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# YEMEN TIMES

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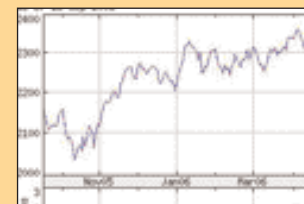
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**Readers' Voice**

Last edition's question:  
Do you think the Pope intentionally criticized Islam with his recent comments about Prophet Mohammad?

I don't know (8%)  
No (19%)  
Yes (51%)  
Out of context (22%)

This edition's question:  
Do you think the Yemeni electoral process could be termed successful despite the few incidences of violence?

- Yes  
- No  
- I don't know

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# Yemenis decide their future

For the first time in Republic of Yemen's history did the presidential and local council elections seem free and fair to the people. Despite some violations and incidents of violence it was termed a successful democratic experience by all means.

By: Yemen Times Staff  
Photos by: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Sept. 20 — Yemenis registered for voting yesterday totalled

9,247,372 of which 42% were women. The voting process was distributed among 333 districts and 27010 sub committees, where the citizens elected their next president and local council



Security did a good job organizing the eager voters waiting since early hours at the electoral centers' doors.

members at the district and governorate levels.

Results of the Sept. 20 presidential election will be announced as soon as vote counting at each polling center is complete, with the final result being announced 72 hours after polls close, according to Khalid Al-Shareef, chairman of the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER).

It was the second local council election, the first of which was held in 2001. This year's local council contests coincided with the race for Yemen's presidency, the second time Yemenis have elected the president of the republic directly since the first direct presidential election on Sept. 13, 1999.

Since unification, Yemen has held five direct elections: three races for Parliament seats, 1999 Presidential elections and 2001 Local Council elections.

In this year's presidential and local council elections, registered voters increased this year by 30 percent, as compared to the total number of voters in the April 2003 parliamentary elections. The increase implies growing electoral awareness among Yemenis and enthusiasm to participate in the electoral process.

More than 98,000 Yemeni citizens — including 35,000 women — participated on election committees and subcommittees, and of that total, 81,030 were candidates' agents to monitor the process at polling centers. Election committees and subcommittees consisted of both ruling party and opposition members.

One day before the elections, Al-Shareef declared suspension of the one-constituency system which allowed for Yemenis to vote in centers other than where they were registered originally, a source of debate between the SCER and the Joint Meeting Parties, who viewed it as a successful means of forgery. "Suspending the one-constituency system does violate the law; however, it's better than doubting the election's results," Al-Shareef noted.

Voting results are planned to be announced at each polling center, as ballot boxes weren't to be removed from the centers to ensure voting transparency and integrity.

Five presidential candidates competed for the nation's highest post, while 1,636 candidates, including 22 women, and 18,928 candidates, including 129 women, contested local council posts



Yemenis decide their future through ballots.



Side by side, a civil and military man participating in the democratic process.



Their babies did not stop Yemeni women from voting.

at the governorate and district levels, respectively. However, only 431 local council candidates at the governorate level and 7,000 candidates seeking posts at the district level will win seats. Monday, Sept. 18, was the last day of campaigning for the presidential candidates, with pre-election days witnessing excitement, criticism and controversy over the spread of corruption, a phenomenon opposition parties attribute to policies pursued by the regime and the ruling party.

## Surprisingly peaceful election day

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Sept. 20 — The electoral process went smoothly despite various warnings of potential violence. Until the time of writing this report, only few incidences of violations were reported around the republic. Armed elements killed a security officer in electoral constituency No. 37 in Taiz governorate's Sharab Al-Salam district. The incident caused voting to halt at noon, according to local sources.

The same sources mentioned that an

armed group broke into the constituency's polling center at Al-Jeel Al-Jadeed School, killing the security officer and forcing citizens from coming to the school and voting.

In related news, the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER) confirmed that armed disputes between elements from the General People's Congress and those affiliated with the Joint Meeting Parties claimed one life in Taiz Constituency No. 58, Jabal Habashi. Another man was seriously injured in the same conflict and rushed to a Taiz hospital.

According to a release from the JMP media center, the chief of Jabal Habashi district was forcing citizens to vote in public.

Sources also reported that the JMP withdrew from elections in Constituency No. 41 following attacks against their representatives there by some elements affiliated with a Taiz



A poster by Dar Al-Salam advocates peaceful elections in Yemen.

deputy governor.

The SCER also announced that one soldier was killed and 11 other individuals seriously injured in a traffic accident in Raymah while heading to safeguard a constituency there.

Local sources from Habour Dhoulimah in Amran governorate mentioned that armed individuals shot dead the election committee chairman there.

In Al-Jawf, which witnessed more violent incidents during the election campaigns, two individuals were injured in an exchange of fire, according to official sources.

Local sources in Al-Jawf's Al-Zaher district mentioned that election results were announced in the morning in a manner violating the law and pointed out that voting was halted at some polling centers.

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# Thai coup leader unveils PM plans

The leader of the military coup in Thailand has said a new prime minister will be named within two weeks.

Gen Sonthi Boonyaratglin told a news conference that new elections would take place in a year's time, once a new constitution had been written.

A statement read on state television said Thailand's king had endorsed Gen Sonthi as temporary leader, although the monarch has not spoken in person.

The coup was staged late on Tuesday as PM Thaksin Shinawatra was in New York.

The UK's foreign office confirmed that Mr Thaksin was expected in London later on Wednesday.

He was preparing to address the UN General Assembly when news of the coup emerged.

The coup followed months of growing tension in Thailand, with protests against Mr Thaksin and a general election which was annulled due to concerns about its legitimacy.

So far, reporters in Thailand say the atmosphere remains calm and no outbreaks of violence have been reported.

## New constitution

In the news conference on Wednesday evening, Gen Sonthi claimed he was acting in line with the wishes of the Thai people, blaming government mismanagement for forcing coup leaders to act.

But he denied the military wanted a permanent hold on power, attempting to reassure his audience by putting a deadline on how long he would remain in power.



Troops remain visible on Bangkok's streets

"We have two weeks. After two weeks, we will step out," he said.

He said coup leaders were considering candidates to appoint as the new prime minister, who would rule until fresh elections in a year's time.

In the interim, he said, a new national assembly would be appointed to draft a new, permanent constitution.

He said "fellow countryman" Mr Thaksin would be welcome to return to his homeland, but warned he could face criminal charges for corruption.

A statement on state-run television on Wednesday declared the apparent support of revered King Bhumibol Adulyadej for the coup leader.

"In order to create peace in the

country, the king appoints Gen Sonthi Boonyaratglin as head of the council of administrative reform," the statement said.

"All people should remain peaceful and civil servants should listen to order from Gen. Sonthi Boonyaratglin from now on."

Gen Sonthi has said the king had nothing to do with the coup. The UK's foreign office has confirmed Mr Thaksin is expected in London, "as he has relatives in the UK".

## Yellow ribbons

In the capital Bangkok, tanks have cordoned off the government district. They have yellow ribbons tied around their barrels to signify loyalty to the king.

The BBC's Kate McGeown in

Bangkok says on the surface it is functioning as normal. But she says there is a strange quietness about the usually vibrant city.

Regional army commanders have been in charge of areas outside the capital, Bangkok, and Wednesday has been declared a public holiday.

The coup leaders have ordered provincial governors and heads of government agencies to report to them. They have also banned assemblies of more than five people, which are now punishable by six months in jail.

A statement urged "farmers and workers" - an apparent reference to Mr Thaksin's rural base of support - to remain calm.

In another move to defend against a counter-coup, a senior general said Mr Thaksin's main deputy, Chidchai Vanasathidya, had been "invited to stay" at Army headquarters on Tuesday night.

## Shock and concern

Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister, Surakiart Sathirathai, told CNN Mr Thaksin was "constitutionally and legally elected" and should be returned to office.

But Mr Thaksin's official spokesman, Surapong Suebwonglee, told Associated Press news agency: "We have to accept what happened. We are not coming back soon."

Thailand's regional neighbours expressed shock and concern at the events, and the US urged Thais to resolve their differences peacefully.

It is the first coup attempt in 15 years in a country where they used to be commonplace. There were 17 of them between 1932 and 1991.

Source: BBC

# Sudan PM: UN troops are not welcome

Sudan's president has said his country would never allow UN peacekeepers into Darfur, and claimed the 'West' wanted to dismember his country in order to help Israel.

"It is very clear there is a plan to redraw the region especially after the invasion of Iraq," Omar Hassan al-Bashir, Sudan's president, said on the sidelines of a UN General Assembly session.

"The main purpose [of this plan] is the security of Israel. Any state in the region should be weakened, dismembered in order to protect the Israelis, to guarantee the Israeli security."

Bashir said he supported a continued presence of an African Union force in Darfur, which wants the United Nations to take over its operation of 7,000 soldiers and monitors.

But Bashir said that while his government welcomed non-African advisers and soldier who provided logistical support for the AU force, he rejected the deployment of troops from outside Africa, even if under AU control as UN officials had suggested earlier.

Sudan has previously rejected a UN

security council resolution adopted on August 31, authorising up to 22,500 UN troops and police to replace the cash-strapped and ill-equipped AU troops.

Bashir said: "We want the African Union to remain in Darfur until peace is re-established in Sudan."

## Call for UN

Other African politicians - including Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the Liberian president - told the UN general assembly that the UN should consider intervening in Sudan without the consent of Khartoum.

Johnson-Sirleaf called on the Security Council to act to restore "peace, security and stability" to Darfur.

Bashir noted that the UN resolution also called for help to train police and an independent judiciary, which only help enforce suspicion of the council's motives.

"We are a state, we have our institutions, our institutions have not collapsed," Bashir said.

Source: Al-Jazeera



Bashir: Sudanese institutions have not collapsed

# Israeli air strike kills Palestinian in Gaza

GAZA (Reuters) — A missile from an Israeli aircraft killed a Palestinian militant in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday after he was spotted near a rocket launcher, local residents and the Israeli military said.

Gaza residents said the man was a member of al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, part of President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah movement. Another Palestinian was wounded in the strike.

An Israeli army spokesman said the man was trying to remove launchers that were used earlier to fire two makeshift rockets into Israel.

An Israeli was wounded by one of the two rockets fired from the Beit Lahya area in the north of the Gaza Strip, an army spokesman said.

Israel has carried out frequent air strikes on the territory during an

offensive launched in late June after gunmen from Gaza abducted a soldier in a cross-border raid.

More than 210 Palestinians, about half of them civilians, have been killed during the offensive, which Israel says is also aimed at stopping militants from firing their makeshift rockets into Israel.

In the early hours of the morning, Israel launched an air strike on a house in the militant stronghold of Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, the Israeli military and Palestinian witnesses said. There were no casualties in the attack.

Witnesses said the house, which was destroyed, belonged to a Palestinian militant. It was unclear to which faction the militant belonged. They said the house was empty at the time of the attack.



Members of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades are seen in Gaza July 9, 2006. A missile from an Israeli aircraft killed a Palestinian militant in the Gaza Strip on Wednesday after he was spotted near a rocket launcher, local residents and the Israeli military said.

# Death toll in Kazakh mine blast rises to 41

SHAKHTINSK, Kazakhstan (Reuters) - The death toll from an explosion on Wednesday in a mine owned by Mittal Steel in Kazakhstan rose to 41, a Mittal official said.

"According to preliminary but almost certain data, 41 people have perished," Grigory Prezent, Deputy Coal Department Director of Mittal Steel Temirtau, told reporters at the scene. "Thirty-two bodies have been found. They are being recovered at the moment."



General view of the Lenin coal mine in the town of Shakhhtinsk.

# Israeli army set to complete Lebanon withdrawal

By: Dean Yates

JERUSALEM (Reuters) — The Israeli army said on Tuesday it could complete a pullout from southern Lebanon within a few days as the United Nations said the number of peacekeepers in the devastated country had reached 5,000.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's office said such a level of peacekeepers on the ground in southern Lebanon should enable Israel to finish its withdrawal.

"Things are going as planned at this stage with the coordination. Hopefully we'll leave very soon," Miri Eisin, Olmert's spokeswoman, said.

Israeli forces have been gradually pulling out from territory the army captured during the month-long war with the Hizbollah guerrilla group that ended on August 14.

Military chief Lieutenant-General Dan Halutz told parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that all soldiers could return to Israel by the Jewish New Year, which begins at sunset on Friday.

"If all goes without a hitch, to the satisfaction of all sides, the working assumption is the IDF (army) will leave all the areas it controls by the

Jewish New Year holiday," a parliamentary spokesman quoted Halutz as saying.

"If not, it would be delayed another week."

Israel went to war after Hizbollah captured two Israeli soldiers and killed eight in a July 12 cross-border raid. Nearly 1,200 people in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 157 Israelis, mostly soldiers, were killed in the conflict.

