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Readers' Voice

Last edition's question:
 Do you think the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate's new leadership will put a stop to commonplace attacks on journalists?

I don't know (12%)
 Yes (19%)
 No (69%)

This edition's question:
 Most observers cast doubt on the authenticity and impartiality of nomination procedures for the upcoming presidential elections. Do you think the procedures followed are fair and transparent?

- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know

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

Al-Hamra Mountain attacked

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, July 16 – Press sources reported that Army forces located in the Kittaf Mountains bombarded Al-Hamra Mountain, where Al-Houthi followers exist. Sources also mentioned that the attack occurred last Wednesday, July 12, at 9.30 p.m.

According to Al-Shoura.net, Al-Houthi followers "considered the attack to be truce-breaching, but gave their assurances that they won't react to this breach and will abide by the truce." They further requested political powers, security and organizations to intervene in order to stop the attacks and killings in Sa'ada.

In a June 28 letter to the Intercession Committee, Abdulmalik Al-Houthi, son of scholar Badr Al-Dain Al-Houthi, called upon the committee to exert more efforts to spread peace, demonstrating the willingness of Al-Houthi followers to cooperate and dialogue with authorities. He gave further assurances that their attitudes will not change, despite the recent events.

In his letter, Al-Houthi said, "We want to clarify some issues and hurdles

standing in the way of a peaceful solution. Some of these issues relate to asking us to come down from the mountains to our villages." In this regard, Al-Houthi declared that they basically left their villages for the mountains, not to revolt but to save their lives, indicating, "We had no option of escaping war, just of going up to the mountains."

He pointed out that no military action was taken against the state or armed forces; instead, they confined themselves to visiting markets in search of food and basic needs.

Al-Houthi indicated that houses escaping destruction were turned into military barracks, causing those still living in the villages to feel insecure. He also said soldiers and army officers residing in their villages are mobilized against the residents due to factional and religious mobilization against Zaidi doctrine followers, whom they regard as unbelievers and polytheists.

He added that military leaders turned donkey barns into prisons for citizens without any clear reasons, leading to more abuse and mistreatment.

Addressing a mediation committee, Al-Houthi said, "The situation in our

areas are too bad and this is what is preventing us from returning to our homes." He also pointed out that those who returned following President Ali Abdullah Saleh's amnesty law were subject to chasing and most were sent to jail. He added that they will return to their homes once there's the possibility of freedom and security.

Following receipt of the letter, the mediation committee supervising the truce between the government and Al-Houthi followers made an agreement to secure their return home, guaranteeing that they won't be chased or arrested by the army. However, there's no information regarding finalizing this agreement.

A campaign aimed at banning teaching Zaidi doctrine still is ongoing. The Chief of Security in Sa'ada phoned one such teacher, Ali Masaoud, to tell him to stop teaching in Al-Masaoud area. The mediation wasn't successful, but did lead to calming tensions there. Information indicates that the ban was made according to high-level directives. In this regard, Zaidi books were confiscated in an official campaign aimed at drying up Zaidi thought and heritage.

International conference on MENA water governance begins in Sana'a



Yemen's Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Yemeni Minister of Water and Environment, the German ambassador and representative of InWEnt at the conference's opening ceremony.

By: Amel Al-Ariqi

SANA'A, July 16 – An international conference on water governance in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region began Sunday in Sana'a and will continue through Thursday. Hosted by Yemeni Minister of Water and Environment Abdulrahman Al-Ariani, the conference is supported by the Yemeni-German Cooperation's water sector program, GTZ.

Approximately 65 participants, including those from eight MENA nations, will attend the conference, entitled, "Water Governance in the MENA Region: The Current Situation," including high-level representatives of ministries and national authorities, senior government advisors, senior researchers, national and international development experts and both private sector and non-governmental organizations.

However, the conference witnessed the absence of some members of the Palestinian and Syrian delegations. "The absence of these members is due to the Israeli staged attack on Lebanon, which has affected that region" Al-Ariani stated, "However, outcomes from this conference will be exchanged between all of the participating countries."

The conference will conduct an assessment of the actual situation in terms of the region's water governance. "The conference will critically review the MENA region's water management situation and analyze trends and future outlooks, reviewing experiences and identifying key issues regarding water sector governance. Appropriate governance policies and strategies will be identified, focusing on the needs and future direction of capacity building strategies for improved governance. Strengthening regional cooperation and networking also will be discussed at the conference," Dr. Mohammed Al-Hamdi said.

"The logic of these topics is to first conduct an assessment of the actual situation in terms of the region's water governance, identify critical issues that should be targeted, deciding what changes must be made and choosing policies and recommendations on how to reach the objectives," Al-Hamdi explained.

The conference is part of a four-year

capacity building program in the MENA region's water sector, formulated by InWEnt (Capacity Building International) on behalf of the Germany Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Along with its regional partner, the Arab Water Council, the program is focusing on eight countries: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Yemen.

According to Al-Ariani, the eight nations share the same problem regarding water issues: "The common foundation of these countries is water scarcity; that is, each of these eight countries is experiencing water scarcity."

"Yemen is considered one of the world's poorest countries regarding water. Water quantity is only 10 percent of the per capita share in the MENA region and less than 2 percent of the international average," he added.

According to World Bank studies, the MENA region – home to 4 percent of the world's population – possesses only 1.4 percent of global water resources. Three quarters of its land mass is arid, making the region the driest in the world.

Defined largely by drought and desert, it suffers scarcity of fresh water, uneven availability, a growing gap between supply and demand, deteriorating water quality and dominance of agricultural water use. Jordan, Yemen, the West Bank and Gaza are among regional countries least well endowed with water resources.

The InWEnt capacity building program consists of numerous training events and seminars, as well as three international conferences, the first of which is being held in Sana'a. The second conference, entitled, "Water Governance in the MENA Region: Critical Issues and the Way Forward," will be held in Cairo, Egypt in 2007, while the third will be held in 2008 in Zaragoza, Spain under the title, "Water Future to 2025 for the MENA Region."

According to a press release, "The program's output will include improving institutional performance and policymakers' awareness of priority issues involved and a functional network on water issues within the MENA region."

Al-Baidani shocked as Parliament drops his name

By: Mohamed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, July 15 – Dr. Abdurrahman Abdurabu Al-Muradi Al-Baidani, who submitted his nomination documents to apply for president in the upcoming elections, was shocked that his name was dropped from the candidates' list under the pretext that he's married to an Egyptian woman.

What does dropping Al-Baidani's name – minutes before listing the names of eligible candidates to Parliament – mean? Was it done out of malignance or

fear of competition? Was it the result of MP mood or implementation of orders from higher authorities?

There's justification that his wife is Egyptian, as Yemen's Constitution stipulates that the candidate mustn't be married to a foreigner, meaning she has no Arab citizenship.

Even if it's assumed that an Arab Egyptian wife hasn't had Yemeni citizenship for 50 years now, she's already of Arab origin, blood and affiliation and speaks Arabic. So, who allows those concerned to drop the name of her husband, applying for president, from the list? It's a shameful excuse. Where are the slogans Arab leaders usually chant about nationalism, unity of land, blood

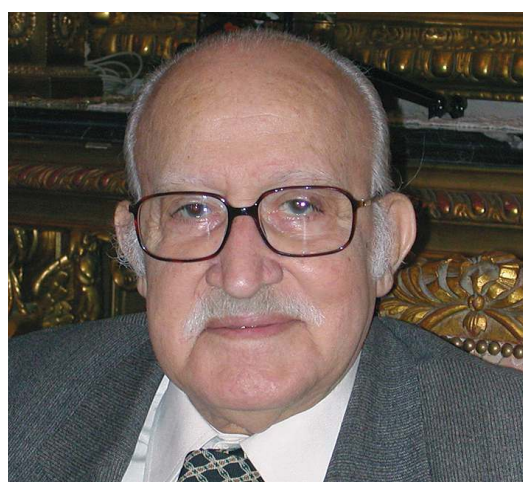
and destiny? They speak of facts, but never explain them to the public.

Al-Baidani occupied several posts before the revolution: Vice President of the Revolution Leadership Council, Vice President of the Republic, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Deputy High Commander of the Armed Forces, Minister of Economy and Minister of Minerals, being appointed to any post by Revolution Leadership Council consensus. He also was selected to defend the revolution and the republic.

The following are Al-Baidani's answers to questions forwarded by the Yemen Times as to why he was dropped from the presidential candidates' list

"It's a decision from President [Ali Abdullah] Saleh himself, as he fears real competition. But the reason announced is that I was dropped because my wife is Egyptian. I don't think this is the justification, since my nomination documents included my wife's passport, issued during the imamate rule with registry number 115 on September 6, 1956 – 50 years ago – and since then, she's held Yemeni passports.

"It's a shame to deny a Yemeni revolution advocate – one who assumed the highest posts and participated in the revolution – the right to apply for president. No one would imagine his name being dropped from the list of candidates, following 44 years of historic effort, under



Dr. Abdurrahman Al-Baidani

the pretext that he's married to an Egyptian who's held several Yemeni passports since the revolution," he stated.

Al-Baidani added, "Abdulaziz Abdulghani advised me to withdraw a few hours before the names of eligible candidates were announced. I informed him that I was ready to withdraw after the announcement of eligible candidates. I met with President Saleh and agreed with him on how to achieve comprehensive reforms. If he promised to adopt them, I was ready to withdraw. I went on advising him, under condition that he would vow to implement these reforms. I suggested that I could be appointed an unannounced advisor to him, without any post, so citizens couldn't interpret my withdrawal as a deal with Saleh."

Continued on page 2

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Population growth hinders Yemen's development

By: Nashwan Dammaj

IBB, July 12 — Timed with the World Population Day, the General Secretariat of the National Population Council, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), set up a festival celebrating the occasion in Ibb.

The participants' speeches focused on population growth rates in Yemen, one of the highest rates in the world. They also addressed the future problems and fears resulting from this speedy growth and the hurdles facing Yemen in the absence of awareness concerning reproductive health.

Dr. Arwa Al-Rabai'e, Deputy Minister for Health, stated, "Education and awareness programs concerning reproductive health are not enough, not only in Yemen but also in the Arab world." She also pointed out, "Young people enter this stage, lacking the necessary knowledge, and are unprepared for life's requirements and unaware of the consequences relating to unwanted and early pregnancy and STDs. All these matters make this group economically-dependent on others."

For his part, Mr. Hans Hobgin, UNFPA representative in Yemen, said, "World Population Day this year focuses on youth, in order to bring people's attention to new problems young people face. Young people represent a great percentage of their communities' population, and about one half of world population is under 27 years old." In Yemen, the percentage of the population under the age of 14 years old is 44%.

Furthermore, Hobgin pointed out that, "More young people today are threatened by poverty, illiteracy and HIV/AIDS. As for young women, they are subject to early pregnancy and delivery." He added, "more than 500 million people aged between 15-24 years old live on less than US\$2 a day. 69 million women are illiterate and about 14 million girls aged between 15-19 years old become mothers each year. 6,000 people contract HIV/AIDS every day."



Some of the participants in the World Population Day Celebration.

He continued, "Yemen's population will reach 35 million by 2025, and the youth rate now equals 44%. These young people face so many problems, including unemployment, poverty, early marriage and pregnancy, qat chewing, dropping out of school and HIV diseases, particularly AIDS."

"At the 2005 summit attended by world leaders, among them was President Saleh, the leaders expressed their desire to exert greater efforts to reduce poverty, improve health conditions and secure a more luxurious life for people. These goals will not be achieved unless young people actively participate in setting policies and population programs," he further said.

Dr. Ameen Al-Janad, General Secretary of the National Council of Population, said, "Population growth in Yemen is a real problem. According to 2004 statistics, Yemeni population reached 21 million, with an annual increase of 3%, equal to 641,000 each year. We have a fertility rate of 6.2%."

"The population work program, adopted by the state last year and covering the period 2001-2025, is an executive program aiming to face population problems. The program was made with the help of experts from the World Bank, with a total cost of YR 33 billion," added Dr. Al-Janad.

Abdulrahman Al-Akwa, Minister for Youth, said, "Most problems faced by the Yemeni community result directly from population growth, that being the great challenge for development in Yemen."

"Yemen also has the biggest population gatherings in the area, with more than 123,000 gatherings, posing a great difficulty to planners when trying to provide infrastructure and utilities. Development can be achieved only with the existence of the correct balance between population growth and the economic growth. When population growth rates are higher, this means more poverty, illiteracy and backwardness," added Al-Akwa.

Dr. Abdulkarim Rasae, Minister for Health, concluding the activity said, "The increase of the population growth rate is attributed to the high fertility rates on one hand and the improvement of women's and children's services and the control over endemic diseases on the other. Due to this annual increase in population, the population problem is considered a great burden on the march for development."

