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**Inside:**

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**Readers' Voice**  
 Last edition's question:  
 A field study has revealed a fearful increase of illiteracy among Yemeni youth and children. Do you think the Yemeni government would work for rectifying the economic, social and cultural situations to help fight illiteracy dissemination among these important segments of the population?

I don't know (6%)  
 Yes (34%) No (60%)

**This edition's question:**  
 Yemeni judiciary closed three newspapers for violating the publication law, however, Prime Minister ended ban on the three papers Tuesday defying judiciary. Do you think Yemeni judiciary will be independent from the executive authority?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

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 and have your voice heard

## Palestinian Foreign Minister: Government will never recognize Israel

**Hamas refuses the U.S. and European pressure, accepts a Palestinian state but without recognizing Israel.**

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, May 3 — Hamas government will accept establishing the Palestinian state within the 1967 frontiers but it will never recognize Israel, Palestinian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Al-Zahhar said during a Sana'a press conference last Monday before he left Yemen.

"We will agree on a Palestinian state within frontiers reached by 1967 accord on condition nobody tells us to recognize Israel, and we will not abandon Palestine despite international pressures," he added.

The Palestinian Foreign Minister called on the Arab and Islamic countries not to respond to pressures by the U.S. and the European Union, confirming such pressures constitute a big problem to the

Palestinian government. "The problem will exacerbate if we respond to U.S. and EU pressures," he noted.

Al-Zahhar said his tour in the Arab region succeeded to resume good relations between the Palestinian government and Kuwait and Libya. Consequently both Kuwait and Libya pledged financial assistance to the Palestinian government. The latter pledged 55 million dollars in a monthly aid to Palestine plus admitting Palestinian students to its universities.

He mentioned there are many Arab countries announcing their strong adherence to back the Palestinian issue, expecting the popular assistance to be larger than the official one. Al-Zahhar denied information by the U.S. and Israel that his government is besieged.

The Palestinian official said his government makes contacts with most of the Arab and Islamic countries, as well as some western countries in an official way. "We received invitations for international conferences and if there is any siege on Palestine it is only imposed by the U.S. and their allies," he commented.

Al-Zahhar confirmed that Arabs and



Mahmoud Al-Zahhar (center) at the press conference.

Muslims backed Hamas in the past as an organization and now they back it as an official government and authority. He indicated the Palestinians never forget those who support them, nor do they forget those standing against them.

With regard to the results of his visit to Yemen, Al-Zahhar said: "Yemeni Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal approved 15 scholarships for Palestinian students to

study medicine and 10 for other students to major in pharmacology in Yemeni universities, in addition to other scholarships in dentistry to help Palestinians improve the health level in their country.

During his meeting with Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, Al-Zahhar said they have discussed all the issues presented to President Saleh when he met with him, the most important of

which was supporting the Palestinian people to restore paths controlled by Israel for 3 months.

Al-Zahhar reached an agreement with Yemeni officials to maintain contacts and improve deliberations and cooperation in different areas. The Palestinian official met with Yemeni Parliament Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Al-Ahmar and over 200 Yemeni personalities.

## Interior Ministry arrests Al-Balagh Editor for opinion writing

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, May 3 — Editor-in-Chief of Al-Balagh weekly was arrested last Wednesday morning and thrown in the Criminal Investigation Bureau's prison without any obvious charges.

From the jail cell, Abdullah Al-Wazeer told the Yemen Times on Telephone: "security authorities summoned me to the Criminal Investigation Bureau and told me that I am detained and will be referred to prosecution for a criminal charge, which is not clear."

When the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) called the Interior Minister Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi to inquire him about the case, he said a complaint was sued against Al-Wazir, but he never explained what is the complaint and who sued it.

"I was illegally arrested for publication issues. And as security authorities



Abdullah Al-Wazeer

could not find evidence for my detention, they fabricated a charge against me. Until now I have never known the charge and I hope the situation to come gradually back to normal and the law to prevail the country," Al-Wazir went on.

Abdullah Al-Wazir published an article on his paper last Tuesday under the heading "They disgrace the President". The article discussed practice of the president's henchmen and how they make their enemies out of nothing, cause anarchy and chaos, break government laws, embezzle public money and grab private and public property.

## Government releases suspended newspapers

**Yemeni government released three suspended newspapers just one day before journalists worldwide celebrated the World Press Freedom Day.**

By: Mustafa Ragih

SANA'A, May 2 — Yemeni Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal issued a decree releasing Al-Ray Al-Aam, Al-Hureyah and Yemen Observer newspapers, which have been suspended since last February for republishing the Prophet cartoons.

Bajammal issued the decree Tuesday following a meeting with Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS), Deputy Prime Minister & Minister of Interior Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi and Minister of Information Hassan Al-Lawzi. The meeting, which came one day before journal-

ists around the world celebrated the World Press Freedom Day, discussed many problems and issues experienced by journalists. The meeting came out with the government's support for journalist via approving the YJS General Assembly's meeting on May 25 to elect a new YJS Chief. The new chief will succeed Mahboub Ali who resigned the post due to health issues. The government approved financial sponsorship for the YJS General Assembly's meeting.

Prime Minister obviously responded to the YJS demands regarding situations of journalists in official media and their entitlements in the new wage strategy,

YJS board member Sami Ghaleb said in a statement to the Yemen Times. He added that Bajammal ordered concerned bodies to quickly issue an ownership document for the YJS to have land for its Aden office.

With regard to the dispute between YJS and the government over the new draft press law currently discussed before Al-Shoura Council, Bajammal told YJS the government is not in a hurry to approve the draft law. He demonstrated his government's care to achieve a draft law meeting YJS's demands and expectations.

"Though late it was, the Cabinet's



decision is good and reflects insistence of the journalistic community, represented by the YJS, on a broader scope and safe climate for press freedom," Editor-in-Chief of Yemen Observer Mohamed Al-Asadi stated. It will be the first time for the Yemeni press to normally mark the World Press Freedom Day.

Editor-in-Chief of Al-Ray Al-Aam Kamal Al-Ulefi said: "we welcome the government's move to pass the law after the attempt to harm reputation of Al-Ray Al-Aam, voice of all people, and its editors, as well as to shut up mouths by illegally suspending the three papers."

## Court removes military barracks from cities

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, May 3 — Al-Hota court ordered the General Attorney and other concerned authorities to remove military barracks and units from main cities and provincial capitals to outskirts and other areas. The court ruling stirred wide reactions in different parts of the country.

The Court that is headed by judge Ahdhib Al-Bakri turned the case from a normal case, in which Hamoud Al-Jaradi and others were accused of murder, into a another legal trend; of forming an armed band and highway robbery.

The 14 suspects are affiliates of the

39th Armored Division who were arrested following their attack to the house of lieutenant colonel Mohamed Muhsin in Beer Nasser in Sabir area in Lahj, on March 2005. Citizen Mohamed Daifallah was killed in the attack. The court condemned 11 of the accused to death, and acquitted the others. The ruling included confiscating the farm, which was a subject of dispute between influential military leaders and the fifth brigade, which used to own before 1994 war. The farm is to be changed into a public park.

The court ordered the general prosecution, to probe key officials, including

Minister of Defense, Lahj Governor. The regional military leader, leader of the 39th armed brigade and head of the State's land and real Estate, were also among the list. They were all to be investigated over recklessness, negligence and concealment of trespassers who collected wealth in contradiction to the law.

The court also ruled that the Ministry of defense should compensate the families of the accused when the judgment is carried out. The ministry should also pay costs of 2millions Yemeni riyals to the three others.

Lahj's Governorate prosecution appealed the judgment. It said that it is

contradicting the procedure Penal law. The 13 suspects also appealed the ruling.

Observers expect that the ruling will reactivate several previous similar murder cases in all Yemeni governorates. Among these governorates are Hudieda, Aden, and Lahj in which the military barracks were involved.

The judgment brought into focus the case of military barracks in governorates. It was a case raised by political parties in their agendas. It was especially raised during the unity crisis between the socialist party and their partner in unity making, the General People's Congress in 1994.

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## TICU disavows agreement to implement sales tax law

By: Mustafa Ragih

SANA'A, May 2 — Trade and Industry Chambers' Union (TICU) started a media campaign disavowing a previous agreement it signed with President of the Republic to implement the sales tax law by the advent of 2007.

The TICU waged a broad campaign against the sales tax law in mid 2005, culminating with an agreement to pass a 5 percent tariff instead of 10 percent on imports entering the country via land outlets. The same tax is passed on the industrial sectors, however, implementing the tax in the trade sector was postponed until 2007. The law will be applied on the basis of sale bills.

Meanwhile, trade sector representatives held a consultative meeting last week with other representatives from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) to exchange viewpoints on applying the sales tax law, issued in 2001.

