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Readers' Voice
Last edition's question:
Former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was sentenced to death and his associates sentenced to ranging terms. Do you think the court issuing the judgments is a legitimate one, particularly when Iraq is under occupation?

I don't know (8%)
Yes (45%) No (47%)

This edition's question:
As usual, the government has demanded additional allocations in the annual budget by the end of the year, supposedly to compensate for a deficit. Do you think such extra allocations really are meant to compensate for budget deficits?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

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Development Minister: UK supports Yemeni development

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Nov. 8 — In a meeting yesterday in Sana'a with President Ali Abdullah Saleh, UK International Development Minister Gareth Thomas discussed the UK's current support program for Yemen in advance of the upcoming Yemen Donors Conference in London.

During the discussion, President Saleh reviewed Yemen's achievements and progress regarding reforms, democracy and women's contributions to and in public and political life.

It was the first visit by a UK development minister. "The UK's relationship with Yemen goes back many years and it gives me great pleasure to be the first UK Minister for International Development to visit this beautiful country," Thomas remarked.

He insisted on the importance of supporting Yemen, noting, "Yemen is a very poor country facing many challenges,



Gareth Thomas, the UK International Development Minister

but it's also an important partner with the UK in fighting terrorism and promoting stability in the Gulf region and the Horn of Africa."

Thomas also discussed Yemen's plan for reducing poverty, improving governance and fighting corruption. "This is particularly important as Yemen prepares to present its plans at the Yemen Donors Conference in London next week."

He added that the conference also will be an excellent opportunity to build regional cooperation with senior representatives from other Gulf states expect-

ed to attend the conference. "The UK considers this meeting an important step in Yemen's development, but both its government and donors will need to increase their efforts in the following months and years if we're to see sustained improvements in Yemen."

"Given the extent of poverty in the country, I'm surprised that Yemen has relatively few donors and receives much less aid than other countries in a similar position. In the past three years, DFID [the UK's Department for International Development] has provided \$50 million to improve basic education and provide water and sanitation, roads, health care, education and micro-finance for communities, but much more needs to be done. The UK also is establishing new programs to improve public financial management within the government and provide better access to legal services for the poor," the minister noted.

He expressed his hope that the UK's relationship with Yemen will grow stronger in the future. "The UK is home to many people who still have families in Yemen and who actively encourage the British government to increase its assistance to Yemen. It's my hope that the UK's relationship with Yemen will strengthen considerably in coming years. This is possible, given the Yemeni government's clearly stated commitment to reducing poverty, improving governance and tackling corruption," he concluded.

Journalists demand no prison for Al-Odaini

By: Saddam Al-Ashmouri

SANA'A, Nov. 8 — Numerous journalists, lawyers and human rights activists staged a sit-in Tuesday in front of Parliament, demanding that Mohammed Sadiq Al-Odaini, head of the Center for Training and Protecting

In a letter to the attorney general, demonstrators requested suspending Al-Odaini's judgment and enabling him to appeal and defend himself before the appropriate court.

The letter also hinted that Al-



Journalists, lawyers and human right activists meet with attorney general to discuss Al-Odaini (inset) case.

Journalist Freedom, not be imprisoned.

Following a one-day sit-in at Yemeni Journalists Syndicate headquarters, demonstrators headed to the attorney general's office, requesting that he suspend Al-Odaini's prison sentence. The Primary Court sentenced Al-Odaini to a three-year prison term and fined him YR 1.2 million, a ruling the demonstrators consider unjust.

Odaini's trail was unfair because he isn't guilty. Moreover, it noted that personal freedoms shouldn't be restricted by only a blunt ruling.

For his part, Attorney General Dr. Abdullah Al-Alfi promised to study Al-Odaini's case within 10 days, having already requested the case file from the Primary Court.

Continued on page 2

Syria hands over Aden-Abyan Army member

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Nov. 8 — Syrian authorities have handed over a member of the Aden-Abyan Islamic Army, a terrorist organization, who was arrested while attempting to cross into Iraq via the Syrian border, media sources reported Wednesday.

Wade'e Hamid Al-Dawlah and three other Aden-Abyan Islamic Army members traveled to Iraq in February 2006 to fight U.S. troops there. But while there, Al-Dawlah differed with his accomplices about using themselves as bombs to kill Shi'ite Muslims in Iraq, refusing to blow himself up to kill Shi'ites.

Al-Dawlah confirmed that he went to Iraq to fight the U.S., whereas the other three blew themselves up amid Shi'ite congregations. After confiscating all of his personal documents, Iraqi groups forced Al-Dawlah to the Iraqi-Syrian border, where Syrian authorities arrested him and subsequently handed him over to Yemen.

"A group of 14 Aden-Abyan Islamic

Army members traveled to Iraq in 2004 to fight the occupiers there," Al-Shoura Net reported Wednesday. A source said the entire group was killed, except for two, who returned to Yemen and were imprisoned until 2006.

Al-Dawlah's family urges security to release him, as he's been detained for months. The family says he shouldn't have been imprisoned since he refused to engage in terrorist acts in Iraq.

In this past Monday's issue, Al-Ayyam newspaper reported that Yemeni teenager Riyadh Khalid Ba Odha was killed fighting against U.S. forces during confrontations between U.S. troops and armed men in the Iraqi city of Anbar.

The newspaper mentioned that Nasser Mohammed Ba Odha, one of his relatives living in Shabwa, confirmed that the teen had traveled to Iraq with a group of jihadists a week before this past Ramadan began and had participated in numerous operations against U.S. and multinational troops in Iraq until he and several others were killed on October 22.

Ba Odha further noted that four of the teen's cousins are being jailed at the Guantánamo Bay U.S. detention center.

According to various media, more than 500 Yemeni youths have joined the Iraqi resistance against occupation forces; however, official sources haven't confirmed such information.

MPs consider it constitution-violating, but government requests further budget allocations

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Nov. 8 — On Tuesday, the Yemeni Cabinet approved an additional allocation for the current financial year to be used for current, capital and investment expenditures, government loans in Sana'a.

At its regular meeting, the Cabinet referred the draft law seeking additional allocations to Parliament to finalize required constitutional measures. The draft is expected to face wide opposition in Parliament, as have similar projects the government has submitted in the past.

According to finance committee member Abdulkarim Shaiban, making an additional allocation for the current budget year is unjustified and violates Yemen's Constitution. However, he expects the draft law to pass due to the General People's Congress (GPC) majority in Parliament.

The additional allocation announced by the Cabinet is nearly YR 422.64 bil-

lion, or approximately 45 percent of the 2006 general budget.

Shaiban asserted that the government is addicted to additional budget allocations because they're spent without being controlled and furthermore, Parliament is impaired and weak about auditing government accounts or forcing it to commit to the constitution.

The cause for this, according to Shaiban, a member of the opposing Islah Party, is the existence of a GPC majority dominating most committees, particularly those concerned with control and accountability.

He further predicted that the Yemeni government already has spent the additional sum prior to Parliament's consent. Though law dictates that the government apply for additional allocations, which should be on a small scale, before spending it, the government has become accustomed to committing such violations over the past few years.

Continued on page 2

Israel continues attacking Palestinians aggressively

The Palestinian government declared three days of mourning to commemorate its victims and says the Israeli attack will destroy all chances of peace.

GAZA, Nov. 8 — At least 13 members of one extended family died as they were sleeping when tank fire hit their home in Wednesday's incident.

The killings happened a day after Israel started to withdraw its tanks from Beit Hanoun in northern Gaza after a week-long offensive in which dozens of people died.

Tzipi Livni, the Israeli foreign minister, called the deaths in Beit Hanoun "a regrettable incident."

"The Israeli military does not intend to harm civilians - that is never our aim. But in the framework of such things, incidents like these happen," Livni said.

Shattered flesh

Local residents spoke of horrific scenes after the Israeli tank fire hit several houses in Beit Hanoun.

"Five of my brothers have no heads ... my father-in-law has lost his legs, he's left with just shattered flesh," one man told Al-Jazeera following the attack.

A 14-year-old girl identified as Athamna said: "There were wounded people when the shell fell on my uncle's house, we went to help but when we got there another shell fell on us."

Mahmud Abbas, the Palestinian president, said that the killings had "destroyed all chances of peace".

"You [the Israelis] do not want peace at all. You have destroyed all chances of peace and you should bear all the responsibility," he told reporters in Gaza City following the attack.

"Our people are at the end of our tether. We need to speak up to tell the world, from the UN to Europe, to examine these acts of atrocity commit-



The Israeli attack was one of the most deadly in recent years.

ted by Israel because a worldwide reaction is needed to bring them to an end."

Deeply shocked

Alvaro de Soto, the UN's envoy to the Middle East, called for an immediate end to Israeli military operations following the attack.

"Alvaro de Soto is deeply shocked and appalled by the IDF [Israel Defence Force] military action early today, in which a house in a residential area in Beit Hanoun was destroyed by a tank shell, killing a score of civilians including many women and children," his spokesman said in a statement.

European nations said that the attack should spur international efforts to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Continued on page 2

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In brief

Aden**New system for ship supervised and movement**

Nov. 7 — The italic company for special consultative has finished the preparations to enter new system for ship supervised and movement. The safety project indicates several fields in the marine field. This project aims to organize the ship movement in the oil port at Al-Moala pier. Many courses will organize for the port staff in how to deal with this new system.

A study for the shell variety in Aden

Nov. 8 — A research team started looking at the area is in the area of Al-Briegah's seashore in Aden on Monday. The study aims to note the shell variety in Aden and activation the center of conchologist research. Some of the shells are used to produce medical materials and makeup. The research is set to last two months.

Al-Jawf**Searching for heritage locations**

Nov. 7 — The general committee for heritage visited Al-Jawf Governorate to survey important historical locations around the governorate. The team aims to find a location for building a new museum. The museum will be completed in the six next months according to the govern orator of Al-Jawf stated. The project is supported by the community fund for development.

Marib**A coordinating assembly for educated women support**

Nov. 8 — Workshop activities aimed to establish a coordinating assembly to support educated women project in Marib concluded on Monday. In total 55 trainees participated on the workshop. Many women's issues were discussed and all focused on the importance of developing women's programs.

Sadah**Course on communication and health culture field**

Nov. 8 — The Ministry of Health organized a three-course for the communication and health culture field. Overall 28 trainees will get training to deal with patients and how to illustrate the health information for patients. The trainees had a course in how to prepare a awareness programs for the citizens especially for women.

Sana'a**Two drug-traders sentenced 25 years imprisonment**

Nov. 8 — The Yemeni Primary Panel Court sentenced Ahmad Awam Assuhari and Saleh Hussein Hadi to 25 years imprisonment on Tuesday. Judge Mohammad Ahmad Al-Badani read the sentences and also freed Ali Mohammad Abdullah and Ali Hamid Said. He also ordered the burning of 34 kg of hashish, seized by security authorities in Marib.

Youth and education channel project in Sana'a

Nov. 7 — On Sunday Vice President Abdo Raboh Mansur Hadi inspected the project of creating the Tourism, Youth and Educational Channel in Sana'a City. The channel will broadcast education programs that include curriculums for primary and secondary schools. The vice president watched some examples of the programs, expressing his appreciation for the efforts exerted to prepare those programs which aim to improve the educational process in the country. The vice president also visited the new building for the Ministry of Education in Al-Hasabah.

Taiz**The citizenship and civics project continue for the fourth time**

Nov. 7 — Women's forum for researchers and training organizes a special meeting for the school managers and teachers in Taiz on Nov. 9 to discuss the practical ideas for the citizenship and civics project. The project improved the students' skills in how to get information's source and group work for the four years ago. Also it brought suggestions in how to develop the project's activities.

Yemeni expatriate shot dead in US

SANA'A, Nov. 7 — A Yemeni expatriate was reportedly shot dead by a gang Nov. 5 in Brooklyn, New York.

Ahmed Shuaibi, 44, was shot once in his head Sunday evening after refusing to give a three-man gang money.

Shuaibi emigrated to New York 14 years ago to support his wife and children in Yemen. He was working in Avenue R Mini Mart in Marine Park.

Following the shooting he was rushed to Coney Island Hospital by his friend who was at the back of store

when the incident took place. However, he died in hospital.

Police are conducting investigations to know the circumstances of the incident and whether his attackers are responsible for a string of similar robberies in Brooklyn. However, there have been no arrests.

Shuaibi was leading a modest life in an apartment shared with his step-mother and three half-brothers and he was supporting his three-member family in Yemen.

New York Times quoted his step mother, Muntaha, as saying, "When I heard the news I wished I were dead instead of him."

She further added "Now I have no support, only him — what am I going to do?"

Mourning Shuaibi's saddening death, his cousin Mason Mohammed said Shuibi used to work long hours in return for a small amount of money, but it was enough to support many people.