Halutz said meetings involving the Israeli army, the United Nations and Lebanon were taking place to coordinate the pullout.

Senior officials have privately said Israel intended to complete the withdrawal by the Rosh Hashanah new year holiday.

Earlier this week the army said it had withdrawn from more than 80 percent of territory conquered during the war, handing it over to U.N. peacekeepers under UNIFIL II, an expanded version of the original peacekeeper garrison in the area.

Military officials have refused to say how many Israeli troops were still in southern Lebanon. Israeli forces maintain control of a narrow strip of land inside the south.

Speaking from the southern Lebanese town of Naqoura, UNIFIL

spokesman Alexander Ivanko said the force in Lebanon now numbered 4,950.

"We're there. We consider it to be 5,000," he said.

Ivanko said some French troops were still heading south from Beirut, but Italian and Spanish forces have already joined some 2,000 UNIFIL troops in position since before the 34-day war.

## Syrian border

Ivanko said a team of UNIFIL experts assessing security at Lebanon's ports and borders had toured the Syrian border.

Israel says the Syrian border is a major gap in enforcement of an international arms embargo stipulated by a U.N. Security Council resolution to prevent Hizbollah re-arming.

The resolution called for 15,000 troops to join a similar number of Lebanese army troops in southern Lebanon.

Israel launched the ground invasion partly to try to stop rocket attacks from Hizbollah guerrillas that had dug in across the militia's stronghold in southern Lebanon.

One of the weapons Israel used was cluster bombs, which has drawn heavy criticism from the United Nations.



Soldiers and an Israeli tank guard a position in the Marjayoun valley, southern Lebanon, September 19, 2006.

REUTERS

On Tuesday, U.N. officials said Israel had scattered at least 350,000 unexploded cluster bomblets on south Lebanon, mostly when the conflict was all but over.

"The outrageous fact is that nearly all of these munitions were fired in the

last three to four days of the war," David Shearer, the United Nations humanitarian coordinator in Lebanon, told a news conference in Beirut.

Israel denies using cluster bombs illegally.

A U.N. fact sheet said the figure of

350,000 unexploded bomblets was based on reports by Israeli soldiers, and excluded cluster bomb firings by conventional artillery or aircraft.

Shearer said cluster bombs had killed or wounded an average of three people a day since the war ended.



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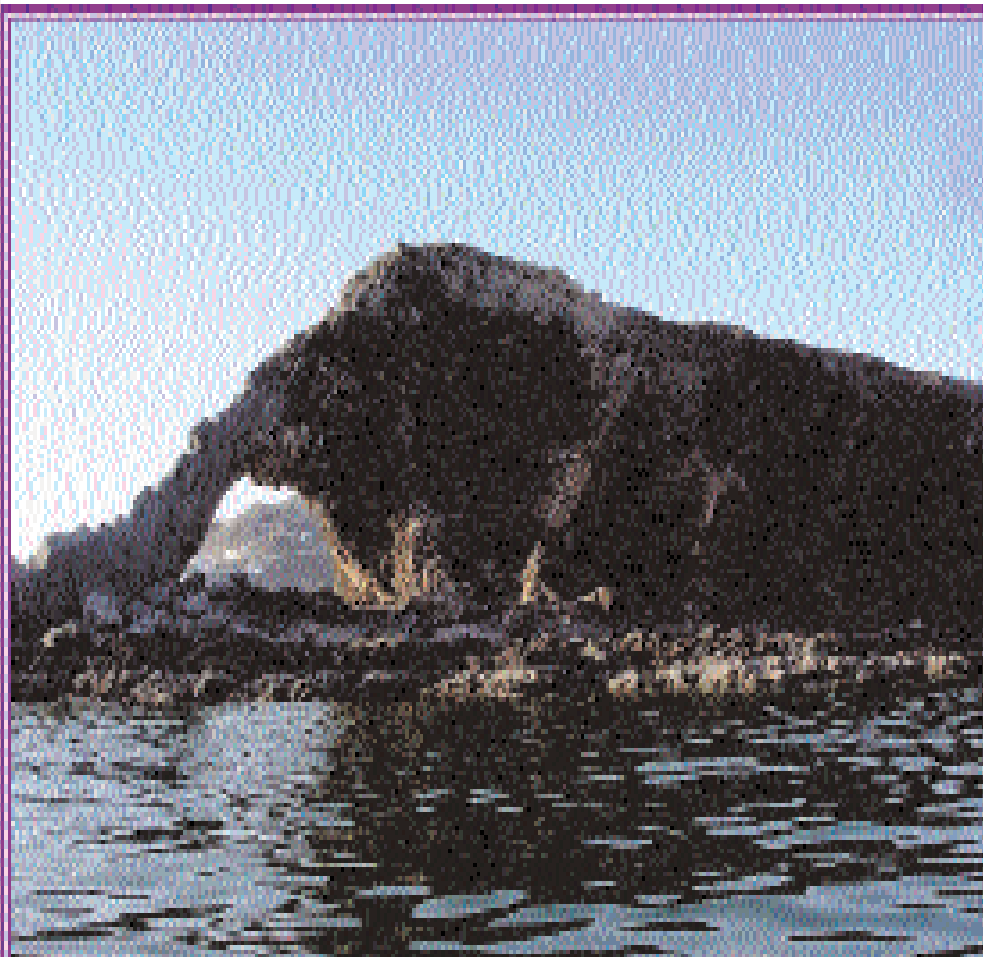
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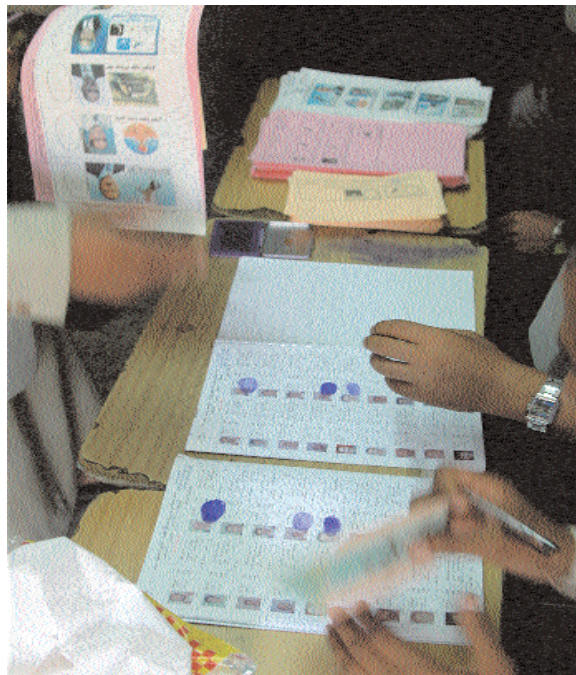


# Yemen Times ELECTIONS Update

Providing regular in depth analysis, reporting and coverage of the Yemeni elections.

## Election day in pictures

**V**oting day came with excitement in Sana'a. The final week saw JMP and GPC rallies in the capital to build momentum for each candidate as voting day approached. The voting day holiday brought a focus to the polling stations with long lines of people waiting to cast their vote, and turn their thumb purple, snaking through most of the city. With voting stations were open all day making Sana'a abuzz with electoral excitement. The Yemen Times had reporters Yasser Al-Mayasi and Glyn Goffin tell the story of the day with pictures from the capital.



► The voting thumbs left behind to show who has cast their ballot.

PHOTO BY GLYN GOFFIN



Having a say about their future, Yemeni women voters constitute 42% of registered voters.

PHOTO BY YASSER AL-MAYSI



At the President Saleh rally one supporter wears his support.

PHOTO BY GLYN GOFFIN



Final rally for bin Shamlan in Sana'a.

PHOTO BY KHALIL AL-KHAUBARI



Young Yemeni men exercising their electoral rights.

PHOTO BY YASSER AL-MAYSI



▲ Happy to give his purple thumbs up for the Saleh poster in behind.

PHOTO BY GLYN GOFFIN



◀ Thumbs up for democracy. Ink stained thumbs to confirm completion of the election process.

PHOTO BY YASSER AL-MAYSI



The voting day selection sheet with the five presidential candidates.

PHOTO BY GLYN GOFFIN



One soldier puts his vote on his most valuable possession – his AK-47.

PHOTO BY GLYN GOFFIN

# Democracy's progress throughout Yemen's elections process

By: Yemen Times Staff

Yemen has gone through various stages over the past 16 years as it's held different types of elections, whether presidential, parliamentary or local council elections.

For the first time in its history, Yemen is witnessing the most competitive presidential election, considered the first of its kind in the region. Five candidates are vying for the presidency: GPC candidate Ali Abdullah Saleh; JMP candidate Faisal Bin Shamlan; National Opposition Council candidate Yasin Abdul Sa'eed; independent candidate and leading socialist party member Ahmed Al-Majidi and independent candidate Fathi Al-Azab, who's in charge of the youth department within the Islah Party, the opposition coalition's largest party.

Here, we survey the various democratic phases within the Yemeni elections process, beginning from 1993, following unification.

## 1999 presidential election

After the April 1997 parliamentary elections, the Supreme Commission for Elections and Referendum (SCER) was reformed, with all political parties and organizations reviewing voter registries and deleting repeated names.

In 1999, Yemen witnessed the first real presidential election, where there were only two candidates vying with one another. Ali Abdullah Saleh was the General People's Congress (GPC) candidate, while his competitor, Najeeb Qahtan Al-Sha'bi, ran as an independent, but there was no real or serious competition between the two.

At that time, 3,725,228 voters – equal to 98.7 percent – participated in the election, whose results were in favor of Saleh.

Saleh received 3,583,795 votes, while 141,433 votes went to Al-Sha'bi. Several local and foreign organizations, as well as some embassies in Yemen, participated in monitoring the election. The two most prominent opposition parties, Islah and the Yemeni Socialist Party, stood by the GPC and nominated Saleh as their candidate. Many other political parties participated in the election as well.

The 1999 presidential election resulted from an agreement the political parties signed stipulating a multi-political system and peaceful transfer of power as basic principles for Yemen's regime.

For the first time, the SCER was formed, constituting 17 members and various committees. In accordance with Yemen's population census, the SCER divided the country into 301 constituencies and 2,017 electoral centers.

## 1993 parliamentary elections

The 1993 parliamentary elections are considered the first elections following unification, as well as the first to include all parts of Yemen. Nearly all political parties participated in the elections, with 3,166 candidates, of whom 1,940 were independents. The elections included 42 female candidates, 24 of whom were independents.

Although 2,682,457 citizens were registered on election rolls, only 2,271,126 voters (84.7 percent) voted. Parties included in the elections were the GPC, Islah, Al-Haq, the Yemeni Socialist Party, the Ba'ath Party, the



A child looking at her mother while voting in the parliamentary elections

Nasserite Unionist Party, the Nasserite Reform Party and the Nasserite Democratic Party. Election results led to a triple coalition consisting of the GPC, Islah and the Yemeni Socialist Party.

## 1997 parliamentary elections

After the 1993 parliamentary elections, the SCER was formed to include seven members, with four other members joining in March 1996, totaling 11 SCER members at that time.

The 1997 parliamentary elections were characterized by a great number of citizens voting for their

representatives in Parliament. Observers say large numbers of Yemenis participated in the elections due to increased election awareness. With 2,742,610 voters participating, they voted for 2,125 candidates nationwide representing 12 political parties, as well as independent candidates.

Election results showed that the GPC won 189 seats, Islah won 53 seats, the Nasserite Unionist People's Organization won three seats, the Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party won two seats and independent candidates won 54 seats. However, due to the 1994 secessionist war, the Yemeni

Socialist Party boycotted the elections, which several local and international organizations monitored.

## 2003 parliamentary elections

Still more voters participated in these elections, with 6,201,254 Yemenis voting for 1,389 candidates representing 22 political parties. Although new governorates were established, the number of constituencies remained the same.

Election results showed that, as usual, the GPC won the most Parliament seats with 229 seats, followed by Islah, which won 45 seats. Other political parties received only

*For the first time in its history, Yemen is witnessing the most competitive presidential election, considered the first of its kind in the region.*

very small percentages in these elections.

It was noticed that the opposition parties could exert strong pressure on the ruling party, so they formed what's known nowadays as the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP). The JMP bloc consists of the Islamic Islah Party, the Yemeni Socialist Party, the Nasserite Unionist Party, Al-Haq Party and the Popular Forces Union Party.