"Over three years, UNFP will help the Ministry of Health provide family planning means for free. Later on, the Ministry alone will make them available," indicated Rasae.

Gitmo detainees' relatives stage sit-ins

SANA'A, July 16 — Relatives of detainees in Gitmo and other secret American detentions staged a sit-in in front of Parliament and the United Nations office in Sana'a on July 15. The protesters demanded the interference of Parliament members (MPs) to set Yemeni detainees free and close up all secret American detentions. They further asked Parliament members to address their counterparts in order to press US Administration to close Gitmo and other secret detention camps in America and Europe and other countries. They also demanded bringing detainees back to their home countries alive and not as corpses.

In front of the United Nations office in Sana'a, the protesters criticized the difficult and often illegal

ordeals detainees undergo in American detentions, asking the UN to denounce such inhuman American practices.

In a letter handed to a UN representative in Sana'a, demonstrators appealed to the organization to uphold its human and historic responsibility of defending and protecting human rights. They said also that UN nepotism of the USA weakens the organization's role.

In a press statement, Mohamed Naji Alaw, Chairman of the National Organization for Defending Human Rights and Freedoms (HOOD), said that "We handed Parliament letters from HOOD and detainees' relatives and another one from the Civil Society Organizations (CSO), demanding the return of all Gitmo

detainees and those in other American detentions to their homes."

Further, we asked the MPs to question the government as to what they have done, and what they intend to do with regards to this issue. In collaboration with CSO and other countries that have detainees in American detentions, the protesters also asked MPs to address their equals in other parliaments and in the American Senate Council to follow up this issue.

Alaw went on to say that "We think that Parliament will take a positive stand and press the government to adopt a similar attitude. We have also adopted other mechanisms with the aim of putting pressure on the American Administration to set all detainees free."

Military court sentences 12 officers to prison

SANA'A, July 16 — A military court, affiliated to the Ministry of Defense, sentenced 12 intelligence officers to prison last Wednesday- July 12, with sentences ranging from 8 months to 3 years, over the escape of Al-Qaeda members from the Political Security Prison. Having been convicted with carelessness, they were all dismissed from their jobs.

According to Sep 26.net, a site which belongs to the Ministry of Defense, "The verdict was issued by Judge Saleh Hussain Al-Adrauai in the court's session last Wednesday. The first, second, third and fourth officers were convicted with facilitating the escape of 23 Al-Qaeda suspects."

"While the fifth officer was convicted of a crime related to negligence of his duties and the fourth one was sentenced to a 3-year term and dismissal from his job. Furthermore, the sixth and seventh

officers were sentenced to a one and a half year term and dismissal from service. The first, eighth, ninth, tenth and eleventh were sentenced for one year and dismissed from military service. The second one along with the twelfth was sentenced to an 8-month term, along with dismissal from service", added Sep 26.net.

The verdict did not, however, deprive the convicts from their acquired rights regarding retirement payment and remunerations. The source also said that trial procedures were made according to law and lawyers were appointed to defend the convicts.

The Referral of 12 officers to military judiciary was a source of surprise for The National Organization for Defending Human Right and Freedoms (HOOD) as it is not authorized to look into such cases, according to

Mohammed Naji Alaw, HOOD's Coordinator.

In a letter submitted to the General Prosecutor, Lawyer Alaw said that military courts are authorized to look into crimes committed by armed forces affiliates, while convicts were affiliates of Political Security Apparatus, which is basically a security apparatus rather than a military one.

He further indicated that their case should be heard before regular criminal courts not military courts as well as stressing that principles of justice dictate the convict's trial in front of the concerned court.

Additionally, Alaw considered their trial to be unfair as the convicts' right to defend themselves was violated, asking for correction of this illegal procedure by referring their case to the concerned court.

Al-Wahdawi editor prevented from writing for 6 months

SANA'A, July 15 — The Capital Southwest Court suspended Al-Wahdawi Editor-in-Chief from writing for six months and fined the paper YR 500,000 as a compensation to Republican Guards, commended by President's son. Under the court verdict, the mouthpiece of the

Nasserite Popular Unionist Organization- one of the political parties in Yemen, must pay Prosecution a fine of YR 50,000.

The court followed the publication of news stories on capture of citizens and land grab by some soldiers from the Republican Guard in Dhamar.

The Ministry of Defense sued a legal action against the newspaper, however, the verdict was issued five months after the lawsuit was filed to the court.

According to Ali Al-Saqqaq, the newspaper will appeal with the hope to invalidate verdict.

Aden Police destroy YR 526m-worth drugs

By: Aden Bureau

ADEN, July 15 — Security authorities in Aden destroyed 1052 kg of hashish and other drugs including heroin, the value of which has been estimated at 526 million Yemeni Riyals.

"Such quantities of drugs were seized thanks to efforts by policemen in the governorate who fight the phenomenon of trafficking drugs between Yemen and the neighboring countries," Chief of Aden Security Department, Colonel Abdullah Qairan told the Yemen Times.

He pointed out the quantity was extremely large and might have had effect on the health of youths if it had reached them. "Security authorities are committed to fighting strongly the phenomenon that has destroyed the economies of various countries," Qairan continued.

According to Qairan, the Aden Security Department has a plan to implement an awareness program on risks of these substances and how to exterminate the problem through coordination with health and education authorities.

"In cooperation with security

authorities, many outlets, which had been used for transporting these harmful substances, have been controlled by the concerned bodies in the government and civil community organizations," said Aden Security Department Chief.

The minutes for destroying the substance were signed by Dr. Musab Al-Sofi, Manager of the General Department for Fighting Drugs, Mustafa Qafer Chief Magistrate of Aden Prosecution, Khalid Al-Najjar, drug fighting officer and Anis Abdulkhaleq, an expert in chemical substances.

Sana'a Congregation discusses developments in Somalia

ADDIS ABABA, July 15 — Chaired by foreign ministers of the congregation member states, Yemen, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia, the Sana'a Congregation is due to discuss territorial developments in Somalia and the region.

The two-day event is scheduled to start on Tuesday July 18. The member states have plans to achieve mutual interests and restore security and stability to restless Somalia, the capital of which is dominated by the Islamic

Courts. In addition, the congregation is expected to discuss the recent issues and developments in Sudan and Palestine.

The meeting aims to bring Somalis together and give public interests more precedence over tribal and individual interests, thanks to a call from Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh for a dialogue between the conflicting groups in the interim government. Also, it aims to establish security and stability in Somalia, which has been war torn

for 16 years, as well as to suggest solutions for regional and international security issues.

Economic and trade committees in the congregation are due to discuss many economic and commercial projects and decisions of relevance to the member states. The committee has a plan to improve economic relations and the volume of trade exchange between the member states, mainly in areas related to the Joint Free Zone, taxes and customs.

YLNG celebrates 134 graduate trainees

SANA'A, July 15 — The Yemen Liquefied Natural Gas company has celebrated 134 trainees who have completed the first stage of the training process at the company's training center last Wednesday. The training included completing an intensive English course to provide the trainees with the minimum level of English-language understanding necessary to complete the following technical training successfully. The full length of the training program is two years and will cover theoretical as well as practical training in oil and gas technologies, electrical and mechanical engineering, as well as several technical disciplines required to operate the company's Belhaf LNG plant.

The training center was set up at a total cost of US\$35 million to train 300 technical staff selected after a screening process of over 16000 applications from various parts of the country. The current batch will commence technical training within two weeks while the second batch will commence the first stage of English language training shortly and will include 45 new trainees selected from local commu-



Trainees graduating the first stage of training.

nities in Mareb, Shabwa and Al-Jawf governorates.

Mr. Christian Auge, training manager of YLNG, told Yemen Times that the objective of this center, justifying the expense, is to produce qualified Yemeni engineers and technicians to handle

important operational tasks within the Belhaf plant, providing them with an opportunity for a hands-on training experience in a YLNG plant abroad and in Belhaf, emphasizing the importance of building human capital and capacity using local talents and trained expertise.

Continued from page 2

Al-Baidani shocked as Parliament drops his name

Al-Baidani continued, "Saleh's decision not to nominate me is considered an announcement by the statesman that he doesn't intend to implement any reforms in the country and that he'll never welcome any advice from me, whether in private or in public."

"The country is projected to face frustration and recession as a result of unemployment, poverty, starvation and despair. The time bomb of terrorism will remain unchecked due to rampant corruption in the country."

"Due to absence of the will to reform in a strategic location, this country won't be allowed to invest because of being a time bomb for terrorism. Yemenis are fed up with the regime and nobody can imagine that they'll tolerate the tragedy," he went on.

Asked about evidence that Saleh dropped his name from the presidential candidates' list, Al-Baidani replied, "First, all of the executive and legislative apparatuses operate according to

directives from Saleh and he's the official in charge of the committee that examined applications. The reason is logical because he's chairman of the ruling party."

"The second reason is Abdulghani's attempt to persuade me to withdraw from the nomination, as he can never do anything unless directed by the president and this fact is known by everyone. Finally, Saleh is the only one to benefit from dropping my name. These are some of the reasons persuading me and public opinion at the local and international levels that Saleh doesn't accept any real competition," Al-Baidani said.

"I presented 27 books to various Yemeni, Arab and international libraries on economic reforms in Yemen, as well as on the required means of development for Yemenis and establishing a modern state, for the sake of which we were called to revolt. Establishing a modern state can't be achieved by replacing one ruler with

another or replacing the imam scarf with the military cap," he commented.

Al-Baidani concluded, "The justification of my wife being Egyptian is attributed to the fact that she didn't behave like other women from tribes surrounding Sana'a, who used to support the republican regime by day but behaved as imamate supporters in the evening. My wife was in charge of trafficking arms to revolutionaries, who then carried them to Aden, Taiz and Sana'a."

"If all of these revolutionaries passed away, anyone intending to examine the facts can ask Gen. Mohamed Qaied Saif, a member of the Revolution Leadership Council, who is still alive. Such a historic fact is correct and never accepts controversy. Additionally, nobody could imagine that my wife isn't Yemeni after 44 years. However, I have explained that my name was dropped from the competition, which is supposed to be free and fair."

G8 struggle to find consensus

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — World leaders, mindful of turbulent Mideast politics, struggled Sunday to draft a consensus statement on escalating warfare between Hezbollah and Israel, a conflict that dominated talks at the summit of wealthy nations.

Russia said it would evacuate its citizens from Lebanon, where Israeli bombs are falling in response to rocket attacks by the terrorist group Hezbollah. President Bush and European allies had differing views on who should be blamed, but urged both sides to restore calm.

Mr. Bush had been backing Israel's right to defend itself, but on Sunday he also urged Israel to show restraint.

"Our message to Israel is, look, defend yourself," Mr. Bush said. "But as you do so, be mindful of the consequences. So we've urged restraint." Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned that the fighting between Israel and Lebanese guerrillas could ignite a wider conflict, and said the international community had to use all

means possible to end the violence immediately.

"If Lebanon explodes, we all know ... how it can resonate across other countries in the region," Lavrov told reporters at the G-8 meeting in St. Petersburg.

Leaders of the G-8 nations — the United States, Russia, Japan, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Canada — began a full day of discussions and issued joint declarations that called for bolstering energy security, fighting infectious diseases and improving education. But the summit was dominated by concerns about the escalating violence in the Middle East.

The United States and France have begun preparations to evacuate citizens from Lebanon. Britain dispatched two ships, including an aircraft carrier, to the eastern Mediterranean in apparent preparation for evacuations. Russia confirmed that it was pulling its citizens out of the nation.

Israeli warplanes began striking Lebanon after Hezbollah guerrillas cap-

tured two Israeli soldiers Wednesday in a cross-border raid into Israel. The bombings continued into Sunday, as Hezbollah fired barrages of rockets ever deeper into Israel.

"The international community must address the root causes" of the violence taking place in the Mideast, Mr. Bush said. "This started because Hezbollah decided to capture two Israeli soldiers and fire hundreds of rockets into Israel from southern Lebanon," Mr. Bush said. "That's the cause of the crisis."

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, sitting with Mr. Bush for a bilateral meeting on the summit's sidelines, said everyone is going to work hard to find a common solution. "We all want the situation to calm down," Blair said.

The only way to stop the hostilities, Blair said, is to address the basic reasons — extremists backed by Iran and Syria.

"I think it would be a very good signal to send out to the world at this moment that we can agree to such a position," Blair said.

French President Jacques Chirac said he wanted the G-8 nations to call "for a show of moderation on the part of all parties involved, so that we can establish the conditions of a long-lasting cease-fire in the region."

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said U.S. officials have told Israeli Prime Minister Olmert that they are concerned about the effect the violence is having on innocent civilians.

