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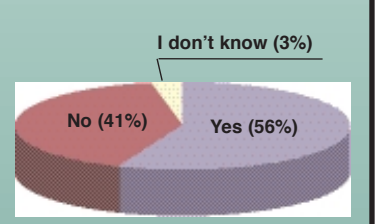
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Would Al-Islah party have a new leader other than Sheikh Al-Ahmar after the party's internal elections?



This edition's question:

Do you think the grant given to Yemen by USA is a reward for its role in the African Horn?
- Yes
- No
- I don't know

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

Al-Mahdhari disappointed at Yemeni press freedom

By: Raidan Al-Saqqaf

SANA'A, Feb. 18 — The Sa'ada Penal Court last Tuesday sentenced journalist Abed Al-Mahdhari, editor-in-chief of Al-Diyyar newspaper, to one year in prison in absentia to be implemented immediately in a case presented by a judge in Sa'ada's Saqeen Court.

Ironically, the ruling was made against Al-Mahdhari by the same judge the journalist attacked in 2001. Al-Mahdhari had accused the Sa'ada Saqeen Court judge of corruption and bribery and he now faces a year's imprisonment decided upon by the same judge.

Al-Mahdhari told the Yemen Times he expects to be arrested at any moment. The specific court dealing with this case closed immediately after handing down the sentence, which doesn't give Al-Mahdhari a chance to file for appeal, and consequently, endorses the sentence against him.

The journalist expressed his disappointment at Minister of Interior Rashad Al-Alimi's attitude toward his case. He believes Al-Alimi should have a different position because he's responsible for protecting journalists, especially after President Ali Abdullah Saleh previously announced that journalists shouldn't be



Abed Al-Mahdhari

detailed or imprisoned over issues related to publishing opinions.

He further noted that he met with Yemeni Journalists Syndicate Chairman Nasr Taha Mustafa, who promised to discuss halting the ruling's implementation with Attorney General Abdullah Al-Ulfi. Mustafa indeed met with the attorney general yesterday, who agreed that he wouldn't take any action until the Sa'ada court is reopened in order to allow for appeal.

However, Al-Mahdhari expects that Al-Ulfi's attitude won't be any different than the interior minister's. The journalist reveals that he intends to appeal the

ruling; however, the Sa'ada judiciary currently is paralyzed because the area is the scene of military conflicts between the Yemeni army and Al-Houthi rebels.

He alleges that his trial was a military one aiming to settle political accounts due to his outspoken opinions against the military action in Sa'ada. He also believes it's an attempt to silence him, particularly since he's a Sa'ada native and has relatives there, so he was able to report war news from there.

Al-Mahdhari further expressed his disappointment at the situation of Yemeni journalism and journalists, adding that he's awaiting his syndicate's condemnation of the ruling against him.

Newly elected Yemeni Journalists Syndicate Secretary-General Marwan Dammaj commented that Al-Mahdhari's sentence was surprising and sudden, especially given that no work has been done on the case for years. He added that the syndicate resents such constraints against freedom of expression.

"Journalists shouldn't be imprisoned on the grounds of opinion. This is what President Saleh promised publicly, but no one really implemented it. We now demand that this law be changed totally," he concluded.

Washington reinstates Yemen's funding

By: Adel Al-Khawlani

SANA'A, Feb. 18 — The Yemeni Ambassador to the U.S., Abdulwahab Al-Hajiri, received last Wednesday a telephone call from John Danilovich, Chairman of the Millennium Challenge Corporation Board of Directors, congratulating him for the Millennium Challenge Corporation's decision to reinstate Yemen for participation in the corporation's program, said an official source in the Yemeni Embassy in Washington.

"Yemen has carried out important reforms over the past time period, which is why the Millennium Challenge Corporation's Board of Directors decided to reinstate Yemen in the Threshold Program," Mohammed Ahmad Al-Basha, Media and Public Relations in Washington quoted Danilovich.

The chairman added, "In addition to what has been accomplished thus far, the Yemeni government has made a number of important reform commitments. Looking at the progress we have been able to document, Yemen has demonstrated its commitment to continuing this reform effort."

The Yemeni Ambassador expressed his happiness about the Millennium Challenge Corporation's decision, confirming that Yemen plans to work with the corporation with the aim of getting assistance, improving its investment climate, attracting foreign investments to the country and creating more job opportunities for its people.

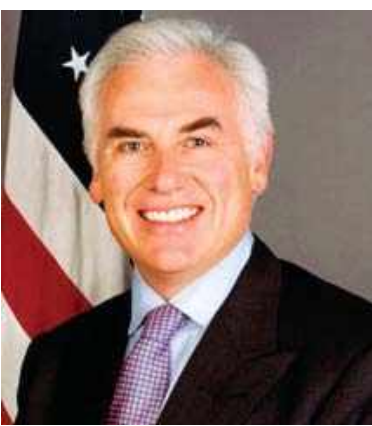
According to Al-Basha, the Millennium Challenge Corporation's decision reflects success reached by the national reform program, which contained a matrix of partial political and economic reforms as directed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

During his Sunday meeting with Yemeni Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Abdulkarim Al-Arhabi, the U.S. Ambassador to Yemen, Thomas Krajeski, handed the Yemeni government Washington's decision to reinstate Yemen's eligibility for the Threshold Program.

The U.S. envoy said his government values Yemen's efforts to enhance the national reform programs, pointing out that Washington will coordinate with Yemen to provide practical proposals aimed at improving the indicators of good governance to help the poor country receive Millennium Challenge Corporation's funds.

Al-Arhabi mentioned that his government deeply thanks the U.S. Embassy's efforts to support Yemen's Millennium Challenge Corporation's entry. He said that accepting Yemen's request for admission is due to development Yemen-American ties and enhance cooperation between the friendly states, particularly in the areas of development.

Al-Arhabi informed Krajeski about



Ambassador John J. Danilovich, CEO of the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

steps taken for the Anti-Corruption Law and procedures related to establishing a higher authority for fighting corruption.

The Islah Charitable Society welcomed Millennium Challenge Corporation's declaration to reinstate Yemen. The society said that the corporation values the efforts pursued by Yemen and its president, backed by different national political parties and organizations.

