwide has risen sharply. In Iraq, the United States is now detaining a record 10,200 people, more than double the number held five months ago. U.S. detentions in Afghanistan were also increasing based on the last publicly available numbers: the United States held approximately 500 detainees as of January 2005, a substantial rise from the 350 held in June 2004.

By: Michael Posner  
& Deborah Pearlstein  
Human Rights First

Behind the Wire assesses changes in the nature and scope of the United States' global military and intelligence detention system since the release of Human Rights First's

Ending Secret Detentions report on the system last year. While identifying some positive developments, Behind the Wire concludes that the number of detainees held within U.S. detention facilities and the secrecy regarding the system are on the rise, stressing the capacity of 'transient' facilities and undermining U.S. efforts to win the hearts and minds of local populations critical to the United States' security interests overseas.

Since September 2001, the United States has established a network of detention facilities around the world—under both military and intelligence control—used to detain thousands of individuals captured in the "war on terrorism." More than 65,000 individuals have been screened for military detention and 30,000 detained in the last three and a half years. What is unknown about this detention system—particularly the location of U.S. detention facilities, how many are held within them, on what legal basis they are held, and who has access to the prisoners—still outweighs what is known about it. But the information that is known paints a troubling picture.

### The Known Unknowns

What is unknown about this detention system still outweighs what is known about it. But facilities within it share in common key features that—while having unclear benefits in the nation's struggle against terrorism—make inappropriate detention and abuse not only likely, but virtually inevitable.

First, each of these facilities is maintained in either partial or total secrecy. For the past half-century, the United States has considered itself bound by international treaties and U.S. military regulations that prohibit such blanket operating secrecy. Yet in this conflict, the icrc—which the United States has long respected as a positive force in upholding international humanitarian law—has repeatedly sought and been denied access to these facilities. As the

icrc recently noted in a public statement:

Beyond Bagram and Guantanamo Bay, the icrc is increasingly concerned about the fate of an unknown number of people captured as part of the so-called global war on terror and held in undisclosed locations. For the icrc, obtaining information on these detainees and access to them is an important humanitarian priority and a logical continuation of its current detention work in Bagram and Guantanamo Bay.

Indeed, Human Rights First has been unable to identify any official list of U.S. detention facilities abroad employed in the course of the "war on terrorism." There is likewise no public accounting of how many are detained or for what reason they are held. And there has been a disturbing absence of serious congressional oversight of both known and undisclosed detention facilities.

Second, these facilities have thrived in an environment in which the highest levels of U.S. civilian leadership have sought legal opinions aimed at circumventing the application of domestic and international rules governing arrest and detention. Where it would have once seemed crystal clear to military commanders and on-the-ground military custodians alike that the Geneva Conventions governed the arrest and detention of individuals caught up in the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, this Administration has challenged the applicability of those rules. In several recently leaked legal opinions from White House Counsel, and the Departments of Defense and Justice, it has become clear that some in the Administration have given a green light to the wholesale violation of these rules.

As a result, it remains unclear what legal status has been assigned to those being detained at these U.S.-controlled facilities. Are they prisoners of war, civilians who took a direct part in hostilities (who the Administration calls "unlawful combatants"), or are they suspected of criminal violations under civilian law? The Administration has applied no clear system for defining their status. It also is unclear under many circumstances which U.S. agency is ultimately responsible for their arrest or the conditions of their confinement. And it now seems that U.S. military and intelligence agencies are involved in their interrogation, as well as civilian or foreign government contractors to whom aspects of detention and interro-

gation has been outsourced. It is likewise unclear to whom a family member or legal representative can appeal to challenge the basis for their continued detention.

Finally, the U.S. government has failed to provide prompt notice to families of those captured that their family member is in custody, much less information about their health or whereabouts. In such cases, the families of individuals removed to such unknown locations have had no opportunity to challenge detentions that may continue for extended periods. For example, Saifullah Paracha, according to information his family received from the icrc, has been detained at Bagram Air Force Base for more than 11 months. His wife and children remain in the dark, not only of the reason for his detention, but also when they can expect Mr. Paracha to be released or tried. Other individuals captured more than a year ago remain in detention at other undisclosed locations. The lack of information to family members about these detainees violates U.S. legal obligations and sets a negative precedent for treatment that may directed at U.S. soldiers in the future. It also engenders great anguish and suffering on the part of the families of detainees—no less than did the practice of "forcible disappearance" in past decades—while engendering enormous hostility toward the United States.

### In the Interest of National Security

The Administration has argued that, faced with the unprecedented security threat posed by terrorist groups "of global reach," it has had to resort to preventive detention and interrogation of those suspected to have information about possible terrorist attacks. According to the Defense and Justice Departments, a key purpose of these indefinite detentions is to promote national security by developing detainees as sources of intelligence. And while much of what goes on at these detention facilities is steeped in secrecy, intelligence agents insist that "[w]e're getting great info almost every day."

Whatever the value of intelligence information obtained in these facilities—and there is reason to doubt the reliability of intelligence information gained only in the course of prolonged incommunicado detention—there is no legal or practical justification for refusing to



report comprehensively on the number and location of these detainees—or to fail to provide the identities of detainees to the icrc, detainees' families, their counsel, or to others having a legitimate interest in the information (unless a wish to the contrary has been manifested by the persons concerned).

The United States is of course within its power to ask questions and to cultivate local sources of information. And the United States certainly has the power to detain—in keeping with its authority under the Constitution and applicable international law—those who are actively engaged in hostilities against the United States, or those suspected of committing or conspiring to commit acts against the law. But it does not have the power to establish a secret system of off-shore prisons beyond the reach of supervision, accountability, or law.

Finally, even if some valuable information is being obtained, there are standards on the treatment of prisoners that cannot be set aside. The United States was founded on a core set of beliefs that have served the nation very well over two centuries. Among the most basic of these beliefs is that torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is wrong, arbitrary detention is an instrument of tyranny, and no use of government power should go unchecked. The refusal to disclose the identity of detainees, prolonged incommunicado detention, the use of secret detention centers, and the exclusion of judicial or icrc oversight combine to remove fundamental safeguards against torture and ill-treatment and arbitrary detention. Current practices which violate these principles must be stopped immediately.

The abuses at Abu Ghraib underscore the reason why, since the United States' founding, Americans have rejected the

idea of a government left to its own devices and acting on good faith in favor of a government based on checks and balances and anchored to the rule of law. As James Madison noted, "[a] popular Government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a Prologue to a Farce or Tragedy." This nation's history has repeatedly taught the value of public debate and discourse. To cite one example, the United States learned this 30 years ago when a series of congressional investigations uncovered widespread, secret domestic spying by the CIA, NSA, FBI, and the Army—revelations whose impact on the intelligence agencies was, in former CIA Director Stansfield Turner's words, "devastating."