While the GPC is the most prominent party in Yemen, other political parties include:

1. Ba'ath Arab Socialist Party
2. Nasserite Democratic Party
3. National Democratic Party
4. Nasserite Reform Party
5. Liberation Front Party
6. Leagues of the Sons of Yemen Party
7. Federation of Popular Forces
8. Ba'ath National Arab Socialist Party
9. Yemen Leagues Party
10. National Social Party
11. Popular Unionist Liberation Party
12. Popular Unification Party
13. People's Democratic Party
14. September Democratic Organization
15. Yemen Unionist Congregation
16. Green Social Party

# Ya nafs ma tishtay: celebration of favorite and traditional foods in Yemen

By: Fatima Al-Ajel  
Fatima\_fnjr@yahoo.com

Ya nafs ma tishtay, a unique occasion related to Yemeni culture, is a special festival for various types of traditional and delicious foods celebrated the day before Ramadan (the new year). Whoever enjoys eating what they like will be present on Ya nafs ma tishtay Day, as its name means.

Women in the home do their best to prepare their families' most favorite foods, while restaurants and sweet shops also busily prepare special foods for that day. Parks are crowded with visitors preferring to hold Ya nafs ma tishtay parties there, as Yemenis are

crazy about food, juices, etc., on that day.

When investigating how Yemenis celebrate the occasion, they replied with the following:

Most school and university students like celebrating Ya nafs ma tishtay Day with their friends and teachers; thus, school administrations allow students to spend part of class time holding a big party to mark the occasion.

Bin Sina School manager Aisha Al-Hakimi comments, "Every year, we allow students to celebrate the occasion. We let them prepare for Ya nafs ma tishtay Day themselves as an entertainment activity. Teachers sometimes participate with the students in preparing a big meal in the schoolyard."

"Ya nafs ma tishtay is a good oppor-

*"Ya nafs ma tishtay is a good opportunity to build good relationships between students themselves, and with teachers especially, because it's held at the beginning of the school year,"*

tunity to build good relationships between students themselves, and with teachers especially, because it's held at the beginning of the school year," she added.

Students always plan for and await

the occasion. Eleventh grade Halima School student Imani Al-Hababi says, "I get to know new friends on Ya nafs ma tishtay Day, arranging with them what food and sweets we can bring for the festival. We all specialize in a particular dish the others may not be able to cook. I always make bint al-sahin because I'm the one who can make it the best."

Yemeni housewives actually are more interested in Ya nafs ma tishtay Day than working women because they have time to plan for it. They either meet in homes or telephone each other, careful not to repeat the same dish in one meal. Housewife Kawkab Al-Bahri says, "I arrange to go to the park with my neighbors and friends because it's a suitable place that will be enough for all of the guests and their children."

Both restaurants and sweet shops are crowded with customers, as many friends – especially men – and some families go to restaurants especially on this day to order special food, unlike other days. Restaurant owners know the importance of Ya nafs ma tishtay Day as a festival of food, anticipating what their customers will order so they carefully take into account the occasion.

Arahim Al-Thaifi, owner of a group of restaurants in Sana'a, says, "We accept that more customers will come into the restaurants, so we work in two non-stop shifts until 1 a.m., trying to meet every customer's requests."

However, some Yemenis aren't interested in Ya nafs ma tishtay Day, considering it unimportant and insignificant. Ali Mohammed, 35, says, "I don't know why Yemenis are crazy about this occasion – they act like they haven't eaten for a long time! They make others feel like they won't eat in the next days, so they have to eat as

much as they can."

## Elections atmosphere and Ya nafs ma tishtay Day

Amid the elections atmosphere, Yemenis are busier than usual with election events, so will they celebrate Ya nafs ma tishtay Day as usual? University student Mariam Al-Yemeni replies, "I don't think I'll make a party for Ya nafs ma tishtay Day like every other year because these days, Yemenis are considering the elections and their

results. I didn't plan to do anything and my family won't allow us to go to a restaurant as a security measure. We may make a small party at home and that's enough."

Like many Yemenis who worry about the election results, 50-year-old Latifah Al-Sari comments, "I don't want to celebrate any occasion in these days. For me, this year's Ya nafs ma tishtay Day is to spread peace and a safe atmosphere in Yemen and nothing more."



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# Post-election scenes

Though there are those who feel annoyed of using imagination and prediction of the future I don't see those people's annoyance because those do not look beyond their noses to see where matters have reached.



By: Dr Mohammed Al-Mutawakil

Scene one is founded on victory of the Joint Meeting Parties and the General People's Congress conceding that result and measures of transfer were performed in easily and civilized way.

1-After the being sworn in the newly elected president delivers a speech in which he confirms he is the President of Yemen and he deals equally with all of the citizens, all regions, organizations and political parties and groups and all are equal before the law. He declares closure of all files of political conflicts and affirms that Yemen is open for all of its sons without any exception. He stresses his abiding by the constitution and he is obliged to implement all that had been stipulated in his election platform in the light of which the people have elected with constitutional, peaceful and democratic ways.

2-The elected president calls on political parties, civil society organizations, heads of parliamentary blocs, the armed forces and security, scientists, judges, social and economic leaders and academic and media specialists to elect a representative for each to a consultative meeting at the presidential

house to discuss the future and draw up a vision for the new Yemen, including freedom, equality, justice, progress and development, a Yemen for all the Yemenis of both sexes.

3-The Yemen arena changes into a beehive where all blocs and bodies begin to prepare their visions and elect their representatives.

#### The General People's Congress

The GPC holds continuous meetings to assess its role and reasons for its failure and its responsibility at the present time and future. The GPC reaches important decisions pertaining reconsideration of its organization and reaches important decisions related to rebuilding the party on genuine foundations based on effectiveness of its members, the strength of its organization, deepening the commitment of its members to its program and principles as well as benefiting from the talents affiliated to it and then ending the identification with the state that converted it to a gathering of employees and owners of needs. On the political side it will be entrusted with forming the government in its capacity as the party of the parliamentary majority. Since the party needs to improve its image before its citizens and convince them about the state of change that reached it the party would ask Dr. Faraj Bin Ghannim to form the government due to his good reputation. He will be keen to form a government of national unity.

Thus the party will change the image during the two following years and by that will guarantee a reasonable parliamentary majority in the following parliamentary elections. By reforming the political system the GPC it for its own interest as party of majority to adopt the parliamentary system, guarantees independence of judiciary, expansion authorities of local government. I will find it for its own good to reconsider the electoral system, formation of the supreme commission for elections, the election of a shoura council from the governorates in an equal form. The GPC will limit authorities of the presidency of the republic and it will strengthen authority of the constitutional institutions over which it dominates due to its majority. Thus it has pulled the rug from under the JMP on the one hand and guarantees non-ability of a party other than it to an absolute cool in the future. It will at the same time acquire popularity and good reputation inside and outside and manage to wipe out all negative images in the people minds.

#### The JMP

If the GPC adopted the political reform with its parliamentary majority, the JMP will not be able but to keep pace with it and by application of the political reform the parties will lose the common issue that is grouping them and will not benefit from the presidency post. The JMP will find a central issue making them stick together and each party will devote its efforts to prepare its own road through which it will race with in the next elections. The alliances will change. The Yemeni

Congregation for Reform (Islah) and the GPC will be the two big parties vying in the field. The Yemen Socialist Party, the Nasserite, al-Haq Party and the two Unions will have to revive life for the coordination council so that to form a figure in the competition with the two large parties.

Different political and ideological thought among those parties and the Islah and in the details those differences are faint inside the coordination council. It might happen that some of them will conclude alliance with the GPC in its new formula due to its conventional ideology and its new political pursuit as it is close to those parties programs.

In this way the power would have moved from the republic presidency to the parliament, the shoura council, the judiciary, the local councils and civil society organizations and from all of them to the citizens who will elect institutions and thus democracy takes its sound course ad the rule of the people by the people will be achieved. Also that justice will realize equality and freedom. Development will flourish, workforce will work, hungry people will get satisfied, corruption will evaporate, souls will be full of love and blood, honor, dignity and public property will be protected.

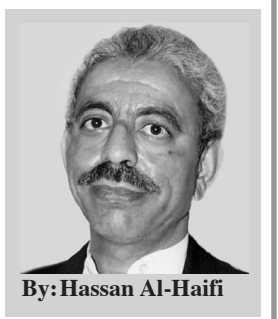
It is a beautiful dream in your hands the people of Yemen to make it real with a small box and a sincere testimony, and a simple tick on a ballot.

*Mohammad Al Mutwakel is a professor of political science and information at the Political Science Department, Sana'a University.*

## COMMON SENSE

### Pope Benedict XVI's folly: A new crusade or facing the baptist challenge

At the start of the Middle Ages, the Moslem armies were knocking at the gates of Europe and both the Eastern and Western Roman Empires were facing near collapse. Actually, the Western Roman Empire has been replaced by the Roman Catholic Church and the Byzantines were under the strong influence of the Greek Orthodox Church. As both of these churches detected a threat to their sustainability as powerful temporal as well as secular institutions, with the rapid (voluntary) spread of Islam, because the latter did not approve of an institutionalized priesthood of any order (that is why I always reject the title of "Moslem clergy" often used to speak of religious scholars or preachers of Islam), both of these institutions immediately sought to arrange political alliances with the monarchs and grand noble orders that prevailed in Europe then, which still was religiously considered "heathen" by these churches. The bargain that was achieved thus was as follows: the churches would give these despots "heavenly titles" to their thrones and the latter would impose Christianity "by the sword" in both of their manifestations then in their areas of jurisdiction, and the Church would give blessings to the harsh feudal order that kept Europe in the dark for centuries to come until even good Christians saw the mischief in this and decided on a Protestant revolt and eventually the Renaissance. Yes, it was Christianity that was imposed upon the ancestors of most of its faithful today and it was either belief in Jesus or death for them. Even the New World was not to be spared this forced conversions, as the Spaniards and the Portuguese carried out the Inquisition with full vigor among the helpless "Red" Indian populations inhabiting the Americas. For their strong devotion to the Catholic Church, the Pontiff—Alexander VI issued the *Papal Bull "Inter caetera"*, in 1493 realigning the New World division between Spain and Portugal, both of which literally slaughtered millions of those who rejected this policy of forced conversions. The blood of all these "heathens" included hundreds of thousands of Moslems from the Iberian Peninsula to as far away as the Philippines, which would have been today like Indonesia, Malaysia and the Southern part of Thailand Moslem had it not been for the implementation of the Inquisition in all the domains granted to it by the Pope.



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

But even before that, we can go back to the papacy of Pope Urban II (Pope from 1088 – 1099). He worked diligently to end the Moslem control of Sicily, in collusion with Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenus, who had sent his Ambassador to the Pontiff requesting support against the Moslems in Sicily and Asia Minor. The absence of Islam in Sicily today did not occur by magic but through the forced conversions of the population of the island when the Moslem emirs were driven out. In 1096, the devoted Pope also launched the First Crusade to free Jerusalem from "heathen" Moslem control as he referred to it. When the Crusades took Jerusalem in 1099, they slaughtered some 90,000 people inhabiting the city arranging their heads in pyramid mounds throughout the city (See the History of the Arabs by Anthony Nutting). Throughout the history of the Moslem Empires that prevailed since the death of the Prophet Mohammed (peace of Allah be upon him), Moslem rulers pretty much stuck to the Qur'anic dictate "there is no compulsion in religion". Needless to say the Holy Book of Allah insists that even differences in religious views are to be "discussed" peacefully with non-Moslems with the idea that people should be led by reason and logical deduction to accept Islamic doctrine. Furthermore, Moslems are compelled to set good example of proper Islamic behavior and practice (which, regrettably, is not the prevailing scene amongst a sizable segment of the Moslem population of the world, by virtue of ignorance or distorted views that have been nurtured by the enemies of Islam amongst some desperate or naive Moslems). That is how Islam gained its converts in most of the corners of the world where it prevailed. The existence of sizable Christian minorities amidst Moslem dominated areas attests to the tolerance of Islam throughout its history. The continuing spread of Islam, even in the United States with some 20,000 converts a year, is testimony to its dogmatic appeal.

Surely, Pope Benedict the XVI was not oblivious to these historical facts and surely, he is even more insulting when he attributes Moslem anger at his "academic" comments in his homeland, of all places, to "misunderstanding" of his intents. We will further explore the Pope's statements in the next issue.

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

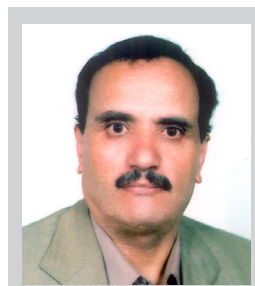
# Yemen's democratic change

The population in Yemen stands around 20 million and half of the citizens should be eligible to vote. The remainder of the population are under the age of 18 years and cannot yet practice their democratic tasks. Going back to the last voter records from 2003, the most recent parliamentary elections, there were

over 8 million people registered – around 85 percent of those who could vote. The important thing is that the proportion of those registered to vote reaches 85 to 90 percent.