In a statement following the meeting, Chairman of Trade and Industry Shammakh said: "What happens is a conspiracy against the Yemeni economy and such conduct aims to create a sedition and divide the society."

Bashammakh blamed the IMF for its insistence on applying the sales tax law while economists said the trade sector rejected the sales tax, as traders fear the sales tax mechanism requiring them to withhold regular accounts. This will help discover tax evasion in trade and industry interests tax because the tax authority knows about monthly sale bills.

Applying the sale tax in Yemen comes as part of partnership with international foundations and donors to qualify Yemen's economy and compensate for production tax, which was replaced by the sales tax.

Bashammakh commented the IMF is a means of destruction because it wants to apply its program overnight. He

added traders will exploit the available space channels to denounce the sales tax law, pointing out that the condition of withholding regular accounts is a catastrophe as the majority of trades manage millions of Riyals, however they do not know how to write checks.

Bashammakh's statement excluded the fact that the sales tax is passed only on traders whose monthly sales reach 50 million Yemeni Riyals, and this is why they are required to withhold regular accounts.

The tax authority is being reshuffled by a Canadian Consultancy Company with the main objective of developing the authority's institutional and administrative structure. The reform program conditioned reshuffling the tax authority to cope with sales tax application.

The Trade and Industry Chamber, represented by Shammakh, vented its criticism of the IMF saying: "the majority of traders run millions and cannot write checks."

## Court jails Al-Qaeda suspect

SANA'A, May 3 — State Security Specialized Penal Court (SSSPC) sentenced Mohammad Hamdi Al-Ahdal, a senior Al-Qaeda suspect to 37 months Wednesday. Al-Ahdal who is considered Al-Qaeda second-in-command in Yemen was charged with forming an armed band, financing Al-Qaeda militants and being involved in the deaths of 18 Yemeni soldiers. "Alahdal was convicted of collecting funds and distributing them to a number of people accused of belonging to Al-Qaeda". Judge Najib Al-Qaderi said.

The 35-year-old Al-Ahdal, also known as Abu Asem Al-Macci, shouted "Allah Akbar (God is Great) and victory to bin Laden and Zarqawi" when the sentence was pronounced. Later, the press reported that the convict saying "Praise God (but) the trial is unjust."

Worth noting that the judge did not



Mohammad Hamdi Al-Ahdal.

mention the rest of the charges, and it was not clear whether Al-Ahdal would face further sentencing later. Legal experts believe the light sentence handed down was due to the lack of evidence on certain charges.

According to the public prosecutor Khalid Al-Mawri, Alahdal had received up to 50,000 dollars from Al-Qaeda leader to finance the networks

operations in Yemen and to give aid for families of detained members of the group.

Al-Ahdal, who has been in custody for almost three years, rejected the charges of financing attacks in Yemen. He said that his trial was politically motivated. But he admitted to having aided families of Islamic militants held in custody of the U.S. or the Yemeni authorities. "Yes, I have been giving financial aid to families of Mujahedeen (holy warriors), and I'm happy for doing that," Al-Ahdal said during the previous trial.

Yemeni authorities believe that Al-Ahdal, who was arrested in 2003, was the deputy of Ali Qaed Sinan Al-Harhi, Alias Abu Ali Al-Harhi, who was killed in a November 2002 CIA missile attack on his car in eastern Yemen. Both men were key suspects in the 2000 bombing of the U.S. warship Cole in Aden port.

## Heavy rains damage houses in Hadramout



Strong floods in Shebam Hadramout left heavy loss of property.

By: Saleh Al-Batati  
Mukalla

Heavy rainfalls hit on Friday 28 April districts of Qatan, Shebam and Seyoun in the valley of Hadramout governorate. The heavy rainfalls caused the collapse of many houses in areas of Hafli, Khamour, Shebam and Huwat.

The damage included the fall of three buildings and collapse of a num-

ber of flats as well as the sweeping of some agricultural land soils. No casualties have been reported among the residents of those areas.

Those rains have posed great danger to historical houses and buildings in Shebam. They are usually built of mud that would not resist heavy rains for a long time and consequently cause demolition or large cracks in them that may lead to their fall.

A citizen said he saw the fall of a ceiling of one of those historical houses as a result of water gathering on the

roof. The residents have many times appealed to the government to renovate those houses that are considered one of the sites attracting tourists from various parts of the world. They asked the government to cover the buildings with alabaster, which is a material resistant to rain.

The Germans are presently carrying out repair works to some historical houses that are exposed to falling.

The assistant deputy of the Wadi districts and desert had visited and inspected the damaged areas and gave his

## Yemen, Saudi exchange terrorist suspects

SANA'A, April 29 — Yemen handed over 16 Saudi fugitives to their homeland Saturday April 28 while Saudi authorities repatriated 11 Yemenis in the latest security swap between the two neighboring countries, Yemeni security official said.

The official said that the 16 Saudi nationals wanted at home on suspicion of involvement in terrorist activities. He added that the move falls within the framework of security agreements signed between the two countries to cooperate in combating terrorism and boost security in both Yemen and Saudi Arabia. He would not give further details on the exchange operation

or the nature of charges against the fugitives.

Saudi Arabia and Yemen have already exchanged wanted suspects on more than one occasion under a June 2003 security agreement which strengthened an extradition treaty signed in 1998. In June 2000, they signed an agreement ending a decades-long territorial dispute. The two neighbors also agreed in 2004 to implement joint security arrangements to block infiltration and smuggling across their 1,800 kilometer frontier.

In May 2002, Saudi Arabia handed, Yemen three wanted Islamists, including two who were involved in the

bombing of a giant French tanker off Yemeni shores. The three terrorists who attacked the Limburg with a booby-trapped boat were among a group of eight suspected turned over to Yemen by Riyadh. In return, Saudi Arabia received five wanted terror suspects from Yemen.

Last year, Yemen handed over 69 men to Saudi Arabia wanted by Riyadh for suspected connections with terrorist attacks in the oil-rich kingdom. Saudi Arabia and Yemen has been battling suspected Al-Qaeda militants since they were subjected to a series of attacks in recent years, notably.

## 1st conference on investment & human development

SANA'A, May 3 — The First Conference on Investment & Human Development is scheduled to convene in Sana'a on 27-29 May 2006. The conference is to be held for the first time under an initiative by the Yemeni private sector and aims at establishment of a new economic stage in both sectors of investment and human development.

The aim is also to prepare investment climate and environment leading to

attraction of Arab and foreign capital and preservation of domestic capital. Many local and regional parties have confirmed their attending of the conference organized by the ministry of industry that assigned its implementation to the Gobari Investment Group and under the sponsor of many economic personalities and trading houses in Yemen.

Sources close to the conference have affirmed that the event would be a start that would contribute in few next years to the establishment of joint huge

investment projects with contribution of Yemeni and foreign capital. In addition, the conference would discuss many issues related to investment affairs and the role that could be played by government institutions in Yemen to facilitate measures and legislations taken with the aim of providing protection for the investor.

The conference is also scheduled to approve recommendations that would help enter Yemen inside the world competition as among the countries of more attracting of investment. The confer-

## Team building course concludes

SANA'A, May 3 — The regional training course for trainers in pressure and team building was concluded in the Yemeni Embassy in Cairo on April 28. It was organized by the Yemeni Cultural Center, with the support of National Fund for democracy (NED). The course was in cooperation with the Arab bar establishment for training in Cairo. A number of youth from Yemen, Egypt Tunisia and Jordan participated in this program. A number of speeches were given in the event which was attended by our Ambassador in Cairo.

The manager of the national youth center, Mr. Abdullah Abdul-Ilah Salaam said: "The course is one of the youth, human rights and democracy activities. It is, within the youth court's project, which the center had been adopting for four years now. It seeks to form a network of local and Arab trainers that will build a base in their institutions to carry out pressure and advocacy activities. It strives to obtain trust and make alliances with youth patronizing organizations. This is because the youth are the largest and most important sector in

Yemen and the Arab region. They comprise 65 percent of the population."

The participants listened to a number of lectures on basic concepts of support, influence on decision-making and acquisition of teamwork skills. Methods of planning to gain advocacy identification of adults' education in addition to gaining the kills of designing and using certain aids in training were also tackled. A practical session for practicing advocacy and team building was held for each participant.

## Early marriage among girls on the rise

By: Ismail Al-Ghabri

SANA'A, April 30 — A field study revealed last month that child marriage among girls reached 52.1%, compared to 6.7% among males. The study conducted by the Woman and Development Study Center, affiliated to Sana'a University; on a sample of 1495 couples argued that there is a huge age gap between the spouses.

The study, which established a comparison between ages of spouses in their first marriage through three generations, disclosed that marriage age raised gradually from an average of 10.24 years to 14.70 years for women and from 20.97 to 21.54 years for men. It indicated that marriage age varies from one geographical area to another, confirming that girls in Hudeida and Hadramout could marry as young as 8 years old, or ten years old in Mukalla.

