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Issue No. 1000... and counting... Issue No. 1000... an



Reasons for spinsterhood: Education, poverty, expensive dowries



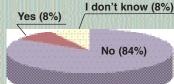
Mohammed Al-Yemeni: Portrait is where our emotions find their home



General Director of the SBWM: "The existing project will extend the life of the aquifers, but it won't solve the problem."

Readers' Voice Last edition's question: Yemeni MPs doubt the capability of the

existing Parliament's presidency board to keep pace with other parliaments across the world in controlling relations between executive and legislative authorities. Do you think Yemen's Parliament is like other world parliaments in its legislative and organizational performance?



This edition's question:

Do you think the funds Yemen will receive from donor countries will actually be spent to improve the country?

Yes I don't know

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

More than 85 percent of Yemen's estimated outside financing is secured **Success at Donors Conference**

By: Raidan Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — The international community has responded favorably to Yemen's plea to assist in financing its development at the Yemen Consultative Group meeting, also known as the London Donors Conference, held Nov. 15 and 16 at Lancaster Castle in the UK.

Nearly 86 percent of Yemen's estimated outside financing needs were secured in order to implement the nation's third strategic five-year development plan, in the hopes of increasing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to 7.1 percent by 2010 from the current 4.1 percent estimate for 2006, thus speeding economic progress, providing employment opportunities and decreasing poverty.

More than 42 countries and international development and financing organizations participated in the conference, contributing more than \$4.73 billion in aid, grants and loans for Yemen.

Saudi Arabia was the largest donor at \$1 billion, followed by the Kuwaitbased Arab Fund for Development at \$700 million. Other donors were Qatar and the United Arab Emirates at \$500 million each, the United Kingdom at \$222 million (£117 million), the United States at \$220 million, Kuwait at \$200



President Ali Abdullah Saleh during a press event following the conference.

million in loans and the Sultanate of Oman at \$100 million.

Other countries and organizations like the World Bank, the European Union and the Islamic Fund for Development also generously contributed funds, while organizations and countries like Bahrain offered technical cooperation, capacitybuilding and training in order to build human capital in Yemen.

The conference began with welcoming remarks by Daniela Gressani, World Bank Vice President for the Middle East and North Africa Region; Gareth Thomas, British International

Development Minister; Abdul Rahman Al-Atieh, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

During the opening session, Saleh pointed to the failure of the 2002 donors conference in Paris, where only 20 percent of funds pledged actually were given to Yemen to implement needed development projects. He hoped this year's conference participants would have a genuine interest in helping more than eight million Yemenis escape poverty.

Continued on page 2

Yemen Times marks issue No. 1,000

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Nov. 20 — The Yemen Times celebrates issue No. 1,000 today, an achievement that affirms Yemeni journalism's success as a whole, as well as the flourishing of free and independent media in pursuit

This achievement is the fruit of many efforts and much hard work since the newspaper was established in 1991. In that year, the late Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, an economics professor, founded the Yemen Times and introduced it to the local and international readership. The newspaper's success is attributed to his

Founded by the prominent economist and human rights activist, who also was its editor and publisher until his untimely death at age 46 in a 1999 traffic accident, the Yemen Times began publishing Feb. 28, 1991 with the declared aim: "To make Yemen a good world citizen."

Fifteen years later, staff members confirm that the road to success wasn't easy, being full of thorns and difficulties, particularly as staffers committed themselves to neutrality, independence and transparency. Yemen Times reporters thus far have been committed to seeking facts; however, such facts often are bitter and fatigu-

Staff members' efforts and dedication have produced positive results in numerous areas, the most important of which is gaining the confidence and a good reputation in the eyes of local and international parties interested in independent and transparent media.

As a result of this reputation, the Yemen Times has received several international awards, the first of which was the International Press Award in 1996 – only five years after most recent award was in May 2006 when the International Press Institute (IPI) honored the Yemen Times with its 2006 Free Media Pioneer Award.

The newspaper's distinctive success is attributed to its self-reliance, as well as exercising a noble humanitarian message professionally. Today, one may say with pride that the Yemen Times established the initial steps toward free and independent journalism, devoting most of its time and efforts to seeking facts.

On this occasion, Yemen Times staff commit themselves to continue striving to reach the noble humanitar-

ian goals for which the newspaper was founded. They vow to continue seeking facts, defending public rights and freedoms, backing civil community organizations and discussing facts objectively, neutrally and trans-



Yemen Times' founder.



The first issue of Yemen Times on Feb. 27, 1991.

The newspaper's editorial board states, "We remain committed to sup porting citizens and conveying their sufferings, concerns and voices to government officials and decisionmakers. We'll continue promoting all of the positives and criticizing all of the negatives in all governmental and non-governmental parties," adding, "We'll always support efforts aimed at implementing economic and political reforms and developing Yemen's press situation."

The Yemen Times attributes its success to its sincere reporters, who continue exercising great efforts, and deeply thanks its readership and those who support it.

Appeals court supports prison for Al-Qaeda terrorist

By: Yemen Times Staff

imprisonment ruling

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — The Terrorism Appeals Court has upheld a three-year Mohammed Hamdi Al-Ahdal, Al-

against Qaeda's second-in-charge in Yemen,





who was convicted of targeting foreign interests and raising funds for terror

During the court's final session, prosecution accused Al-Ahdal of raising money to carry out terrorist plans, declaring that he collected more than 1 million Saudi riyals to finance terror acts in Yemen.

Such acts included striking the USS Cole in Aden port and French oil tanker Limburg in Mukalla, which, according

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Mohammed Hamdi Al-Ahdal

to prosecution, were financed through financial transfers from Saudi Arabia either via phone or e-mail.

Additionally, prosecution pointed out that Al-Ahdal admitted meeting with Abu Ali Al-Harithi, Al-Qaeda's first-incommand in Yemen, whose car was targeted in a November 2002 U.S. missile attack in eastern Yemen's Marib governorate. According to a source, he further admitted working as Al-Harithi's body-

Prosecution also charged Al-Ahdal with receiving Ahmed Ibrahim, a Palestinian who entered Yemen illegally, and took him to Marib's Al-Houson district, where Al-Ahdal received SR 380,000 to buy weapons. Al-Ahdal also gave Al-Harithi SR 50,000 to carry out criminal and terrorist plans.

For his part, Al-Ahdal stated during

Al-Qaeda in Yemen's financial official, and requested a swift release. Also known as Abu Asim, Al-Ahdal was arrested September 2003 in Sana'a following a lengthy period of intelligence work. Born in Medina, Saudi Arabia in

the final court session that not all of the

information was correct and that he had

no connection with Al-Harithi. He fur-

ther denied undertaking any military

acts, as well as allegations that he was

1971, Al-Ahdal worked in the honey trade during the early part of his life. He was arrested in Saudi Arabia in 1999 and jailed for two months, after which Saudi authorities deported him to Yemen, where he lived in Hodeidah on Al-Ummal Street.

While living in Saudi Arabia, Al-Ahdal traveled many times to Bosnia and Herzegovina. He also fought against the Russian army in Chechnya, where he was injured and his leg was amputated. Additionally, he made numerous visits to Afghanistan between 1999 and 2000.

Al-Ahdal traveled to Ethiopia in 2000 to follow the case of his cousin, who was accused of terrorist acts there. According to several sources, he became Al-Qaeda's top man in Yemen after Al-Harithi, key planner of the USS Cole attack, was killed.





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In brief

Aden

Local Council meets World Bank delegation

Nov. 18 — General Secretary of Local Council, Aldul Kareem Al-Shaef, met the delegation of the World Bank led by Golio Thomas and they discussed the issue of governmental institutions restructure. Al-Shaef said the topic of the new administrative restructure for the state's organizations. They also discussed the proposals and recommendations of workshop organized by the World Bank in Aden.

Dhamar

Traffic accident leads to 16 killed and others injured

Nov. 19 — One traffic accident led to 16 dead and others injured on the Jahran's Way in Dhamar. Witnesses stated that the accident was a crash between a car and bus which was headed to Sana'a – the two drivers are killed.

Sana'a

Workshop on eradicating illiteracy Nov. 18 — Mohammed Al-Said, the Assistant of Syrian Minister of Culture arrived in Sana'a on Saturday to take part in a workshop on eradicat-

ing illiteracy in Sana'a.

The workshop is organized by USESCO in cooperation with the Arab Education Bureau for the Gulf States and includes participation from 11 Arab countries. Upon his arrival, the Syrian official stated that the workshop focuses on increasing funds to eliminate illiteracy in the region.

The first Child Entertaining Day

Nov. 19 — Shuithib Foundation celebrated the first Child Entertaining Day cooperating with the management of Movenpick Hotel. About 60 children from different social foundations for orphans and handicaps children participated in the celebration. The celebration included sports and entertaining sections. The celebration reflects the cooperation between the civil society and the private sectors to improve the children's activities in society.

Training course in television montage

Nov. 19 — The Mass Communication and Qualifying Institute organized a training course in television's montage cooperating with the Syrian television. The trainees are selected from the Yemeni channels. The course aimed to provide trainees with new technical knowledge in preparing television programs and how trainees select suitable sound effects for a program. "This course is important to provide the Yemeni staff with the new experience in both the technical and media fields and the Yemeni Staff need more courses in different fields to improve their performance," according to the dean of the institute.

Taiz

Cooperative training to improve graduates employability

Nov. 19 — The employment oriented private sector program which is supported by the German Agency for Technical Co-operation held a seminar on Sunday. The training seminar was provided by companies, large and small of the private sector, in order to create the highly demanded competence of the labor force and overcome skills gaps to enhance investment and improve the employability of graduates. The purpose of this gathering is in particular to discuss the findings and recommendations of an important study carried out on co-operative training in Hodeidah and Taiz. The relevance for other governorates will be reflected in steps for further action through a working group and committee be identified.

New Japanese grants to District Education Office in Mahwiyah

Nov. 19 — Japan has decided to extend a grant amounting to US \$90,000 to the District Education Office in Mahwiyah in Taiz government under the scheme called "Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human security projects." The grant aims to support small-scale community-based projects in basic human needs fields, such as primary health care and basic education in the developing countries.

Foundation stones for a new press code proposed

Journalists, lawyers, civil society and MPs gathered to create alliances between all stakeholders and a strong advocacy movement in Yemen for freedom of press.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

ADEN, Nov. 19 — The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate is leading a committee of journalists, Members of Parliament, NGOs, researchers and legal consultants on a draft proposal of the press code to be presented to Parliament. The committee was formed after a two-day discussion organized by the Human Rights Information and Training Center in Yemen, the Center for Defending Freedom and Journalists in Jordan and the International Research and



Ezzaldin Al-Asbahi: "The right to information is as basic as the right to live."

Exchange Board. The discussions took place in Aden where 33 activists from the media, legal system and Parliament came together to integrate previous efforts in the media law issue and take it a step forward.

"The purpose of this project is to break the ice between journalists, MPs and lawyers so that these three important sectors work together for the sake of freedoms and independent media," said Ezzaldin Al-Asbahi, general director of the information board.

The discussions aimed at finding ways for creating alliances between all stake holders and establish a strong advocacy movement in Yemen.

Nidal Mansour, president of the Defending Freedoms Center, congratulated the participants at the end of the sessions and concluded that this project is a part of many efforts aimed at enhancing the legislative environment in Yemen and in other Arab countries.

"I feel the first step was accomplished in these discussions. The most important issue here is that we have to work on advocacy and getting the support of Parliament in order to amend all the legislations that restrict freedom of press so as to create better environment in line with the international standards," explained

The spaces for freedoms must be expanded with a system to respect these freedoms through the law and there should be understanding and coordination between the legislative and executive systems as well as with the media and NGOs to complete the cycle of defending freedoms, said Mansour.

"This is especially good for the country's development because there could not be investment in the absence of freedom of press. And these sectors are the driving force behind freedoms," said Mansour.

Abdulkareem Shaef, deputy Gov. of Aden, acknowledged the importance of freedom of press and remarked that this freedom comes a responsibility that must not be ignored "we must make sure that this freedom is not empowered negatively for political or personal gains."

This event is the second for this project. Nigad Al-Buri a researcher and legal consultant of the project, explained to the participants the history of this project and conveyed the recommendations of the first meeting in July which took place in Sana'a.

Recommendations from the previous meeting included six priorities – the top-most is media law and others include training, professionalism and syllabus at the media colleges. Moreover, according to Al-Buri, there is a gap between the practices and the regulations whereby the practiced media is much more free than what the regulations state.

"Therefore, we must work on



This project is part of many efforts aiming at enhancing the legislative environment in Yemen and in other Arab countries

aligning the regulations with the aspirations of activists and defenders of freedom of press," he said.

Al-Buri said Yemen in particular is promising in this regard because of its on-going democratic progress.

The twinning of MPs and the media is very important according to Al-Buri. The MPs need the media for public support and the media needs Parliament to support their causes.

"We have to work together to make the freedom of expression a public demand," Al-Buri concluded.

Nabeel Al-Mahmadi, a lawyer and specialist in the media law, gave a scary narration of the constraints found in the current media law and in the punishment acts on journalists.

"There are regulations to imprison journalists, confiscate their property, close their newspapers and even put them on death rope," said Al-Mahmadi. "The current laws incriminate journalism and they could be interpreted in more than one way which is very dangerous."

Al-Mahmadi is a legal consultant with the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate and has provided in depth analysis of the media law with a team of specialists and he will add his input in the formation of the propose new press code draft.

Al-Thawri editor seeks asylum

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Nov. 19 — Khaled Salman, editor-in-chief of Al-Thawri newspaper — mouthpiece of the Yemeni Socialist Party, announced his withdrawal from the president's delegation at the London Donors Conference and made a bid for political asylum in the UK.

"The Yemeni governance commits sev-

eral human rights violations and abuses. It exercises illegal practices against political forces making democracy lose its meaning. The regime uses democracy merely to receive grants and funds that go into the pockets of corrupt officials," Salman said in a statement.

"The nation experiences division, the citizenship ranks multiplied and the country has fallen prey to the rulers and symbols of the regime who loot property, waste public money and exercise corruption in different government offices," the statement reads.

"For these reasons, Khaled Salman, member of the Yemeni Socialist Party,



Khaled Salman, announces his bid for asylum.

central committee and general secretariat, and Editor of the party's newspaper, who is wanted by the government for 13 publication cases, herby announces his withdrawal from the president's media delegation and seeks political asylum in the UK."

Salman is a Yemeni journalist known for criticizing government corruption and

he seeks implementation of political and economic reforms. Since he took the job as the newspaper's editor, he has been in permanent dispute with authorities and now faces up to 13 publication cases.

Salman, who has extensive media experience of over more than three decades, is counted among the foremost names in Yemen's journalism over the last few years. He is famous for his solid attitudes and support of press freedom. Salman's asylum claim is a direct message to the government,

"He preferred to seek a political asy-

lum, sending a strong message that the next period will be worse than before," according to another journalists. Salman did not occupy any leading government posts and he is famous for his political and human commitment. A number of journalists called upon the authorities to make use of the message sent by Salman in his asylum to review its practices against the freedom of political and press work and further warned of continuing the existing practices of suppression.

Continued from page 1

Success at Donors Conference

Saleh added that regional stability very much depends upon conference outcomes and whether the international community will help his government fulfil promises made to the Yemeni people during the election.

A high-level delegation from the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation arranged with several donor countries to ensure their active participation in the conference. President Saleh visited Saudi Arabia, communicating with several Gulf leaders prior to the conference in order to ensure its success in raising the required funds for Yemen's third development plan.

Failure to raise such funds would result in the plan's collapse, but also would have catastrophic consequences for Yemeni society and its economy, which currently is in a fragile condition, according to analysts.

Despite being surrounded by some of the region's richest nations, Yemen is the poorest Middle Eastern country and receives only a fraction of the aid given to other Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Yemen received \$12.7 per capita in 2003, equivalent to 2.2 percent of GDP, compared to \$33.4 per capita (18.7 percent), which is the average for LDCs.

Sources at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation indicated that this donors conference was expected to yield \$10 billion in order to accelerate Yemen's development and make such development evident to the Yemeni people, especially after its government's cooperation with the United States in the war against terror and becoming instrumental in ensuring regional stability, coupled with such political milestones as holding democratic elections, decentralizing power and reforming the judicial system.

The two-day donors conference discussed several aspects related to Yemen's political and economic scenario, including its national reform agenda, regional economic integration, donor harmonization and implementing various development projects. Such discussions included considerable participation from several Yemeni government officials, intellectuals and academics.