Secretary-General of the society, Abdulmajid Farhan, claimed that the Yemeni government's interest in improving the quality of health and education services is the primary reason for accepting its request for Millennium Challenge Corporation's admission.

"The spending on education, health and fighting corruption has become an international criteria encouraging the state and society to give top priority to these issues," Farhan went on to say.

He renewed his society's commitment to pay closer attention to development issues, mainly health, education and combating corruption during its coming three-year strategy.

The program is designed to assist countries that are on the 'threshold,' meaning they have not yet qualified for larger compact grants, but have demonstrated a significant commitment to improve their performance on the eligibility criteria. The corporation's Board of Directors selects countries based on the overall performance in 16 policy indicators, as well as demonstrated ability to undertake reforms.

Yemen was eligible for Threshold Program assistance in 2004, but its eligibility was suspended by the board in November 2005 following pattern of deterioration in Yemen's policy performance on the selection criteria. Yemen may now apply for a Threshold Program Agreement.

The Board of Directors found that the Yemeni government has worked aggressively and demonstrably to address the country's performance on the selection criteria.

Continued on page 3

Sa'ada confrontations flare

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Feb. 18 — Reliable tribal sources say three hours of fierce fighting occurred early Sunday morning between Yemeni army and security personnel and Al-Houthi rebels wearing military uniforms for camouflage, leaving behind numerous dead and injured.

Media sources reported last Friday that a helicopter flying at low altitude and armed with an M-17 machine gun was hit by small arms fire and forced to land after one of its crew was killed and others injured on both sides.

According to the same source, "The helicopter made an emergency landing in Harf Sufian's Beit Ayanha area while a small group of soldiers supported by the plane was combing the area in search of Al-Houthi rebels."

Several Sa'ada districts are witnessing continual confrontations, especially Madan and Sheharah districts, where military units conduct combing operations searching for Al-Houthi rebels there.

Sources also assure that Houthis are following guerrilla warfare strategies in their fight with army and security personnel, a strategy causing many losses among government forces.

Amnesty International has called upon President Ali Abdullah Saleh to take necessary measures in accordance with international law to protect human rights in Sa'ada, where confrontations are occurring between government forces and Houthis, who adhere to Zaidi Islamic doctrine.

According to the organization's statement, as of the end of January, dozens have been killed and more than 50 arrested. The group also maintained that a complete evaluation of the situation in Sa'ada can't be made right now, as all communications with the area are cut off and journalists are prevented from reaching there.

The statement added that the conflict's casualties include military personnel, those who fell due to excessive use of power and executions conducted by military personnel acting outside the law. Further, it maintained that there are detainees who have been tucked away from the world and subjected to the risks of torture.

"Ibrahim Al-Houthi, who was arrested by security forces at Sana'a Airport on Feb. 1, is detained and isolated from the outside world in the security apparatus's prison in Sana'a. Perhaps he is subjected to torment or other types of mistreatment because he is Hussein Al-Houthi's brother, who was executed outside of the law following similar confrontations in Sa'ada in 2004," the statement alleged.

Amnesty International fears that the current confrontations may lead to widespread human rights violations, including killings outside of the law by law enforcement officials. Further, the conflict may lead to collective arrests and detentions.

The human rights group's fears are justified due to massive violations during previous Sa'ada confrontations in 2004 and 2005 resulting from military personnel's non-commitment to international conventions, which regulate the use of force.

According to Article No. 3 of the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, "Law enforcement officials may use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty."

In its letter, Amnesty International also called upon President Saleh to take necessary measures to prevent gross violations during the armed clashes in Sa'ada. It further stressed the importance of charging any individual arrested and

ensuring him or her a fair trial or freeing him. Further, it also demanded anyone detained for peaceful expression of his or her beliefs also be released immediately.

In a statement released last Saturday, the Joint Meeting Parties denounced the arrest of citizens in Sana'a, Dhamar and Hajjah, including numerous political activists from the Public Forces Union and Al-Haq parties, demanding their immediate release.

The JMP also requested other political parties, civil society organizations and human rights groups show solidarity with the detainees and pressure authorities to free them. They further warned of politicizing the security situation and called for abiding by Yemeni law and the constitution and abandoning suppressive acts against citizens.

The statement further called upon authorities to cease such acts, which contradict democracy and justice principles, because they expose the nation's stability and security to risk and double the consequences.

Member of Parliament Yahya Al-Houthi did not comment on the Yemeni request to the Interpol to extradite him back to Yemen on the bases of his involvement in terrorism with reference to the Huthi rebellion, and have set three conditions for resolving the confrontations between Al-Houthi's followers and Yemeni government forces.

Continued on page 3

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In brief

ADEN

Police assault mass graves protestors

Feb. 17 — Authorities confiscated the tents of people who protest raiding mass graves in Tareq Military Camp in Kour Maksar. The protestors claimed that undercover police stormed the tents they set up near the camp. The protestors shouted that the police assaulted three young people who were guarding the tents and detained two of them in the Criminal Investigation Bureau's jail.

DHAMAR

NGOs dropped for violations

Feb. 18 — As many as 44 private, cooperative and agricultural organizations have been dropped from the Social Affairs Office's register under directives from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour and Dhamar Governor, General Manger of the Dhamar Social Affairs and Labour Office Mohammed Saleh Al-Adhra'e. He pointed out that some of these organizations violate the laws and didn't show their final accounts, financial reports and other documents required for holding their electoral rounds in conformity with the law.

LAHJ

Ancient sites, museums restored

Feb. 18 — The Lahj Antiquities Office is making the final arrangements to implement the rehabilitation project of the Hauta Museum, which was built in 1343 Hegira Islamic Calendar, AD 1924. The office's general manager, Mohammed Ahmad Salem, said, "The project is part of a broader plan for rehabilitating the building to become a national museum. In addition, there are other projects for restoring and walling several museums and ancient sites in the governorate."

SANA'A

Sudanese official visits Yemen

Feb. 17 — Nafe'e Ali, assistant to the Sudanese President and Deputy Chairman of the Sudanese National Congress Party for Political Affairs and his accompanying team, arrived in Sana'a for an official visit to Yemen. The Sudanese official carried a letter to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh from his counterpart Omar Al-Bashir. According to Ali, the letter is concerned with the progress of relations between the two brotherly nations.

