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Fear and ignorance trample the rights of bus drivers



**8**  
Keeping with traditional rituals



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Sana'a Zoo animals need a better life

**Readers' Voice**

Last edition's question:  
Do you think Ameen Ali Al-Rohani's case could affect Yemeni-U.S. relations?

I don't know (11%)  
No (47%)  
Yes (42%)

This edition's question:  
Do you think the Yemeni government is serious about reducing the number of VIP bodyguards, which exceeds 70,000?

- Yes  
- No  
- I don't Know

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

## Government takes steps to control arms bearing

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Jan. 21 — Republican Decree No. 8 of 2007 was issued last week to control arms bearing to protect senior government officials. Comprising 16 articles, the decree is based on Yemen's Constitution, as well as 1990's Law No. 40 concerning organizing arms bearing and trade.

Under the new decree, the Interior Ministry is tasked with organizing protection for high-ranking officials, whereas bodyguards assigned to escort such officials must abide by numerous conditions. One condition is that guards must not carry arms in public places, markets, hotels or cafeterias unless they are escorting officials as assigned by the Interior Ministry.

Another condition is that bodyguards mustn't enter security or military institutions with arms. All personal arms must remain inside the vehicle prior to entering any such institutions, except for a single pistol carried by one bodyguard when accompanying a distinctive individual inside a security or military institution.

A third condition is that bodyguards always must wear a uniform, obey



From now on, guards must not carry arms in public places, markets, hotels or cafeterias unless they are escorting officials as assigned by the Interior Ministry.

military regulations and behave well.

A Ministry of Interior department is responsible for training and increasing bodyguards' awareness, supervising and monitoring them and assessing their performance and abidance. The department will continue coordinating with senior officials to ensure that its

bodyguards don't bear unlicensed arms.

The decree's bylaw specifies political and national security organizations to organize and assign bodyguards to protect certain personalities as they do their jobs.

Continued on page 2

## Imprisoned without a cause: Former Guantanamo detainee's voice finally heard

By: Nisreen Shaddad

SANA'A, Jan. 21 — A group defending human rights presented on Thursday a program which detailed the plight of a released prisoner, detained for five years in the American prison Guantanamo, where he was abused physically and mentally, denied medical attention, and held without any hope for a trial. Mohammed Al-Asadi, with a crestfallen demeanor, detailed his despair with strong words at The National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedom, or HOOD headquarters in Sana'a.

Families of other detainees were also present at the program. Many of the detainees being held at the American prison in Cuba, have absolutely no evidence against them of having committed hostile acts against the United States. The United States opened the prison in 2002, rounding up many of the men in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and labeling them enemy combatants and terrorists.

"My son went to Pakistan to study but never came back. He was arrested without a definite case ... those are the documents that prove the purpose of

his going to Pakistan," said Hail's mother.

Umm Abdullah's says her husband, Ismael Al-Raimi, traveled to the United Arab Emirates to secure work and had been there for two years when he called his wife saying he was returning to Yemen. After that phone call, Al-Raimi disappeared, and his family didn't hear from him for months. The family painstakingly found his name on a list of Guantanamo detainees. However, according to Umm Abdullah, she has been trying to find out more information on her husband through the Red Cross, but has been told he is not in Guantanamo. She fears her husband is in one of America's secret jails, Umm Abdullah said.

The other five Yemeni detainees who were recently released from Guantanamo are still being held in the Central Prison in Sana'a, while the government runs a background investigation.

"Al-Asadi wasn't held with the five other detainees as America released him without requesting further interrogations," said Khalid Al-Anisi, executive director of HOOD.

Continued on page 2

## Yemen denies sheltering wanted former Iraqi VP

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Jan. 20 — A Yemeni government source denied last Thursday that former Iraqi Vice President Izzat Ibrahim Al-Douri is living in Yemen, as alleged by Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.

The source pointed out to Yemen's Saba News Agency that Yemen deals with political refugees in its territory with high transparency. He noted that reports of Al-Douri's presence in Yemen have been circulated via electronic web sites belonging to Iraqi journalists, which are unauthentic and baseless.

Reuters reported Talabani as saying that Al-Douri, deposed Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's deputy in the

Revolutionary Command Council, is in Yemen. While in the Syrian capital of Damascus, the Iraqi president said, "I was told that Izzat Al-Douri is in Syria, but later on, it's been made clear to me that he's in Yemen, not Syria. For a long time, we've been informed that he's in Yemen."

Al-Douri criticized Ba'ath party members who plan to unify the national leadership via a Damascus conference. In a letter believed to have originated in Sana'a, according to media outlets, Al-Douri warned of a conspiracy led by Ba'ath party dissidents.

A similar statement put forth in the name of the Ba'ath party national leadership and published last Thursday demanded party members not be driven



Izzat Ibrahim Al-Douri

toward U.S. plans during the conference. Speaking on the former Iraqi official's behalf, the statement said that this is a conspiracy against the Ba'ath party, accusing the Syrian regime of hosting the Damascus conference with the aim of selecting new leadership for the party.

"We received information that some Ba'ath party dissidents, who didn't display an honest attitude when coalition forces occupied Iraq, called for an illegal national conference in Damascus," the statement went on. "Hosting the conference in Syria confirms that this is part of a U.S. occupation conspiracy to eliminate the symbol of the struggle against the occupiers."

Continued on page 2

## Yemen mediates to resolve Somalia conflict

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Jan. 20 — Sheikh Sharif Ahmad, head of the Somali Islamic Courts, is due to leave Kenya for Sana'a as part of Yemen's mediation efforts to resolve conflicts between the Islamic Courts and the interim Somali government, numerous media outlets reported late last week.

Media said the Somali Islamic Courts reached an agreement with the United States, Italy, Ethiopia and Yemen, with the aim of involving the Islamic Courts in the interim government. The agreement is the fruit of a series of talks

between numerous Islamic Courts leaders and the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a.

Under the agreement, the Islamic Courts mustn't interfere in the case of Sheikh Hassan Daher Awais' band, who belongs to the Islamic Courts Union, as Awais is accused by the U.S. Administration of having links with Al-Qaeda.

The head of the Islamic Courts still must sign the agreement in its final form, since he's believed to be the ultimate decision maker, a matter which the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a hasn't confirmed.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh consid-

ers Ethiopian military intervention in Somalia a legal act because it was made upon request by the interim Somali government.

In an interview last week with United Arab Emirates newspapers Al-Bayaan and Emarat Al-Youm, Saleh stated, "The Ethiopians may fear any presence of Islamic elements in Ujadin region, fearing that the Islamic tide will affect the region. I heard from Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi that Ethiopian troops will withdraw from Somalia."

Saleh noted that it was decided to host Islamic Courts leaders, except

those internationally-wanted elements believed to have connections with the Al-Qaeda network.

"Islamic Courts' Foreign Relations Officer Ibrahim Adow and other Islamic Courts elements are holding talks with U.S. officials and the Americans are due to hold talks with the interim Somali government," he added.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi earlier revealed that several Somali Islamic Courts leaders are holding talks in Yemen with the aim of ending their nation's crisis.

Continued on page 2

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## In brief

## Hajah

## Successful stop to tribal clash

Jan. 20 — The general manager of the Jamamah district in Hajah governorate stated that on Friday a tribal group convinced two fighting tribes to stop a fight started many years ago. The fight killed two men and injured another, who is in a critical situation. The fight was over disputed farmland.

## Hodeidah

## Protest against rising license costs

Jan. 20 — Hundreds of bus drivers arranged a march to the administration of the governorate traffic. The march protested the rising cost of licenses. They want the local authority and the governorate of Hodeidah to stop the extraction of the traffic administration. The marchers threaten to go on strike if the traffic administration doesn't apply their requests.

## Shabwa

## The first union for poets

Jan. 20 — As a first step in supporting the cultural and arts' movement in Shabwa, poet Ahmad Ba-Mahjob established the first union for poetry and poets at the beginning of this month. The established committee consists of six famous poets as the members. The union aims to give more concern to poetry in its different forms, encourage and create a competition between the inventors and the union will play a great role in developing the cultural movements if it find good supports, according to the union's publisher, Ahmad Ba-Mahjob.

## Sadah

## Discussing women empowerment project

Jan. 20 — Deputy Governor of Saada Salem al-Waheishi held Thursday talks with the director of the project, Anit Fonj, at the German Cooperation Office for Development in Sana'a over the project of Equivalent Opportunities and Women Empowerment in the governorate of Sadah. Al-Waheishi pointed out that women in the governorate have achieved a remarkable success in the field of education, work and development and achieved many social and political rights. Fonj offered all required assistance for women in the development fields within the framework of the project that the German office would implement.

## Sana'a

## The first Disables General Conference

Jan. 20 — Vice President Abdu-Rabu Mansour Hadi attended on Saturday, the first Disables General Conference which discussed, over two days, issues related to work programs of the Yemeni disabled. Hadi pointed out that this conference is a future sign to make this social section completely integrate with society's activities, production and creation. He expressed confidence that the conference will start a characteristic move on the administrative and performance level and establish offices for disabled in all governorates to qualify, employ or treat all in need.

## Employing rural female in teaching field

Jan. 20 — Minister of Education, Abdul-Salam al-Jawfi, discussed on Wednesday with educational official in World Bank-Yemen Office Aisha Fu'ad aspects of educational cooperation between Yemen and the World Bank and the possibilities of the World Bank supporting the Ministry of Education's plans aimed at employing female high school graduates to teach, by contracts, in the rural districts in order to encourage girls to enroll to schools. They agreed on assigning a field team to study the needs of female instructors in remote and rural districts in order to put conditions and standards required for contract.

## Taiz

## Bab El Mandab water project

Jan. 20 — The General Secretary of Taiz Local Council Mohammed Al-Haj inspected the level of achievement the first phase of Bab El-Mandab Water Project. The cost of the project is around \$280 million. Meanwhile, Al-Haj listened to progress for ongoing water projects funded by the European Union.

## Local wheat infected, government denies findings

SANA' Jan. 21 — A new form of stem rust, a virulent wheat disease, has jumped from eastern Africa and is now infecting local wheat, according to a scientific study.

The study, conducted by researchers with the Global Rust Initiative and the Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, confirmed conclusively the existence of the wheat disease in Yemen. There is also evidence that the disease has spread into Sudan, but more tests are needed to confirm the finding. This strain of stem rust, now called Ug99, was found in Uganda in 1999, and it has since spread to Kenya and Ethiopia. It is thought to have the potential to seriously damage wheat production. The disease has overcome resistance in wheat offered by the commonly deployed Sr31 gene.

The study warned that this disease could easily spread to the vast wheat-growing areas of North Africa, the Middle East, Pakistan, and India. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, countries in the predicted, immediate pathway grow about 25 percent of the Earth's wheat.



Ug99 infection on wheat.

However, Abdullah Al-Siani, official of plant quarantine in the Ministry of Agriculture denied any kind of wheat

infection in Yemen saying that the ministry did not register any cases of wheat infection.

## Al-Saeed Foundation launches 2007 activities

TAIZ, Jan. 21 — Al-Saeed Foundation for Science and Culture launched its 2007 activities last Thursday with a painting exhibition and a lecture about scientific research.

The launch is timed with the 10th anniversary of the foundation and the Hajj Hayel Sa'eed Anam's prize for science and literature.

Shawki Ahmed Hayel, a board of directors member, delivered a speech in

which he expressed his happiness over this exceptional program which includes unprecedented activities.

He further noted this year will witness an inauguration of new departments and activities such as the metallic coins department — documenting Yemeni coins throughout history. He also pointed out the role the foundation plays to enrich the innovative, scientific and cultural

movement.

Faisal Sa'eed Fara'e, the foundation's general manager, reviewed the details of the annual program for 2007. He also presented the activities of Al-Saeed forum for the period January — June 2006, which include 11 lectures ranging from scientific research, cultural development, geography, anthropology, Islamic sciences and history.

## Continued from page 1

## Government takes steps to control arms bearing

The bylaw sets many conditions in order for bodyguards to be granted arms-bearing licenses, the most important of which is that the number of bodyguards mustn't exceed seven for each of the following: prime minister's deputies, Speaker of Parliament's deputies, interior and defense ministers, political and national security chairmen and the supreme court chairman.

A second group of officials including Members of Parliament, Shoura Council members, governors and undersecretaries of defense and security ministers can have a maximum of five bodyguards each. A third group of officials can't have more than three bodyguards each. This group includes deputy governors, managers of departments at military institutions and chiefs of security departments.

Officials in a fourth group can have only two bodyguards each. Such officials include undersecretaries of other ministries and their assistants, as well

as other personalities at military institutes and sites.

The bylaw also stipulates protection for persons other than government officials, such as traders and businessmen, as the nature of their work requires safeguarding them. Such individuals can apply to the interior minister to grant them licenses for bodyguards if they meet the legal requirements and pledge to pay for the guards' living costs.

Additionally, businessmen also can hire guards from private security companies licensed by the Interior Ministry. However, the interior minister will determine the number of bodyguards and guns for each businessman, which also applies to foreign foundations and organizations and private firms.

In conformity with the bylaw, the interior minister has the authority to specify the number of bodyguards for each individual, cancel their arms-bearing licenses and withdraw their body-

guards if such a person dies, retires or is dismissed from his job.

Bodyguards and arms-bearing licenses also may be withdrawn if violations occur, such as pointing guns at policemen or other government officials, or if guards mishandle their arms or lend them to others.

However, the bylaw exempts several types of bodyguards from the regulations, such as those for the president, the vice president, the Speaker of Parliament, the prime minister, the Shoura Council chairman and the Higher Judiciary Council chairman.

Researchers fear such a bylaw may not go into effect and question whether the Yemeni government is serious enough to organize arms bearing.

The decree was issued following numerous requests to justify the number of bodyguards and arms-bearing licenses for each individual after official security tallies revealed that more than 70,000 armed bodyguards current-

## Egyptian security arrest Yemeni official

CAIRO, Jan. 21 — An Egyptian newspaper reported that the General Administration of Al-Jeeza Investigations arrested a Yemeni official trying to break in the Israeli Embassy in Cairo on Jan. 16.

The Yemeni Maj. Abdulsalam Dahhan Al-Masheli pretended to be a Jewish cosmetics merchant and wanted to finish some privileges relating to his time in Cairo.

Egypt's Al-Misryon newspaper pointed out that Gen. Adel Al-Hilali, the chief of Al-Jeeza security department received a notice from the concerned officials in the Israeli Embassy stating they arrested Al-Masheli, 36.

When the officials asked him to present his identity card to make sure of his identity, it became clear that Al-Masheli was Yemeni to the police officials.

An official at the Interior Ministry, who

declined to give his name, said Al-Masheli has psychological problems and he traveled to Cairo for treatment. The official went on to say that his ministry is following his case in Cairo and it managed to resolve the problem with Egyptian authorities.

Yemeni Consul in Cairo, Ali Al-Ayyashi, told the Egyptian Akhbar Al-Yum that Al-Mashli is mentally ill and he traveled Cairo for treatment with his sister who studies there.

Al-Ayyashi further stated that Yemen's Ambassador to Egypt, Abdulghani Al-Shamiri, intervened to solve the problem and they agreed to give Al-Masheli additional time to complete his treatment. Later the Yemeni Embassy received him and admitted him to a specialized center and he will be deported and returned to Yemen.

## Yemen loses leading man in literature

HODIEDAH, Jan. 20 — Yemeni poet and historian Abdurrahman Ba'ekr, 64, died Jan. 18 in Hodeidah following a heart attack.