"There is a great concern on all sides about civilian casualties, there is a great concern about damage to civilian infrastructure," Rice said. "I don't think that there is anyone here who would say that Israel does not have a right to defend itself. And I think that everyone here would note that the extremists who are attacking not just Israel but the very foundation for peace need to be stopped."

White House counsellor Dan Bartlett said there was a growing consensus on the Middle East among summit members.

Source: Associated Press

Hezbollah rocket attack kills eight in Haifa, Israel

By: David Rosenberg and Dania Saadi

July 16 (Bloomberg) — Eight people were killed and at least 20 injured today after Hezbollah fired rockets into the train station in Haifa, Israel's third-largest city, as hostilities with Lebanon entered their fifth day. The eight were in a garage next to the station during the attack at about 9:20 a.m. local time, an Israeli army spokeswoman said. Israel has lost 24 people since the conflict began and its Home Front command is warning residents of Tel Aviv, Israel's biggest city and commercial center, to be on alert for a possible attack. At least 110 Lebanese civilians, three soldiers and two Hezbollah fighters are dead, according to Lebanese police. The assault on Lebanon is Israel's broadest since 1982, with warplanes striking targets across three quarters of the country. Hezbollah rockets have forced northern Israelis into shelters and brought life to a standstill. Israel is also fighting Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip, and have killed four in 24 hours.

"We have no intention of giving in to these threats," Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said in remarks broadcast at



the start of the weekly Cabinet meeting. "Our enemies are trying to disturb daily life. They will fail."

The fighting has sent crude oil prices to a record and contributed to declines in U.S. and European stock markets amid concerns it may widen into a broader conflict. The Middle East provides a third of the world's oil. The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange's benchmark TA-25 index fell

as much as 4 percent today, before rebounding as much as 2.9 percent this afternoon. Egypt's main stock index, the CASE 30, dropped 6.2 percent and trading was briefly suspended.

Oil Gains

Crude oil may rise further this week on concern Middle East shipments will be disrupted. Twenty of 34 analysts surveyed by Bloomberg said prices will rise.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora yesterday called for a United Nations-backed cease-fire and for his government to re-establish its authority in the country's south. Hezbollah controls southern Lebanon and staged the kidnapping raid into Israel July 12 that started the conflict. Israel accused Iran of aiding

Hezbollah fighters in southern Lebanon. Stationing troops in the south, where Hezbollah gunmen operate without any government interference, would meet one of Israel's conditions for ending its attacks.

"I understand Siniora will put in his army in the south," Shaul Mofaz, Israel's transport minister and a former chief of staff, told reporters. "Nobody is blocking his way. He should do so and without conditions."

Fighting May Escalate

Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak said fighting will probably escalate until the Lebanese government takes steps to end it. He doubts Israel will invade Lebanon with ground forces, relying on air and sea attacks instead. For now, Israel has no option but to continue the military offensive in south Lebanon, said Eyal Zisser, a research fellow at Tel Aviv University's Moshe Dayan Center. "Lebanon is waiting for the world to come in and get involved in this conflict, and to make Hezbollah surrender," he said. Israel hasn't launched a full-scale military attack on Lebanon or Hezbollah since it pulled its troops out of a swathe of

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southern Lebanon held for 18 years until May 2000.

Israeli forces today hit two coastal radar stations operated by the Lebanese army, as well as Hezbollah headquarters and a compound that houses the organization's al-Manar television station, an army spokeswoman said. Lebanon's army fired on and missed an Israeli aircraft over the Lebanese coast, she said.

Laser-Guided Missile

Israel's Channel 2 television said Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, 45, was wounded in an Israeli attack, without saying where it got the information. Hezbollah denied the report, al-Jazeera TV said, citing an unidentified Hezbollah source. Three Israeli sailors reported missing after a radar-guided missile hit

their gunboat were confirmed dead, an army spokeswoman said. The laser-guided missile that struck the boat was supplied by Iran, Brigadier General Noam Faig said at a Tel Aviv news conference.

World leaders, including U.K. Prime Minister Tony Blair, Russian President Vladimir Putin and French President Jacques Chirac, have called for Israel to restrain its response to rocket attacks and the capture of its soldiers. U.S. President George W. Bush stopped short of endorsing a cease-fire called for by Putin, but urged Israeli restraint. Blair joined Bush today in blaming Iran and Syria for the escalation of violence. Syria will respond with "firm and direct" action to any Israeli assault, Information Minister Mohsen Bilal was quoted by the state-run Syrian Arab News Agency as saying

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAMME COORDINATOR

With Support from the Dutch Government (NPT/YEM/035) the Faculty of Commerce and Economics at Sana'a University is implementing the project 'Establishment of an Executive Master's in Business Administration (EMBA) Degree Programme'. The first student intake is scheduled in November, 2006. A full-time Programme Coordinator is now required to oversee the administration of the programme and to provide liaison between students and university faculty.

Objective of the Position

The Coordinator will manage the daily administrative activities of the EMBA plus to coordinate course schedules, course related non-curriculum activities and to coordinate between students, faculty and the NPT / MBA Project.

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نطمح دائما أن نمد زياتنا بالمنتجات المتميزة التي ترضي أنواقهم، وامتدادا لهذا السعي الدائم نقدم لزيائننا الكرام الآن عرضنا الترويجي النجم السعيد الذي يضم العديد من الهدايا المجانية الرائعة كاجهزة التلفزيون، غسالات الملابس، مشغلات الأقراص المرئية DVD، الأجهزة السمعية المحمولة، خلاطات العصائر، الكؤيات، كرات القدم، قمصان T-shirts و أقلام. إلخ. ستحصل على كل هذا عند شرائك من منتجات باناسونیک بما قيمته ٥٠ دولار، لذا تقبل بزيارة أحد معارض باناسونیک اليوم لتصبح من الفائزين بعرض النجم السعيد.. أسرع ولا تفوت الفرصة.

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A reality: The population in Yemen

By: Ismail Al-Ghabri

The UN populations' report for 2005 has confirmed a reality: the population in Yemen provokes worries and fears, despite recent steps and new programs aimed at controlling population growth by all possible means that include birth control, female education, and creating awareness to better hygienic conditions for mothers and children.

The recent census shows about twenty million live in Yemen and will steadily grow to 45 million by the year 2050, the report speculates, as well as indicates that demographic growth in Yemen multiplied 2004. The main factors behind this are the rather high fertility rate among females currently between 2 to 6 per female, and the population growth rate estimated as 3.2%.

The second reason for this tremendous growth of population in Yemen lurks behind the overwhelming rates of illiteracy amid females at 69.1% versus 27.3% among males. This educational gap between men and women necessitates that a more strategic plan to implement seriously needed measures to bridge this gap. Women's education would dramatically help in meeting

demographic monitoring policies.

Such strategies must coincide with other factors such as birth and pregnancy health measures. It is estimated that the World has about 250 million lives as a result of birth and early pregnancy deaths.

In Yemen, the current rate of population increase is considered a major challenge in the face of development for the country, although some don't consider it a serious factor. The matter, however, does require more concerted efforts and cooperation between concerned parties.

The economic aspect of this situation in our country is of technical nature in the sense that the rate of the underage, and those who are incapable to work reaches 47% and this means the rate of the needy for support exceeds 400%. This puts a heavy burden on the new generation.

The UN has launched this year a warning campaign to raise awareness among various nations on health related problems and their hidden dangers. The report states a woman's health can be threatened by numerous births and related complications. In Yemen, health complications caused by early age pregnancy and back to back birthing are the main causes of deterioration in a woman's health and subsequent deaths.

A rate of 42 out of total females deaths are linked to the repercussions of early age pregnancy and delivery with the number of mothers who have died as result of this reason range between 4900 and 5500 cases. In addition, within each death case of those previously mentioned, there are at least twenty reported cases of women who have been seriously harmed. This means that the total number of deaths, in addition to those mothers who were extremely harmed is estimated between 9,800 to 11,000 cases.

Consequently, maternal death or disability cases will certainly affect the life of kids and bring about a tragic situation over the course of their upbringing. Kids will suffer malnutrition, bodily functional disorders, and other possible psychological and health problems.

The family as a whole will suffer also as a result of the unhealthy growth of kids and will spend much more on medications. Such a child, when he grows up in that way, might not be of much help in bettering the family's economic conditions.

The population report as such, has highlighted influential factors such as illiteracy, maternal health, and economic impact in relations to the population's growth in the country.



Main cities are crowded with people.

Unemployment, health failures in Yemen criticized

By: Yemen Times Staff

The Yemeni Observatory for Human Rights (YOHR) has criticized the state's policy of distributing public employments, a fact supported by the ever-increasing number of unemployed citizens.

According to official figures, the current workforce is estimated at 4,090,680 employees, 76.3 percent male and 23.7 percent female. There are 3,621,679 laborers, which comprises 88.5 percent of the total workforce.

Such estimations were made in 1999 and no other estimations have been made as yet, a matter which reflects the lack of attention to dealing with data and human resources. In light of this, a realistic estimation of the current workforce is not reflected, as the mentioned sur-

veys were conducted at intervals, thus excluding a great deal of people of the working age.

With the estimations of 7,520,000 people in work and 2,500,000 without jobs, unemployment is equivalent to 35 percent of the total workforce. Official figures, however, estimate unemployment at 15 percent of the total workforce. This estimation seems "bias and misleading."

The report clarified that 150,000 graduates of universities and technical/ vocational institutions have been registered with the Ministry of Civil Service in the hope of being awarded a post. This is a cumulative figure of more than eight years, ending in the year 2005. However that number doesn't include all graduates, for some prefer not to register at the Ministry of Civil Service, but with the private sector instead.

Over the past five years, universities graduated some 90,000 students, with an estimation of 19,000 graduates per year. In addition to this, private universities, foreign universities and technical/ vocational institutions contribute to the number of graduates. Yet, however large the number of graduates, the state receives only eight percent of those who apply at the Ministry of Civil Service each year. 90 percent of graduates remain without jobs in the institutions of the state and the capacity of jobs in the private sector has reduced due to inactive economic activities, said the report.

"Yemen suffers from an unemployment crisis that affects graduates with higher education. Of the reasons for the escalation of unemployment are structural factors that lie in ailing the structure of the economy; besides other factors proven in the decline of the government investment spending on development projects, as well as the high population growth rate and education outputs," stated the report.

Health rights

In its annual report, the Yemeni anti-leprosy program in Taiz mentioned that 7982 cases of absolute leprosy were discovered in 2005 and 415 new cases of leprosy in 2004. The rate of the spread of leprosy in Yemen, the report added, reached 100 cases out of 100,000 people.

The report quoted Hashem Al-Zain, representative of the World Health Organization, WHO, in Yemen, as saying that there were 411 cases of probable polio infection up to May 2005. Al-Zain added that 300,000 children in Hudeida had not been vaccinated against polio. Yemen is one of six countries where vaccination against polio is still under the required level. Cases of polio registered in Yemen reached 1533, which is half the cases registered worldwide, said Lee Jong-Wook, WHO Director-General.

As for maternal mortality, the report stated that eight birth-related deaths occur per day and that out of every 50

women, one dies as a result of pregnancy and birth complications.

The report said that according to the estimations of the Ministry of Health, 15,000 Yemenis get infected by cancer per year, WHO's estimations push that figure up to 20,000. Every year, of this figure, 66 percent die, while 25-30 percent survive for more than 10-15 years.

Moreover, the report mentioned a variety of factors behind the defects in health services, some of which are stated below.

- Incompetent use of available resources: The health sector receives around four percent of the public expenditure. The individual's portion of the total Ministry of Health's budget is only

\$4.30 per year. The health reform document of 1998 indicated that 50 percent of health finance had been wasted by corruption, lack of competence and mal-administration.

- deficiency of health and environmental legislations: The efforts made by the government to improve health care failed to encourage the citizens to enjoy their rights to good health, due to ever-spreading epidemics, corruption, governmental incompetence, administrative incompetence, lack of policy to fight hazards such as the threatening spread of dangerous diseases and the counterfeiting and smuggling of medicines.

Globally, Yemen is classified among the ten countries suffering from water

shortages, having only 2.5 billion cubic meters of water resources.

The individual's portion of water resources decreased from 229 cubic meters in 1988 to 116 cubic meters in 2005. This figure is expected to reach 72 cubic meters in 2025.

"Although the government has been aware of this disaster-like truth since the 1980s, it has not done anything noticeable to handle the reasons behind the aggravation of this problem since its beginning," said the report.

Arbitrary digging has had bad effects in this regard. There are 55,000 water wells and more than 400 diggers in the country; and only less than half the population can get clean drinking water.