Government discusses

comprehensive education strategy
Feb. 17 — Minister of Education Abdulsalam Al-Jawfi launched the first consultative conference on the comprehensive education strategy on Saturday. The 3-day meeting was attended by general managers of education offices in the Yemeni governorates. The conference discussed several work papers on the comprehensive education strategy, in addition to enrolling all the Yemeni children in primary and secondary schools and helping them study in any schools nearby. Al-Jawfi praised the efforts the Education Ministry expends while paying hardship allowance for teachers nationwide.

TAIZ

Malaria fighting workshop

Feb. 18 — In cooperation with Taiz University and the World Health Organization the National Program for Fighting Malaria organized a workshop on fighting malaria. The event was attended by many academics and representatives from the private and government sectors. The workshop disclosed that Taiz is the second Yemeni governorate, after Hodeida where citizens suffer the proliferation of malaria.

Al-Turba citizen demonstrate

Feb. 18 — Hundreds of people demonstrated on Sunday before the government complex in Taiz's Al-Turba area in protest lifted slogans that read "In order not to make it another Ja'ashin." The demonstrators sent a letter to the head of the local council and the district's head asking to set up the technical and vocational institute in Al-Masna'a area according to the old design and further to reinstate teacher Abdulghani Al-Zekri in his school and other teachers together with canceling all changes to school administration. They further called for making no changes to the route of the road under construction in order neither to harm personal properties nor to give area's influential people a chance to interfere with local council affairs.

Islah party reviews its political development

By: Fatima Al-Ajel

SANA'A, Feb. 17 — Islah's Media Office conducted a political symposium entitled, "A Reading of Islah's Political Experience," at the Movenpick Hotel in Sana'a last Thursday, discussing numerous aspects related to the party's progress over the past 16 years.

Several academics, politicians and thinkers attended the event where three different papers were presented, the first of which, prepared by Sana'a University political science professor Abdullah Al-Faqih, tracked Islah's progress throughout its history. According to him, Islah plays an important role in Yemeni political life and it's not easy to neglect it, either inside or outside Yemen.

He described the party as the power gathering all Yemenis with their different ideological directions and party associations, which will motivate Yemen's future and provide an important guarantee for the public system.

Al-Faqih reviewed the features of Islah's relations with the authority, the opposition and the international com-

munity, referring to Islah's relations with the authority party as progressing in three steps. The first stage (1990-1997) was distinguished by political sharing with the authority, which was a reason for the party's disappearance and led to its switch to the opposition side.

The second stage (1997-2001) carried political expectations for the party, which helped it discover the authority's hostility towards it. The authority liquidated all Islah companies and resources and denied it from all of the donations it used to receive. The third stage involves a competition for the authority from 2001 until now after ending its strategic alliance with the General People's congress.

Al-Faqih also clarified the party's true attitude toward terrorism, saying Islah refuses to use terrorism issues as a tool for foreign extortion or local artifice.

At the presentation's conclusion, Al-Faqih discussed several issues, including expanding women's participation in leading party positions and bodies, such as the Shoura Council and the General Secretariat.

Further, women in Islah Party's women's section look forward to occupying higher positions in the party, just as women in the ruling General People's Congress and the Yemeni Socialist Party have achieved. In this regard, Amaina Al-Aslami, chief of Islah's women's section in Hajjah governorate, states that women in Islah expect the party to grant them at least 15 percent of Shoura Council leading chairs.

National Women's Committee deputy Hooria Mashahoor blames both the authority and the opposition for keeping women away from political activities. She emphasizes giving women the right to exercise their rights by making true legal reforms.

Also at the event, Mohammed Al-Mikhlaifi, a member of the Yemeni Socialist Party's Political Office, presented a paper addressing the party's attitude toward several debatable issues, including women, terrorism and political transfer of power. He talked about the important role Islah plays in activating the opposition performance via the Joint Meeting Parties.

Parliament take act in feudal Sheikh issue

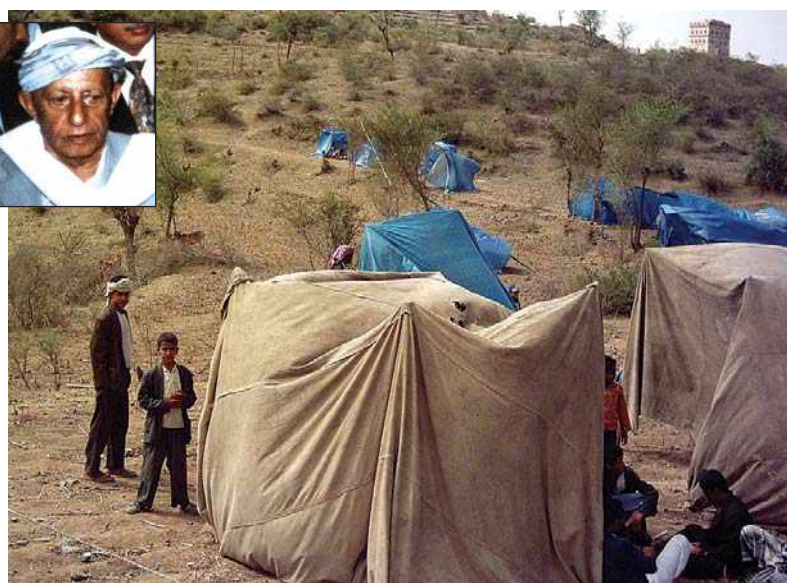
SANA'A, Feb. 18 — The Parliament has composed a special committee to investigate the accusations against Sheikh Mohammed Ahmed Mansour, a powerful leader in Ibb, after people demonstrated for days in front of Parliament. Mansour was accused of evacuating many peasants working on his land in Al-Ja'ashin and abusively treating the people.

The committee is composed of seven MPs known for defending human rights and led by MP Sheikh Mohammed Al-Shaef, head of the human rights and freedoms committee in Parliament. The MPs urged the government to provide shelter and food for the demonstrating citizens who have been camping over a week in Dar Salam in the capital region.

The committee evolved after heated debates in the Parliament where Al-Ja'ashin villagers plight was seen to be politically motivated. However, the committee started operating yesterday itself as it met with the villagers and agreed to stop the demonstration and arrange for them to return to their homes peacefully.