We should be clear—the United States has important and legitimate

interests in gathering intelligence information and in keeping some of this information secret. But we are not demanding the public release of any information that would compromise these interests. What we are calling for is an official accounting—to Congress and to the ICRC—of the number, nationality, legal status, and place of detention of all those the United States currently holds. We ask that all of these places of detention be acknowledged and open to inspection by the ICRC, and that the names of all detainees by made available promptly to the ICRC and to others with a legitimate interest in this information. Neither logic nor law supports the continued withholding of the most basic information about the United States' global system of secret detention. Trust is plainly no longer enough.

## The war against Iraq's children

Iraq's children have suffered more than just successive wars and economic sanctions. The loss of parents and family resources has boosted child labor, homelessness, and inclinations towards violence and rebellion. They often now live in homes where 25 people live in a space of 40 square meters. Even intact families may comprise parents and five children in a single six-meter room.



By: Amal Kashf  
Al-Ghitta

The increase in child labor reflects families' dire economic situation: children are frequently a family's only breadwinners, and they work cheap. Contractors in municipal services, for example, prefer to use children in order to cut costs. Here, a child may be used for agricultural labor or for janitorial work. Many work in piles of garbage, either removing them to another place or collecting empty bottles and cans to sell.

Other children load and transport items in the markets, where they must pull carts weighing 60-70 kilograms and carry boxes weighing 15 kilograms in temperatures of 50 degrees centigrade. Two children may unload a truck carrying 1,000 kilograms of food items.

Not surprisingly, Iraq's child workers suffer from a wide array of serious health problems. Children who work in the garbage dumps are prone to skin and respiratory problems, while those who work with paints eventually become addicted to the intoxicants that they inhale. And all working children are vulnerable to malnutrition, as their diet typically lacks the items necessary to build body tissues.

Nor is there any official authority to protect children and defend their rights in case of incapacitation or sickness. On the contrary, children are often beaten by family members if they do not provide the daily wage expected of them, or by their bosses when they are inattentive or make a mistake.

Indeed, Iraqi children are exposed to beating without regard for their age and for myriad reasons, thus growing up insecure, hostile, and violent. Moreover, they are prone to being kidnapped by criminal gangs, trained to steal or pickpocket, or, worse, placed at the mercy of terrorists for use in attacks.

The deterioration of families' financial situation has also left poor children deprived of educational opportunity. For many children, even when they do

attend school, the collapse of infrastructure, the unavailability of electricity and water, and high temperatures in the summer are hardly conducive to successful study.

The small number of schools, the poor condition of buildings, and the collapse of relationships between students and teachers

is also at fault. Older children sit in classrooms with much younger children, growing frustrated and violent, rather than becoming role models for others to emulate.

Iraqi girls suffer no less than boys—and often more. At one end of the spectrum of deprivation, their opportunities are more constrained. When a family's income is insufficient to pay school fees for every child, girls are typically denied an education, owing to the traditional belief that marriage is a girl's final destiny. They must perform household chores and are subject to beating if they do not carry out orders issued by male family members. In poor households, they are also likely to receive less food than boys, placing their physical health and development at even greater risk.

At the other end of the spectrum, rape, adultery, early child bearing, and abortion have become ordinary matters. Increasingly, Iraqi girls interpret anything given to them as a means to have sex with them.

Orphans, whose number has increased sharply over the past quarter-century as a result of wars, economic sanctions, and terrorism, are especially vulnerable to the cruelest type of physical and psychological violence. Having lost their homes and parents, they sleep in alleys, sell cigarettes or newspapers, and beg. Grandparents are often unable or unwilling to care for them, and the pathological education given to them by criminal gangs often puts them beyond the reach of any institution's ability to rehabilitate them.

Simply put, children in Iraq have been reduced from human beings worthy of care to tools of production and instruments of violence. We are quite literally breeding a new generation of disorder.

Amal Kashf Al-Ghitta, a member of the Iraqi National Assembly, directs the Islamic Foundation for Women and Children.

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# Georgia on Europe's mind

By: Salomé Zourabichvili

The era in which Europe could rely on America to wage war, make peace, and establish democracy in its own backyard is over. With European Union enlargement, and as the recent Russian gas crisis demonstrated, that backyard now includes not just Ukraine, but Georgia as well. Indeed, as in Ukraine, Georgia is undergoing a test of democracy that Europe cannot afford to ignore.

Georgia was the first post-Soviet country to stage a "color revolution," and thus to demonstrate, with dignity and maturity, its people's choice for democracy and European values. The European Union flags that have flown on all Georgian public buildings since then signal a natural attachment, as old as the history of a country that, for the ancient Greeks, was an integral part of the world as it was then known. Prometheus, Medea, the Amazons and, in neighboring Armenia, Noah's Ark—the Europe of our myths starts here.

With its history, culture, and traditions—including its critical, independent, and even rebellious spirit within the former Soviet Union—Georgia would seem to be an ideal candidate for successful democratization. So it is all the more worrisome that democratization there is foundering.

Everything seemed to have started well enough. Political reforms, privatization, anti-corruption measures, a search for new leaders untainted by compromise with the former regime, and implementation of a pro-European

foreign policy met no resistance. But the totalitarian mindset has since resurfaced in leaders who, with their claim to represent the will of the majority, appropriate more and more power.

Like the ancient Greeks' Hydra, Georgia's political elite never ceases to die and be reborn. The same people and governing methods that the "Rose Revolution" of November 2003 sought to defeat have reemerged at the center of power by using their personal networks, which extend outside Georgia's borders, as well as their tremendous wealth and finely honed skills at political scheming and manipulation.

This bears little in common with the essence of democracy, which consists not merely in ballot boxes, but in the separation of powers. The government meddles in the affairs of the parliament, which in turn seeks to micromanage the government—including, in my case, the nomination of ambassadors and their daily routines! Finally, and more seriously, the judiciary is not yet independent, undermining the rule of law and thus deterring badly needed private investment.

Georgia's democracy exists in its head, but not yet in its body: citizens still spurn politics as a dirty pursuit, abandoning the ground to those who should have been retired long ago. But the hope of democracy remains strongly rooted in Georgia's people, civic organizations, and media.

Now is the time for Europe to ensure that this hope is not extinguished. The US has already done as much as it can to support political stability in Georgia since independence.