President Saleh also declared Yemen's intention to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in order to ensure transparency in managing Yemen's extractive wealth, following recommendations by a high-level delegation attending last month's third EITI plenary conference in Oslo. Thomas, whose Department for International Development initiated the EITI, applauded such declaration, further announcing that the UK will increase its annual aid to Yemen from this

year's £10 million to £50 million by 2011.

At a concluding press conference, GCC secretary-general Al-Atieh stated, "I think a new history has begun in this region, the Arabian Peninsula area. Such cooperation and partnership is necessary to face present challenges in the region, as well as also outside it. It's very important to have this coordination, cooperation and integration in order to achieve the ambitions of the peoples of the GCC and Yemen."

He added, "The GCC is very interested in all matters related to development and building Yemen's infrastructure within the reform agenda the Yemeni government has adopted, which is essential for development efforts in Yemen. This gives us confidence and gives donors confidence to support projects in Yemen. In the next stage, we'll work with our brothers in Yemen to translate these pledges into reality."

Thomas stated during the conference, "Because of the huge challenges Yemen faces in terms of the number of children not in school, issues around potentially declining oil revenues and the need to improve access to employment and better health, as a result of my visit to Sana'a last week, Britain has decided to increase its aid budget to Yemen from some £12 million next year to some £50 million in 2010-2011

"We're delighted with the way this donors conference has gone. As [Al-Atieh] said, to raise \$4.7 billion is a hugely significant achievement for this conference. The challenge for Minister [of Planning and International Cooperation Abdul Kareem] Al-Arhabi and his colleagues in the Yemeni government and indeed for the international community who are Yemen's friends is now to focus on implementing such spending to ensure that money is well spent and that it genuinely delivers for the very poorest people," Thomas concluded.

Analysts indicate that despite the conference's success in raising nearly 86 percent of required funds, the key issue is implementing and efficiently using such funds because the Yemeni government is known to be infested with corruption and dysfunctional when it comes to implementing development plans.

However, President Saleh seems confident that the key issue is partnership between Yemen and the GCC and developing Yemeni infrastructure in order to become more business-friendly, especially prior to next February's Invest in Yemen Conference in Sana'a, which seeks to attract more investment, especially from Gulf states, and may be the key factor for long-term development in Yemen.

Westerners face trials in Yemen

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Nov. 17 — Seven Western nationals and a Somali man, arrested in Yemen in October on suspicion of links to Al-Qaeda, will face trials in Yemen and will not be transferred to Guantanamo Bay, the Yemeni Interior Minister said on Monday.

"They will be referred to the court here," said Interior Minister Rashad Al-Alimi, speaking to reporters after a parliamentary session.

Asked whether the three Australians, Briton, Dane, Somali and the unidentified western national would be transferred to Guantanamo Bay, Al-Alimi replied, "No, they will not be sent anywhere."

The men were arrested in Sana'a Oct. 16 for alleged links to the Al-Qaeda

terrorist network and for attempting to smuggle weapons to Somalia.

A German national was also arrested, but was released earlier in November after Yemeni interrogators said he had not been involved in any illegal activities with the other suspects.

Australian press quoted an official saying the seven suspects have confessed to involvement in smuggling weapons to Somalia and collecting money for terrorist attacks. The press quoted an official, who spoke on conditions of anonymity, saying the authorities searched the house of the Dane and discovered documents and reports linked to Al-Qaeda and thousands of U.S. dollars and euros. The Dane is a convert to Islam and had been studying at the Islamist Iman University, which is run by Sheik Abdul-Majid Al-Zandani. The

university has denied that any of the suspects were students there. The group also includes Australians Abdullah Ayub, 19, Mohammed Ayub, 21, and Marek Samulski, 35.

The Ayub brothers are sons of Jihad leader Abdul Rahim Ayub, a member of an alleged Sydney terrorist cell who was arrested and charged a year ago.

The arrests are part of a state security campaign launched last month against members of an Al-Qaeda cell. The security official added that among more than 12 suspected militants arrested in the campaign six were believed to be linked to the Sana'a cell.

One of the detainees allegedly confessed that he was assigned to carry out an attack with an explosive-laden car on Sana'a International Airport, the security official said.

Billions lost on the roads

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — There have been several financial and administrative violations wasting over YR 100 billion in the Ministry of Public Works and Highways, according to the Central Organization of Control and Audit's 2005 third quarterly report.

The report says the ministry failed to implement various strategic road projects, the cost of which had been approved as part of the ministry's budget for 2005. It said YR 3.6 billion were allocated to 20 projects, which the ministry failed to implement.

The report added that YR 104.5 billion, which had been approved for five tarmac road projects, was spent on other non-planned projects. These new proj-

ects, however, still are listed among the projects under implementation in order to receive allocations in coming years.

The Ministry of Public Works and Highways spent a total of YR 3.3 billion on 44 tarmac road projects without any financial allocations for these projects in the ministry's 2003 investment program, the report revealed. Other numerous projects received allocations during the same year, however these projects had not been listed in the budget.

The Central Organization of Control and Audit remarked that as implementation of projects in many sites was halted and the completed parts in these projects have become subjected to deterioration and damage by rains and their

water courses were blocked due to a lack of maintenance.

The organization reported the Ministry of Public Works and Highways hired contractors to prepare studies and designs and paid their costs, however, the General Administration for Studies and Designs in the ministry is the party responsible for these works according to the law.

The organization criticized the in the Ministry of Public Works and Highways that led to raising the cost of projects and failure to complete the projects on time. It noted the ministry doesn't coordinate with service bodies, such as electricity, water and sanitation corporations.

Darfur rebels say army launches major offensive

By: Opheera McDoom

KHARTOUM, Nov 19 (Reuters) - The Sudanese government has launched a major offensive in North Darfur despite an agreement to hold new talks among all parties to the conflict, Darfur rebels said on Sunday.

A rebel commander said clashes continued on Saturday and Sunday, after joint attacks by government forces and militia on rebel bases in the Bir Mazza area on Wednesday and Thursday.

The African Union (AU) monitoring mission, which had condemned last week's attacks, confirmed that fighting was continuing. However, the Sudanese army denied it was conducting an offensive.

"We have split into two or three groups and all have fighting," said Jar el-Neby, a commander from the rebel National Redemption Front (NRF), which rejects a May peace accord signed by only one of many rebel fac-

"The government did not use planes yesterday but today the Antonovs are circling," he told Reuters from Darfur.

Government troops and allied militia known as Janjaweed were still inside the former rebel town of Bir Mazza, Neby said, calling on the international



A Sudanese refugee only known as Kiro, stands in Seneit near the Chad/Sudan border, Nov. 14. Like many hundreds of others, Kiro, 7, fled over the border to Chad since the attack by the Janjaweed militia on her village of Khabesh in the Jebel Moon area of West Darfur where a United Nations report said 22 people were killed in the attack.

community to intervene to protect civil-

"We have confirmed at least six people killed and more attacks on civilians and looting of cattle is going on," he

The AU confirmed the continued fighting. "It's an open secret," said one AU official.

A Sudanese army spokesman denied the allegations.

"There were clashes between some tribes and the rebels in the area and the armed forces intervened just to protect the civilians there," he said. "But the clashes were very minor, the (rebel) and AU reports are untrue.'

Militia and rebels

Experts estimate that about 200,000 people have been killed and 2.5 million forced from their homes in 3-1/2 years of conflict in Darfur. Mostly non-Arab rebels took up arms in early 2003, accusing the government of marginalising the remote west.

Khartoum mobilised tribal militias to stem the violence. Those militias now stand accused of a campaign of rape, murder and pillage.

The North Darfur clashes follow a refusal by Sudanese authorities to allow U.N. humanitarian chief Jan Egeland to visit areas near the fighting last week, despite Khartoum's public insistence that security is good in the region.

Foreign journalists have also been denied travel permits.

A meeting in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa on Thursday agreed that the May peace deal for Darfur was inadequate and a new process should be activated under joint leadership of the U.N. and the AU.

However, the rebels said the government was merely trying to buy time to press on with its military operations. A struggling, ill-equipped AU force has failed to halt the violence.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in Addis Ababa that Sudan had agreed in principle to a joint U.N.-AU force in Darfur, but Sudanese officials later denied any such agreement.

"The United Nations can offer logistical support to help maintain stability in Darfur rather than replacing the African force there," Nafie Ali Nafie, Sudan's most powerful presidential adviser, told the state news agency SUNA.

"Sudan will never consent to the deployment of international forces to replace those of the African Union, who have shown their ability to execute their

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West fighting terrorism properly now, Blair says

By: Sophie Walker

LAHORE, Pakistan (Reuters) Western allies in Iraq and Afghanistan are now giving more weight to reconstruction and wider political issues alongside military force to fight their war on terrorism "properly", British Prime Minister Tony Blair said on Sunday.

Blair met Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf in Lahore to discuss how to beat the Afghan Taliban, pool counter-terrorist intelligence and quell militancy in Pakistani religious schools.

He announced a doubling of British aid, some of it to boost Pakistan's moderate Muslim schools to counter Islamic extremism.

"We begin to win when we start fighting properly, and I think we are now fighting properly," Blair told a news conference. "But we've got to do more."

Asked to clarify Blair's remarks, his spokesman added later: "This is all about learning as we go in the war against terrorism. First, the world recognizes the global threat of this extremist ideology, second it takes security measures to address that and thirdly it has to recognize issues like

British government officials have been lining up in recent days to warn about the threat of plots by Muslim militants to launch terror attacks in Britain, while British forces in Afghanistan have faced some of the fiercest fighting from a resurgent Taliban since it was overthrown in

On Friday, Blair briefly appeared on Friday to accept an Al Jazeera interviewer's contention that the Western intervention in Iraq had been disastrous -- although he went on to point the figure at outside forces



Prime Minister Blair is greeted by Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf ahead of their meeting at the Governor's Residence in Lahore Nov. 19.

fomenting sectarian violence, and his Taliban receive support in his office said he had not meant to endorse the questioner's view.

Both Blair and Musharraf were adamant that progress was being made, both in the fight against terrorism and against the Taliban in particular. But both said military might needed to be backed by political solutions and reconstruction

Musharraf has faced longstanding criticism over accusations that the

country, as well as shelter on the Pakistani side of the lawless frontier.

"Taliban problem is an Afghan problem. It is in the southeast region of Afghanistan, being supported by elements from this side," Musharraf told the news conference with Blair.

"We need to put our house in order, here on our side, and make sure that this support is cut off, but the main battle is in Afghanistan," he said.

Britain has about 5,000 troops in

Afghanistan, part of a 31,000-strong NATO-led force battling the Taliban. Musharraf said Afghanistan needed

reconstruction help on the scale of Marshall Plan for Europe after World War Two.

"A generation to defeat"

The two leaders also discussed the need for the Middle East peace process to resume.

Blair last week told a group advising U.S. President George W. Bush that progress towards resolving

the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would help reduce the bloodshed in Iraq. He told journalists in Lahore:

"Global extremism is based on an ideology that exploits grievance, so what we've got to do is -- at the same time that we are taking on that ideology -- we've got to take away the opportunity to exploit a grievance."

"This took a generation to grow and it will take a generation to defeat," he said.

British government sources say

they are concerned about the flow of people and ideas between Britain and Pakistan, where some madrasas, or religious schools, double as training camps for Islamic militants. Nearly three-quarters of a million British Muslims have roots in Pakistan.

The two countries' interior ministries are to set up a joint working group to pool intelligence work and for Britain to provide technical help and training in forensics, crisis management and tracking terrorist funds.

Expression of Interest Technical Assistance on the Impact of the Basic Education Expansion Project Credit No. 3422-YEM

This request for expression of interest follows the General Procurement Notice for this project that appeared in Development Business, issue no. 553, February 2001.

The Ministry of Education (MOE), Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Basic Education Expansion Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the contracts for the below-listed consulting service. The Project Administration Unit now invites eligible consulting firms to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consulting firms must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills, etc.).

The objective of the technical assistance is to help MOE assessing the impact of the Basic Education Expansion Project and verify if the Project development objectives have been achieved through implementing project components. The main objectives of the consultancy are to:

- 1- Study the girls' enrollment indicators in the five project governorates (Sana'a Am ran. Al-mahweet, Aldhale and Ramah), and compare them with the prospective results and the baselines.
- 2- Investigate whether the project has reduced the gab between the enrollment of male and female in the targeted governorates.
- 3- Study the girls enrollment indicators in the five project governorates (Sana'a, Amran, Almahweet, Aldhale and Rymah), and compare them with the baselines and the perspective results.
- 4- Investigate whether the Project has achieved the development objectives and update its indicators and compare them with the Project design.
- 5- Investigate that the Project achieved its goal in all its components (Access, quality and capacity building). 7- Study the quality of the programs implemented and or supported by the project such as teacher training, supervision field visits.
- 8- Find out if the interventions supported by the Project are sustainable, and if not suggest the necessary recommendations to make them sustainable.
- 9- Study the Project impact on achieving some of the Basic Education National Strategy objectives.
- 10-Discuss any obstacles that were faced during the program implementation and suggest the recommendations to overcome them.

The selection of the consulting firms will be in accordance with the procedure set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: "Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, May 2004" Interested consulting firms may obtain further information during working days Sat.-Wed. From 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon at the address below to which the expression of interest must be delivered by December 6, 2006.

Ministry of Education Basic Education Development Project Project Administration Unit 60 m Southern Rd. -Bait Meyad Tel: 00967-01-619160, Fax: 00967-01- 619219 Email:info@bedp-yemen.org

More Buddhists killed in Thailand's Muslim south

BANGKOK (Reuters) - Suspected Muslim militants shot dead a Buddhist man in Thailand's restive south on Sunday in another apparent response by separatists to Prime Minister Surayud Chulanont's peace visit last week.

A policeman said the victim, whose neck had also been partially severed, was the third Buddhist killed in the last three days in the southern province of Yala in what appeared to be a coordinated campaign to force Buddhists to leave.

"I had warned him about the situation. I had asked him and his family to leave this village because it is almost occupied by Thai Muslims," the policeman said.

Last night, suspected Muslim militants shot dead an elderly Buddhist man in Yala, one of the three southernmost Thai provinces in which more than 1,800 people have died in nearly three years of unrest.

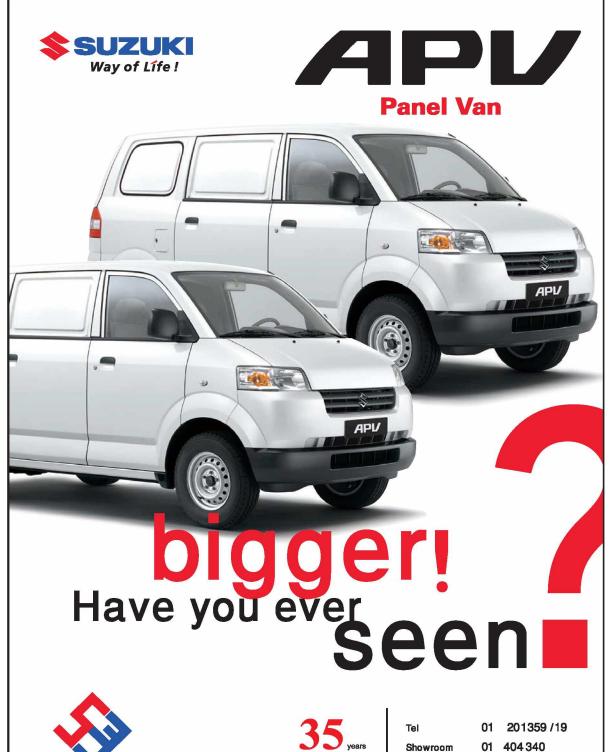
The militants have never made their aims public or claimed responsibility for any attacks in the

Muslim-majority, Malay-speaking region, which was an independent sultanate until annexed by Thailand a century ago.