MP Abdulrazaq Al-Hajri, a member of the composed committee, stressed the importance of not leaving the case in the hands of the local jurisdiction in Ibb, which had rejected their case earlier and accused them of rebellion.

Other MPs urged Parliament to



For one week men of Ra'ash village camped in a deserted area in Haradh Valley protesting against Sheikh Mansour's (inset) abusive control.

YT PHOTO ARCHIVE

secure protection for these people once they return home in fear of being subjected to vindictive measure by the powerful Sheikh.

Earlier this month the men of Al-Ja'ashin village left the women behind and evacuated their homes in protest of the abuse they suffer under the control of Mansour. The villagers allege that consultative council member Mansour oppressed, harassed and imposed unlawful duties upon them and that the sheikh's militia regularly

loots and robs them.

Media, especially opposition, has taken up this issue heatedly and argued this is a violation against human rights and accused the sheikh of throwing the villagers out of their homes by force. However, Mansour denied these complaints that what is being proposed in opposition newspapers is nothing but rubbish.

"They want to disgrace me and damage my image for political reasons," he said.

Study: More mothers dying each year

By: Jamal Al-Najjar

SANA'A, Feb. 16 — Over 3,000 mothers die each year during pregnancy and delivery due to the deterioration of Yemen's medical care services and economic problems, according to a study presented by the Women National Committee.

The government has issued a Free Delivery decree three times and the issue was first addressed in 1999, but last year there were still deaths involving 365 mothers out of 100,000.

The current study is a follow-up to the third decree issued in 2006 it was done in cooperation with Oxfam.

As part of the decree all women giving birth are exempt from fees in public hospitals and medical centers and the study examined the progress in the governorates of Sana'a, Aden, Hodeida, Shabwa, Amran and Lahj and also the nearby rural areas.

According to the study several reasons stand behind the high rate of maternal death during pregnancy and delivery. The lack of medical care tops the list of difficulties along with the people's poverty and also the mismanagement by health ministry officials.

The study listed the problems with most of the medical centers as follows:

- Shortage of required medical equipment.
- Lack of basic medicine.
- Small obstetric departments that are medically inconvenient.
- Absence of continuous training

to enable the staff to perform well in emergency deliveries.

- Shortages within the governmental budget.
- Mismanagement and absence of active transfer systems.
- Staff not given financial incentives.
- Labor services are very weak.

The study points out that the miserable condition in the medical centers of the rural areas force people to go to public hospitals in cities putting a heavy burden on those obstetrical departments. Therefore, 91 percent of normal deliveries and 99 percent of all delivery cases involving caesarean section occur in urban public hospitals.

Concerning delivery fees, the study maintains that the average cost of a normal delivery is YR 2,750 and the cost of caesarean section delivery is YR 21,800 in addition to transportation costs creating an obstacle for people living in rural areas.

Medicine prices represent roughly 50 percent of the total cost of deliveries. This amount of money is considered very high by most people in hospital investigated by the study. As a consequence 64 percent of the maternal mortality rate occurs at home because of the high costs such as transportation, medicine and the delivery fees in hospitals.

The study confirms that even though the "Free Delivery" decree had first been issued in 1999 and then affirmed in 2003 and 2006 by

Bajammal is back after medical checkups

SANA'A, Feb. 18 — Yemeni prime minister and the ruling party's secretary-general, Abdulqader Bajammal, arrived in Sana'a early Sunday morning after some medical checkups in London. Bajammal was received by his office manager, Ali Attef, accompanied with the government's master of ceremonies.

Some media outlets reported that Bajammal went to London for his annual vacation and to have the routine checkups, while others said he went due to differences with President Ali Abdullah Saleh regarding making a cabinet reshuffle.

However, Bajammal's return affirms that he was in London for a checkup. Yemen's Saba News Agency reported that he had some physical checkups, as well as a successful heart surgery in a hospital outside London.

The General People's Congress denied news by several local and foreign media alleging that a new government formation soon will be announced. Some news outlets even reported that one of the current cabinet ministers will replace Bajammal.

Any government reshuffle must be preceded by the current prime minister's resignation and his consent as the ruling party's



Bajammal.

secretary-general.

Some political observers believe President Saleh is facing a dilemma in choosing new cabinet ministers, adding that such official procedures must be done according to the Yemeni Constitution, particularly after news reports of foreign demand to replace Bajammal.

Such speculation comes at a time when Saleh says his party has many responsibilities ahead and he wants to put his platform into practice.

Do you know what to do in emergencies? We do



Hani Abdulghani volunteering while Ilyas Mani demonstrates how to bandage wounds.

YT PHOTO BY NASRI AL-SAQQAQ

SANA'A, Feb. 18 — The Yemeni Red Crescent, represented by Ilyas Mani deputy director of the organization, provided Yemen Times staff with a crash course on first aid in two sessions this week. Mani, who is also a lecturer at Sana'a University Faculty of Agriculture, explained at the beginning of the session that the Yemeni Red Crescent continuously provides such training voluntarily to whoever requests it in order to enhance the community awareness of first aid and hence to effectively help injured people and reduce their suffering.

"The first thing you need to know is that by learning first aid not only do you reduce the pain and complications of an injury, you can also save lives. This is why it is

important that everyone knows at least the basics and have a first aid kit available at all times," said Mani.

The sessions included how to act during accidents and how to deal with various injuries such as bleeding, unconsciousness, suffocation, shocks, fractions, poison and animal bites, bruises and burns. The 40 participants enjoyed the training and interacted with the issue and practiced CPR on dummies.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf, editor in chief of Yemen Times, explained that such awareness sessions are important for people and organizations should facilitate training for their staff.

"I would encourage other organizations to contact the Red Crescent and arrange for such training on regular basis," she said.

Yemenia conducts training course for managers

SANA'A, Feb. 17 — Effective communication was the focus of a training course for 45 Yemenia managers working in Yemen and abroad.

Yemenia deputy manager of commercial affairs, Abdullah Al-Mutareb, pointed out the course aims to put the manager on the picture of developments targeted by Yemenia's commercial administration by expanding the organizational structure and introducing new administrations.

He further added his administration tries to cope with the new developments and ensure optimal operation and competition and further prepare for the current

year. The two-day course focused on clearing the authorities of area managers, administration managers and sales managers together with return improvement and scheduling administrations.