To be sure, stability was not always identified with democracy during the rule of Eduard Shevardnadze, the former Soviet Union foreign minister who was ousted as our president by the Rose Revolution. But Americans invested generously in the survival of democratic ideas and leaders. Although the foundation backed by the financier George Soros did not fabricate the Rose Revolution, as Russian nationalists claim, it certainly nurtured, encouraged, and supported democracy's preconditions.

But, to help consolidate its democracy, Georgia now requires support of a different nature, which Europe is better equipped to offer. The models for the balance of powers, the functioning of the judiciary, and local democracy must be inspired by European forms, which are closer to Georgian reality than Anglo-Saxon models of the American type.

Europe's rejection of this challenge would betray its fundamental duties in a place—small, Mediterranean, flexible, with old historical traditions—where democracy stands a much greater chance of success than in Ukraine, which is both huge and still very Soviet-minded, not to mention Central Asia. Indeed, refusal to support Georgia's struggling democracy would most likely postpone democratic progress in Ukraine, Belarus, even in Russia itself.

This clearly raises the stakes. Russia, while never renouncing its imperial dreams and instruments of domination, was nonetheless coming to terms with the inevitability of democracy, at least on its margins. But

this hesitant acceptance of a certain normality in its relations with its neighbors has always been vulnerable to a sudden eruption of Russia's famously irrational "derzhava"—an aggressive ethos that glorifies the state and asserts its strength by pouncing on weakness.

This is the key to understanding the recent Russian gas crisis. Just as surely, any sign of a retreat from democracy in Georgia and other post-Soviet states will merely fuel Russia's neo-imperial ambitions. It is Europe's responsibility to convince Russia that there is no hope of a return to the past. Europe must assume this role not only to ensure the future independence of its energy supply, but also to demonstrate that European values of freedom, democracy, and justice between peoples have real force.

To succeed, Europe must equip itself with the necessary instruments: a large semi-public foundation to promote Europe and support political reform, a university to train future executives of nascent democracies, a police force, and an army of judges and magistrates to breathe life into the models that we want to emulate.

Above all, Europe needs conviction. If Europe today cannot convince itself that it has a vital interest in its neighbors' future, who will believe in Europe tomorrow?

Salomé Zourabichvili is a former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, and the leader of one of Georgia's opposition parties.

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# Increased activities of Yemeni businesswomen

**Yemeni businesswomen complain of not receiving enough encouragement and unfriendly social attitudes toward them.**

By: Mahyoub Al-Kamali

Yemeni women's activities in economic areas have increased despite challenges they face in a conservative society that looks at women through their housework in raising children and some light activities. Nevertheless, laws encourage women to practice trade and investment work in the free market based on economic openness and attracting capital to operate available economic projects by Yemenis, Arabs and foreigners.

Positive indicators have emerged regarding increased numbers of Yemeni businesswomen registering their commercial activities. There are 232 women in three governorates - 200 in Aden, 12 in Taiz and 20 in Sana'a - who operate commercial businesses.

A study mentioned that the above figures do not reflect actual numbers of Yemeni businesswomen, as most prefer not to register their businesses with the Ministry of Trade or Chambers of Commerce to avoid

paying taxes. According to the study, businesswomen prefer managing social characteristic projects gaining quick profit with low cost through opening pharmacies, medical laboratories and private schools. Despite strong competition prevailing in the free market, recent years have witnessed dozens of women operating businesses in Yemen, particularly in Sana'a, Aden and Taiz governorates.

However, the study also mentioned certain hindrances facing businesswomen. Among impediments are not enough encouragement and care, society's unfriendly view and the investment environment, adding that some problems businesswomen encounter are gender-related. Taiz businesswomen mentioned they were exposed to family and societal pressure when they began projects like coiffeur shops. Other hindrances in initiating projects include difficulties in financing, marketing, obtaining licenses and weak skills and abilities.

The study also revealed the Chambers of Commerce role in boosting social gender equality, indicating that most sources of capital



Yemeni businesswomen face many types of social impediments. Picture: Dr. Najat M. Jumaan, an example of successful Yemeni businesswoman.

are from the businesswomen with very little support coming from husbands, family or friends. It also proved that a majority of

businesswomen invest in the services sector, such as coiffeur shops, sewing workshops and hotels. Very limited numbers of women work in non-

traditional sectors such as selling ironmongery, cartoon film distribution, the energy sector and real estate.

# Economists criticize Central Bank's currency policy

By: Yemen Times Staff

Specialist economists criticized the Central Bank of Yemen's policy of pumping millions of dollars into the market in an attempt to preserve the national currency price, discrediting the move as causing banking market disturbance. They say the policy indicates the extent of its negative effect in the case of Watani Bank for Trade and Investment. Despite that, the Yemeni government considers the Central Bank's measures necessary to keep price rates stable against deterioration from time to time. Nevertheless, this excites worry and criticism by a number of economists.

Sources affirmed that such pumping volume during January, February and March of this year has amounted to \$249 million, a great sum compared to Yemen's modest banking market. However, national currency prices have not improved against other currencies and local market price rates have not retreated but continued their sharp rise until sugar prices increased twofold.

Specialists emphasized that the local currency's price retreated 15 percent in the past two months, pointing out that the CBY does not have a clear monetary policy and that Yemen's dollar price is not governed by market dealings but rather by a group of beneficiaries possessing foreign currency stocks.

Economists are skeptical about CBY



Central Bank of Yemen in Sana'a.

PHOTO BY YASSER AL-MAXASI

rescue steps, describing them as going to a group of exchange dealers rather than reaching the banking market to cover the currencies' deficit. All monies the CBY pumps into the market do not reach exchange shops but are given to limited exchange dealers or certain banks.

Banking affairs researcher Saeed Al-Qarshi believes CBY currency price measures are sedatives rather than real

cures. He clarified that measures to decrease the dollar price against the rial include issuing treasury bonds, pumping foreign currency into the market and raising the legal reserve on foreign currency deposits by 30 percent.

Al-Qarshi said he noticed that treasury bonds had a role in keeping the currency relatively stable, but negatively impacted development and the country's economic situation. The reason

was that banks began using economic sector loan funds to buy treasury bonds; and by this, thereby achieving stable revenue without risks. Consequently, the treasury bonds withdrew liquidity from the banking sector, which reflected negatively on investment and economic development.

Al-Qarshi considers the problem's reasons inflation, price rise and the consequent drop in local currency pur-

chasing power. Consequently, citizens tend to retain their purchasing power by exchanging what local currency they possess for foreign currency. Another reason is lack of trust in the local currency. By nature, Yemen is a consumer society depending on the external market to import most of its needs.