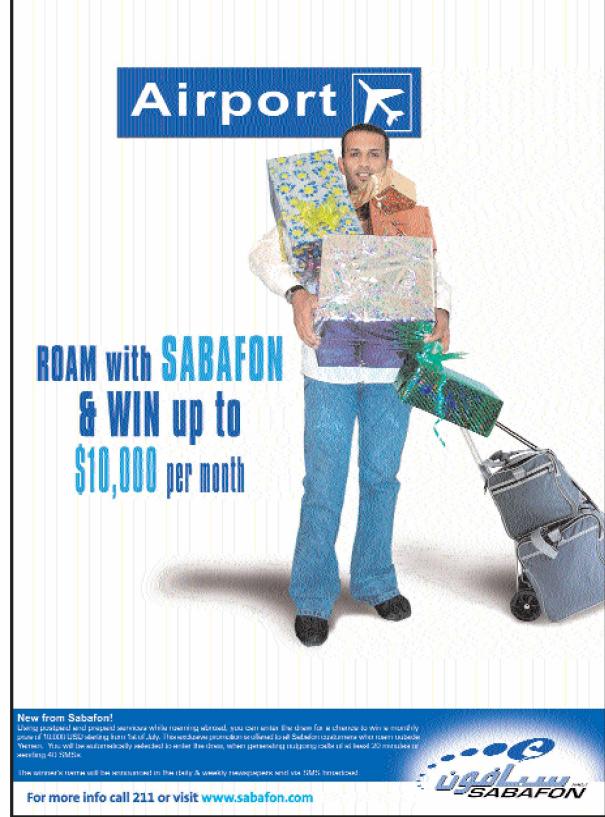
Surayud, who was appointed by the army after a military coup against Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra in September, has embarked on a major peace drive in the south, stating a desire for talks for rebels.

His three visits in the last month have been followed almost immediately by coordinated bombings or shootings

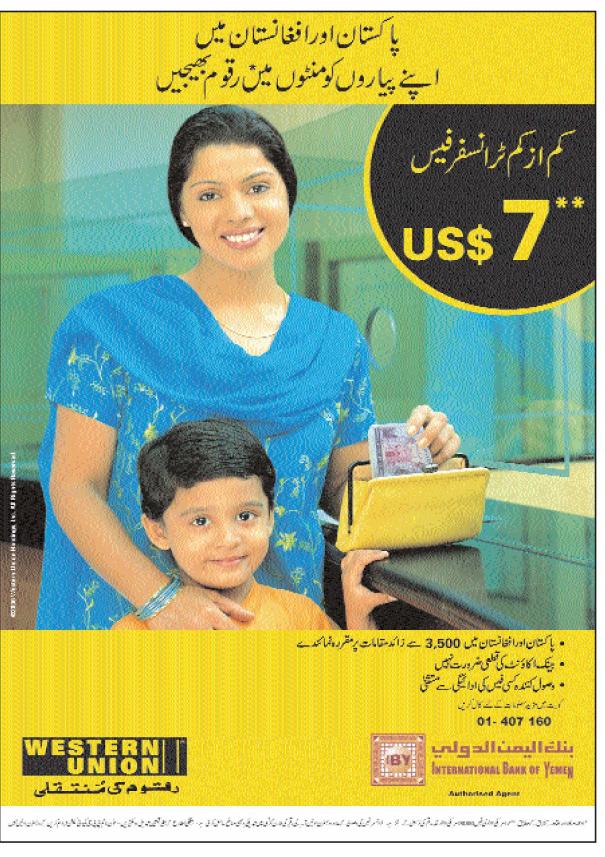




E-mail suzuki@yemen.net.ye







Reasons for spinsterhood: Education, poverty, expensive dowries

Tribal societies like Yemen consider marriage a basic life value and women who don't marry by a particular age face rumors and questions about why they don't marry.

Bv: Fatima Al-Aiel fatimafnfr@yahoo.com & Nawal Zaid

he phenomenon of spinsterhood isn't limited to a particular community; rather, it's widespread across several communities in both educated and illiterate societies. Various factors affect spinsterhood: men who are unable to pay expensive dowries to a girl's family, poverty and educating girls, which takes several years.

Such marriage issues and many others negatively impact women's psychology, particularly in Yemeni society, which blames the woman. In some areas, when a woman reaches age 30 without getting married, people label her a spinster and she then has a slim chance to wed.

Unfortunately, some fathers don't care as much about their daughters' happiness as they do about money. "I'm 30 years old and I haven't married yet because my father refused my coworker, who still must improve his financial position," Salwa Mohasin explains, "This is why I'm still unmarried." Women in Yemeni society aren't allowed to give their opinion on the dowry or other marriage costs.

Some parents list many requirements for the groom to provide, the most important of which are the expensive dowry, furniture and other items. In this instance, the groom starts believing that marriage is a dream that's impossible to achieve.

Houda Al-Saleh, 35, hasn't married due to such expensive requests. "Many men proposed to marry me. When my father refused them all, rumor spread in the neighborhood that my father doesn't want me to marry, so for two years, no one has come to ask for my hand."

Many daughters become victims of their father's selfishness often because they work and are responsible for the household's income. Thus, fathers create reasons for a man who proposes for

"Saba" and her five sisters were forced to remain unmarried and live with their father, who depended upon their salaries. After he died, only two sisters married because they still were young, whereas the other three haven't. "My two sisters and I are past age 40, so it's impossible to find men who are at the same age to marry," she adds.

Many youths prefer to marry girls from rural areas, thus increasing spinsterhood in the urban areas. Men think uneducated rural girls are more innocent and easy to control, says Jamal Hassan, a 28-year-old educated man. He married an illiterate rural girl after hearing negative comments about educated women who like to control life themselves, adding, "My parents and friends advised me to marry a young rural girl."

Unfortunately, many youths think educated urban women claim equal rights with men, thus making it difficult for the husband to control his wife, 25-year-old university student Najla Al-Qasimi remarks. "University women are engaged in studies and seeking knowledge, which is why men favor marrying those with modest education or those who aren't educated. However, some youths do prefer marrying educated women.'

Educated women seek more from marriage, including love, respect and social status. "Frankly speaking, I prefer to marry an educated guy who's sufficiently aware about marriage affairs and establishing harmony between both spouses," Al-Qasimi



Women themselves sometimes are the reason for their own spinsterhood. rejecting several suitors while awaiting a better opportunity. "I'm unwilling to suffer anymore in my life. I spent hard years studying, especially given the lack of facilities for study, so I'll never marry a man who isn't ready for marriage," declares 30-year-old Hanan Al-

Samah Al-Alwi, 32, points out that spinsterhood is better than divorce. "I haven't married because I haven't found a good man to be my husband. I prefer to be spinster rather than a divorced woman carrying the responsibility of children," she notes.

"I never consider myself a spinster because I'm interested in my studies. I ignore society's viewpoint," explains 35-year-old Arabic teacher Nada Ibrahim. "Spinsterhood was a problem in the past, when women were responsible to their fathers, but many women now are educated and have their own businesses, with some helping their families increase their income," she

However, when unmarried women reach age 45, they often become frustrated, perceiving that they lack numerous privileges, the most important of which is a marriage partner who loves and understands them. Asma Abdullah blames herself for being a spinster, having refused many men who proposed because she was waiting for a better one. Now, at age 44, most of her friends are married and have children.

Dr. Nabil Mubarak Bin Fahashen of Al-Horabi Hospital states, "Some women age 30 and above suffer numerous organic diseases, particularly in the nervous system. Symptoms are manifested by lack of appetite, being underweight and losing fat in the chest and abdomen, while others suffer diarrhea. In conducting checkups, spinsters don't seem normal. They suffer frustration and other psychological disorders, as well as diabetes and hypertension."

Decreasing dowries

Some parents who aren't gluttonous for money decrease the dowry when a man applies for any of their daughters,

58-year-old Hadeya Al-Madani notes. "Frankly speaking, if the man applying for any of my daughters is well-bred and responsible, I don't care about money as much as I care about my daughter's happiness."

Um Ali Zaid, 32, agrees, "Because I have five daughters, I prefer a man applying for any of my daughters to be well-bred and abide by religious principles. I don't care about money. I want the applicant to respect my daughter and treat her kindly.'

She adds, "We've heard about and seen many daughters who became victims of their parents' greed. It's time to stop this greediness."

According to 30-year-old government employee Hamoud Abdullah Zaid, women's exaggerated requirements are responsible for their spinsterhood. Most condition that the marriage partner must be educated, in addition to other requirements, which are difficult for the man to meet, thus compelling him to seek a rural girl.

"Spinsterhood has climbed to 70 percent during 2006, particularly in cities," 29-year-old Mona Ali, a member of the National Woman Committee,

Housewife Fahmia Mohammed Al-Shehab, 41, illustrates, "Of those who applied for me, I preferred one who was educated as a main condition, in addition to having a good job and abiding by religious principles. I also preferred to live with my husband in a private home."

Al-Shehab adds that due to the ncreasing numbers of women men often are found to be married to more than one and they usually prefer marrying girls under age 18.

Tribal traditions also are a reason for spinsterhood, as some parents refuse to marry their daughters to outsiders. Higher-class Yemenis also refuse to marry their daughters to men from lower classes, another factor making marriage impossible.

In rural areas, spinsterhood begins at age 18 and even younger in some villages. In such areas, people consider an 18-year-old girl a woman suitable for marriage, particularly if she isn't enrolled in school. This notion is backed by 35-year-old Islamic Education teacher Mujahed Al-Badawi. However, in cities, spinsterhood begins at age 25, an idea supported by 29-year-old housewife Intisar

Wrong points of view

Some families request high dowries because they mistakenly think it will preserve their daughter's dignity. They also think more money will ensure that her husband won't ever neglect her. But a man intent on abusing his wife will do so no matter what the cost of her dowry or he won't ask for that

The real assurance of a good marriage is a good choice of partner, rather than money, which won't last. However, many parents say they feel social pressure to demand a high price for their daughters' hands. "If I request just a small dowry, people will think there's something wrong with my daughter," says a father of seven girls.

The elderly consider it best for a girl to marry young "Let the 8-year-old girl get married and I guarantee a successful marriage!" declares 70-year-old Amina Al-Marrani, "When the girl becomes older, she'll be of no help anymore." Such thinking means she must marry at a younger age in order to be obedient to her spouse.

Are Yemeni men bachelors?

For Yemeni men, bachelorhood isn't a phenomenon because they can decide to marry anytime. Men like Amin Al-Hawathi indicate that they simply don't want to wed because marriage is a great responsibility. But in some cases, men over age 30 are unmarried because they can't afford the marriage

"I can get married anytime because dowries are low in our area," notes 30year-old government employee Nabil Al-Khamis.

Adel Al-Haimi, 29, agrees, "I prefer to remain a bachelor but I could wed even at age 40 because any girl would accept me as long as I can provide her with all she wants.

Al-Marah Club: Treating children through fun

By: Fatima Al-Ajel fatimafnfr@yahoo.com

n an effort to help manage children's medical treatments in conjunction with fun and games, Saba'een Hospital has opened Al-Marah Club.

Observing sick children's inadequate conditions at Saba'een Hospital, a visiting French group arranged with hospital administration to dedicate a room exclusively for a club. Opening under the banner, "Remedies for Enjoyment," the club is geared for pediatric patients to be in an entertaining and relaxing atmosphere.

Nurse Bushra Al-Masari is in charge of the club and the children who attend it, having taken various French-sponsored courses on how to deal with sick children. Nagat Abdo, managing supervisor for the French Link Organization in Yemen, selected her to be responsible for Al-Marah.

Since its opening, the club's method is to supply toys and videos to help patients under age 12 take their medication. No more than 10 children are part of the club at any given time, but this also limits space given to the club for its activities, thus preventing more children from joining.

"My hope is for the club to have larger accommodations so a larger group of children can participate," Al-Masari comments, "It's such a pleasure to see the children out of their hospital beds and not thinking about their illness as they busy themselves with the different toys we have available, especially those who previously were deprived of such entertainments."



Mother and children together at the Al-Marah Club.

remember 12-year-old Hanadi, who like a hospital. joined the club during her hospital stay. After spending a month with us, she refused to leave the hospital once she recuperated because she didn't want to leave the club or the favorite toy she had played with. However, I emphasized that she could visit us anytime she wanted."

During a two-hour club visit, children are involved in a variety of activities: painting, playing in groups, watching TV or listening to music and Islamic songs. Three-year-old Abdulmalik Ali Nahi joined the club with his mother's permission, who commented that she liked the idea of the club, "I spent 10 days in the hos-

She continues, "I especially pital with my son, but it didn't feel Six-month-old Mohammed Qalain

visited Al-Marah with his mother, Um

Mohammed, who said, "My son has been ill for four days and every morning, I dedicate an hour at the club for him. I appreciate the organization supporting it." Every child who joins Al-Marah is given a membership card allowing him or her to visit the club even after

their discharge from the hospital. More than 40 children have joined since the club's opening. Its main event is a large monthly party, wherein French members from the Link Organization are invited to spend time with the children. Link currently faces various organizational issues, one of which is struc-

turing the club's activities. While most activities are for entertainment, the organization also provides many handcraft type of games aimed at teaching children new skills. Unfortunately, Al-Masari states, "I observe that the children are more interested in playing freely, so I sometimes find it difficult getting them to use those particular games.'

Generally, every new project has its own aims and future plans for success. Al-Marah plans to open other branches in hospitals throughout Yemen and hold a lecture series for club members' mothers to teach them how to deal with their children's illnesses. The objective is to increase mothers' health care awareness by inviting specialists to talk and explain variety of subjects, as well as distributing cassettes and DVDs on health care.



Children are not thinking about their illness's as they busy themselves with

the different toys in the club.

lob Announcemei

Health 20/20 Project, Funded by USAID, announces the following vacant position

The project focuses on health system strengthening worldwide. In Yemen the Project will provide support at the central level to activities such as National Health Accounts and Health Information Systems. The project will also support the five USAID-targeted governorates of Al-Jawf, Amran, Mareb, Sa'adah, and Shabwah. The following position will work as part of the project team in

Position: Project Assistant

- Assist technical staff & consultants in technical and administrative activities, and help to coordinate the communication and collaboration between staff members.
- Assist technical staff in data input, data/technical analysis, developing charts, tables, preparing and formatting reports
- Assist with planning meetings and coordinating activities with outside clients in ministries and governorates
- Organize the logistics for project workshops, training sessions, and seminars. Translate documents.
- Assist with solving office and administration problems related to entire range of project activities.

- BA in finance, administrative, management or health related field.
- Two years professional experience in business, finance, management or health related fields. Excellent knowledge and experience with Windows, Word, Excel and other data processing and graphical presentation
- Excellent inter-personal communication and organization skills.
 - Fluency in English and Arabic.

CV to be sent to P.O. Box22344, Sawan, Sana'a or Fax: 967 1 302 722 or Email: aalkohlani@phrplusyemen.com

Free Voice: Investing in the future

This is "Investing in the Future" Program's 6th Newsletter from Nov. 13, 2006. The newsletter is published by Free Voice and provides information about Freevioce Arab media program and Arab partners.

Reported by: Nicolien Zuijdgeest

Qatar - Aljazeera backs new pan-arab newspaper

The Qatar based satellite TV network Aljazeera is backing the launch of a new pan-Arab newspaper. It seeks to establish Doha as an Arab media hub and wants to end the Saudi hegemony over regional print media.

This was reported by the UK's Financial Times newspaper. Aljazeera has hired Abdelwahab Badrakhan, the former deputy editor of the Saudi backed pan-Arab daily al-Hayat to run the new paper, which is slated to start publication next year from Qatar. It will aim to rival London-based al-Hayat and Asharq al-Awsat, Badrakhan told the FT. It will however have a wider margin of print freedom than these two Saudi-backed publications. Subsidised by the emir of Qatar, critics say Aljazeera treads carefully when covering controversial Qatari stories.

Syria - Private political daily hits newsstands

A privately-owned political daily hit Syrian newsstands, hailing its arrival as a first in this tightly-controlled country for decades.

The editor of Al Watan ('The homeland') said that it was neither an opposition paper nor a state-controlled daily. 'We do not belong to any movement, we do not express the points of view of any party,' Waddah Abed Rabbo wrote in an editorial, adding that it was the first private political daily to appear in Syria for more than 40 years.

Abed Rabbo also owns the economic daily Al Iqtissadiya ('The economic') launched in 2001, while a privately-owned weekly, Abiad wa Asswad ('White and black'), has been on sale since 2002. The independent satirical paper Addomari which came out in 2001, was closed down by the authorities two years later after publishing articles critical of the domestic situation.

United Arab Emirates - Human rights activist harassed

Since June 2006, security officials and the judiciary have targeted several prominent activists, including Muhammad al-Mansoori, president of the independent Jurists Association (JA), and lawyer Muhammad al-Roken.

In June, the Federal High Court issued an arrest warrant for al-Mansoori, which accused him of allegedly 'insulting the public prosecutor'. According to Al-Mansoori, these charges stemmed from his public interviews and advocacy promoting human rights.