Ba'ekr is known as one of Yemen's leading men of literature, thinking and history. He is among very few thinkers who enriched the Yemeni and Arab library with important contributions ranging from literature, history and politics with about 20 works.

These works include studies of Yemen's revolution history and political history together with many other Islamic studies and critical works. He also wrote collections of poems and plays.

Ba'ekr lost his sight during his youth and, thus, compelled to stay in his homeland, Hodeidah's Hais, to write.

His early education was at the hands of his father and then he studied secondary school in Sana'a and later he perused studies under religious scholars in Zabid.

He married more than once and has 15 sons: seven boys and eight girls. He was honored by many cultural institutions including Al-Saeed Foundation and Al-Afif Establishment. Further he occupied the second rank in competition conducted by London Radio at the beginning of the 15th Hegira century.

## Imprisoned without a cause:

Although Al-Asadi was tortured for five years, his talk exuded confidence, strength, and faith, and he said he hopes in the future to be able to do more to become a defender of detainee rights.

"In this conference I call on all people to stand tall to shut down Guantanamo and end the trail of human tragedy at all secret detentions ... America must be aware of the danger the U.S. government is leading them to. Such treatment creates rancor and spite and brings evil to the whole world," Al-Asadi said.

He added, "I will use all my efforts and energy to clarify the sorrow and pain the rest of the detainees suffer

from. I will struggle to present their issues to the public and work with the organizations that defend human rights."

Shadi Mokhter, an American lawyer pursuing her doctorate in human rights, and an attendee at Thursday's event, agreed that Guantanamo is an illegal prison, "Release the detainees or give them a fair trial," she said.

Another attendee, Ryadh Al-Ghaili, who was once a detainee at the political security prison in Yemen said, "My coming to this conference is to support all detainees around the world whether they are being held at Guantanamo or Guantanamo systems used in Arabic

or Islamic countries. There is no difference between Guantanamo and a political security prison as they are both violations of one of the greatest blessings God gives man, which is freedom."

Others present at the event agreed that before fighting terrorism as security centers claim, they need to heal the tendency of terrorism in their hearts and understand the concept of human rights.

"The issue we need to face today is not only the existence of Guantanamo, but also the upside-down concepts and principles of human rights ... such as a pre-emptive war and a war against terrorism. Such concepts changed the

aggressive war against Iraq into a war of liberation, and legalizes arresting innocent men under the banner of 'War Against Terrorism,'" said Tawfeeq Al-Bathi, from the Human Rights Information and Training Center.

## Al-Ghaili also explained the cause of terrorism.

"The treatment while being arrested is enough to create terrorists. They snoop on our private affairs, rush into our homes, and illegally detain us for months or years while using torture and depriving us of the necessities of daily life," Al-Ghaili said.

During his statement, Al-Asadi

asserted: "It is a war against Islam, because while being in the prison they punished us while we were praying. They stomped on the Holy Quran and threw it in deserted places and toilets. They frisked our private organs. They forced us to shave our beard. And when we asked them for rights, they told us we are neither humans nor animals to deserve rights. We are devils, and devils have no rights."

There were about 759 men, all Muslim, initially held at Guantanamo. The number of detainees fell to 400 in 2006. 100 of the current prisoners are Yemenis, 70 are Saudis, and 230 are other nationalities

## Yemen denies sheltering wanted former Iraqi VP

According to the statement, that symbol of struggle is the Ba'ath party, which has been affected by the Syrian regime, an ally of Tehran's regime.

Al-Douri lashed out at former Iraqi Ba'ath party member Mohammed Younis Al-Ahmad, whom he described as a

dissident, urging all loyal party strivers to fight conspirators and traitors with the occupation and Syrian intelligence.

Various Western and Arab newspapers reported that Iraqi Ba'ath members are working on organizing a conference for the party in Damascus, in collaboration

with the U.S. and Iraqi governments, to unify the party's national leadership after nearly 30 years of fragmentation.

Media sources previously mentioned that some of Al-Douri's sons are in Yemeni government custody in Sana'a, in addition to approximately 1,000

Hussein loyalists.

At the moment, Al-Douri's fate remains unknown, as nobody knows whether he's dead or living in or outside Iraq.

Born in 1942, Al-Douri was a top advisor to the late Iraqi president and is

wanted sixth on a U.S. list of 55 former Iraqi officials. U.S. forces in Iraq announced a \$10 million reward for anyone providing information leading to the arrest of Al-Douri, who's believed to be behind the recurring fierce assaults against coalition forces.

## Yemen mediates to resolve Somalia conflict

"Many Islamic Courts leaders have arrived in Yemen for talks with the interim Somali government to resolve the crisis," Al-Qirbi told Al-Khaleej newspaper. He hoped Islamic Courts leaders will bear in mind that tackling their nation's tragic situation necessitates talk and harmony between conflicting factions without violence, as peaceful dialogue is the only way for Somalis to be rid of the crisis.

He emphasized that the Yemeni government is concerned about Somalia's instability, pointing out that Yemen suffers the consequences of the war-ravaged nation's instability, mainly by increasing the number of refugees to Yemen.

According to Al-Qirbi, the role Yemen is playing along with the international community aims to bring together the Somali Islamic Courts and the interim government. "The Yemeni government

stresses the necessity of continuing peaceful dialogue and avoiding violence to resolve the crisis," he continued.

After concluding her tour of Africa, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer met President Saleh earlier this month in Aden. Both sides talked about the Somali situation, discussing various means to support its interim government and the necessity of deploying African peace-

keepers in Somalia to restore security and confront the Islamic Courts.

Yemeni media sources say nearly 50 Islamic Courts members came to Yemen after the Ethiopian intervention, while the interim Somali government fears Awais, who chairs the Islamic Courts' Shoura Council, may be in Yemen or Kenya.

Somali officials affirm that they won't stop hunting Awais, who is wanted by

both the U.S. and the international community, admitting that they face difficulties arresting him because he's married to the sister of Somali Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Mohammed Hussein Aidid.

According to such officials, Somali President Abdullah Yousef still respects Awais, who helped release him after his previous detention by Islamic Union Forces.

# Lebanon opposition sets strike day

Lebanon's Hezbollah-led opposition called has called for a general strike next week as part of its efforts to topple Fouad Saniora's, the Lebanese prime minister, government.

The opposition said on Saturday that the strike, on January 23, would be a response to Saniora's failure to meet the "legitimate and rightful demands of the people".

"We urge all the Lebanese to freely express their national and political choices by way of general and public strike and lockout in all areas on this Tuesday, January 23," the Lebanese National Opposition said in a statement.

The opposition - a loose alliance of

several parties - said that conditions in Lebanon will not re-stabilise unless a "national patriotic power" is born, through a fair and early parliamentary elections, "paving the way for a new era".

It also said the government had "belittled and scoffed at the massive, democratic, well-mannered and civilized protests and sit-ins in downtown Beirut," launched 1 December.

Along with Hezbollah, a mainly Shia movement, the Lebanese National Opposition is composed of Amal, another mainly Shia organisation and the Free Partiotic Movement led by General Michel Aoun, a Christian.



Supporters of rival parties have held demonstrations and street sit-ins in Beirut since Dec. 1.

**Labour unions**  
Separately, Lebanon's powerful labor union federation on Saturday called on its 350,000-strong rank to strike against the prime minister's planned tax increase that are part of his economic reform program.

"Let's make January 23 a day of showing popular willpower and a day of protest against injustice and oppression," said the union, which has previously supported the Hezbollah

opposition.

The calls for a general strike has come just days before the Lebanon donors conference in Paris on January 25, designed to attract foreign financial assistance.

The opposition has criticised the Paris conference, claiming the donor money and loans - which local analysts set around \$ 5 billion - would only increase the national debt and further weaken the economy.

Source: Aljazeera.net

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The Embassy of India, Sana'a cordially invites all Indian nationals in the Republic of Yemen, along with their families, to join in the celebrations of 58th Republic Day of India on Friday, the 26th January, 2007 at the Embassy premises (Building No. 12, Djibouti Street, Off-Haddah Street, Sana'a). They are requested to assemble at the Embassy at 0900 hours.

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# Costly day in Iraq as 20 U.S. troops killed

By: Alastair Macdonald and Mariam Karouny

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - U.S. forces suffered one of their costliest days in Iraq on Saturday when 20 troops were killed, including 13 on a helicopter and five in a clash in a Shi'ite holy city that the U.S. military blamed on militiamen.

Two bombs kept up the pressure on Sunday. One killed six people on a bus in the centre of Baghdad and the other, a car bomb, killed one in the capital. The past week has seen a spike in bombings as the government prepares a crackdown in Baghdad.

The battle at a government building in Kerbala was the bloodiest for U.S. troops in the Shi'ite south in two years and occurred as President George W. Bush presses leaders of the Shi'ite majority to crack down on militias from their community.

Hours after the loss of all 13 passengers and crew aboard a Blackhawk transport helicopter, the U.S. military said five soldiers were killed and three wounded in the Kerbala clash. Two other soldiers were killed elsewhere, and the deaths of two killed on Friday were also announced.

It was unclear whether the helicopter was shot down. Residents near Baquba in violent Diyala province northeast of Baghdad said they saw a helicopter in flames in the air.

It was the deadliest day for U.S. forces since Bush said 10 days ago he was sending about 20,000 more troops to Iraq to try to prevent sectarian civil war between Shi'ite Muslims and the once-dominant Sunni Arab minority. His plans have run into resistance from opposition Democrats who now control Congress.

The U.S. military said on Sunday a brigade of around 3,200 soldiers had arrived in Baghdad, the first of some 17,000 planned reinforcements for the city, and it would be fully operational by the start of February.

Thousands of pilgrims are thronging Kerbala, 110 km (70 miles) south of Baghdad, at the start of the 10-day rite of Ashura, a highpoint of the Shi'ite calendar and a target before for attacks by al Qaeda and other Sunnis.

"The Provincial Joint Coordination Centre (PJCC) in Kerbala was attacked with grenades, small arms and indirect fires by an illegally armed militia group," the U.S. military said in a statement, apparently blaming Shi'ite militiamen rather than Sunni insurgents whom it usually refers to as "terrorists".

"Five U.S. soldiers were killed and three wounded while repelling the attack." It made no mention of attackers killed or detained and officials did not immediately respond to queries on how the assailants' identity was established.

### Convoy

An Iraqi local government official who said he was in the building throughout questioned the identification of those who fought the U.S. troops posted outside a joint U.S.-Iraqi base, in the provincial governor's headquarters, just

after dark.

Describing how a convoy of half a dozen white, U.S.-made, unmarked four-wheel drive vehicles approached the compound around 6 p.m. (1500 GMT), he said armed men in the convoy exchanged heavy fire with U.S. soldiers.

U.S. troops and Iraqi special forces later searched the office of the governor and other senior officials, said the official, who represents a major Shi'ite political party and spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity.

"It's still very mysterious," he said. "I'm not sure why they say those people who came in were militia."

Relations have become strained

between Washington and the Shi'ite-led Iraqi government as the United States presses Baghdad to rein in Shi'ite militias blamed for death squad killings and tries to limit the influence of Shi'ite Iran.

Not since U.S. troops fought street battles with the Mehdi Army of Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr in southern Iraq in 2004 have U.S. forces had such heavy casualties in the region.

Sadr remains a potent force, both inside government behind Shi'ite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, where the Mehdi Army has been accused by Washington of being the greatest threat to Iraq.

Aides to Sadr accused Washington of

trying to provoke a confrontation by arresting one of its spokesmen on Friday.

Maliki has been criticised by U.S. and Sunni leaders of failing to tackle the Mehdi Army but the premier vowed this month to crack down on Shi'ite militias as well as Sunni groups in a major operation backed by U.S. reinforcements in Baghdad.

Sadr, a young populist cleric, enjoys a mass following in Iraq and some backing from neighbouring Shi'ite Iran.

U.S. forces also said they foiled an attempt to smuggle a car bomb into Baghdad's Green Zone government compound.

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# Seeing history through the others' eyes

By: Ambassador Gilles Gauthier and Ambassador Frank M. Mann

In remembrance of the Elysée-Treaty of 1963, the 22nd of January is celebrated as the French-German Day. Is this a mere confirmation of a longstanding and world-wide known friendship between two countries? Upon taking a closer look, this date turns out to be the turning point of one of the most ambivalent, sometimes tragic, but in the end fortunate developments of a bilateral relationship between nations.

Historically, the 22nd of January is a date pointing to the future. The "Treaty on the French-German Cooperation" was concluded 44 years ago by both sides as a tool to reach their distinct objectives. Today, the anniversary describes a success story of convergence, reconciliation and gradual acceptance of the other. Yet, the common past of the two countries goes back even further: Their competition during the race towards the top during the period of Industrialization turned into an arch-enmity after the French-German War in 1870/1. The atrocities of World War I and II seemed to cement the gulf between the opponents forever.

So how could this relation be transformed to one of the closest friendships and partnerships in Europe? Following the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany, it was the will to reconcile that characterized the beginning of the European Unification in the 1950s with an attempt to share coal and steel, i.e. means of war.

Both countries wanted to avoid atrocities of previous wars for the generations to come. Images of the French-German summits of the last forty years speak for themselves: First, the embrace between Konrad Adenauer and Charles de Gaulle in 1963. Then the silent commemoration of Helmut Kohl and Francois Mitterrand for the victims of Verdun in 1984, hand in hand. And finally, the first invitation of a German Chancellor to the celebration of the



French ambassador Gilles Gauthier (L) with German ambassador Frank M. Mann.

landing of the Allied Forces in Normandy in 2004: Gerhard Schröder and Jacques Chirac demonstrated the French-German reconciliation with a heartfelt embrace.

If France, in 1963, aimed at preventing further confrontation with Germany, today it expects that the German EU Presidency furthers European interests in a decisive manner. By adding his own version of the treaty's preamble in 1963, Adenauer had strived for Germany's renewed independence, for its reunification and its inclusion in NATO.

Today, more than ever, Germany assumes responsibilities within the European and the international network of states. What lies between now and then is the European integration, often considered ponderous but in reality moving extremely fast. As European nations, France and Germany have demonstrated to the world how former enemies can join forces and form a fruitful partnership for the benefit of the

whole continent. It was proven that finding common solutions built on shared interests is the only way to turn rivals into winners: foes became friends and paved the way for the development of the EU.

Just as much as both sides had struggled to get close to another on the political level, the citizens had to come to trust each other. How deeply this trust is rooted nowadays is reflected by the completely natural way the post-war generation and their descendants are dealing with each other. The founding of the "French-German Youth Association", also in 1963, and hundreds of community twinning agreements between French and German villages and cities have opened the way for encounters of young and old citizens in both countries which have often led to deep and long lasting friendships.

Another prominent example for this development is the founding of a German-French "Youth Parliament" in

2003. One of its initiatives was to suggest a history book called "Histoire-Geschichte" for French and German High School students that was eventually conceived under the patronage of French Minister of Education and Minister-President of the Saarland. The first volume on "Europe and the World since 1945" has already been in use since the winter term 2006/07. The other two volumes, "From the Ancient World to the Age of Romanticism" and "From the 19th century to 1945", will be presented in the course of the next two years.

The preface to the first volume points out that "the book is not a presentation of French-German history, but a French-German history book". It is not only the history of one's own country that is meant to be taught and assessed but also common European history - at the same time and in particular from the view of the neighbouring country. What is notable about this textbook is that, while the initiative came from the

political side, it was developed purely by German and French historians. "We must not leave out any taboo subjects," assured the French Minister of Education. Controversial subjects, like the Treaty of Versailles, were simply presented as the controversies they are. In this way, the innovative textbook also turned out to be a historiographic document of a critical discussion on the past.