That will surely mean Yemeni citizens are entertaining big responsibility and no longer taking expressing negative attitudes toward democratic activities. Since 2003 woman are effective figures competing

with that of man at the polls and registering to vote. This means the electoral and democratic consciousness of woman is close to equaling man's consciousness. It also indicates that woman will not squandering their democratic rights and will practice those rights. Women are keen in all



By: Ismael Al-Ghabiri

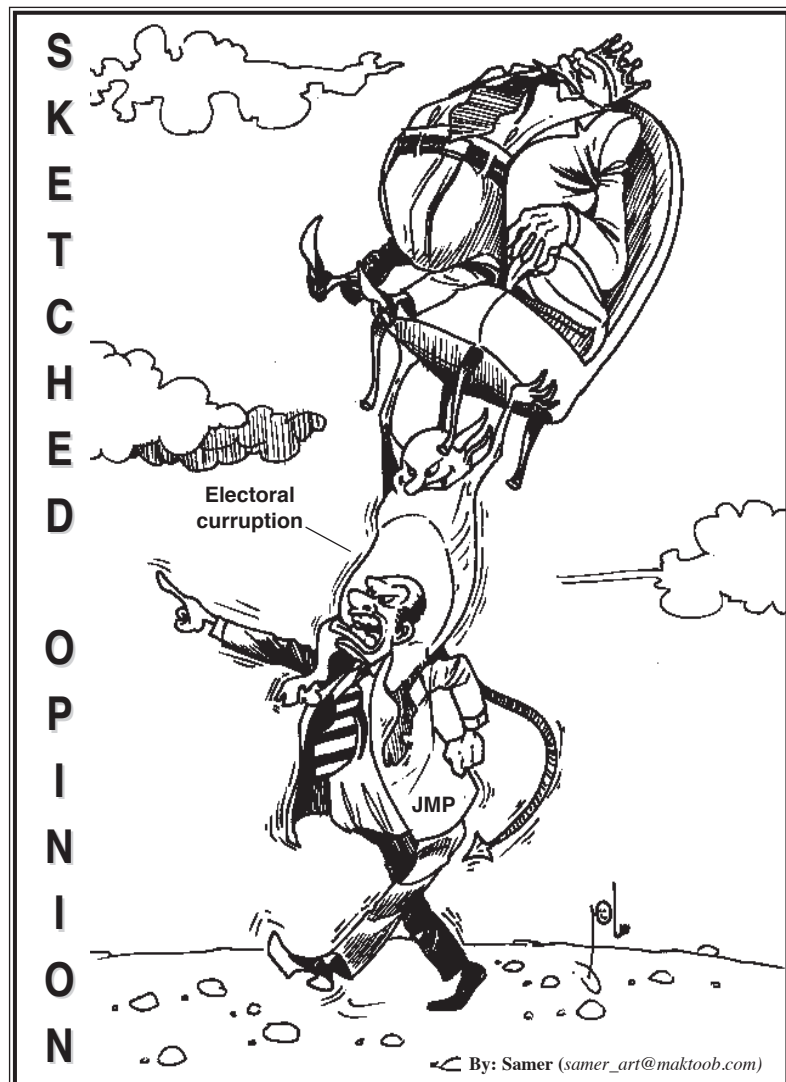
electoral activities: local, parliamentary and presidential. Women compete with men for nominations and aspire for being member in local councils and parliament and they have been put forth as presidential candidates.

In the united Yemen we feel democracy is the backbone of political action within parliamentary, legislative and executive powers as well as the judicial system. This choice is a firm

decision from which there is no retreat as it's the higher form of reform, unity and democracy and a very important and delicate stage en route to a guaranteed embodiment of the democratic and pluralist forum.

In this regard we are not talking about the distance Yemen has traveled in its democratic course because there is still a long journey ahead. On the road it's the parliamentary, presidential and local elections that can uproot corruption and purge our system of the corrupt. It's one of the first steps in the democratic course.

*Ismael Al-Ghabiri is a Yemeni journalist, working in Yemen Times for almost 14 years.*



## Letters to the Editor

### Vote for... Yemen!

It's really a unique Yemeni experiment what I'm witnessing these days. As a young Yemeni girl I know for sure that I've never seen an election like this one. It represents how Yemen can give the whole world a new different perception of democracy. I know my voice makes contributes to Yemen's democratic future. Nevertheless, I'm not becoming so fixated on this extremism that I see is getting more and more a block against progressing further. My voice does count, Allah will ask me about my voice. I should be very reasonable about it.

I won't vote for anyone that can't give 100 percent of himself to the country. I won't let my voice be a bridge to fulfill his personal goals. I won't be happy if my voice may take my country one step back.

I have decided how I'm going to

vote. Proudly, I vote for the Yemen that has always been very generous to me as treated me as one of it's daughters.

*Afrah Nasser*  
[afrah.nasser@yahoo.com](mailto:afrah.nasser@yahoo.com)

### FBI Releases 9/11 Videotape Filmed Near Pentagon

The FBI just released video recordings taken on 9/11 by six security cameras located at the CITCO station overlooking the Pentagon. I find it incredulous that, according to the FBI, none showed any aircraft during the actual attack on 9/11. So far - six cameras - no aircraft - nothing! It's unbelievable!

There were video recordings taken by security cameras mounted on the rooftop of the Pentagon, as well as cameras at the nearby Double Tree Hotel, and the Maryland Department of Transportation buildings. Why

won't the FBI release all of these videos? Will the videos show a passenger jet striking the building or, more likely, will they show nothing?

All the unedited video recordings confiscated by the FBI within minutes following the attack should be released before the election. I believe these videos could document conclusively that a missile, perhaps one armed with depleted uranium, struck the Pentagon. How much longer will the FBI be allowed to cover up this crime?  
*Harold S Kramer,*  
[hsk01945@vrocket.com](mailto:hsk01945@vrocket.com)

### Regarding the pope's recent comments about Islam

I wish to commend Pope Benedict XVI for having the courage to express what modern man rarely has in practice the foresight to acknowledge, namely that "violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul".

Contrary to the claims of Islamic

leaders, the Pope's comments were nothing more than a decisive and uncompromising renunciation of the present cycle of violence in the name of religion as well as an invitation to dialogue between religions.

Terrorism is and always will be a show of inhuman ferocity that, precisely for this reason, will never be able to solve conflicts among human beings. Only reason and love are the valid means of surpassing and resolving disputes between people. No situation of injustice, no feeling of frustration, no philosophy or religion can justify such an aberration.

When fundamental rights are violated, it is easy to fall prey to temptations of hatred and violence. Nonetheless, we must keep in check our base impulses and together work to build a global culture of solidarity that restores hope in the future to the young.

*Paul Kokoski*  
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## Muslim, Male, Young

# The influence of radicalism

The majority of Muslim youths in Germany feel integrated. Nevertheless, several political and social factors have led to increasing alienation. Martina Sabra seeks answers.

By: Martina Sabra

When Youness (name changed by the editor) was ten years old, at the Koranic school in Cologne they wanted to drum it into him that he should not wear either short pants or silk shirts and should not get together with "unbelievers."

It was soon clear to the boy and his parents that he was not going to stay there much longer. "I preferred to play soccer and join a breakdance group," recalls Youness, now 23 years old and a trained auto mechanic.

All the same, he does care about Islam, he emphasizes. "Although I rarely pray, pork is taboo for me, and I observe Ramadan, too – when I can."

With his rather unpolitical mosaic identity, Youness is no exception. He represents the majority of Muslim youth in Germany, a majority that often drops out of the picture too quickly in discussions on Islamic terrorism and juvenile violence.

### Danger of marginalization

Experts agree that the overwhelming majority of young Muslims don't want to have anything to do with Islamism, a totalitarian political ideology that seeks to supplant the sovereignty of the people with a theocracy.

Therefore, it would be a serious mistake to put Muslim youth under general suspicion. Nonetheless, it is also clear that more and more young men with a Muslim background run the risk of being taken in by Islamic fanatics' promises of salvation.

"In my opinion, the threat must be taken very seriously," declares the Berlin social scientist Eberhard Seidel, who has dealt with the subject in numerous dialogue projects. "A significant number of Muslim youths are marginalized and see no chance of integrating themselves into this society."

### Dramatic scenarios, little factual knowledge

Violence in schools, Islamic glorifica-

tion of violence in the Internet, new anti-Semitism, attempts to recruit for terrorist attacks in mosques – the disturbing reports are increasing.

Meanwhile, thus far there has not been a single representative study on the exact number of Muslim youths in Germany, their participation in religious, social, and political organizations, and their political views.

Unemployment, poverty, and anxiety about the future characterize the everyday lives of many of the estimated 1.5 million young people between the ages of 12 and 25 with a Muslim background in Germany.

Increasing ghettoization in lower-class neighborhoods and a lack of educational opportunities result in the fact that only half as many immigrant children as German children go on to the Gymnasium (university preparatory school).

Instead, almost three times as many immigrant children as Germans attend the Hauptschule (secondary general school) – a form of education that offers hardly any prospects for an occupational future. Twenty percent of immigrant children, more than twice as many as German pupils, leave school without a certificate.

Furthermore, many young Muslims struggle with conflicting values within the family and in day-to-day life in Germany. Whereas at home they must be obedient or are pampered by their mothers, in school and on the job they are expected to act responsibly. Young males, in particular, are unable to cope with this conflict.

### Islamic Ersatz identities instead of integration

Especially in densely populated urban areas, more and more Muslim youths seek refuge from a feeling of powerlessness in religious-tinged fantasies of superiority or ersatz identities. "For these youths, Islam is the only resource that cannot be taken away from them from birth," explains Eberhard Seidel.

"In this respect, there is scarcely any difference between radical Islamic youths and young right-wing extremists.



Experts agree that the overwhelming majority of young Muslims don't want to have anything to do with Islamism, says Martina Sabra.

Right-wing radicals also fall back on resources that no one can take away from them – racial ideologies or supposedly purer blood."

Nevertheless, social and economic problems are not a satisfactory explanation for the spread of Islamic ideas. Many young Muslims dissociate themselves from totalitarian ideologies, despite social problems and poverty. On the other hand, there are educated middle-class Muslims who regard Islam as an important part of their identities.

Although there have been no Islamic attacks in Germany thus far, the German government sees in Islamic extremism "the greatest threat to security, domestic and worldwide." An intelligence agency report from North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany's largest federal state, of March 2006 refers to an "abstractly high risk" of terrorist attacks in Germany.

### Thread of 'homegrown' terrorist networks?

"Germany has been mentioned in the Al Qaeda circle," reports press spokeswoman Dagmar Pelzer. "And since the London attacks in July 2005, we have paid particular attention to signs that could point to so-called 'homegrown' terrorist networks."

The NRW security agency also reports that "in several mosques nationwide, young people were and occasionally still are systematically approached in order to recruit them for violent struggle."

In its attempt to stem the spread of Islamic ideas in Germany, security agency authorities have set their sights on both "legalistic" and "militant" Islamic organizations, although the former declare their support for the constitution and for nonviolence in achieving their political goals, at least outwardly, whereas the latter propagate violence and terrorism as political means.

According to the intelligence agency, nationwide approximately 27,000 adults and young people are reported to be active in Germany's largest legalistic Islamic organization, Milli Görüs (IGMG: Islamic Association Milli Görüs, National Vision), which supports a theocracy in Turkey.

Smaller organizations described as legalistic, such as Muslim Youth in Germany (MJD), are said to number around 250 adherents and sympathizers. So-called "militant" Islamic organizations, such as Hamas, Hezbollah, and Islamic Jihad, reportedly have a total of approximately 2,400 followers in

Germany, including young people and adults.

### The Internet as a recruiting tool

Intelligence officials and researchers, such as the Bielefeld social researcher Wilhelm Heitmeyer, warn against the methods of Islamic organizations: young people are lured with free recreational activities like sports, computer courses, and children's entertainment.

Once they are involved, they are indoctrinated with Islamic ideas. Nevertheless, the organizations work openly and are within reach. Islamism in the World Wide Web is a far greater cause for concern.

"The Internet is the most important

outlet for Islamists of all stripes, particularly Jihadists," according to the NRW security agency. Press officer Dagmar Pelzer is not able to estimate how many sympathizers are active in the Net, however. "Given the nature of the Internet, hit rates cannot be reliably determined."

### Instead of repression and threats, strengthen young people

In order to prevent Islamic groups from extending their influence on young Muslims in Germany or, at worst, recruiting new terrorists, an efficient intelligence service with well-trained experts is necessary. On the other hand, it is essential to systematically strengthen young people against totalitarian influences.