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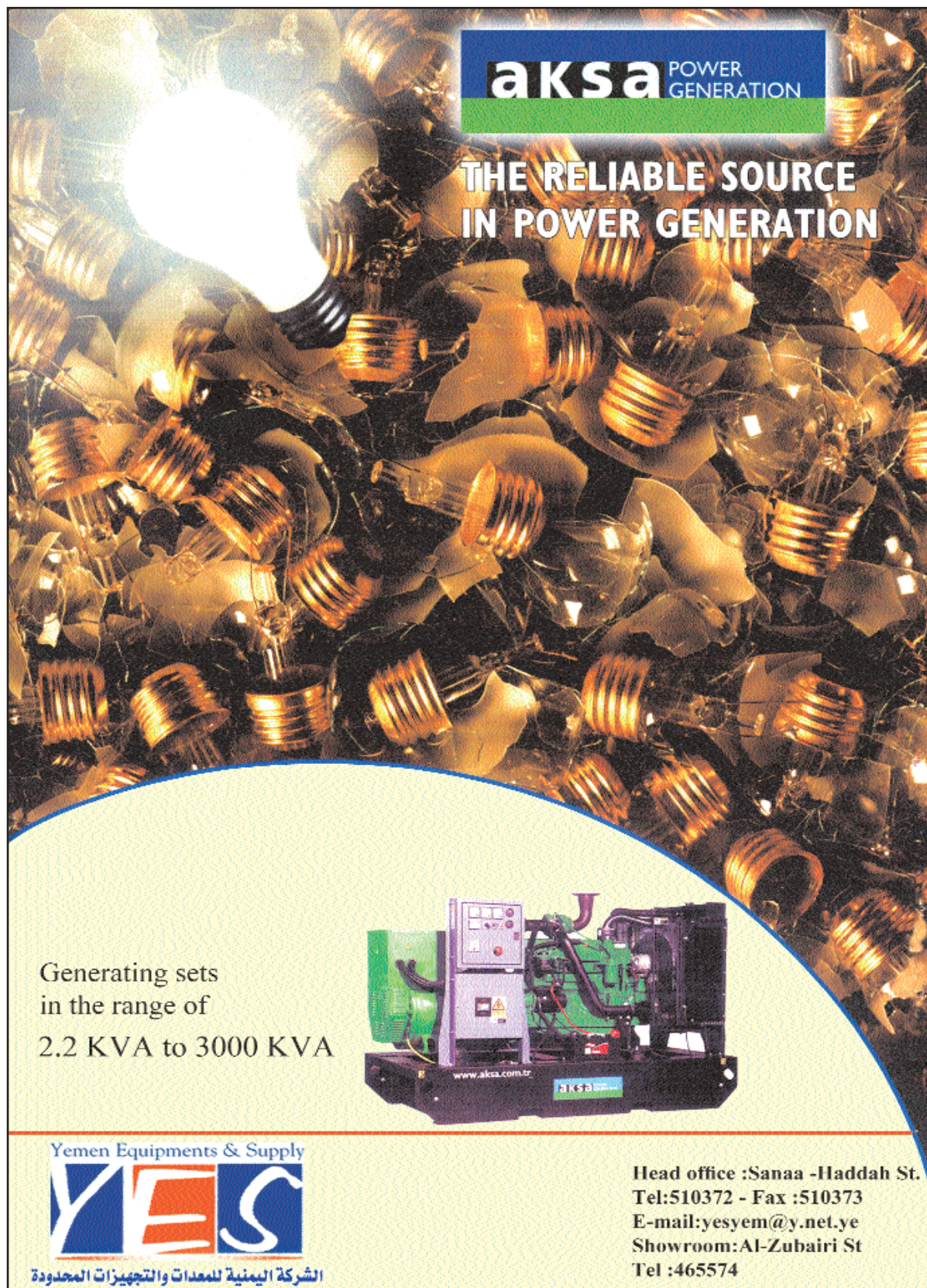
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Vacancy announcement

The Socotra Conservation Fund (SCF) is a not for profit organization, limited by guarantee, registered in UK and operating in Yemen under the auspices of the Government of the Republic of Yemen, Ministry of Water and Environment.

The SCF has received a Grant from the US Embassy in Yemen under the "USDA Agreement FY 2003 PL480 Food for Progress" initiative. The grant aims at supporting the implementation by SCF of priority community development projects in Socotra Island.

The SCF invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position with its project " Livestock and Fisheries Community Development Project"

Post Title: Project Manager
Duration: 06 months (renewable)
Duty station: Full time in Socotra

Responsibilities

- The Project Manager will respond to the Secretary and Board of Directors of the SCF.
- Coordinate and supervise the timely implementation of all project activities at site level, mobilizing and coordinating the necessary technical and administrative support from SCF office in Sana'a and Hadibu, Socotra.
- Identification, recruitment, management and supervision of national staff and consultants
- Procurement, operation and maintenance of project equipment
- Set-up and management of a suitable project administration, financial reporting and external auditing system
- Prepare an inception report, operational work plan, and periodic progress and financial reports, as per project reporting schedule.
- Liaise with project partners in Socotra and in Sana'a.

Qualification

- University degree in Environment \ Agriculture preferably specialized in animal production studies.
- A solid professional background in similar community development projects, and or NGO management.
- 5 years of prior relevant working experience in the field of livestock management, and/or fisheries development projects.
- Familiarity with the complex and delicate social and operational context of Socotra is an important asset.
- Fluency in Arabic and working knowledge of English is required. Knowledge of Socotri a distinct asset.
- Full Computer Literacy and familiarity with e-mail and main IT communication skills.

Interested candidates are requested to submit their applications indicating the title of the post applied for by mail to Socotra Conservation and Development Programme/ Socotra Conservation Fund. Only short listed candidates will be notified.

P.O.Box 16494- Sana'a/ Fax: 425309/ E-mail (scf@socotraisland.org)

The deadline for receiving applications is 17 August 2006.

SCF is an equal opportunity employer and women are encouraged to apply.

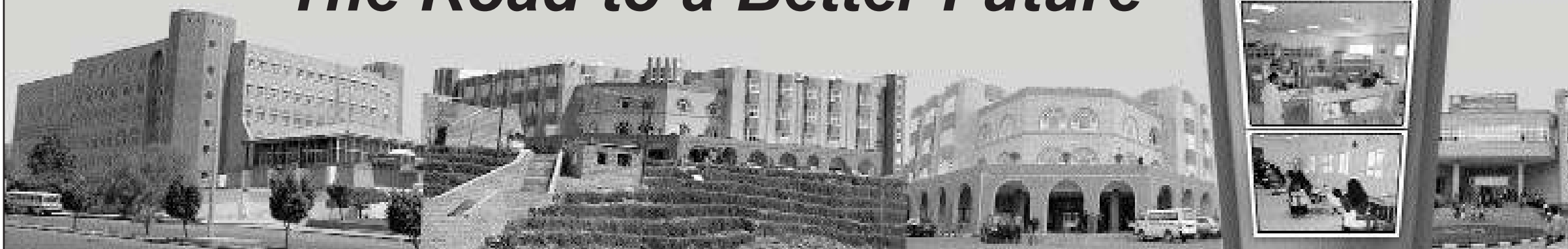
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Words of Wisdom



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

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

OUR
OPINION

The true test

The tension and alarm the Arab and Muslim world is currently going through reminds me of the crises in Iraq in 2003 and the second Intifada in Palestine in 2000. In fact, as we are glued to our TVs following every new move whether it be by Israel or Hassan Nasr Allah, it reminds me very much of the time we saw the missiles fall on Baghdad International Airport. Since then, not a single day passes without further bloodshed in Iraq or Palestine, and the real tragedy is that it does not affect the world that much anymore because somehow we are used to it now.

Now, once more, we are observing the beginning of a new war and I believe that in no time we will have got used to this war, too, and will hear the escalating numbers of killings on both sides with complete indifference. This is not just about a war in the Middle East; unfortunately the value of human life has been degraded everywhere around the world: The continuous famine in Africa, the guerrilla raids in East Asia, the Latin bandits, the drug traffickers of North America, the European Mafia... etc

However, not all human life has the same value. It is amazing how the value of a human being's life is decided according to their passport. How the life of three Israelis are worth hundreds of Lebanese and Palestinians, and how several Americans are equal to tens of Iraqis. It is also amazing how obvious facts are able to be manipulated and turned upside down; like how Israel becomes the victim of cruel Lebanese and aggressive Palestinians.

The true test in this new crisis in the Middle East is not to win the war. In fact, winning in such battles is a very relative issue. The true test is our position in front of humanity and history. Time will move on, Lebanon will reconstruct its nation like it has done many times before, Palestine will fight until the very last soul and the Iraqis will stand on their feet again no matter how long it takes. I wonder how the Israeli and the United States' governments, the G8, the current leaders of the UN, Arab League and all the Arab leaders will be viewed in another 100 or 200 years. That is the true test.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf
Editor-in-Chief

Self-defense or war of annihilation?

Under what claim and logic could the declared war of annihilation now going on against an entire people be called self-defense? How can a person possessing the minimum degree of his mind and humanity believe that what has been occurring in Gaza against the Palestinians, with the obvious features and dimensions of a war of annihilation, is an act of self-defense, as the White House and its head repeatedly claim?

In exporting such a dubious logic as this, either the language used by the White House and president George Bush possesses indications and implications completely different from the concepts of language used by people



By: Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh

all over the world, or the ridiculing of human mentalities on part of this government and its president has reached such an extent that it is too difficult to maintain a minimum degree of credibility towards those who use this type of language.

I wonder how can a human having even a small amount of reason, let alone a man possessing full reason, see all that the Israeli army of occupation is doing against the Palestinians as a sort of self-defense, as if the warplane raids and army tank poundings were Palestinian planes and tanks and the Palestinian martyrs of children, young and elderly people and women constitute the occupiers' need to defend themselves?

Justifying the killing and searching for

excuses to provoke the mind and conscience is worse than killing innocents and entertaining the sight of dead bodies covering the streets with blood everyday. This outrageous justification is considered the downfall of conscience before it could be an expression of the fall of the language and its familiar concepts and indications. Who would believe that an all out offensive, as this against Gaza and its besieged and starved people, is nothing but an act of self-defense?

This is a distasteful irony not governed by the logic of language or the logic of politics or that of human beings. Moreover, it is deriding human reason. It is rather a call instigating the aggressor to go too far in his aggression and continue killing the innocent and destroy their houses and any hope in life. This stand, bias and support of oppression and tyranny, generates angry reactions from many people against the United States of America and

against all the White House's calls for political reform and respect of human rights.

If Zionist terrorism is considered self-defense, the forms of terror present in various parts of the world would find justification, according to the American logic. Terror would change into self-defense and thus the card that the White House uses to justify its losing wars and biased stands would be dropped. This also emphasizes the policy of double standards that has become the main basis of American policy. This policy has become clearer and more atrocious since the new conservatives have been in control of the ruling system and they herald a dark future for the world nations, the American people in particular.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh is Yemen's prominent poet and intellectual. He is the director of the Yemeni Center for Studies.

JMP nomination of its presidential candidate

"It inspires a feeling of satisfaction and safety." This is the summary of my personal conviction towards the opposition's nomination of the former minister and parliamentarian Faisal Bin Shamlan, the owner of a clean record in various aspects of administration. It seems the man does not have grudges or wish to enact revenge against any person or place. His independent status has provided him with an opportunity to look at everything through a firm perspective that changes according to the national interests.

The Yemeni opposition and the Joint Meeting Party (JMP) have secured a brilliant victory for the principle of peaceful transfer of power and have confronted the President



By: Ali Al-Garadi

think it indicates the national mentality that does not want partisan fanaticism in the post of the state leadership. He represents technical experience and independent vision that can give care to the democratic experiment with neutrality and without giving priority of a party to others and consequently produce a "ruling party" that inflicts limitations on the

ruling Yemen since 1978, and with him the historical heritage of the adherence to the party, the state, the President and all institutions of the authority.

political life as is the case now.

The President's party, the General People's Congress (GPC) controls a sweeping majority in the Parliament, the local councils and all institutions of the executive, legislative powers and the state administration apparatus. This sweeping majority came as a result of the one constituency system, large-scale corruption and the use of the state service against the opposition parties.

For this reason the opposition parties have endeavored in their political program for a national reform demanding a parliamentary system guaranteeing justice in the distribution of votes and representation of the society's various segments. It is not enough for international organizations to see long columns of voters casting their voices; most of them came under greed or fear or tribal bias. Many observers of Yemen's political

affairs think the key way for solving the crisis of backwardness begins with pluralism of the media. A backward regime's governance relies on the elements and factors of ignorance and fear. Providing means of knowledge is the guarantor of ending both of those factors.