Concerning the marital relations, the study showed that there is a higher prevalence of divorce among women married early. Also that more than one marriage by men married to women below 18 years and remarriage of divorced girls accepted but extremely difficult, especially in Sayoun region.

Experiences of wives below 18 years, as found by the study team indicated that the wives are generally unprepared for a sexual relationship and coercion into sex

and lack of information about sex, sexual and reproductive health and contraception as well as lack of treatment of reproductive complications and Sexually Transmitted Diseases. There are also consequences from the mental health point of view as young mothers generally have poor skills and capacity to care for babies leading to anguish and anxiety among young mothers and suffer from feel a sense of insecurity. Moreover their feelings of intimacy and affection get affected because of early marriage.

The study showed that 19% of total maternal mortality is among women in 15-19 age group and that median miscarriage reaches 0.8% among women below 18 and 0.56% among women over 18 years of age. There are other maternal complications according to the study especially that about 65% women do not receive any reproductive health services which increases the prevalence of fistula, anemia and malnutrition among young (expecting & lactating) mothers.

According to the study, 48.7% of Yemen's population is below 15 years of age of which over 50% girls are likely to be married before 18 years of age. Of the study sample 381 people said that poverty is the primary reason behind child marriage while social traditions and values constitute another reason for the phenomenon, as parents prefer their daughters to get married in order to avoid any immoral

deviation. Other reasons such as fear their daughters to enter the age of spinsterhood, or that the parents are lured into marrying their daughters at a young age by rich men proposing to marry their daughters.

The study added that the average marriage age in the three governorates is to increase from 9 to 15 years during the 30 years to come. The study findings indicated that 1420 of a total number of 1495 women say they pursue work at home or in the sectors of trade and agriculture. Some of them got married before age 18. The study revealed that 564 never had an access to education while 189 others hardly read and write.

About 32.91 percent of the study's male sample hold the view that one of the causes of early marriage is the financial facilities of families who consider the source of income and enough finance as a condition for marrying their daughters event at early age. Some poor families tend to merchandise their daughters for marriage as soon as they reach the teenage years, and this fact was confirmed by 388 of the surveyed people who pointed out that families merchandise their girls for marriage at early age for poverty.

The study stated that families believe that girls constitute an extra burden on the family while boys help add to the family income.

## Germany donates books to Sana'a University

SANA'A, 30 April — the History Department of Sana'a University received, On Sunday, 30th April, the German Embassy's Cultural Attaché Hendrik Selle, accompanied by the representative of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Mrs. Judith Zepter and her assistant Mr. Rafael Sánchez

The visit was an appropriate occasion for the guests to hand over a selection of state-of-the-art scientific books on modern history, which had been donated by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Dr. Mohammed Yusr, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, and Dr. Mahmood Qasim, professor of history, expressed their gratitude for this kind of support as a visible sign of the close cooperation between Yemen and Germany in the field of cultural and academic issues.

Mr. Selle underlined that it is not enough to provide students with much-needed facilities such as literature or computers, but that it is equally important to teach and encourage them to



German Embassy's Cultural Attaché Hendrik Selle, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Mrs. Judith Zepter with members of academic staff in History Department of Sana'a University.

make independent use of these facilities. Moreover, he expressed his hope to strengthen the already existing contacts in the academic field, emphasizing the

important role Yemeni alumni of German universities, numbering over 3,000, and the German Academic

Exchange Service (DAAD) can play in that regard.

This organization, which is financed by the German government, offers each year a number of scholarships for highly qualified Yemeni graduates and young scientists who are aiming to obtain further qualification in Germany, Jordan or Egypt. At Sana'a University's German Department, the DAAD is represented by the lecturer Mrs. Judith Zepter, who will be succeeded this summer by a new lecturer, after having taught German language there for four years with great success and appreciation by her students.

The DAAD is planning to expand its activities in Aden with the establishment of a new lectureship of German at Aden University later this year.





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# 2006 marks child abuse

By: Faisal Al-Safwani

**W**ith the beginning of 2006, a violence wave against children occurred in some Yemeni governorates, most notably Taiz and Ibb. It included rape, abduction, and murder, among other recurrent assaults.

A few months ago of this year, child abuse cases were reported in different governorates. During three months, eight cases of child murder were officially registered, among other similar cases that have not been exposed.

Here we shall survey some of these cases that have officially reported.

## Sawsen

Sawsen is a nine-year-old child from Amran governorate. Her family reported to Amran's Security Department that their daughter Sawsen was raped by a fifty-year-old Sheikh in February 20. The case was then referred to the Prosecution for more investigations. Medical reports showed that Sawsen was really raped.

## Azhar

Azhar is 13 years of age. She lives in

Taiz governorate. She was abducted in February 6 after coming out of school. She is still missing, while her family members are still searching for her.

## Safa'a

In February 25, the 15-year-old Safa'a disappeared in Taiz. On the same day, her family reported officially to the Security Department about the disappearance of Safa'a.

Two weeks later, she was found in one of Taiz's suburbs as she was lying on a road side. Investigations showed that after she left school somebody managed to abduct her and then raped

her. she was left alone in a suburb and fell down in a dead faint.

## Aiyda

Aiyda is an eight-year-old child from Taiz. An aged man from her village raped her, over which her father reported to the Security Department.

## Hanan

In January 25, Hanan Abdullah, aged 6, was kidnapped while she was playing in front of her house in Taiz governorate. Her family reported to the security authorities about her abduction. She remained in abduction for 25

days. Investigations showed that the one who kidnapped her took her to Ma'aber city in Dhamar governorate.

## Musheer Al-Zindani

Musheer is a three-year-old child from Ibb governorate. He was reported abducted in January 24 as he was playing next to his house. He has not been found as yet.

## Basma

In February 18, the seven-year-old Basma went with her father, Abdullah, to school in Sana'a city. On their way to school, a car, on which four armed men were dressed in camouflage military outfits, stopped him. They threatened him, hit him on the head, put Basma in a sack or garment and ran away. The efforts of security authorities succeeded in releasing Basma from abduction.



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Duration: 18 months

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### 4) Mechanical or Civil Engineer

Duration: 18 months

Fluency in English written and spoken is essential

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## المعرض الطبي الدولي الخامس

للأدوية والمستلزمات الطبية والعناية الصحية وطب الأسنان

للفترة من ٨ - ١٢ مايو ٢٠٠٦ م

يصاحب المعرض (الملتقى الطبي العلمي)

شركات عالمية وعربية ومحلية

تقدم كل ما هو حديث من

أجهزة ومعدات طبية

أدوية ومحاليل

تجهيز مستشفيات

تجهيز مختبرات

تجهيزات طب الأسنان

للعرض والبيع المباشر

ندوات وفعاليات طبية علمية

للاستفسار: ٤٤١٠٠٠



الجمهورية اليمنية - صنعاء - شارع الستين - أمام فح عطان - ص.ب: ١٥٤٣٤ - تلفون: ٤٤١٠٠٠ - فاكس: ٤٤٨٠٨٦

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# Education For All

## Literacy from past to present (Part-I)

### EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006 (4/9)

**W**hen 164 governments adopted the six Education for All (EFA) goals in 2000, they espoused a holistic vision of education spanning learning from the first years of life through adulthood. In practice, achieving good-quality universal primary education (UPE) and gender parity, two of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, has dominated attention. As the United Nations Literacy Decade unfolds, the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006 aims to shine a stronger policy spotlight on the more neglected goal of literacy – a foundation not only for achieving EFA but, more broadly, for reaching the overarching goal of reducing human poverty.

Part III paints a detailed map of the enormous literacy challenge, focusing on the most vulnerable regions, countries and groups. It also chronicles the remarkable transition of many societies to widespread literacy: 150 years ago, only 10% of the world's adult population was literate, compared with 80% today. How was this achieved and what lessons does it suggest for moving towards universal literacy, essential in today's knowledge societies?

Across the board, progress over the five years was steady but insufficient if the EFA goals are to be achieved or to come within much closer reach than they are today. All the evidence points to a continued need for an intensive policy focus on sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia, and the Arab States, along with least developed countries in other regions. National strategies that concentrate on gender, teachers, health and the most disadvantaged groups are vital for accelerating the pace of change.

#### Literacy from past to present

Significantly reducing all forms of illiteracy and enabling young and old alike to enrich their literacy skills and practices are the core challenges raised by the EFA literacy goal. To address these, policy-makers need state-of-the-art knowledge of where literacy has been more or less achieved, how it has been (and could be better) measured and monitored, and why certain groups have successfully acquired strong literacy skills while others have not.