In July, security agents detained al-Roken for 24 hours. They detained him again in August for three days. According to the Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (HRInfo), al-Roken was detained for criticising the country's justice system in an interview with Al-Jazeera. Security officials confiscated his passport and barred him from leaving the country.

For the past five years, authorities have barred twelve prominent UAE commentators and academics from disseminating their views in programmes broadcast by Abu Dhabi Television. The government also actively discourages the formation of non-governmental organisations. AlRoken and other lawyers and activists are already waiting more than two years for a reply from the Ministry of Social Welfare to form the Emirates Human Rights Society.

Yemen - Legal committee established

Civil society organizations and human rights activists have agreed to form a legal committee in Yemen to offer the necessary legal assistance for journalists detained over opinion expression.

In a special meeting Ezalddin al-Asbahi, head of the Human Rights Information and Training Center, called all to work together to make such a committee succeeds, giving examples for journalists who are under trial and need a legal assistance. The meeting also agreed to form another committee to study a

financial and regulatory bylaw for the legal committee, which they called the Legal Committee for Supporting Press Freedoms.

The meeting comes within the program of reforming the media legal frame in Yemen being implemented by the International Researches and Exchanges Board (IREX) and the Jordan-based Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ) in collaboration with the HRITC.

Lebanon - Conference on Arab media

The World Association of Newspapers (WAN) will be holding a conference in Beirut on Dec. 10-11, 2006 to explore the efforts of Arab media to win their independence and freedom in an environment of continuing repression and harassment.

The conference, entitled 'Press Under Siege,' will focus on the physical threats and dangers to media staff, legislative and economic pressures used to control media, censorship and self-censorship, and programs to support the development of professional and commercially viable news enterprises.

Leading publishers and editors from across the Middle East are being invited to discuss these challenges at the conference, which is being hosted by the Lebanese daily An-Nahar.

The opening session of 'Press Under Siege' will include the presentation of the first Gebran Tueni Award to an Arab newspaper executive, in honour of the former Lebanese newspaper publisher and long-standing WAN Board Member who was killed in a car-bomb attack in Beirut on Dec. 12, 2005.

Algeria - Government obstruction for journalists

Since summer 2006, French-Algerian journalist Lakhdar Khelfawi and Algerian journalist Arezki Att-Larbi have been banned from leaving the country after charges dating back to 1997 have been resurrected.

The July 5, 2006 decision of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika to pardon all journalists sentenced for 'offending constituted institutions and bodies' and 'defamation' turned out to be window dressing.

Arezki Aıt-Larbi, correspondent for French newspapers Le Figaro and Ouest France, is a harsh government critic.

After his request for a passport renewal was refused in May, Ait-Larbi found out that he had been sentenced to a six-month prison term dating back to 1997. A defamation suit had apparently been entered by a former head of prison services that turned a blind eye to the mistreatment of Lambèse prisoners as Ait-Larbi had exposed in an April 1994 article in l'Evénement. The journalist had never received any notice of the suit or of his court summons. Ait-Larbi looks upon the case a fresh attempt of intimidation by the Algerian authorities.

Khelfawi, who has been settled in France since 1998, returned to Algeria for family reasons in June 2006. When he tried to return to France on July 12, border police banned him from leaving the country. The ban, which dates back to 1997, followed a conviction for "defamation" and a sentence of six months in prison and a small fine. The editor of the weekly El-Kalaâ was named in a lawsuit lodged by the wali of Tébessa, after he published an article remarking on the official's absence from an official ceremony. The Algerian authorities still prevent him from leaving the country even though the July 5 presidential pardon is applicable to his case. In addition, four French cartoonists had visa requests refused, officially because of an "administrative backlog."

Qatar - Aljazeera unveils journalists' memorial

In recognition of the dangerous work that many journalists are required to do, Aljazeera unveiled the "Wall of Freedom" memorial to honour journalists who have been killed while on duty throughout the world.

Aljazeera satellite television network has unveiled the 55-foot memorial, engraved with the names of more than 630 journalists, on Nov. 2 in Doha, Qatar. The date also marks the 10th anniversary of the Aljazeera.

Iraqi-Canadian artist Mahmud Al-Obaidi designed the Wall of Freedom. "Reporting the news has become extremely unsafe in many parts of the world," said Wadah Khanfar, Aljazeera's director general. "We wanted to honour those who have sacrificed their lives for their profession, and we hope that one day we can see an end to the killing."









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 - التصاميم: تصاميمنا مجانية ، مختلفة و اقتصادية .

Words of Wisdom



One of the main problems in building a modern state in Yemen is tat three blocks of our society perceive themselves above accountability. The sooner we see this and address it, the easier it will be to build a meaningful government based on law and order, and modern values.

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



OUR OPINION

1000 issues with many more to come

ith this issue, the Yemen Times marks 1000 issues. We started as a Wednesday weekly in 1991 and, proudly, we are now bi-weekly and since inception the Yemen Times was issued nonstop through thick and thin. On this occasion. I found it most suitable to reiterate Yemen Times mission through the words of its founder in the very first editori-

Introducing the Yemen Times

This is the first issue of the Yemen Times. Therefore, it is with pleasure that I use this editorial to introduce it to the

The Yemen Times is an independent weekly newspaper not attached to any political party or thought. As such it stands vis-à-vis the various local, regional, and international issues is determined on the basis of an objective assessment of the merits and demerits involved. The paper aims to reach out to a large base of readers especially amongst the intellectual classes, the decision makers, the business sector and the international community.

Nevertheless, the paper covers with interest and commitment two categories of activities, which are:

1. Economic/ Business Activities:

Yemen Times will provide a detailed coverage of economic and business activities in Yemen, and a synopsis of important regional and international issues in this sector. Major emphasis will be placed on trade, investments, economic laws, tenders, and market-watch aspects in price levels, consumption, interest rates, exchange rates etc. in general, government and private-sector efforts in the country's socio-economic development process will be extensively covered.

2. Democracy and Human Rights:

S

Yemen Times believes that the prosperity and strength of nations, if at least in the long run, will depend on democratic values and the observation of human rights. In the absences of those two basic elements in society, it is doubtful that much can be achieved. Therefore, the paper will closely follow those two issues as reflected in Yemeni life. Much has been achieved in both accounts in the recent past, and much more remain to be achieved.

The paper will heavily depend on primary sources of information; i.e., interviews, polls, field surveys, and contributions and feedback from our readers.

Yet, the paper will also provide information from secondary sources, especially through the weekly summery round up of the local press. All in all, Yemen Times hopes to be informative and analytic in nature. All members of the paper promise to make a sincere effort to serve our readership, and all of us will appreciate an active participation and feed-back. Till next Wednesday, take care!

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Our stages of democratic construction

By: Dr. Abdulaziz Al Tarb

the analysis of the course of democratic construction that President Ali Abdullah Saleh has drawn for our Yemeni experiment we have noticed he is almost entering the third stage after the success of the recent presidential and local elections and in the light what the president's election platform has

touched on as well as a number of other

By: Prof.

Abdulaziz Al-Tarb

He who has studied and followed up the development of the democratic experiment and pattern of the existing political order since President Saleh assumed power in July 1978 would notice it has passed two stages of democratic construction mostly characterized by rational and objective gradualness.

The first stage is called establishment. The president has set it for experimentation through the practices of the authority of democracy such as people's referendums and elections of cooperative councils as well as to arouse the interest of society in this program and its advantages. After that he managed to

finalize theoretical programs guides for that democratic orientation, namely the National Charter of 1982. The president enhanced that by holding the first parliamentary direct election – the elections of the Shoura Council in 1988. To develop the emerging experiment there was the Yemeni unity in 1990, with which the president

concluded the components of the first stage. The second stage was characterized by practicing. The president was able to establish the practical constituents for the practice of democracy by associating the unity with political pluralism, political and press freedoms and the freedom of expression. And it was also associated with passing laws regulating and guaranteeing the practical practice such as the press and publications and the freedom of opinion and expression law in 1990 and the law of 1991 pertaining political parties and organizations

During that period the people managed to finish three parliamentary elections, two

and general elections law in 1992.

presidential elections and two local elections, all enhancing the democratic practice and developing the masses democratic awareness. This stage is about to complete its features and traits in the remaining two months of this year.

As for the third stage, which the president is to launch in the coming days, it will be characterized by traits of implementation. It is an advanced stage of the democratic building and it is distinguished by the stage of the dynamism of the relationship between democracy and the utmost degree of economic development. Each one influences the other in the field of development and growth and its foundation is the human and placing the proper person in the proper place.

We have felt the early part of the third stage already. The president realized with his visions and deep look for the future the impossibility of separation between development and democracy. So he focused during that stage on development and modernization of infrastructure and services. There have been works on roads, communications, electricity, water, health and education all as an essential condition for he economic development and attracting foreign investments in addition

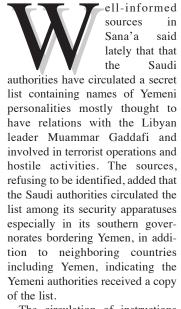
encouraging the local capitals. The president continues thinking of consolidating this development by introducing railroad service for the first time beside the development and expansion of general and commercial ports.

The president envisages that democracy and economic development will develop and grow in healthy climates. Therefore he adopted two laws on financial security and tenders. They are necessary for purging the arena from corruption, creating a sustainable state of social programs and investment in stability by developing and modernizing means and requirements of economic

Generally the present third stage of democratic construction is the one of the actual application of constituencies of democracy and its virtues on economic development and the latter's reflections on democracy for providing constituencies of the economic development and growth for the state of law and order and modern

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Tarb is an economist and a professor in Political Science. He is the head of the Arab Group for Investment and Development.

Saudi Arabia punishing Yemenis visiting Libya



The circulation of instructions stipulates to arrest any person trying to enter Saudi territories and Saudi Arabia can coordinate with the neighboring countries to have access to the wanted persons. The source said the instructions came in the wake of information Saudi Arabia obtained that there are persons who had traveled to Libya more than once and held meetings with Libyan intelligence authorities aimed at planning for terrorist acts and hostile activities hostile to



the kingdom.

The source pointed out that among those names are senior Yemeni personalities, commercial and political, as well as sheikhs.

I say this piece of news has no hidden implications and meanings of the Saudi haughtiness and arrogance towards the Yemenis it is also clearly proves Saudi interference with Yemen's affairs. It is practicing its administration of our country as if it were one of its regions and the troubles and disturbances and destabilization of security it instigates. The Saudi Arabia prevention of Yemenis to visit an Arab country like Libya, and its leader President Gaddafi, and punishment of those who traveled to Libya is one of the prominent moves to tighten its grip on our country altogether, assuming that the regime of Ali Abdullah Saleh does not represent but one of the Saudi Emirs from the Sedirs and southerners who were in Jizan, Najran and the like.

The Saudis cannot watch those who they imagine forming danger against them. It needs to deal with Yemen as an independent state and without considering the citizens of an independent state as wanted persons by it on charge of traveling to Libya and visiting President Gaddafi. The Saudis should recognize there is a Yemeni constitution stipulating freedom of travel for every citizen and that the authority in Sana'a has no right to arrest any citizen in response to demand by the Saudis. Why are we, the Yemenis, prevented from travel? Their regime prevents us to travel even to Iran just to satisfy them.

Why don't the Saudis deal with us as Gaddafi does - he did not ask any Yemeni not to travel to Saudi

Al-Omari, Moneer

Al-Saggaf, Raidan

Patterson, Dana

Shadad, Nisreen

Khidhr, Mohammed

Arabia? Why does travel to Libya become a charge against us while thousands of Yemenis lived in Saudi Arabia and built it with their hands. They have not committed any terrorist acts. Now the regime has imposed house arrest on us and a siege so that we do not go to the land of God to work and live. Maybe the Saudis are looking for someone to attribute their internal problems to and to increase the oppression on people searching for the air of freedom away from the chains of despotism. At present we are prevented from traveling to Libya and Iran in response to the desire of Saudis and traveling to Syria and Lebanon is considered a charge behind the scenes. Maybe we will be prevented to travel to Iraq under the same excuse.

We wonder if the regime in Sana'a will reveal the names of those prevented from traveling to Saudi Arabia or to deal with the list as the implementer of orders, keeping them secret so that the apparatuses are able to arrest them. The wish is that the name of Saleh is not among the list because he travels to Libya and visits Gaddafi

Will the punishment against those be imprisonment, as hap pened to some of our sheikhs though they had official visa and service passports, or maybe harsher? Let's wait and see perhaps our real rulers are in Riyadh and not in

In order to destroy all these barriers I call on every Yemeni capable of traveling to Libya and its leader Gaddafi and also to Iran, Lebanon and Syria and to any country we want to visit. They have no right to prevent us from traveling wherever we want.

We also call for President Ali Abdullah Saleh to move away from the Saudis and declare his freedom from their grip and declare Yemen as a free and independent country and also to oblige the Saudis to release our sheikhs.

Yahya Badr Al-Din Al-Houthi is a Member of Parliament and brother of deceased Sheikh Hussein Al-Houthi.

Letters to the Editor

Political reforms is a priority Dear Sponsors and Participants in the Conference of Donor States The Justice and Democracy Party offer you the most sincere greetings, appreciating your efforts to help our country to attain economic qualification to keep pace with our brothers in the

neighboring countries. In spite of the significance of that economic assistance, we perceive that what is more important for us all today is presenting support and assistance to our country to carry out political reforms that lead to economic, administrative, financial and legal reforms that build the foundation to build a modern democratic, civic state, a state of institutions, law and a just and independent judiciary, and separation among the authorities.

The weaknesses of the state in

performing its duties has led to the

spread of corruption, absence of justice and the deterioration of basic services and more than 41 percent of the population is below the poverty line, 47 percent of the population has an income of less than two dollars per day, while the rate of unemployment has reached more than 40 percent, two million children are outside schools, 50 percent of the total population are not covered by health services, 46 percent suffer from malnutrition, 64 percent do not get potable water, and the number of deaths among children has reached 97 out of 1000 births, while the asphalted roads constitute only 9 percent of the total general roads. While the state budget for 2006 has reached YR 1.18 trillion an increase of more than 70 percent over the budget of 2005, the government intends presenting a request to Parliament to open an additional financial allotment of about YR 400 billion, in addition to the fact that it did not benefit from the difference in the oil revenues, for which Parliament had requested from the government to open a special account and to this day no one knows the fate of those

Our country had also received in the past many packages of aid and financial grants which were not fully benefited from in the specified fields. No doubt, these situations that we have indicated have obstructed the development process and local and foreign investments.

At the level of democratic liberties, the government acts to rally against the freedom of establishing political parties and obstructs the work of the civic society organizations and the freedom of the press, through the laws and regulations that are contrary to the constitution, and with the presence of weapons and their trade.

All these reasons make Yemen fertile ground for terrorism affecting everyone. Thus the credibility of the government in combating corruption is embodied not just in the passing of laws to combat corruption, but in the extent of its ability to refer those files to a just, independent and honest judiciary. Therefore we affirm the necessity of giving importance to the issue of political reforms in our country, and considering them among the priorities of your conference to attain our aspired objectives.

Mohammed Orner Zain Assaqqaf President of the Justice and Democracy Party

Denmark's planned first mosque receives no international attention from Muslims

n launching its fundraising campaign for Denmark's first mosque, the Islamic League, a mixed group of primarily Arabic, Turkish and African associations, had high hopes for Muslims worldwide to contribute to realizing Denmark's first real mosque. However, until now, this hope has been in vain.

It was expected that some of the attention directed toward Denmark due to a Danish newspaper publishing the blasphemous depictions of the prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) last year would help create media attention in the Muslim world, which would lead to widespread public support for the building project.

Although a large number of news media were contacted, it seems none wanted to carry the story of the first mosque to be built on Danish soil.

As a weak minority on their own, Danish Muslims face a hard time in making the mosque a

> The Islamic League Denmark

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26 September weekly, organ of the Yemen armed Forces, 16 Nov. 2006.

Main headlines

- London conference a real partnership with the Gulf and donors
- London conference concludes its meetings, President Saleh: We are to maintaining committed comprehensive reforms
- The participants in the conference praise the Yemeni experiment, committed to support development plans in Yemen
- Yemen foreign minister: Success of the conference reflects international appreciation of Yemeni reforms
- Yemen-French summit in Paris
- Saleh discusses with Blair development of bilateral relations and situation in the region
- Arab ministers concerned with fish wealth meet in Sana'a on 25 November.

Writer Faisal Jaloul says in an article that the Yemenis can start a real opportunity for development and progress in the London conference, providing for them means they have for long yearned for the programs pertaining to infrastructure and, qualification of the Yemeni cadre needed for production on the Gulf

Cooperation Council and receiving technology from outside and invest it locally.