Minefields of activity

By: Ismael Al-Ghaberi

SANA'A, Nov. 8 — With a move to enhance security and peace in the region, Yemen now tops the list of countries that expended great efforts in clearing underground mines, according to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Rashad Al-Alimi.

A national meeting on mine clearing discussed the effort to clear the mines, which put lives of citizens at risk.

During the meeting, Flavia Pansieri, Resident Representative of the UN Development Program, praised successes achieved by the National Mine Clearing Program over the past time period.

Pansieri mentioned the role played by UN and other international organizations in supporting the program, aimed at protecting lives of citizens.

There is still a lot work ahead for the mine clearing programs.

According to National Mine Clearing Program, over 1000 areas are posed to the threat of mines in Yemen. The program released a report saying there are over 900 billion square meters implanted with mines and non-explosive missiles.

Almost one third of the threatened area mines with high threat to nearly 15 villages and housing complexes and another third have mines with medium threat to 86 villages and housing complexes.

According to the report, 14 governorates have benefited from the mine clearing activities, of which Aden, Hodeida and Hajja are now clear of mines.

It said that the area where mines have been cleared accounts for 82 percent of the total over the 14 governorates.

The report added that 410 out of a total number of 478 fields have now been cleared of mines. It stated that mines and non-explosive missiles number 188,924 and 78,827 respectively. These mines and missiles were implanted against soldiers and tanks during different wars in the country.

The National Mine Clearing Program said mines and missiles killed 58 people and injured 35 others, including children and adults between 1992 and 2006 in 42 separate incidents.

Mines in Yemen date back to the second half of the last century and they had been planted over different time periods. Between 1962 and 1967, following the 26 September Revolution, mines were planted in Mareb, Al-Jawf, Sana'a, Hajja, Amran and Sa'ada.

Between 1979 and 1983 mines were



The report added that 410 out of a total number of 478 fields have now been cleared of mines.

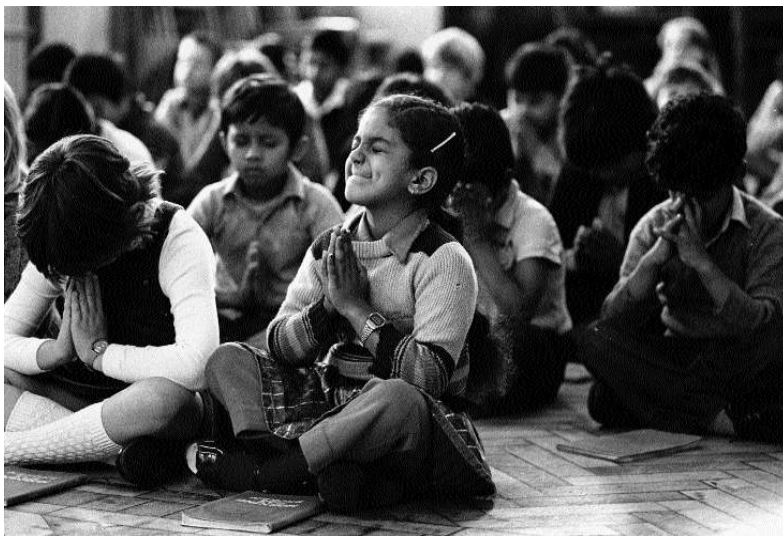
planted in seven Yemeni governorates: Ibb, Al-Dhale', Al-Beidha, Dhamar, Taiz, Hodeida and Raima. And during the 1994 Civil War many mines were planted in the governorates of Lahj, Abyan, Al-Dhale', Hadramout, Shabwa and Al-Mahra.

The Looking-Glass
Aspects of contemporary experience
in the UK and the Middle East

SANA'A, Nov. 8 — A new exhibition of work by UK and Yemeni photographers opened on Tuesday at the National Museum in Sana'a. The Looking-Glass is documenting aspects of contemporary Muslim and social experience in the UK and the Middle East. The exhibition remains open for one month. The Looking-Glass opens up a dialogue on identity and the broader aspects of contemporary experience in a post modern world. The three UK and Yemeni photographers have drawn on the personal, private inner fabric of individuals' lives as well as the broader political and social realities of daily existence. Each of the artists involved proposed their own subjects for the exhibition:

Tim Smith's photographs are divided into three series. The first focuses on Muslim communities living in the North of England. The second shows photographs taken from among the Yemeni communities in Newport and Sheffield. The third section is a collection of photographs taken in Yemen in 2005 as part of an ongoing project looking at the extraordinary history of Yemen as a trading nation, and showing its role as the crossroads between East and West; many of the portraits show Yemenis who have lived and worked in Britain and returned to Yemen.

Bushra al Mutawakkel has produced a series of photographs on aspects of contemporary life in Yemen, showing



the interweaving of religion and culture in a collection full of passion, beauty, color, complexity, tension and contradiction.

Clement Cooper has produced a series of black and white portraits of young, hijab-wearing, Muslim schoolgirls living in Manchester, beautifully lit, simple and emotional portraits. He said of this work, 'I'm not trying to document social conditions, but to explore the humanity of my subjects, to understand them as people'.

Some of The Looking-Glass photographs have been featured in the British Council's major Middle East touring exhibition, Common Ground.

The photographs will be shown in the new exhibition gallery on the

ground floor of the caravanserai in the south wing of the National Museum in Sana'a.

The British Council Yemen is pleased to be working under the auspices and with the co-operation of the Ministry of Culture to open up the channels of creative exchange and dialogue between Britain and Yemen on this occasion.

A Private View on the 7 November is being hosted by Elizabeth White, Director of the British Council, under the auspices of HE Khaled al-Rowaihan, Minister of Culture, and will be attended by Sir David Green KCMG, Director-General of the British Council, and other distinguished guests.

Companies compete
for Yemeni oil

SANA'A, Nov. 7 — The Ministry of Oil and Minerals has selected 34 world companies to compete for the right of exploring and producing oil in 14 blocs under investment within the third international tender.

The competing companies were selected from the initial 63 who submitted bid forms that included the minimum technical and financial requirements in order qualify for the final stage upon which the companies will be given the right to explore 14 blocs.

In a meeting attended by company representatives, Khalid Bahah, oil min-

ister, announced the tender and declared it to be the third international tender. The 14 blocs involve seven governorates.

Bahah considered the announcement of this tender to be an important step for investment and a boost for a developed and progressive Yemen.

Additionally, Bahah indicated the committee in charge of the third international tender will study the bids of these companies technically and financially between Nov. 26 and Dec. 19.

The final result will be announced on Dec. 20.

Yemen Banking & Insurance
Companies Guide out

SANA'A, Nov. 7 — The sixth annual Yemen Banking and Insurance Companies Guide was just released.

The guide has become an important media reference and a rich encyclopaedia for scholars, researchers and anyone interested in the economy.

With the book, many people can learn about different activities and services offered by banks and insurance companies in Yemen.

The guide gives an update to all the data and laws concerned with banking activities, in addition to popularizing any new banking activities and services. It is also distributed in a bilingual format for both Arabic and English speakers.

Over the past five years, the guide has occupied a great prestige thanks to its vital content and distribution at the local level and in some neighboring countries, as well as to its regular issuance without any barriers.

Success of the guide is attributed to the journalist Yasser Al-Mayasi, who expended great efforts during several stages of the preparation. The guide is now an indispensable media source to benefit all the interested people including those working in the banking and marketing sectors and research centers.



Al-Mayasi confirmed the guide aims to assist with the economic media that serves these important sectors of economy. The guide mainly concentrates on banks and insurance companies since both sectors are closely related.

"We plan to issue various media products to drive forward the wheels of development in the country and convey a good impression about Yemen to the outside world, particularly in the economic area," Al-Mayasi explained.

The guide, issued by Al-Nukhba for Public Relations and Advertising, is distributed in Yemen and internationally.

Continued from page 1

Journalists demand no prison for Al-Odaini

Earlier this month, the court issued ruled in absentia, dictating Al-Odaini's imprisonment and fining him YR 1.2 million after convicting him of attempted murder.

The ruling also may have had something to do with his opposition to influential individuals and sheikhs in Al-Odain district in Ibb province.

Al-Odaini was surprised by the ruling, as he hadn't known anything about the case or any court sessions until the judgment was issued.

He also indicated that he was subject to threats, particularly after publishing an article entitled, "It's enough, presi-

dent," on several web sites.

Al-Odaini previously was subjected to 18 threats and imprisoned for more than two years in a case wherein he was wrongly accused. He was freed after human rights organizations intervened.

The Center for Training and Protecting Journalist Freedoms, which Al-Odaini heads, denounced and rejected the ruling against its chairman, considering it standard in Yemen's judiciary to issue judgments without trial.

Previously, the appeals court asked Al-Odaini to accept the ruling and then challenge it if he believes it unjust.

MPs consider it constitution-violating

Shaiban also accused the government of intentionally creating a deficit in the general budget, estimating oil at \$40/barrel, a price lower than international prices, which are \$70. He asserted that such government measures are an attempt to obtain further foreign aid and loans.

Concluding his remarks, Shaiban noted that the government doesn't care about Parliament, nor did it provide detailed categorizations of expenditures on previous applications for additional allocations.

Additionally, he alleged that Parliament doesn't know anything about aspects of spending, so the government intentionally submits applications in four papers to confuse it. In this regard, he referred to past government viola-

tions involving YR 40 billion given to contractors under direct order and without tenders.

For his part, Yasser Al-Awadi, deputy head of the GPC bloc, defended such a decision by the government, considering it natural and predictable.

He also declared that the government has the right to request additional allocations if there is extra revenue and spending outside the budget, further denying that such violates neither the law nor the constitution.

Over the past few years, Yemen's government has become accustomed to requesting additional year-end budget allocations, aiming to dispose of revenues surplus achieved via oil pricing differences, which reached 50 percent this year.

Israel continues attacks

Massimo D'Alema, the Italian foreign minister, said: "This morning 18 people were massacred ... an escalation of violence I think is unacceptable.

"I think that now an international initiative to unblock the Palestinian situation is essential."

Israeli "regret"

Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister, said in a statement that he regretted the attack but said that Israel's army had fired in an attempt to prevent Palestinians from firing rockets into Israel.

Amir Peretz, the Israeli defence min-

ister, ordered the army to stop shelling Gaza until an investigation had been completed, his ministry said.

An army spokeswoman said that artillery had fired on an area used by Palestinians to fire rockets at Israeli cities.

Ten such projectiles exploded inside Israel over the past 24 hours, the spokeswoman said.

"This morning, we fired artillery shells to stop rocket fire. We fired on an area where the rockets are fired from. We are checking Palestinian reports that people who were not involved in the [rocket] fire were hit," she said.

No deal between YSL and GPC, Bin Fareed says

Mohsen Mohammed Abu Baker Bin Fareed, 60, is secretary-general of the Yemen's Sons League (YSL) party, being involved in politics since 1984. Graduating from Cairo University's Economic and Political Science faculty in 1969, he obtained a master's degree from the United States in the early 1980s. He also is the father of five sons.

The Yemen Times visited his residence, where he stayed with YSL head Abdulrahman Al-Jifri, who apologized for lack of time and referred us to Bin Fareed to answer our questions.

Although he declares his age to be 60, to onlookers, Bin Fareed seems to be in his 40s. His Hadrami accent remains intact, having been unaffected by accents spoken in the Gulf or other Arab countries, where he's spent more than four decades.

Always smiling, Bin Fareed admits that his political trends dominate his dealings with others, as he's very good at debating and has a good command of discussing issues.

The relationship between the YSL and the ruling party, which became firm within no time, was unexpected. Bin Fareed attempted to confirm that there's no deal between his party and the ruling party, and further declared that the YSL is concerned about the nation's welfare.

He also spoke about Yemen's poor state and how things could be better, particularly politically and economically.

Bin Fareed believes Yemen is tending toward an abyss if faithful Yemenis don't hasten to save it, assuring that they are relying on President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has the power and experience – if he wishes – to save Yemen and impose required reforms.



Mohsen Mohammed Abu Baker Bin Fareed

"President Saleh, as we believe, is aware of Yemen's problems. He knows well that Yemen needs real change and realizes that circumstances won't allow Yemen to take past steps," he stated.

"We believe no more margin for movement exists because the nation has reached a very bad state, imposing upon the one who leads Yemen to tend to reforms – real reforms," he added.

that agreement in our current program as to local governance, administrative and financial reforms and announcing free zones, a matter suspended for 16 years.

Do you think the timing of your return to Sana'a aims to back Saleh against the opposition?

We're convinced about backing Saleh, while the issue concerning negative effects upon the opposition is left to those who can read Yemeni political trends correctly. We have no enmity with any party and we want to assure that we extend our hands to all, aiming to draw Yemen out of its critical situation. The situation requires collaboration by all as a way out of the dire conditions here in Yemen.