- Some 18% of the world's adults live without literacy skills
- The largest numbers of illiterates are concentrated in South and West Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia and the Pacific
- The lowest literacy rates are found in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab States Africa and South Asia are off-track to meet the 2015 literacy goal
- Only 88 adult women are literate for every 100 literate men
- Marked progress towards mass literacy has been made among 15- to 24-year-olds



A 9-year-old doing her homework while selling fruit on the pavements of Calcutta, India.

#### How literacy is conventionally measured

Adult literacy figures are to be treated with caution. Until recently, literacy assessments used in crossnational comparisons have been based on official national census figures. In practice, experts determined an individual's literacy level by one of three methods:

- 1) self-declaration, in which respondents reported their literacy level on a census questionnaire;
- 2) third-party assessment, involving one individual – typically the head of household – reporting on the literacy level of household members; and
- 3) educational attainment, in which number of years of school completed was used as a proxy to distinguish the 'literate' from the 'nonliterate'.

Each method has serious limitations and tends to use the dichotomous approach, defining individuals as either 'literate' or 'illiterate'. Since the 1980s, concerns about literacy statistics have gained momentum. How credible and comparable are these data? Measurements not based on direct tests tend to depict individuals' literacy level inaccurately and hence result in inaccurate aggregate literacy rates. Estimates based on years of schooling grow increasingly problematic as evidence accumulates about education quality.

More fundamentally, not all countries use the same definition to classify a person as literate, nor even the same definition of the adult population. Nevertheless, definitions compiled by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics from 105 countries show that a large majority conceives of literacy as the ability to read and/or write simple statements in either a national or indigenous language.

Just as definitions vary, so does timeliness: censuses every ten years are the norm in developed countries, but not in many developing ones. Censusbased literacy statistics can thus be as much as two decades out of date. Moreover, in many contexts, the

language in which literacy skills are measured touches upon sensitive, often controversial issues.

#### Mapping the literacy challenge

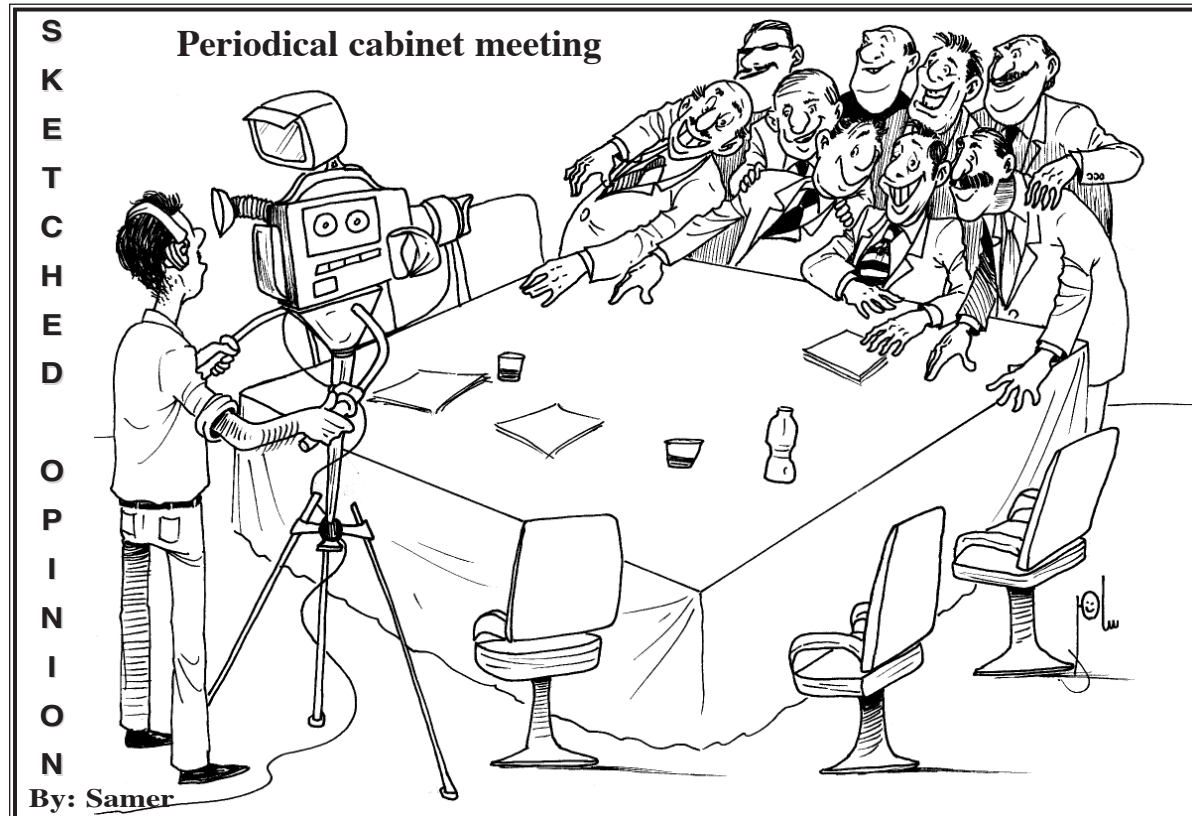
According to conventionally obtained data reported by countries for the most recent year in the reference period 2000–2004, the world counts 771 million illiterate adults, some 18% of the adult population. Since 1990, the number of illiterates has fallen by 100 million, mainly due to a marked reduction (by 94 million) in China. The vast majority of the 771 million adults who lack minimal literacy skills live in three regions: South and West Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, and sub-Saharan Africa. Although East Asia and the Pacific has the highest literacy rate among the developing regions, at 91%, its large population means it is still home to 17% of the world's illiterates. The share of the world's illiterate population living in sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia and the Arab States has increased since 1970, partly owing to relatively high population growth rates; these regions' literacy rates cluster around 60%.

Three-quarters of the world's illiterates live in just twelve countries, of which eight belong to the E-9 group of nine high-population countries. Achieving the Dakar goal hinges on progress in these countries.

In Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Morocco and Pakistan, the absolute numbers of illiterates increased between 1990 and 2000–2004 despite improvements in adult literacy rates, indicating that progress was insufficient to offset the effect of continuing population growth.

The world's adult literacy rate – the number of literate persons expressed as a percentage of the total adult population – increased from 56% in 1950 to 70% in 1980, 75% in 1990 and 82% in 2000–2004. On recent trends, the adult literacy rate should reach about 86% by 2015.

On average, the world literacy rate increased at a faster pace in the 1970s than in subsequent decades. While adult literacy rates have improved in all regions, they remain relatively low



in South and West Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab States. There are also considerable differences between countries within regions. South and West Asia has the lowest literacy rate of any region (59%), mainly due to the levels in Bangladesh (41%) and Pakistan (49%). Among individual countries, Burkina Faso, the Niger and Mali have the world's lowest adult literacy rates (below 20%). In sub-Saharan Africa, South and West Asia, and the Arab States, literacy rates increased by more than 10% between 1990 and 2000. Several countries with literacy rates between 50% and 65%, including Algeria, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria and Oman, have made considerable progress but will still find it difficult to reach the EFA literacy goal by 2015.

Women continue to constitute a majority of the world's illiterates: 64%, unchanged from 1990. At the global level, only 88 adult women are considered literate for every 100 adult men. Regions with relatively low gender parity indices are South and West Asia (0.66), the Arab States (0.69) and sub-Saharan Africa (0.76). In East Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, the GPI is above the global average of 0.88.

#### Migration, both international and within countries, raises demand for literacy skills among migrants themselves and family members who remain behind

All other regions have achieved gender parity in adult literacy. Progress towards mass literacy is especially marked in the 15–24 age group, where expanded access to formal schooling helped raise the global literacy rate from 75% to 88% between 1970 and 2000–2004; the corresponding rates for developing countries were 66% and 85%. Interestingly, literacy disparities favouring young women in the 15–24 age group are observed in an increasing number of countries, a trend most pronounced in Latin America and the Caribbean, in eastern and southern Africa and in countries with high literacy rates. Worldwide, however, more than 132 million young people are still unable to read and write even at a minimum

#### Strong correlations between illiteracy and poverty

In most instances, where poverty rates are higher, literacy rates tend to be lower. This is true among and within countries. Illiteracy tends to prevail in low-income countries where severe poverty is widespread.

In Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique and Nepal, for example, where 78% or more of the population lives below US\$2 per day, adult literacy rates are below 63%, and the number of adult illiterates exceeds 5 million in each country.

The links between poverty and illiteracy can also be studied at the household level, where evidence from thirty developing countries indicates that literacy correlates with wealth. In seven sub-Saharan African countries with particularly low overall literacy rates, the literacy gap between the poorest and wealthiest households is more than forty percentage points, and the gap is nearly always greater for women than for men. Even in countries where the overall rate is above 90%, literacy disparities by household wealth exist.