Dr. Ali Al-Shatir, finance undersecretary for planning, statistic and follow-up affairs, earlier demanded revising the treasury bonds issuing policy. He said he personally believed the bonds contributed to economic recession and there must be some factors to come out of such situations. In his opinion, among such factors is drawing up a serious study of the treasury bonds situation. Al-Shatir pointed out that the treasury bonds were important at the establishment stage, playing a role in land and currency speculations, as well as a type of stability role.

For its part, the CBY asserted its continued market monitoring, with Prime Minister Bajammal defending the policy, indicating that inflation rates affected the currency by 2.4 percent and admitting that demands for the dollar sometimes are unreasonable.

Last year the CBY raised the legal reserve on foreign currency deposits to 30 percent without interest. The purpose was to raise demand for deposits in local currency. However, what happened was completely the opposite. Demand for foreign currency deposits rose from 27 percent in 2004 to 81 percent in 2005.

## Promising investment opportunities in minerals in Yemen

By: Yemen Times Staff

A recently published economic report revealed Yemen's possession of a huge stock of mineral riches, representing promising investment opportunities. The report mentioned that such miner-

als are encouraging alternatives to provide new national income sources.

There are encouraging prospects for mineral wealth investment, as surveys confirm the existence of large quantities of gold in Hadramout Valley towns and an estimated 687,000-ton geological reserve containing about 15 tons of gold. Gold also is present among rocks

in Sana'a, Abyan, Al-Jawf and Al-Beidha areas.

According to the report by the Geological Survey Department, surveys confirm the existence of about four million tons of copper and nickel north of Mukalla and in the Hamoura area of Taiz governorate.

Old silver mines were discovered in

Radhradh area in Nahm, as well as discovery of significant zinc and lead mineral ores in a reserve estimated at about 3,073 million tons. The reserve contains an average of 15.3 percent zinc and 1.6 percent lead, as well as 155 kilos of sedimentary rock in the southern end, particularly in Shabwa and Masilah.

The report also pointed to existence of iron in Mekiras and Sa'ada, in addition to other large quantities of metals, industrial rocks and nonmetallic ores of commercial indicators. These discoveries represent promising investment opportunities as income alternatives instead of reducing the country's oil quantity.

## In breif

Sana'a will host a regional symposium in May on social partnership in fighting poverty organized by Yemen's Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and the Arab League. Several Arab countries are participating in the symposium, in addition to Arab, regional and international organizations concerned with combating poverty in Arab nations.

Yemen's pavilion in the Arab and Foreign Communities Exhibition concludes in Amman, Jordan today. The exhibition was organized by Yarmouk University's new students care department in the student affairs deanship.

Opened March 12 by university president Dr. Mohammed Al-Sabarini, the exhibition included Yemeni, Saudi Arabian, Palestinian, Nigerian, Chinese, Indonesian, Malaysian, Bahraini, Kuwaiti, Omani, Egyptian, Algerian, Mauritanian and Moroccan pavilions. The Yemeni pavilion displayed books, pamphlets, photos, handicrafts, heritage instruments, foods and folk clothing.

Preparations are underway for economic committee meetings of Sana'a Grouping Forum countries in April. Yemeni Minister of Industry and Trade Dr. Khalid Rajih Sheikh will chair the meetings, with participation of his Sana'a Grouping countries counterparts. The committee will discuss a number of topics pertaining to enhancing the grouping's economic and trade cooperation. It also will discuss activating and implementing economic and trade agreements, as well as ways the grouping countries can benefit from Aden free zone by increasing volume of trade exchange.

Sheikh Abdullah Saeed Al-Katheeri, chairman of the board of directors of Amran Company for Yemeni Estate and Contracts Investments, which participated in the International Fair for Estate, revealed that his company's sales volume amounted to YR 347 million, equal to 30 percent of the total display.

He clarified that his company received investment and other offers, most significantly was that offered by Al-Wadi Medical Complex in Sayoun, which is under deliberation with Dr. Salem Al-Sirri, the complex's board of directors chairman. A Saudi investor offered to build the complex.

Al-Katheeri also said his company received offers from Saudi investing companies to build recreational cities in Mukalla area in Hadramout governorate.

The capital secretariat is preparing to conduct a field inspection campaign of bakeries to see to what extent they are committed to bread prices and weights decreed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The campaign will be implemented periodically and aim to activate the ministry's role in monitoring and protecting consumers. Another campaign preceded this one, wherein all expired goods and those whose packaging does not conform to defined specifications were registered.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade has begun preparations to hold trade and industrial exhibitions, which will include handicrafts exhibitions. The exhibitions are intended to be held in Hodeidah city during celebrations of the 16<sup>th</sup> national day of establishment of the Republic of Yemen to be held this year in Hodeidah city.

Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation Dr. Jalal Faqirea confirmed that his ministry is about to adopt and implement building 15 agricultural projects in Marib governorate. The projects include agricultural, animal and botanical fields, as well as expansion in building water dams and barriers.

In recent meetings held in the governorate, which included senior governorate officials, Faqirea indicated that the projects are part of Cabinet directives to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.



# Inby and Wihdat in heated encounter

**Arab Contractors stadium in Egypt will host Egyptian Inby vs. Jordanian Wihdat on Wednesday within Arab Champions League first leg semifinals – AS**

Cairo (ArabSport) Wednesday - Egyptian Inby will play guests Jordanian Wihdat on Wednesday in their most anticipated Arab Champions League semifinals first leg match.



Egypt's sole representative, Inby, is looking forward to score as many goals as they could to make the return leg

match easier for them and to book their seats within the finals and compete over the title for the first time in their history.

Mustafa Kamal will stand as the goalkeeper; in front of him will be Mohammad Younes, Amro Fahim, Mohammad Al Hadidi, Fouad Salamah, Ayman Saeed, Mohammad Thabet Saroukh, Samir Sabri, Hani Abdullah, Magdi Abdul Aty and Abdul Hamid Hassan.

On the other hand, Jordanian Wihdat players are keen on resuming their positive results they have claimed so far in Arab Champions League depending mostly on their distinguished players, Amer Theeb, Faisal Ibrahim, Mahmoud Shelbaieh, Mustafa Shehdeh and many others.

The match will be run by Kuwaiti referees' crew led by Saad Kameel and will be watched by Tunisian Monsef Al Fadele.

Source: www.arabsport.com

## Sports Marketing and Olympic History Symposium launched

The Sports Marketing and Olympic History Symposium kicked off Monday at the Sana'a Olympic Center organized by the National Olympic Committee in cooperation with the Asian Olympic Council.