Yemen deserves the world's help in founding a genuine democratic regime with free and honest elections and free media. Otherwise, one day it will be hit by fragments of dictatorship and false bureaucracy. The world's interests lie in the existence of freedom, social peace, actual development and means of knowledge.

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

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Political mockery

By: Abu Zaid Al-Sulaimani
abuzaidnyc@aol.com

If anyone thought that Ali Abdullah Saleh was really not going to run in the upcoming presidential elections, you would have to have been a fool of some sort. I mean it was only a matter of time before the republican guards and Yemeni secret service agents dressed as civilians to march in protest against the President's decision not to run. I have nothing

against the President. As a matter of fact I think he's much better than the 64 or so people that we have running for the job of President. We'll get to the 64 later but for now let's talk about the President.

In a true democracy no person is forced to run for public office against his own will. It's not in the best interest of a nation to elect someone to lead their country if that person does not want to be there. And as I recall and I'm sure most Yemenis do as well, the President has declared time and time again that he was not going to run for another term. This would have put the icing on the cake on a job well done by Ali Abdullah Saleh. After all it was under his leadership that today we're united. We no longer have missiles pointing at each other and instead we are one. The peaceful transfer of power would not only have solidified his iconic image in Yemen but would have made him an even greater icon among all Arabs.

64? Are we having the first ever Sana'a marathon? 64 people makes it sound like a track race not a presidential race. It's makes a mockery of our young democracy. And we have three women that each thinks she can be the next Bilqis or Arwa. Democratically speaking, why not? But let's be realistic here, even their own family members won't vote for them.

Bin Shalman! I read his profile. Great guy. Gives to charity, and is actually broke, which is surprising for a Yemeni politician, which tells you he's honest. But here's the problem - he used to play with my great-

grandfather when they were kids. OK he's not that old but close. When you get to be in your 70s you shouldn't be worried about how to run a country but instead worry about the fact that Alzheimer's disease might start to kick in. You're a little late buddy. And the other 60 or so puppets are just that - puppets.

In conclusion, there are no real candidates. Of course there wouldn't be. It's still Ali time. If the President really wasn't going to run, it would have been a whole

different story. We would have had real candidates with real political power. I for one would wish to see someone like Yahya Al Shuaibi run for President. I've seen what he can do and so have many Yemenis.

Our leaders have always feared competition and the popularity of others. When someone gets too popular with the people in a certain area, we relocate them. At least that's an improvement; the YSP used to slaughter them, or they would just disappear forever.



By: Samer (samer_art@maktob.com)

Letters to the Editor

Hezbollah and Israel

There is a serious risk that the latest dramatic episodes between the Islamic fundamentalist group, Hezbollah, and the state of Israel, will degenerate into a conflict with international repercussions.

One must condemn the actions of Hezbollah for crossing the border on Wednesday and capturing the two Israeli soldiers. However, Israel's military reprisals must equally be considered wrong. A State's right to self-defense does not exempt it from respecting the norms of international law, especially as regards the protection of civilian populations. Lebanon is a free and sovereign nation, and offers assurance of its closeness to those people who have suffered so much in the defense of their own independence.

It appears obvious that the only path wor-

thy of our civilization is that of sincere dialogue between the contending parties.

Paul Kokoski
paulkokoski@mountaincable.net

Knowledge without work

I would like to inform you that many people in Yemen are sitting at home without work because the government could not offer them jobs according to their experience. This is not an excuse. Why doesn't the country provide a person a job according to their experience? This would be for the good of the country, not for us. Instead I see a lot of foreigners working. I know that many people in Yemen don't have any experience, therefore why can't we try to establish a suitable place for them to work together, to their earn living?

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Yemen Press Review

By: Mohammed Khidhr

Al-Wasat
weekly, 12 Jul 2006.

Main headlines

- While the Russian intelligence runs after its members in Yemen, Al-Zarqawi battalion in Aden and Sana'a intends to hand over Saudis to Riyadh
- The president holds contacts with Al-Jifri to re-draw his alliances in the southern governorates
- Seizure of citizens lands in Hudeida by influential officials increases
- Al-Mahra fishermen complained it, foreign fishing with official licenses
- Tribal pressures to release the involved, attempts to smuggle 8 containers of diesel
- Socialist leader Muhsin: Opening files does not frighten anyone
- Parliament demands a budget equal of that approved for the presidency office
- Free zone port stops work

Mohammed Al-Jariri writes that president Ali Abdullah Saleh had in the past years of his long rule faced bug obstacles the most dangerous of which were in the form of coups or political crises developed to large-scale war. However, the man had managed to hold fast and come out victorious from all those obstacles and challenges by virtue of his shrewdness and flexibility and support of his relatives.

The challenges have not ceased and the series of obstacle renews due to scramble of people presenting themselves more than anytime before. I don't mean by that the internal dossier and the economic data that show deterioration and the aggravating social issues, although they are dangerous nor the Houthism file despite of its being painful or the file of the opposition abroad though it is strong. I meant the obstacle of Faisal Shamlan, the candidate of the Joint Meeting parties. I am not among those belittling the importance of the choice and exclusion of leaders of the parties from nomination to compete the president. Fully on the contrary, I see the choice as a kind of genius, and political indications leading to dividing the

Yemeni street into two big blocks. Ibn Shamlan represents a meeting point among the parties of the JMP, especially the Islah and the YSP and a meeting point among these parties and their different trends. It is true that the parties of the JMP have presented a new style of dealing among parties of contradictory ideological precepts and moved from the square of conflict to that of embracing refuting all prospects. Nevertheless, a nomination of a leader from the JMP may not gain the absolute support because of the legacy of the existing contractions within these parties and their organizations. From here comes the cleverness of the selection. Moreover the personality of Bin Shamlan has no political adversaries whether before or after the unity and he enjoys respect and appreciation of all.

It is the first time a competitor of this weight presented by a strong political block and it is the first time president Ali Abdullah Saleh despite of his multiple elements of strength to fight a strong elections battle without support from the Yemeni Islamic movement (Islah).

grinds the rest of the people. And it is so strange that the government becomes a collector to an extent that it has become a burden on its citizens. Chaos is taking root and order is absent and injustice has become the rule and justice an exception.

This government and its officials have become concerned only in gaining the bigger share of the country's riches as well as its revenues and loans and assistance. The citizen did not practically benefit from all that. The situation is now in dire need of real change.

It is unbelievable that this government, and the successive governments before, wants to reform the situation. All indications show the extent of corruption of this government and its institutions have and it is not possible to believe the lies and delusion practiced by the government media. This situation and the tragedy are clearly seen by all and that should be put in our minds all the time.

All of us have to wring out our rights by all means without fear and we have to understand that freedom and dignified life are not easy to gain and are not given as a gift.

Al-Wahdawi
weekly organ of the Nasserite Unionist Organization, 11 Jul 2006.



Main headlines

- After submitting application to presidency nomination to the parliament, Bin Shamlan: Nothing can be achieved without political reform
- Seemed to be annoyed about the opposition candidate, The president assails the JMP
- Six sailors die in a Panamanian ship sinking offshore Socorro island
- One killed, four wounded in tribal clashes in Amran
- Libya finances building of a power station in Yemen
- Information ministry withdraws Ath-Thawra daily from newsstands, Conflicts behind repeated changes inside GPC press
- Al-Dhaliee denounces violation of principles agreement, Qahtan threatens by sit-in
- A sheikh storms Al-Salam Hospital in Saada
- Addition of two members to elections supreme commission, Dr Dahhan: We hope activation of the spirit of law and constitution
- Indications on continuation of escalated Zionist aggression on the Palestinians
- Among them 5 Saudis, State security court acquits persons accused of forming a terrorist gang

Writer Muamar Mohammed Al-Batoul says in an article that the government in world countries pursues policies and follows plans for taking care of the citizen and working for improving their conditions and reforming their conditions. For that end the government employs all its capabilities to serve its society and seriously and sincerely works to provide dignified life for all members of the society without discrimination. The topmost injustice and tyranny is when a government is controlled by a small group of people owning destinies of the people, tampering with riches of that people and its life becomes at the top of luxury and wealth while the majority of the people lives in a tragic condition of life.

The program of impoverishment that our government is carrying out has become something no longer to keep silent against it especially in the situations that are going from bad to worse. International reports point out that 80% of the population lives under the line of poverty and continued increase in the rate of unemployment as well as deterioration in all walks of life.

It is regrettable that our country which is rich with its natural wealth and its people live this kind of tragic life. It is also regrettable that the wealth and its revenues go to accounts of a small group of persons at a time poverty

Al-Balagh
weekly, 11 Jul 2006.



Main headlines

- Attack on the hose of head of Islah party branch at the constituency 37
- Yemeni journalists demand the Syndicate's extraordinary conference to study all issues concerning the journalists
- A Chinese company establishes a free of charge training center for the ministry of higher education
- After clashes, using bombs, a gang for stealing telephone cables in Tamar arrested
- A mother appeals for saving her son from execution
- Tens of lawyers and teachers in Ibb and Saada governorates appeal to the president for the release of Judge Luqman

Editor in chief of the newspaper's article mentions that the meeting of the parliament and the shoura council began to study applications of candidates to presidential elections. The election programs are still not clear but now the image is complete. The General People's Congress selected Ali Abdullah Saleh as its candidate and the JMP leadership nominated independent Faisal Bin Shamlan and the National Opposition Council elected Yassin Abdeh Saeed. The question is would the JMP be sincere in the selection of Shamlan or would they receive through the back door their own interests? As for the masses no one knows how much their conviction is to give their votes to Shamlan.

The period of seven years is the arbiter through which what Yemen wants. It is either the building of institutions and consolidation of democracy and peaceful transfer of power or chaos and loss. The coming period would establish for tens of years and draw up the broad lines for Yemen's future. It would define the historical position that Yemen would occupy in the present century at both the Arabian Peninsula and the Arab world.

We want parties of the JMP and the GPC to look beyond the presidential elections and to draw up the integrated programs to build Yemen first and above all.

As-Sahwa
weekly, 13 Jul 2006.



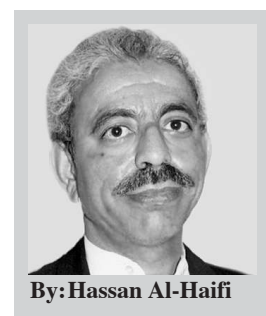
Main headlines

- Bin Shamlan: Future is for the JMP
- Heated competition for the president post
- Allow accuses the Parties Committee of selectivity and

COMMON SENSE

An American license to kill

From what can be discerned from the position of the United States on the Gaza situation and now the newly erupted clash in Lebanon is that the Zionist agenda in the region has been tagged to Washington's foreign policy agenda.



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

Hamas and Hezbollah may have initiated. But it is easy to find rational explanations for this initiation, which can all be tracked to Israeli arrogance and the ongoing policy of literally strangling the population of Gaza and the West Bank.

This is notwithstanding the obvious negative repercussions that this would have on American interests, world peace and regional stability.

One is almost led to believe that all sense of logic and rationality have been removed from American foreign policy as well as the lack of humanitarian concerns that such a foreign policy entails. The fact is that the United States could have done a lot to contain much of the violence that is now spinning out of control and God only knows where it will lead to.

It could have even prevented the new escalation in Lebanon by simply acting more responsibly in restraining its Spartan ally in Israel and reminding it that not all problems can be solved by the barrel of the gun. It is no secret that Israel would not carry out the mass punishment on the Palestinians for choosing their newly elected Hamas government, which negates the previous US policy of supporting democratic elections in the Palestinian territories.

This only projects the idea that if democratic elections do not lead to what Israel likes than the US will be ready to let Israel do all it needs to do to topple the resulting government. Setting aside the political ramifications, one is inclined to believe that the US has absolutely no human concerns when it doggedly pursues a policy that only reflects the wishes and aspirations of its Zionist ally. No one is counting on Israel to pursue any civilized policy in the region, because the whole existence of the Zionist state is based on a mixture of deception and "might makes right" approaches that defy logic and comprehension.

Surely a state created at the expense of the indigenous population of the country is not expected to follow any moral traits as it seeks to further expand its reaches at the further expense of such a population.

But why the United States should provide the license for such wanton killing as we see in Gaza and now Lebanon defies logical explanation. Both ensuing conflicts are the result of military engagements that Israeli forces and resistance forces of

Perhaps Hezbollah may have acted in the sentimental manner that is expected to come from any Arab, who possesses the wherewithal to come to the aid of their brethren in Palestine and this may have been a daring move indeed on the part of Hezbollah.

But, the fact is that Israel continues to intimidate and provoke in its hostile attitude towards the Palestinians and the fact is that the majority of the Arabs "in the street" continue to feel sympathy for the Palestinians, and have a strong suspicion of anything that Israel does, notwithstanding the submission of many of the Arab regimes to the "realities of the times", realities in themselves that are imposed upon by the sheer power of the gun rather than a fervent desire to live in peace.