That will work only if a) both parents and the youths themselves are allowed more political participation, b) patriarchal, violent child-rearing practices are eliminated, c) dialogue projects are more actively promoted, and d) educational opportunities for young Muslim immigrants are significantly improved.

Language screening, not only when children start school, but two years earlier, and established immigrant quotas for all primary schools are essential, in order to avoid a concentration of children with language problems at individual schools.

The introduction of open-minded, progressive Islamic classes in the German language at German schools will certainly not do any harm, but priority should be given to systematic education in democracy and human rights that is available to all young people.

After all, it is not only Muslim youth that are vulnerable to extremism. For years, the most brutal politically motivated acts of violence in Germany have not been committed by Islamists, but by right-wing extremists.

Source: Qantara.de 2006.

## Let's stop the call for moderates

By: Rev. Canon Andrew P B White

Bahdad - There is certainly a crisis between Islam and the West, and all the time we are being told to both strengthen and deal with the moderates.

The term "moderate" is being used to describe the tolerant Muslims who shun violence and terrorism. The problem is that this word itself shows a total misunderstanding of the very nature of Islam. What's more it strengthens further the position of the intolerant as the true disciples of their faith tradition.

I am a Christian and a priest of the Anglican Church. I would take great offence to being called a "moderate" Christian. I am not; I am serious about my faith tradition. When I say the creed on Sundays, I mean it and believe it. I share with my Muslim brothers and sisters their concern about growing Western secularism and disbelief.

I have the privilege of spending most of my time in the Middle East; most of my colleagues are Muslims. Some of my most trusted staff are Muslim, including those who translate for me at church services. I probably have the only Church in the world that meets in a Shi'a Muslim Prime Minister's office. My staff and colleagues are not moderates. They are serious about their faith and beliefs. They shun all forms of violence and terrorist activity. They are, like the majority of Muslims, loving, trustworthy and ardently against all forms of violence.

The reality is that I have more in common with many of my Muslim brothers and sisters than I do with many of my so-called Christian colleagues. I do not consider any of these people moderates; they are not, yet they are totally serious about their faith and totally tolerant to the "other", both Christians and Jews. What they want to see are people who

are serious about their faith and their service of the Almighty.

If we are going to be serious about dealing with the very real problems between Islam and the West, we need to begin by using the right language. In the very first place it will mean doing away with the language of the "moderates". We need to truly respect Islam, which will mean having regard for those who are serious about their faith. Realising that if we really want to make progress in Muslim-Western relations we must begin by respecting Islam and the language and means it uses of self-identification.

We must realise that most Muslims are tolerant and serious about their faith. They want to work with others, but they want others to respect them, and even be willing to learn from them.

Maybe, just maybe, the West has a lot to learn from Islam. Maybe even we as Christians can learn from them and become more serious about our faith tradition. If we are going to seriously break down the barriers between

Islam and the West, let us begin by looking at ourselves in the West and seeing how we can become more serious about our faith and beliefs, and let us begin by doing away with this language of moderations, for what is being asked for is to disregard the fundamental tenants of Islam. Islam requires both serious commitment and tolerance of the other. Let us also stop thinking that those from the West who engage with Islam should just be liberal Christians in the West. We can be serious about our own faith, and we don't all have to be Western either.

The Reverend Canon Andrew P B White is President of the Foundation for Relief and Reconciliation in the Middle East and Anglican Priest for Iraq.

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## Germany's political stagnation

A year ago, Angela Merkel, Germany's charming new chancellor, was in the final phase of her election campaign. The incumbent, Gerhard Schröder, lagged so far behind her Christian Democrats (CDU) in public opinion polls that she thought she would win a landslide victory and could therefore afford to expound the cruelties of the liberal austerity program delineated in her electoral campaign. She even announced a value-added tax increase (which her new government has, indeed, decided to implement in 2007).

But German voters did not appreciate her honesty. When she named the law professor Paul Kirchhoff, who advocated a flat tax, as her candidate for finance minister, Merkel's electoral cakewalk turned into a nightmare. She lost nearly her entire lead, and in the end won by only a tiny margin – a margin too small to form her preferred coalition with the liberal Free Democrats. Instead, she had to form a coalition with Schröder's Social Democrats (SPD), though without Schröder himself.

Merkel's first year of government will soon be over. It has been successful in terms of international relations. She won the respect of her European Union partners and managed to salvage Germany's damaged relationship with the United States. Her unpretentious manner and intellectual capacity (she holds a



By: Uri Avnery

doctorate in physics) quickly won her the respect of many, even of Vladimir Putin, whose language she speaks fluently.

However, Merkel has disappointed everyone who hoped that she would continue and even expand Schröder's domestic economic reform agenda. While her party program speaks of opening union contracts, relaxing job protection, and, in particular, overhauling the incentive structure of the welfare system, her government has been mostly silent about these issues. The cautious steps toward wage subsidies that her government has taken are mere window dressing and cannot be taken seriously.

Thus, Merkel has so far dampened any hope that the important and hard reforms that she announced during her campaign and that Germany urgently needs will be carried out under the CDU-SPD "grand coalition" government. To be sure, she has put healthcare reform and a reform of company taxation on the agenda, but the plans presented so far give no indication of a major breakthrough.

This stagnation in policymaking has been heavily criticized by the media and the influential Wirtschaftsrat (Economic Council), an association of entrepreneurs who sympathize with the CDU. Even Germany's Christian Democratic president, Horst Köhler, has continually reminded the

government of the need to press ahead with economic reforms in order to pave the way for sustainable growth.

So why does Merkel not dare more? Why is she not sticking to the announcements she made during her campaign?

The superficial answer is that her coalition partner, the SPD, is not willing to go further. But if this is the explanation, the next question is why the SPD is unwilling to continue Schröder's reform course.

Such questions lead to the real explanation of Germany's political stagnation: there is simply no popular majority in favor of liberal reforms, because in the near term such reforms would create too many losers. Germany's extensive welfare system spends 31% of the country's GDP for entitlement programs operated by the government sector. No less than 41% of the voting-age adult population lives primarily on government transfers such as state pensions, full-scale public stipends, unemployment benefits, disability benefits, and social assistance. (In East Germany, the figure is a whopping 47%.)

Among those adults who actually vote, recipients of public transfers form a clear majority. Indeed, the upper 10% of income recipients pay more than 50% of aggregate income tax revenue, and the upper 20% pays about 80%, while 40% of income recipients pay no income taxes whatsoever. Small wonder that a huge majority of the population – and even a slight majority of CDU voters – prefer a strengthening of the welfare state to a more market-oriented system.

The SPD learned about these preferences the hard way, when Schröder's liberal reforms, as cautious as they were, prompted an internal revolt and induced his predecessor as party chairman and temporary former Minister of Finance, Oskar Lafontaine, to desert the SPD and found a new party. Lafontaine now plays directly on the preferences of public transfer recipients and firmly occupies the left margin of German politics, dreaming the dream of the everlasting welfare state that can draw on unlimited resources.

Indeed, after Lafontaine's "The Left" party merged with eastern Germany's ex-communists, it secured a firm base among voters, changing the political equilibrium in the country. Faced with the prospect of losing members and voters to the new party, the SPD simply cannot afford to continue Schröder's reform agenda.

Many Christian Democrats may be dreaming of the next election, and a new coalition with the Free Democrats – and perhaps the Greens – that would carry out the necessary welfare and labor market reforms. But the reality is that the CDU leadership is re-orienting the party toward more socialist attitudes in order to attract a larger share of the electorate, making postponement of the necessary reforms all but inevitable. In the midst of such political machinations, Germany is gradually losing its future.

Hans-Werner Sinn is the Director of the Ifo Institute for Economic Research in Munich.

Source: Project Syndicate.



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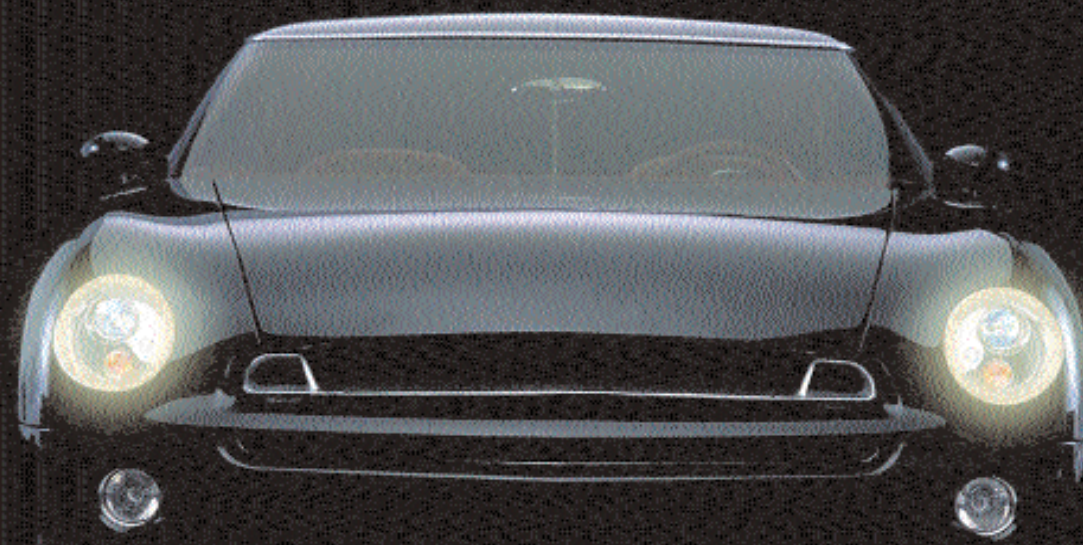


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# CONSULTING SERVICES

## For the Basic Education Development Project (IDA Credit & Multi-Donor Trust Funds)

The Basic Education Development Project (BEDP) at the Ministry of Education (MoE) seeks applicants for the position of five individual consultants to monitor the operation of Conditional Cash Transfers Scheme (CCT) in Lahej Governorate.

The pilot CCT scheme is planned to be rigorously evaluated before being phased out in other regions of the country. A demand-side financing survey is being developed to be undertaken in Lahej governorate. The Lahej governorate survey will also serve as a baseline survey for the impact evaluation of the scheme. For monitoring the CCTs, a detailed list of students benefiting from the CCTs will be developed and maintained by the MoE and will be updated monthly after receiving information from schools about the compliance of students with the conditions of the cash transfer. In addition, the transfer of funds will be monitored to ensure timely delivery to the students and records will be maintained about the number of beneficiaries and the amount of funds paid out. In order to facilitate the MoE in implementing the CCTs a group of five individuals will be hired to ensure a smooth and timely process. The work of the individuals hired will complement each other and they will work in close coordination with the Girls' Education Sector (GES). The specific tasks and scope of work for each individual are detailed below separately.

### 1) Database administrator

The database administrator will be responsible for:

- Decide on type of software which is best to use for this database. Gather international experience to make this decision. The data must be easily convertible into STATA and other common statistical software.
- Develop a user friendly beneficiary database of more than 10,000 school age children eligible and/or receiving the CCTs in the governorate of Lahej. The database will have detailed information on each child's household and child characteristics as well as space to enter progress through school such as attendance, school test scores and other monitoring indicators as developed by the consultant developing the CCT scheme. Each child will have a unique identification code of the original baseline survey.
- Develop a methodology to continuously check the quality of the data entered (such as a template that accepts only relevant codes for the relevant question/variable)
- Regular updating of the database and trouble shooting any problem that might come up during the year in the database.
- Guiding and supervising the data entry operators (TORs below) in efficient and accurate data entry of the different conditionalities relating to the cash transfers.
- Ensuring that the database reflects the right amount of money transferred to the child and the date of payments.
- Developing a separate database (or extending beneficiary database) for monitoring the children that drop out of the program or fail to receive the CCTs due to a non-compliance of the conditions. This database will be developed on the basis of a short questionnaire (developed by the supervisor) that will be given to children if they fail to re-qualify for the CCT (criteria still to be determined). The administrator will ensure that the child's identification code matches with the original surveys.
- Provide regular inputs to the supervisor to help develop periodic reports on the number of beneficiaries and the amount of money paid out by age, grade and gender.
- Develop a clear codebook which explains all variables in the all database. The codebooks should be in English and Arabic.

### Qualifications:

The successful candidate will have an advanced degree in computer and information systems (BS in computer sciences or an advanced diploma in database management), with at least 3 years experience of working on developing database.

The candidate should be proficient in Arabic with a working knowledge of English language.