Literacy rates tend to be lower in rural than in urban areas. In countries where overall literacy rates are comparatively low, there are tremendous disparities: 44% rural vs 72% urban in Pakistan, and 24% rural vs 83% urban in Ethiopia. In addition, disparities are found within rural and urban areas. Pastoralist and nomadic populations, who number in the tens of millions across the African drylands, the Middle East and parts of Asia, tend to have lower literacy levels than other rural populations. In the rural Afar region of Ethiopia, for example, in 1999 the overall adult literacy rate was 25%, but the rate in pastoralist areas was 8%. In urban areas, as studies from China and Egypt illustrate, migrants from the countryside are at a disadvantage compared with the urban-born.

#### Excluded groups

For complex social, cultural or political reasons, certain population groups find themselves excluded from mainstream society, a phenomenon often resulting in reduced access to formal

education and literacy programmes. Knowledge about their literacy is limited, since such groups are often omitted from census or household-based assessments, but the tendency is for literacy rates to be lower in these groups, which include:

**Indigenous peoples:** The world's approximately 300–350 million indigenous people speak about 4,000 to 5,000 languages and live in more than 70 countries. Available evidence suggests that significant disparities exist between indigenous and non-indigenous populations. Limited access to formal schooling is clearly a factor. The national literacy rate in Ecuador, for example, is 91% (2001 census figures), but the rate is 72% for indigenous groups. In Viet Nam, the national rate is 87%, against 4% for some indigenous groups. Nepal's minority Dalit population has a significantly lower adult literacy rate than the rest of the population. Roma in Central Europe have weaker literacy skills than majority populations. Indigenous women tend to have particularly low literacy rates.

#### People with disabilities:

Over 600 million people (about 10% of the world's population), two-thirds of whom live in low-income countries, have a disability of one form or another. It is estimated that 35% of all out-of-school children have disabilities, that fewer than 2% of children with a disability are enrolled in school and that over 90% of children with disabilities in Africa have never attended school. Even in Canada and Australia, more than 40% of disabled children have only completed primary education. Limited data suggest, in addition, that gender disparities in literacy rates are greater for people with disabilities. Migrants: Migration, both international and within countries, has grown dramatically in recent decades. It raises demand for literacy skills among migrants themselves and family members who remain behind.

Internal migrants often face considerable difficulties when moving from one region to another: a literate migrant from a rural community might become 'illiterate' in an urban one that uses different written languages and more advanced communication systems.

# Tocqueville's lessons in democracy

By: Nicolas Tenzer

**I**t seems appropriate that, due to the Iraq war, the world has been debating the nature of democracy 200 years after Alexis de Tocqueville's birth. Tocqueville is justly famous for rejecting reactionary nostalgia and regarding democracy's triumph as our destiny, while warning against the dangers that democracy holds for liberty. Should we still share his worries?

Tocqueville viewed democracy not only as a political regime, but, above all, as an intellectual regime that shapes a society's customs in general, thereby giving it a sociological and psychological dimension. Democratic regimes, Tocqueville argued, determine our thoughts, desires, and passions. Just as there was Renaissance man and, in the twentieth century, homo sovieticus, "democratic man" is a form of human being.

For Tocqueville, democracy's sys-

temic effects could lead citizens to deprive themselves of reasoned thought. They could only pretend to judge events and values on their own; in reality, they would merely copy the rough and simplified opinions of the masses. Indeed, what Tocqueville called the hold of "social power" on opinion is probably strongest in democratic regimes – a view that foretells the growth of modern-day demagoguery and media manipulation.

Tocqueville believed that there are no effective long-term constraints on this tendency. Neither local democracy nor small societies, neither governmental checks and balances nor civil rights, can prevent the decline of critical thought that democracy seems to cause. Schools have the power to be little more than enclaves from the corrosive strength of social influences on how the mind works. Similarly, while Tocqueville thought that pursuing virtue as the ancients did, or having a religious faith, could sometimes ele-

vate the soul, both conflict with the democratic ideal if they become officially prescribed in public life.

In this sense, Tocqueville's intellectual heirs include the neo-Marxist theorists of the Frankfurt School, as well as Hannah Arendt, all of whom feared above all the disintegration of reason in modern societies. Indeed, the French philosopher Marcel Gauchet entitled a recent book *Democracy Against Itself*. The democratic way of life, these writers argue, tends to destroy original thought and to suppress "high" culture, yielding a mediocrity that leaves citizens vulnerable to democracy's enemies.

But, while history is replete with murderous regimes applauded by cowed and deceived masses, the greater risk for democratic nations is that their citizens withdraw into apathy and short-term thinking for immediate gratification. The past – despite rituals that seek to commemorate historic moments – is obliterated by an addi-

tion to the now and the new. Even the supposedly well-educated ruling class is subject to this bewitchment. The essential problem of the democratic mind is its lack of historical consciousness.

Do the defects of democracy really mean, as Tocqueville claimed, that resigned pessimism is the only – realistic but unsustainable – path open to us? I don't think so. There are means to fight against what might be called today's growing "democratic stupidity."

The first defense is to push for an educational system that really forms critical minds, namely through the (nowadays) largely neglected subjects of literature, history, and philosophy. If the informed and critical citizenry that democracy requires is to be formed, our schools must stop pandering to the latest popular fads and begin to sharpen the analytical capacities of students.

The biggest impediment to such an education are the mass media, with its

tendency to cultivate superficiality and amusement. Many people nowadays spend more of their lives watching television than they do in classrooms. The passivity that mass media encourages is the polar opposite of the active engagement that democratic citizens need. But it is hard to imagine that the mass media (other than quality newspapers) would, of their own volition, become instruments of an education that enhances citizens' critical capacities.

This concern about mass media is no mere elitist scorn for popular culture. The question is not one of popularity alone – after all, Mozart was popular in his day, and Shakespeare's plays attracted the poor as well as the rich – but of mass culture's refusal to challenge and provoke. The result of the failure is a generalized indifference and passivity in audiences.

Indeed, for a long time a globalized media culture, one unable to inspire the capacity for critical thought or create

elevated feelings, has been on the rise. It is a culture that, through its carelessness, threatens democratic freedom because it fails to create any sense of obligation – to society, to history, to community.

Is it too late to do anything about a culture that so deadens the spirit? Tocqueville despised the elites of his time for their complacency in the face of the deracinating force of mass democracy. Will the myopia of our leaders also serve as an agent of his disquieting prophecy?

*Nicolas Tenzer is President of the Centre d'étude et de réflexion pour l'action politique (CERAP), director of the journal Le Banquet. His most recent books are Les valeurs des Modernes. Essai sur l'échec politique du nouveau siècle and France: la réforme impossible?*

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# Yemeni tourism during 2005

By: Mohammed Rageh

“**T**ourism industry in Yemen is still not very active and the amount of its contribution to the national economy is still lagging behind the required level”. With this introducing phrase the State Authority of Tourist Development prefaced its annual report. This is a phrase that has been repeated throughout the past years in press and economic reports. However, the phrase this time is part of an official report issued by the Tourism Authority monitoring indicators of the tourist sector in 2005 which is termed as the year of tourism in Yemen.

In the year 2004, Yemen had witnessed various types of activities as it was declared as Capital of Arab culture, with financial appropriations amounting to one billion YR available in the budget of the ministry of culture. The government wanted to maintain the same momentum. Thus, it launched the motto of that considers the year of 2005 as a year of tourism in Yemen. It is a title indicating a promotional plan aimed at activating tourism movement after many failures caused by the war on terror and kidnappings of foreign tourists for which Yemen was known. Those failures had affected the tourist sector with stagnation despite the fact that Yemen possesses great potential components enough to push forward the industry of tourism. Those factors have not been properly exploited in developing competitive capabilities of this vital economic sector.

Incoming tourism in Yemen goes in an opposite direction to a dominating world climate that has seen big growth in world tourism. As incoming tourism in Yemen has remained in

limited boundaries despite expansion in world tourism. Nonetheless, the general direction of international incoming tourism in Yemen had witnessed big growth by the end of 2006, as the report indicates. The average annual growth has reached 24%, which is a high average in the region as compared to previous years that witnessed many shakes in tourism sector due to many different factors, economic, social and political, with the war on terror and kidnappings as serious factors in addition to negligence of tourist historical sites and poor services in tourist facilities.

The two past years have witnessed a kind of stability in tourism activity in Yemen and last year was specified as the tourist year and there were held many promotional activities. That has increased the number of tourists coming to Yemen. Indicators of tourist sector point out that in 2005, 203 thousand tourists had arrived in Yemen with an increase of 130 thousand tourists compared to 2004. By the end of 2005 the average annual growth of international tourist nights amounted to 43% and is expected to increase to 1218 thousand tourists.