Al-Mutareb also indicated the course focused on communications and communication channels and highlighted the importance of such communication to facilitate the communication between different administrations.

Yemenia  اليمنية

Sana'a hosts strategic studies seminar

SANA'A, Feb. 18 — Yemeni government, in collaboration with the US-based National Defense University's Near East South Asia Center for strategic studies, is hosting a three-day seminar themed "Strengthening a Yemen-US Strategic Partnership."

The Seminar will discuss various issues including border and maritime security, counterinsurgency, democracy, human rights and reforms.

The center's representatives will meet with representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense to discuss wider issues of policy and decision-making

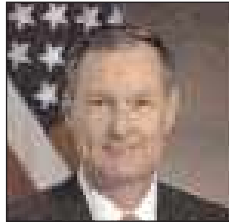
and combined and coordinated operations.

The center, headed by Lt. General W. Barno from the U.S. Army, a former commander of the Combined Forces Command Afghanistan, is located at the National Defense University in Washington and conducts seminars for military and civilian representatives of the Near East and South Asian countries with 25 nations in the region. Seminars, funded by the Department of Defense, are between two to four weeks in length.

The mission of center, as advocated in its web site, is to enhance stability in

Near East and in South Asia by providing an academic environment where strategic issues can be addressed, understanding deepened, partnerships fostered, defense-related decision-making improved, and cooperation strengthened among military and civilian leaders from the region and the U.S.

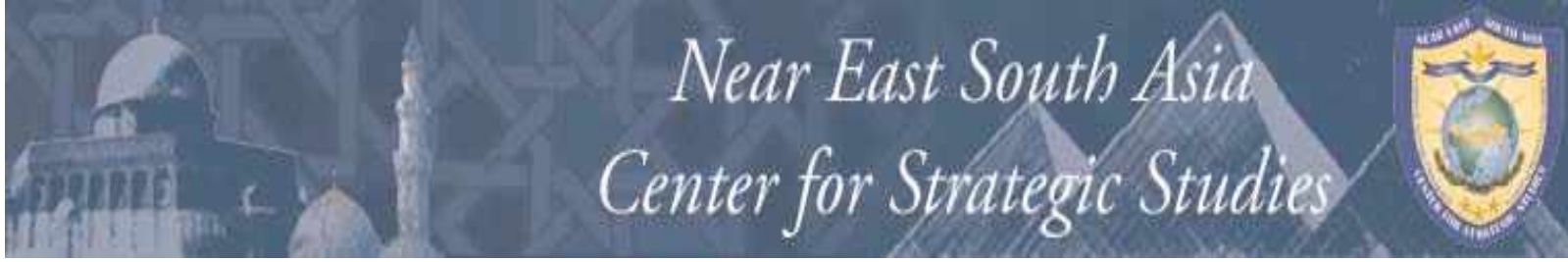
Launched in October 2000, the center builds on strong bilateral relationships between the U.S. and countries in near and south Asia region by focusing on a multilater-



**Director of the center
Lieutenant General
David W. Barno, U.S.
Army.**

al approach to addressing regional security concerns and issues. It is designed to meet the knowledge needs of national security professionals by providing a forum for rigorous examination of the challenges that shape the security environment of the region.

Participation is open to military and official civilian representatives from all countries in the NESAs region with which the U.S. government maintains diplomatic relations.



Yemenization of work force in oil and gas companies

SANA'A, Feb. 18 — Yemen's Ministry of Oil is to dig up 55 new oil wells and increase Yemenization of work force within the international companies working in Yemeni oil and gas sectors to 90 percent, according to Al-Motamar.net.

The ministry also announced it will

promote a number of the sea sectors within the fourth round of competition over the coming days after it has finish contracting with the winning companies in the third round.

This comes at the lunch of human resources forum which was inaugurated

by Vice President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi on Sunday.

In his delivered speech, Hadi told the participants the political leadership is paying more care to oil and gas sector and further provides all facilities before investors as this sector is the back

bone of the national economy.

He also pointed out that Yemen has no other alternatives, so it tries best to increase production and receive more returns in order to combat poverty and employment and further accelerate development wheel.

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Continued from page 1

Sa'ada confrontations flare

In a statement, of which the Yemen Times received a copy, MP Al-Houthi declared that there should be true intent to reach a solution. He said government forces should cease fire, the army should withdraw to its positions before the war and dialogue should take place outside the country because he considers the atmosphere in Yemen unsuitable. He further requested guarantees to ensure the authority's commitment to the ensuing agreement.

Yahya Al-Houthi maintains that mediation committees won't provide any solution, hinting at the experiences of previous mediation committees — especially the last one formed under

presidential directive, some of whose members were arrested after submitting their report about the situation in Sa'ada during recent days.

He added that Al-Houthi followers support a cease-fire and noted that the Sa'ada war has flared for seven days and is timed with cutting telecommunications to and from the governorate.

In related news, Saudi scholars in Najran and Dhahran Al-Janoub warned of the risks of their government's involvement in the Sa'ada events.

In a statement appearing on the opposition Al-Higaz.org web site, Shafa'i, Zaidi, Sufi and

Ismaili scholars, as well as tribal and social personalities from Najran and Dhahran Al-Janoub in Saudi Arabia, asked their government not to follow Yemeni in its war against Zaidi scholar Badraddin Al-Houthi's followers, which is being sold to the public as Yemen and Saudi Arabia's war against the Shi'ite danger in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula.

Issued by the mid of Muharam and addressed to Najran's prince and other officials in the south of the kingdom, the statement noted that followers of Zaidi, Shafa'i, Ismaili doctrines and other Islamic sects have lived peacefully side-by-side in Saudi Arabia and Yemen for

years. It said "We should not allowed to spoil such brotherly relations now or for any reason because this will have great risks on our nation's unity, security and stability."

The statement also renewed its warning of the risks resulting from the consequences of the Sa'ada events, which disturb Yemen's security and tranquility due to the spread of weapons there and the possibility of Sulfi groups — who ally the Yemeni government against cleric BadrAl-Din Al-Houthi and his followers — allow them in. It concluded by asking the two warring Yemeni parties to fear Allah and stop the bloodshed.