The event involved as many as 70 participants, representing sporting federations and concerned administrations at the Ministry of Youth and Sports, as well as other

parties concerned with sports marketing.

Some symposium papers presented gave a glimpse of sports history and its relation to marketing in Olympic rounds and international championship. Other papers discussed the Olympic movement's history since it began at the hands of French national De Cobertan in 1896.

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## Sports in Brief

### Eighth round of Division 1 football club league wraps up

The second round of Division 1 football clubs witnessed exiting contests. Small teams ascending this year are embarrassing larger ones, as seen by the large number of goals scored, 23.

Saqr Taiz still leads despite two draws in recent matches; however, Hilal, 22 May and Yarmouk are chasing strongly. Titleholder Tilal continues staggering behind. Ahali of Sana'a also is far behind and threatened with collapse unless club members hurry to save their team.

### Table tennis teams attend camp in China

Delegations from the national table tennis teams (girls, juniors and adults) departed Sana'a to attend a camp at a sporting academy in China. The camp aims to help Yemeni players benefit from Chinese experience and improve their performance. The delegation involves 16 players of both genders.

The junior table tennis team will participate in the World Table Tennis Championship this May in Germany, as well as the Dubai junior competition and the Arab Championship in Yemen this August.

### Basketball referees training course wraps up

A basketball referees training course concluded Monday at the Ahli Club Hall in Sana'a. The March 12-13 course was organized by the General Basketball Federation with 28 referees participating from various ranks.

Federation Deputy President Mohamed Hassan Abdu spoke at the concluding ceremony, emphasizing the need to hold such courses.

Course lecturer Mustafa Anwar Zaid confirmed that the course achieved great success, with referees benefiting and obtaining information about the game's new amendments.



# Job Vacancies

The Yemen LNG project involves the construction and operation of a gas pipeline, a harbour and a liquid natural gas processing plant at Balhaf which will export 6.7 million tones of LNG per annum. The project offices will be based in Sana'a and the project has an anticipated lifespan of over 20 years. Yemen LNG Company is now preparing to recruit the temporary and permanent staff who will construct and manage the project.

**Candidates applying for these posts must be Yemeni nationals**

### INTERNAL CONTROL ANALYST – Reference No. 051

Reporting directly to Deputy Finance Manager, the job holder will develop, control and maintain financial procedures in compliance with company management control policies and procedures and to ensure procedures are maintained in accordance with legal requirements, with agreements signed with Partners and with company internal control practices without jeopardizing the efficiency of operations. The job holder will require to support and coordinate other divisions in the development and implementation of departmental control standards and procedures. The successful applicant will have a minimum of 5 years' professional experience in a control and audit role within an oil and gas environment, an Accounting or Financial degree or commensurate professional qualification with good interpersonal and report writing skills. This permanent staff position is based in Sana'a.

### INTERNAL AUDITOR– Reference No. 050

Reporting directly to Deputy Finance Manager, the job holder will assist with the developing/adapting Internal Audit Programmes and implementing them in accordance with an approved annual Internal Audit Plan, carry out internal audits on regular basis of pre identified functions and report on any irregularities found, assist outside groups conducting audits of Company records (Statutory, Government, Tax and Shareholder), prepare regular status reports on both Financial and

Technical Audits to Division Managers, identify outstanding and resolved audit points and coordinate and work with various external audits (From Partners and from statutory auditors).

The successful applicant will have a minimum of 5 years' professional experience in a control and audit role within an oil and gas operations, an Accounting or Financial degree or commensurate professional qualification with good interpersonal and report writing skills. This permanent staff position is based in Sana'a.

### PAYABLES ACCOUNTANT– Reference No. 029

Reports to the Account Payable Supervisor, the job holder is responsible for registering and processing invoices for payments to Vendors on the Payables system, processes manual payments as required and targets any payments which appear on the Aged Accounts Payable listing for priority attention. The job holder also is responsible building working relationships with Company Divisions and third party suppliers as well as assisting both internal and external auditors as necessary in identifying invoices for review and advises Accounts Payable Supervisor when Vendors can be closed out on the Payables system.

The successful candidate must have Intermediate business qualification, with Business or Accounting degree preferred and at least 2 years Accounts Payable experience, preferably with Oil and Gas industry.

**All applicants for these positions must have excellent IT skills including extensive experience of Microsoft Office systems. Fluency in written and spoken Arabic and English are essential, and candidates will be tested to assess their current level and training needs.**

**Applicants should send their CVs in English mentioning their personal ID/passport number with a short covering letter explaining why they believe they are qualified for the post either to the address below, or preferably by e-mail to**

**HR@YEMENLNG.COM**

**Human Resources Department  
Yemen LNG Company  
P.O. Box 15347. Sana'a, Yemen**

**Closing Date : 31st March, 2006  
Candidates selected for interview will be contacted by Yemen LNG.  
WWW.YEMENLNG.COM**



# Youth Forum

The Youth Forum section is an uncensored space for youth-related issues written by Yemen Times readers.

## Women's rights Showers

By: **Barkatullah Marwat**  
bumarwat@hotmail.com  
Kuwait

For ages women have been insisting for their rights. At every forum one finds women asking for their rights, especially from men. It seems almost ridiculous of women asking for rights from men when they don't allow rights to their own gender.

When a girl becomes a wife, she snatches away the rights of her mother-in-law. When the mother becomes the mother-in-law at her son's wedding she doesn't bother to treat her son's wife in a decent manner. Instead the mother-in-law does everything to tease her daughter-in-law and will at times put the daughter-in-law in a position where she becomes the victim of an exploded stove. (Here I am not sure you mean the literal sense as in the "kitchen brides of India who are burned to death by their in-laws" or do you mean she is worked like a "horse ploughing the fields").

Sisters show great enthusiasm with the marriage of their brother, but when the brother's wife enters their home, they start conspiracies against her. ("Or in some cases") A wife sometimes doesn't let her husband live peacefully with his sisters and she always tries to create a distance between them.

Why don't women bring about changes in themselves? (Are our social constructs such that permit us to lash out against the very group we belong to?) If women sort out their problems, almost half of the problems of our society will be

solved. (But are those problems based on family upbringing or are they based on peer pressure from women outside their own families? If the case is that it is a question of upbringing; then we must look to our Qur'an and Sunnah to find the solution to bringing up better mannered women in our families.)

If the problems reside with peer pressure from the outside, then the question is how do we stop these trends from taking hold in our women.) While asking the men for rights, women should also think about the limits set by Islam on the freedom of a woman. (This freedom is to remember to be kind to one's family; to bring up our children with good, sound Adab; and to abstain from creating fitnah by virtue of our own tongues and actions.)