The report also tackles the topic of local tourism mentioning that there were indicators of its growth. Local tourism acquires great importance as it plays a big role in development of sites possessing tourist components besides of its being a guarantee for continuation in operating hotels and an increase in proportion of hotel job opportunities, especially at seasons of international tourism absence. Local tourism is a fixed factor not subject to surprise fluctuations. The report mentions that average growth of this tourism movement in 2005 amounted to 10%, recording an increase in comparison with the previous two years.



Dar Al-Hajar in Sana'a, is a main attraction for tourists

On tourism impact on Yemen economy statistical information and statements the nature of tourism, development and results are scarce and unreliable. This situation makes the government and the private sector

and the society lack accurate statements and information that are necessary to show efficiency and activeness of general policies and commercial processes for upgrading the level of tourist services.

There is especially a shortage in correct information and statements regarding the role the tourism plays in economy in Yemen. There is an increasing development in the role the tourism can undertake with regard to economy, directly and indirectly. This can be seen in generating of added value, creation of job opportunities revenues of international tourism in hard currencies. The contribution of tourism to Yemen's gross domestic product and economic growth has not been felt up until now. That could be attributed to the reality that actual contributions estimated in the national accounts are less than the real contributions of the tourist sector. The reason is that there is no estimation and evaluation of this sector's effect but regarding to contributions of hotels and restaurants, which are one of the components of tourism activities. The report pointed out that by the end of 2005 it was expected that tourist revenues would amount to \$225 million. The proportion of the contribution of hotels and restaurants to the GDP ranged 1.58% to 1.34% in the years 2000-2004, i.e. with an annual growth average of 8.6%.

It is known that increase in tourist movement leads to increase in volume of employment inside tourism sector or in sectors related to it. But the seasonal characteristic of tourist action, he great change in work circumstances and non-acquisition of work contracts in many productive units, constitute major restraints precluding obtaining of figures indicating the volume of labor in tourist industry.

## Business In Brief

**T**he agricultural cooperative federation is preparing to build four factories for canning agricultural products in the areas of Tihama, Thamar, Lahj and Marib. The factories are part of investment projects of the federation for the year 2006. The federation also plans to implement 19 projects of agricultural development for this year. It is presently building the second phase of the cooperative information network whose main center is established at the cooperative headquarters in the capital Sana'a. The network is to link the federation branches to all exporting centers. The federation also plans to begin building nine agricultural projects in Hudeida, Amran, Thamar, Aden and Hadramout. In addition the federation is to build another 9 agricultural projects as part of a program for developing animal wealth in a number of governorates.

**T**he general authority for post and savings is preparing to open 29 post offices and lay foundation stones for another 24 post offices during the celebrations marking the national unity day on 22 May.

**A** ship arrived at Hudeida port carrying 29 thousand and 920 hundred tons of wood. Also three ships anchored at Al-Makha port loaded with cattle and gas oil.

**S**uaid Industrial and Trading Group had last Thursday organized a celebration on inauguration of a program for facilitated loans in the governorate of Aden. The celebration was held in cooperation with the office of industry and trade in Aden. It aims at providing all needs of employees of furniture, carpets and electric equipment through loans offered by the cooperative agricultural credit bank and Yemen's international bank for employees at both private and public sectors.

The proportion of beneficiaries from the program is expected to reach 210% by the end of this year. The program has greatly helped solve many problems for most of employees in private and public sectors as the program contributed to met their needs by selling on credit system without levying interests.

## Continued increase in poverty cases

By: Mahyoub Al-Kamali

**S**mall Industries & Enterprises Fund (SIEF) has during the first quarter of this year financed 369 small productive projects at a cost of over YR 162 million with an increase of more than YR57 million for the same period last year. The offered loans covered funding new small projects and expansion of existing ones for

developing the kind of services offered by those projects. Through granting those easy loans the fund aims to develop the sector of small industries and enterprises in productive, services and commercial areas in addition to mobilization of financial and technical revenues from internal and external sources. It also aims to explore possible investment opportunities in this sector and offer necessary technical consultation and assistance.

Presidential directives have been lately issued for providing a sum of YR 20 million for financing small and medium productive projects and merging the two banks of agricultural credit and lending for housing in one bank called the bank of development, agriculture and housing in order to solve the problem of funding weakness and absorption of unemployment by providing more job opportunities for local labor.

According to sources of the fund the governorate of Sana'a occupied the first position regarding the cost and number of projects funded by it. The fund financed 113 projects in the capital and the governorate of Taiz comes in the second place in this field as its projects financed by the fund amounted to 55. Financing of small

projects by the fund also covered the governorates of Hudeidah, Aden and the city of Mukalla.

The fund is at present working at development and activation of its performance and expansion of its activities and services to cover various governorates of the country. It would restructure the fund and develop its systems and to prepare a complete directory on human resources. It is to take more steps to establish an information network connecting the main administration with the fund's governorate branches in preparation of providing a database on the type and needs of each governorate of small projects.

Despite all those efforts the cases of poverty in Yemen are in continuous increase because of the

rise in proportion of unemployed workforce at the labor market and aggravation of family problems and drop in their income as well as the rise in the cost of living in general and rates of food stuffs. All that happens despite of official efforts for fighting poverty and for sustainable development.

Small Industries & Enterprises Fund (SIEF) plays a major role in fighting poverty in Yemen and its activities receive government support and from donors. The Fund's projects aim at alleviating poverty in the country but nevertheless rates of unemployment have aggravated and job opportunities decreases at a time prices rates skyrocketed especially prices of essential stuffs and house rents.

## Yemen-Gulf joint investments

By: Yemen Times Staff

**G**ulf and Yemeni investors have recently launched a paints factory as branch of Joton paints in the area of Alalam in Aden at a total cost of \$three million. The Chamber of Commerce in Aden explained that the factory is a joint project between Norwegian Joton Company and the International Company of paints as well as Saudi and Omani investors and the Hayel Saeed Companies Group. The total cost of three million dollars could potentially increase and the factory's production capacity is estimated to reach five million liters a year of various types of paints.

Aden's Chamber of Commerce explained that the local demand for paints is about \$27.7 million a year. There is a large consumer market in Yemen and their factory is committed to produce safe industrialization criteria suitable for the environment

and works according developed systems reducing wastes resulting from production. The Chamber indicated that the factory would meet needs of the Yemeni market of paints in order to stop importation from abroad that costs Yemen millions of dollars every year.

On the other hand a source at the general union of Yemen chambers of commerce announced that a group of Yemeni and Saudi investors intend to build a real estate company with a capital of \$200 million to be implemented during this year and the next in case the stock market in Yemen is established.

He made it clear that the investors have met in Jedda and studied the establishment of that company after the Yemeni cabinet had given its directives to prepare the reference framework of the company that would undertake preparation of measures needed for the establishment of Yemen stock market.

On his part the Yemeni minister of Industry and Trade Khalid Sheikh

affirmed that establishment of a stock market in Yemen would pave the way for founding big estate companies in the country, calling on Saudi investors for building estate companies in Yemen. These directives come as part of activating the Yemeni Gulf relations aimed at qualification of Yemen economy for its incorporation with Gulf States economies in a period of ten years.

Simultaneously, a Kuwaiti delegation led by sheikh Al-Duaij Al-Khalifa Al-Subah, Undersecretary of Social Affairs and Labor officially visits Sana'a on 6-8 of this month to conduct talks including Yemeni Kuwaiti relations. The visit coincides with a visit by a delegation of Saudi businessmen to the governorate of Taiz to explore investment opportunities in partnership of Yemeni capital abroad.

Yemen's deputy minister of Social Affairs and Labor Yassin Abdeh Saeed says a number of projects and joint agreements would be discussed with the visiting Kuwaiti delegation.

### Announcement

#### Invitation to Tender for the supply and Delivery of one new twin screw survey boat

Yemen ports authority (port of Aden) intends to announce for the above tender.

The tender document is available to bidding companies at a cost of US\$ 150.00

Quotations are to be submitted on **20<sup>th</sup> June, 2006.**

For collection of tender documents or more information, **Please contact:**

**YPA-Head office,**

**Tawahi - Aden,**

**Tel: 967- 02 - 204638 / 202669**

**Fax: 967- 02 - 205805 / 201541**

**Email: [ddg@yemen.net.ye](mailto:ddg@yemen.net.ye) and [ypaplanning@y.net.ye](mailto:ypaplanning@y.net.ye)**

**T**he total reserve of Yemen gold ores in the year 2005 amounted to more than 16 million tons located mainly in two sites in Hadramout and Hajjah. A report by the general authority of geological survey on its activities during the last year mentioned that gold ores reserve at the site of Wadi Madan in Hadramout amounted to 678 tons with concentration degree of 15 grams of gold per each ton and 11 grams of silver per each ton. The report mentioned the reserve of gold ores in Al-Hariqa area in Hajjah amounts to 16 million tons with concentration degree of 1.65 gram per each ton. It is expected that gold ores reserve at the same site would reach 40 million tons.