Washington reinstates

The directors select countries for eligibility for Compact of Threshold Program assistance from a pool of candidate countries based on each country's commitment in three broad policy categories, which are: ruling justly, investing in people and promoting the economic freedom. Threshold countries don't meet the criteria for Compact eligibility, but are close and have demonstrated a commitment to improve policy performance. Under Millennium Challenge Corporation policy, the directors may reinstate eligibility for a suspended country if it is determined that the country has taken corrective action or has demonstrated a sufficient commitment to correcting each condition for which assistance eligibility was suspended.



Vacancy Announcement

The Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) is a German enterprise for sustainable development with worldwide operations working also in Yemen as a priority partner country of the Yemen-Germany Cooperation. The Country representative office in Sana'a (GTZ Office Sana'a) is looking for a

Office Manager as Assistant to the Director GTZ Office Sana'a

Main Task:

The office manager and assistant to the GTZ Director in Sana'a takes responsibility for a wide range of administrative duties of which the main task will be to provide secretarial and administrative support to the Director. The position includes routine office management (planning, appointments, minor translations, daily correspondence) and specific assignments such as contract procurement, finance and controlling.

Qualifications:

- University degree
- Minimum of three years work experience in similar position / field.
- Experience/preparedness working in an international, intercultural team.
- Knowledge of finance and contract procurement
- Fluent in English, Arabic with good knowledge of German being a great asset
- PC literate with good command of all MS-Office standard applications
- Flexible, open minded, highly motivated and stress-tolerant

Duration for the position:

Permanent with 3 months probation period

Remuneration:

GTZ offers commensurable payment according to qualification and performance of the incumbent and offers a solid social security package.

Interested applicants who fulfill the above-mentioned requirements should send their detailed CV (with copies of awards/degrees earned, references, etc...) with a short covering letter referring to the position advertised and salary expectations. Non-Yemeni applicants should have valid and necessary work and residence permits.

All applications are to be submitted in a closed envelope clearly marked as the following:

"The Director GTZ Office Sana'a"
GTZ Office Sana'a
P.O. Box 692
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

**Final date for submission of applications will be the 28.02.2007. Women are encouraged to apply.
Only short listed applicants will be contacted and invited for interviews.**

Vacant Positions

Accountant (5 Positions)

Primary duties:

- Bachelors Degree in Accounting.
- 3-5 years knowledge of accounting necessary for applying proper accounting treatment to all transactions and for maintaining and reconciling accounts.
- Understand accounting and tax treatment of detailed transactions related to payments made to and on behalf of expatriate population.
- Understand and know the policies that affect expatriates. Review all amounts to ensure proper handling for compensation and payment to and on behalf of expatriate population.
- Ensure that payments are made timely for expatriate related items.
- Ensure that reporting is accurate, timely, and collectable. The successful candidate must have a strong understanding of balance sheet accounting.
- Handle any reporting including reporting for matters of tax compliance and management reporting.
- Strong communication skills and interpersonal skills are a requirement. The job is intensive in communications with all levels of the organization. Situations will require one to be firm and tactful for disputed matters. Cultural differences must be handled in a sensitive manner.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English are a requirement.

Business Development Manager (3 Positions)

- Take leadership of this business venture in the oil and gas industry, and also in natural resources ventures.
- Develop a strategic business plan that covers all aspects of running the business, including resourcing and operational needs, budgets, market positioning, potential partners and potential clients. Define short, intermediate and long-term business objectives and goals.
- Build the necessary team of resources to deliver objectives.
- Actively seek new business opportunities and innovative business models for growth.
- Develop a sales plan and strategy to strengthen client relationships, build awareness and increase reputation in the oil industry.
- Implement this plan to achieve agreed sales target. You will be actively involved in all aspects of the sales cycle - providing accurate and timely sales forecasts.

Preferences

The successful candidate will have:

- A degree in Business related subject essential. Master's degree preferred.
- Minimum of 5 years of appropriate experience in business development or sales or operations management in the oil and gas industry essential.
- Experience selling to clients at senior and/or the delivery of technologies at board level essential.
- The ability to lead and manage a new business essential. Previous general management/operations experience a distinct advantage
- Clear understanding of the upstream oil and gas industry and the ability to articulate value propositions to high-level executives in E&P companies essential.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills in English are a requirement.

Field Support Engineers (2 Positions)

What we looking for is:

- At least 3-5 years rig experience.
- Someone who is a self starter,
- Someone who is Energetic and motivated
- College degree required.
- Computer skills and understanding with a working knowledge of English both written and verbal.

Candidates are requested to send their resumes in English enclosed with a cover letter to
email: M_Abdulkader@DPMC-YE.com or Fax : (009671 413173)
No later than 08th of March 2007

Announcement

Yemeni Saudi Cement CO.(YSCC) is cordially inviting the concerned authorities to attend the workshop to discuss the Environmental Impact Assessment Report of Batais Cement Plant project on Thursday February 22nd, 2007 , 10:00 AM at the meeting hall of Al-Koud Agricultural Researches Station, Abyan Governorate.

Yemeni Saudi Cement Co.
Batais Cement Plant

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VIERA

VIERA Link : التقنية الأولى من نوعها في العالم
يعمل بلمسة واحدة
تشغيل سهل

تقنيات فييرا بلازما عالية الوضوح مع ميزة وصلة فييرا الخاصة يمكن الآن أن تقول وداعاً للكابلات المتعددة المتشابكة. عند وصل الأجهزة المتوافقة مع نظام الوصل فييرا باستخدام كابل وحيد من نوع HDMI يسمح التشغيل بوضوح تام مددة الاتجاهات أمراً ممكناً. وبذلك تستغني عن الحاجة إلى عدة أجهزة تحكم عن بعد لتشغيل فييرك المنزلي.

احصل على تلفزيون فييرا بلازما مع ميزة فييرا لينك واكتشف متعة التشغيل بللمسة واحدة.

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• ميزة إعادة عرض تقنية السينما الخائلية بللمسة واحدة
• ميزة إعادة عرض تقنية DIGA بللمسة واحدة

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شركة ألفا المحدودة **ALFA**

Earthenware: Keeps food hot and Yemeni heritage alive

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For Yemen Times

Yemen is renowned for its rich heritage and civilization. Despite an increasingly modern lifestyle, Yemenis still maintain their ancient traditions, especially their eating habits. Most Yemenis still eat sitting on the floor and use earthenware to cook and serve their meals. This reflects their great pride in

their culture, rarely trying to imitate others.