We live in an Islamic state and we have to make it an Islamic state. This can only be done if we succeed in proving ourselves as true Muslims. (This is where Islamic education is a key factor. We need to promote better education in the home for our women and promote good manners as the litmus test of our adherence to Islam.) Women should not exceed the boundaries set by Islam. They should be learning more about the rights of a woman within Islam, within her family and within women themselves. In wanting to share in the benefits they believe they will derive in the race with men, women have gone very far, but in its own way has created many new troubles in our society.

If we want to prosper in this world, we'll have to bring Islam back into our lives and the women should play their due part in it.

By: **Fuad Noman**  
fn\_0012000@yahoo.com

Life's lure can't calm time's tempest

It is the most saline mist  
But it is burnished phantasm  
Knapsack of fillet  
Wrapped by the castle in the sky  
Remains of brains  
In slender lanes  
Hugging the showers of light  
While walking I heard  
The ricochet of famine corpse  
Muttering to black dogs  
By the side of the curve of a century  
cemetery  
Dumping the water by hoodoo of  
grubby hogs  
Attended the departed human's bicen-  
tenary  
As we are wearing our overall night  
It can't be darker than Tomorrow's  
site  
Spiritual darkness will be innate  
human rite  
Either with the dove's bough or with-  
out bullet diet  
Infuriated hatred blade stabbing the  
pride's head  
Chopping and tossing the innocence  
smiles by butcher's blade

Swelling up and discharging the  
parcels of sarcophagus lade  
Pitiable Fatality of tame animal  
Butcher's eyes have not shed  
In next to no time,  
No Showers  
Titanic Cascade shaking ill-timed  
cosmos's gate!  
Behind hugging and loving my tears  
are dropping  
My past with present and future in  
one place grouping  
The arrow of perfidy clobbering the  
back of moon by undying lobbing  
Led the night's time to be blind and  
poignant moving

## Unnecessary provocations and some important corrections - What is with Europe?

By: **M. Hand**  
mthanley@ups.com

Our columnist writes: "But why should there be a systematic effort to make sure that all of Europe is embroiled in such obvious efforts to foment hatred and bigotry." I could not believe my eyes that your columnist was writing this. This particular columnist foments hatred and bigotry toward Jews in almost every column he writes.

He also states: "One would wonder why any cartoonist far away in Denmark would find it necessary to waste his talent on intimidating illustrations of hate and prejudice, without reason or cause, especially as Muslims have never brought any

harm to him or to Denmark..." I would like to inform you sir, that most of the rest of the world wonders why Muslims thousands of miles away (in, say, Iran, Afghanistan or Indonesia) would also find it necessary to waste their "talents on intimidating illustrations of hate and prejudice, without reason or cause" against Israel, especially as Israel has never brought any harm to them.

It is clear that your world does not understand Freedom of Speech. It is also clear, from your demands of apology from governments, that you don't have any idea what it means to have an independent press, or, for that matter, any institution that is not controlled by the your corrupt governments.

The Muslim world stands by

silently as prominent Muslim heads of state threaten to wipe other countries off the map, while homicide bombers kill innocent children daily, and while thugs in your midst cut the heads off live hostages while your government controlled press is not only complicit, but actually makes sure the act and its associated threats are broadcast to the world.

Yet, you are afraid of words. WORDS! Maybe, just maybe, you might want stop you're rioting and "outrage" for a moment to reflect on why most of the rest of the world sees the Muslim world the way the cartoon depicts, as a violent, out of control society.

Yeah, sure, Islam is a peaceful religion alright. That's what they keep on telling us.

## Poverty in our hearts only

By: **Abdulkreem Al-Aawage**  
abdulkreem\_h\_alawage@yahoo.co

Poverty is in our hearts. These few words indicate a great meaning: The homeland has an ample bosom. The earth is full of wealth and resources. The youth struggle here and there to study and apply for jobs. It is the reality, a better earth for wiser people. Everything is available but there isn't a care for anything.

It is repeated and heard every minute -there is corruption in the administrative and financial sectors- which leads us back to what we have talked about before, poverty.

But it is not the poverty of the economic arena. It is about the poverty in our hearts which makes officials in the offices of the different ministries to sell jobs to those who pay more for them; sell the certifications in our schools to those careless students; and create obstacles in any routine treatment to get what is nowadays called- the cost of Qat. It is this darkness of the heart which makes some, let the piles of herbicides enter the country in illegal ways.

It is the poverty and blindness of the heart, which leads those in the agricultural field to waste the gifts of donor countries in trivial projects or unknown pursuits.

What are the solutions to all these

hindrances? They must be found and tackled with quickly to assure everyone in this society their rightful place in life and equality due to them.

I am like those who wander and know that there is corruption: Speaking about this dangerous disease in various settings among both the formal and informal media, and in the various sessions of parliament -yet never taking any positive steps to face or cope with these difficulties. So I ask the question, a question incumbent on everyone: Have we not the evidence and the means to face all these obstacles or we are so complaisant in all of this because we have received some benefit or interest from a bad situation?

### Vacancies

**Technical Assistance Management Specialist + Administrative Assistant + Accountant**  
For the Basic Education Development Project  
(IDA Credits & Multi-Donors Trust Funds)

The Basic Education Development Project (BEDP) at the Ministry of Education (MOE) seeks applicants for the above mentioned positions. The Technical Assistance Management Specialist will contribute to accelerate the project implementation and the preparation of better quality documents to be submitted to IDA and ensure that the relevant provisions of Development Credit Agreement and the Operations Manual are implemented. Under the general direction of the Project Director, the said person will be responsible as per the underwith mentioned tasks, will report directly to the Director and will closely work with all sectors and departments of MOE, Governorates and Districts Education Offices involved in the Project.

#### The Technical Assistance Management Specialist would:

- Help the Ministry's staff in preparation documents to be submitted to PAU and IDA;
- Review and comment all relevant documents and correspondences submitted to PAU by the MOE, or by other organizations;
- Working as a liaison between PAU and MOE;
- Manage all aspects of technical assistance inter alia:
  - Review and prepare TORs if needed;
  - Prepare long-, and shortlists for the consultant assignments;
  - Review and comment the consultants' proposals, reports and contracts;
  - Manage the consultants' work and contracts;
- Review the documents PAU send to other stakeholders of the Project from educational professional consideration and improve them if needed;
- Assist and support the development of project implementation plan;
- Assist and support the PAU's monitoring and evaluation activities as required;
- Assist and support the generation of progress reports as required;
- Fulfill other project related tasks assigned to him/her by the Director.