The complete three volumes of this book might be considered just another

step on the path of two distinctive soloists towards their successful duet. As a daily companion in their school bags however, it will form the perception of French and German students of their common history and of a new Europe which is developing. It is a stronger symbol than any monument could ever be for the eventful French-German history, during which foes became friends. It will help the youth in both of our countries to see through each others' eyes.

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# Fear and ignorance trample the rights of bus drivers

The illegal extortions bus drivers are made to pay makes their lives difficult. They claim traffic officers threaten to penalize them, even when they haven't violated any traffic rule, which invariably leads to them paying some money as a bribe to such officers.

By: Nisreen Shadad  
Yemen Times Staff  
and Saddam Al-Ashmouri  
For Yemen Times

Representatives of the administrative union body, which is supposed to look after and help bus drivers, also indulge in extortion. However, when the Yemen Times presented the problem of such extortion to traffic officer Yahya Al-Falahi in the presence of some bus drivers, they denied the existence of such a practice. While a few reiterated it, the majority remained silent.

Regarding any relationship between police and the union, "There's no relationship between us because the administration is an official body, whereas the union is civil service. However, due to personal relationships, union officers request assistance from police because they're more powerful," an anonymous traffic officer.

Another police officer noted that it's impossible to accuse anyone who isn't

dated by the administrative body and elected by bus drivers, also put a host in bus drivers' nests rather than acquainting them of their rights and defending them against those going beyond the limits imposed by law.

Regarding such representatives' duties, Hasan Al-Ahdal, an alternative representative for Ahmed Haidar, says, "I'm in charge of collecting money for cleaning the bus stand and helping bus drivers in an accident."

An unofficial representative who requested not to be identified, replied, "My duty is to collect money and send it to the administrative body. It's not our business to know where it goes or in favor of whom." Bus drivers at Beit Baws stand added, "The union compensates us in an accident, giving us 30 percent of the repair cost."

Bus drivers must pay two types of fees: official and unofficial. Official fees vary from one stand to another according to the size of the bus. For example, at each bus stand at Taiz intersection, bus drivers pay YR 50 daily. Since there are two stands,

local council and so on."

However, Me'sar and others have no idea to whom such unofficial fees go. "I hope to learn where it goes because it's such a huge amount of money! What an irony this is - we feed them instead of them feeding us," observed bus driver Mahdi Al-Matari.

Regarding bus drivers who refuse to pay such fees, Daghigh says, "When bus drivers refuse to pay, representatives give their names to the traffic police to detain their buses and thereby force them to pay. We have no choice but to pay because detaining our buses and putting us in prison requires us to pay thousands in penalties."

Bus drivers affirmed that they must stand together to rise up against such oppression because they feel they have no way to improve their income. They work the entire day to earn money while others simply tread on their rights and take their hard-earned money. "You can imagine that I rent a bus for YR 3,000 daily, spend YR 1,000 for petrol and other spending amounting to YR 1,000. However, after working from morning until 11 p.m., my daily income is less than YR 6,000, so what can I do with the remaining YR 1,000?" Al-Matari explains.

As he describes, such corruption goes back to their weakness. "Because we were weak from the very beginning, collecting money from us has become a habit and it's very difficult to get rid of it now. We must work together because individual effort can't face this menace."

Khalid Al-Anisi, a lawyer and executive director of the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, also known as HOOD, says, "Laws and legislation organize everything, yet we need control and observation. For example, there's a law preventing a traffic officer from riding in a violator's taxi, bus or car with the intention of taking him to the administrative body. This rule protects bus drivers because sitting together in the same vehicle gives many traffic officers a chance to exploit violators. Added to that, they might fight and such a fight most probably would end with committing a murder."

He continued, "Once, while returning to Sana'a from Al-Dhale', a traffic officer stopped me because I needed to renew my car's deed of title. He asked to ride with me to the administrative body. On the way, he began haggling with me about paying him something in return for letting me go. I refused and told him that he broke the rule as well as I did because he rode in my car. Therefore, he left me!"

According to Al-Anisi, "In my viewpoint, the problem is that bus drivers still are unaware of their rights. Generally speaking, people are negative about serious problems that have disturbed them for so long and they aren't ready to spend the time, effort or money to pay the tax of citizenship to stand against the arbitrary."

He went on, "Even in traffic, the main focus is only on the drivers' duties; thus, as a result, bus drivers easily can be exploited and traffic officers have the opportunity to exceed their bounds. What makes bus drivers' condition weak is traffic officers' ability to penalize, even if bus drivers don't break any traffic rules. Added to this is bus drivers' difficulty in proving the opposite."

"Moreover, if bus drivers stand against traffic officers, they may lose more money and their rented buses may be detained. Therefore, they prefer the easier way, which is paying money. As a lawyer, I prefer to pay the commonwealth rather than an individual because paying money without a receipt causes others to tread upon our rights," Al-Anisi concluded.

## A lawsuit for accountability

Yahya Al-Ziyadi, a Shumaila district representative for 15 years, says, "We - both the previous representatives and bus drivers - selected the Shumaila district union to preserve our rights and support us when we're in need. However, the union took a lot of money illegally without providing any receipts. We complained about them to police, but our complaints fell on deaf ears."

"Prosecution commanded returning the complaint reports to us six times, but they didn't. Hundreds of bus drivers and representatives then asked us to bring suit against them, calling into question the union's financial accountability," Al-Ziyadi explained.

"Although the union administration for buses to Bab Al-Yemen/Hizyaz and 13 Shumaila district/7 July/Darsalm has an observing union called a public union selected from drivers and bus owners to revise activities and accounts for 2001-2004, no one observed or was aware of the accounts."

"Therefore, we authorized some among them to make us aware of where the money is going. After many clashes



Bab Al-Yemen bus stand in Sana'a. A lot of money is illegally taken from bus drivers without providing any receipts, complained bus drivers.  
YT photo by Saddam Al-Ashmouri

took place, we eventually were informed about only the 2004 accounts and what we found was an illegal and random layout with no receipts or a delivery note from the bank, which we had signed, but it wasn't documented.

"When informing us about the 2005 accounts, we found them worse than the previous ones, so we asked to bring in two accountants to review the accounts - we would select one and they would select the other. However, they refused, so we sued them."

He continued, "However S'ad Shajerah denied this and claimed that if the bus drivers and bus owners agreed to change us, then surely we would be changed. He said drivers have the right to change, so if we are as they claimed, why are we still their union?"

"If I take anyone's right, I would say it

in front of all to come and I would take it," he added.

This matter has been in court for years and still no verdict has been reached. "For a year, we've been going to court to receive a rebuttal to our suit, but we've had no response," Al-Ziyadi concluded.

Whether they join the union or not, Shumaila bus drivers must pay YR 120 for stand services. Some bus stands have unions while others don't. Some bus drivers are content about the union's work, but most are not. Bus drivers have the option to join the union or not. For example, the route from Shumaila to Bab Al-Yemen has a union whereas the route from Shumaila to Al-Siteen/University doesn't. Many bus drivers join the Shumaila/Bab Al-Yemen union, but many don't.

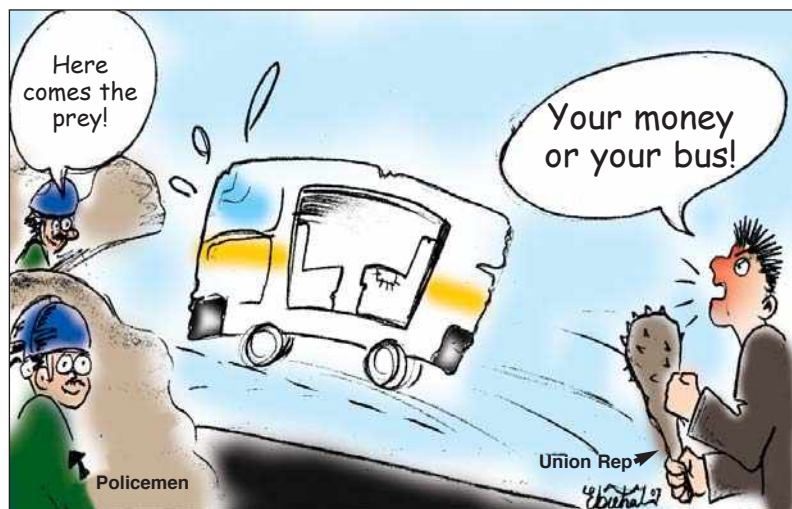
There are four stands and nine repre-

sentatives for Bab Al-Yemen stand; thus, bus drivers must pay Bab Al-Yemen stand YR 40, YR 30 at Shumaila stand, YR 30 at Hizyaz stand and YR 30 at Darsalm stand - all without a receipt. Additionally, union members must pay YR 80 for further services such as opening new systematic routes and services in case of accident.

An optional approximately YR 1,500 annual contribution supports a bus driver if he's sick or imprisoned and the union will pay not less than YR 500.

Added to this, representatives of Al-Zindani Building stand take YR 20 from each bus driver without a receipt.

In an effort to obtain more information regarding in whose favor such fees go, the Yemen Times attempted to interact with the local council, trying to set up an appointment for months, but in vain.



violating the rule; however, if a rule is broken, it's the officer's duty to penalize.

"Representatives give us the names of violators who refused to pay the fees and consequently, we put them in prison," explained Al-Falahi, a traffic officer at the 26th of September office.

However, Abdul Aziz Al-Sanabani, head of the Shumaila traffic office, said, "We have a practical relationship with the representatives and the traffic officers union because they all work together to apply the rules and control violators. If a bus driver refuses to follow the standard rules, we only convince him not to violate them and most listen to us. However, we don't have the right to put anyone in prison for violating the standard rules."

Bus drivers further complain about traffic police illegally using the indictment bill. If they refuse to give the officer what he wants, he'll penalize them. "Bus drivers know traffic officers at several intersections who will let us break the law once we bribe them," one bus driver admitted.

Though many traffic police confirmed that they don't transgress in this manner, bus drivers complain vehemently about such extortion and their incapacity to defend their rights and prove the officers' guilt. One bus driver said that because of the critical situation traffic police make him live under, his life's dream is to kill at least one of them.

Regarding ways bus drivers can protect themselves from such extortion, one police officer suggested, "Bus drivers can go to police administration to follow up their cases and prove their innocence, which is what we call quittance. If many bus drivers went there, surely it would be a good result."

Al-Sanabani added, "Bus drivers' innocence depends upon our knowledge of their characteristics." However, bus driver Saleh Ahmed says such a way never will prove their innocence.

Union representatives, who are man-

**"What makes bus drivers' condition weak is traffic officers' ability to penalize, even if bus drivers don't break any traffic rules."**

**"Representatives give us the names of violators who refused to pay the fees and consequently, we put them in prison."**

bus drivers must pay YR 100.

Drivers must pay YR 100 at each of Shumaila's six stands for a total of YR 600. Added to this are fees for the stopping place (YR 20), fees to join the same street (YR 10,000 (\$50) and fees to make a local trip (YR 1,200) and an international trip (YR 10,000).

Unofficial fees are those paid without a receipt and go to support such things like elections and Palestine. Moreover, bus drivers at several stands don't get receipts for official fees, including buses at Taiz intersection, from Taiz intersection to the university and from Taiz intersection to Hadda Street.

Regarding unofficial fees, one anonymous official representative responded, "We collect extra money only when we have official instructions, which doesn't happen frequently, but no official receipt is given to bus drivers in return."

Some representatives consider their salary nothing in view of their job. "Bus drivers must pay YR 40 and they receive a receipt in return. Nevertheless, I take

YR 10 more from each driver daily as a gift [described as a salary], but this is nothing compared to my hard job. I stand in the sun for hours organizing buses and calling passengers and in the end, I receive only YR 15,000 monthly," the official representative lamented.

Al-Hasabah Street bus driver Hameed Daghigh complains, "The fees are too much and on certain occasions, it becomes a chance to take more. We used to pay only YR 20 to stand representatives, when suddenly, fees for cleanliness and the local council emerged. Besides that, they ask us to pay an extra YR 150 to support Palestine."

Bus driver Mohammed Yahya Me'sar says, "We pay YR 10 at the bus stand and YR 50 to the representative of the administrative union body. Sometimes the fees are increasing - fees for cleanliness, the

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# Women's rights in Morocco New family code faces many hurdles

In Morocco many women's rights organizations are pointing to great difficulties in implementing the new family code. Reasons include the vague legal requirements and the government's inadequate information policy. By Beat Stauffer

A little over three years ago, in October 2003, Morocco's King Mohamed VI gave the crucial impetus for reforming the family code, the so-called "Moudawana".

After parliamentary discussions, the revised law was ultimately put into effect at the beginning of February 2004. Since then, Morocco has garnered much international praise.

However, Moroccan women's organizations are coming up with a mixed interim balance sheet: the implementation of the new family code faces numerous hurdles, and even the revised Moudawana does not yet provide for legal equality between men and women.

It was a good three years ago that King Mohammed VI gave the starting shot for the introduction of the new family code with his speech to the Moroccan parliament. This amendment brought Morocco much praise internationally.

However, the implementation presents a much less rosy picture, at least from the perspective of the critical media. "All over the world Morocco is presented as exemplary with regard to women's rights in the Arab world",

introduction of the new Moudawana represents major progress.

In practice, however, few changes can yet be seen. As before, women are suffering from discrimination, domestic violence and patriarchal patterns of behavior, explains Tafnout, and old practices such as polygamy or the marriage of underage girls is still commonplace.

Tafnout also locates the main problem in the implementation of the new family code. In many respects, the requirements of the new law are kept very vague, and the judges have barely been prepared to work with the new Moudawana. For this reason, much depends on the individual judges and their world views.

In the eyes of the Moroccan women's organization ADFM, the Moroccan people have not really been informed about the changes in the Moudawana either. Moroccan public television did broadcast occasional ads two years ago, Tafnout says.

However, these ads were in Modern Standard Arabic and in very technical languages, and they did not reach the vast majority of poorly-educated, often illiterate women.



Even the revised "Moudawana" does not yet provide for legal equality between men and women

this deeply-anchored mentality can be changed in the foreseeable future. But this will require a broad educational campaign in schools, mosques, and in the media.

A similar view of the situation is taken by Morocco's second-largest women's organization, the "Ligue Démocratique pour les Droits de la Femme" (LDDF).

In spring 2006 the organization presented its first interim assessment, with statistics on permits for marriages with minors and for polygamy, among other things.

In the view of the LDDF, most of these special permits clearly violate the new Moudawana, which provides for such marriages only under very specific circumstances.

#### Distrust of Islamist women

Both women's organizations are very skeptical about cooperating with Islamist women and their organizations. They accuse the PJD, the Islamist party in parliament, of taking an unclear and contradictory position on the new family code.

Though all the members of the PJD voted for the amendment in parliament, since then the Islamist press has regularly published critical and negative articles.

For Mina Tafnout, the role played by the internationally-known Islamist Nadia Yassine is also ambiguous: on the one hand, she functions as an informal spokesperson for "Justice and Welfare", the country's biggest Islamist movement, which has always taken a clear stance against revising the family code; on the other hand, she openly propagates an "Islamist feminism".

Thus Tafnout hardly finds it surprising that the new family code has made little headway with many men and has in part been sweepingly rejected. "I have the impression that many men feel threatened by the new Moudawana and fear the loss of their traditional role as head of the family and the privileges associated with it," explains Tafnout.