With the means the conference provides Yemen can shorten the distance separating it from other neighboring countries and the farther. Those distances that have accumulated as a result of the nature of the introvert imamate regime and the repeated civil wars during the republican era.

And with those means Yemen can make for the cost of the unitary integration which is very costly and consumed large portion of the moderate oil revenues that fortunately its flow coincided with the unity negotiations that was declared in 1990. with the means Yemen is betting on in London conference it can meet requirements of the demographic revolution escalating with the stability that was established in the country, improvement of health services, expansion of cities, and stability of life in them, and important advantages of infrastructures especially the sector of services that led to expansion of the base of population pyramid ands consequently the generation of new needs in quantity and quality in the past years.

No doubt, the size of unemployment, administrative inflation, and illiteracy need future treatments and plans supported by budgets supposed to be controlled over by proper use. This means that protection of the promised means from London conference maybe the main coming task of the government in the

upcoming stage. This task takes two courses; one dictates building impregnable dam against old corruption and the second involves intensifying monitoring the probable corruption along with launching huge workshops in the light of the coming billions. it is surely that Yemen success in providing the best conditions for the use of the coming means is a fateful question especially that the country is about to step into a new historic threshold.



Al-Wasat weekly, 15 Nov.2006.

Main headlines

- The president inaugurates a new alliance at al-Eman University
- A new shake hits the president's relationship with sheikh al-Ahmar
- The president assures al-Eman university students not to be used as a political card
- Chaos prevails parliament meetings Primary verdict against kidnappers of Italian tourists upheld

The newspaper editorial says the visit of president Saaleh to al-Eman university and his delivering of an organizational speech before its students has affirmed that the president is still able to play the game in the square of division and fragmentation and to play on the cord of differences in visions inside this organization or that the contradiction between this group or that.

The question that imposes itself here is can this game realize results stabilizing the base of his rule and provide it with continuity for the longest possible period? The answer is negative because the previous experiments proved ability to only dissension but did not produce the wanted fruits.

The experiment of the Faithful Youth is the best evident to prove the fact that magic will inevitably recoils against the magician especially if it is practiced against ideological groups or currents possessing their calculations diplomacy considering possibilities of the incomer and threats of the outside. It is a matter those groups do hide and work with all ways to deface any indicator implying of that so that to keep the outward appear as it the real expression of the degree of their credibility.

Me Saleh today is not in need of practicing what he can produce and he does not at the same time to benefit from it as longest possible period as it may soon change to the contrary as soon as possible because an approach with a contradictory side that will soon work to cut the bonds of trust in the credibility of promises.

It is maybe the matter that brought together the contradicted sides as is the case with the parties of the Joint Meeting Parties bloc that grouped themselves in facing the president and his political party.

President Saleh is at present in need of a practice of another type to actually form a strong and sincere support, and that is the work with the masses of the people with regard all that is related to building the state and preparing for it deserved position regionally and internationally.

This cannot be achieved but by proving truthfulness of his promises through working this time with the masses in ending corruption that is harming them materially



Al-Sahwa weekly, 16 Nov. 2006.

Main headlines

are known

- Economic disarray, the government paralyzed
- Interior minister walks out of parliament session after MP Hashid accused him of lying
- Hysterical rise in prices and judiciary discloses the government Politicians: saving the country
- begins from inside, the political will for reform stronger than begging to solve our problems Al-Saadi: Mechanism of the GPC is

Writer Zaid al-Shami says in his citizens?

for laughing at people and its results

article after the end of the elections the prices jumped up high. Food stuffs, wheat, flour, rice, sugar, imported and local products, construction materials, meats, chicken; eggs have all risen as if the prices were waiting the whistle of the start and so they did. The prices skyrocketed while the government stood looking at what is happening as id the question does not concern it and suffering of the citizens concerns some other side.

Up until now we have not heard a logical justification for this sudden rise in prices of all materials and goods. Some interpreted it as a compensation for the private sector for what it has spent in the elections and others exaggerated by alleging that it is a pre-designed agreement and electoral deal to be faced by government silence but accompanied with threat that has no effect on the

The justifications that ascribe the rise in prices to the freedom of trade and the market economy and sometimes it is said due to the world expensiveness as causes and in other time they claim that the state of drought that happened in some countries of the world as the cause.

At all events the question remains why all that has happened in our country alone after the end of the elections? what has the state done to raise the standard of the citizen and what are the strategies it has adopted for the establishment of stability and securing the dignified life for the

Has America "lost" the Middle East?

By: Patrick Seale

ichard Haass. one of America's leading foreign policy specialists, has pronounced that "the American era in the Middle East... has ended." His controversial judgement - which President George W. Bush would certainly not agree with -- is to be found in the very first paragraph of an article he wrote in the November-December issue of Foreign Affairs, the prestigious journal of the New York-based Council of Foreign Relations, of which Haass is President.

Haass argues that in the Middle East's recent history, America's supremacy can be seen as the fourth period of domination by outsiders. The first period was Ottoman control up to the First World War, then British and French colonial rule between the wars, followed by the Cold War, in which Moscow and Washington competed for influence and shared out the region between them. The collapse of the Soviet Union some 16 years ago ushered in a period when America ruled supreme, enjoying what Haass calls "unprecedented influence and freedom to act."

But now, he says, this era too is drawing to a close, and may indeed already be over. He predicts that the region is entering a phase "in which outside actors have a relatively modest impact and local forces enjoy the upper

Is Haass right? Or is he being a little hasty? Are his gloomy conclusions unduly influenced by the misjudgements, omissions and foreign policy blunders of the Bush presidency? Could America recover its authority under a new administration? These are questions of considerable interest to the

Perhaps the first thing to say is that, in spite of its recent failures, the United States is still not seriously challenged in the Middle East by any other external power or group of powers. The Iraq war may have all the makings of a major disaster, but what other power could afford to spend \$500 billion dollars and deploy an army of 140,000 men for an indefinite period half way

across the world?

The European Union, which many had hoped would serve as a counterweight to the United States, has conspicuously failed to forge a common foreign and defence policy. Its members pull in different directions. They are divided on major issues such as the war in Iraq, the Arab-Israeli conflict and on how best to confront the threat of Islamic militancy. On Iraq, Britain chose to side with the United States rather than with its principal European partners, splitting the EU down the

Because of its spectacular economic growth, China is emerging as a strategic challenger to the United States, particularly in East Asia. It is certainly a formidable competitor in the feverish world-wide search for raw materials. It has made deep inroads into Africa. where some 500,000 Chinese are already at work, many of them on construction sites.

But China's economic partnerships and alliances have still not been translated into the sort of naked power the U.S. can project by means of its numerous deep-water fleets, its global network of military bases and its technological supremacy.

Russia's economy, in turn, has improved on the basis of oil and gas revenues, but it is still very far from recovering the considerable influence it used to have in the Middle East as an arms supplier and great power protector of several Arab states.

As for local actors, which Haass predicts will soon "enjoy the upper hand," it is hard to see whom he has in mind. All too often at odds with each other, the Arabs are even more divided than the Europeans. Their oil wealth - their main material asset -- has still not been put to any consistent political purpose.

Iran poses a more serious challenge to American power, but its ambitions would seem to be purely local and defensive. It seeks to break out of the artificial isolation the U.S. has imposed on it. It wants to be recognised as a major Gulf power, and as the protector of Shi'a communities everywhere. Militarily, it seeks the means to confront or deter an attack on itself - to avoid devastation such as Iraq has suffered - rather than to attack others.

As for non-state actors like Hizbullah and Hamas, they pose no credible challenge whatsoever to the United States. Their quarrel is with Israel - and with what the United States has allowed Israel to do in Lebanon and Palestine. Their ambitions are strictly limited to their own societies. If their legitimate grievances were addressed, they would cease to be any sort of a threat.

As the United States faces no serious challenger in the immediate future. either from inside or outside the region, could it recover its authority? There is no doubt that the United States is now deeply unpopular in the Arab and Muslim world, even an object of loathing in many quarters. Militant groups would like to strike at it, if they

Many Arabs look back with nostalgia to the era of President Eisenhower, who put an end to the Anglo-French-Israeli aggression at Suez in 1956 and, more recently, to the presidency of Jimmy Carter who, although he only managed to do half the job - by forging the Egyptian-Israeli peace -- made a valiant effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict in its entirety.

What then should the U.S. do to regain trust and credibility? It should perhaps begin by recognising its many

Perhaps the greatest mistake over the past 25 years was to allow Israel to expand its settlements on occupied Palestinian territories. There is no greater obstacle to a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and to Israel's integration into the region, than the nearly half a million Israeli settlers in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The relentless erosion of the rump of Arab Palestine has created the militant movement Hamas and has aroused hostility to the U.S. throughout the Arab and Muslim world.

Another mistake, made under Ronald Reagan's presidency, was to allow Israel to invade Lebanon in 1982, killing over 17,000 Lebanese and Palestinians. The U.S. even attempted to reward Israel for its invasion by forcing Lebanon to conclude a separate peace which would have put it in Israel's orbit. When that attempt failed, the U.S. allowed Israel to remain in south Lebanon for the next 18 years until 2000 - an invasion and occupation which created the militant movement

A third mistake was the failure to reestablish friendly relations with Iran in the 27 years since the Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution, and indeed to have backed Iraq in the long and brutal Iraq-Iran war (1980-88.) Instead, outraged at the seizure and incarceration of its diplomats for 444 days at the start of the Iranian revolution, the U.S. allowed itself to be trapped in a posture of unrelenting hostility towards a major regional power and is now paying for that mistake by Iran's defiance over the nuclear issue.

A fourth mistake which dwarfs the others was America's rash and intemperate reaction to the traumatic terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. The war against Iraq, waged on false and fraudulent premises, has proved a catastrophic error. It was driven by a wish, in the heat of the moment, to teach the Arabs a lesson about America's military power; by the ambition to control Irag's vast oil resources; and also - and perhaps primarily in the minds of pro-Israeli officials in the U.S. administration -- by a bid to improve Israel's strategic environment by smashing a major Arab state.

Not only has the war - and the "Global War on Terror," of which it is a part - squandered America's human and material resources, it has also done tremendous, perhaps irreversible, damage to America's moral standing.

What should the U.S. now do? It should regain the independence of its foreign policy by freeing itself from the pressures of lobbies and special interest groups. It should punish those responsible for gross human rights abuses, such as torture. It should announce a firm date for its withdrawal from Iraq. And it should bend every effort - and every resource - to solving the Arab-Israeli conflict on a basis of equity and justice.

George W Bush has two more years in office. Can he -- will he -- act? Or will Haass' prediction of an end to the American era come true?

Middle East and the author of The Struggle for Syria.

Patrick Seale is a British writer on the

Source: www.commongroundnews.org.

The rise -and fallof Lebanese blogs

By: Sharida Mohamedjoesoef

couple of months ago I was asked to submit my first contribution Free Voice. Having made a life-time hobby out of Lebanon, I had no difficulty defining my topic matter. That particular column ended with a note on the Lebanese blogosphere, a new open source of journalism that is rapidly changing from disjointed caveman mumblings into eloquent raves and rants from ordinary citizens.

Little did I suspect that between that first column and the one you are reading now, the world would soon be witnessing piles of smoking rubble in Lebanon after the drums of war between Israel and Hezbollah.

Nor did I reckon with the sudden boom in blogs from ordinary Lebanese and non-Lebanese all over the world, covering the war from their own perspective. Ramzi's Blah Blah reporting from Beirut, Lama with her Thy Lemma from London, or Shirin-from-Lebanon, just three out of countless blogs.

If truth be told, many stories found on these blogs proved much more revealing than the cover stories from so-called professional war correspondents, some of whom, apparently seemed to be thinking they had landed the lead role in a new TinTin adventure.

While a great many bloggers seemed unable to drag themselves away from the sectarian divide in Lebanon, others dared swimming against the stream. Now, in a country like Lebanon, a country where clan-allegiance outweighs all other allegiances, this is quite an achievement.

One such blogger is 26-year-old Raja who, together with five other bloggers, makes up Lebanese Bloggers .. Raja's by-line reads:

'There are enough Lebanese and Middle Easterners blaming everyone else for their problems. Maybe one or two ought to buck the trend.'

What trends? To give you an idea: in Lebanon it is as much a 'no can do' for a Christian to start questioning the constitutional privileges of the country's Christian minority as it is for a Shia Muslim to tackle Hizbollah's strategy of using human shields.

Yes, I know there are always exceptions to the rule and yes, realise this is a generalisation, but then again generalisations are generally most effective in demonstrating a point, mine pinpointing the delicate sectarian make-up of Lebanese society, a divide which is even embedded in the country's political system.

The recent war between Israel and Hezbollah triggered an open discussion on the internet, with a huge amount of Lebanese blogs tentatively questioning themselves as well as their leadership. Unfortunately, what started out as a very promising sign that change was in the air, practically collapsed the moment the war had ended.

Did then the Lebanese blogosphere die a quick death? I should hope not, for in a region where freedom of speech is hard to come by, all this blogging might just be the very lifeline for many Lebanese to shake off age-old cultural, religious and political mindsets and become a truly unified independent country.

And about time, too, for Lebanon officially gained its independence in 1943, but I dare say that the country's struggle for true independence has only just begun.

Sharida Mohamedjoesoef is a journalist and translator working for press agency Novum Nieuws /Zoomin TV in Amsterdam, she had worked for the Dutch Muslim Broadcasting Corporation (NMO).

Mohammed Al-Yemeni:

Portrait is where our range of emotions and deep thoughts can find their home

"I live the stages of giving birth and creating my painting melodramatically. I live with it while it's simply feelings in my heart and a big issue in my mind. I take my emotions and thoughts and give them artistic form. Then, I deal with it thoughtfully like it's my child. I try to find an entrancing frame and a safe place to present it in," says plastic artist Mohammed Al-Yemeni.

Bv: Nisreen Shadad hurteagle8@hotmail.com

lastic art is a fine arts genre demonstrating a nation's culture, as well as the artist's own customs and traditions. "The artist has absolute freedom to use tools and materials effectively reflecting his or her ideas. The artist also must have the flexibility to use various materials to illustrate the picture drawn in his or her mind," Al-Yemeni explains.

Born in 1972, Al-Yemeni is specialized in logography (using logotypes, single symbols representing a larger meaning, in design and printing), as well as having studied theogony (the origin and genealogy of gods). His name has become a common fixture in the publications of numerous international organizations and Yemeni NGOs, including UNDP, UNICEF, CARE, the Ministries of Health and Education, the Universal Health Organization, Partners Without Boundaries and others. Additionally, he has taught art since 1994 and held a 2006 exhibition at the Culture House.



A woman of a great esteem.

Al-Yemeni believes the artist must burnish his personality and elevate his character since he's addressing his pampered sensibility. He stresses the importance of teaching the new generation of artists each school's distinctive features and understanding their important intellectual precursors.

In this regard, he established Fantasia, a center to teach art, in 1997. In viewing Al-Yemeni's portraits, one can see prominent features of modernist schools; however, he mostly adheres to impressionism (reflecting bright color rather than a subject's true

Plastic art is a new art in Yemen and in eastern countries in general. It has undergone several phases in Yemen, as Al-Yemeni explains in the following

What are the phases of plastic art in

"Plastic art has gone through three phases. In the '70s, plastic artists were few and could be counted. Hashem Ali was the first to plant the seed of plastic art in Yemen. Though he didn't receive any particular art education, I can say that he's the teacher of all artists and I'm proud of being one of his students. Abdul Jabar Noman also is one of the first leaders of the artist movement up until today

In the '80s, we moved into the second phase, which involved a wider group of artists such as Nizar Hakim, Fuad Al-Fateeh, Talal Najar and others. Nowadays, we're in the third phase, characterized by a wide group of artists appearing with numerous visions. Most are brilliant and have amazing works; however, they sometimes seek to make a name for themselves at the expense of artistic values. They follow the blind and deaf – those who ignore the academic side and run after simplicity and superficiality. They consider the modern schools easy, even before being aware of the tools of such schools or having a good academic knowledge about art in gen-



Al-Yemeni with two of his paintings: the left one illustrates that man has succeeded in being set free from the physical chains that shackle his legs, but he's unable to be intellectually free, while the second demonstrates a woman formed of the four seasons.

Do Yemeni plastic artists adhere to a particular school of art?