Since time immemorial, Yemenis, and more recently foreigners, use mud-based earthenware as the preferred choice without substitution, regardless of the technical demands of the modern world. Despite modern industries manufacturing kitchenware of glass, metal and copper, earthenware ranks first in Yemeni cooking.

Throughout Sana'a and other governorates, factories manufacture earthen-

ware utensils. Many districts are known for their earthenware by name. For example, Al-Haisei (the cup-like glasses) are named for the Hais area and the Saddi Magla made in Saddah. But is earthenware as popular today as before, or are they on the road to extinction?

Hajj Ali Al-Matari, buying some earthenware commented, "I cannot imagine a Yemeni house without a piece of earthenware, be it in a rich or poor house. Personally, I would never change earthenware for modern cookware. I have used those from my great grandfather's time until now. Earthenware is cheap. For example, I bought a magla made of pottery costing only 150 YR. If I were to think of buying a magla made of metal it would cost more than 600 YR."

Earthenware has many uses. It can be used to prepare, cook and serve food and drinks. These items come in many forms, such as cup-like vessels, plates, jars, dishes, vases and tablespoons among others. Each has a special Yemeni name specific for cooking or preparing different foods or drinks. Barmah is a special earthen pot that cooks meat in few minutes, keeping it hot and fresh while adding a special taste to the meat. Magla is another vessel used to serve the piping hot Yemeni saltah. Then there is Madel, a vase for freezing water and keeping it cold regardless of the surrounding temperature.

Naife Al-Kawilani, owner and manufacturer of a large earthenware factory, explains how it's done. "We dig a two-meter deep hole in the ground to get a special soil suitable for making these wares. We then mix it with water and put this mud into special blocks that are fired and baked in furnaces. We also make different types according to what customers like."

Customers are usually urban or rural Yemenis, as well as foreigners from Arab states and Western tourists.

"The market for earthenware is increasing now more than ever. Every one who visits or passes near my store buys pieces of earthenware. This is due



Although mostly created by men, pottery is a delicate trade based on smooth light touches and a lot of patience YT photo archive

to their attractive forms."

The seller reiterates that the cost of the earthenware is cheap compared to its modern counterparts.

"Each piece may cost between 100 to 500 YR, so it is as affordable to the poor as it is to the wealthier customer".

50-year-old Hajjah Fatima Qaied, from the Hamdan area, believes earthenware is healthier.

"Most of the wares in my kitchen are earthen. I always cook in these because they give my food that special flavor and, of course, makes my family want to eat more. You always feel you want to eat even if you're not hungry. When I want cold water, I never put it in the refrigerator. I just pour the water into a jammanah to keep the water cold." Hajjah Fatima has never eaten in metal pots or dishes because she believes these leak poisonous minerals into the food.

Walking around the old souks of

Sana'a or other cities around Yemen, one sees customers crazy about these earthen wares, everyone buying them for particular purposes.

Mohsan Al-Kawilani, a customer of the old souk store comments, "I prefer the earthenware because at the very least I know the materials they are made of, while the other wares are mixed with chemicals, which are unhealthy and change the taste of food if kept in them too long. But the earthen wares are good and I have never heard any negative things about them."

Another customer added that, "because our food is traditionally served hot, we use the earthen wares to keep food hot longer without changing the taste or smell."

Abdullah Salah Al-Shagagei, a seller in Al-Maleh souk has followed in his father's footsteps said, "Most of my customers are foreigners. I think they buy this earthenware to use as center-

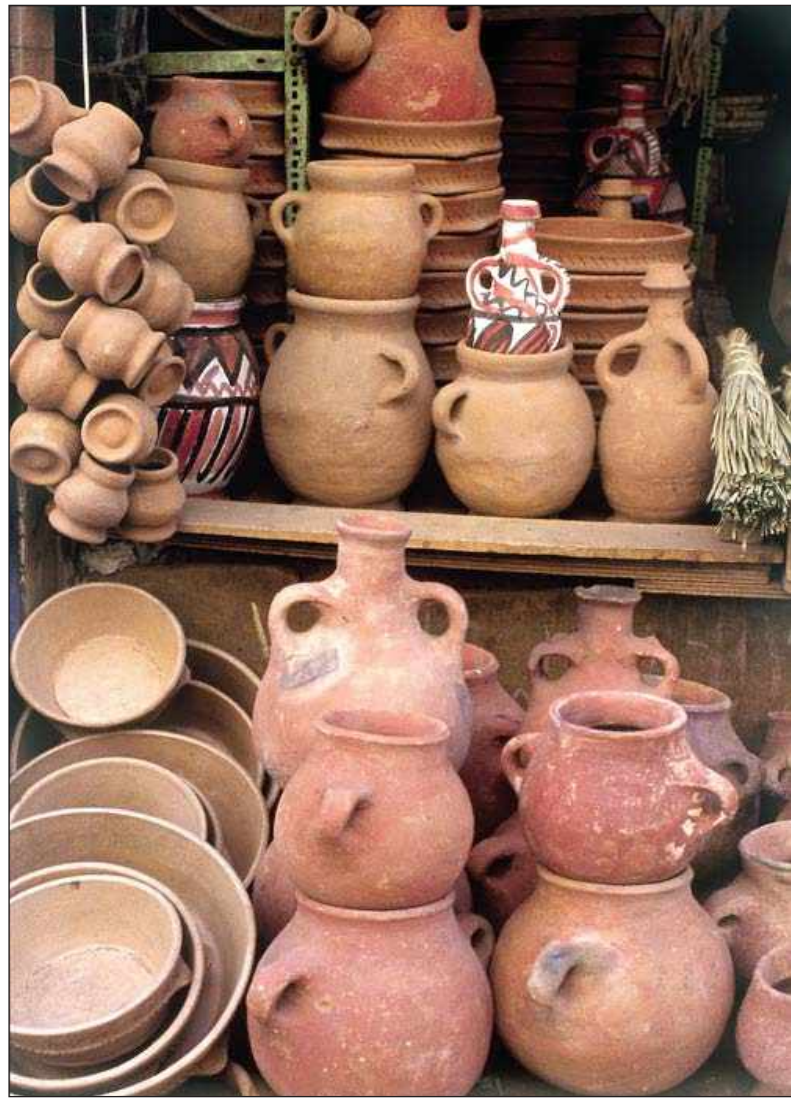
pieces in their homes when they return to their countries. It's a testament that they symbolize Yemeni heritage."