### 2) Two Data Entry Operators

The data entry operators will be responsible for:

- Entering the information on all the relevant children for the CCT scheme in the database developed by the database administrator.
- Helping the database administrator in consolidating the information on children's economic and social background from the baseline survey and any other relevant survey into a beneficiary database.
- Ensuring that any information regarding an individual in the system has a unique identifying code and ensuring that the code can identify the individual in any survey used as a background survey.
- Monthly or periodic (as relevant) update of the database.
- Entering the attendance, school grades and other relevant conditionality information of each child as soon as the information from the field is received.
- Provide information regularly to the database administrator and the supervisor to help develop periodic reports on the number of beneficiaries and the amount of money paid out by age, grade and gender as well as other requested information.
- If requested by supervisor, participate in surprise visits to the beneficiary schools to verify the compliance of children with the conditionalities and to verify the data and information about children being transmitted to the team and GES by the schools.

### Qualifications

The successful candidate will have an advanced diploma or a degree (equivalent to bachelors) with relevant experience and knowledge of computer database programs. The person will be proficient in Arabic and have working knowledge of English language.

### 3) Coordinator

The Coordinator will be responsible for:

- Developing a strong operational and working relationship on behalf of the GES with the agency responsible for transferring the funds to the beneficiaries (this agency has yet to be finalized)
- Check that the payments to households are being processed and sent on time.
- Solve any problems regarding households that do not receive payments or are difficult to send money to (in coordination with the supervisor).
- Work with the MoE and any other relevant agency to solve any implementation issue that may arise.
- Ensure that any mismanagement of funds is reported to the MoE and the BEDP project team.
- Provide the database manager and data entry operator with relevant and up to date information on the distribution of funds including how much has been transferred, when and how.
- Participate in surprise visits to the beneficiary schools to verify the compliance of children with the conditionalities and to verify the data and information about children being transmitted to the team and GES by the schools. During these visits also talk to the beneficiaries to verify the transmission of funds.
- Regular visits and extended stay in program sites will be necessary.

### Qualifications

The successful candidate will have at least a bachelor's degree in financial or public management, such as a Masters in Business Administration or Masters in Public

Administration or Social Sciences (Masters degree preferred). The candidate should have at least 3 years work experience in a relevant position. It will be beneficial to have experience in managing payment systems. In addition, the person should be dynamic and creative in figuring out new ways to design mechanisms.

### 4) Supervisor

The supervisor will be responsible for:

- Working in close coordination with the Girls' Education Sector which is leading the initiative.
- Work in close coordination with the GES, the World Bank, DFID and Netherlands project staff and consultant to establish a system of monitoring the CCTs. For example aiding to develop special cards for the schools to record CCT information and pathways for the information on the cards to be sent to those needing to use the information.
- Ensuring the close coordination and complementarity of the work being done by the three individuals mentioned in the three TORs above.
- Supervise the establishment of a database on all beneficiaries, supervising which conditionalities were met or not met by the students, check if the payment was made on time, if the payment was not made on time why is it so.
- Verify the information concerning who has and has not met their conditionalities is being provided on time by the school system.
- Solve any problems associated with information on conditionalities not coming in on time or looking like it has been falsified.
- If a beneficiary drops out of the program, develop a survey (to be approved by the GES and WB team) that gathers information about why the child is dropping out and to monitor the compliance of conditionalities and the social issues of attending or not attending school. This would be a part of the main beneficiary database.
- Work with the MoE to solve any implementation issues that may arise.
- Develop, schedule and lead regular random surprise visits to verify that the attendance records and on the conditionalities are being adequately and correctly kept and recorded.
- Provide regular reports on number of beneficiaries and amount of money paid out, by grade, age and gender, as well as other requested information.
- Provide regular briefing sessions on the implementation progress of the CCT scheme to the government and the relevant donor community.
- Regular visits and extended stay in program sites will be necessary.
- Develop and manage a system to maintain all the original paper documents which ensures they are easily retrievable at the request of GES, the beneficiaries or the donor agencies including the WB staff and consultants.

### Qualifications:

The successful candidate will have an advanced degree in financial or public management, such as a Masters in Business Administration or Masters in Public Administration or Social Science (from a local university) or equivalent. The candidate should have at least 5 years work experience in a relevant position and vast experience of working in the field. Demonstrated ability to manage a small team is also necessary. The individual should be proficient both in Arabic and in English and be able to present regular briefings to the MoE high level official as well as the BEDP donor community.

All applications along with a detailed resume and supporting documents should be submitted by **October 4, 2006** at the following address:

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

# Yemen Airways achieves ambitions

Customers of Yemen Airways, and others concerned recognized the fact that Yemenia has undergone transformation from an ordinary a/l into a modern a/l with high automation in various areas.

**D**uring the year, the Yemen Airways moved from the manual system to the automatic system. This leads to replacing the systems of booking with new ones, plus introducing the system of electronic tickets. The personnel were reshuffled to ensure effectiveness of performance and to stop relying on a single person. As a result of reshuffling the administrative hierarchy, each department has become responsible for taking decisions and reaching targets according to previously formulated strategic goals.

Yemen Airways managed to establish consultative relations with internationally famed aviation companies such as the U.S. Airways. Such changes culminated in the inauguration of a new Yemenia office by Chairman of Yemen Airways, Captain Abdulkhaleq Al-Qadhi. The new office is located in Al-Zubeiri Street in the Capital City. Its equipment and decoration reflect the high standards of Yemeni Architectural heritage and bewitch eyes of the beholder.

The idea of inaugurating the new office is to establish identity and privacy of Yemeni architecture in the mind of every visitor, as well as to prove the national, economic and tourist role the Yemen Airways plays.

Inaugurating the new office, Captain Abdulkhaleq Al-Qadhi, Chairman of the Board of Directors at Yemen Airways outlined indicators of the company's development.

He said: "the continued development of Yemen Airways enables the company to compete with international airlines. It is the fruit of efforts expended by the Commercial Department in the company which enabled Yemen Airways to be a distinctive national company, which represents Yemen, raises its flag high and cares for providing the best of services for customers.

With regard to plans and programs of updating, which Yemen Airways intends to implement, Al-Qadhi stated: "We have numerous plans plus an ambition to achieve according to the program approved by the Board of Directors. The new program includes developing and expanding Yemen Airways, in addition to improving the level of performance training human resources through the first phase of which is due to end by the end of the year."

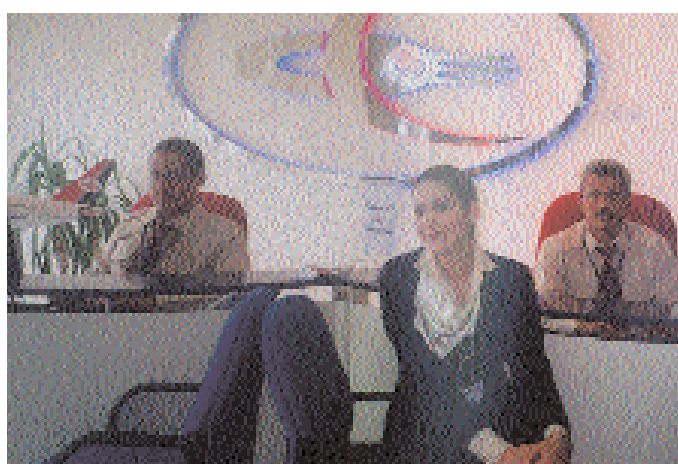
"There are great efforts devoted to improving the level of performance in the company in general and foreign experts were invited to help the company reach its goals, Al-Qadhi continued. "There are positive indicators of the steps we have taken in this respect."

With respect to the agreement on open skies and increasing fares, Captain Al-Qadhi said: "there is an increase in the number of flights between Egypt, Yemen and Dubai and we thank these companies for agreeing on open skies. With respect to increasing fares, I can say there is no increase, but it is surcharge to the fares and the issue is associated with the increase in oil prices worldwide. This addition helps the company get the convenient fuel, particularly as the company depends entirely on its income and without any outside supports.

"We don't want to raise fares. We only want to cover the operation expenditure," Chairman of Yemen Airways noted. "We always care for improving the level of services we offer to passengers in order to be at the level of competition. We have qualified staff, who meet the most prominent requirements of competition and work hard on updating the company's fleet. In this respect, Yemen Airways will sign an agreement on purchasing new aircrafts to be added to the company's fleet.

For his part, Abdullah Al-Mutarreb, Deputy General Manager for Commercial Affairs at Yemen Airways, considered inaugurating the new office as an initial move to standardize equipment and decoration of the office to other Yemenia-affiliated offices in and outside the country.

Al-Mutarreb added: "Such a model of equipment and decoration will help create a unique impression of Yemen Airways and distinguish it from among thousands of international airlines. Offices of Yemen Airways abroad function as a micro-screen displaying Yemen's great civilization. Also, these offices play an integral role in improving the level of services the company offers to its customers, be they businesspersons, investors, tourists or companies worldwide.



Business Intelligence

# See your business future in a crystal ball

Since 1989, concepts of information technology began playing an active role in improving business decision-making through a mechanism called: Business Intelligence (BI). The use of BI has changed the face of strategic business decision making in many parts of the western world and increasingly in the Arab region and Yemen. Now Business Intelligence Solutions (BIS) are a must-have component for business success.

By: Mohammed Esmael Al-Moayed  
moesmael@gmail.com

**B**usiness intelligence is a broad category of applications and technologies for gathering, accessing and analyzing data to help enterprise users make better business decisions. The term implies a comprehensive knowledge of all of the factors that affect business. It is imperative to have an in-depth knowledge about factors such as your customers, competitors, business partners, economic environment, and internal operations to make effective and good quality business decisions. Business intelligence enables you to make these kinds of decisions.

**Reasons for Business Intelligence:** Business Intelligence enables organizations to make well informed business decisions to create competitive advantages. When you are able to extrapolate information from indicators in the external environment and make accurate forecasts about future trends or economic conditions. Once business intelligence is gathered effectively and used proactively you can make decisions to benefit your organization before the competition.

The ultimate objective of business intelligence is to improve the timeliness and quality of information. Timely quality information is like having a crystal ball that can give you an indication of what's the best course to take. Business intelligence reveals to you the changes in customer behavior and spending patterns, your own capabilities, and what changes are taking place in the market.

Businesses realize in this very competitive, fast pace, and always changing business environment the only thing to help them gain a competitive advantage over competitors is how quickly they respond and adapt to change. Business intelligence enables them to use information gathered to proactively respond to changes.

**Benefits of BI**  
BI can eliminate a lot of the guesswork within an organization, enhance communication among departments while coordinating activities, and enable companies to respond quickly to changes in financial conditions, customer preferences, and supply chain operations. BI improves the overall performance of the company using it.

Information is regarded as the most important resource a company has so when a company can make decisions based on timely accurate information it

improves their performance. BI expedites decision making because businesses realize information can be used to achieve an advantage so when a business obtains key information they quickly use it before a competitor obtains the same information. It also maximizes the customer experience because they can cater to the wants or needs of a customer.

**Factors Influencing Business Intelligence**

Customers are the most critical aspect to a company's success and without them a company cannot exist. So it is very important to have information on their likes and dislikes so you can quickly adapt to their changing demands. Business Intelligence enables you to gather information on the trends in the marketplace and come up with innovative products or services in anticipation of customers' changing demands.

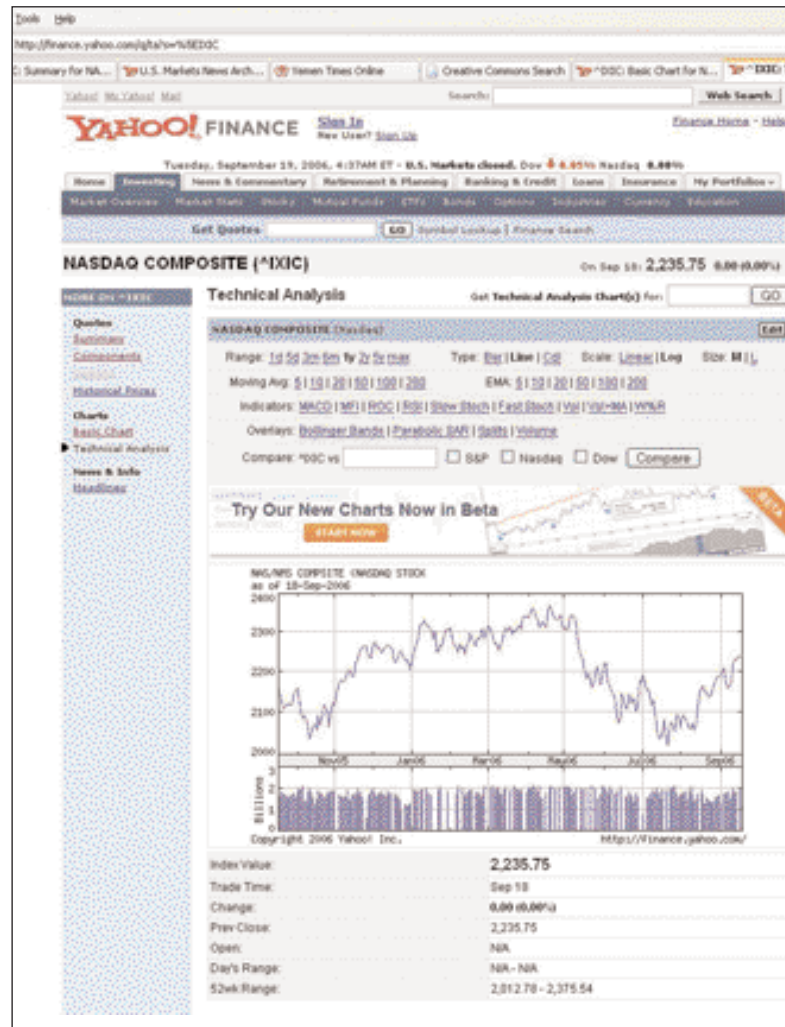
Business Partners must possess the same strategic information you have so there is no miscommunication leading to inefficiencies. It is common now for businesses to allow their suppliers to see their inventory levels, performance metrics, and other supply chain data in order to collaborate and improve. With business intelligence businesses and partners can share the same information.