We can't specify a school for all plastic artists because it depends entirely on the nature of the artist's thoughts. For example, terrorism and oppression are abstract concepts, so one can't illustrate them using the methods of the realistic school. We have to defer to another school, such as symbolism.

Schools and colors (meaning visions) of plastic art are vast; however, they have appeared and spread much more in the West because the history of art extends back thousand of years there, whereas they only appeared in eastern countries around the 1920s.

It's difficult to give a particular date other than the '70s because it began as individual efforts at different times. The only one who can be described as a perfect plastic artist is Hashem Ali and the school obvious in most of his works is realism (illustrating and conveying reality in all its details and complexity). But he then began to diversify, using numerous schools of art.

What obstacles does plastic art face? Ignorance is where the danger resides. For example, in attending several shows, I find it difficult to ascribe a painting to a particular school. Not only that, but plastic artists introduce themselves as impressionists or modernists.

However, once I begin discussing the basics and fundamentals of their work

and the schools they claim to belong to, they usually have no idea what I'm saying. Therefore, I always believe the artist must be knowledgeable enough so that, consequently, he can choose the school befitting his thoughts and ideas.

Furthermore, people attend a show and nod their heads like they know what's behind the paintings. However, in discussing them, they attempt to use metaphysical and big words so as not to appear less than the professional artists. Unfortunately, both the artists and the viewers are ignorant.

What's the value of plastic art and is it simply a hobby artists are eager to practice because it can be more valu-

Art can represent an issue and, in my point of view, artists are equal to those who bear guns. The best example I can give is the distinctive artist, Najy Ali, who played a vital role in history. He was assassinated in Europe because he could illustrate the disease of Arabs through his paintings, skillfully touching the wounds from which Arab nations suffer.

Artists can shed light on their society's problems and discuss big issues via a neat portrait. They can cause both intellect and emotion to work together to build up a complex pattern of meaning within a painting.

Besides that, today's artists can receive high revenues because the fields in which to work are increasing, including television, advertising, publishing and architecture. Therefore, I see no excuse for artists who are job-



The horse isn't always a symbol of dignity and triumph; it also can be a symbol of destruction and humilia-

Literary Corner By: Abu Al-Kalmah Al-Tayyibah Yemeni Annals (Hawliat Yamaniyah)(V)

Subject Book: Yemeni Annals (Hawliat Yamaniyah)

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No. of Pages: 661

ontinuing with a year by year summary of the Annals we proceed as follows:

1250 AH (1834/35 AD): This year Imam Al-Mahdi Abdullah sent "great gifts, swords, horses and clothing" to Emir Ali Bin Turabah of Tihamah in the hope of regaining control of Tehama, and the latter responded with even better gifts than those sent by the Imam. However, when the messenger with the Imam's gifts returned to Sana'a, the Emir Bin Turabah sent a letter complaining that not all the gifts sent to him were duly received by the targeted recipient. At this juncture, the Imam immediately arrested the messenger, who was Sherif Ali Bin Ahsan Al-Husseiny. The messenger was charged with betraval of trust and all his relatives were arrested and his assets were confiscated. In the meantime, Emir Bin Turabah passed away and Tehama seemed to be under a vacuum of authority. The Turks seized the opportunity and reinforcements were sent from Egypt and the force was commanded by Ibrahim Ali Pasha and he was able to bring Tehama under Turkish-Egyptian control. The latter was able to restore law and order and "secured the roads and the latter was praised by those present and away, and he was generous, knowledgeable and well versed in theology. With the death of Qadhi Ali Bin Mohammed Al-Shawkani, the author notes that justice retracted and the Minister Qassim Bin Ali Al-Affari was manipulating everything to his discre-

tion, without a proper judicial reference. 1251 AH (1835/36 AD): More tribal insurrections from Amran and Dhu Hussein, "while the Imam was occupied with his ailment ... until he passed away". In the meantime his son Ali was proclaimed Al-Imam Al-Mansour Ali Bin Al-Mahdi Abdullah, and "he was pledged allegiance by the far and near". The new Imam was generous, but was poor in leadership. However, he stopped the business partnership that his father had consummated with the Jewish merchants and the latter were "looted for being "sleazy", and taking advantage of the kindness and favor the deceased Imam had shown them. This year was also a year of misfortune and suffering was widespread. The year saw the death of prominent scholars such as Qadhi Abdurrahman Abdullah Al-Mujahid, Ahmed Bin Yousef Zabarah, Mohammed Bin Mohammed Zabarah and Qadhi Abdullah Bin Ali

1252 AH (1836/37 AD): The author noted the spread of corruption, because the Imam was not learned and was easily influenced by the Ministers who misused their authority without fear or conscientiousness. The new Minister Yahya Bin Mohammed Al-Suhouly "was even more oppressive than his predecessor". He rounded up the merchants in Ramadhan "on the pretext of demanding a loan to the state, but in reality he wanted them to be looted... The Minister prevented complaints from reaching the Imam and prevented the good scholars from advising the Imam on the proper way of conducting the state". A rebellion was called for Qassim Bin Al-Mansour, who settled in Ta'ez and the Imam called for support to put down the rebellion. A force of volunteers gathered and headed for Ta'ez. However, "when they realized that there was not much they could loot, they abandoned him and the rebel Imam resorted to the Turks, who quickly took over Ta'ez, who were able to buy off everyone, since when they saw the cash boxes open, the Arabs all rushed to them to offer their loyalty, like when flies rush" (to a corpse). In the meantime around Sana'a the tribes again broke away from the government and took over Sana'a and attacked the Imam in his palace and "robbed everything in sight" and proclaimed Abdullah Bin Hussein Al-Mahdi as the new Imam Al-Nasser Li Deen Allah (The Guardian of God's Religion), who ruled from late that year. His rule was characterized by some extremism and some piousness, as he took responsibility for the orphans who were related to him and he was "virtuous" as the author says.

1253 AH (1837/38 AD): A merciful year, with lots of rain and bounties plenty, according to the author, and "people returned to their habitats". The new Imam set out on an expedition to subdue any areas that are out of state control. He was able to bring most of the Ibb area under control and restore law and order and continued to establish the authority of the state until he heard that the Turks had reached Al-Udain on the periphery of Ibb. A battle ensued in Jibla, in which five Turks were killed and it was then that the Imam let it be known throughout the country that the Turks are facing defeat in Yemen. The Turks did not proceed any further, as they were faced with a severe defeat in Al-Udain after tribesmen from Hamdan came to reinforce the Imam's forces and "many Egyptians (fighting with the Turks) and Turks were either killed or imprisoned. The author relates an interesting dialogue between the a Turkish prisoner and the Imam when the Imam asked him: "What is it that makes the Turks so fearful and scared in battle?" The Turkish prisoner requested to be released in return for his reply and the Imam agreed. The Turkish soldier said: "Neither lightening or heavy fire frightens Turkish soldiers. But it is those Yemeni daggers!" With this he went on to demonstrate this, by requesting a full Yemeni outfit to wear requested the accompaniment of some of the good fighters of the Imam and took part in an attack against a Turkish garrison. There he behaved like the Yemenis by rushing to the Turks with his dagger pulled out of the "'asib " he was wearing and within minutes the Turks suffered a heavy

"Al-Tarab" - The Muscat Oud Festival

The non-pop side of Arabic music

When Issam El-Mallah was commissioned by Sultan Qaboos of Oman to organize a music festival in Muscat, he made a conscious decision to concentrate on the traditional, "oldschool," Arabic musical traditions. Stefan Franzen reports

hy a festival in Oman - a country that is not exactly considered the center of the Arab music scene? "The idea came from Sultan Qabus Ibn Said himself," explains Egyptian musicologist Issam El-Mallah, who teaches ethnology at the University of Munich, Germany, and was responsible for the conceptualization and realization of the festival.

"The Sultan is a heaven-send for us musicologists. I am not saying this as political propaganda, but because it's a fact. Oman was almost a world power from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, but thereafter the country went into a phase of total international

"Then this young man came back home, after finishing his education at an English school, and brought back completely new ideas. His father initially had him arrested, but he was able to pull off a putsch with the help of the military. Since 1970 things have been moving ahead again in terms of infrastructure and the education system."

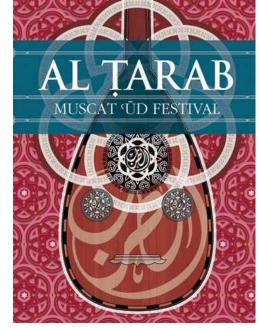
Recalling the old traditions

It is thanks to the Sultan's love of Western and Arabic art music and traditional music that El-Mallah was able to record the music history of Oman over the past few years. And now all kinds of music from jazz to symphony orchestra and opera are part of a lively cultural scene.

With such a wealthy patron backing the festival – one who was also willing to allow its organizers full artistic freedom in the planning - El-Mallah was able to work under optimal conditions, he said. How did he, then, use this freedom to lend a new note to the old idea of a lute festival?

"At the previous festivals devoted to oud, well-known soloists were invited and each one played for about half an hour. My idea goes a great deal further," explains the musicologist.

"We showed soloist performances on the one hand, and then also lutes combined with song. The aim was to recall the old traditions. Because if you see a concert today on Arabic television, a vocalist will appear with at least 60 to 80 instrumentalists behind him, a third of them rhythm instruments, which creates a kind of disco mood. And further, I shifted the perspective forward by having



compositions for oud and symphony orchestras

"The Egyptian composer Amar El-Sherei was even commissioned to write new material. This combination ensured that we were able to revive old traditions yet also to open up future possibilities. The oud, being the central instrument in Arabic music, is best suited for all these interests."

Yet-to-be-discovered musicians

In his conceptualization of the festival, Issam El-Mallah was well aware that almost none of the musicians - with maybe the exception of Moroccan Said Chraibi were known in the West. And even among the musicians he chose, there would have been many others who were better known in the Arabic world.

But that was not his focus.

The chosen artists had to fulfill the criteria of being at once a vocalist and lute player, and they also needed to be able to improvise over many magammat (scales), even quarter-tones - something that has often been pushed from the foreground in recent attempts to conform to Western music.

But the most important aspect for the professor was yet something else: Creating tarab." Tarab is an emotional state of "enchantment" which

means communicating joy and sadness to the audience in a deeply-felt, spontaneous, heart-gripping manner.

"Many lute players are excellent virtuosos, but they still can't create tarab. Ultimately, I wanted to have representatives from Morocco to Oman in order to show the different facets of oud playing within the Arabic nation: the delicate, soulful sound from the Maghreb, where the oud is also smaller, and the more powerful, technical sound from the Middle East and the Arabic peninsula."

The untrained Western ear will

probably not recognize all these nuances, but hearing the concerts on the CD box set "Al Tarab," produced by ENJA Records, one does note some differences between the sounds from various geographical areas.

For uninformed listeners, El-Mallah has included a thick booklet in four languages (English, French, German and Arabic) that elucidates the music's theoretical underpinnings, including rather dry lists of the different scales, detailed analyses of various works, and a discourse on the relationship between Western music history and Arabic

Tschaikowsky and Wagner citations The musical realization of this relationship, namely orchestral works, leaves a mixed impression: While Atiyya Sharara's 20-year-old concerto for oud and orchestra sounds somewhat crude and a bit like heavy-handed military music, the Occident and Orient meld better in the commissioned composition by Ammar El-Sherei, despite the flashy eclecticism of its

Beethoven, Tschaikowsky and Wagner

A nice side-effect has emerged from this event for Oman. The opulent CD set documenting the festival is available on the European market, which has helped this up-and-coming country to unexpected PR. El-Mallah, who is already mentally at work on further festival editions and has recently received a request from Germany, feels satisfied when he considers the results:

"My main goal has been reached, namely to show the wealth of Arabic music, its respectable, non-pop side, which of course also has its place. In the Muscat Oud Festival, I think a bit of education was accomplished that I did not want to undertake as a professor at the university, but rather with something practical, with a live sound. This is much more effective and does not end in dry, empty instruction."

Stefan Franzen © Qantara.de 2006 Translated from German by Christina



Sana'a **British School**

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

Pre-School Teacher

Candidates should speak fluent English, have up to date experience of teaching 2-4 year olds, a teaching qualification and excellent references.

At this exciting time in the school's development, we need someone who is full of good ideas, who can use our very spacious early years premises to its full potential and who can work alongside support staff to plan and deliver an engaging curriculum.

Applications including full CV should be addressed to Miss Nerys Loveridge, Head teacher, at the school, to arrive no later than 3pm on the 22 November 2006. Visits are welcome by appointment.

> Sana'a British School 18, st 21, off Nauakchott St. PO box 15546 Sana'a Tel: 203950

Email: sbsyemen@sbsyemen.com

The British Foreign & Commonwealth **Chevening Scholarship Scheme**



British Embassy Sana'a

The British Embassy invites applications for the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's **Chevening Scholarship Scheme**. This highly-competitive scheme offers full-time postgraduate scholarships of varying length to Yemeni women and men who will play a key role in promoting Yemen's political. economic & social development.

Applicants, who must be under 40, should have a university degree and very good written and spoken English. Candidates will be selected on the basis of their potential and motivation to rise to positions of authority.

Spouses and children are not funded under the scheme.

The deadline for applications is 30 November 200 6.

The application form and full information are available on line from the British Council web site:

http://www.britishcouncil.org/me-learning-funding your-studieschevening.htm

Applications are to be submitted by hand to our office, or by mail to PO Box 2157, Sana'a.

For further information on the scheme please see the web site: www.britishcouncil.org/me



Creating Opportunity for People Worldwide



CANT POSITIONS

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) invites applications from qualified candidates for the following positions:

Level of Assignment: Type of Contract: Section / Division: **Duty Station:**

Assistant Project Officer (05/2006) NO-B **Fixed Term** Programme Hodeidah

Under the supervision and guidance of the Project Officer Field 3. Operations (NOC), Assistant Project officer shall be mainly responsible for implementation and coordination of UNICEF activities at district level in the Governorate of Hodeidah. The Assistant Project officer responsibilities include:

- Advocate, develop and enlarge the key elements of the education, water and sanitation and health sector programmes with counterparts at the governorate and
- Facilitate implementation, periodic reviews and promote innovative activities under girls education women development and child survival, Co-ordinate under the supervision of the Project officer Field
- Operations . with Sana'a office teams to initiate advocacy and implementation of the country programme Co-operate with counterparts partners and work closely with colleagues in the implementation of activities to accomplish
- the agreed mid-decade goals, Initiate and facilitate situation analyses, including baseline survevs needs assessments, project design, monitoring and
- impact oriented evaluations of UNICEF assisted projects in
- Manage and supervise the functioning of small area project implementation unit (PIU) and its staff on a day to day basis. Staff Member supervises one staff member and one driver, Carry-out any other tasks agreed with the supervisor or the

Qualifications and Skills Required: University graduate in social science or related fields.

- Five years working experience in project management and implementation at local level in support of a development programme of an international organization, of which at least one year in support of programme activities of a UN
- Good analytical and data processing skills. Proficient computer usages and good knowledge of
- common computer applications. Proven experience of working in a multi-sect oral/multi-
- cultural environment Fluency in written and oral English and Arabic.

Level of Assignment: NO-B Section / Division: Duty Station:

Assistant Project Officer (07/2006) **Fixed Term Programme** Taiz

Under the supervision and guidance of the Project Officer Field Operations (NOC), Assistant Project officer shall be mainly responsible for implementation and coordination of UNICEF activities at district level in the Governorate of Hodeidah. The Assistant Project officer responsibilities include:

Advocate, develop and enlarge the key elements of the

- education, water and sanitation and health sector programmes with counterparts at the governorate and district level,
- Facilitate implementation, periodic reviews and promote innovative activities under girls education women development and child survival,
- Co-ordinate under the supervision of the Project officer Field Operations, with Sana'a office team to initiate advocacy and implementation of the country programme,
- Co-operate with counterparts partners and work closely with colleagues in the implementation of activities to accomplish the agreed mid-decade goals,
- Initiate and facilitate situation analyses, including baseline surveys needs assessments, project design, monitoring and impact oriented evaluations of UNICEF assisted projects in
- Manage and supervise the functioning of small area project implementation unit (PIU) and its staff on a day to day basis. Staff Member supervises one staff member and one driver,
- Carry-out any other tasks agreed with the supervisor or the

Qualifications and Skills Required: University graduate in social science or related fields.

- Five years working experience in project management and implementation at local level in support of a development programme of an international organization, of which at least one year in support of programme activities of a UN
- agency. Good analytical and data processing skills Proficient computer usages and good knowledge of
- common computer applications. Proven experience of working in a multi-sect oral/multi-
- cultural environment.
- Fluency in written and oral English and Arabic.