#### Qualifications:

- Advanced degree in education or in similar field e.g. education management, education administration, etc;
- At least 5 year working experience in education preferably in education planning, technical assistance management ;
- It is preferred the consultant to have wide knowledge on at least 3 different fields of education, e.g. girls education, curriculum development, text book, literacy, education organization, etc.);
- Working experience in development projects is an asset;
- Computer literate and excellent speaking and writing knowledge in English;
- Ability to work with team.

#### The Administrative Assistant would:

- Provide secretarial and operational assistance to professional staff
- Ensure quality of outgoing correspondence and other related documents.
- Manage the filing system and record management.
- Manage the leave and attendance system and schedule appointments.
- Handle the logistics of conferences and workshops.

#### Qualifications:

- A Bachelor's degree with at least 3 years experience in office logistic management.
- Good interpersonal skills and excellent communication skills.
- Computer literate and excellent speaking and writing knowledge in English;

#### The Accountant would:

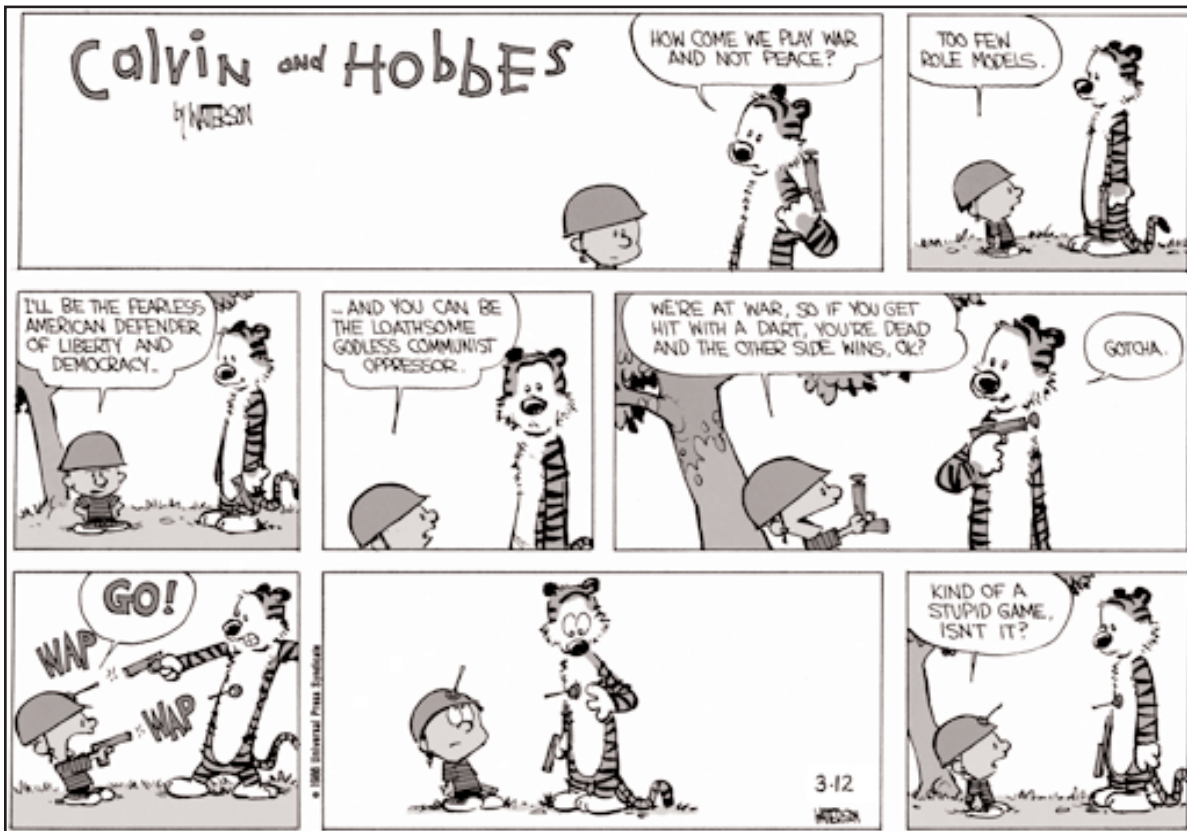
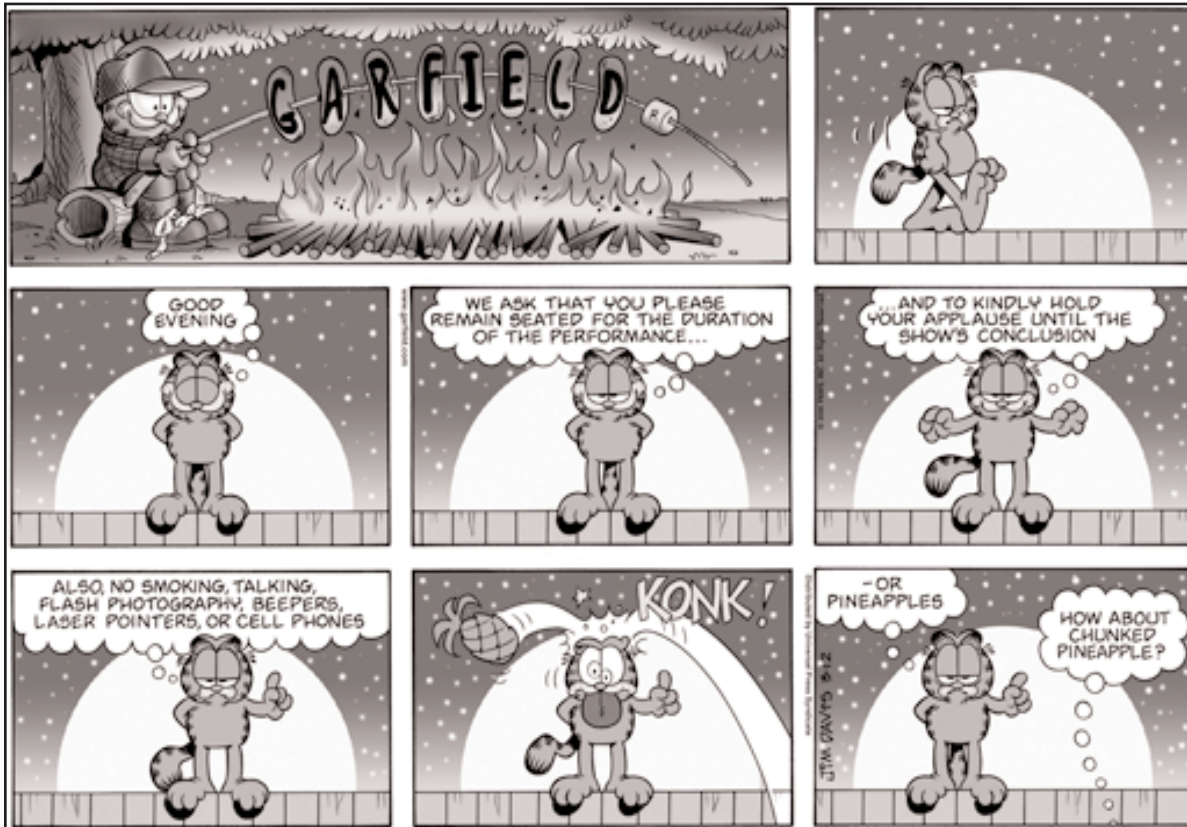
- Ensure that there is a functional financial management system; Establish proper accounting procedures and internal controls.
- Manage all daily financial activities of the grant; prepare the withdrawal applications, claims, and related governmental letters; Record transactions in the computerized accounting system of the financial activities; Make the necessary vouchers and receipts for all deposits and withdrawal to and from the grant, and record them in the predefined chart of accounts in the system.
- Make a monthly replenishment of the S/A and maintain the necessary control registers for all procured goods and technical assistance; Make a monthly reconciliation of the S/A.
- Make sure that all bank statements, withdrawal applications, claims, correspondence are properly filed and easily accessible once required.
- Ensure that consolidated financial management reports for the grant are produced on a timely basis and sufficient in content to enable the management of MOE and IDA to assess the financial position of the grant.
- Act as a focal point for any dialogue on financial management matters relating to the grant may be required by the financiers.
- Ensure that the grant is audited in accordance with IDA's requirements and cooperate fully with the auditor in that respect.