The ADFM has received countless phone calls and threatening letters from indignant men. Nonetheless, the women's rights activist is optimistic that

At any rate, there seems to be a deep divide between the emphatically secular women's organizations and the Islamist ones, one which at this time can be bridged only here and there.

Many proponents of a modern, liberal family code mistrust the Islamist women's motives and regard their involvement in women's organizations and commissions largely as a strategy of infiltration and power grabbing.

For instance, the fact that the LDDF has been repeatedly attacked verbally and even physically by the Islamists is apt to have increased this distrust.

Aicha Ech-Channa, probably the best-

known Moroccan women's rights activist, has repeatedly been made the target of Islamist attacks. But the founder of "Solidarité Féminine", who has been fighting for over 20 years for single mothers' rights, refuses to be ruffled by such attacks.

Patiently she lists the discriminations still contained in the new family code. At the same time, however, she expresses understanding about the need for proceeding cautiously in the matter. "If the new Moudawana had gone even further," says Ech-Channa, "it would certainly have been rejected by conservative and fundamentalist circles."

Ech-Channa sets greater store by changing hearts and minds than by confrontation. And she argues passionately for new forms of sexual education to effectively address deep-seated resistance toward gender relations based on equality.

#### An uphill battle

A somewhat more positive assessment of what has been achieved so far comes from the (Swiss) aid organization cfd, which supports "Empowerment-Programs" for women and disadvantaged children in Maghreb.

Severina Eggenspiler, project coordinator for the Maghreb, says she has the impression that it has become much easier for Moroccan women to file for divorce. At the same time, she also points to problems in implementing the new law, to a number of shortcomings and to the lack of improvement in the situation of single mothers.

However, in Morocco hardly anyone can afford to lobby for these people, due to the taboos on pre- and extramarital sex.

In terms of their demands for the future, the three Moroccan women's organizations are largely in agreement. First polygamy must be banned on principle, says Mina Tafnout, as it is a form of contempt for women.

Second, inheritance law, which is still influenced by Islam, must be revised. And finally it is extremely important to reform the laws regarding child custody, which still disadvantage women. "This is the next battle we must wage!" Tafnout says emphatically.

At the same time, she makes it clear that this battle will not be easy; in Morocco, too, the champions of the Sharia have good cards.

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Women's rights activist Aicha Ech-Channa, founder of the Moroccan Feminine Solidarity Association, was awarded the "Elisabeth Norgall Prize" 2005.

wrote Le Journal Hebdomadaire. "But the Moroccan authorities are not doing enough to explain the Moudawana to the citizens and to take its application seriously."

#### Few changes in practice

The interim assessment by independent Moroccan women's organizations is just as critical. For Mina Tafnout, board member of the Association Démocratique des Femmes du Maroc (ADFM), there is no question that the

## Words of Wisdom



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

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



## OUR OPINION

## Media Sustainability Index

The creation of indicators and standards has continuously proved as a good way to measure development and progress. It is also used as means for comparison and motivation to improve. For example, the United Nations Human Development Index is a tool used to measure development through life expectancy, literacy and education and standard of living.

The International Research and Exchange Board, known as IREX, developed a similar indicator to measure media development called the Media Sustainability Index. The MSI was first conceived in 2000, in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development, in order to provide in-depth analyses of the conditions for independent media in 38 countries across Europe, Eurasia, the Middle East and North Africa.

MSI is used to assess how media systems change over time and across borders. Since 2006, IREX has also produced an MSI for the Middle East and North Africa, with support from USAID, the U.S. Department of State's Middle East Policy Initiative and UNESCO. An MSI for Africa will be produced in 2007.

It is easy to understand why there should be such an indicator. To start with, the role of strong, independent media in promoting human rights and the development of societies is very important. Moreso, the status of media reflects the level of democracy and progress of a country. Media also initiates change and cross communication between the public and decision makers. The MSI assesses five "objectives" in shaping a successful media system: Legal and social norms protect and promote free speech and access to public information, journalism meets professional standards of quality, multiple news sources provide citizens with reliable and objective news, independent media are well-managed businesses, allowing editorial independence, and supporting institutions function in the professional interests of independent.

A score is attained for each objective by rating seven to nine indicators, which determine how well a country meets that objective.

In the MSI conference held last week to introduce MSI for the Middle East and North Africa, there was a heated debate regarding the methodology on which the measurement of media sustainability factors were determined. The question was, now that we have good indicators, how do we measure them effectively. Although IREX has already created research and came up with MSI figures for the Middle East and North Africa, countries, the participants in the conference felt they are not very accurate and need to be recalculated.

However, it is important for us working in media to always keep in mind a performance indicator. Because without it progress can be very difficult to measure. It was a very good first step and the next thing to do is our own calculations to find out for ourselves how we rate as independent media and what can be done to become better.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf  
Editor-in-Chief

## Conflict of wills in the Arab land

By: Dr. Yassin Saeed Nouman

In 2006 there was no evidence that the Arab joint action had taken even one step forward or the politics architects in this field had proved to have serious comprehension of the real dangers the Arabs were exposed to because of their failures to achieve any progress at the level of cooperation and Arab joint action.

The year should have witnessed fruitful cooperation among Arab countries. That is because of the big challenges the Arabs faced in Iraq, Palestine, Somalia, Lebanon and Sudan where the political and social situation fluctuated as an expression of instability that was threatening the entire region. The financial surpluses that amounted, only in the Gulf region, to more than \$600 billion in 2005 inspired hope to solve the problem of poverty, even if partially. That was because of the absence of a mechanism and incentives for the travel of capitals among the Arab countries and also the environment encouraging strategic investment in Arab countries

Poverty and continuous recession in the living standard and social services, the deterioration of the education standard, unemployment among youth and increase its averages in an unprecedented form, and absence of political, intellectual and social freedoms have all created a convenient climate for the emergence of violence, extremism and terror.

The retreat of American interest in democracy and freedoms in the Middle East in particular has led to rebuilding the idea of "the stable state" in the regional political consciousness at the expense of democracy and the political and intellectual freedoms. That had produced an outstanding negative impact on political mobility, which began to constitute a restraint against behavior of the despotic states on the one hand and, on the other, besiege violence, extremism and terror.

The national state experienced deep shakes due to influence of non-national structures especially sectarian, which is posing a real threat to the civil national state with Iraq, Lebanon and Sudan all examples. That reflected itself negatively on most Arab countries in which the sects and minorities have headed towards resistance to improve their situation because the Arab political system's use of force to conquer the national ambition of building the democratic national state where its sons are equal in rights and duties.

The absence of clear-cut strategies for economic and social development made development revolve inside a vicious circle of failing experiments which reproduced the poverty in its most

resisting forms to the so-called efforts for fighting poverty. They are failing efforts by all standards as they concentrate on programs that are devoted for this purpose on partial treatments of some aspects of poverty without linking them to comprehensive developmental plans leading to end backwardness and poverty-producing factors. The backwardness in the Arab homeland is seen in its clearest images among which is the political environment for a sustainable development with its interconnected links. These unstable, corrupt structures, packed with elements of despotism and hostility to creativeness do not offer to development the minimum degree of conditions to achieve its goals in destroying backwardness. The time development begins to produce objective conditions taking its course towards dealing with social interests in the manner leading to preparation of the society for joining this long and complicated process in a spirit of solidarity and sense of common responsibility, the restraining forces would step forward to derail the course of the process and its conditions towards reproduction of their own interests. They do that in the way blocking the series of development at low levels depriving it of realizing the required accumulation for the enlarged reproduction process.

Similarity of the Arab countries productive structure on the one hand and those countries individual building of economic subservience to industrial states resulted in slowness in the implementation of programs of Arab economic integration, let alone the absence of the political will which forms the greatest block before the achievement of this objective.

What reflects clearly the tragic situation the Arabs are undergoing presently is that all are talking about foreign projects competing among themselves in a way making the Arab arena a place for demonstrating their force. On the other hand the Arab project is absent, at last the one resisting to render the Arab land to a field for the external projects to settle their accounts. They talk about an Iranian project and an American project making Arab land a place for settling their accounts. That means among other things that the Arab region has become productive of foreign interests whose strategic importance has priority to the exchanged interests of the region states' interests. This is the main reason for absence of the Arab unified strategic project for the region's future. This Arab project is the one that can protect the region from foreign projects, which through their conflict on the Arab land threaten stability of the region and future its development. The present aspects of politics, security, sectarian and economic polarization in the Arab region reflect a horrific state of deterioration that may push the region, in case this polarization continues building its strong mechanism without resistance, to the edge of civil wars and confrontations directed by foreign interests. There does not appear in the offing any effort resisting continuation of building those mechanisms in the heart of the Arab region by depending on political or sectarian support devoid of national identity.

The future of our Arab region must not remain an indicator of what results the conflict of those foreign projects conflicting on our produces. In case the Arabs decided to wait for the results with this spirit devoid from initiative and sensing of the danger of those projects whatever their results are, the problems of the region will no doubt be more complicated. Then the Arabs will not be able to decide their future in the manner the pres-

ent circumstances, despite of their complications, allow them. The present circumstances can still offer the Arabs a golden opportunity to produce Arab resources to decide the region's future in a way securing for its people the living in peace and following the road of sustainable development. There are many elements of power in the Arab region still positively working in favor of producing these options, including the strategic project that will transfer the Arabs from the state of defense to the position of positive and active participation in deciding the future of the Middle East and the international policy. By the Arabs' undertaking of this great responsibility the minor internal differences that hinder the opportunities of producing this project will disappear.

The historical experience and up to date proved that foreign alliances of any Arab country could not replace the need for the Arab solidarity, whether in its regional or Arab form. Such alliance will be of high cost and its mechanism does not work in favor of this country without a large solidarity ensuring protection for its parties' interests. This element works in interest of Arab solidarity and integration. Those who presently undertake drawing up policies cannot ignore this fact singled out by the historical experiment. Among the elements of power is the important change in the cultural structure that surpasses in its growth the political element. This will push for important political changes reflecting the need for democracy, political pluralism and unleashing intellectual freedoms. These can redraft the stand towards the great strategic issues. The ties that will grow among the Arabs, whether through the institutional system that depends in its formation on these elements or via direct relations among the Arab society activities produced by the common interests, will create suitable circumstances for a joint Arab action enabling it to draft its strategic project to fill the vacuum that is now filled by the foreign projects. Among the other elements of power is the feeling of the need for regional; groupings that can perform a transitional function in favor of the Arab integration and to practically translate that into the establishment of some groupings, of which the Gulf Cooperation Council is considered as a more active and more organized. This council that undertakes a complicated task in one of the more complicated Arab regions because of economic, geopolitical and security reasons, managed to a great extent to fill the vacuum in its region by coordinating the policies of its member states. Among the other elements of power too is the establishment of a capitalist sector, organizers, property companies and investors who can, if they are freed from hegemony of the states, play a normal role in the production of the conditions necessary for an Arab economic integration. This is the sector relied on in the advancement of nations but its capabilities are still inoperative because of the restraints imposed on it through governmental policies. And that forces it to divert an important part of its activity to outside the Arab region. The many potential elements of power can be reviewed as proof that life is still giving the Arabs the opportunity to surmount the state of defeat to the position in which they will be able to produce conditions of advancement to which many nations have produced before them.

Dr. Yassin Saeed Nouman is a Yemeni politician and Yemeni Socialist Party Secretary-General  
Source: www.alneda.net

## SILVER LINING

## The Press does not send out poison!

“Do not listen to what newspapers say,” this is exactly what President Ali Abdullah Saleh told the al-Sha'ab football team while meeting them at the Presidential Palace in Mukalla last Wednesday. He even advised them to not pay any attention to what the newspapers say as they, to him, send out their poison.

This is not the first time in which the man harshly criticized or distorted the image of press and journalists, considering them trouble makers, attempting just to instigate problems and scare the people of the situation.

Such kind of hostile discourse toward the press and journalists is dangerous and consequently brings about some of problems for journalists. When influential people and police officers listen to such discourse from the leading man in the country, they take a very negative and even hostile attitude to the press, which then increases the harsh attacks and harassment of the journalists.

The political regime in a democracy should not expect the press to present just a rosy picture of all situations. It should not expect to have prototype newspapers of al-Thawra, 26 September or even the state-owned broadcast media in which almost nothing serious or of interest to the public are discussed. Such media is just propaganda outlets and are no use to the people.

As a tax payer, I don't feel that I am benefiting from the state-owned media financed by taxes of the public. They do not touch our main issues and concerns that we would like them to be reported or covered. They just serve the interests of individuals at the power centers. This is why we believe that liberalizing broadcast media has become a must; the people should have a choice in a democratic system.

But, there are some independent or party newspapers that are of interest to the readers because they report stories of importance to them; some of them have played a significant role in reporting corruption issues and offenses like that horrible torture crime of Sheikh Saeed al-Fasheq, the rape of Anisah al-Shaibi by the jail police officers. These newspapers are operating according to the law and constitution and they have not broken these institutions.

In fact, we cannot have a democracy without an operational free press. If they break the law, they must be held accountable. But we cannot call what they report poison that the youngsters and people in general have to keep away from. It is true there are some newspapers not operating professionally, but we cannot generalize this misbehavior. The problem is that most of these yellow newspapers have been initiated to serve the purpose of influential people at the power center and they are, therefore, in good terms with people using them as an instrument to hit their opponents.

We do expect the people in charge to respect the role of the press in a democracy. They should understand that freedom of the press is not a luxury – it is a key element of development at large. Mr. President, believe me the press function is not poisonous. The role of the media is to comfort the afflicted people and to report the truth, which it is the right of all people.

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



By: Mohammed Al-Qadhi

## New cabinet structure



By Samer

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# Yemen Press Review

By: Mohammed Khidir



Al-Was at weekly, 17 Jan. 2007.

**Main headlines**

- Government fate hostage to internal criteria and external demands
- WB: We did not say Yemen the first of states in fighting corruption
- Security kills a third person wanted by America, Allaw demands investigation
- YSP Secretary general: shadow government one of alternatives, corruption committee is totally official
- After annexing it to foreign ministry, Corruption mafia burn archives of expatriates ministry and criminal investigations arrest its guards
- Security deployment in precaution of spread of fresh protests
- International condemnation against execution of al-Bandar and al-Tikriti
- Saudi religious scholar describes Saddam execution as sectarian

The newspaper's editor in chief writes asking what was there beyond the violation of honor to make us depart the heights of power and the disregard in which we imprisoned ourselves, from violation of the honor of Anisa to violation of Hamdan's human entity. The case is one thought he perpetrators are different.

Before the disclosure of the these two cases there are many cases, some have been disclosed and the majority were not due to impregnability of their owners and

inability of the state, the protector of honor.

The victims of tyranny are increasing in number due to an aggressive sheikh, arrogant official or poverty with defenselessness leading to selling of dignity

Nonetheless, political parties, religious men and mosque preachers seem to be aloof from what is going on though they all fill the world with their tumult when one of their dignitaries are touched. Where is sheikh al-Zindani who used to ascend Yemeni mosques oratory stands talking about his readiness to offer his life if the Islamic Sharia law is not fixed in the constitution as the major source rather one of the sources of legislation? Where is he who has gathered all his religious Arguments for entering people as shareholders in Islamic company for fish? Where are the other religious scholars? Where are they hide and bury their heads in the sand against grievances of the people and violation of their honor whereas they fight because of a beard that was shaved considering that as violation of the religion teachings?

Hamdan, Anisa and grandfather of the child Sawzan who have risked their life despite of their weakness are more courageous than you are and more dignified, so let them alone and you are busy fighting the windmills. You hide your inability with more feigningly Adopting the role of morals and values where you are too far from confrontation for safeguarding them on the ground when the tyrants violate them.