Level of Assignment: Type of Contract: Section / Division: Duty Station:

Project Assistant (08/2006) GS-5 **Fixed Term Programme**

Under the supervision and guidance of Assistant Project officer (NOB) of UNICEF Taiz Field Office, the Project Assistant shall be mainly responsible for implementation and coordination of UNICEF activities at district level in the Governorate of Taiz The Assistant Project officer responsibilities include:

- 1. Mobilize district counterparts and communities for the planning and implementation of project activities in the field Yong Child Survival, Basic education & Gender and Child Rights etc.
- Assist in advocating for UNICEF goals and policies at the district level. Assist in ensuring adequate coordination with other NGOs, INGOs and UN Agencies in the districts.
- Follow-up distribution of supplies provided under UNICEF programme activities, Follow-up training activities delivered under UNICEF
- programme activities. Assist in processing, monitoring and timely liquidation of
- cash assistance to government and NGO/INGO.

- 6. Monitor UNICEF programme implementation through regular field visits, identify difficulties that may hamper activities, and propose remedial action.
- Report on implementation progress of UNICEF activities in the districts. Assist in collecting information and preparing
- periodic reports for the zone office. Handle custody of petty cash for the Aden zonal office,

Qualifications and Skills Required:

- University graduate in social science or related fields. Five years working experience in project management and implementation at local level in support of a development programme of an international organization, of which at least one year in support of programme activities of a UN
- Good analytical and data processing skills. Proficient computer usages and good knowledge of
- common computer applications.
- Proven experience of working in a multi-sect oral/multicultural environment
- Fluency in written and oral English and Arabic.

Title: Information Assistant (04/2006) Level: Type of contract: Duty Station: Sana'a

Under the overall guidance and supervision of the Communication Officer (L-4), the incumbent shall perform the following main responsibilities:

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Prepare designs and camera-ready art works and layouts for UNICEF publication. Supervise publishing operations inhouse, and liaise with printers, TV and radio procedures,
- Assist in editing, proof reading, printing and distributing of information materials Assist in drafting and editing articles, press releases, and
- Responsible for custody of all audio visual equipment ensures their timely repair and maintenance and oversees the proper maintenance of photos, film slides, and the film library in general.
- Maintain and up to date mailing list for prompt distribution of reports and all other releases from NYHQ and vise versa,
- Provide administrative support to the section.

Qualifications and Skills Required:

- Completion of secondary high school is required
- Four years of experience in a similar capacity, Training in desktop publishing, print preparation, and audio
- visual work. Training in editing and drafting press release,
- Good judgment, initiative, and high sense of responsibility. Fluency in English and Arabic (speaking, reading and
- writing).

Sr. Secretary (06/2006)

Level Type of Contract: **Fixed Term Duty Station:** Sana'a

Under the overall guidance and supervision of the Senior Programme Officer (P-5), the incumbent shall perform the

<u>Duties and Responsibilities</u>

Title:

- Arranges appointments and maintains supervisor's calendar, receives visitors, places and screens telephone calls and answers queries with discretion, Arranges meetings, both internal and external, some
- involving high ranking officials, and makes minutes and/or notes at meetings, Receives, screens, logs, and routes correspondence, attaches necessary background information and
- maintains follow-up system. Draft non-substantive correspondence and ensures follow-up,
- Clears correspondence for conformity with established procedures and accuracy of statements before being signed by the supervisor,
- Translate letters/documents from Arabic to English and vice-vis and acts as interpreter in meetings when required, Keeps lists of names, addresses and telephone numbers of ministers, government officials and members of the diplomatic corps.

Qualifications and Skills Required:

- Completion of secondary education, and training in secretarial skill requires.
- Four years working experience as secretary or Admin Assistant in large organization
- A good working knowledge of English and Arabic (Oral and
- Good knowledge of computer applications required.

Interested and qualified individuals should send their application along with the curriculum vitae to: The Operations Officer, UNICEF Yemen, P.O. Box 725, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

Please specify the post you are applying for. Applications received after 28th of November 2006 will not be considered.

UNICEF is non-smoking environment.

Qualified women candidates are encouraged to apply. ONLY Short-listed candidates shall be contacted.

General Director of the Sana'a Basin Water Management Project:

"The existing project will extend the life of the aquifers, but it won't solve the problem."

eports continue warning of dryness threatening many Yemeni cities. The capital city of Sana'a and its surroundings top the list of cities facing drought within the next 10 years. In order to face the water crisis in these regions, the World Bank is supporting the Sana'a Basin Water Management Project (SBWMP), which aims to assist Yemen's government in containing groundwater depletion in the Sana'a Basin, considered the main water source for these regions.

The Yemen Times interviewed project general director, Mohammed Harmal, to highlight this project and its affect on the water status in Sana'a.

Interviewed by: Amel Al-Ariqi

Basin's current state?

Sana'a Basin is a highland area spread over 3,200 square kilometers, with an approximate 2.4 million population that's growing an estimated 7 percent annually. The basin's irrigated agricultural land has swelled from 3,000 hectares in 1985 to 23,400 hectares in 2000, covering approximately 7 percent of land area.

Groundwater extraction began exceeding recharge in the mid-1980s due to rapid population growth and sharp increases in water use for agricultural purposes. Estimated annual recharge is approximately 80-120 million cubic meters, whereas groundwater extraction could be as high as 250 million cubic meters.

As much as 80 percent of such extraction is for irrigating agriculture comprising cash crops and highlyvalue crops like qat and grapes. Because of being the most profitable product, water is pumped from depths of up to 600 meters for qat, whereas fruits and vegetables, which draw water from only about 300-400 meters,

Because of the situation projected above, depletion of groundwater resources and degrading water quality have started to increase at an alarming

Basin Sana'a Water Management Project (SBWMP) is supported by the World Bank. Can you describe this project?

The objectives of the overall 15-year program are: to increase both the quantity and useable life of groundwater resources available in Sana'a Basin, thus postponing the date at which extremely expensive new supplies may have to be brought in from outside the basin. The program is also aim to concurrently increase the efficiency of irrigation water use so as to allow time for a gradual shift to a less water-based rural economy in the basin; and to strengthen and build an institutional and legal framework capable of dealing with future basin management issues nationwide.

The program's current first phase consists of the five-year Sana'a Basin Management Project (SBWMP), which has the following basic objectives:

- (a) to implement, test and develop "best practice" demand (primarily irrigation) and supply (primarily recharge) management methods in a limited area for later application of lessons learned and large-scale implementation throughout the Sana'a Basin under the program's subsequent two phases;
- (b) to rehabilitate and rebuild damaged dams to improve downstream safe-

- ty and enhance recharging of groundwater aquifers;
- How would you describe Sana'a (c) to establish a regulatory, legal and institutional framework needed for more sustainable water resource management in the basin; and
 - (d) to prepare the program's Phase II project.

A secondary objective is to enhance local rural development through community organizations.

How can you achieve these goals?

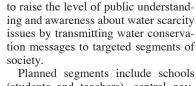
The SBWMP comprises seven components, each of which has specific purposes, but all of which contribute to meeting basic project objectives and presenting an integrated water resources management. The first component concerns Manage demand and improve irrigation. This component seeks to achieve agricultural water conservation by increasing water use efficiency for irrigation by introducing modern irrigation systems and equip-

Second component deals with manage supply and improve recharge. This component's primary purpose is to enhance groundwater recharge via existing and new conventional dams, as well as through subsurface dams, check dams and other structures. It's expected that farmers then would pump water from shallow aquifers rather than from deep aquifers, which are a critical drinking and domestic water source for Sana'a city. A further purpose is to effect safety improvements to existing dams.

Third Component is called develop institutions and build capacities. This component aims to develop overall institutional and managerial frameworks and capacities for basin water resource management. Intended activities include:

- (i) developing the National Water Authority-Sana'a Resources Branch's (NWRA-SB) capacity for water resource management, as well as the water sector and regulatory and monitoring frameworks and processes;
- (ii) building the NWRA-SB's capacity for basin water resource planning and management
- (iii)investigating and monitoring basin hydro-geological and water resources
- (iv) providing capacity building and training the NWRA-SB
- (iv) developing institutional basinlevel stakeholder water management, relating to sub-catchment federations of Water User Associations (WUAs), i.e., Water User Federations (WUFs), and to the Sana'a Basin Commission, the basin-level stakeholders' water management entity.

The fourth component is informaand public awareness



(students and teachers), central government (parliamentarians), the media (journalists), the farming community, health centers and hospitals (to reach women), local councils and associations (to reach men), industries (industrial water users) and both rural and urban special interest groups.

While fifth Component is called Environmental Management Plan and Mitigation Program. The program as a whole serves to improve Sana'a Basin's environmental situation, but this component specifically includes necessary environmental management and mitigation interventions to supplement measures incorporated in the other project components.

Taken together, all of these measures comprise the project's Environmental Management Plan (EMP). Identified additional needs to be met by this component relate to EMP coordination and overview, public consultation, general environmental monitoring, dam safety reviews and monitoring, water quality and pollution monitoring, pesticide management improvements, public health issues (specifically bilharzia control), cultural heritage protection and urgent and short-term environmental improvement measures for the Sana'a city Wastewater Treatment

The sixth component covers inputs needed for project management, direction, overview, coordination, review, disbursement and procurement, administration and monitoring and evaluation through a Project Coordination Unit. It corresponds directly to the Sana'a Basin Commission's Project Management and Monitoring, as well as dedicated implementation units within appropriate line agencies that eventually could assume higher-level project management responsibilities.

And the seventh Component involves preparing the Phase II project, which is subject to satisfactory interim reviews and assessments of SBWMP performance and achievements.

Supporting organizations often stipulate community participation and involvement in such projects, so what do you do in that regard?

Community participation and involvement in the demand component is implemented via (i) technical and organizational support to well-based local farming groups, i.e., water user groups (WUGs), (ii) legal and functional establishment of community groundwater user organizations, i.e., WUAs, at the well field or village level, and (iii) corresponding technical and managerial training and extension programs involving both farmers and Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation staff assigned to its Sana'a office for irrigation development and extension duties in the basin.

Regarding the supply component, the project will create sustainable dam and recharge systems management by strengthening the relevant capacity of the responsible government agency, the agriculture ministry's General Directorate of Irrigation and formalizing or establishing community operation and maintenance organizations (i.e., WUAs/WUFs) at the wadi branch or village level, together with appropriate training and extension pro-

How has the Sana'a Basin Water Management Project achieved its first phase goals and how do you assess your performance during that stage?

The project really began in the second quarter of 2004. As Yemen's pilot project, the SBWMP has concentrated on quality, not quantity, while implementing its components. Implementing



Two farmers working to get groundwater from the Sana'a Basin.

such components varies, especially for those considered slow due to establishing WUAs and training them how to run association business (administration and financial), as well as how to maintain and operate modern irrigation systems installed on their farms.

What about random well drilling?

Random well drilling is a big issue, not only in Sana'a Basin, but nationwide. New water law No. 33 issued in 2004 is a useful support to the water resource strategy. Additionally, the Yemeni Cabinet issued decree No. 343 declaring Sana'a Basin a protected zone wherein drilling deep wells is prohibited. However, the decree gave exceptions for drinking purposes and deepening or drilling alternative wells, which is subject to certain measures

The NWRA-SB is exerting much effort to enforce the water law and the decree at the basin level; for example, the NWRA must issue a license before drilling or deepening any well. With all of the aforementioned issues, the Sana'a authority is unable to control random and/or unlicensed well drilling due to lack of cooperation by the public and agencies responsible for helping enforce regulations to control drilling activities. The NWRA-SB has installed a free hotline phone number 173 for the public to inform it of any drilling activities.

Will the Sana'a Basin be able to cover the constant water demands, particularly with increasing population growth and expanding construction, or should we begin thinking about other future solutions?

The water situation is quite complicated and requires much effort and work from both the government and the public. Project objectives regarding water conservation are in the process and assessments from implementing these objectives aren't ready yet. It's obvious that Sana'a is suffering water

scarcity and the need to transfer water from other sources is urgent. The existing project will extend the life of the aguifers, but it won't solve the problem. In my opinion, we must work in both directions, which are conserving currently available groundwater and searching for future solutions.

What motivation do you offer farmers to restrict water depletion?

The NWRA-SB is working very hard to implement and enforce water sector regulations that will help reduce random well drilling and control drillers. The Sana'a authority also is launching an awareness program. As mentioned above, the information and public awareness campaign's objective is to raise the level of public understanding and awareness about water scarcity issues. The project is introducing new irrigation systems to farmers, which will help reduce the amount of water used for irrigation.

Some reports point to pollution in the basin. Can you expand on that?

A major well inventory was compiled for Sana'a City in 1995, wherein water samples were analyzed for major cations and anions. Five years later, the opportunity was taken to repeat the same exercise on a sub-set of the original wells. The result showed that urban groundwater was characterized by high concentration of almost all of the cations and anions due to wastewater continuously infiltrating the aquifer via cesspits.

Another source of pollution in the basin is due to reusing untreated wastewater to irrigate some parts of the agricultural area north of Sana'a Wastewater Treatment Plant.

How is construction in the basin affecting its recharge?

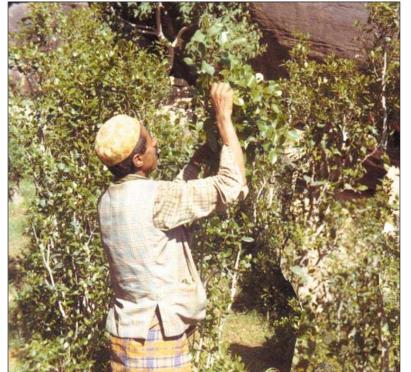
Construction in Sana'a basin has a big influence on recharging the shallow aquifer due to constructing new buildings and roads with concrete and asphalt, which reduce percolation and infiltration during the rainy season. A good example is the shallow wells located near the Old City, which dried up after constructing the Al-Sailah

Many farmers complain about fees they must pay in order to get modern irrigation means. What is your comment about this?

The SBWMP is providing farmers subsidized modern irrigation systems at very cheap prices, ranging between 25 and 40 percent of the actual cost. Farmers contribute 20 percent to insulate the system, while the project contributes 80 percent.

What institutions or organizations do you cooperate with and how do you define each organization's role? Several agencies and ministries are involved with SBWMP activities and they can be summarized as follows:

- The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation's General Directory of Irrigation is involved in implementing the project's supply component.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation's General Department of Plant Protection implements pesticide integration management plans for qat and grapes.
- Ministry of Public Health and Population implements the bilharzia control program.
- Other agencies like the Environmental Protection Authority, the local water and the Sanitation Corporation are involved in implementing Component 5 - Environmental Management Plan and Mitigation Program.
- The NWRA-SB is responsible for implementing Component 3 -Developing institutions and building capacities and Component 4 -Information and public awareness campaign.