#### Qualifications:

- A minimum of Bachelor's degree in Accounting with a minimum of 3 years of professional
- Experience in accounting position, preferably in the private sector or in a development project.
- Familiarity with the government's and IDA's financial management requirement.
- Experience in the use of accounting programs and software.
- Proficiency in both Arabic and English.

All applications along with a detailed resume and supporting documents should be submitted by  
**Saturday, March 25, 2006 at the following address:**

**Basic Education Development Project**  
60M Southern Road, Bait Meyad  
Tel: 01-619160 / Fax 01-619219





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## Walking in the clouds on Razih Mountain

After visiting Razih Mountain, Irena Knehtl contemplates the splendor and the future of this green area in northern Yemen.

By: Irena Knehtl  
iren\_knehtl@yahoo.com

The peace of the idyllic countryside in northwestern Sa'ada governorate was broken by the roar of bulldozers, tractors, scrapers and dump trucks. A wide, paved road - Razih ring road - was in the making. The beauty of Razih Mountain is becoming increasingly within reach.

### The way of man

A thousand feet off the ground, the haze lifted as we headed for Razih Mountain. The sandy areas gradually thinned out and there was just a darkish-gray jagged mountain. From this altitude, the mountain took on a faint green tint, almost resembling the mold of a moonscape. From the brightly painted mud and brick houses of the lower valleys, the homes here changed into gray stone construction. A few tiny villages clung precariously to the mountainside here and there.

Small villages and laboriously terraced hills were everywhere. Farming here is a perpetual contest between man and nature. The sun was still shining but black clouds threatened on the horizon as we stepped into cool, crisp air.

In view were the old and the new - sometimes extremes of both, small farm plots, old forts and castles, new houses, new cars, donkeys turning up in narrow alleys at the picturesque fortress like a traditional home. The scene was wild and rugged as we entered another world from the cool air of the mountain. The air was colder still at the top of this beautiful mountain world. Remote villages sat on the flank of the mountain like a large stone fortress.

The edge of Razih Mountain ridge abruptly dropped several thousand feet into wild canyons leading down through the coastal desert to the Red Sea. Green grass, wildflowers and a cool, clear brook all were spiced with the fresh smell of spring. A country lane wound its way up and down gentle slopes, past lush fields of wheat, barley, tomatoes, onions and alfalfa. Peach, apple and plum trees were in the pinkest bloom.

Razih farmers were tilling their fields, plowing and pulling weeds. Every village had a different character - literally a different color - all beautiful and well-cared for. People would come over and invite us in for coffee, and if we wished, a meal.



The beauty of the Razih Mountain: Green terraces and blue skies.

Meadows and wildflowers shrouded in mist, castles in the air, the smell of time and the art of being - these are changing times.

### A mountain dreamland

Isolation and abundant rainfall make Razih so distinctive. Terraced farming, craggy mountain peaks, tall trees and luxuriant coffee plantations - agriculture here requires little or no irrigation. It is assumed that most parts of Razih Mountain receive at least 12 inches of rain annually.

Farming is laid out in broad terraces, some 200 to 300 feet wide, astride the hilly contours of the land. Cereal crops, wheat, barley and millet dominate commercial agricultural production while fruits like apricots, figs, apples and pears are plentiful.

### Future development

Razih development began fairly recently. The whole area has changed a lot and will continue to change at an ever-increasing pace. The completion of Razih road and providing electricity are two ongoing projects of major importance for the Razih area. Other efforts include basic improvement of water and roads, and also education and health have high priority. Agricultural advances could be among the most dramatic and innovative.

Change must be slow in order to ensure development for the better. Change that comes fast can be overwhelming, even frightening. Local leaders have little experience in promoting their community's needs to the world, let alone managing implementation of these needs. Maybe what is needed is a forum where people and companies

can link with individual school and hospital needs to which they can contribute not just funding, but also advice, information and even hard labor. The internet could be such a medium.

The road will improve the area's tourism potential a great deal. Mountain worlds like Razih could be a showcase for self-sustainable tourism aimed at those seeking different experiences, conscious of the importance of social responsibility and environmental integrity and wishing to have experiences that give them new and different perspectives. Such tours could be done with informed tour coordinators to help tourists better understand the culture.

This highland region supports a heavily concentrated population. Providing modern services to

isolated communities in developing countries under conditions that ensure projects are both affordable and commercially viable remains an unsolved challenge.

The "bundled service" program, for example, offers another alternative. By enhancing electrical service with telecomm and internet access, projects increase economic

opportunities and raise communities' productive capacity.

Utilizing breakthroughs in wireless internet, providing off-grid electricity, telecomm and wireless internet service simultaneously promise that communities will develop productive activities to raise income levels faster than extra services drive up project costs.



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Wheat, barley, apricots and apples are among the many crops on the Razih terraces.

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