To the leaders of the Islah Grouping I tell them are not those violations that happened against human and honor are more important than a loss of a constituency or a

position at a local council? When are you going to grow up and fill the place you are occupying?



Al-Sahwa weekly, 18 Jan. 2007.

**Main headlines**

- Merchants suspend their strike, the government postpones the sales tax
- News leaks on government formation started by the GPC and ended by it, Politicians: absence of political will reduces importance of genuine reform
- Islah conducts its internal elections of the 4th general conference
- Arrests in Aden and protest demonstrations in Dhaliie
- Qahtan: There is a JMP shadow government
- The World Bank denies reports by government media on Yemen's progress in fighting corruption
- Hussein al-Ahmar accuses the authority of preventing him from traveling to Egypt
- Allaw establishment holds the attorney general responsible and Zaraniq tribe denounces

Writer Zaid al-Shami says in his article that following the wrong road does not lead to safe end, the is the state of Somalia that was led by its leaders to the abyss beginning from Siad Barre who left it dismembered and with troubled conditions , dominated by differences and much warring. Those who came after him were not wise or successful. Each does not see but himself and will not

be satisfied until he thinks he has ended his adversaries.

We hope that has happened to Somalia to be as a punishment resulting from corruption , division, dispute and tribal fanatics and we remember how Siad Barre executed scholars and burned them in public squares.

Repeated cycles of conflicts and wars even after the agreement of Arta city of Djibouti took place and disturbance continued but situations have not stabilized. The last of which was the control of Islamic Courts on the country. A kind of stability has taken place in the country, but that does not mean that we say that the Islamic Courts were right. They should have worked to accommodate all and deal well with the state institutions and to draw up priorities for issues, but there name as Islamist formed a bugbear for America and Ethiopia and for other countries and under the fighting of terror they use force against all that is related to Islam.

The Ethiopian interference and occupation of cities as well as the American bombing came to be a new witness of the extent the Islamic and Arab nation has reached of weakness and humiliation. If the Arabs and Muslims remain looking at what is happening in Somalia without exerting what they have to of duty towards their brothers. Their duty is to support them on the right and help them get rid of egoism and rancor.

Now after the Somali president has returned to Mogadishu we expected he would declare general amnesty and to extend his hands to all the sons of his homeland and not to except anyone even those who had been with this party or that. We expected he would not allow any of

the ministers or officials to spell statements that will provoke this side or that.

There is no need for pursuing because that policy did not make stability before and will not bring it now and the cycle of violence should stop and come to an end.

Somalia will continue in its conflicts and its bleeding wounds unless the Somalis, particularly the politicians, are convinced that they should coexist and concede to each other instead of conceding to the foreigner.



Al-Nidaa weekly, 17 Jan. 2007.

**Main headlines**

- Death chases escapees from Political Security Prison
- Washington negotiates with Somali Islamic Courts in Sana'a
- 55 thousand people from Haima isolated because of rock slides
- : Lawyer of Amisa al-Shuaibi demands coercive arrest of criminal investigations director
- International Decency report: Yemen is weak in fighting corruption
- 20 insolvent prisoners join the list of complainers against prosecution and concerned authorities
- Bahah: Oil is not to deplete in 2012. WB report reserved

Writer Mohammed al-Ghubari says in an article I is expected that soon there will announced the formation of a committee for fighting corruption and a law will be issued on regulating tenders, which

is still floundering the parliament. The government will enter into a new compromise with merchants on the implementation of the sales tax law.

Personally, and many share me the opinion, I do not pin much hope on the committee and the law in limiting corruption because its forms are multi and its channels are interrelated between the sources of money and authority of individuals.

The talk on the existence of huge privileges for members of the corruption fighting committee and legal texts prohibiting those who endeavor to contact the committee of tenders cannot convince us that time is going to give us the better because the laws presently in operation were there for more than two decades and corruption was very much less in degree than now.

Also, the experiment based on increasing salaries of the judicial power members did not lead to existence of fair and judiciary. The case is the same with the central apparatus for monitoring and audit. The talk on huge allowances and awards to senior leaderships dominates measures of preventing the plunder of public property. The question also lies in many sides for which special salaries and high allowances are allotted and they are still in the arena of corruption.

Travel allowance is one of the continuous sources of corruption and the question does not concern the bulk of employees who get expenses from this article but rather related to the higher positions of government establishments.

The allowances, and commissions gained by those in charge of affairs of projects, tenders, and licenses are the cornerstone in the process of seizing the public property.

There were many factors which have deteriorated relations between Sunnis and Shiites in Iraq. The most significant act was the bombing of the Shiite shrine in Samara in February 2006. After that incident a vicious cycle of revenge killings started in the country. The last nail was hammered by the Iraqi government when Saddam Hussein was hanged. The manner of his execution has created more rifts between Sunni and Shiites. In past Sunnis have accused Shiite dominated Police and Army forces for aiding with the Shiite militant groups responsible for the killings of Sunnis.

The most powerful Shiite Militia is called Mehdi Army, controlled by radical Shiite cleric Muqtada Al-Sadr. The Shiite guards who hanged Saddam Hussein taunted him and shouted "Long live Muqtada". It is a clear proof of their affiliation with such a person, whose army is involved in killings of innocent people, which no one can deny easily. Now the gap is so wide that it is leading towards a division of Iraq.

If Iraq is divided it will be divided into three parts of Shiites, Sunnis and Kurds independent territories. The short term affects would not suite US interests in the region. Sunni area would certainly become a hotbed for Insurgents, Al Qaeda, Jihadi and Militant movements against USA .

Shiite dominated government in Iraq is pro American but that does not reflect the mood of all Shiite population in Iraq. Infect Iran has a great influence over Iraqi Shiites. Iran is considered as the greatest enemy of USA and Israel so things would never be so smooth under Iranian influence.

Independent Kurd area would have its own affects for the region. Kurd population is mainly spread in Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. With a population about 35 million people, Kurds makeup the largest ethnic group in the world who don't have separate country of their own. About 55% of Kurds live

in Turkey, 20 % each in Iraq and Iran and 5% in Syria. Kurds have long desire to have their own independent country called Kurdistan. A separate homeland for Kurds in Iraq would also inflate uprising of Kurds in other parts for a free sovereign country. Turkey has a long history of troubles in Kurdish dominated areas of Turkey .. That would mean more problems for Turkey. Turkey has strong bilateral relations with USA and among the few Muslim countries who have formal diplomatic relations with Israel. Turkey would never like that to happen otherwise it will certainly affect its relation with USA and west.

So apparently it looks that USA will try its best to stop any partition of Iraq. But that's only one side of the picture; there are other aspects of Iraqi division also. The division of Iraq in the long term could prove very useful for USA especially for Israel.

The separation of Iraq will certainly bring more enmity between Sunni and Shiite Muslims in all over the Arab world. Iran is considered as leader of Shiite Muslim countries and Saudi Arabia is considered as leader of Sunni Muslim Countries in the region. Both never had friendly relations. The recent clips of Saddam Hussein execution have created anger in Sunni Muslim countries and blame of that was openly put on Shiite dominated government of Iraq.

In last year's war between Hezbollah (A Shiite militant group in Lebanon) and Israel, Saudi Arabia and other Sunni Muslim Arab nations accused Hezbollah for provocation and starting of War while Iran and Syria backed the Hezbollah movement by all means.

Survival of Israel is mainly due to the fact that there are many differences in Arab countries which prevented

them to form an effective united-front against Israel. Though every Arab state is against Israel but remained more suspicious about each others. So Israelis would like Sunni Shiite enmity to continue because it has always helped them and will certainly help them in the future also.

As Israel is considered to be the closest ally, United States has always backed the actions which resulted to favor Israel. So if the partition of Iraq will suite Israel that it will never be put out of the cards.

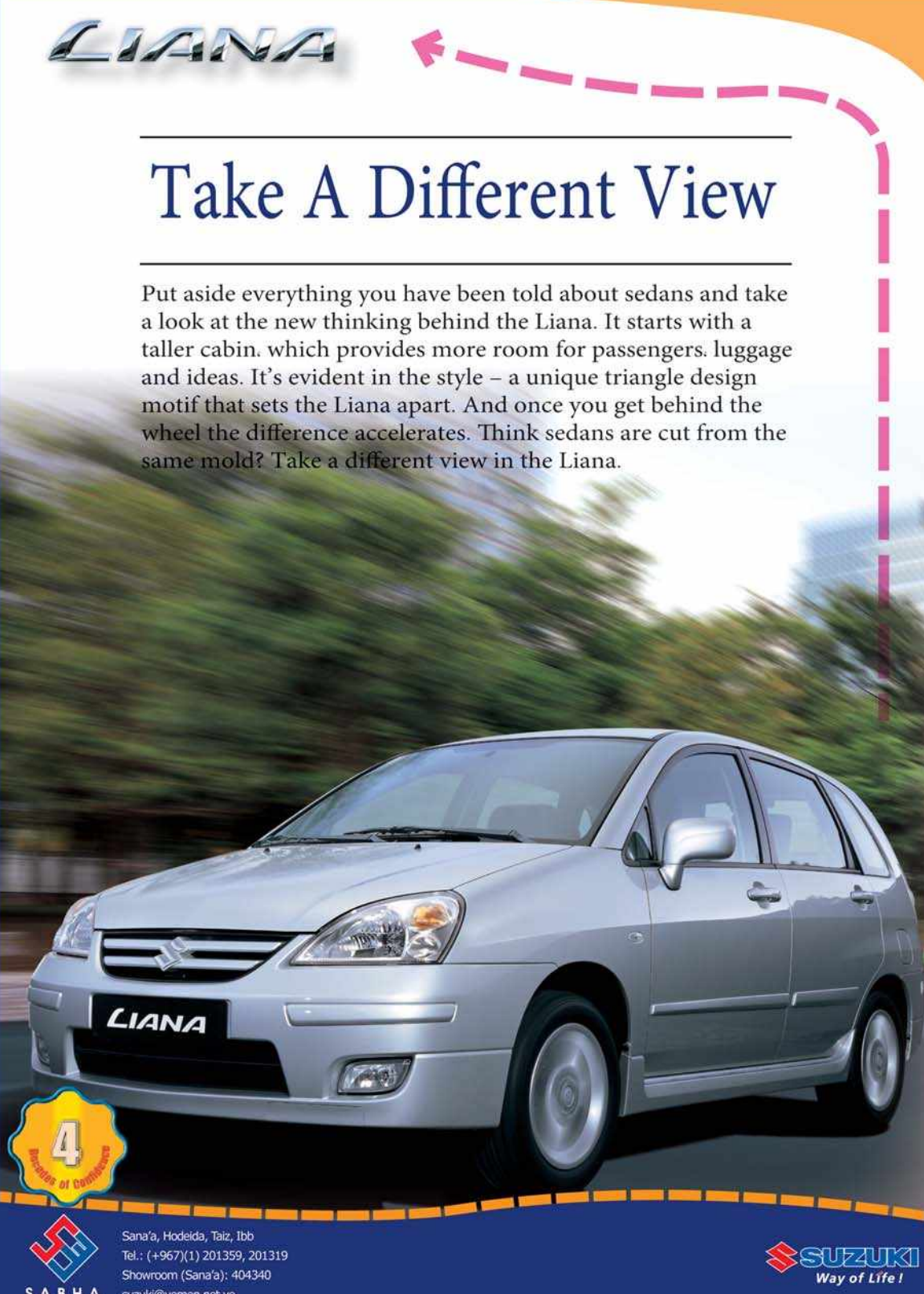
The other most significant long term affect would be of Kurd independent movement in the region. Kurds will never sit idle after getting a Independent territory in Iraq. Their ultimate goal is to create a sovereign county for all the Kurds in the region. It would bring more troubles for Turkey, Iran and Syria as the proposed Kurdistan could only become reality when these countries will lose their territories. USA would never mind such kind of uprisings in Iran and Syria. Though Turkey is considered a friend but Kurds are proving even stronger alleys. Infect a free Kurdistan would be the most pro-Western state after Israel in the Middle East. Will western powers mind the creation of such a state?

One must also not forget that in recent past there were calls of new Middle East from USA and Israel and if Iraq divided there will be a new Middle East . The change will bring some far-fetched consequences for all the Arab world and Turkey and it seems that those changes will not prove good for any of those countries.

Muhammad Imran Khan is assistant director of Pakistan's National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA). He is an economic and commerce specialist and a freelance writer for several international newspapers.




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**LIANA**

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# Wedding parties in Hadramout: Keeping with traditional rituals

By: Fatima Awadh AlSubban  
fatamh@sify.com  
For Yemen Times

It is exciting to travel around Yemen, in every city and village you discover thrilling rituals that keep you amazed and eager to learn more. What you may see in one area, you will see differently in another area. It is because of Yemen's rich cultural heritage. In talking about wedding rituals in Yemen, you will find many differences.

Weddings in Hadramout feature such things as *aldaqah*, the cutting of the bride's hair. Hadramout weddings are usually four days long and the traditional practices are common, but now with economic constraints people tend to shorten their celebrations down to two days.

In the past, the wedding dress used was a green *Sabaih*, especially in Mukalla and its outskirts, considered an attractive color for the bride to wear on such a special day. However, in Al Wadi Hadramout brides could always choose among a wide selection of dress colors for the wedding party, at a time when women were not affected by new fashion trends. They never thought to imitate others in their fashion and were happy with their own styles. Yet nowadays, women have replaced the green *Sabaih* with other dresses for Al Sout Alhena'a, while maintaining the white dress for the bridal night.

In those days the bride had no idea about when her engagement or wedding party day would be or she hadn't met her groom. The time of the wedding was confirmed two years after the day of the engagement. If the girl was 10 years old at the time of engagement, the wedding would be during her twelfth birthday and normally she was unaware her



While the groom, prepares for "Al-Sahehr" Al-Henna'a party, the men sing to liven it up. At the end of the party, the men put henna on the groom.

morning of the second day of the wedding.

Neighbors, relatives and friends attended the wedding celebrations alongside the families of the bride and groom. A tent was erected in the street, on top of the roof of the house or in the biggest room of the house to animate the wedding within it. Now however, some people will hire halls in big hotels even when they erect a tent. This tent is erected and tightened with ropes at the corners of the nearest houses and carpets are strewn across the floor within the tent. The tents are used for the women's parties that include *Sout Al hena'a* - the party for the girls, the bridal night, *Alsubeh*, and for the groom participation in the *Aldeqah* event as well.

The weddings in Tarim differ from the weddings of coastal Hadramout even though there are certain similarities in both cities.

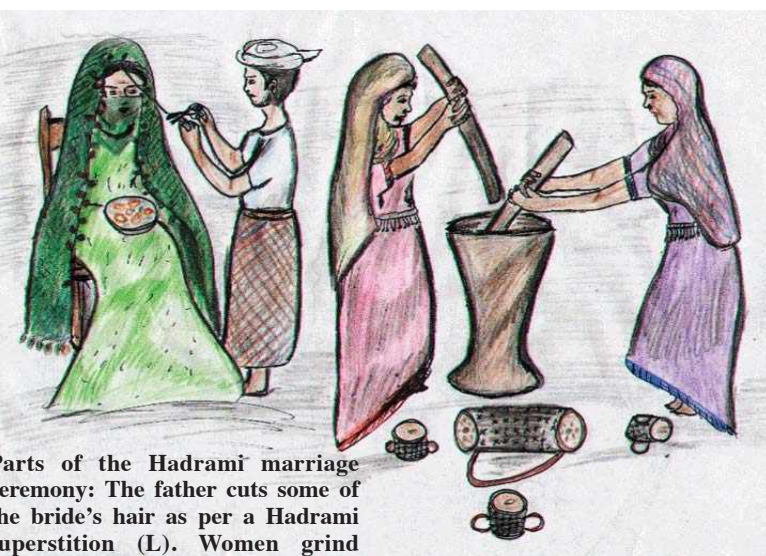
was believed it was better for her to be inexperienced in life and that it was better for the girl married early - usually between 10 and 12. With this in mind the family would order her out of her home when they called her.