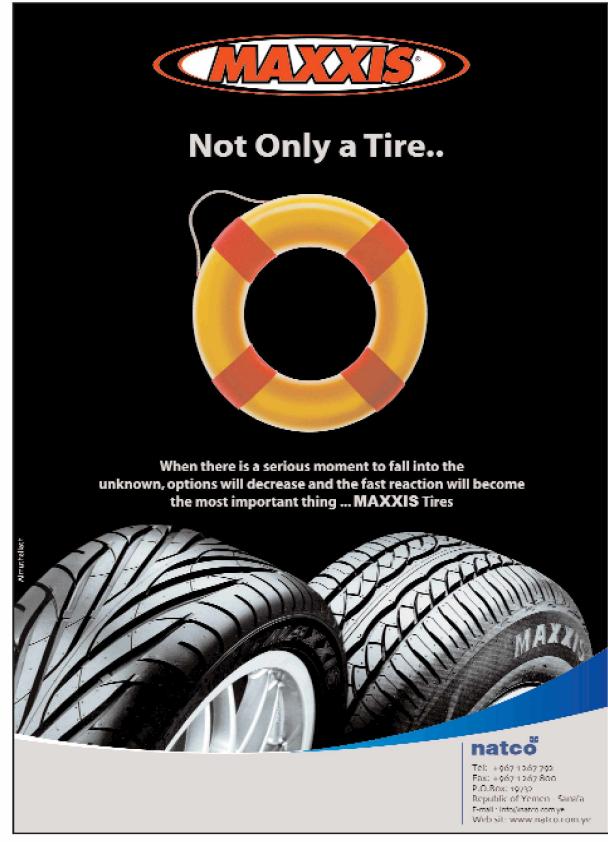


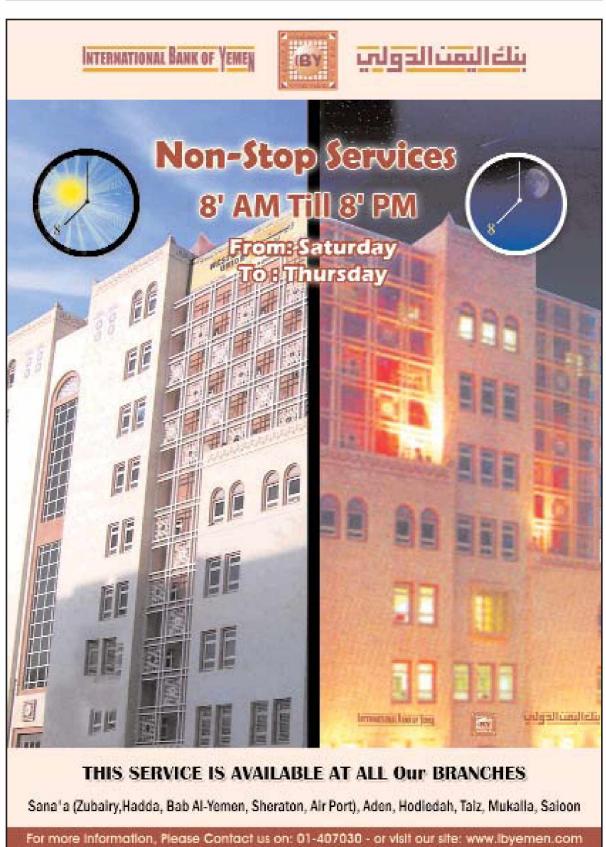
Most water extraction is for irrigating cash crops and highly-valuable crops

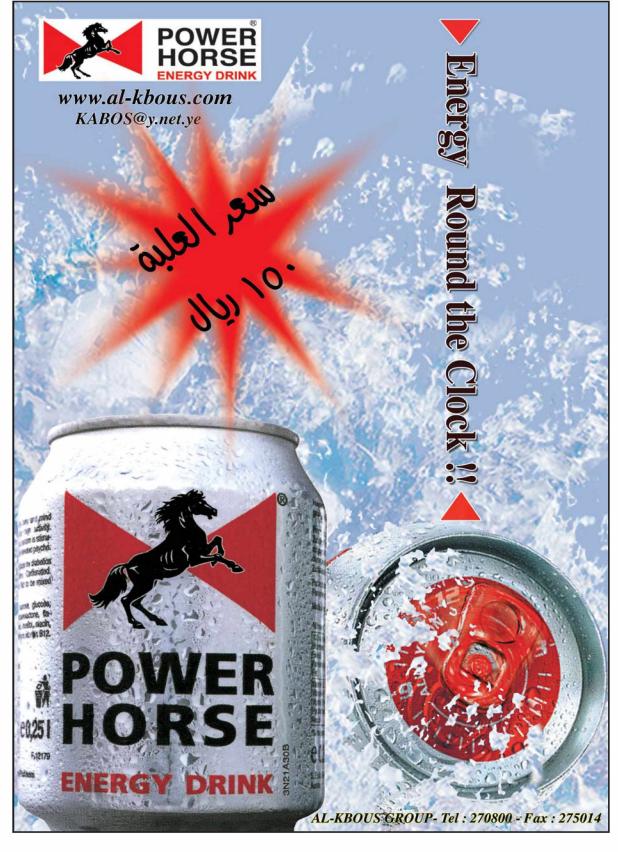


The project is holding an awareness campaign targeting farmers.









Yemen brings on foreign coach



Football federation signed a contract with Egyptian coach Mohsen Saleh.

SANA'A, Nov. 18 — The Yemeni Football Federation signed a contract with Egyptian coach Mohsen Saleh. He will take over the national football team for one year on a renewable contract.

Upon arrival of the Egyptian coach, the football federation organized a news conference in the presence of its head, Ahmad Saleh Al-Eisi, who said the contract came after a long search and contact with several coaches, saying the federation is happy to bring on board an experienced coach. "We hope that hiring Saleh constitutes the real step toward developing the Yemeni football and improving skills and per-

formance of the coaching staff," said Al-Eisi. Saleh said he hoped the contract to help achieve the federation's goal and improve performance of Yemeni footballers in all the local. regional and international participa-

"I will be responsible for supervising Yemen's junior and senior football teams, in addition to coaching the national team under the one-year contract, which is also renewable," said the Egyptian national.

Under the contract, the Egyptian coach will be paid US \$240 thousand (more than YR 45 billion).

Sana'a University sports program begins

SANA'A, Nov. 19 - The Students' Affairs Office in Sana'a University, represented by the General Youth Care Department has made the necessary arrangements for the 2006-2007 sport program.

The youth care department finished the past season's sport program successfully including various games and competitions. Volleyball, table tennis and chess teams for men and women will compete in the university for several

Additionally, Sana'a University hosted the First Yemeni Universities Volleyball Championship and placed, but in Aden Sana'a University claimed first position in the table tennis championship.

Sana'a University participated in the Arab Universities Championship in Egypt and stood second in the individual teams and third in the group teams. The university held various sporting activities for the handicapped and blind students and provided them with sport training

The Sana'a University Sport Program paid closer attention to female sporting activities with the aim to encourage female presence in different sports.

Rooney brace saves Red Devils

Rooney scored twice to keep his side English Premiership on Saturday.

The Red Devils to come from a goal behind to overcome Sheffield United 2-1, while Chelsea defeated fellow London club West Ham 1-0.

Regular title challenger Arsenal suffered setback when they were held 1-1 by Newcastle United.

Sheffield United were expected to offer little resistance to the United juggernaut, but the newly promoted side took a shock lead through former United player Keith Gillespie.

However, England striker Rooney made up for his profligacy last week to keep his side's title ambitions on track.

"They were two marvellous finishes," Red Devils boss Alex Ferguson said.

"The first came from a run across the defender. He has caught him on the hop, off-guard, and it was a great

"The second was terrific. Taking that kind of finish, when you are under pressure and you need to win, it makes it more special."

A deft free kick from Geremi was enough for Chelsea to set up the

Manchester United striker Wayne Premiership blockbuster next Sunday at Old Trafford as the two leading three points ahead of Chelsea in the sides meet for the first time this season.

> Despite his opponent's toiling, Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho was in an uncharitable mood.

> "It would be unfair if they scored in the last period of the game because we were the better team, but it was a good game because both teams played with a good attitude," Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho said.

Struggling Newcastle United stunned hosts Arsenal thanks to Keiron Dyer's 30th-minute goal at Emirates Stadium.

Bore draw

While Liverpool failed to reignite their title campaign with a mind numbingly dire 0-0 draw with Middlesbrough.

There was no fairytale start for rock-bottom Charlton's new boss Les Reed as hosts Reading won 2-0 at the Madejski Stadium.

Everton returned to the winner's circle thanks to a goal from Spanish midfielder Mikel Arteta which sealed a 1-0 win over Bolton.

Portsmouth overturned an early deficit to seal three points with a 2-1

win in the final minutes against Watford.

While in the early match, Manchester City beat visitors Fulham 3-1 at Eastlands as Bernardo Corradi finally got on the scoresheet for the home

Blackburn host Tottenham and Aston Villa travel to

Wigan in Sunday's games. Source: Aljazeera.net

Yemen defeats India in cup finale

By: Ismail Al-Ghabiri

SANA'A, Nov. 18 - In the last qualifier for the Asian Cup of Nations Finals, Yemen won 2-1 over visiting India this past Wednesday at Al-Thawrah Stadium in Sana'a.

For both teams, the game was meaningless after Japan and Saudi Arabia booked their places in the finals. The first half of the meeting ended goalless, however the Indian teammates demonstrated more possession of the

In minute 9 of the second half, the visiting team placed home its first goal exploiting defense mistakes in Yemen's defense lines. The goal forced the national team coach to make two substitutions, Wasam Amro came on for Saleh Al-Shehri while Mohamed Al-Tahous was replaced by Waseem

The substitutions improved the performance of the Yemeni teammates who equalized the result in minute 15 of the second half thanks to a goal by Nashawan Al-Hajjam.

The Indian coach made substitutions to maintain the draw, which he saw as convincing for his side, but Yemen netted its second to end the visitors hopes of returning home with one point.

The match, administered by the Jordanian referee Hassan Marshoud, saw two yellow cards in the first half.

With this deserved victory, Yemen increased its points to 6 in the sixround tourney while the Indian team suffered six defeats in the tourney and returned home pointless. Yemen's two wins and six points came in the first and last matches - both against India.

In the same group, Japan had a strong match against Saudi Arabia earning a compelling 3-1 victory in Sapporo City located on the island of Hokkaido, Japan.

With the win Japan finished atop the



The Yemeni football team prior to their final qualification match against India.

qualifying group on the basis of headto-head record with Saudi Arabia. Both teams earned 15 points in Group A.

Striker Kazuki Ganaha scored twice as Japan avenged their 1-0 defeat in Saudi Arabia in September. The Saudi Ambassador to Japan Faisal Turad was among the crowd of 43,000 that came for the match. Both sides had already qualified for the 2007 Asian Cup finals but Japan outplayed the visitors with probably their best performance since Ivica Osim took over from Brazilian

Defender Tulio gave Japan the lead in the 20th minute, bundling the ball home from close range after Seiichiro Maki's header had been blocked on the

line. Ganaha added a second nine minutes later before the Saudi Arabia pulled one back through an Al-Qahtani penalty in the 33rd minute.

Ganaha restored Japan's two-goal advantage from close range five minutes into the second half to secure a deserved win for the Asian Cup hold-

The Asian Cup finals, to be hosted jointly by Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia. Japan have won the last two Asian Cups, in Lebanon in 2000, and two years ago in China with a controversial 3-1 victory over the hosts in Beijing.

The Arab News Daily quoted the Egyptian sport critic Khalid Bayoumi,

who spoke at the ART channel after the match, as saying the Saudis did not have a good performance in both halves. "There was a big gap and lack of skills and professionalism as the players were playing solo and we did not see the Saudis playing as a team," he said. Brazilian Marcos Paqueta, coach of the Saudi team, did not motivate the players enough to give their best, he added.

"The players are the same and the mistakes are still repeated. Not having a basic and strong squad is big problem, the team had been playing many games and many changes are being made. This affects them negatively and on a long term basis," Bayoumi added.

Football Federation decision enrages Yemen

By: Ismail Al-Ghabiri

SANA'A, Nov. 19 - The Yemeni Football Federation is angered by a decision made by the Arab Football Federation to have Lebanon host the games of the Aden Group in Arab Championship Tourney instead of the Yemeni city of Aden - where they were originally scheduled. The Sana'a Group members will play in Yemen's capital according to the previously set timetable.

A senior Yemeni official released a statement, following the decision, saying the Arab federation doesn't respect its resolutions. The statement said the Arab Football Federation

that people in charge of the federation pay harm to interests of some Arab countries.

The statement says the Arab Football Federation tries to isolate Yemen from other Arab countries and weaken Yemen's role. The statement provided evidence of Arab Football Federation unfairness because it has never appointed a Yemeni referee to run a match over the past two years.

However, according to the statement, the Asian Football Federation and Federation of International Football Association frequently appoint Yemeni referees for football games.

The statement argued that there are

many well-qualified Yemenis who are not engaged in any of the Arab Football Federation activities despite the fact Yemen is one of the first countries that played football.

The Yemen Football Federation claims its right to participate in forming the Arab Football Federation committees, according to a sport official. He said the Yemen federation sent a letter to the Arab federation claiming involvement of Yemeni people in its committees.

The Yemen federation said Yemeni referees have to participate in administering football meetings, organized by the Arab Football Federation.

Sana'a will start organizing the games of its group, which includes Yemen, Palestine, Comoro Islands and Djibouti as of Dec. 14.

Arab Football Federation had decided earlier that Yemen would host two groups, one in Sana'a including the above-said teams while the other group was scheduled to play in Aden and it is made up of Lebanon, Sudan, Mauritania and

The Yemen Football Federation was surprised by the Arab Football Federation decision, issued on Oct. 8, which selected Lebanon as a substitute for Aden to host the encounters between Lebanon, Sudan,



والدته: ٤٧٢٧٩٢-٢٦٩٠٠

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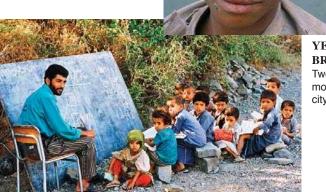
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he International Day for Children is celebrated Nov. 20. The United Nations General Assembly recommended in 1954 that all countries institute a Universal Children's Day, to be observed as a day of worldwide fraternity and understanding between children and of actively promoting the welfare of the

The date of Nov. 20 marks the day on which the Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, in 1959, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in 1989.

Nothing better than celebrating children's day than with beautiful photos. All Photos are Copyright ©2006 TrekEarth.



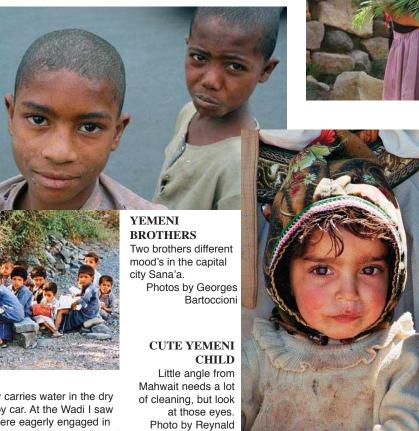
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The Wadi Sachra (Al Hudavdah hardly carries water in the dry season, and you can drive through it by car. At the Wadi I saw this teacher with his small pupils. All were eagerly engaged in the lesson. Teachers earn very little and usually have additional Photo by Wolfgang Schanze



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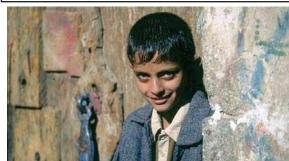


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MISCHIEVOUS SMILE Boy - Sana old city. Photo by Mariusz Jachimczuk







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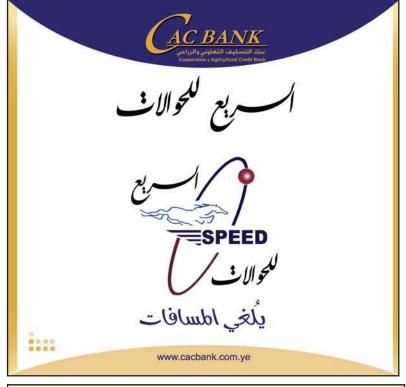
Yemeni children adore being photographed. In this photograph a group of young villagers came to be photographed by a digital camera. The photographer showed them their photo taken and their face lit with astonishment, laughter, and cries of Photo by Georges Bartoccioni







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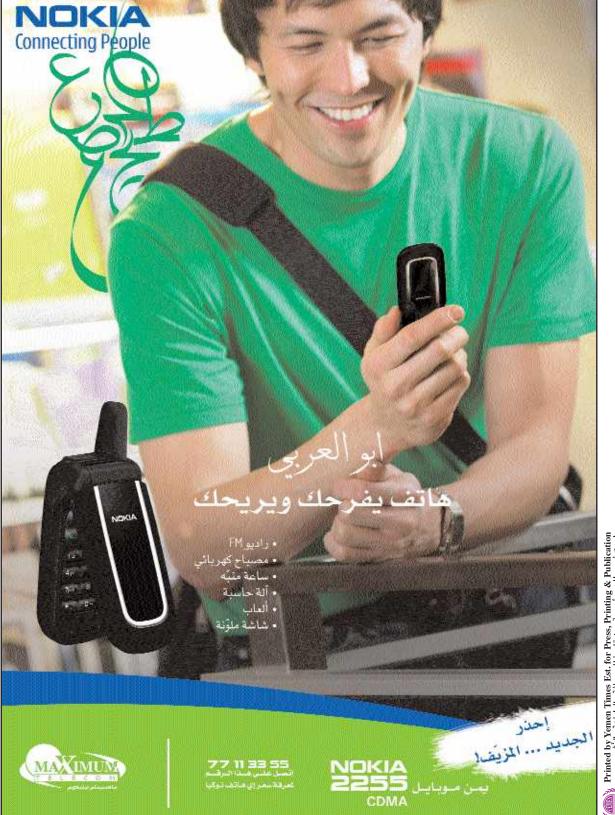
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