Internal Operations are the day-to-day activities going on in a business. You need an indepth knowledge about the internal workings of your business from top to bottom. If you make an arbitrary decision without knowing how your entire organization works it could have negative affects on your business. BI gives you information on how your entire organization works.

One of the leading Business Intelligence Solutions (BIS) providers is 'Business Objects' and it translates data from the factors that influence BI to useable BI that changes the way they do business to become more efficient, better managed and more competitive. They integrating their data, turning it into information, and delivering it widely across and beyond their organization. The ability to take any piece of information and deliver it to where it can be best used - whether it be in the hands of an employee, a supplier, a partner, or a customer - with an amazing power to transform the decision making process.

**Business Intelligence for Telecommunications from Business Objects**

The telecommunications industry is going through a revolution. Acquisitions, consolidations, and new regulations are creating competitive



pressures and new opportunities. Managers at telecommunication service providers are recognizing the opportunities, turning them into a competitive differentiator and measuring the impact on revenue, market share, and customer retention. One way of ensuring a company can capitalize on these opportunities is to invest in a strategy to harnesses the power of information.

The telecom industry has ever-changing market conditions and managers need information at their fingertips to anticipate the changes and quickly make informed decisions. Decision-making in the telecom industry today demands high-quality intelligence. BI solutions, already widely used by telecommunication companies in human resources and finance, are now becoming critical to their core business strategy by: driving sales and marketing, increasing customer loyalty and streamlining operations.

**Driving Sales and Marketing**

Enabling easy access to information, business intelligence solutions from Business Objects are a key component for building strong sales and marketing operations. As well as undertaking sales analysis which enables companies to measure revenues, volumes, and margins from an unlimited number of different dimensions such as geography, time, and product category.

Another important element is the ability to profile customers into segments so that marketing executives can obtain insights into customer demographics and behavior and they can visualize, and manage customer segments resulting in more accurate marketing campaigns and improved ability to target new customers.

Additionally, service corporations, such as Telecom companies, can use BI and BIS to run targeted marketing campaigns, but they usually measure campaign efficiency by looking only at the response rate. Business Objects enables organizations to track the performance of campaigns over time, and use tracking to create more effective marketing and merchandising promotions.

Lastly, BI can enhance management strategies aimed to improve the analytic and operational practices that grow lifetime value of customers. Business Objects enable businesses to drive increasing profits from their customer base by constantly monitoring, reacting to, or even anticipating changes in customers' behavior.

**Increasing Customer Loyalty**

In the highly competitive telecommuni-

cation industry, operators realize that proactively sharing information with customers is a great way to increase loyalty. For example, Telecom companies are moving their customer services to the web to stand out from the competition and build stronger customer relationships. They can provide their customers with critical information such as trouble ticket status, service level agreement reporting, and usage history. It is cost efficient compared to producing paper reports.

**Streamlining Operations**

As competition pushes down prices, telecom operators are looking at ways to lower operating costs to maintain acceptable return for shareholders. For customers, the service they get from a call center is a highly visible indicator of the company's quality of service. Companies can analyze their call center activity so they detect busy periods, look at call waiting times, and take action to ensure the call center is running efficiently.

**Future of Business Intelligence**

Consumers are now demanding quicker more efficient service from businesses. To stay competitive companies must meet or exceed the expectations of consumers. Companies will have to rely more heavily on their business intelligence systems to stay ahead of trends and future events. Business intelligence users are beginning to demand near real time analysis relating to their business, particularly in frontline operations. They will come to expect fresh information in the same fashion as they monitor stock quotes online. Monthly and weekly analysis will not suffice. "Business users don't want to wait for information. Information needs to be there and never out of date. This is the way we live our lives today. Why should Business Intelligence be any different?" said Charles Nicholls, CEO of SeeWhy, a UK software company.

Soon companies will become dependent on real time business information similar to how people expect to get information on the internet in just one or two clicks. "This instant 'internet experience' will create the new framework for business intelligence, but business processes will have to change to accommodate and exploit the real-time flows of business data," said Nigel Stokes, CEO of Canada's DataMirror Corp.

Also in the near future business information will become more open and throughout the organization people will be able to view information on their particular segment to see how it's perform-

## Business in brief

**IMF adopts voting reforms**  
The International Monetary Fund approved a plan to boost the voting rights of developing countries such as China, South Korea and Turkey as a start for overall reforms to make the fund more representative of its 184-member states. Along the same lines, the World Bank approved a controversial proposal to hold back loans from countries not exhibiting improvements in governance.

**Oil & Gas Infrastructure survives Terrorism**  
Experts say last Friday's terrorism attacks would have been very negative on Yemen's economy as the targets were very sensitive. The first target, Al-Dhabah port, had over 4 million barrels of crude oil stored at the time of the attacks, while the safer liquefied gas plant produces 1800 tons of LNG daily, which are the main supply for the local market which uses this gas for cooking purposes.

**Institute for Hospitality & Tourism Inaugurated**  
The Minister of Tourism, Nabil Al-Faqeih, accompanied by the Minister of Technical Training, Ali Safe'e, inaugurated the Institute for Hospitality and Tourism. The Institute will train 120 students at a time in matters relating to hospitality and tourism in feed the local job

market with qualified personnel in the field of tourism.

**Yemen's External Debt at US\$ 9.96 billion**  
Cabinet's report on Yemen's external debts says the debt reached US\$ 9.96 billion at the end of June 2006. While the amounts utilized from these debts stand at US\$ 8.5 billion, the report also indicated that the debts increases by 1 percent every year, considering the debt to consist of long-term loans with flexible terms.

**31.9% growth in exports through Aden**  
Yemeni exports through the port of Aden have achieved a growth rate of 31.9 percent during the first half of the year, totaling the exports at over YR 15.2 billion. Yemen's main exports were fisheries, honey & coffee, and milk products.

**'Etesalat' interested in Telecommunications Market**  
Emirates-based Al-Etesalat Telecommunications Company is interested in venturing into the Yemeni market following its successful establishment as the third mobile Telecommunications provider in Egypt. Al-Etesalat has already established itself in sixteen countries worldwide and currently studying its entry into the Yemeni market.

### OPINION

## Transparency and Corruption

By: Raidan Al-Saqqaf  
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**N**ow as you have elected your leader, you ought to hold him responsible and accountable for his acts of leadership. To hold Yemen's political leaders accountable, citizens and voters must have proper information about government revenues, budget allocations and the implementation of national strategies and developmental plans. Openness and transparency make it more likely government revenues and resources will be used more efficiently and fairly. By contrast, lack of transparency results in more probability for corruption and misuse of resources and hindering developmental plans and prosperity of the people, giving validity to the argument that the government officials who fail in realising developmental plan are actually involved in massive corruption, and placing their narrow personal interests above the national welfare of development, and these corrupt continue to make policies and administer the government freely because of the lack of transparent disclosure and the limited accountability. Corruption thrives when there is no transparency, and mechanisms of good governance facilitate for increased transparency and good results of the governance process. Transparency matters. The path from transparency to good governance and from good governance to good results is obvious, but the journey has not happened in Yemen.

It is not a matter of ethics or trust, it is not the matter of the non-existence of a reliable governance system or the existence of one that does not work; it is a matter of disclosure. We need to know why Yemen continues to fail in meeting its developmental plan and why every reform strategy results in more poverty. We need to know why the Central Authority for Control and Audit does not transfer cases of corruption to the legal system and why it does not publish its reports and become transparent with its findings when companies are involved with corruption or certain officials instructed something against national welfare and development be implemented, news of which make headlines time and again in the Press and are known to the public.

And lists of companies advocating for corruption reach thousands; companies which prosper the most nowadays are usually government-linked companies, utilizing their influence and corruption in winning bids and contracts in many sectors including civil works, infrastructure, constructions, suppliers, and oil. Recently the new Minister of oil, Khalid Bahah, announced no sub-contracting tender will take place without a bid and a competitive offer as a move towards more transparency in the bidding process. However, many companies and officials are working hard to spoil this system. Bahah acts with a sincere will to develop this country and I have a feeling Bahah is incorruptible and can set an example for other officials to follow.

So, in the future the capability requirements of business intelligence will increase in the same way consumer expectations increase. Companies must increase at the same pace or even faster to stay competitive.

**BI in Yemen's Economy**  
Many Yemeni enterprises, especially private ones, have made progress in automating information. These enterprises now have different sources of information making data warehouses essential - the first step in BI.

Private and government sectors have very big challenges. For example, banks have to increase their capital within the next years or merge with other banks and there is a growing number of Telecom

companies creating intense competition. These factors affect decision makers who should start thinking seriously about business intelligence as one of their solutions to aid future planning and increase efficiency and productivity.

Many of Yemeni companies share the same concerns with their counterparts in the region, and following suit, now is the right time to think of implementing a BIS. In Yemen many challenges hinder economic growth. New strategies in business and economic policy making must be adopted, and BI is one of these strategies.

Mr. Al-Moayed is a Business Intelligence & Business Object Expert administering Information Technology at Sabafone Telecommunications

**VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**  
SANA'A OFFICE  
**CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENT CONTROLLER**

Dove Energy Limited invites *Yemeni Nationals only* to apply for the position of Document Controller. The position will be based in the Dove Sana'a Office.

**Responsibilities**

- Register internal and external documents.
- Maintain a controlled document's register for the Operations and Maintenance Team.
- Control documents on all allocated construction projects
- Send and track Drawing Transmittals and Submittals.
- Manage the document/drawing review process, Internal and External.
- Expedite responses to document/drawing changes and enquiries.
- Archive data for historical purposes.
- Ensure the Ministry of Oil and Minerals has up to date versions of documents

**Qualification**

- Good communication and writing skills in both English and Arabic Languages.
- Good Computer skills, Microsoft Office suite and Autocad exposure preferred.

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

# Sophie's and Zoodie's Diary

Sophie's day starts with her maid waking her up before noon. She washes her face for her and takes care of her personal hygiene. Her maid sprays on her a perfume with the scent of lemon. It refreshes her and her senses and makes her start her day happily and joyfully.



By: Loay Yehia Aleryani  
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After that she goes to have her breakfast with her mom who, as soon as she sees her, hugs and kisses her showing tenderness and love. This makes Sophie feel the warmth of being a member of a family. She sits to eat a delicious luxurious breakfast that provides her with energy and vitality. As soon as she fills her small stomach, immediately she goes to complete the rest of her daily activities.

Zoodie is forced to wake up nearly before dawn. Her school is extremely far. It takes from her one-hour and a half walk to reach it. Unfortunately the way in which she is woken up makes her continuously nervous and exhausted the rest of her. She wakes up hearing her mother's yells and shouts together with a few slaps in some cases. Her mother's mood is bad all the time. She cannot accept any one being late. Then Zoodie goes to bring water. This was not an easy duty although it might sound so. She must walk a long distance to reach the water and stand in a long queue. She finally carries a very heavy pail full of water all the way back. She notices that her mother has offered her father cheese and milk while Zoodie and her seven brothers and sisters had only dry bread and water to eat. After that she gets up to finish her duties.

In the afternoon Sophie goes for a walk followed by her bodyguard. He runs behind her if she felt like running

and he sat down beside her if she sat but keeping a distance between them not to disturb her. She liked a lot to take a walk in the park next to her house. She also enjoyed a lot watching the small lake and the fresh green grass. She loved to roll on it or play with some pigeons. When she felt a little thirsty she would order she would order an ice cream. Finally she returns home and on the way she buys a lot of sweets, and various kinds of candies.