When she reached the door of her home, one of her relatives, usually her uncle would carry her on his back. The women then covered her with the "a green *Sabaih*, which usually had the girl crying by then. This ritual is called the "Alrebut" because the bride was unaware of her own wedding and no one would ask or take her opinion. And of course, there were no objections, no discussions. This is considered the first event in the wedding party and the most traditional. *Alrebut* is still one of the rituals in Hadramout still in practice until now.

The female guests, relatives and friends would start to sing and dance into the night. The next day, in the morning, the bride would prepare for the second party, in which she wore a green dress while her hands and legs were decorated with henna. The singers would sing wedding songs to the bride. This event is called "Sout Al Henna'a." In the afternoon, the bride covered by the green *alsebaih* and with part of her hair exposed and dangling around her face, she would sit on a chair while they put a dish on her thighs. In the dish was a pair of scissors. Her father and relatives would then come one after the other and take the scissors to cut a little bit of the hair dangling by her face. After this ritual the bride was presented with gold rings, earrings and other jewelry.

During that night the bride would be prepared for bridal night, called "Leeth Al Dokhlh" because the groom would then come to take his bride to his new house. Naturally, the bride would be very afraid at the moment, yet curious to meet her husband. In the past, the bride would bring all her furniture, from her family, to her new house.

On foot the bride would walk the streets to reach the groom's home.



Parts of the Hadrami marriage ceremony: The father cuts some of the bride's hair as per a Hadrami superstition (L). Women grind coffee and ginger in preparation for serving the guests (R).

wedding had been set.

During the preparations for the wedding, women would grind coffee and ginger in mortars with pestles in the groom's home in a custom called "Aldeqah." Women would sing and dance accompanying a singer. This ritual would usually occur during the

## Sculpture is what you make out of what you want

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori  
For Yemen Times

Sculpture is created from the imagination and the more "out there" it is, the more an artist is noticed for his or her work. When asked, sculptors



Artist Morshed Ali Sanad skillfully carves a wooden statue of Dar Al-Hajar with four wheels hidden below its mountain.

will readily speak about their art. Morshed Ali Sanad is one such distinctive artist known for his wood carved monuments, who aims at being innovative.

Married with nine children, this 63-year-old illiterate man originally from Mahwit notes that he didn't receive a formal education, only that he "studied several parts of the Qur'an in Al-Me'alama."

### How did you discover your talent?

I began by sculpting a replica of the presidential palace when I was 15 years old. One of my relatives thought I was gifted, so he asked me to work with him as a carpenter. I was full of energy and believed I could do something really innovative when Sana'a was the 2004 Cultural Capital. As my children grew up and worked, I began sculpting more statues and palaces at home.

### What sculptures have you made and what was the most difficult?

The most important sculptures I've made are a guard house in Bab Al-Sabah; the old Sana'a palace consisting of three floors and a splendid view (when viewing from the top); the



At one of his shows, he explains how to make all of the components of a guard house, including lighting.

There was no transportation and the bride and groom walked toward their new home while the women sang until they reached their destination. In modern times the bride usually rides in a luxurious car decorated with artificial flowers and writings in the mirror of the car wishing for a happy marriage.

At the groom's house the ceremony would begin when he signs the wedding contract with the bride's father. The signing usually occurred during the afternoon followed by the groom and a number of his relative visiting the bride's father, then going either to the masjid for Al Asha'a or after Magrib prayers.

In the night, the groom was prepared for Al-Sahehr Al-Henna'a or "Al-Makhderh." Men gathered and sat the groom on a stage while a hired team sang to liven up Al-Sahehr. In these teams a great singer would preside over the ceremony such as the likes of Muhammad Jeamh Khan or Abudalreb Edrees. He would sing until midnight and then the men would put henna on the groom at the end of the night's events.

The next day for the "Aldeqah," relatives of the groom gathered in the tent, the women to grind the coffee and ginger. Each woman would place one hand on the hand of the other woman next to her, together hammering the coffee and then the ginger while singing at the beat of the drums until noon.

In the afternoon, all of the groom's family would go to the bride's home to have lunch. They would then go home to prepare for that night by outfitting the groom to receive his bride. His mother accompanied him to the bride's home for the bridal night as is customary in many places over the world.

On the third day all the events occur in the groom's home where everyone assembles for the lunch meal. The bride would then appear dressed in her jewels and beautiful dress. Smiling, she would dance among the women. This ritual is called "Al Subeh."

On the fourth day, drums and songs could be heard in the groom's home. During the afternoon, all the women would gather at the home of the groom and make "Al Mould," considered a religious party with religious songs and poems. The bride would then sit among her relatives looking wonderful while they congratulated her.

Unfortunately, some of these customs have fallen by the wayside. Things such as the furniture a bride brings with her to her new house, the wearing of the green *alsebaih* and the *aldaqah* of the groom have suffered a cultural death these days. We can only hope the custom of *Aldeqah* reappear.

Customs and traditions are very important in our life. They reflect our original roots and our culture. Hopefully it will become a main stay that can influence this new age and its generation that needs to continue these customs and traditions.

mountainous amphitheater in Shihara, the hanging village; a Yafe'e house with all its unique parts; a vineyard in Bani Hishaish and the Haraz house. I chose the last ones because of their unique designs and to depict the differences in architecture in each governorate.

The most difficult piece was Dar Al-Hajar, which took me nine months to carve. It's the largest known replica of the original Dar Al-Hajar, consisting of 21 detachable wood pieces. I used a scale drawing representing the actual size of Dar Al-Hajar with a corresponding ratio to the size of the drawing of the model. Weighing approximately 100 kg., the statue is 1.6 meters high by 2.2 meters wide. Four wheels hidden inside the structure allow its movement from place to place.

### What makes you distinctive and different?

I'm the first Yemeni sculptor to use wood skillfully. I create statues such as *qamariyyas*, carpets, and *shisha*, completely in wood, right down to any plumbing inside the statues, their windows, doors and lighting. Other

## Literary Corner

By: Abu Al-Kalima Al-Tayybah

### Yemeni Annals (Hawliat Yamaniyah)(IX)

**Subject Book:** Yemeni Annals (Hawliat Yamaniyah) [1224 - 1316 AH (1809 - 1898 AD)]  
**Author:** Muhsin Bin Ahmed Al-Harazi et al  
**Checked and Edited by:** Abdullah Mohammed Al-Hibshi  
**Language:** Arabic  
**Publisher:** Ministry of Information and Culture  
**Year Published:** 1400 AH/1980 AD  
**No. of Pages:** 661

1274 AH (1857 - 1858 AD): The most notable event was the destruction and looting of the Dar Al-Tawashy Palace, which was a rare architectural wonder in Sana'a. Al-Mahdi enters Sana'a. The author states: Except for this Imam, I have never heard of an Imam (Caliph) who has proclaimed himself for the Imamate five times and five times, the people pledge their allegiance to him, and then gets kicked out five times! As a side event, the author notes that the "French" (most likely British, as all foreigners were then known as French or "Franks" arrived to Jeddah and were battering the Turks there. The Prince of Jeddah and the Turks appealed the Turks and "captured a bunch of Jeddah residents, said to be 14 Moslems, who were beheaded and their heads were sent to the "Franks". The people of Jeddah left the city and went to Mecca, because the Turkish Commander had capitulated to the Christians and fear was widespread from the Christians, who were threatening the Pilgrims and visitors to the Prophet's grave (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). The reason for this was said to be the revolt of the people of Mecca and Jeddah against the foreign non-Moslem intruders who had had become allies with the Turks, who had hit the Holy Mosque in Mecca with artillery fire and other munitions, with "a bullet even hitting the Black Stone of the Ka'aba.

1275 AH (1854 - 1855 AD): A very difficult year with drought, inflation and impoverishment reaching high proportions. The reason for this according to the author was the high exchange rate of the riyal or "Qirsh", as the silver currency in use then was called. Again, author recalls the appearance of a strange "asteroid", or satellite, as he calls it, which had a tail, similar to the one that was observed earlier ("twenty years ago"). Because of this strange astronomical phenomenon, "there was a widespread plague that was witnessed throughout the world, with some countries suffering from it more than others. This year a local Sheikh, Al-Haj Ahmed Al-Haimy takes over control of Sana'a and the people of Sana'a decide to revolt against this oppressive Sheikh. At the same time a new Imam Al-Mansour Hussein Bin Mohammed Al-Hadi proclaimed himself as the new Caliph and the new Imam gained prominence "left and right". He fortified himself in Al-Taweelah in the Al-Qarani'a Fort. This was an impenetrable fortress and it was there that he received "multitudes from far and near", who came to declare their loyalty to the Imam. Because of the severity of the times, many of the people saw in this Imam a blessed relief from all the suffering they were going through, as "there have never been such trying times" as these in Yemen.<sup>1</sup>

1276 AH (1855 - 1856 AD): Al-Hadi enters Sana'a from Al-Taweelah. The people of Sana'a however rebelled against him and the people of Sana'a

announced their loyalty to a local Sheikh Muhsin Bin Ali Mu'eedh. Skirmishes continued between the Imam Al-Hadi and the favorite of the Sheikh and the people of Sana'a, Imam Al-Mutawakkil Muhsin Bin Yahya.

1277 AH (1856 - 1857 AD): The fight for the Imamate continues until the latter eventually got the upper hand. This was also the year in which the Ismaelites and the Haimah tribe decided to take over Sana'a and there the Imam Al-Mutawakkil decided to confront them and the force that led the counterattack against the Ismaelites was led by the Prince Mohammed Bin Yahya Hamid-Aldin.<sup>2</sup> However, it was the Turks who decisively defeated the Ismaelites after having moved against the Mohammed Bin Ayidh, Chief of Aseer<sup>3</sup> and in 1285 the Imam led a force from Arhab to defeat the Ismaelites, but the insurrection of the tribes prevented the Imam from achieving any decisive victory. From this year, the author points out that Yemen has never been in such a chaotic state, as "Imams come and Imams go and it was not long before the Turks decided to take control of the situation.

1289 AH (1872 - 1873 AD): They arrived in Sana'a on 18 Safar 1289 AH, or 25 April 1872 AD. The Turks were commanded by Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha, who broke his forces into two groups, one took over the South of Sana'a, in a place called "Wahb", probably where the "Urduh" (a military barracks) stands now. Another force took over the fortifications. When the Turkish commander requested the records of the government, the advisors to the Imam Ali Bin Al-Mahdi recommended that the Imam does not hand over anything to the Turks, otherwise "they will know all about the country".

In this year, in the Month of Ramadan according to the author and others who wrote about this period, "the stars disappeared and it was widely thought that the Judgment Day was approaching.

1290 AH (1873 - 1874 AD): The Turkish Commander was replaced by a new Commander with the name of Ahmed Ayyoub. A strong earthquake from the Al-Haymah area and the mountain was "split and lifted out of its place" and smoke and fire could be seen coming out of the mountain and the river of Al-Hanashein was dislocated and its water turned red. This was said to have been caused by the fighting between Bait Al-Nash and others of the area. When they were being mediated by a judge, he asked all the combatants to swear on their allegations, which turned out to be false, so God was punishing them for using his name in vain.

1. In another book, See Literary Corner of Issue 868 and thereafter, Al-Wasi'y History, it was said that the plague was so severe in that year that there were no more coffins left to bury the dead. The same book states that the air was a severe cold streak of air, which killed all the crops and water "would freeze at Noon!" from the severe low temperatures.
2. The father of Imam Yahya Hamid-Aldin, who eventually became the founder of the Mutawakelite Kingdom of Yemen, after the Turks left Yemen in 1918.
3. Now a part of Saudi Arabia.

sculptors normally use gypsum, even in the minute pieces.

### What are the tools of your trade?

I normally use carpentry tools such as a file, a pair of tongs, a saw and a ruler.

### Have you held or participated in any exhibits to present your work?

I contributed six statues in two exhibits at the Culture House and presented the Dar Al-Hajar replica at the Mahwit festival. I've also received various invitations to participate in national art functions. Lastly, China requested the participation of several Yemeni sculptors, of which I was one of the candidates; however, the event subsequently was cancelled and I'm unaware of the reason for that.

### When sculpting your statues, what do you depend on and do you take any photographs?

I usually see them and then visualize the picture in my mind. I depend a lot on my memory and because I'm a carpenter, that helps me understand the entire architecture and its specific details. I sometimes see something on television and consequently sculpt it as it is. For example, I saw Shihara on television, I guessed regarding its true size and then made a scale drawing to correspond to the real object.

### What are your current statues?

I'm working on a statue of Baraqish, the historical city located in Al-Jawf, depicting the city's fences, gates, houses, palaces, guard houses and all of the other components.

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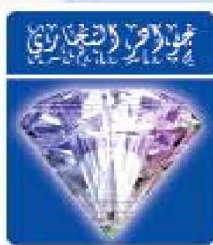
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Main Prizes	No. of Prizes During Each Sub- Period	Total No. of Prizes During the Full period
First Rank Prizes : Two <b>BMW X3</b> (cars) & One <b>Chrysler 300 C</b>	1	3
Second Rank Prizes: Two <b>Dodge Durango</b> (cars) & One <b>BMW 320</b> (car)	1	3
Third Rank Prizes: Three <b>Jeep Cherokee</b> (cars)	1	3
Fourth Rank Prizes: Three <b>Xiali™ 6500</b> (cars)	1	3

Other Prizes	No. of Prizes During Each Sub- Period	Total No. of Prizes During the Full period
Tickets to Dubai & Malaysia + (US\$1000) Accommodation expenses.	15	45
Laptops	10	30
Full Bed Room Set( Furniture)	10	30
House Hold Equipments (TV, Refrigerator, Washing machine ,Gas Cookers, Vacuum Cleaner, , Blender, &, Iron,)	5	15
LCD Samsung TVs 23Inc.	5	15
Jawaher Al Tijari Accounts of (YEM100,000) or (US\$ 500) each.	50	150
Mobile Phones Samsung GSM	134	402
Samsung Cameras	54	162
Watches Made in Switzerland	54	162

# Sana'a Zoo animals need a better life

By: Amel Al-Ariqi  
amel11ariqi@yahoo.com

“We try to keep the zoo animals from dying by helping them adapt to their new environment in captivity,” Sana'a Zoo, veterinarian Dr. Ameen Al-Qubati says.

Sana'a Zoo, which was established after Taiz Zoo, opened in 1999 and thus far has cost [a total of] YR 100 million (\$735,000). The zoo is located in Darsalm approximately 15 km. from the city center, a flat area of rocky desert.

According to manager Khalid Al-

day off) and 2,000 on other days.

Sana'a Zoo is proving very popular as a great family day out because there are few other places for public amusement or family recreation in this traditional Muslim city.

The zoo started with approximately 80 animals, including a lone gazelle, a turkey, geese, guinea fowl, three hyenas, six lions, 13 baboons, a few doves and other birds of prey, some small hawks, five monitor lizards, two porcupines, two hedgehogs, 15 mongooses and two baby hyenas.