Was there a deal between President Saleh and the YSL?

There's no deal between President Saleh and us. We returned to Sana'a convinced that President Saleh is able to lead Yemen toward reform and our return was unconditional. We're looking for common factors and how we can cooperate with others for Yemen's welfare.

How do you evaluate the recent presidential and local elections?

I believe the elections were very good because it was the first time real competition existed. It added to Yemen's experience and I don't believe its likeness exists in the Arab region.

Regarding negative aspects, there were violations and infringements; however, we know well that the democratic process is a cumulative process with some errors corrected each time. Next time, we'll try not to make such errors again and thereby further boost the experience.

It was supposed that all state apparatuses should remain impartial, including media and public funds, to ensure the elections' fairness and impartiality. In summary, it wasn't a typical experience and not 100 percent impartial; however, it was an advanced Yemeni experience.

Are you actually optimistic that the ruling party will fulfill its promises soon?

I realize the difficulties Yemen faces and its limited resources; however, we must try because frustration isn't the solution. I've heard many pessimistic voices, which isn't new or strange in Yemen. We mustn't surrender but rather hope and work for a better future. We believe that goodness will overcome evil forces in the end.

If exploited well, our nation's potential and resources regarding oil wealth, fish, gas and/or agriculture will cause us to rise to our feet and put Yemen on the right path. We shouldn't simply get frustrated.

The YSL actively participated in dialogues involving all political and social factions, particularly the

environment is a tough one. Is this really so and if so, why?

Investment is hindered by corrupt and influential powers that try to impose partnerships on investors and further, no laws or legislation exist.

A range of climates characterizes Yemen's land, so the question is how to cause investors to come and how to invest and protect it against corrupt individuals.

In summary, Yemen lacks the political will and regulations to ensure correct workflow. However, we're about to usher in a new phase, wherein we wish to dispose of past problems and restrictions. We must reform Yemen; otherwise, we'll face the unknown.

I realize the matter and it's natural for the one leading the nation to realize it more because he knows everything about the country, so it's in this person's interest to embark on true reform.

Some say Al-Jifri was promised a high government post in return for backing the GPC. What's your response?

Although we read and heard much about this in newspapers, Allah knows that we made no deal or conditions for our stance; rather, it was made after persuasion. Our discussions with the GPC focused on our reform program; we never addressed posts.

Why did you terminate your relationship with the opposition, particularly the JMP?

The YSL was among the main founders of the national opposition bloc formed following Yemeni reunification. Further, it was a member of the coordination council formed after the 1994 Civil War. The JMP was formed after this council broke apart.

The parties involved in the JMP alliance met together, but no one spoke to us or asked for our opinion. Furthermore, Al-Jifri sent YSL's project with martyr Jarallah Omar when he met him in London in 1999, calling for the existence of an opposition bloc and requesting opposition parties' opinions about the project. However, we've received no reply since that time.

The JMP alliance is like the ruling party because they try to sideline, marginalize and edge out others' roles. What will they do when/if they reach power?

Do you have any final words?

Al-Jifri was always saying, "Our departure was political, so we can come back only via a political return. This has been set since 1994 and we were always waiting for the opportunity to return to our country. We were knocking at the authorities' doors for dialogue in order to actively and effectively exist in our country. The opportunity came just before the elections and after the president was willing to hear another Yemeni voice, asking for our party's attitude, so it was natural to respond to his request."

It's said that Yemen's investment

Interviewed by: Mohammed bin Sallam

Since Yemeni unity, the YSL has demanded reforms and a changed ruling system. Furthermore, it differed with the regime. What caused its main leaders, who were living outside Yemen, to return to Sana'a at such a critical time accompanied by the presidential and local elections?

The YSL isn't a new party on Yemen's political field, but I can assure you that it's the first party in Yemen, having been announced officially in Aden in 1951. The national Yemeni movement began at Egypt's Al-Azhar University in early 1940, when league founder Mohammed Al-Jifri met with the late Mohammed Mahmoud Al-Zubairi and Mohammed Al-Nouman, who later formed what was known as the First Yemeni Battalion as a base for a national and unified Yemeni movement.

Under binding circumstances in North Yemen, our brothers were compelled to form the Yemeni Liberals Movement, while the Sons League party was formed in South Yemen, which was under British occupation at that time.

We existed amid a unified Yemen in 1990 and changed our party's name to Yemen's Sons League because our political engagement involved all of Yemen.

As everyone knows, Yemen experienced a different phase during the first four years of unity, followed by civil war, which forced us to leave the country. We remained abroad; however, we longed to return to our homeland because the natural place for political engagement should be from inside, not

outside the country.

Forced by circumstances, we remained abroad a long time until President Saleh phoned and asked the YSL to declare its stance on the elections. He further declared that his party was proceeding to request political, economic and social reforms. When you review our attitudes, statements and literature, you'll find that we've called for real reform for years. If President Saleh adopts this reform, we'll be with him.

This wasn't said only today or during the elections, but it's been recorded in our literature for years. It seems the ruling party was busy with other things, thus not comprehending our attitudes.

Our problem, as diagnosed by Al-Jifri, is that, "Everyone looks at himself in the mirror and doesn't see others. Furthermore, everyone reads his own writing and doesn't read others'."

Some people's surprise at our arrival in Sana'a is unjustified because our attitudes are transparent and known to all.

When President Saleh called the secretary-general asking him about the YSL's stance regarding the elections, I later informed him of our position following discussion of the matter. We believed that President Saleh is the most capable person to lead Yemen to reform because he holds the nation's keys and is qualified for it. He has accumulated experience for a long time, so we declared our stance with him without any condition.

What do you mean by changing the ruling system you formerly declared on numerous occasions?

We have a comprehensive reform pro-

gram published a year ago in mass media and distributed to all political factions and civil society organizations. Additionally, it's available on our web site with details anyone wants to know.

We had hoped the ruling party and/or other political factions would discuss it with us. If it's good, why don't we agree on it? If not, we can adjust it and if there's a better program, we can cancel ours and all agree on it.

What are the most prominent aspects of your reform program?

We wholeheartedly believe that political reform should initiate true reform, later followed by economic and administrative reforms.

Can you give more details about the identity of your political reform, according to your program?

Regarding the ruling system, the existing system has no clear features, as it's neither completely presidential nor parliamentary. We suggested two choices: either be a completely presidential system wherein, accordingly, the president is held accountable for everything, or be parliamentary.

In our program, we specified the outline of the presidential system, its characteristics and its positive and negative points. The matter wasn't decided decisively because the door to dialogue remains open before all parties with reform projects for Yemen's welfare.

Is your project close to the Document of Pledge and Accord that all political parties agreed upon prior to the 1994 Civil War?

We were the main participants in that treaty, so you'll find many aspects of

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position with "UNDP" office:

Post Title: National programme officer, Economist /ICS-9

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- Contribute to identification of areas for support and interventions within economic development.
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- Coordinate project implementation with the executing agencies and introduce performance indicators/ success criteria, targets and milestones.
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- Thorough analysis and research of the political, social and economic situation in the country and preparation of substantive inputs to United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), Country Programme Document (CPD), Country Programme Document (CPD), Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) and other documents.
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Interested candidates are requested to visit our website at: <http://www.undp.org.ve/undp-vacancies.htm> for detailed term of reference of the position and may submit their applications indicating the title of the post applied for by mail to Human Resources Unit and response will only be made to short listed candidates.

UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448841/E-mail: (registry.ve@undp.org)

The deadline for receiving applications is Wednesday, 29th November

UNDP is an equal opportunity organization and qualified female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.



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- Issue and manage local contracts and local procurements.
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- Update the DHO and HO on projects and report on meetings
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Interested candidates may send their CVs to dfid@yemen.net.ve by 20 November 2006.

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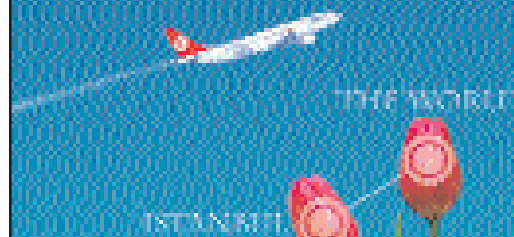
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A distinctive society

By: Amenah bint Natera Al-Lahabi

I had my expectations tightly reined in as I buckled myself in for the flight bound for Yemen. It was neither my first, nor my last trip to the Middle East. We were talking about Yemen because the time I would spend there was a great unknown.

However, upon my arrival, my new family embraced me wholeheartedly and a touch of paradise graced all of my days. 'Aseed (a Yemeni lunch dish) became a daily staple that I now miss. Yet Yemen would test my patience and fortitude in ways I didn't think possible. Within three months, there were three weddings, two hospital visits, miles of spectacular landscapes and intriguing people and luckily, not one funeral.

The airport is small and unassuming. After the likes of Dubai and JFK or Heathrow, Sana'a is blessedly compact. The airport has more police doing clerical work than necessary, more hangers-on than space permits and all the red tape that officials love to blast one with when they don't want to be bothered. However, once you pass the visa stage – and I strongly suggest one obtaining a visa before arriving in Yemen – it's smooth sailing to the front door.

What next assaults the eyes is construction, construction and more construction. Everywhere something is going up as a new structure atop an older one or even underneath, such as new pipes ripping the uneven sidewalks. The unearthed streets help develop one's driving skills with their obstacle course-like twists and turns, not to mention all the extra sightseeing one gets while turning five extra corners to get to the front of a hotel or a friend's house. Whatever planning goes into this chaos, the end isn't part of it, as buildings and fully operational roads look like unfinished puzzles.

Women and men in Yemen

While I was busy looking out from behind my niqab, there were 10 times as many eyes trying to see through it. I'll never understand a society of men – raised among publicly black-clad faceless women – who do circus-like acrobatics and contortions to catch a glimpse of skin. The first glance is followed by a double take and then rounded out with a five-minute staring session. Unless the light changes or the person is pulled away to participate in a conversation, such staring easily could go on for hours.

Women seem to suffer the same obsession. When a newcomer enters the

room, they'll stare her down while blatantly whispering about her in her face. I asked why, but not one person could give me an explanation worth Yemeni salt: The men don't have manners, they're not used to seeing women, they're curious people, etc. Oh, give me a break!

These men don't live in bachelor dens. They always have women at home – a mother and a few sisters in tow – so how could they not be indoctrinated? In Yemen, where uniformity is fashionable, that sameness is enforced – be it the niqab and balto or daily life rituals. The answer to many of my questions was, "Well, all Yemenis do this or that." What I think we have here is groupthink about social graces – or the lack thereof.

However, a few conversations later, my new husband gave me a reason. I realized that most Yemenis talk to each other about all subjects, but they rarely can check the accuracy of their statements. If the head honcho of the diwan says it's blue, well then the grass better start mutating now.

Traveling around Yemen

In all his travels, my husband never had ventured past the outskirts of Aden into the city proper because of the things he was told existed in that metropolis of vice and 'haram' pleasures. Of course, there are no whiskey bottles strewn helter-skelter on the pavement, nor do women go around publicly smoking cigarettes while dressed in shorts and halter tops – sorry, wrong country. It was wonderful quickly traveling to Yemen's major cities with only the breeze from our speeding jeep moving our layers of clothing. The roads I saw improved weekly, considering the height and hairpin turns of the mountain ranges, whose roads were paved snugly onto them.

However, traveling to the inner villages was another thing altogether, as it's hard on some body parts and dangerous if one doesn't know how to drive the turns, breaks and dips such 'tariqs' entail. But one can picnic just about anywhere on the road, which goes a long way in refreshing body and spirit. Yet every abrupt stop, bang, splash, shifting rock and swerve is well worth the view. Ibb's terraced mountain heights were breathtaking and always left me hoping for a giant, clad in the Yemeni futa and belted jambiyya, to climb those fertile stairs.

Such is Yemen

Nevertheless, the spirit is tested if one gets sick, needs a test done or has some business in a government office. To my

bitter disappointment, I learned that Yemeni blood is valued below that of American or Saudi blood, as we paid three times more for blood work than the average Yemeni because of a blue passport.

That same blue passport also cost us a bundle in legal fees while suffering comments like, "Americans are no good" and "Americans are rich and have lots of money." Maybe this explains why so many Americans are workaholics, up to their eyeballs in debt, usually don't take vacations or, as in the case of Yemeni deli workers, stand for 12 hours straight, seven days a week – sans the qat cheek bulge.

Qat, central to the Yemeni lifestyle

I must mention qat or else I can't say I was in Yemen. I personally can't chew it because it doesn't agree with my stomach. Many would wish the same fate upon all Yemenis, which isn't feasible or economically safe, as others recently have pointed out. Such clamoring must take into account that there's nothing to substitute qat socially – it's endemic to the diwan-attending men and women who chew it. Tell me that men don't need to go to diwans, that their businesses don't need the atmosphere it creates, that traditions – both new and old – can go to pot or that one's attendance at the diwans doesn't affect family standing and friendships – especially in rural areas.