While the recent escalation in the violence may have led to the uncertain aura we are now seeing in the future prospects for the region, but surely Hezbollah may have rightly sensed that most Arabs in the Arab world would have no second thoughts about judging that indeed there was no other way to break the impasse that the violence in Gaza was coming to.

Since American nods of approval to Israeli intransigence was only leading to one tragedy after another in the Holy Land there was an apparent need for "something to happen" that would hopefully bring relief to the Arabs of Palestine and challenge the apathy of the international community (and especially the Arab regimes) to the ongoing massacre of the civilian population of Gaza.

The American anti-terrorism rhetoric is simply not being received with open hearts in the region and is being viewed more as a language of hate that is used to corroborate Israeli "legitimized terror" by sheer American blind support of such terror. That is how it is seen on the Arab street and Hezbollah knows this very well. In the end that is where public support lies and counts.

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

- partiality
- Al-Sharaabi: The principles agreement, a reference for solving the electoral problems
- Workers of the free zone stage labor strike
- Palestine tragedy and the world silence
- Attack with bombs and shots on the house of the head of Islah branch at constituency 37

Columnist Zaid As-Shami writes an article discussing and commenting on the JMP's nomination of Faisal Bin Shamlan as its candidate for the upcoming presidential elections. He says the people's circles, as the bases of the JMP, have received with satisfaction the announcement of Mr Shamlan presidential candidate of the JMP. Mr Shamlan shares the JMP its realistic political and economic visions and ambitions to deliver the country from the state of deterioration led by the General People's Congress (GPC).

Choosing an independent candidate is considered in favor of the JMP especial in reply to statements by some influential personalities that the JMP leadership does not want political

reforms but rather seeking for positions and posts and self interests. By nominating an independent candidate the JMP proved that even at the availability of an opportunity the JMP has not pounced upon it and its leaders have not differed about the question. They have rather nominated to the post who the found capable of bearing the responsibility. The Yemenis are in need of a president for all of them and not for one party. Those who wrote the constitution have escaped from their minds the text that stipulates that who is elected to the post of president of the republic should resign from partisanship because his wide authorities could enable him to use all potentials of the state for his party and thus the people is divided into patriotic and traitors. Even the governorates have been described as faithful and heroic and others not. The governorates where the ruling party has majority representation are deemed heroic and loyal and the governorates where the opposition wins they are not.

The JMP has chosen Bin Shamlan from a list of names whereas the GPC was unable to nominate more than one candidate.

SILVER LINING

Will YJS leadership bite the bullet now?

We went to vote for a new president and board to represent the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) in February 2004, we were enthusiastic about the ability of the elections to bring fresh leadership that would breathe new life into the union. The elections were successful and brought forward young people, who were thought to be an asset in the making of the union and its subsequent development. However, the internal conflicts between the board and the president crippled any efforts to improve the situation of journalists, who are facing a number of problems relating to professionalism, ethics, freedom and other areas. It was an unhealthy environment wherein the YJS leadership was busied with trivial things.



By: Mohammed Al-Qadhi

and critical issue. He has also said that he will make use of his good contacts with the president and the authorities to calm down the tense situation between the journalists and these parties. This is fine, as we are not always confronting the authorities. However,

when it comes to violations of freedom, nobody will keep quiet, regardless of what stance the YJS might take. It is the journalists who lead the YJS and not the opposite, particularly during the backlash fight of the journalists against the government's abuse of media freedom.

By and large, there are a number of issues awaiting the new team, including the draft press law as well as the internal organization and restructuring of the YJS to become a real trade union which represents journalists' interests and delivers services to them. Without such restructuring, the YJS will not develop and becomes a professional trade union that is able to create interests for its members.

Mustafa has promised that he will do a lot in this respect. To do so would add credit to our elections, which have been for the second time fair and free; this testimony should be translated into concrete results on the ground. To have fair and free elections means that the voters are not influenced in their selection of their favorite candidates. Those who win in any election are not just a decoration to democracy; rather, they are accountable for their actions and their ability to deliver promises should be questioned. This is simply the principle of democracy at all levels, from the ordinary post in a trade union, to the highest post of the state president.

Anyway, let us keep our fingers crossed in the hope that the new team led by Mustafa will be able to bite the bullet during the remaining two years and get the YJS out of the fix it is currently going through. Mustafa is a competent person and needs the support of us all.

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Mohammed Al-Qadhi is a Yemeni journalist and columnist. (mhlaqadhi@hotmail.com)

Al-Maraw'ah: A matchless historic town

By: Mazen Al-Saqqaf

It's a historic town whose name is associated with the house of Ali bin Omar bin Mohammed bin Suleiman, known as Al-Ahdal, the first to live in it and the forefather of Tihama's Al-Ahdals. It's the town of Al-Maraw'ah, which enjoys an elevated scholastic status as one of Yemen's scholarly locales, especially during the reigns of the Rasulid and Tahiri states.

This town is located 25 kilometers from Hodeidah city on the Hodeidah-Sana'a road. Many outstanding families have dwelled in Al-Maraw'ah in recent times, exerting themselves to preserve its local traditions and customs. Among them is Khairawah, still living in the town; their history there dates back 130 years ago. Their house still bears witness to the town's architectural heritage, with decorations forming an extremely magnificent picture.

Landmarks: a 15-dome mosque

Upon visiting this town, we couldn't hide our fascination with it. Our tour began at the Grand Mosque, one of the town's most striking landmarks, dating back to the seventh century after Hijra. At the beginning, it was built of straw by Sheikh Ali bin Omar Al-Ahdal, and then rebuilt of mud bricks by his son Ahmed, who also ornamented it with 15 domes which still can be seen at the present day.

At the beginning of the 20th century, during World War I, the mosque sustained a hit from a British shell that demolished part of it. Pursuant to directives from Ottoman Sultan Abdul-Hamid bin Mahmoud, the mosque was revamped in 1916 with an area of 30 meters by 40 meters.

Quite recently, the southern part of the mosque was built in a modern style along with a Qur'anic school. Al-Maraw'ah's Grand Mosque is among the town's oldest places of worship and scholarly pursuit and can be described as an Islamic university with a long history, as many scholars, clerics, judges and writers were educated at it.

It was so important, it became the focal point for students and Al-Maraw'ah attained a position among



The Grand Mosque's roof loaded with many domes.

such knowledge-famed cities as Sana'a, Zabid and Jibla. Because of this high status, Imam Ahmed Yahya Hamid Al-Din issued a royal decree providing payment of education costs for those heading to Maraw'ah for religious studies.

Milk and mud: architecture and creativity

When visiting Al-Maraw'ah, one first is surprised by its lofty minarets, but another stunning fact is that despite the town's hot climate most of the year, the indoor climate is mild. Searching for reasons, it was understood that traditional construction materials used in building mosques and other dwellings were the reason for the mild climate on hot days.

When building, workers used to mix mud with milk and spread the mixture on the roofs of mosques and houses. The substance allowed the roofs to absorb water easily without affecting the structure's integrity over hundreds of years and provided a mild indoor atmosphere.

It was a creative method based on cheap materials that would protect them from high summer temperatures at times

when modern amenities like air conditioners weren't available. Actually, it's a marvelous method with architectural and stylistic value, requiring further investigation by experts concerned with shedding more light on this town's singularity.

Ancient scripts, a handwritten Qur'an

Looking around the Grand Mosque, one will see numerous 1 meter by two meter columns. Examining the mosque's mihrab (niche), one can find beside it a dais modeled after the old Islamic style in the early ages of Islam, as it consists of only two stairs without a barrier. The preacher would step with a stick to lean on. Notwithstanding new maintenance and restoration efforts at the mosque, the dais remains in its original state without change.

Exploring such a place, one can't ignore the bookcase taking up a considerable area on the mosque's wall. Among the bookcase's rare scripts are a handwritten edition of the Qur'an with a length of 1.5 meters and "Al-Burhan fi I'rab Al-Qur'an," written in the hand of its author, Al-Maiqari Shumailah Al-Ahdal. The latter is one of the main books taught at Islamic universities worldwide. There also are other manuscripts with much Islamic, intellectual and scholarly significance.

The only person with the keys to this rare book collection, Endowments Director Sheikh Abdul-Rahman leaves the bookcase only very rarely and refuses to reveal all of the secrets of its contents for fear of burglary or acts of vandalism. His dutifulness has increased since a trader offered to buy the manuscripts, but the sheikh believes that to think merely of selling the manuscripts is a betrayal of their priceless heritage.

Old Government Building

Strolling down the streets and lanes of Al-Maraw'ah, one surely will be struck by one particular old building with distinctive architectural features. Locals call it the "Old Government Building." The town's affairs were managed from this building, which became a complex

containing everything related to the town and its residents.

The building included a court hall, prison cells, tax and zakat offices, judges' offices and rooms for military personnel stationed at the building. It also had corridors and underground storage to keep grains and foodstuffs.

This government building is surrounded by a high, thick and stout wall built in the traditional way (milk and mud), which made it difficult to destroy or infiltrate when the government came under attacks.

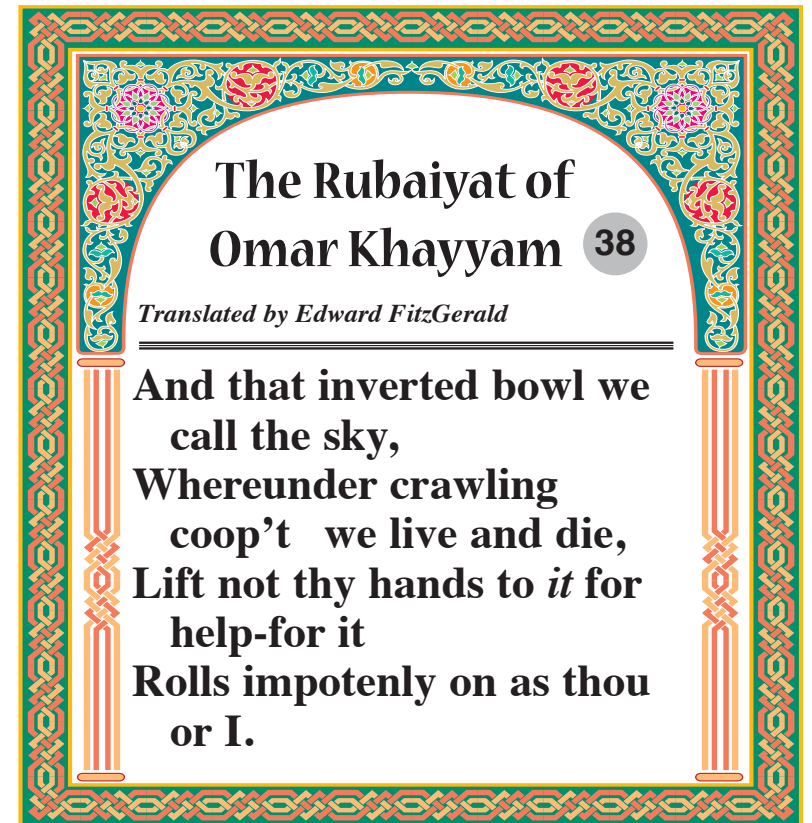
The building has two gates, one of which is used by police, military and judges' vehicles, while the other is a large wooden gate used by locals. The building has been abandoned, but the wooden gate still is withstanding time, testifying to the building's originality with the date 1115 A.D. engraved upon it.

Historical crime: murder in court hall

As noted, Al-Maraw'ah is a town that birthed a good number of judges, clerics and scholars. Along with its religious and scholarly merits, the town has the added ability to cause justice to prevail, with locals retelling the "justice" story that took place at the government building.

According to them, despite the fact that the crime involved influential parties who could twist facts, justice was achieved. The story is about a judge's heinous murder by an individual's pistol. The perpetrator was the son of a Member of Parliament and the reason was a dispute between the judge and the murderer's father in a court hall meeting between the court and area administration.

Bullets riddled the judge's head and his blood splashed all over the place and on the hall's window, where this blood still testifies to the judge's murder on his bench. However atrocious, as locals recall, the crime didn't go unpunished because, despite much mediation and the lure of millions of riyals, the murderer was executed by gunfire and the power of law prevailed. Following this inci-



The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam 38

Translated by Edward FitzGerald

And that inverted bowl we
call the sky,
Whereunder crawling
coop't we live and die,
Lift not thy hands to it for
help-for it
Rolls impotently on as thou
or I.

dent, the court hall was closed permanently.

Al-Maraw'ah souk (market)

One would be lucky to visit the town on a Monday because the day has its own rituals. Al-Maraw'ah is distinguished for its market observed every Monday; therefore, it's called, "Monday Market."