However, Sana'a Zoo now contains approximately 300 animals, with lions, monkeys, and birds comprising its largest populations. Additionally, it has received several new types of animals, including two ostriches, four

villagers in the surrounding mountains and are offered for sale to the zoo, while others donate their animals – mostly birds and dogs – to the zoo because they can't care of such animals,” said Al-Qubati, who doesn't hide his concern about the methods local citizens follow to hunt such animals.

“Animals frequently are injured, usually with broken legs from traps. We don't want to encourage hunting with such violent methods whereby a hunter may kill a flock to get one animal, so we don't accept badly injured animals or those facing death,” he explained.

According to zoo management classification, the wild animal section includes lion enclosures, tigers,

The same attractive construction is found in the monkey enclosure, which has become the zoo's most attractive spot for visitors. The 32 baboons climb among the many rocks, which is a very natural setting for them. The space also includes three stone caves built to provide shade and a large square water trough.

However, not all of the zoo's animals enjoy such natural habitats. For instance, tigers, cheetahs, foxes, birds, etc., are housed in cages with extremely limited space in which to move. “Unfortunately, nobody asked our advice when they built these cages,” one zookeeper noted.

He said the municipality responsible for Sana'a Zoo usually deals with architects to design and built such animal spaces. “The zoo's enthusiastic architects have no education in zoo planning and have never even visited a zoo! They simply obtained ideas from photos, television or the internet,” he added.

Al-Qubati points out that some animals just can't adapt to their new conditions in captivity. “Some mongooses can't survive simply because these animals, which are brought in by villagers, are used to following their instincts and hunting their prey themselves. They also are used to living inside their holes in cool weather. Thus, when they're put into cages, they rarely eat, they feel scared and cold, they become sick and many die.”

Zoo management recently prepared a proposal, of which the Yemen Times has a copy addressed to “involved authorities” and mentioning the zoo's requirements.

According to the proposal, Sana'a Zoo requires a training course for its staff, particularly those who deal with animals directly and daily. “Zoo staff must learn how to deal with the animals and how to raise them according to their behavior and nature.

Staff also need to know more about how wild animals reproduce in captivity, how to control reptiles and obtain snake poison for vaccines, what are the most common diseases among wild animals and how to treat them, as well as those diseases affecting both humans and animals.”

The report emphasizes that Sana'a Zoo must create an environment near to the natural habitat in which the animals used to live, for example, employing a decentralized heating system. “Such an atmosphere will decrease animal deaths – particularly in winter – and encourage them to eat, move about and reproduce naturally.”

The report also mentions that all zoo areas should have cameras to help monitor and watch the animals. Such surveillance will allow supervisors and researchers to study the animals and discover the reasons they may be bothered or threatened, the report noted, also referring to the importance of cameras to protect them from annoying visitors who may mistreat them.

Via the report, management also



Honey badgers eat wide range of food including birds and wild fruits.



Staff also need to know more about how wild animals reproduce in captivity, how to control reptiles and obtain snake poison for vaccines.

explained that the zoo needs an internet web site where it can download and exchange information about its animals with other international zoos and animal welfare organizations.

Twelve days after its opening, several experts from the Global Communications for Conservation delegation visited the zoo, saying, “With its large attendance, Sana'a Zoo provides a perfect opportunity for education and increasing awareness about wildlife and conservation

issues, which is greatly needed in Yemen, a nation facing severe conservation problems.

“International non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments and other donors can assist greatly by providing the zoo money and expertise for posters, maps and information boards. Additionally, short videos and audio tapes are very important in a country with 37 percent male and nearly 80 percent female illiteracy.” However, such suggestions haven't been applied yet.



Lion cubs attract the attention of many children. However, the zoo authority had to separate the male lions from lionesses because there is no space for more baby lions.

Makben, Sana'a Zoo spends YR 2 million monthly for food and a million riyals in monthly salaries for the 47 staff. Open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., it has witnessed as many as 10,000 visitors on Fridays (the weekly

crocodiles, ibex and antelope from zoos in Sudan and the United Arab Emirates. Animals like tigers, snakes, cheetahs, lynxes and squirrels also reside in the zoo.

“Many animals are captured by

cheetahs, wolves, mongooses and lynx cages. A reptiles section contains snakes, lizards, turtles and crocodiles, while the bird section has various types of birds – from large wild birds like eagles and falcons to domestic birds like ducks and other fowl.

Sana'a Zoo management has mounted signs and information about the animals on some cages and according to these signs, not all of the animals are native to Yemen, as some were hunted and brought from Africa or other areas in Asia.

“It's important to create an environment identifying with the natural environment the animals used to live in to help them survive,” Al-Qubati noted, stressing the importance of providing good nutrition, a good atmosphere and a good living space.

Having worked at the zoo since 2004, he pointed out that animals were treated haphazardly because none of the zoo staff were experienced in dealing with animals. “Wild animals randomly were given heavy meals. They were kept in their cages without any type of exercise or training, so they became fat and nervous and refused to reproduce.

“However, we now try to follow scientific methods to feed the animals on certain days with specific quantities of food,” Al-Qubati explained, confirming that such methods have been very successful and encouraged the animals to reproduce.

“We now need more space at the zoo for the new generations of lions because we only have seven enclosures for them.” For this reason, the lions were separated from the lionesses to halt their reproduction.

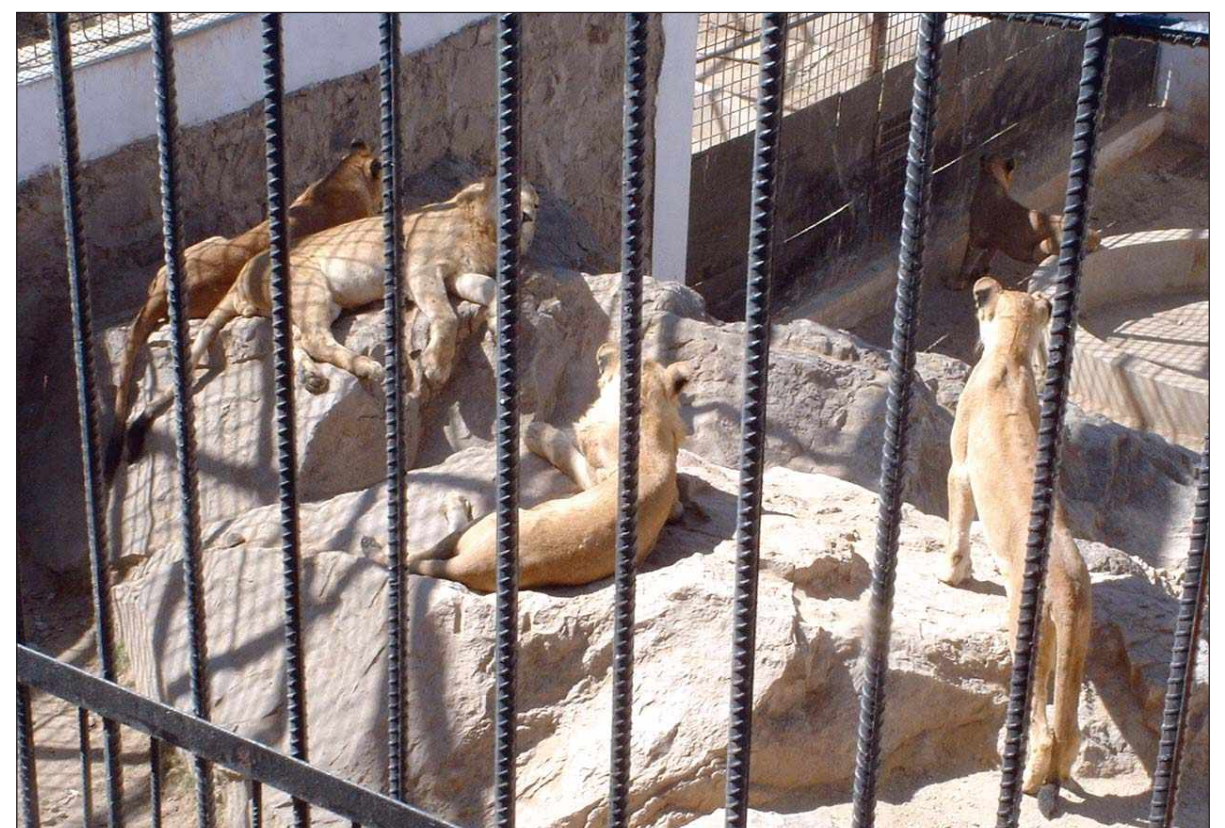
Sana'a Zoo was designed with a particular construction. For example, upon entering the zoo's wild animal section, one is attracted by the row of seven large lion cages with crowds gathered in front of them. Despite their high-wired sides, the spaces are attractive and well built, each with a round concrete water trough, a few shade trees and rocks for the lions to climb and/or lay upon. Each also contains a cave-like area with a locked door leading to a small inside enclosure where the animals can retreat.



Monkeys enclosure is the zoo's most attractive spot for visitors. The monkey to the left is happily peeling a banana.



Small ponds were built for storks.



The zoo contains 36 lions

شركة صناعة السجائر والكبريت الوطنية المحدودة - عدن



2007

CALENDAR

2007



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# Yemen lose 2-1 to UAE, has slim semifinal chance

By: Adel Al-Khawlani

In the 18th Gulf Cup currently held in the UAE capital Abu Dhabi, Yemen's national football team lost by 1-2 the UAE in a dramatic Group A encounter featuring the tournament's earliest penalty shot, which gave the hosts a narrow win.

The defeat reduced Yemen's chance to qualify for the semi-finals and makes it difficult for the team to reach the title game.

Just 40 seconds after the game began, Yemen's fullback Mohamed Saleh handled the ball coming from a corner kick and the referee awarded a penalty kick to the hosts, which striker Mohamed Omar

placed home, netting the earliest goal in the tournament.

For the Emirati team, the early goal did not appear to motivate players as the play was limited to the midfield without any serious attacking moves.

Yemeni coach Mohsen Saleh brought in Nasser Ghazi in the 84th minute and it took him only five minutes to score his team's consolation goal, but that was all they could manage.

UAE coach Bruno Metsu was forced to make some changes in the line up they featured in the opener. Salem Sa'ad started in attack replacing injured Faisal Khalil and Humaid Fakher played on the right side of defence replacing Fahad

Masaoud.

The Yemeni team received a big hit as Bashir Sa'eed added the second goal for UAE from a header before the successful substitute for Yemen Nasser Ghazi exploited a defensive mistake of putting just one back in the final minute of the meeting.

With such a narrow victory, the UAE teammates thanked their fans, who came from different emirates to support the team, and kept their hopes of reaching the semi-finals alive. The UAE team was better organized and determined to secure the game's three points, knowing that a draw or a defeat would mean a humiliating exit at home and in front of their fans.

According to media and sport analysts, the Yemenis have performed fiercely, defending their turf like it was a Hadramout house under siege. But alas to no avail, the Yemeni goalkeeper made a bad judgement as he left his post to clear the ball, but instead he left the goal open and the ball went easily in the back of the net. The national teammates continued to push forward, but with no luck.

The UAE team is now in second place with three points and Yemen is now third with one point equal with Kuwait. The aspiring Omani team is leading the group with 6 points from their wins over hosts UAE and 9-time champions Kuwait, thus booking a place in the semifinals.



Yemen's National Football Team

## Yemen holds Kuwait 1-1, shocks critics

Yemen held nine-time champs Kuwait to a 1-1 draw, registering the second surprise of the opening day after Oman beat hosts UAE 2-1 in the opener.

Yemen's forward Ali Al-Omiqi gave his side 1-0 goal lead over Kuwait in minute 16 of the first half. This forced the Kuwaitis to demonstrate much more possession of the ball as they attacked the Yemeni goal, but their attempts were foiled by the Yemeni defenders and goalkeeper.

Kuwait strikers got several chances to score an equalizer but they failed to convert into goals. Luck finally smiled at Kuwait when they won an equalizer through a penalty kick by Badr Al-Mutawa. Kuwait pushed forward after taking full total control of the match in search of a winning goal but were unlucky. The referee of the match sent out Musaid Nada in the 89th minute for hard tackle. The referee added six minutes injury time, but were not enough for Kuwait to score a goal and secure three points.

## Oman books semifinal place

Oman made it to the semi-finals after defeating Kuwait 2-1 in Group-A action. Oman's last match in the group against Yemen will be a comfortable ride since the team qualifies even if they lose, Arab News reported.

This is not so for Kuwait, which is in a critical situation with one draw against Yemen 1-1 in the opening match and a defeat against Oman 2-1.

The Kuwaitis need to win the last match, and preferably win by a large margin, against hosts UAE - the cheers of the crowd in the event of a draw or defeat against the home team will be Kuwait's

dirge that escorts it out of the competition.

After a brief five minutes where both teams tested each other, Imad Al-Housani, Oman's striker, drew first blood with a spectacular goal in the eighth minute of the first half when he cut through Kuwait defense line and outmaneuvered Kuwaiti goalie Nawaf Al-Khaldi landing the ball squarely in the back of the net.

The game moved along with the tension among the players who bristled and bordered that fine line between play and foul. Kuwait pushed forward seeking an equalizer before the end of the first half, but the Omani defense line was on alert and managed to foiled all attempts. In the second half, the Omani team drew back and relied on fast counterattacks.

Oman tried many times to widen the gap and score another goal to squeeze the motivation of the Kuwaiti team like drops of sweat, but the defense line was also on alert against these attempts. Kuwait came more than once in the second half to score an equalizer, particularly in the 65th minute when Al-Fahd's header went over the top bar.

The Kuwaiti team's effort finally paid off in the 82nd minute when Fahd Al-Fahd received a nice through ball behind the Omani defense line and from a nice cross inside the penalty box. Fahd Al-Rasheedi managed to escape Oman's guard and put the ball in the back of the net.

Kuwait joy lasted exactly three minutes until Hashem Saleh managed to shut the Kuwaiti fans up with a spectacular goal from afar, causing the Kuwaiti goalie to blanch.

With this result, Oman take the lead with six points and Kuwait cling on to little more than hope as it's do-or-die for them against the host team.



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## REPUBLIC OF YEMEN - MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT National Water Resources Authority - Sana'a Branch (NWRA / SB SANA'A BASIN WATER MANAGEMENT PROJECT (SBWMP)

# VACANCIES ANNOUNCEMENT

The Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the costs of Sana'a Basin Water Management Project and it is intended that a portion of the proceeds of the credit will be used to cover the eligible payments against the cost of the project management component and also the cost of installation of Different Irrigation Systems/Networks). Now the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) invites Qualified and experienced Local Specialists and Engineers to apply for the following posts.