Thobes and jambiyyas worn with a sport coat would need to go out of style and ditto for the futa, which would be a shame because I find in them an elegance and reclining grace that can't be duplicated in a Western suit. The jalsi (sitting session) forsaken for the continental sofa (feet on the floor, please), the art of small talk relegated to its modern mobile device, the camaraderie of men reared in the diwan gone elsewhere. Goodness, what will everyone do without a beautifully decorated majlis (Yemeni sitting room)?

It's not nostalgic reminiscing, rather, it's part of what goes on just to prepare for business-as-usual in a diwan. Even those who don't go to diwans still work throughout the afternoon with bulging cheeks. I watched as men paved sidewalks, carved semi-circles of plaster for window dressing, hammered away at stone or iron-grid work, counted kilo upon kilo of rice, sugar, salt or what have you while slowly, and at times gracefully, chewing away. Drivers braving the late afternoon Sana'a traffic looked very much at ease with their qat.

Nevertheless, qat is drinking up Yemen's water supply, as this interesting fiend systematically replaces other



A lot of people like to chew qat in diwans, talking about various issues.

crops. Also, men are eating less and chewing more qat, women aren't caring for their children properly – some don't take care of their kids, period – and lack of money from buying qat every day greatly impacts households.

A myriad of Yemeni women

The other lasting impression of Yemen is its women whose lives are a kaleidoscope of events not always meshing or matching evenly. For instance, one will find women using washing machines, but then not bothering to hang their clean clothes away from dust or dirty puddles. There are women who insist on wearing their jeans like underwear, those who can answer a mobile phone, but can't make a call and those who can't read or write.

One also can meet those women who don't want, care about or understand

the need for their children to be literate in the 21st century. There are women who think the world revolves around rushing to cook afternoon lunch, wash qat and then run ragged while their husbands, brothers or sons demand their clothes and paraphernalia for their diwan hike. The stillness of the house is achieved only when the men leave with their bag of qat and bottles of Pepsi and water.

Women would ask me if American or Yemeni women are better, not realizing that, in her own way, each is unique unto herself. Even fewer realized that to say "American" doesn't mean U.S.-born, that America includes this whole part of the world, that regardless of what everyone might say, English isn't the only language spoken there.

All of these women, as well as the ones who don't suffer these maladies,

live and breathe what Yemen as a whole dishes out to them. Some will surpass these shortcomings, while others will be blessed with progressive husbands, brothers and sons who deem it important to bring their families out of the quagmire of Yemeni groupthink.

Some will leave Yemen for other parts more advanced, but not more friendly or enchanting. Some actually will sit and learn a thing or two from others that have traveled and apply it to their lives. Many will continue as if the world doesn't have a new beginning every day and a few will die believing that what they had was all there ever was in life.

Amenah bint Natera Al-Lahabi is the Coordinating Manager of the Medical Director of Bellevue Hospital Center in New York. She lives in US.

Report condemns violence against Palestinian women

By: Steven Erlanger

Discriminatory laws, traditional practices and a severe shortage of emergency shelters combine to perpetuate violence against women by their family members and intimate partners in the Palestinian territories, according to a report that was released Tuesday by Human Rights Watch, a watchdog group in New York.

The report, "A Question of Security: Violence Against Palestinian Women and Girls," is based on interviews over the last year with victims, police officers, social workers and officials of the Palestinian Authority.

It says that while there is "increasing recognition of the problem" by the authorities of violence against women and girls, "little action has been taken to seriously address these abuses."

In fact, the report says, "there is some evidence that the level of violence is getting worse while the remedies available to the victims are being further eroded."

There is a significant lack of comprehensive data on the scale of violence, the Human Rights Watch report concedes, but it notes that studies and statistics compiled by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics and women's groups, in many cases with



help from abroad, "record high levels of violence perpetrated by family members and intimate partners, aggravated during times of political violence."

The offenses include domestic violence, rape, incest, child abuse and violent responses to so-called honor crimes, like adultery, that embarrass the clan, family or community.

Laws dating from Jordanian and Egyptian administration in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, respectively, do not fully protect the rights of women, the report says. It notes, for example, that the laws provide reduced penalties for men who kill or harm female relatives who are accused of

committing adultery, allow only male relatives to file incest charges on behalf of minors and absolve from criminal prosecution rapists who agree to marry their victims and remain married for three years.

Human Rights Watch also says that women who complain to the police or the courts sometimes put themselves in more danger from an embarrassed family or clan.

The report notes that the Palestinian Authority is not a sovereign state, that the West Bank is under Israeli occupation and that the struggle against it has reduced the resources of the Palestinian administration and police.

Still, the report urges the Palestinian Authority to change laws or enact new ones that criminalize family violence and to repeal provisions that perpetuate or condone such violence.

The report urges Israel to ease travel restrictions for judges, emergency workers and social service providers and to help Palestinian victims of abuse use shelters in Israel.

"The problem is that no one sees this abuse as a crime," said Lucy Mair, a researcher in the Middle East and North Africa Division of Human Rights Watch and a co-author of the report. "It's seen as a family or social problem, and some behavior is not even criminalized."

Source: The New York Times

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

An established International Oil Company operating several exploration areas invites Yemeni National geologists or geophysicists to apply for the position of Senior Explorationist to assist their Sana'a – based Exploration Team with the delivery of an in country exploration programme and the development of Yemeni technical staff.

Candidates should have:

- Masters of Science or higher tertiary degree in Earth Science
- 10 + year experience in Oil and Gas Industry in a technical role
- Familiarity with technical software packages
- International experience will be an advantage

Candidates need to have the following skills:

- Be fluent in written and spoken English
- Be computer literate (Microsoft applications)
- Communicate clearly
- Present material confidently
- Have a willingness and ability to train an exploration team and mentor individuals
- Be honest, open and reliable

Remuneration:

- An attractive remuneration package will be offered

Application:

Interested candidates with the necessary qualifications and experience are requested to submit complete application (including a covering letter, CV and copies of your degree/certificates) by facsimile to 410 314.

Deadline to receive applications is 21st November 2006.

Death of Yemeni press smile

Yemen has lost in a tragic road accident one of the most brilliant, commitment and respectable journalist who is much adherent to ethics of the profession of difficulties. The press of Yemen lost Hamid Shahrah the editor in chief of Annas weekly newspaper. Hamid Shahrah, who passed away in the prime of his youth, was not only among the brilliant journalists in Yemen but one of the promising writers interested in telling the history of the Yemeni national movement with a great amount of sincerity and sense of responsibility. His first book "Death of the Smile" was about the 1948 constitutional revolution and, despite all remarks about it, is one of the most mature reviews of the thought of pioneering revolutionary forerunners. It's a distinguished effort encouraging discussion of some of the issues that are not mentioned in the history of this movement that led to change.

After the publication of his book Hamid came to me very humbly carrying a copy of his book dedicated to me in beautiful slender handwriting, similar to its writer and reflecting his noble feeling. He asked me, at that first meeting, to read his book and write my remarks on it and to frankly tell him all that I person-



By: Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh

ally deem contrary to what he had written. When he called me a few days later he asked me if I had read his book and whether I had made my remarks. I had read the book and had many notes, some of them in his favor and others against him. I asked him to meet me again so I could tell him about my remarks verbally in the hope he may benefit from them in case he thought of re-printing the book. Unfortunately he did not appear to see me maybe because of his preoccupation in his press work and hard work in the production of the distinguished Annas newspaper, in addition to his news online website 'naspress.'

One of the important remarks I had pinpointed was that the book, which focused on connection of the free men with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt,

should mention, in detail, the attempts of the bygone regime to contact the Brotherhood and convince them it was the only an Islamic regime in the Arab homeland and was following their principles and that is why they had provided that regime with advisors and teachers. If the freemen did not succeed to drive a wedge between the regime and Sheikh Hassan Al-Banna and his followers, the Muslim Brotherhood would adopt the stand of the regime and hastened to defend it. The letter of Imam Yahya to Hassan Al-Banna, included in the book, is one of the important documents written to prove that cooperation.

After a short period Hamid visited me to tell me good news on his achievement of press effort and his intention to write an in-depth historical study on the stages following 1948. He told me he needed many more references. At that time I realized he is one of the few researchers who would not write until he collected authenticated documents. Later we had another meeting in the house of the outstanding nationalist Qadi Abdulsallam Sabrah. There and then we had a long talk about his book "Death of the Smile" and the necessity of publishing a new issue including some remarks that would consolidate the importance of the book as one of the important references on a

period of contemporary Yemen needing much accuracy and more fairness.

Yemen has really lost. The late Hamid Shahrah was a professional journalist and a writer entertaining a high degree of morals and a connection with values. There are many writers and journalists in the Arab homeland, but only a few who prove to be serious and sincere. Shahrah proved in practice and action that he is a man of principles and that has been clearly seen in his newspaper Annas, which he established and managed efficiently and with keenness to gather in its editorial staff writers from the entire political spectrum.

The name of the writer and journalist Hamid Shahrah was connected to his well-known book "Death of the Smile" and when he recently died in the tragic car accident his sudden departure was a real death of the smiles on the faces of his many colleagues and admirers and his readers. Undoubtedly, the disappearance of his like in a country lacking serious talents in every field of life is a big loss and extinguishes his highly important project.

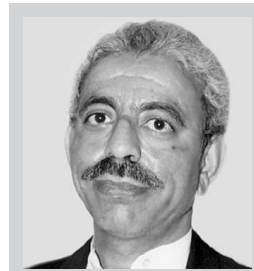
Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh is Yemen's prominent poet and intellectual. He is the director of the Yemeni Center for Studies and Research (www.ycsr.org).

COMMON SENSE

From Inflation in Yemen to Saddam to Al-Jazeera's 10th Birthdaya

Prices in Yemen

The counting of the ballots for the Presidential Elections in Yemen have barely finished and already the counter of prices began ticking rapidly upwards to once again confirm to the astute observer that it is always the Yemeni citizen that picks up the tab for everything. This includes the political games that people play, as the cutthroat merchant community in Yemen is the first to profit from all the fancy posters they pasted throughout the streets and rooftops, walls and ceilings of their large buildings during the election campaign period, by quickly putting a 25% to 50% price hike on just about everything. The question is how much must the people of Yemen continue to endure while the politicians, military brass, merchants and every type of villain that one can think of continue to eat away at the hard earned incomes of the now destitute middle class and the beyond impoverished low-income or no income poor, most whom live below the poverty line? This is without mentioning the helpless widows whose inherited real estate has been gobbled up by sleazy sheikhs or not so "prominent social dignitaries", who only became prominent by the few hired guns that tag along with them wherever they go. Yet, they tell us Yemen is now approaching a new era of prosperity. The truth of the matter is that the new era is turning out to be a field day for all the "elite" of the establishment to do as they please with the people of Yemen, without even having the courtesy to say thank you Yemeni people for being so gullible and easily taken by all the false promises that are dished out by the official media and the well-organized grapevine that spreads the twisted truth to the uninformed who continue to hope that somewhere amidst all the evil that tarnishes the establishment there has to be some degree of conscientiousness. Wishful thinking, is all that one can say.



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

The Theatrics of Justice: Saddam's Verdict

The observer cannot help but make note of the fact that the issuance of the verdict against Saddam just so happens to come out a fortnight before the American Mid-Term Elections for the seats of the House of Representatives and the Senate, where the Republican Party is facing its hardest challenge since George Bush became the worst President of the United States in American History (Federalists, Democratic-Republicans, Republicans and Democrats, not to mention Whigs) and the worst world leader we have today! That Saddam is guilty of many crimes in Iraq and the region at large is unquestionable, but one would expect that the White House could have better taste than to tease the hopefully more intelligent American electorate with such phony theatrics. One would think that democracy does not lend itself to such corny theatrics, but if George W. Bush can become President of the good old USA for two terms with such a horrendous record of failure, it turns out that even the so called modern democracies can be goaded to believe anything that their sleazy politicians feed them. If it happens in the US, then it surely could happen in Yemen, as it has on so many occasions, and in so many other First World, Second World and Third World countries.