Traders from various parts of Yemen come to it, trading their wares, both selling and buying. Traders from remote areas arrive the previous night with a variety of goods and articles, while other traders arrive before dawn. At dawn, the market becomes a beehive swarming with people. Locals from Al-Maraw'ah and nearby villages and districts come to the market to buy and sell. Most are farmers raising cattle, so they have an opportunity to sell their cattle and make money at the market.

The market is divided into different sections: fruits and vegetables, meat, blacksmiths, sweets and confectionary, plastic, furniture, clothes, earthenware, indigenous honey, etc. The market is distinguished for providing the best types of honey and meat. People come from various corners of Yemen to buy honey and meat from cattle raised in the wilderness.

At the edge of the marketplace, one can see a large number of trucks gathering in the cattle section to transport cattle to many provinces nationwide and to the Gulf States, especially Saudi Arabia. Such trade gives locals a chance to raise the price of their commodities.

One of the oldest markets, Al-Maraw'ah's Monday Market has gained popularity and many customers throughout the town's long history. Today, the market proves the economic unity and joint market of Yemenis.

VACANCY Logistician



CARE has an immediate vacancy for a Logistician, based in its Sana'a Office. The person will be a member of the CARE administration team. They will obtain quotations; Maintain records and files for CARE vehicles; cash checks and transfer money; support the safety and security advisor in managing logistics; obtain visas and permits and travel papers for staff and visitors; purchase items for country office and projects

Person Specification

- Able to drive safely
- Willing and able to work out side office hours
- Able to speak read and write English and Arabic
- Minimum educational attainment is a graduate of secondary school
- Self motivated, able to initiate appropriate action and solve problems with little supervision
- Experience in managing / coordinating vehicle fleets
- Experience in dealing with government / ministries and customs etc

To apply send a CV to, 68 Arwa School street or email care_vacancy@yahoo.com with the subject heading "Logistician". Application deadline is Sunday 30th July 2006. Only short listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are encouraged to apply.



A decorated front of a house in Al-Maraw'ah.

Al-Hadharani honored, poetic collection published

By: Yemen Times Staff

Renowned Yemeni poet Ibrahim Al-Hadharani was honored July 13 at the Culture House in Sana'a. Attended by Minister of Culture Khalid Al-Rowaihan, presidential cultural advisor Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh and a host of intellectuals and interested attendees, the celebration coincided with publishing Al-Hadharani's full poetic collection edited by Alwan Mahdi Al-Jailani.

A number of young poets recited some of Al-Hadharani's works at the ceremony. Academics also reviewed



Poet Ibrahim Al-Hadharani

his poetic career and commented on his political activism, especially during pre-revolutionary Yemen. A group of his popular lyrics also were sung.

Published by the Ministry of Culture, the poetic collection accommodates the poet's works published in literary newspapers and magazines like Fatat Al-Jazeera and Al-Bareed Al-Adabi.

Born in Dhamar province in 1920, Al-Hadharani was educated by his intellectual father, Ahmed Al-Hadharani, studying classic literature, Arabic grammar, history, rhetoric and religious sciences. He then moved on to reading world classics and literature, keeping in touch with famous Arab lit-

erary figures.

Al-Hadharani is famous for his revolutionary verse recited by martyrs before their execution, such as the following lines:

How much I was tormented for the sake of my country and drank the cup of death many a time.

And today, for the sake of my country, I give up my life wholeheartedly and voluntarily.

Al-Hadharani's public service included his position within Yemen's delegation to the Cairo-based Arab League, his role as cultural advisor at the Yemeni Embassy in Kuwait and a staff member at the Ministry of Culture.

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Limited resources prevent NWSSIP from attaining targets

By: Amel Al-Ariqi
amel11ariqi@yahoo.com

A national report has revealed that limited financial sources stand in the way of achieving the goals of the National Water Sector Strategy and Investment Program, NWSSIP (2005-2009).

The NWSSIP is a consolidated strategy, action plan and investment program for the water sector, which faces complex development problems, its most serious challenge being scarcity of water resources and over-exploitation of aquifers.

To tackle these problems, the Ministry of Water and Environment, in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, has formed four sub-sectors: urban water and sanitation, rural water and sanitation (RWS), irrigation and water resources, with a total membership of more than 100 professionals, parliamentarians, donors and civil society representatives.

Work groups drafted the proposed strategy and investment program in 2004 to be discussed with a broad base of governmental representatives and donors.

The NWSSIP proposes a set of institutional and financial measures aimed at addressing the four sub-sectors in an attempt to work out solutions to Yemen's water crisis and protect stakeholders' interests in such resources.

In order to evaluate and measure implementation and results alongside NWSSIP targets, the Ministry of Water and Environment established a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in 2005, which produced its first review last month.

Out of an urban population of 5,585 million, 3,428 million receive their share of the water supply and 1,875 million receive sewerage network coverage.

Prepared by a review team related to all of the sub-sectors, the first joint annual review 2005-2006 described the water sector's overall performance as "moderately satisfactory," while insisting that the budget performance was "unsatisfactory."

The total five-year NWSSIP investment program is \$153.8 million - 27.9 percent financed by the Yemeni government, 35.8 percent from donors and 36.3 percent as yet unfinanced. Therefore, to achieve NWSSIP objectives, the water sec-



Fifty-eight percent of urban residents have water coverage, whereas only 38 percent of those in rural areas have water coverage.

tors require an estimated \$307.6 million annual disbursement for each of the five years. Total disbursement was only \$102 million in 2005, leaving an estimated funding gap of \$205.6 million.

Urban water and sanitation

According to the NWSSIP, the annual investment target for urban water and sanitation was \$134.5 million, but only \$65.1 million was approved - 50 percent of the requested amount.

Constant urban population growth is another obstacle facing the NWSSIP regarding urban water supply and sanitation. At the end of 2004, the urban population was estimated at 5.59 million, increasing to 5.86 million by the end of 2005.

Achieved water supply coverage at the end of 2005 was 58 percent, or 457,000 home connections, reaching a population of 3.43 million (up 11 percent from the 2002 baseline); whereas achieved sewage network coverage at the end of 2005 was 32 percent, or 250,000 homes, reaching a population of 1.875 million (up 7 percent from the 2002 baseline).

"There has been an increase in population coverage; however, it

does not yet surpass urban population growth. Thus, in some cases, coverage actually has decreased, as the average individual share is only 62 cubic liters daily," the review mentioned. "So far, increased service coverage does not succeed urban population growth and therefore, does not close the gap."

The review pointed out that coastal towns are well served; however, there are critical towns such as Taiz, Sana'a, Sa'ada and Amran where rural-urban water transfer must be organized on short notice.

Annual water consumption in Yemen is 3.2 million cubic meters, thus exceeding the renewable fresh water supply, which is 2.5 million cubic meters.

Rural water and sanitation

Regarding RWS budget performance, the review revealed that the 2005-2006 outcome was unsatisfactory, as total disbursement was only \$29.5 million, well below NWSSIP's

\$96 million annual target.

However, the review revealed that results were positive, as 252 projects have been designed, with the beneficiaries of such projects including more than 710,080 citizens. The review confirmed that coverage increased overall to 37.5 percent, which includes 5.5 million beneficiaries.

The RWS sector plans to complete 507 water supply schemes in 2006 serving 981,901 rural residents at a total cost of \$44 million.

The review exposed that sanitation coverage data for rural areas is hardly available. "Therefore, it's risky to assert the progress of coverage for this area. In the coming years, the sector needs to pay considerable attention to sanitation and hygiene promotion in its plans," the review mentioned.

The review referred to numerous constraints and difficulties the sector faces, such as:

- Scarcity and depletion of water resources
- Diversification of organizations working in the sector, leading to a loss of available funds
- Poor awareness of beneficiaries in some rural areas where water schemes are executed
- Attempts by some key figures to use rural water schemes for their personal interests, particularly in remote areas.

The review called for the Yemeni Cabinet's immediate endorsement of sector policies and strategies, as well as urgent implementation of detailed and comprehensive field inventory for rural water schemes involving both water and sanitation.

Irrigation and watershed

The review confirmed that no funds were provided to the sector in 2005 to design and implement irrigation as part of the NWSSIP monitoring system. Capacity building and institutional strengthening of the irrigation department in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation was taken up on a skeleton basis, involving such implementations as a Ground and Soil Conservation Project and a Sana'a Basin Water Management project. Such support hasn't been effective, as the sector needs direct support.

The review said delayed restructuring of the ministry's irrigation sector and its capacity building scheme is responsible for the construction of large numbers of dams without proper investigation, design or quality control. In this regard, it highlighted weaknesses in the irrigation infrastructure's occupational maintenance systems and the abandonment of terraces and water har-

The present availability of water, which is 136 cubic meters per person annually, is considered the lowest in the world, far below the world average of 7,500 cubic meters per person annually and 1,000 cubic meters per person annually needed for food production requirements for self-sufficiency.

vesting structures.

On the other hand, the review pointed to the fact that agriculture consumes 90 percent of available water, but irrigation efficiencies are very low (35 percent under spate irrigation and 40-45 percent under groundwater irrigation). The review also noted an 11-fold increase in ground irrigation, from 37,000 hectares annually in 1970 to 407,000 hectares in 2004. Additionally, the review recorded a nearly one-third reduction in rain-fed irrigated areas, from 1.2 million hectares to 460,000 hectares during the same period.

The review also evaluated budget performance through quantitative results and outcomes of this sector was satisfactory.

Water resources management

The review considered that the sector's overall performance during 2005 was unsatisfactory, as the National Water Resources Authority (NWRA), which is responsible for the sector, seems to express limited clarity concerning developing and implementing the water basins plan.

whereas the NWSSIP target was \$9.4 million annually.

The review confirmed that over-exploiting groundwater has become a critical issue since the 1980s, resulting in annually declining groundwater levels in most critical basins. Natural groundwater flow patterns have seriously changed, replaced by water flow in random directions as a result of local pumping. Many hand-dug wells have become dry due to declining water levels.

In this regard, the NWRA has implemented national monitoring to control and predict possible changes in groundwater level and quality. By the end of 2005, there were 547 monitoring points, including 304 to monitor groundwater, 34 to observe surface water and 26 meteorological stations. To date, the NWRA has inventoried approximately 55,000 wells - 21,000 in 2005 alone.

Findings and recommendations on cross-cutting issues

The Donor Core Group (DCG) representing the NWSSIP provides necessary donor-donor coordination, sup-



Agriculture consumes 90 percent of available water, but irrigation efficiency is very low.

Additionally, there was slow progress in preparing water resource management plans and controlling groundwater depletion (the only plan implemented is in Taiz). Furthermore, the review noted that amendments to the water law have been awaiting parliamentary ratification since 2004.

Budget performance also was unsatisfactory, as the sector's total disbursement was only \$1.1 million,

porting signatories for creating a united vision and facilitates communication and coordination. A second type of necessary coordination relates to internal government coordination, highlighting that the water issue can't be approached in isolation as a stand-alone sector due to the many interrelations between water and other economic, social and legal considerations. The need for inter-ministerial coordination is evident.

The return of tuberculosis

By: Annunziata Faustini

Generations of doctors, politicians, and public health officials have struggled to defeat tuberculosis. But, after years of success, TB is making a comeback. The increase in TB in the developed world since 1992 was initially attributed to HIV. However, over time, other factors behind the growing number of cases, such as immigration and a particular type of drug-resistant TB, have emerged.

The World Health Organization has developed a strategy to fight TB's return, including a standardized therapy that specifies appropriate drugs, doses, and timing of therapy. Unfortunately, multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB), which is any TB resistant to the traditional treatments of isoniazid and rifampicin, represents a serious challenge: because standard treatment is less effective in curing it, its transmission continues.

Moreover, any inadequately treated TB becomes multi-drug resistant, so that treatment failure can be either cause or consequence of MDR-TB. This underscores the need for a determined regimen to treat TB today, as well as a more complex strategy to control the disease, one which cures as many cases as possible, prevents acquired drug resistance and decreases the transmission of infection. The WHO recommends what it

calls a "Directly Observed Therapy Strategy" (DOTS) and has set diagnostic thresholds of at least 70% of infectious cases, and curative thresholds of 85%.

We conducted a systematic review of published reports to identify the factors that cause unsuccessful TB treatment in Europe. Twenty-six papers were included in the review, covering 13 countries (the former USSR, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Romania in Eastern Europe, and Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland in Western Europe) in the period from 1988-2001.

On average, the studies found that 74.4% of the curative outcomes were "successful," falling short of the WHO's 85% target. Patients were treated "unsuccessfully" 12.3% of the time, and 6.8% of treated patients died.