### 1- NATIONAL IRRIGATION SYSTEMS ENGINEER (SPECIALIST IN IRRIGATION AGRONOMY)

Under the overall supervision of the Director General of Sana'a Basin Water Management Project, and observing the technical directives, while adhering to the Project's prevailing rules and procedures, and with leeway permitted for the exercise of independent judgement undertake a range of activities, primarily in the field of irrigation systems, design, supervision on installation, operation and maintenance, irrigation scheduling, irrigation advisory services and social mobilization activities. In particular will:

1. Participate with the Social Mobilization Teams of the Project in reviewing and assessing the applications received from farmers for installation of appropriate irrigation systems on their farms;
2. Conduct detailed field assessment on the status of farms selected by the Social Mobilization Teams for final approval, and to ensure that the criteria set for selection is been adhered to;
3. Prepare detail designs of different irrigation systems including production of detailed designs and complete bill of quantities for both pressurized and gravity irrigation systems to be installed on pilot demonstration and private farms, based on the surveys conducted by the project's surveying team; ( Drip, bubbler, sprinklers, and water conveyance networks etc.)
4. Supervise installation of the pressurized irrigation systems (drip, sprinklers, bubblers) and the gravity systems (conveyance and distribution) on both pilot demonstration and private farms, and provide farmers with initial training on site in operation and necessary maintenance for the systems;
5. Cooperate with international and national staff, and liaise with IPAC staff in the dissemination of appropriate irrigation practices and technologies to farmers through field day demonstrations, training courses, seminars and workshops;
6. Collect data related to the efficiency, equitability and effectiveness of distribution of irrigation systems under the project, and on their adequacy to meet the needs of the irrigation water sector in Sana'a Basin;
7. Report monthly on the progress of implementation of the approved Irrigation component Work Plan, quantify the achievements, highlight obstacles encountered, and present recommendations for the smooth and timely implementation of the work plan;
8. Carry out any other related duties as requested by the Sana'a Basin Water Management Project.

#### Qualifications and Requirements:

University degree in Irrigation Engineering/ Agricultural Engineering with major in Irrigation Agronomy, Good computer literacy, Fluency in English language is an advantage. At least five years of field experience in irrigation systems design, installation, supervision, operation and maintenance and engineering related works. Specifically, experience in field installation of on-farm pressurized irrigation systems including drip, bubbler and sprinkler is essential, as well as experience in operation and maintenance of these systems.

#### Duration of assignment:

Initially for probation period of three months, then annual contracts will be offered thereafter.

Applications accompanied by CVs and supporting documents shall be delivered to the project address as follow: SBWMP- P.O.BOX11014, 60 Street, Sana'a ROY Tel (00967-1-469159/7/6), Fax(00967-1-469158) E-mail ([Salduddy@yemen.net.ye](mailto:Salduddy@yemen.net.ye)) Latest Date is (February 3, 2007)

### 2- PROCUREMENT SPECIALIST

The procurement Specialist will be a member of the PCU core staff of the SBWMP and shall report to the PCU Director. He/ She will perform without being limited to the following tasks and responsibilities:

- Responsible of all procurement activities in the project such as goods works and consultant services ensuring that established procurement guidelines of the Government and IDA are complied with.
- Develop coordinate and implement an annual procurement plan for the SBWMP at the PCU level and validate the out put of the other staff linked to the project.
- Work with PCU staff and relevant Ministerial Department specialists to prepare and revise the different bidding documents of works and goods call for Expressions of interest and RFPs consultancy services staff recruitment notices and obtaining the necessary clearance from IDA and ensure their safe keeping and recording.
- Preparation of the Terms of Reference (TOR) the different consultancy services required by the project.
- Responsible of contract management and maintaining of proper records of all relevant procurement documentation as well as developing well-defined management reporting tools to manage and monitor procurement activities and reporting system.
- Participate in the PCU team in clearing procured items through customs and arrangements for the transport.
- Support assist and train procurement Officers reporting to the PCU to apply procurement guidelines of the public sector as well as IDA.
- Preparing and updating the annual budget of procurement under the project.
- Provide inputs into the project annual work program and budget.
- Participate in bid evaluation committees for the selection of contractors.
- Participate in the preparation of the quarterly progress reports concerning procurement matters.
- Liaise with other similar projects and units and relevant Government Authorities.

#### Qualifications and Experience:-

- (a) University degree in Business Administration, Commerce, Law, Economics, engineering, or related fields
- (b) Five years professional experience in procurement operations, of which at least three with IDA Financed Projects
- (c) Working knowledge of English, and Arabic
- (d) Competent in using computers and relevant supporting software.

#### Duration of assignment:

Initially for probation period of three months, then annual contracts will be offered thereafter.

Applications accompanied by CVs and supporting documents shall be delivered to the project address as follow: SBWMP- P.O.BOX11014, 60 Street, Sana'a ROY Tel (00967-1-469159/7/6), Fax(00967-1-469158) E-mail ([Salduddy@yemen.net.ye](mailto:Salduddy@yemen.net.ye)) Latest Date is (February 3, 2007)

### 3- INFORMATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS SPECIALIST

Under the overall supervision of the Project Coordination Unit Director, and in collaboration with the national and international project staff, the Information and Public Awareness Campaign Specialist is required to perform the tasks listed below

1. Work with the NWRA/SB to identify, select, recruit and train the members of the IPAC team and then initiate and supervise the IPAC program, acting on a part-time basis either as an IPAC adviser or as an IPAC team director;
2. Supervise, monitor and evaluate the work of the IPAC team, the

effectiveness of the IPAC messages and methods, and the IPAC results;

3. With NWRA/SB, revise IPAC messages and methods as warranted, and adapt IPAC processes accordingly, from cycle to cycle;
4. Provide inputs to TBS-SBC monitoring, reporting and decision-making related to the IPAC program.
5. Review and discuss with the relevant staff the strengths and a weakness of planned public awareness program, and suggest a strategy to make this program more effective, including prioritization of various actions.
6. Develop a comprehensive program of TV and Radio messages, which should be disseminated during 2004-2008 under SBWMP. In this context, the expert should describe the contents of the messages, pre-test these messages with the target audience, and ensure complete production of these messages with the help of existing public/private production institutions.
7. Propose a strategy to disseminate TV and Radio messages. The expert should elaborate on the mechanisms and institutional arrangement, which must be made to secure smooth implementation of the program.
8. Organize and implement in major rural villages and towns, in collaboration with the respective NWRA Sana'a Branch, MAI (GDI and Northern FU) of GSCP a series of community meetings to discuss possible water management solutions and water related events and competitions (workshops, meetings, and seminars)
9. Recommend a series of actions to strengthen the public awareness department, including the steps, which should be followed by this department to assume increasing responsibilities over the project years-perhaps without the help of external assistance.
10. The expert should provide assistance in setting-up the production unit with necessary equipment facilities to ensure in-house production of public awareness messages, and materials (posters, leaflets and calendars) and Billboards (with water conservation messages) at prominent locations. Moreover, the expert should provide assistance to the project in preparing technical specifications of the communication equipment; installation and testing of equipment procured by the project; and training of staff in utilizing the equipment.
11. Provide an extensive on-the-job training to the staff of the Public Awareness Campaign in order to enable them to perform their functions independently or under minimum supervision; and propose a training program for key staff of the campaign in the form of short-term study tours to learn from experiences of other countries.
12. The expert should provide assistance to NWRA in the production of films on water management issues and prepare TOR for their production, dissemination and publicity.
13. Design a procedure for evaluation of awareness campaign impact.
14. Provide inputs to PCU monitoring, reporting and decision-making related to Component 4 (IPAC).
15. carry out initial surveys of attitudes and vectors of change
16. identify key messages and then design and carry out the IPAC program monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the IPAC messages and methods, and the report on IPAC results;
17. propose adjustments to IPAC messages and methods as warranted, and adapt IPAC processes accordingly, from cycle to cycle

#### Qualifications and Required Experiences

University Degree in media, sociology or related discipline. Five years experience, of which at least 3 in jobs involving design and execution of a mass media or targeted public awareness campaign. Good knowledge of English is an advantage. Vast knowledge of IPAC campaigns in the natural resource sector. Long experience in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating IPAC. First rate communicator

#### Duration of assignment:

Initially for probation period of three months, then annual contracts will be offered thereafter.

Applications accompanied by CVs and supporting documents shall be delivered to the project address as follow: SBWMP- P.O.BOX11014, 60 Street, Sana'a ROY Tel (00967-1-469159/7/6), Fax (00967-1-469158) E-mail ([Salduddy@yemen.net.ye](mailto:Salduddy@yemen.net.ye)) Latest Date is (February 3, 2007)

### 4- INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING SPECIALIST (National)

The ITS will help the PCU to oversee the institutional development and capacity building. This will require him/her to work in close collaboration with the relevant existing and projected water management institutions, in particular (i) the National Water Resources Authority (NWRA) and the NWRA Sana'a Branch (NWRA/SB), (ii) the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MAI) and its sub-agencies including the MAI General Directorate for Irrigation (GDI/ MAI), Department of Plant Protection(DPP/MAI) (iii) Environment Protection Authority (EPAQ), (iv) the Sana'a basin stakeholder organizations including water user associations (WUAs), water user federations (WUUFs) and the SBC. More specifically, the PCU institutional Training specialist would be responsible for:

1. Assess the training needs for each component including: Training in Water Management for Irrigated Agriculture, Water Control and Recharge Systems O&M, Social Mobilization Teams, Basin Water Resources Management, Information and Public Awareness Campaign, Environment Management and EIA and Training for the PCU and Line Agencies.
2. In collaboration with all project staff, define the population concerned by the training program
3. Define the training needs and the scope, and type of training, in collaboration with the project management team.
4. Define the needed consultancy/institution to deliver the training programs, write terms of reference and prepare cost estimates and advise on the procurement process
5. Coordinate the execution of training programs.
6. General Overview and Direction of all training programs in collaboration with PCU's Sociologist/ Social Development Specialist, and line agency engineers.
7. Design quality control mechanisms, including post training evaluations and follow up reviews
8. Design and help implement a training programming and monitoring system.
9. (At the end of the project) prepare a full report on training effectiveness and cost effectiveness.

#### Qualifications and Required Experiences

- At least MSc Degree in Social Development/ Business Administration / Agronomy / Engineering/ or any related field,
- Ten years experience of designing and coordinating training programs, of which five years in projects related to natural resource management.
- Very Good command of written and spoken English
- Computer skills : Windows, MS Office and related programs

#### Duration of assignment:

Initially period of three months, then annual intermittent assignments will be offered thereafter as needed.

Applications accompanied by CVs and supporting documents shall be delivered to the project address as follow: SBWMP- P.O.BOX11014, 60 Street, Sana'a ROY Tel (00967-1-469159/7/6), Fax(00967-1-469158) E-mail ([Salduddy@yemen.net.ye](mailto:Salduddy@yemen.net.ye)) Latest Date is (February 3, 2007)

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## Nepal's hidden tragedy: Children caught in the conflict

Caught in the violence that has plagued the country for over 10 years, Nepal's children have become the often-overlooked victims of the ongoing strife, their plight exacerbated by poverty and abuse.

### The Story

With its recent political turmoil, Nepal, a poverty-stricken landlocked country known largely for tourism and mountaineering, has been once again thrust into the media spotlight as banner headlines and television images focus on the dra-

matic events in the streets of the capital city, Kathmandu. However, as was the case with previous coverage of the struggle between Maoist rebels against government forces, this explosion of interest has shone little light on a lesser-known problem - the plight of the nation's children.

As a result of the strife, children's rights are violated and their lives are profoundly disrupted on a daily basis. According to a 2005 report by Child Workers in Nepal, cited by UNICEF, over 40,000 Nepalese children are estimated to have been displaced over the course of the Maoist

### "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About"

In 2004, the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) launched an initiative called "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About" to draw attention to important international developments and issues that fall outside the media spotlight. The list includes stories on an array of issues and from several geographical regions. Some of the stories on the list focus on troubling humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations, but they also highlight such vital areas as human rights, health and development. Every issue, we will bring a new story to you, hoping that our little effort to advocate for human rights all over the world would make a difference, some how, some way...

The editor

uprising. Tens of thousands have been abducted for short periods for political indoctrination by the Maoists. Some of these children have then been recruited into the Maoist forces or militia. Education has suffered, particularly due to enforced closures during strikes, which have cut the school year to nearly half in some areas. Teachers have been threatened, assaulted and even killed. Schools in conflict-affected areas have been used for political meetings and enforced indoctrination sessions, have been bombed or attacked, and some have been turned into barracks. There are also reports that mines and other explosive devices have been placed in and around school buildings and playgrounds. In response, UNICEF and its partners have urged all parties in Nepal to ensure that schools and classrooms remain free of weapons and explosives and serve as politically neutral zones, where children will not be subject to indoctrination, abduction, harassment as political suspects, or threatened with detention.

been arrested and tortured on suspicion of being linked to the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist), numerous juveniles are currently in detention under anti-terrorist legislation by the state authorities. Meanwhile, there is also evidence of children being used by the Royal Nepalese Army as informants or spies.



Displaced mother and children at a camp in Rajhena of Nepalgunj, Nepal.

## BBC Country profile: Nepal

With its ancient culture and the Himalayas as a backdrop, landlocked Nepal has long been the destination of choice for travellers in search of adventure.

It is also one of the world's poorest countries, a situation that has been made worse by a violent Maoist rebellion.

Nepal has been under the sway of an hereditary monarchy or ruling family for most of its known history, largely isolated from the rest of the world.

### AT-A-GLANCE

- Parliament reinstated in May 2006 following popular uprising against king's absolute rule
- King has been stripped of executive powers
- Multi-party government and Maoist rebels have signed a deal proclaiming an end to the insurgency
- Maoists will be included in a transitional government; they launched a violent campaign to topple the monarchy in 1996 and control large parts of the countryside

A brief experiment with multi-party politics in 1959 ended with King Mahendra suspending parliament and taking sole charge.

Democratic politics was introduced in 1991 after popular protests, but it has been extremely factionalised with frequent changes of government. The current monarch has twice assumed executive powers - in 2002 and 2005.

Meanwhile, Maoist rebels intent on setting up a communist republic have

been waging a campaign against the constitutional monarchy in a conflict that has left more than 12,000 people dead since it started in 1996.

The UN says the rebellion has displaced more than 100,000 people. Its envoy in the country says the use of torture by government forces and rebels was routine.

When King Gyanendra ended his direct rule in April 2006 the rebels entered talks on how to end the civil war.

Nepal has been at odds with neighbouring Bhutan over the repatriation of thousands of refugees living in camps in Nepal. The refugees - Bhutanese of Nepalese descent - fled violence in their homeland in the early 1990s.

With the world's highest mountain, Everest, and spectacular scenery and wildlife, the country has great potential as a tourist destination.

It also boasts a distinctive Hindu and Buddhist culture. But its environmental challenges including deforestation, encroachment on animal habitats and vehicle pollution in the capital, Kathmandu.

Most of the population depend on agriculture, and around 40% of Nepalis are estimated to live in poverty.

Foreign aid is vital to sustaining the Nepalese economy, and the country is also dependent on trade with neighbouring India.

- **Full name:** Kingdom of Nepal
- **Population:** 26.3 million (UN, 2005)
- **Capital:** Kathmandu

### The Context

- Nepal today has a shot at ending the 10-year old armed insurgency of the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and achieving durable peace. Towards the end of April 2006, after almost three-weeks of a general strike and street protests around the nation against direct royal rule, King Gyanendra gave up executive powers of state, which he had assumed in February 2005, restored the last Parliament and allowed the formation of a government composed of the Parliamentary parties.
- A reciprocal ceasefire, government-Maoist negotiations and the election of a constituent assembly to decide the future form of government will hopefully be the key milestones of an emerging peace process.
- In the last 10 years of the armed Maoist rebellion, some 13,000 civilians have died in the violence in remote regions and rural areas.
- Eighty-six per cent of the population of Nepal lives on less than \$2 per day.
- Nepal's infant mortality rate, although substantially reduced in the last decade, continues to be high - some 59 per 1000 for children under one year of age.
- Half a million children do not attend school at all
- According to a UN human rights monitoring mission established in Nepal, breaches of international humanitarian law by the Maoists include continued use of children within the People's Liberation Army, despite denials by the Maoists that they were recruiting children under 18. While children have

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