Happy Birthday, Al-Jazeera

Starting with a budget of US \$ 5 million, Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel was launched exactly ten years ago and ever since then, the Arab media was never the same again. Yes, Al-Jazeera deserves to make a big celebration of its successful ten years of life, after its dedicated people have risked their lives to tell, not only the Arab World, but the world at large that the Arab Media is worthy of pride and fine professional delivery of news and information to an Arab public that has been fed nothing but lies and glorification of their impotent rulers for more than half a century of Arab Television (in all its manifestations). It is to the credit of the enlightened leadership of Qatar, that little small peninsula that juts out like a nipple on the southeastern fringes of the Arabian Peninsula, that Al-Jazeera was born, to the heartache of George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld and the Brits, of all people, who had given the world the BBC (Hona London!), which was once the only viable source of credible news for the Arab masses. For its courage and adherence to professional credible news broadcasting, Al-Jazeera has sacrificed a lot of its valuable staff as martyrs of the truth, while some of are still in prison, for nothing except that they gave the news that was worthy of seeing and hearing, in a media world beset by manipulation on a grand scale. Carry on as usual, Al-Jazeera (or Aljazeera) and we look forward to your English Channel, which will be a benchmark media source for all the non-Arabs, who have also been mislead about the Middle East by the downstream Western media, which is under the domination of the International Zionist Establishment and the military industrial complex that dominates America.

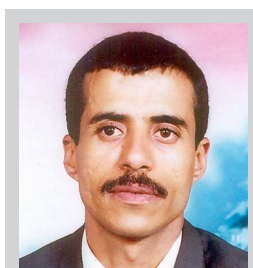
Hassan Al-Haifi has been a Yemeni political economist and journalist for more than 20 years.

What will donors require from Yemen's government?

The London conference of donors on Yemen scheduled in mid-November will be an important event in the history of the Yemeni economy. The conference is to discuss the mechanism of supporting and developing the Yemeni economy and improving its performance. It's an embodiment of regional and international economic partnership.

The conference convenes the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the regional partner, the World Bank, the UN Development Program, Britain and the United States, and they are all potential international partners for Yemen. The conference is not expected to offer magical solutions to Yemen's accumulated economic problems, but it can help in beginning to find solutions and to prepare the economy to achieve the sought after economic reform.

It is decided that the Yemeni delegation taking part in the donors conference to be a high-ranking one and some



By: Faisal Al-Safwani

preliminary information says the Yemeni government will submit definite demands, to ensure they receive US \$ 1.1 billion every year over five years to bridge the gap in the general budget between resources and expenditures over the next years.

The GCC General Secretariat, Abdulrahman Al-Attiyah, said they want to convince donors the Yemeni government was serious in its reform program, adding that the task of the Yemeni delegation will be to win the donors trust.

To do that the Yemeni official delegation is expected to present documented papers pertaining the five-plan of 2006-10, accounts of the previous reforms, a document on the policy of fighting poverty, the policy of encouraging investment and other policies as well as the economic programs by which the government will convince the donors to give grants and loans necessary for the entire process of the economic reform.

According to Gulf and Yemeni press statements on the subject, there appears to be willingness in principle by the donors to offer support and assistance, but they have certain conditions and demands that must be taken into consideration. They want to see the specific steps the Yemeni government will take and defining time stages. Some of them suggest grants have to be offered in the form of investment projects and the investment movement will impose requirements of the economic reform and automatically contribute to reform them. Investment projects need to

improve energy production, infrastructure, banking systems, availability of money liquidity, commercial judiciary and qualified labor. These factors are not available at present. This list makes the task of the Yemeni delegation somewhat difficult, in case such demands were submitted. The international donors aim to develop the major sectors of the economy in general, such as agriculture, industry and trade. Without development of different sectors there will be no economic reform and without modernization of the economic system development will not be achieved and Yemen will not be accepted into the GCC and it will not be reinstated into the Millennium Challenge Account.

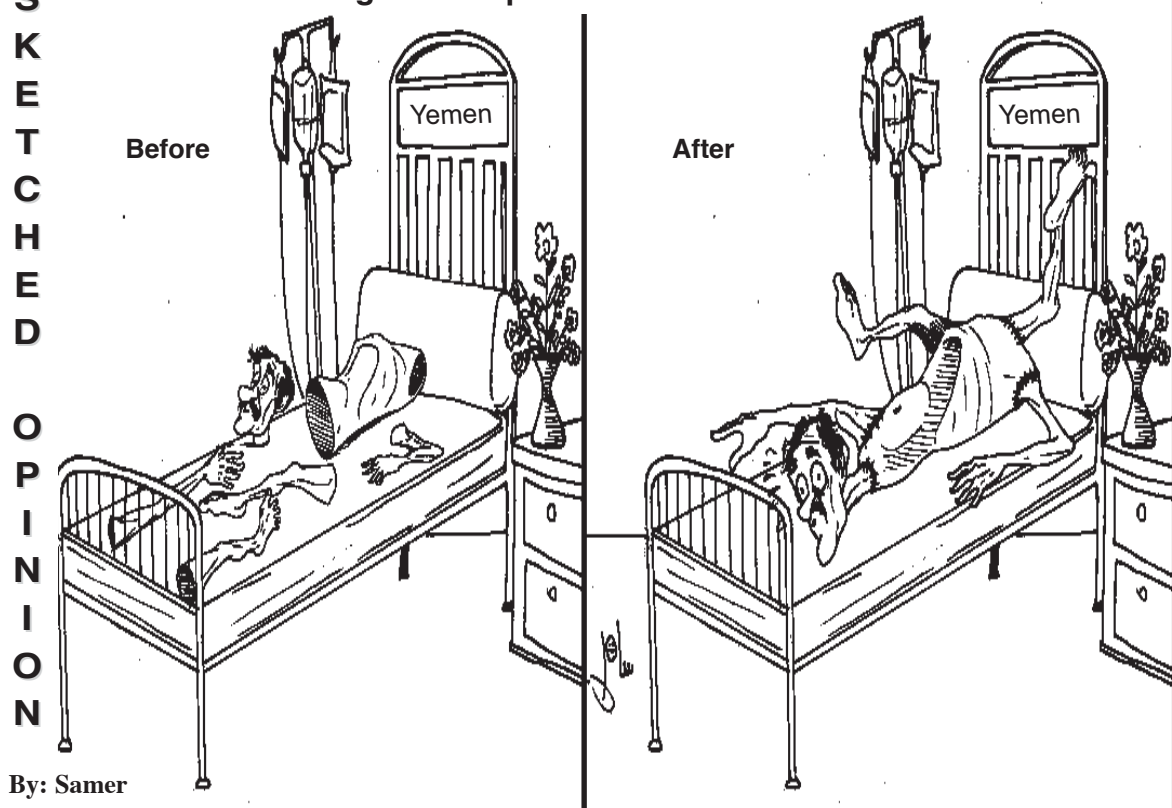
The present situation of Yemen's economic system has changed into a problem hindering our development and makes it difficult to join economic groups, regionally and internationally. The coming conference is considered a big opportunity that can be used to create a qualitative transfer in the Yemeni economy, improving its performance and activating all its sectors.

We no longer have time or opportunity for obstinacy at the expense of our economic and living needs. We have to emphasize to the donors and neighbors our seriousness about reforming our economic situations in the way compatible with the GCC economic systems and show our sincere desire for reform.

Faisal Al-Safwani is a Yemeni journalist

SKETCHED OPINION

Yemen undergoes comprehensive corrective measures



By: Samer

Comments on 'domestic animals' article

How wonderful that someone has now made the effort to take up the plight of what we consider in the west "domestic animals." I lived in Yemen for two years from 2003 to 2005 and during this time I took in numerous cats and provided water for dogs on the street. I was so shocked at the amount of people that have a strong dislike for these animals and don't feel any sense of responsibility towards them.

It is my hope that Yasmine will continue and persevere her good

work, certainly I love Yemen and its people and myself, my husband and children hope to come back to live in Yemen in a few years. If Yasmine wanted to contact me directly on my email I might have a solution for site they require. My Allah help you in your efforts to strengthen your resolve.

Tracy Asaly
freetouch@hotmail.com

Somali refugees in Yemen

I work for an international relief and development agency based in the UK and we are interested in

implementing some projects in Sanaa for the Somali refugees there. I was wondering if you could:

- 1) Provide me with the most up to date news stories concerning the Somali refugees in Yemen
- 2) Provide me with the contact details of anyone who might be able to help me locate the most recent research regarding the refugees.

I would really appreciate your assistance with this.

Sarah Atkinson
Assistant to the CEO
MUSLIM AID

sarah.atkinson@muslimaid.org

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Headscarf debate in Great Britain: Two types of veiling

The issue of veiling does not seem to disappear from public discourse in Great Britain. Do veils oppress or liberate? It depends on why you're wearing one, argues David Shariatmadari.

The debate unleashed by Jack Straw on 5 October 2006 shows little sign of quietening down. Britain's former foreign secretary, who revealed to a newspaper that he asks religious women attending his constituency surgeries to remove their face veils, has released a social valve while projecting himself back into the political limelight.

The passion evident in the voices of interviewees on news bulletins and callers on radio programmes, however, shows us that this is something the great British public has had on its mind for a while. It seems Straw's comments were just the excuse we needed for a bit of collective venting.

The discussion seems to have crystallised around the issue of whether the veil is an instrument of male control or a "liberating" choice made by enlightened women.

Simple, old-fashioned male chauvinism

Some say veiling has long been used to channel simple, old-fashioned male chauvinism, and this is all it represents. The Qur'an doesn't offer a precise list of the kind of clothes that a woman can wear and the result is that men have made the decision for them, in most cases letting their paranoia get the better of them.

How better to control a woman than by covering her up, weighing her down with heavy robes, a visible reminder of her lack of self-determination?

The veil is, after all, more common in rural, less developed societies where women haven't yet undergone the process of emancipation that took a couple of centuries in Britain. Like other remnants of the times when women were chattels without voice or vote, it will one day have to be abandoned.

At the same time, there are people for

whom the veil really is a positive choice: a choice that allows them to reclaim their sense of self in the midst of a society that so often fails to go beyond mere appearance. There's the freedom to go unveiled, sure, but what about the freedom not to have to think about hair and makeup, freedom from the judging eyes of a world obsessed by beauty?

As a symbol of Islam, the veil can also be an expression of religious devotion, serving much the same function as a nun's habit or a monk's cowl. No one would ever dream of asking a Catholic nun to disrobe - so why ask Muslim women to do so. Isn't it just flagrant hypocrisy?

Of the two viewpoints sketched out here, the first is popular among the largely white, liberal, middle-class establishment, the second among vocal second-generation Muslims. Well - they can't both be right. Which one of the two groups is kidding itself?

Talking about separate phenomena

In fact, they are both right, but they're talking about separate phenomena. In

Britain today, essentially two types of veiling exist. First, there undoubtedly are women who'd like nothing better than to throw off their jilbab but would only do so if their husbands, brothers or fathers weren't around to stop them.

They could be recent immigrants, completely reliant on their extended family, with poor English and no prospect of going it alone, or children of immigrants from particularly strict families. These women should, of course, be free to do what they want. We can only hope that as time goes on, the number of people who feel trapped like this diminishes.

Second, there are others who have lived in Britain their whole lives, but have only recently decided to cover themselves. Often they have sisters or even mothers who do not veil. They are the articulate, young, switched-on women who are ready to come down on you like a ton of bricks if you so much as suggest they're the victims of oppression.

They're not lying when they say they've chosen to dress that way. It's a choice that's become more common

recently as a reaction against what is perceived by people from Muslim backgrounds as a groundswell of hatred and blame-laying against their community.

Different cultural meaning

Call it the 9/11 effect, the Iraq effect, whatever you like. It's essentially a reaction, and in this context veiling takes on a completely different cultural meaning. Whereas in their parents' countries it might be a symbol of backwardness or poverty - in Cairo, Istanbul or even Tehran, heavy veiling is an indication of low social class - here it's a testament of non-conformity and of pride, of political resistance.

Applying the same arguments to these very different groups of women, one vulnerable, one politically tuned-in, is an error we should try to avoid if we wish to have any kind of meaningful discussion.

Jack Straw's complaint was not that the veil was oppressive, but that it brought to the fore what separates sections of the community from one another. That may be so, but what's also true is that the

policies of his government during the "war on terror" have succeeded in making a large number of people feel alienated and, as a result, defensive about their cultural heritage.

A few people react to demonisation by becoming invisible. The natural impulse of many is instead to do the opposite, to become fully paid-up members of the tribe which is being denigrated, in order to show their defiance.

For men it might be growing long beards, wearing the kind of get up their grandparents once walked around in. For women it might be the veil. Either way, the political class to which Jack Straw belongs must understand the psychological reasons for this turn of events and, in doing so, accept a good portion of the blame.

David Shariatmadari studied Linguistics at Cambridge University and the School of Oriental and African Studies (London). This article was originally published on OpenDemocracy.net under a Creative Commons Licence.

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The rising wealth of nations

The new Penn World Table, Version 6.2, comparing standards of living across countries, has just been released. The latest figures are for 2004, and, because of data lags, not all countries are included. Yet these numbers are valuable because they are of exceptional quality and they correct systematically for relative price differences across countries, which sometimes leads to surprising results.

Among the 82 countries for which 2004 data are now available, there has been really good news: real per capita GDP has risen by an average of 18.9% between 2000 and 2004, or 4.4% per year. People generally are a lot better off than they were just a few years ago. At this rate, real per capita GDP will double every 16 years.