Zoodie all afternoon is in the field helping her parents. She does what ever they order her to do. She waters the crops, collects them or sometimes she is sent home to bring something to eat for the rest of the family in the field. She always gazed and looked attentively at the children playing on the other end of the field. A slap from her father would her back to her reality. When she was thirsty she drank warm water with a lot of particles and living things swimming inside it. She neither knows nor wants to know what on earth they were. On the way back she would carry her father's belongings. She never ever bought sweets. Actually she has never experienced how they taste in all her life.

In the evening Sophie's friends come over to play with her. They are offered fantastic, delicious types of sweets and food especially bought for them after being examined thoroughly. All her friends live in the same luxury and coquetry that Sophie is living. Her friends were all clean and very stylishly dressed. Sophie's mother is very nice and polite to all of them. She even plays with them. Sophie becomes jealous, as she wants her mom for her only. She goes angrily to her fancy, first class

bedroom followed by her mom. The mother apologizes and embraces her tenderly. The mother puts on her a magnificent set of jewelry but Sophie looks at it blankly and runs to continue playing with her friends.

In the evening Zoodie must help her mother. She washes the few pale clothes in which washing them is only a matter of deceiving oneself as they are no longer suitable for wearing. Also she helps her mother in cleaning the house. Zoodie's only friend rarely comes to ask her mother if she would allow Zoodie to go and play outside with her. Zoodie's mother tells her friend to leave in a very rude way and looks at Zoodie shouting at her to quickly finish up her work. Zoodie becomes angry and walks outside, as she has no bedroom. Her mother runs after her and drags her by her hair into a small storeroom attached to the house. The mother throws her there and closes the door. That was a punishment. Zoodie, inside the storeroom, would hear a group of girls running and singing beautiful, childish songs.

Sophie has never been ill. Her regular visits every two weeks to the doctor and her regular general analysis that she makes make her avoid any disease. Also the quality of the food and drink she uses is carefully examined. As a matter of fact she was ill one time, and she was taken in an ambulance to the hospital as an emergency case. She was given the necessary medicines. She was also examined for 48 hours. Many relatives from her father and mother's side came to see her and gave her many gifts. After the 48 hours passed she returned home very healthy to fill the house again with happiness and fun.

Zoodie is always and constantly ill. Every thing surrounding her was a logical reason for illness. Actually there was nothing around her that could be

considered a source of healthy life. Her diseases vary from one time to another and how serious they are. Definitely, there is diarrhea and malnutrition that are Zoodie's permanent companions in life. She even worries if more than three days pass without suffering a severe stomachache. One day she was extremely sick. All who were in the house realized that her disease would not leave them easily? The mother felt she must do something to help her daughter. The father persuaded her that it was foolish to have that feeling! There is nothing to do in a life such as theirs. The best choices was crying silently and hoping for her to recover. There are two nearby hospitals yet even if they reached them they still can't treat their daughter unless they pay money and bribes. Zoodie's family has no relationship or contact with "money". Also Zoodie is a girl. If she had been a boy maybe it would have been worth trying. One-day Zoodie's uncle came to visit. He saw her mother sitting beside her daughter who was struggling with fever. He smiled stupidly to her. He then went to the father and expressed his sympathy. He told him that he would come with him to arrange everything with the gravedigger. The father patted on his shoulder showing gratitude and appreciation. The uncle raised his shoulder and told him that there is no need for any thanks because there was nothing new about this preparation.

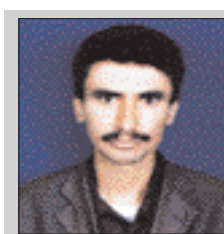
This was an example of the diary of two creatures living on this same planet. Their lives vary a lot as the world gives all the happy opportunities to Sophie and gives nothing but a miserable life to Zoodie.

I forgot to tell you that Zoodie is an African young 9 years old girl who is living in an African village; While Sophie is a 7 years old female dog living in New York. Its kind is Chihuahua.

Translated by: Salwa Yehia Aleryani

# Hail Yemen Times

I have been reading your praiseworthy newspaper, Yemen Times, since 1993 during my schooling in high school. I would like to thank you for the great benefits I have gained from your newspaper since 1993 right now. In fact, Yemen Times, provided me with a lot of vocabulary, idioms, expressions, synonyms, antonyms and many things related to English language and its structure. It also let me know many information in many aspects of life such as politics, economy, culture, tourism, sport... etc.



By: Abdulghani Al-Mansoob  
abdulghani\_almansoob2007@yahoo.com

Really speaking, when I began to read Yemen Times, I came across so many words and expressions in most of the topics then I managed to consult my dictionary to get the meaning. But due to my regular reading of the newspaper strange words and expressions began to decrease gradually day by day until I finished my university education in 2001.

Now, in spite of becoming a teacher of English and teaching for five years, I really still face some new words which I have not seen before. But because of my background I manage to guess the meaning through the context words used, and sometimes I feel forced to consult my dictionary. That is because Yemen Times deals with all things in our day to day lives not only in the local level but also in the regional and international levels.

Some people in my area in a countryside when greeting me start saying, how are you, Yemen Times?; they say so because they always see me carry and read this newspaper. I actually, although I live and teach in a countryside, get this newspaper through phoning friends of mine, car-drivers, travelers... etc by telling them to send me this newspaper. Now I have become an addicted to only reading Yemen Times and not any other newspaper.

Frankly speaking, this is not the first

time to write in your great newspaper, but in fact, I wrote two articles and they were published. That took place when I was at university of Ibb. But since I live in a village where no facilities found like those in a city. I no more corresponded the newspaper, but I kept continuously reading it.

Yemen Times used to be published once a week and now it is being published twice a week, but this does not affect my regular reading and following it twice or even thrice a week.

My dear staff as well as readers of Yemen Times believe me that because of my great love to this newspaper, if I live in a city where facilities like fax, internet... etc are existing, then I will be a regular columnist for Yemen Times under the title which I always thing of, reality and reason, and which I preferred to be about politics, but my circumstances do not allow me to do that. However, if circumstances allow me in future, I will proudly do that.

Generally speaking, I am not the first one to praise or thank Yemen Times, rather I think I am the last one. This honorable newspaper received international recognition and praise. It might be needless to my praise but I did so because I would not like to be an ungrateful person. I revealed my appreciation and gratitude to this newspaper to express my feeling towards such a great newspaper from which I gained knowledge and learnt many things.

Finally, I call upon all those who are interested in English language to keep following and reading Yemen Times newspaper so that they can improve and build up their target language. Many thanks to you, Yemen Times staff, for your newspaper. I wish your newspaper all the best, prosperity and success. Go forward. You have come along way indeed.

## Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

### ACROSS

- 1 Penalizes pay
- 6 Crude dwellings
- 10 It could be fishy
- 14 Ishmael's half-brother
- 15 Native New Yorker
- 16 Dandy partner
- 17 '50s hit
- 19 Barney's neighbor
- 20 Ref's ruling, perhaps
- 21 "If all \_\_\_ fails..."
- 22 Triangular deposits
- 24 Antipasto staple
- 26 Impassive
- 28 Seemingly bottomless
- 30 Illustrious
- 33 Runs for one's life?
- 36 Meridian hour
- 38 Dissolve, as ties
- 39 Toreador's trophy
- 40 Make one's own
- 42 "Tucker's People" author Wolfert
- 43 Happy-hour perch
- 45 Chipper
- 46 Red herring
- 47 Seaquake aftermath
- 49 Bedouin royalty, perhaps
- 51 Floating on water
- 53 Irregularly shaped spot
- 57 More doleful
- 59 Teen fave
- 61 Southern constellation
- 62 Plant safety grp.
- 63 Seasickness candidate
- 66 Last name in fashion
- 67 Notion
- 68 It's tossed
- 69 One venerated for wisdom
- 70 Minding everyone else's business
- 71 Kind of territory

### DOWN

- 1 Cuts calories
- 2 Honshu port
- 3 "The Brady Bunch" character
- 4 Herriman's "Krazy" character

- 5 Connive
- 6 Some turkeys
- 7 More than suggests
- 8 It can get under your collar
- 9 Not often
- 10 Not on the network
- 11 Vacuum cleaner brand
- 12 Most draftable
- 13 Cranberry and cherry, for two
- 18 Outlanders
- 23 Beethoven dedicatee
- 25 Public notices
- 27 Length of service
- 29 Pays a quick visit
- 31 Fifth Roman emperor
- 32 Caterer's item
- 33 Be less than serious
- 34 Feedbag fodder
- 35 Reporters' subject in February
- 37 Caveman of comics
- 40 Cause to beam
- 41 Word with sex or status
- 44 How some crazy things are done
- 46 Debate position
- 48 Saltwater catch, perhaps
- 50 Maltreat
- 52 Antler branches
- 54 Postpone
- 55 Half of half-and-half
- 56 Start of a Kramden laugh
- 57 Covers the earth?
- 58 Place of many
- 60 June 6th of '44
- 64 Brouhaha
- 65 Restriction

### "FLOORED" by Kathy Dername

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62					63	64					65	
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69					70							71

### PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

TUBA'S HOPLOTY  
AMISH ERIN AVER  
UP THE CREEK RENO  
YAHOO BLARED  
FLURRY PLACATE  
LINGER BAOBAB  
UNDID COSTS ALP  
TEEN YURTS AREA  
ERR CURIA FIRES  
TROLLS RULERS  
ADHERES FURLYE  
CRENEL LIN  
TOGA UTONALIMB  
OVUM BREW CURIO  
RENE SITS MEMEND

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Calvin and Hobbes comic strip panels showing Calvin's father talking about monsters and Calvin's reaction.

Garfield comic strip panels showing Garfield and Odie with a large 'Garfield' title.

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## Al-Mahla waterfall: Thunderous serenity

By: Nashwan Damraj

**A**l-Mahla is the name generally given to the most famous waterfall in Al-Naqilin and Al-Sayani districts, Ibb governorate. Though Al-Ta'aqr Mountain has five different flood outlets, this waterfall is unrivaled for its height and abundance of water.

Nestled between two high mountains (namely Eastern Mahala and Western Mahala Mountains) Al-Mahla is more than 24 meters high. Water pours from that height during summer, weakening or disappearing in winter.

Residents from all Al-Naqilin district villages daily come to this waterfall for recreation and sightseeing.

Al-Mahla is part of a long rocky passage extending from Al-Ta'aqr Mountain,

the area's highest peak, until it reaches the center of Al-Sayani district. It later passes via a straight path until reaching the edge of Al-Qaeda district.

The passage progresses via the entire area of Al-Naqilin district, meeting another passage precisely at the bottom at Al-Garafat village and forming one passage. This passage extends to include many parts of Al-Naqilin district, feeding groundwater storage as well as benefiting Wadi Nakhlán with flood-borne materials.

Though most of the water comes from the mountainous Al-Naqilin district, the area neither benefits from this water nor its groundwater.

Other waterfalls like Al-Maswa and Shiyha exist, but they're risky and don't allow viewers to venture near them.

Additionally, the road leading to those areas is bumpy, while the road leading to

Al-Mahla is clear, as well as its lower falls area, which seems too beautiful and serene to the point that people question whether it was manmade.

For locals, Al-Mahla is part of their pride and one of the most beautiful things they provide their visitors. As soon as Al-Naqilin residents receive guests, they take them on an outing to Al-Mahla waterfall.

Visiting Al-Mahla is free and not linked to a specific time; however, certain times best fit the nature of its environment. Morning is the most suitable time because it's sunny and the water is still cold.

Above the waterfall, everything – trees, rocks, humans – appears tiny as viewers are engulfed on three sides. This keeps them constantly looking up in fear, however such feelings soon fade to harmony with the entire sight.

Being the only natural sound, no voice can overcome the water's thunderous

tones, which seem to express nature's continuity and powerfulness. Visitors can shout all they want – whether in joy or protest – because no one will hear.

Advancing at others' encouragement to experience sweet lashes of water from above, one instinctively comes back out in no time, as there's no further ability to resist or continue.

This dance will be repeated many times until the body becomes accustomed to the water's coldness and later requires warming. There are no more visitors in the afternoon because the atmosphere grows cheerless with looming rain clouds.

With the falling rains, floods gather from Al-Naqilin district's upper regions and pour into the passage, thus, approaching the area is difficult, if not impossible. The noise caused by flood waters falling from above and crashing onto the rocks below makes one withdraw without even

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PHOTO BY HAMAN DAMMAG

attempting to enjoy the scene.

Further, roads intersecting anywhere near Al-Mahla waterfall will be blocked for hours until floods diminish and passage becomes easier.

Such isn't the case for humans and animals, as bridges ensuring passage from one side to the other are available everywhere, dating back to when Queen Arwa Bint Ahmed Al-Sulih ruled Yemen.

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