**A**l-Tadhamun Islamic Bank has revealed of a great increase in its investment activity during the first quarter of this year. The bank's profits in the said period amounted to more than YR 4 billion before deducting the share of depositors. The bank said in a statement that the average of growth reached 253% and the bank's deposits amounted to around YR121 billion by the end of the first quarter of this year with an increase of 25% compared of the same period last year.

**T**he Yemeni Arab Cement Company Ltd owned by the Saudi businessman Abdullah Yaqshan announced that a Chinese company SINOMI has won a contract for building a cement factory to be managed by the company in the area of Abdullah Ghareeb, 50 km to the north-east of Mukalla in Hadramout situated to south-east of Yemen. The new cement plant productive capacity amounts to about 1.3 million tons at a cost of over \$250 million. It is an investment by Saudi and Yemeni investors.

#### Exchange rate of some currencies

Date: Tuesday, 2/5/2006

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	196.4100	196.6000
Sterling Pound	358.6000	358.9400
Euro	248.1600	248.4000
Saudi Rial	52.3700	52.4200
Kuwaiti Dinar	672.5200	673.1700
UAE Dirhem	53.4700	53.5300
Egyptian Pound	34.1200	34.1500
Japanese Yen	1.725164	1.726833

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

# Who attacked America on 9/11

By: Dr. Abdulateef Al-Adham

Clamor and exaggeration are evoked from time to time about Al-Qaeda and terror fighting, in addition to other descriptions. The essence of all these is aiming at fighting Islam and the Islamic nation. Yet the unsettled question that remains is: Who attacked America on September 11?

If we analyze things in a simple way, we will find that Al-Qaeda is a small, newly formed organization with a limited number and capability. It is a naive thinking to attribute the September 11

attacks and other operations, on the American embassies and USS Cole to this small organization. However, this organization is only an excuse for an international American Zionism conspiracy to control Islamic world recourse and exterminate Islam, because it is the only obstacle facing their conspiracy.

In fact, the main head quarters of the criminal Bin Laden is London and not Afghanistan. The tapes that Al-jazeera Channel used to receive, were faked, and cannot be a work of a small group, leave alone September 11 attacks.

September 11 was preceded by various preparations on the American side,

including the withdrawal of the American delegation from Durban human rights conference, the Chinese plane incidence, besides the films that were produced about external attacks on America, such as Pearl Harbor, up to the day of September 11, when the attack took place. George Bush was then visiting a primary school, for obscurity, to show the contradiction between the innocence of the children and the barbarity of Islam. The attack on America on September 11 was a Zionist-American joint one, in cooperation with Britain. It was a jesting play, which all means of crime failed to cover.

# Next generation of robots

By: Syed Rehan Ali  
IT Engineer  
Nadinka Integrated solutions

Successful development of fuel-powered muscles could be employed in autonomous robots having very long mission capabilities and powerful exoskeletons for military personnel.

Nanotechnology researchers at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) have made chemically powered artificial muscles that are up to 100 times stronger than natural muscles. Fueled by alcohol or hydrogen, the muscles are also able to do 100 times more work per cycle than natural muscles. Dr. Ray H. Baughman, who headed up the project, said that although batteries can be used for autonomous robots, they store too little energy and deliver it at too slow a rate for prolonged or intense activity. The more than 30 times higher energy density obtainable from fuels like alcohol, compared to that for the most advanced batteries, can translate into

much longer operational lifetimes without refueling. Baughman explained that one of the new types of artificial muscle his team created functions simultaneously as a fuel cell and a muscle. He described one of the new muscles as having a catalyst-containing carbon nanotube electrode that functioned as both a fuel cell to convert chemical energy to electrical energy and as a super capacitor to store the electrical energy, which it then converts into mechanical energy. "Fuel-powered charge injection in a carbon nanotube electrode produces the dimensional changes needed for actuation due to a combination of quantum mechanical and electrostatic effects present on the nanoscale," said Baughman.

In the other type of artificial muscle, the chemical energy in the fuel is converted to heat by a catalytic reaction with air. The resulting temperature increases in this 'shorted fuel-cell muscle' causes the contraction of a shape memory metal muscle wire. Subsequent cooling completes the work cycle by causing expansion of the

muscle. Baughman said that this type of muscle was the more powerful of the two and could have widespread application. "The shorted fuel cell muscles are especially easy to deploy in robotic devices, since they comprise commercially available shape memory wires that are coated with a nanoparticle catalyst. The major challenges have been in attaching the catalyst to the shape memory wire to provide long muscle lifetimes, and in controlling muscle actuation rate and stroke," he explained. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the research leading to these new artificial muscles was funded by DARPA, an agency of the US Department of Defense.

Intriguingly, the fuel-powered muscles can be easily downsized to the micro and nano-scales, and arrays of such micro-muscles could be used in 'smart skins' that improve the performance of marine and aerospace vehicles. And by replacing the metal catalyst with tethered enzymes, it might even be possible to use artificial muscles powered by food-derived fuels for use in the human body.

# An invitation to attend a symposium in the Ministry of Oil and Minerals

Under the auspices of Minister of Oil and Minerals  
**H. E. Mr. Khalid Mahfuz Bahah**

the Ministry of Oil and Minerals organizes a symposium on Procedures and steps of competition for the exploration of oil in Yemeni areas.

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The event will take place at the  
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For registration and inquiry, please call the General Department for Public and External Relations at the Ministry at the following telephone numbers:

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## Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS

- 1 Frame part
- 5 Hoedown site
- 9 Secret scheme
- 14 Growth-regulating spray
- 15 Touched down
- 16 Old-womanish
- 17 Jazz singer of note
- 20 She had three faces
- 21 Where starter
- 22 Sips slowly, as a drink
- 23 Crave
- 25 Milkstop
- 27 Williams and Turner
- 29 Broadway's "Five Guys Named "
- 30 Slow on the uptake
- 33 Regions
- 36 Part of an opera house
- 38 Word with rib or bird
- 39 Jazz musician of note
- 42 Friend in a fray
- 43 Actress Sommer
- 44 Mountain goat feature
- 45 Cereal grain
- 46 "Hail!"
- 47 Fairy milieu

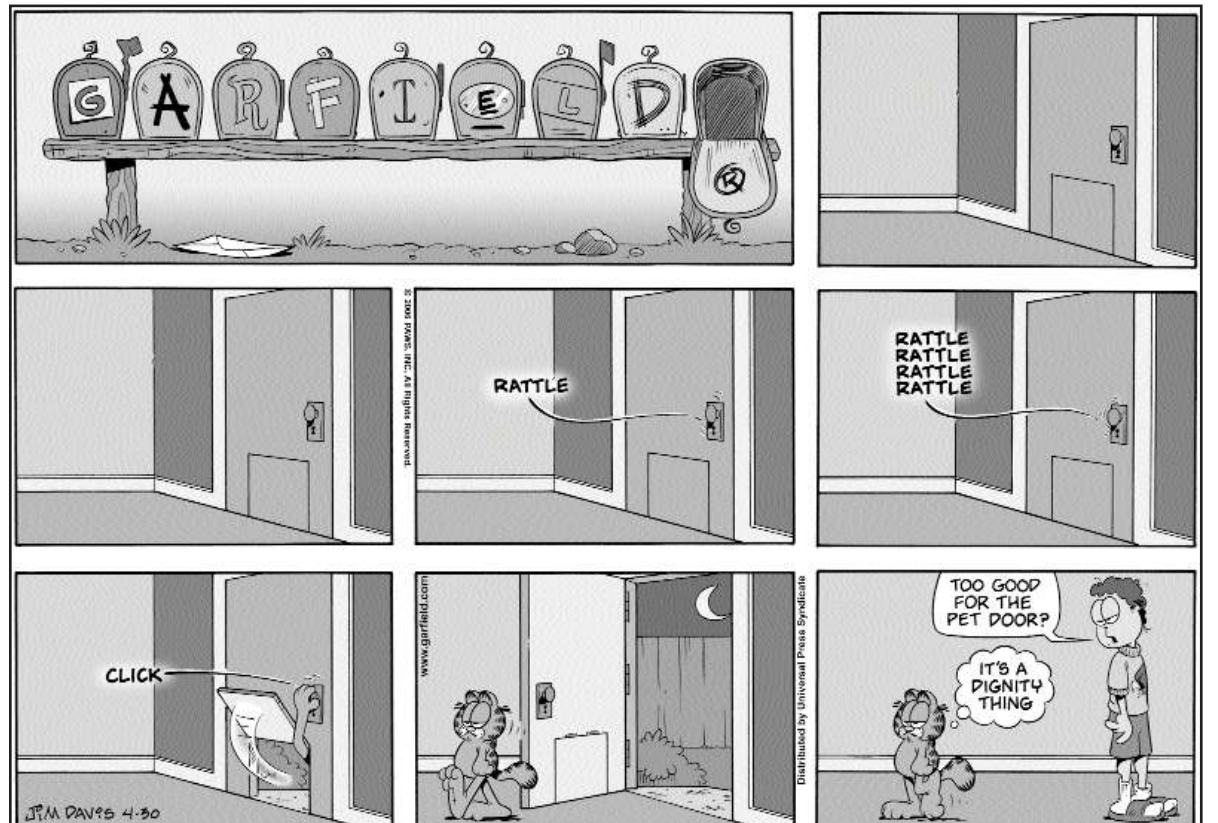
- 49 Slap target, sometimes
- 51 Talked volubly, in the 60s
- 55 Golf shoe plugs
- 58 Form of energy
- 60 Gardner of Hollywood
- 61 Blues musician of note
- 64 Sea eagles
- 65 Seed coating
- 66 Britain's neighbor, to natives
- 67 Resplendent repast
- 68 Singer Seeger
- 69 Kiddie litter?