Many people who could not afford a



By: Robert J. Shiller

car in 2000 now have one, and people who could afford only one car in 2000 now have two. People who could not afford to send their children to a good school or college now can. And so it is with many different goods and services that people consume.

One surprise is that there has been relatively little change in the ranking of countries by real per capita GDP since 2000. Despite all the talk about the Chinese economic miracle, China's ranking has risen only slightly, from 61st out of 82 countries in 2000 to 60th in 2004 - even though per capita real GDP grew by 44% between 2000 and 2004, or 9.6% a year, the highest of the major countries.

The reason China has not risen higher is that other countries have been growing too, and because the gaps between countries are enormous. The range between the poorest and the richest countries in the

world is a factor of more than 100. The average real per capita GDP of the top 25% of countries is 15 times that of the bottom 25%.

Watching these countries progress is like watching a marathon. At first, one is impressed by most of the runners, almost all of whom seem to be going fast. As they pass by, all spread out, one sees that some runners seem to be gaining rapidly. And yet they do not often overtake one another, because the distances between them are so large. Indeed, other runners are out of sight, perhaps miles ahead.

China isn't the only success story. Other big winners in terms of real per capita GDP between 2000 and 2004 are Lithuania (up 48%), Romania (up 41%), Estonia (up 40%), Chile (up 33%), Hungary (up 32%), Greece (up 31%), New Zealand (up 28%), Australia (up 25%), Korea (up 23%), Ireland (up 23%), South Africa (up 23%), and Nigeria (up 22%).

Some of the worst performers among the major countries are Israel (a beleaguered country, with real per capita GDP

up only 2% between 2000 and 2004) and Argentina (hit by a terrible financial crisis in 2001-2, up only 9% between 2000 and 2004). Economic performance in several Latin American countries was relatively weak in this period, with Uruguay's real GDP per capita actually recording a fall by a fraction of a percent. But the overall picture is amazingly good.

If such growth rates continue, we will see relatively poor countries like India, Indonesia, the Philippines, or Nicaragua reach the average levels currently enjoyed by advanced countries in 50 years. But, of course, they will not have caught up with these countries, for those countries will have moved ahead too.

It is hard to imagine now what that world will be like with a doubling or quadrupling of just about every country's GDP. What would all these countries do with all that money?

In 1958, the economist John Kenneth Galbraith wrote the best-selling book *The Affluent Society*, in which he argued that the advanced world as typified by the United States had by that year finally

emerged from "grim scarcity," when dire necessity dictated our lives, to a "world of affluence." He wrote: "So great has been the change [in standards of living] that many of the desires of the individual are no longer even evident to him. They become so only as they are synthesized, elaborated and nurtured by advertising and salesmanship, and these, in turn, have become among our most important and talented professions."

But real per capita GDP in the US is now three times higher than it was in 1958. What have people been spending all that extra money on? Is it all dictated by advertisers and salesmen who are inventing needs?

According to my calculations comparing 1958 and 2005 data from the US Department of Commerce, Americans spent 27% of the huge increase in income between 1958 and 2005 on medical care, 23% on their homes, 12% on transportation, 10% on recreation, and 9% on personal business activities.

The kinds of things that advertisers and salesmen typically promote were relative-

ly unimportant. Food got only 8% of the extra money, clothing only 3%, and personal care 1%. Unfortunately, idealistic activities also received little of the extra money: 3% for welfare and religious activities, and a similar share for education.

Thus, most of the extra money was spent on staying healthy, having a nice home, traveling and relaxing, and doing a little business.

That sounds like what really happened in the US. Maybe that is the way it will be around the world. As long as we can keep worldwide growth going at its current rate, billions of people can look forward to the same kind of improvement. And that should be truly inspirational.

*Robert J. Shiller is Professor of Economics at Yale University, Chief Economist at MacroMarkets LLC, which he co-founded (see macromarkets.com), and author of *Irrational Exuberance* and *The New Financial Order: Risk in the 21st Century*.*

Source: Project syndicate



Sana'a British School

Sana'a British School is recruiting an enthusiastic, experienced and qualified

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The Capital Secretariat and IPEC / International Labour Organization

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Working Child Rehabilitation Center in Sana'a announces a vacancy post as a Project Coordinator for annual period of one year. The incumbent will report to IPEC/ILO office in Sana'a.

Requirements

Education: Advanced university degree in relevant field.

Experience: At least five years of professional experience at the national level in the occupational area.

Languages: Excellent command of English and Arabic.

Competencies: Knowledge of programming and budgeting, project management administration. Good communication skills. Good computer application skills.

CVs will be received from 9am to 1pm from Saturday to Wednesday.

Please address your CVs to:

**International Programme on the Elimination of the Child
Labour, Yemen Office
Apartment # 23-4th floor Al-Nuzaily Building.Hadda St.
P.O.Box: 551
Sana'a-Yemen**

Yousf Abdu Al-Kuraimi:

“The Financial Services Industry restrains its own growth by its underdevelopment”

On top of the pioneers in the domestic financial services industry is Al-Kuraimi Corporation for currency exchange and remittances. YemenTimes spoke to the General Manager of the Corporation, Yousf Abdu Al-Kuraimi, who says the financial services industry in Yemen, in spite of its importance, should be playing a far more important role in the economic development of the country. He says the financial services industry has great potential and can offer much more to the community and the economy to prompt economic growth.

Interview by :Yasser Al-Mayasi

Please provide a background on the establishment of Al-Kuraimi Corporation.

Al-Kuraimi Corporation was established in August 1995. Headquartered in Sana'a, Al-Kuraimi Corporation launched its first branch with an expert team lead by Chairman Abdullah Al-Kuraimi, who is a financial economist himself with over 30 years of experience in the field of financial services.

Al-Kuraimi Corporation has grown into 43 inter-connected branches along with many independent agents spread all over the country with a focus to ensure excellent and quality services for our customers. We focus on providing the best rates for currency exchange as well as instant transfers of money throughout the country.

What is the secret behind your great success?

Our success has no secrets other than our vast and long experience in the field of providing financial services for the domestic market and providing

excellent service evident in our main objective being to ensure customer satisfaction with our services and exchange rates, the courtesy of our employees and the speed of funds transfers.

We always see to it that we are at the highest standards of professionalism and make sure our operations are highly systematic and competent, in order to ensure quality of service and provide the best value for our customers especially when it comes to financial transactions. Research is also an important in order to keep up with the developments in the industry.

What do you consider to be your competitive advantage?

It is the fact that we provide convenience to our clients, first we are spread all over the country and our branches are strategically located in business centers and in locations of population density. Secondly we provide the best exchange rates available in the market updated by the hour.

And thirdly we use sophisticated technology and a state-of-the-art



Yousf Abdu Al-Kuraimi

information system because in this industry we have to receive timely information and submit it to all our customer-service personnel in our 43 branches as well as our affiliated agents.

At any point of time if you call our agents and branches you will get the exact exchange rates. We have the technology, capacity and capability to create a reliable image associated with our corporation for all our clients.

You have advocated for several fundamental changes in the financial

services industry. What are the problems you currently see?

The problems are diverse, but the most critical one is that any economic reforms in the country should start with the banking and financial services industries because they are the lifeblood of the economy. However these two industries were given little emphasis.

These Reforms should start from within the financial institutions by improving their systems to reach international standards because developing Yemen's economy is highly subjective to the development of banks, lending institutions and financial services corporation – if those do not develop then we can't expect any real development in spite of all the government policy and incentives aimed at economic development.

There should be determination among directors of commercial banks and other financial institutions to modernize the operations of the industry such as their marketing, range of products and investment patterns. In needs to happen as soon as possible before they are wiped out by competition once our market opens and multinationals start their operations in Yemen.

From your point of view, how should financial services be marketed?

Marketing of financial services necessitates the presence of the understanding of several concepts by the targeted audience in order to understand and comprehend the messages of respective banks and financial corporations, therefore the first stage should be educating the prospective audience.

The other critical factor is the ignorance of marketing personnel in our sector with regards to the basics of services marketing which make them an obstacle to the further growth of the industry. Each company should have its own short and long-term marketing strategies in order to expand and increase loyalty, as well as to train the required manpower in order to keep up with the times and competition.

Please brief us on the history of banking in Yemen

Banking and financial services has been existing in the modern manner since the 1940s in Aden where foreign banks were operating in service of the colonial administration as well as several businessmen who work in international trade.

Additionally, the first bank was the Yemeni Bank for Construction and Development, which was established in 1964, however, it wasn't until 1964 when an official government agency was created in order to monitor and control financial and currency affairs, but the main developments in the sectors were after the September and October Revolutions and the Yemeni Unification.

What are the regulatory mechanisms for Exchange services in Yemen?

The Legal framework came in a 1991 law which laid down the technicalities in order to obtain a license for currency exchange, giving authority to the Central Bank of Yemen to issue licenses and monitor the industry. The law also indicates which currencies shall be traded by licensed foreign exchange companies as well as regulating the exchange rates and monitoring illegal activities such as money laundering.

However the monitoring mechanism needs an overhaul, as it is limited to each foreign exchange company submitting a monthly report with all the operations of the month while auditing those reports is

still voluntary.

How do you see the future of the currency exchange services in the country?

Well, Yemen is still a developing country with great potential due to the many resources it has and its considerable population, especially as Yemen has a considerable migrant community overseas as well as the increasing migration domestically which increases the demand for our services with good potential in the future, but this potential is highly subjective to the steps the industry takes to grow itself.

OPINION

Why Yemen is searching for international financing?

By: Raidan Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf
Alsaqqaf@gmail.com

President Ali Abdullah Saleh is counting on the success of the upcoming donors conference in London to fulfil the many promises he has made over the years as well as the current promises during the electoral campaign. He gave top priority to economic reform, poverty alleviation and microeconomic development. The promises made by President Saleh were bold and unless backed up by committed funds and a dedicated government then the trust the public gave him will very likely to disappear.

President Saleh is to lead the Yemeni delegation to the donors conference because a failure to raise the needed funds and fulfil those promises is unacceptable, but it is a possibility. Yemen has received considerable funds during the last few decades under Saleh's leadership, any banker or donor will take a look at the credit history of the party at hand, so the logical question is to examine if the previous funds were put into a good and constructive use or were dumped in the purchase of weapons or running the day-to-day affairs of bureaucracy or do they actually improve the quality of life for those governed.

Has the little resources, and income, been used efficiently? How much has Yemen been investing into its own future? Has Yemen been trying to help itself during the last five years? My question is how can the International community help Yemen develop if

Yemen itself is unwilling to help itself? Corruption and poverty are on the rise and the previous development plans failed, but no university or academic institute, no think-tank, no political party and no intellect attempted to explain why the 1997-2003 economic and fiscal reformed failed.

Even if the donors conference is successful, there is no point in funding Yemen's third national plan if it is destined to fail like its predecessors, after all, those are the same people who jotted down the previous plans and took the very same factors into consideration. The hidden agenda behind the donors conference is not to genuinely development the livelihood of the Yemeni people in the micro level, it is to save the political career of the ruling party after making promises it knows it cannot deliver.

Yemen's problems are plenty and more diverse than one might think and a strategy of political reform might give the government the credibility it needs to formulate a strategy of economic reform, however the current circumstances of the nation and the people is too fragile to experiment through trail and error, the donors conference may not be repeated every year and the international community is unwilling to put funds in inefficient hands. Government officials admit that if this conference fails – either in raising the funds or in proper utilization of funds - then there is nothing but remorse for the average man who will continue suffering increasing hardships and a deteriorating quality of life.



The UNFPA Country Office in Yemen, Sana'a, is looking to fill the post of:

National Gender Advisor

Duties and Responsibilities:

Under the guidance of UNFPA Representative, the incumbent for this project funded post (NPPP) will be responsible for the following:

I. Technical Advise:

- 1) Assists in the review of gender strategies and the review of other strategies regarding gender sensitivity (i.e. youth, advocacy etc);
- 2) Assists in ensuring that the concept of gender is mainstreamed in UNFPA supported programmes;
- 3) Assists in the design and implementation of operational research rapid assessment and evaluation related to gender and cooperates with the county office and concerned national and international experts/institutions as may be required;
- 4) Prepares and presents position papers, briefs and notes on gender and women empowerment for relevant forums and contributes to special events related to UNFPA.

II. Programme Management:

- 1) Participates in updating computerised system to plan, monitor and coordinate the implementation of UNFPA supported activities of the National Women's Committee, Ministry of Public Health and Population, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Women Union and other relevant NGOs;
- 2) Contributes/takes charge of the gender programme components as assigned by the office;
- 3) Undertakes monitoring field visits to the targeted governorates and districts agreed upon and according to coordinated plans;
- 4) Contributes to preparation/organization and participates in the APRs, MTRs, Subprogram and Country Programme Reviews, evaluations and assists in completion of the relevant reporting;
- 5) Assists in financial management and follow up of audit recommendations for project activities concerning gender and women empowerment.