MDR-TB was inversely associated with successful treatments. We found that populations with at least 10% MDR-TB showed a notable reduction in successful outcomes. Surprisingly, no relationship was found between TB treatment outcomes and immigrant status in these studies, perhaps because all immigrants were combined, regardless of country of origin.

These results suggest the following clinical and public health implications:

- since successful TB treatment outcomes are below the 85% threshold, an enhancement of national TB control programs is needed in most European

countries;

- MDR is the most important obstacle to controlling TB in Europe;
- analyzing immigrants by specific country of origin, timing of immigration, and previous treatment can help define the risk of MDR-TB associated with immigrants;
- treatment characteristics need to be reported more consistently in order to identify and correct the factors related to inadequate treatment of TB in Europe.

Although some characteristics of TB therapy, such as interruption of treatment, are well known predictors of multi-drug resistance, other aspects of treatment that reflect the health-care system, such as the drugs used and the length of therapy, must be studied to help improve control programmes. For example, one of the studies that we reviewed found that no standard therapy in the initial or secondary phase of treatment was associated with an unsuccessful outcome or death. Moreover, some aspects of patient management emerged as risk factors for not completing therapy, which suggests difficulties in access to health services for TB patients.

Structural barriers do not represent the only problems of access to treatment in the health care system. Foreign-born patients may interrupt treatment due to lack of confidence in diagnosis and care, or they may ignore the more minor symptoms of the illness. Patients who feel better after the initial treatment may also fail to complete therapy.

Social factors other than birthplace should be studied to evaluate what causes primary multi-drug resistance. Treatment interruption has been associated with asylum seekers and refugees in Switzerland. Interruption was also associated with homelessness, intravenous drug use, and alcohol dependence in Hamburg. In Spain, homelessness was a risk factor for interruption and HIV positivity, and intravenous drug use was a risk factor for unsuccessful treatment.

I also believe that there is a relationship between the need for therapy and the political choices that countries make. The DOTS strategy is not implemented in all European countries, owing in part to disagreement about whether treatment is a duty or a right. Public health workers argue that therapy should be imposed upon patients who are at risk of failing to complete it - a policy that others claim would violate individual liberty.

Unless we act to step up the fight against TB, many health-care systems may find themselves facing a less abstract problem: securing the economic resources and organizational capacity to ensure treatment for the growing number of patients who want and need it.

Annunziata Faustini is a doctor in the epidemiological unit of the Lazio Regional Public Health Agency in Italy, and was chief of surveillance of infectious diseases from 1996 until 2002. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2006.



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REPUBLIC OF YEMEN – MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT
SANA'A BASIN WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SBWMP)
VACANCIES ANNOUNCEMENT (INTERNATIONAL/REGIONAL)

The Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the costs of Sana'a Basin Water Management Project and it is intended that a portion of the proceeds of the credit will be used to cover the eligible payments against the cost of the Project Management and Implementation of Water Demand Management. Now the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) invites qualified and experienced international/regional experts to apply for the following posts:

1. INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING SPECIALIST/EXPERT (Internal/Regional)

The ITS will help the PCU to oversee the institutional development and capacity building. This will require him/her to work in close collaboration with the relevant existing and projected water management institutions, in particular (i) the National Water Resources Authority (NWRA) and the NWRA Sana'a Branch (NWRA/SB), (ii) the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MAI) and its sub-agencies including the MAI General Directorate for Irrigation (MAI/GDI), and including the MAI Office (MAI/SO), (iii) the field Implementation Unit of Irrigation Improvement Component, and (iv) The Social Mobilization Teams of the Project (SMTs) (v) the Sana'a basin stakeholder organizations including Water User Associations (WUAs), Water User Federations (WUFs) and the SBC. More specifically, the PCU Institutional Training Specialist would be responsible for:

- Develop the various comprehensive training programs for each component including: Training in Water management for Irrigated Agriculture, Water Control and Recharge Systems O&M, Social Mobilization Teams, Basin Water Resources Management, Information and Public Awareness Campaign, Training for the PCU and Line Agencies
- General Overview and Direction of all training programs in collaboration with PCU's Sociologist/Social Development Specialist, and line agency engineers
- In collaboration with all project staff, define the population concerned by the training program
- Design and coordinate the execution of a training needs assessment
- Define the training needs and the scope, and type of training, in collaboration with the project management team
- Define the needs consultancy and education program, write terms of reference and prepare cost estimates and advise on the procurement process for implementation of training programs
- Coordinate for implementation of local and external training programs
- Design quality control mechanisms, including post training evaluations and follow up reviews
- Design and help in implementing training programs and monitoring system
- Prepare progress reports on training effectiveness and cost effectiveness

Qualifications and Required Experience

- At least MSc Degree in Administration / Sociology / Economics / Business or any related field.
- Ten years experience in designing and conducting training programs, of which five in projects related to natural resource management.

Duration

The ITS will be recruited for intermittent consultancy assignments totaling nine months over three years (2006-8).

2. SOCIOLOGIST / SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST (International / Regional)

The SSDS will work with the national social development/WUA specialist in the TS-SBC and will report to the manager of the TS-SBC. The primary function of the SSDS will be to provide methodological guidance and management support to the national social development/WU specialist in overseeing the social mobilization function in the project. In particular the SSDS will help the national social development/WUA specialist in the TS-SBC to:

- In collaboration with the national Sociologist and SMTs, conduct social assessment studies to assess the attitudes of the frames towards implementation of Demand Management Component and Supply Management Component, and their impact on the traditional water rights to the beneficiaries located downstream of such structures in accordance with Article 27 to 45 of the Water Law and give his recommendation.
- Conduct social assessment studies to assess the attitudes of the farmers and make

recommendation for achieving stakeholders participation of farmers especially in the WUAs for management and conservation of groundwater and to encourage them not to expand the irrigation areas and not to increase cropping intensities in lieu of the subsidies on the modern irrigation systems to be provided to them

- Design the overall community participatory approach for the management and conservation of water
- Review and assess the institutional structure at the community level (Stakeholders, Community relations with other local institutions, Water transfers and markets etc.)
- Train National Consultant and Counterpart staff assigned to the PCU.
- Coordinate the various involved implementation partners and processes involved in the social mobilization aspects of the project
- Oversee and guide the process of identification, interview, selection, recruitment and assembly of the SMTs, and of their subsequent training
- Review and refine the methodological approach to social mobilization, test it, and reflect results in a continuous process of improvement of the approach
- Oversee the process of assessment and selection of participating communities through definition and application of criteria related to socioeconomic characteristics, social and organizational readiness, and willingness of communities and water user organizations to assume both benefits and responsibilities relating to project interventions
- Overview the social mobilization, training and extension support processes, including coordination of inputs by the various partners (SMTs and consultants, and community groups and individuals), review and supervision of the preparation and execution of work plans, and definition of process adjustment from cycle to cycle in response to encountered constraints and difficulties
- Oversee in particular the social and organizational development of the WUAs for village wellfields management and dam and recharge systems operations and maintenance, including legal and organizational establishment, setup of financial and administrative procedures, and corresponding management training
- Contribute to definition and execution of community social, economic and institutional baseline, monitoring and evaluation exercises, assess from these the level of satisfaction of water users, WUGs and UWAs with project-supported interventions and of the corresponding social benefits, and propose actions to be taken for needed improvements
- Mediate in and/or address as needed social difficulties that may arise as a result of project interventions, such as conflicts within and between WUGs and WUAs, between participating and non-participating WUGs and WUAs, between government agencies and local communities, etc.
- Provide social and organizational development inputs to PCU monitoring, reporting and decision-making related to the project Components

Qualifications and Requirements

The Sociologist shall have at least Msc degree in Sociology or economics with specialization in Sociology with extensive experience of not less than 15 years in Socio-economic surveys, social and institutional assessment related to water / agriculture and irrigation projects. The Sociologist shall have experience in poverty assessment of land tenure and land use, water rights, participatory water management, stockholders assessment, formation of Water Users Groups and Associations etc.

Duration

The SSDS will be recruited for intermittent consultancy assignments totaling nine months over Three year (2006-2008)

3. IRRIGATION AGRONOMIST / IRRIGATION SYSTEMS ENGINEER (International / Regional)

Under the overall guidance and supervision of the Director General of Sana'a Basin Water Management Project, and joint coordination with the Director of the Field Unit of Irrigation Improvement component, and observing the technical directives, the international Irrigation Agronomist Engineer will:

- Provide direction and guidance to the Project Field Unit teams undertaking physical system design relating to improvement of delivery (conveyance and distribution) system

through upgrades of or conversion to, piped system, introduction of various modern on-farm pressurized irrigation technologies, wadi bank protection works for some vulnerable locations, and leveling and introduction of plastic tunnels/covers for demonstration plots;

- Tendering and contracting of above physical systems construction and installation supervision such that these activities are to proceed in parallel with the Social Mobilization but the construction is carried out not before WUA establishment and signing of implementation agreement;
- Providing general guidance in commissioning and O&M start up of different irrigation systems
- Undertake various implementation studies, including inter alia a study to review the design criteria and technical specifications of pipes with the purpose of cost savings and potential increasing the number of beneficiaries
- Assist in developing water resources management and understanding and skills for the Farmers, WUG and WUA training program
- Provide on-the-job training to the counterpart of the Project Field Unit Staff.
- Guide SMPs in developing procedures for measurements (including metering of water consumption of wells) and valuation of water savings in fields as a result of project intervention and assessment of mid-term long-term individual financial benefits resulting from water savings and system modernization including reduced water system operation costs (from less pumping and less labor-intensive irrigation) and increased crop yields (from more even and effective water applications and control, fertilizer application through irrigation systems, and improved disease control) and long-term community sustainability benefits from reduced water use and non-expansion of irrigation, in the form of groundwater conservation and extended useful aquifer life; and
- Assist in comprehensive capacity development training program for the WUA and water users covering irrigation management and O&M, specifically in relation to the system types and technologies being provided under the project, and agricultural techniques and practices for improved cropping and production, again specifically related to the physical system interventions.

Qualifications and Required Experience

- Degree in Engineering, preferably with Master Degree in Irrigation Systems Engineering / Irrigation Agronomy.
- Knowledge and Experience in management of rural development projects and water resources engineering and irrigation including pipes conveyance and pressurized irrigation systems.
- More than fifteen years experience in Designing and managing projects and supervising engineering works.
- Good knowledge of English, knowledge of Arabic and advantage
- Computer use: Windows, MS Office and related programs

Duration

The Irrigation Agronomist/engineer is recruited for intermittent consultancy assignment totaling 18 months over Three years (2006-2008)

Competencies Required: Incumbents should have:-

- Ability to produce quality output in a timely manner
- Ability to work under heavy pressure
- Excellent organizational skills and sound judgment
- Ability to communicate with different levels of targeted populations and Professionals
- Good knowledge of English and Arabic
- Computer Use: Windows, MS Office and related programs

Duty Station

Sana'a basin area and in-country travel if necessary

Applications accompanied by CVs of applicants shall be delivered to the project address as follow (SBWMP, P.O. Box 11014) 60M Street, Sana'a ROY

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Daisy-shaped "starshade"

A huge daisy-shaped shield that would block out light from parent stars could be used to find Earth-like planets in other solar systems, an American astronomer said on Wednesday.

He and his team have designed a plastic "starshade" measuring 50 yards in diameter that would orbit in tandem with a trailing telescope and block out light from parent stars to enable scien-

tists to map planetary systems.

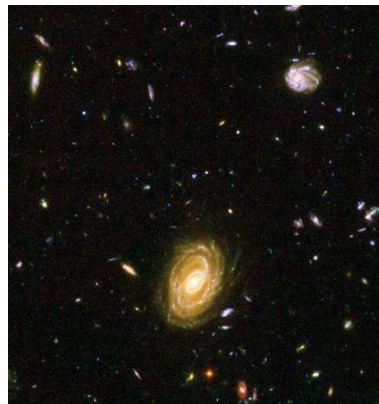
Finding other planets is very difficult because their parent stars are about 10 times brighter.

"We think this is a compelling concept, particularly because it can be built today with existing technology," said Professor Webster Cash of the University of Colorado.

"We will be able to study Earth-like planets tens of trillions of miles away and chemically analyze their atmospheres for signs of life," he added in a statement.

The shield, which is known as the New Worlds Observer, is described in the journal Nature. It would be launched into an orbit about 1 million miles from Earth and then opened.

Three thrusters would be used to keep it steady while the telescope trailing thousands of miles behind follows light from distant planets as it hits the space shield.



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"The New Worlds Observer is actively being studied in academia, industry and government," Cash said in a letter to Nature.

He added that if Earth-like planets exist, the starshade could find them within the next decade.

Source: Reuters



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