DOWN

- 1 Cynically callous
- 2 Kicking partner
- 3 Crowning glories
- 4 Lifting device
- 5 Sobbed and then some
- 6 Word of dismay
- 7 Ascends
- 8 Unspecific degree
- 9 Ethelred's nemesis
- 10 Irate
- 11 Drill tips
- 12 Sunburn soother
- 13 Contact, for one
- 18 Unorthodox opinion
- 19 Give the facts
- 24 Lake Como locale
- 26 Brunch order, often
- 28 Remedies for the cold shoulder?
- 30 Facts, e.g.
- 31 Grandpa Munster's pet
- 32 Make sound
- 33 Cracked, as a glass door?
- 34 Depend
- 35 Popular fashion magazine
- 37 Sort
- 38 Go at a snail's pace
- 40 Update
- 41 Pumpkin-shaped
- 46 Creative aesthete
- 48 Tillable
- 49 Plays in shallow water
- 50 Limerick starter, often
- 52 Summer eating locale, perhaps
- 53 Each
- 54 Throws down the gauntlet
- 55 Child, for one
- 56 A fly is a common one
- 57 Bart's teacher
- 59 Ready for print
- 62 Place for a computer
- 63 Offensive of 1968

"I GOT THE BLUES" by George Campfiel

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67						68				69		



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## Marib through an Indian eye: essence of ancient south Arabian Peninsula

By: Rajib Chakraborty

It was nearly the end of 1998 when I received an assignment in Yemen from my office in Delhi. To be very honest, Yemen was not known to me like other modern Arab nations such as the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar or Saudi Arabia, so I had to get some information from the internet.

Yemen is situated in the lap of the Arabian and Red Seas, well-distinguished by borders with Saudi Arabia and Oman in the southernmost part of the Arab world. Though I had heard about Aden port from the pages of history in childhood, I never had heard the name of Yemen's capital Sana'a.

However, once a visa and tickets

meet King Solomon also is described in the Bible.

After 100 A.D., Sheban power began to decline with the rise of the Himyarites. Sea trade became more important and western regions adjacent to the Red Sea began flourishing instead of the eastern regions of the Sheban kingdom. In 600 A.D., the great Marib Dam collapsed under a catastrophic flood and civilization gradually vanished under the grip of irresistible sand dunes. The Qur'an described Marib Dam's final collapse as God's punishment on the end of the old world and the turning point in history.

Yemen's government has taken measures to restore its prosperous agricultural past and as a result, a new Marib Dam was constructed three kilo-

known as Bilqis' Throne and constructed in the eighth century B.C., stands as a witness to Sheban architecture. To date, five eight-meter-high pillars of single stone stand challenging the sky and adverse weather and also serve as a national symbol of modern Yemen. The ruins of a stone boundary wall, internal temple walls and steps are amazing.

Approximately 1.5 km. from Baron Temple is Marib's most important and famous temple, which was completely buried under sand dunes. Excavations still continue to unveil its history. Dedicated to the sun god, its original name was Awam Temple, but it later was renamed Al-Maqa to worship the moon goddess. Locally, it is called Mahram Bilqis.

The temple's main structure is emerging from the sand and eight numbers of similar propylons with the same smooth rock finish also are visible. Its stone walls are curved with various designs and inscriptions and its stone wall fence also is oval-shaped like the sun or moon.

Near Marib city exists Old Marib, a cluster of multi-story mud and clay buildings. During the Sheban period, clay technology was very rich. Though weather has destroyed their original shape, these mud house ruins are enough to surprise any visitor and a few dwellers remain in them following their repair.

Adjacent to the old town, the ruins of a temple with its slender rocky columns also attract. Though these are valuable witnesses to millenniums of ancient south Arabian history, they are not properly protected. However, some effort now is being made to protect them. You neither must purchase any ticket nor must spend a penny to visit these ancient sites. In the heart of town, four-star



Marib is mentioned in ancient inscriptions from 1000 BC, and it has so many historical witnesses to the Sheban Kingdom.

hotel Marib Bilqis awaits to welcome you.

If you travel five kilometers south of the city, you can ask your driver for a ride over the sand dunes. There you can visit lush green orange groves, another desert wonder. You can see every Bedouin tribesman roaming with an AK-47 and women driving pickups to bring grass from the fields for their cattle.

We are working to restore irrigation canals to distribute water from Marib Dam to the desert to transform it into a rich agricultural hub. Within the context of our field work in Bedouin vil-

lages, we are able to mix with the locals. Bedouin social structure is different from other parts of Yemen, as there are few tribes, but they always are creating trouble between each other and are not so comfortable with Yemen's general laws.

Whatever is in their minds, they always respect us as the foreign engineers. Many times, they invited us into their homes for lunch. The warmth of their hearts and purity of their hospitality always attracts us. We feel proud to be a part of restoring the prosperous agricultural past of Sheba.

Not only Marib, but all of Yemen is

an excellent blending of rich ancient civilization, years-old heritage and natural beauty. Nobody could imagine such a scenic country exists in the Arab world until he walks in Yemen. However, more initiative, effort and planning is required to attract tourists to taste 'the essence of the ancient south Arabian Peninsula.'

Rajib Chakraborty is an Indian civil engineer. He has worked on various civil engineering projects in Yemen since 1998 and he is currently Assistant Resident Engineer on the prestigious Marib Dam and Irrigation Project.



These mud house ruins are enough to surprise any visitor and a few dwellers remain in them following their repair.

were arranged, I reached Sana'a airport one evening, suppressing all the pain of leaving relatives. After arriving, I realized there are no such dazzles of modern cities like Dubai, Abu Dhabi or Muscat. The city is a perfect pictorial combination of ancient Arab heritage surrounded by natural walls of hills.

The next day, we started for Marib, 170 km. east of Sana'a, where our project site was awaiting us. Leaving behind the green fields of Sana'a's suburbs, our land cruiser began traveling the undulating asphalt road, which was like swinging black ribbons. On the way, we crossed two hills, well-adorned with natural sandstone cleavage.

Immediately after crossing the second hill, we came down to the plain. On both the sides of the road, the desert spread with its massive emptiness. There was no evidence of trees, no evidence of people and no evidence of cattle anywhere except the checkpoints. We ultimately reached Marib after two and a half hours of travel. After meeting the local project authority, we proceeded to the Marib Dam site, the origin of our assigned project.

Marib is mentioned in ancient inscriptions from 1,000 B.C. There are so many historical witnesses to the Sheban kingdom in Marib. Though locals are not much bothered about it, Marib has special importance to historians, archaeologists and foreign tourists.

In Assyrian inscriptions, Sheba's kingdom was pronounced the richest, most prosperous and powerful kingdom in south Arabia. The Queen of Sheba, also known as Queen Bilqis, was the Sheban dynasty's greatest ruler. During her reign, the dynasty reached its peak in culture, trade and agriculture. At the same time, in the sixth century B.C., the old Marib Dam was constructed, blocking the Wadi Adana riverbed.

To date, the great dam's ruins and its well-planned distribution system implemented in that ancient period are a surprise to modern engineers. The arid zone became fertile via this superb irrigation system - not only in agriculture, but also in the caravan trade, as Sheban merchants traveled 3,400 km. to Gaza in modern Palestine carrying frankincense, myrrh, spices and gold. There was not a temple or wealthy home in Jerusalem, Babylon, Greece or Rome where such resins were not required. The Queen of Sheba's caravan journey from Marib to Jerusalem to

meters upstream of the old dam site in 1986. The reservoir filled with bluish-green water is a mind-blowing scene against its arid background and is worth seeing.

In eastern Marib, Baron Temple, also

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