III. General:

- 1) Liaises between UNFPA Country Office and concerned national sub-programme and component project management on technical, financial and administrative matters of gender related activities;
- 2) Keeps abreast with UNFPA Policies, programmes and apply them to the given conditions;
- 3) Keeps abreast with conceptual and methodological developments. As to ensure streamlining of gender issues and women concerns at all levels, as well as other emerging population issues;
- 4) Participates in interagency theme or taskforces related to gender;
- 5) Assists in preparation of reports to Headquarters on gender related activities and performs any other functions in the field of gender and women empowerment as directed by the Representative.

IV. Working Environment:

- 1) The incumbent will work at UNFPA premises. He/She should move between centres and sites of the component projects as appropriate and agreed upon with Representative and project management;
- 2) She/he reports on all above-mentioned tasks to the UNFPA Representative. The UNFPA Representative will supervise the performance of the incumbent. He/She will be subject to an annual Performance Appraisal (PAR) that will be completed by the UNFPA Representative in consultation with national sub-programme and projects management;
- 3) Works closely with UNFPA National Programme Officers, UNVs, NPPPs, CST advisors and missions fielded by UNFPA as may require.

Qualifications and Experience Required

- Post graduate degree in social or other relevant sciences;
- At least 5 years of professional experience, preferably in gender or women empowerment programmes/ projects;
- Excellent professional knowledge of English and Arabic and the ability to clearly communicate and report in these languages;
- Adequate computer skills, good interpersonal communication and team building skills.

Applications should contain P11 Personal History Form that can be collected from our Country Office or downloaded from our web site: www.yemen.unfpa.org. UNFPA offers an attractive compensation package commensurate with experience. Please send your application to: UNFPA, P.O. Box 7272, Sana'a. Deadline for application: 26 November 2006. Please note that only candidates who fulfil the above requirements will be considered and notified.



The International College (IC) at the University of Science and Technology has extended the Registration Due Date for the Academic Year 2006/2007 Until the 2nd November for All Programs.

For more information, please contact us at: 01 408484 - 733164843

Business In Brief

Yemen drops in Transparency's Corruption Index

In its 2006 report on the Corruption Perception Index, Transparency International has ranked Yemen 111th in 2006 dropping from the 103 in 2005 among the most corrupt countries in the world. Yemen's corruption perception has dropped from 2.7 in 2005 to 2.6 in 2006, contrary to the global trend where more developing countries are combating corruption and enhancing transparency. Finland rank as the least corrupt and at 163, the bottom of the list, is Haiti.

World Bank VP visits Yemen

Daniela Gressani, Vice President of the World Bank for the Middle East and North Africa is visiting Yemen prior to next week's donors conference to be held in London. Gressani said the World Bank and the international community have an interest in making the donors conference a success and working with the Yemeni government in developing the economy of Yemen. She also affirmed the support of the World Bank for regional integration in the Arabian Peninsular.

Yemen's local currency rated as 'B'
Capital Intelligence, the international emerging markets rating agency, has affirmed Yemen's local currency ratings of B in both the long and short terms, and B minus for long-term foreign currency. The agency has also indicated that Yemen has built a comfortable level of foreign exchange reserves relative to its external financing

needs. It said Yemen became a small net external creditor for the first time in 2005 and official reserves are projected by CI to reach US \$6.9 billion by end of 2006 compared to a public external debt stock of about US \$5.5 billion

IFC promotes investment environment in Yemen

The IFC is working closely with the Ministry of Trade and Industry to improve the environment of conducting business. The IFC also developmental schemes with regards to portal cities and also improve the legal and executive framework for mineral extraction industries in Yemen.

Assets of Central Bank Increase

The assets and reserves of the Yemeni Central Bank overseas reached the equivalent of US \$800 billion by the end of September 2006. A report by the central bank has indicated that reserves of local commercial banks have increased by 2.3 percent during 2006.

Aden Port installs safety and control system

The Port of Aden, Yemen's premier shipping port, has installed an advanced Vessel Traffic Management and Information System in order to ensure the Safety and Control of vessels in the port with a total cost of US \$2.5 million. The system also includes high-tech surveillance systems and radars in order to safeguard the port and vessels from mishaps or terrorism attacks.

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Sheikh Mohammed Mutuali Asharawi:

The Imam of the heralds

By: Mohammed Albadany
katyouwe1@yahoo.com

Sheikh Asharawi, that great herald, was born in 1911 in Dekdoos village, Egypt. He memorized the Holy Quran when he was 11 years-old. In 1926, Asharawi joined Azakazeek institute with elementary one and belonged to Jame Alazhar Mosque, in which he manifested his genius with memorizing poetry, proverbs and aphorisms.

Then he joined a secondary institute in which his concern with poetry and art increased. These were the reasons for his special rank among his colleagues. So, they had chosen him as a president for the students union and then the president for the artists association in Azakazeek institute.

Sheikh Asharawi was preoccupied with the national movement as well as Alazhar movement. During this period he and his colleagues were going to the courtyard and the portico of Alazhar and delivering Friday sermons.

His first major appearance was on the television program called "Noor ala Noor" (Light on Light). It was directed by Ahmmed Feraj and it was about the good qualities of Prophet Mohammed. When the people heard him for the first time, they felt with the beauty and the splendor of the eloquence as well as the accuracy of the meaning.

The Sheikh continued his episode without any kind of fatigue or boredom while the Arabic minds distinguished by the episodes of his praising and explanation of the Holy Quran - until the Jews one day protested against the

his famous program "Khawater Emania" (Believable Thoughts). They felt that after the Camp David Accords that Asharawi's speeches were just a matter of contempt.

Even the Israeli Prime Minister stated that the explanation of the verses of the Holy Quran, which exposed the Jews, could dispute the peace process. Not only that, but also the American press wrote in bold title "SILENCE THAT MAN."

But he did not keep silent or change his style. All were hearing his explanation of the Holy Quran in which he distinguished his unique style in the explaining its meanings.

We pray for Allah to have a big mercy upon him and to lodge him in His paradise. Asharawi died in the same month which he was born at the age of 87.

Obsolete heart

By: Fuad Noman
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Rose!
Look at me; I am not in tears
In life's time,
My heart lost and froze
So, my life's stream converted
Into a hurtful shore
Do not evermore flame me more
and more
Is not it enough what inside me to
sear!
Is not it enough what on my land to
fear!
Oh my Rose!
Even if your deep root
is about to shear
So please, do not shed your tears
When I touch your red cheeks
For my life,
Your striking scent is my lovely
dear
In time, my deep pain can soundly
heal
Love is forever

My sun's warmth can't be
transformed into a severe fever
As my obsolete heart will be
your pioneer and leader
Whatever!
No power for your love can delete
As my soul's sinews are still able
To sing and beat
So my heart can't be obsolete
Look at Mr. Robber
A shame's weaver
Who makes himself a pompous boss
In truth
One day he would be in gross loss
He without doubt
Who can bend and sheer
Since Lie is a dirty deal
I violently shake my heart to reveal
How my soul goes to feel
For jollity, I can't steal
The truthful love is the dearest deal
Love is as God only one
Nor be three or four
Rose!
No one for your cry and moan
Only, my soul can listen and hear

You take me with ocean's overflow
You shake my sakes to always glow
Nothing is so heavier than what I
stow
No one like I your lips' dew can
draw
Rose! No one for your cry and
moan
Only my heart is your lifetime's
loan

I submit; I deny!

By: Shokry Abdo Ali Al-Qubati

High and high.. above the sky
Another Moon is seen by I
Nice about it, I am, but why?
As if it is, to me, my eyes!
Now, come down to earth, and sigh
She is the Moon... I Submit; I
Deny!

Qat sessions

By: Mahmoud Al-Harazi
mahmoud_22@hotmail.com

Ramadan has ended and Eid Al-Fitr has come and gone cheerfully. In Sana'a, the streets are empty and the whole city is motionless, as if it's been abandoned, because both young and old men have abandoned the streets. However, women and children pack the city's parks and public spaces, while homes are packed with young and old men spending much time chewing qat.

The qat session begins every afternoon with a group of friends gathering in one of their homes, sometimes at the outset. They alternate telling jokes and stories, laughing sometimes and fighting at others. One shares a story that happened to him in the past, followed by the others, or they speak about politics and other issues. At other times, they speak about future projects, wishing they could carry them out.

Such ideas spring from the beginning of the qat session and they continue talking about projects and future plans. However, as soon as nearly three hours have passed and each one has endured talking to the one nearby, all

of their faces turn to gloom and they have no strength of movement.

They also no longer can talk. They forget the projects and politics and start remembering their past preoccupations - especially those of the diminutive yet happy nation of Yemen - and the great future that will be achieved in their prosperous homeland.

However, as soon as the qat is out of their mouths, just five to six hours later, they curse themselves that they chewed it and swear they won't buy qat again the following day. But when that next day comes, awaiting the daily qat session begins, so they go buy it, sometimes borrowing money to get it.

All qat chewers know it's a waste of time, effort, money and health. Regardless, the numbers of qat chewers in Yemen is approximately three million, at the very least. Qat chewers spend approximately \$6 million a day, with an average YR 300 per capita. Thus, Yemeni qat chewers spend approximately \$156 million annually and waste approximately 15 million hours daily (an average of five hours per capita).

Every qat chewer knows all of this, but even more than that, they know that more than 320 types of pesticides and insecticides are used on qat trees,

most of which are banned internationally. And for what? Only to increase qat production, while increasing greed among qat owners and their lack of concern for public health.

Another huge loss is in wasting the nation's water resources. Qat cultivation and production uses approximately 800 million cubic meters of water, thus using approximately 80 percent of groundwater. This is happening while some citizens are dying due to drought and cities are disappearing because of lack of drinkable water.

The greatest loss is that qat chewers aren't limited to just old and young men, but have extended to include women and children, which makes the problem more complicated and without any resolution to it. If the government established social clubs to gather young Yemeni men and women rather than qat sessions, the matter would be completely different, with a strong national economy as well as strong and healthy citizens.

Declining local currency values due to high prices causes qat owners and sellers to raise qat prices because they're dissatisfied with smaller profits. The result is that whenever food-stuff prices rise, qat prices rise too - and in the presence of the law, which

Human rights... Or animal!

By: Sami Sallam
Sami.Sallam@ye.britishcouncil.org

Yasmine is 17-year-old Yemeni-American girl dedicated to a case that touches an important human awareness issue.

At the age of 15, Yasmine created a proposal for animal shelters and an awareness program for treating stray animals. This girl spotlights stray animals as an element of life that definitely deserves recognition. The approved proposal presented to the British and Dutch Embassies and to the WSPA, reflects her humanitarian sense,

highlighting animal rights. Issues a vast majority of Yemeni are unaware. However, the proposal meets the standards Prophet Mohammed taught in this regard. I agree people in Yemen need awareness campaigns on how to deal with such poor creatures.

Drawing the attention of both Embassies and the WSPA, stands as a great achievement, and I wish Yasmine the best in her endeavors. On the other hand, I hope Yasmine draws the attention of concerned international organization to the plight of human rather than animal shelters. "You can't walk or drive without seeing a beggar waiting for a handout to afford a mouthful in order to

keep alive. The sleepy child sitting with a bathroom scale waiting for a person worried about losing one more kilo due to hunger or unknown terminal illness," as she said in her interview with Yemen Times. Abject poverty, disease, and hunger are an inevitable part of Yemeni lives.

I am not against Yasmine's project, but I suggest she not waste any opportunity in calling interested international NGOs' attention to human right's issues in Yemen. The ability of local organizations has proven remarkably slow and weak in dealing with the issue of Yemeni people having basic rights to a decent quality of life.

Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS

- 1 Tropical food staple
- 5 Group of trees
- 10 It's a blast
- 13 Kitchen emanations
- 15 Herbert Hoover, e.g.
- 16 Chinese river or dynasty
- 17 Kind of experiment
- 19 "The Lord of the Rings" actor Holm
- 20 More bohemian
- 21 Break at the theater
- 23 Seesaws
- 25 Dashboard instrument
- 26 If you're human, you'll do it
- 27 Mope
- 29 Intuitive knowledge
- 32 Alfresco area
- 34 Pi followers
- 35 Take in or let out, e.g.
- 38 U.S. federal documents producer
- 39 Singer Newton
- 40 Babe in the woods

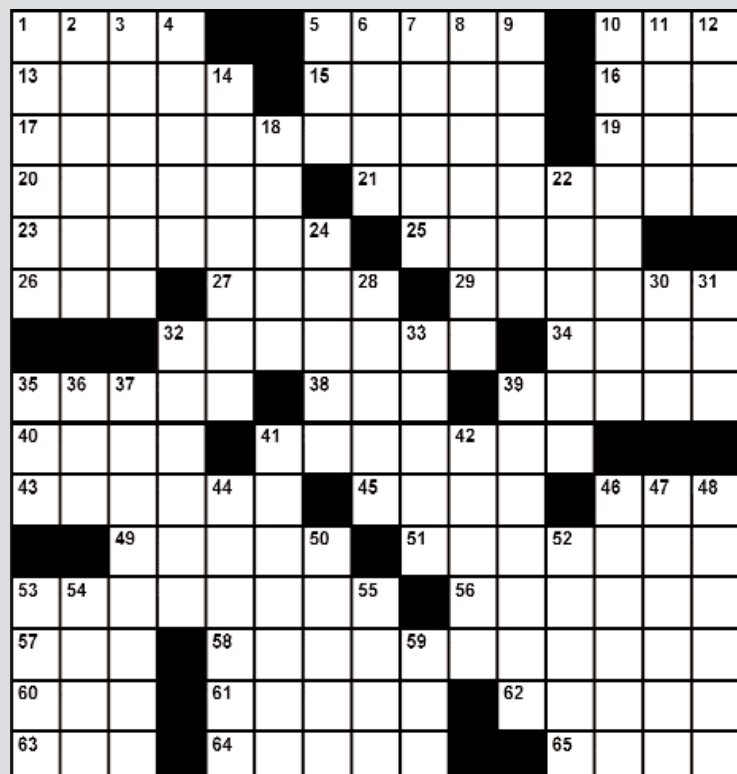
- 41 Occasions for holding hands
- 43 Feel the need to drink
- 45 Red Cross collection
- 46 Otherwise called, briefly
- 49 Where the Gurkha reigned
- 51 Consoles
- 53 Some Bach pieces
- 56 "And look you, here's your letter; this ____" (Shakespeare)
- 57 ____ Lanka
- 58 Shared dwelling
- 60 Doodlebug's morsel
- 61 Small, decorative cases
- 62 Arafat's first name
- 63 Cowboy legend Rogers
- 64 Family lines
- 65 Superman's surname

DOWN

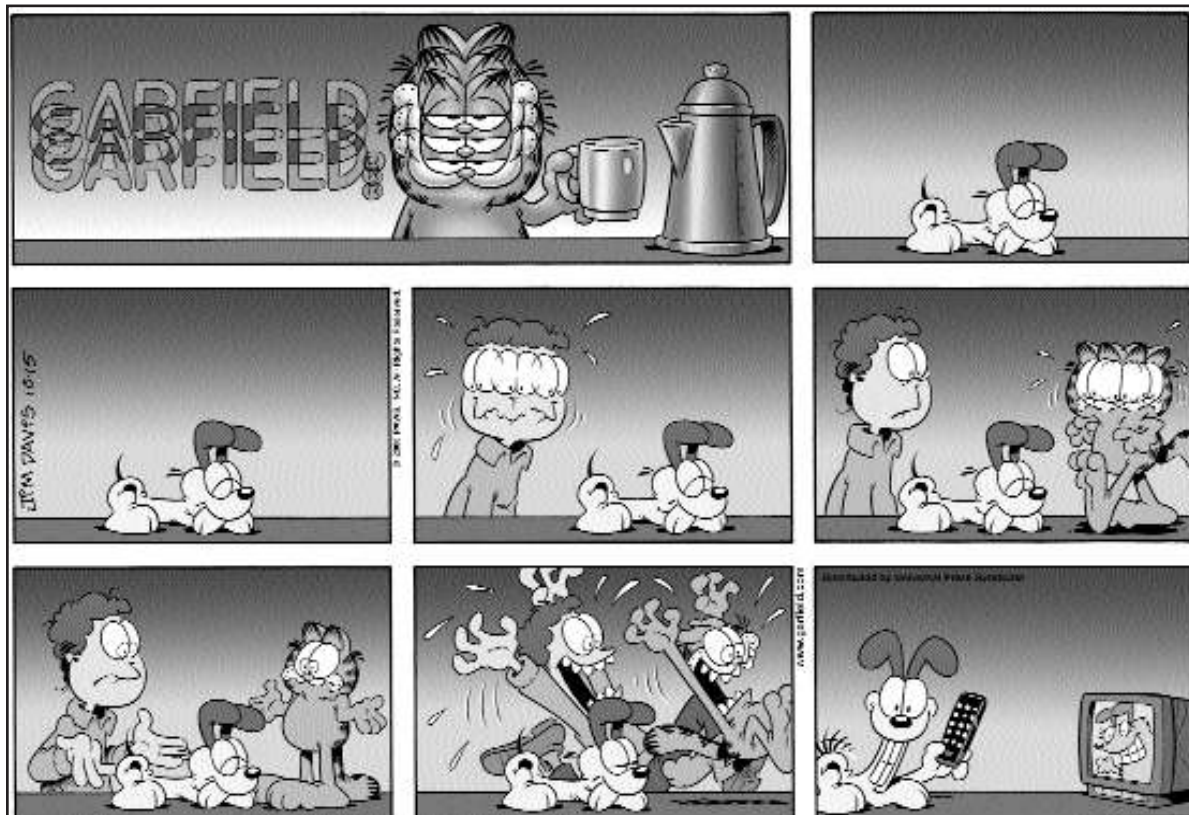
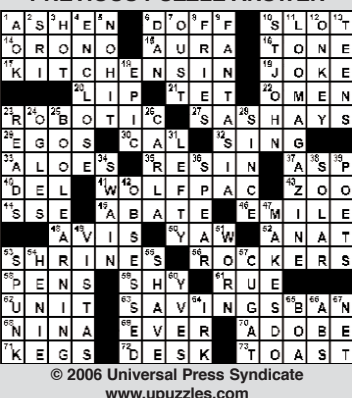
- 1 Up until now
- 2 Smitten one
- 3 Hollowing tool
- 4 What an astronaut may get into
- 5 Tomcat

- 6 Actor's quest
- 7 Having debts
- 8 Kind of point
- 9 Playbook play
- 10 Bitten before?
- 11 Cleared of clutter
- 12 Pitchfork piece
- 14 Certain train car
- 18 Baseball scoreboard item
- 22 Where Greeks met Greeks
- 24 Hurricane water wall
- 28 Fibrous barks
- 30 Charged particle
- 31 Directly from NNW
- 32 Insectivore of Madagascar
- 33 Traffic markers
- 35 Fore and ____
- 36 Di-dah lead-in
- 37 St. Paul, for one
- 39 Loaded
- 41 Part of a canon
- 42 St. ____ (largest Virgin Island)
- 44 Play suit?
- 46 Words in a James Dean film title
- 47 Enters, as data
- 48 Put forward as truth
- 50 Drink like a dog
- 52 Comparative words with "strong"
- 53 Nicholas, for one
- 54 Yes ____ (choice words)
- 55 Notch
- 59 Feminine suffix

"TWO CENTS WORTH" by Casey Rumblach



PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER



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Yemen celebrates the World Food Day 2006

By: Ismael Al-Ghaberi

Along with other nations, the Republic of Yemen has celebrated this Monday the occasion of World Food Day 2006. Under the theme "investing in Agriculture for food security", the ceremony kicks off its events here in Sana'a in cooperation with Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

During the celebration, the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation Dr. Jalal Fakeera has delivered a speech, affirming that the strategic policy adopted by the Yemeni Government is to sponsor and support agricultural sector in the country. Dr Fakeera pointed out that this is the correct approach for development and poverty elimination, taking into

account that agricultural sector plays a substantial and vital role in the development span in industrial nations as it helps in coping with various difficulties facing development process.

The Minister further confirmed that Yemeni farmers have been well-known through history for their success in exploiting the diversity in the geographic nature of their country to cultivate many agricultural products some of which have gained worldwide fame. Dr Fakeera praised the women in the villages and their contribution in the agricultural field.

On the other hand, FAO representative in Yemen, Hashim Al-Shami, delivered a message on behalf of Jaques Diouf, FAO Director-General, on the 2006 World Food Day. In the speech, Al-Shami said: today, agriculture has contributed to human

civilization by improving nutrition and living standards. It has ensured the production and distribution of agricultural, fishery and forestry products and enough food to feed everyone on this planet, the message reads.

Despite the progress achieved in agriculture and rural development, more than 850 million people still remain hungry and poor. Our greatest challenge is to reach the World Food Summit and first UN Millennium Development Goal to halve by 2015 hunger and poverty worldwide.

The theme chosen for World Food Day and TeleFood this year is "Investing in agriculture for food security" so that "the whole world will profit." The aim is to highlight the role of investment in agriculture - both public and private. Action should be supported to improve rural livelihoods by reversing the decline of public investment in agriculture over the last two decades.

Seventy percent of the world's hungry live in rural areas. That is where it is most critical to provide food and employment. The seed planted by a farmer leads to a flourishing agribusinesses that pay taxes, and help build rural schools and roads. Agricultural development is the first step of a long-term sustainable economic growth. Everyone gains from investment in agriculture.

Since 1964, FAO has been a key player in the UN system in the mobilization of international and domestic financing for agriculture in favour of developing countries and countries in transition. Through its cooperation with financing agencies, FAO has helped 165 member countries to obtain funding for almost 1 600 agricultural and rural investment programmes and projects. That represents funding commitments of over US\$80 billion!

The challenge of increasing investment in agriculture is especially great in Africa. Governments in that region have recognized the urgency of committing their own resources to agriculture. In the "Maputo Declaration" in 2003, African Heads of State committed their governments to allocating 10 percent of their national budgets to agriculture and rural development within five years, thus doubling the present level of resources.

Recently there has been a significant revival in lending for agriculture. Debt forgiveness programs, strengthened by the G-8 decision in 2005, have begun to release national resources for investment in the sector. But much still remains to be done and innovative actions are welcome.



World Food Day/Theme



From right to left Fao Representative, Mr Shammakh, Dr. Jalal Fakeera

Increasing the volume of public investment in agriculture is of absolute necessity and it is crucial to make such assistance more effective. One major mechanism is the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, a consortium of 26 donor development agencies, which FAO co-chairs with Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The platform seeks to improve donor aid effectiveness and focus action on achieving the Millennium Development Goals.


While increased development assistance, public investment and debt relief are key elements, equal importance should be given to private sector investment. Commercial farmers, traders, input suppliers, agro-processors and transnational agribusinesses all contribute to a

global system of investment that can help rural people reap profits from agricultural production, marketing and trade. But, importantly, let us not forget that small farmers themselves are the biggest investors in agriculture.

"Promoting profitable partnerships" is the new model for cooperation between the public and private sectors. This means finding new ways of bringing together producers - small farmers and cooperatives - with agribusiness and governments to create profitable ventures. It places primary responsibility on governments to create stable socio-political conditions, establish legal frameworks for access to land and water, enforce grades and standards, foster a better climate for private investment and provide essential rural infrastructure.

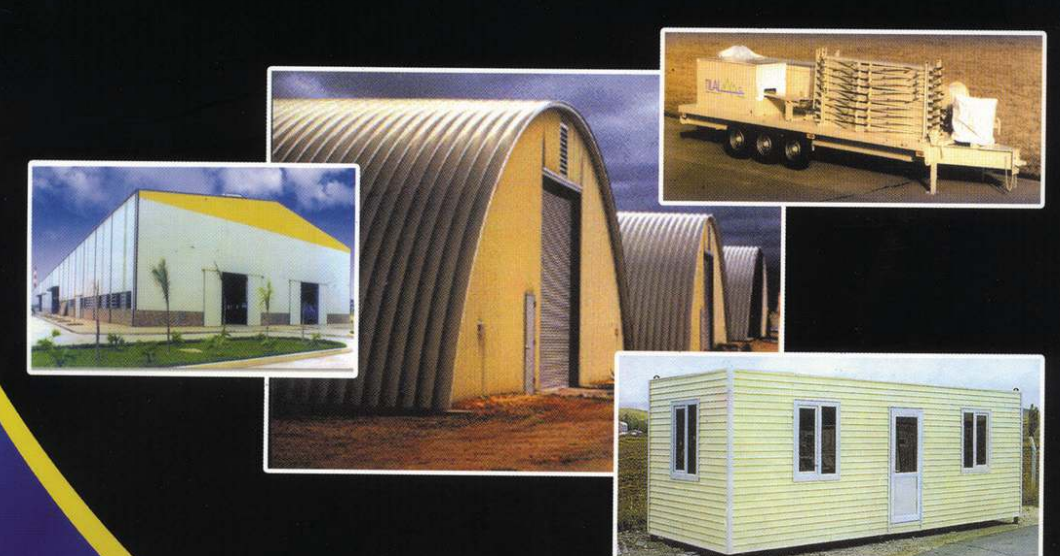


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