What are the most common wares customers like to buy? Magale rates first among the earthen wares because they are used in serving and presenting most Yemeni meals. "So you could say every Yemeni house has a Magale", Al-Shagagei says.

Housewife Karimah Al-Hamdani says that although it keeps food hot longer, you need to expend more effort to wash them.

Amel Al-Hifi, another housewife commented women in the past used the earthen wares because they didn't have modern wares that cook food faster. But now we have better appliances and it's easier cooking.

"I don't have many of these earthenware pieces, but I have to keep some for those special occasions which need these wares."



Magale (plate like earthwear) are used for cooking and serving food, while Madels (jug like earthwear) are used for storing for storing water.

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Words of Wisdom



In the final analysis, it is in the hands of the people in charge of this country to make our transformation towards democracy real and meaningful. It would be unfortunate if the change in Yemen remains merely a show or something superficial. Our politicians need to believe in preparing for the 21st century. To do that, they have to internalize some new values.

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

OUR
OPINION

Escalating violence

Yemen presented a good example when the government created the dialogue committee to deal with fundamentalists and Al-Qaida affiliates in Yemen. Thousands of Yemeni youth were accused of being a part of this religious group, and the government decided it was best to open up channels of communication and try to understand where they were coming from instead of throwing them into prison and leaving open wounds to fester.

The Believing Youth in Sa'ada are no different. They are a religious sect who disagree with the governing system and have decided to take things into their own hands, hence the Al-Houthi insurgents. Although one of the fundamental differences between both groups is that Al-Qaida started off as a military group in Afghanistan while the Believing Youth, more commonly known as Al-Houthi, followers started off as a peaceful religious movement and only developed in to political group many years later.

It is not my intention to defend rebellious movements; I am, in fact, totally against defying the state by violent means. However, I would like to remind politicians in Yemen that violence breeds violence and the lesson learnt with Al-Qaida affiliates must be used in other similar conflicts.

Judge Hamood Al-Hitar who has led the Dialogue Committee, says that this method has proved successful because he allowed amply qualified scholars debate with the fundamentalists and finally convince them that what they are doing against the state is wrong. Today, many have again been integrated into society and are leading normal lives. The ones who would not yield were dealt with differently. However, the point is that they were given the chance to express their views and argue their beliefs, a thing that did not happen in Sa'ada. An initial truce had taken place one year ago, but was sadly broken by government security forces without any clear justification.

What is perhaps even more frustrating is that, according to government statistics, every day there are dozens of people killed in various tribal areas as a result of tribal conflicts. Strong tribes do not abide by the law, indeed they don't even acknowledge the authority of the government. They have their own regulations and even their own army. Everyday, a leaders of some Yemeni tribe acts against the governing system and actually implement their own rulings. Lands are confiscated, people are tortured and killed, homes are destroyed and money is taxed. The direction in which the situation in Sa'ada will now is potentially towards an endless cycle of crises where the city descends into chaos and people are driven from their homes and jobs only to become internally dislocated persons without compensation from the state. The second scenario is that the government actually crushes the group and repeats what Saddam Hussein has done with the Kurds in Northern Iraq.

Is that what we want? Is this a wise thing to do? I thought that Yemeni politicians had learnt from the past. We have gone through so many wars to date that I feel it is high time we think strategically in order that live in peace.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf
Editor-in-Chief

An opportunity for Arabs before it is too late

By: Dr. Abdulaziz Al Tarb

I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that 2007 is to be one of the most dangerous in the life of the Arab nation for several reasons.

In Yemen we are experiencing a crisis between the government and the business sector, the locomotive of development, about the sales tax and the problem rebellion in the governorate Sa'ada and its ramifications on stability and development.

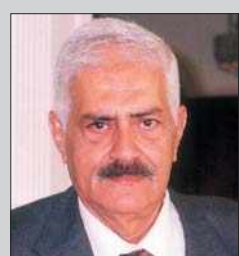
The wounds of the nation that are open for a long period in more than one sensitive spot of the Arab body especially in Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, and Sudan have begun to fester because of their too much uncleanness that threatens to make them perish.

The Arab regimes seem to be ready now to entrust the matter of remedying the open wounds to the same doctor that context has been the disease and this context it can be understood the reality of the stands of a number of those regimes regarding the latest movements of the American administration.

Without playing down the

importance of building strategic relations between the Arab countries and the United States it is important and necessary at the same time the Arab rulers have to comprehend that Bush and the neo-conservatives are not the United States but rather a sample of evils insisting on leading the whole world towards a real catastrophe and the American people have to be aware of its danger. We have not to surrender the destinies of our peoples to the ruler of the White House be it republican or democrat and see how he deals with the hot issues in the Middle East region; the issue of Palestine, the situation in Lebanon and Sudan and what he has been doing in Iraq.

Would we be exaggerating if we say that the current crisis gives the Arab countries that are friends of the United States a rare opportunity to withhold some of the cards they offer? I do not think that there is any kind of exaggeration in this saying. Here comes forward the specification of one of the most



By: Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Tarb

current paradoxes, unlike what the ruling elites think of rejecting Bush's new policy categorically and embarking on a serious dialogue with Syria and Iran and maybe Turkey, aimed at achievement of a group for integrated goals:

1- An end to bloodletting in Palestine and helping to form a national unity government and lifting the blockade imposed the Palestinian people immediately.

2-An end to the Lebanese crisis by putting pressure on the two conflicting parties and a return to the negotiating table to solve their pending problems in the way that preserves Lebanon's independence, but without harming requirements of the Syrian security.

3-Putting pressure on all Iraqi factions to hold reconciliation preserving the unity of Iraq and establishment of a turning-point for a new political process aiming at establishment of a government representing all without any consideration of sectarian affiliation.

Lessons of "Houthism" in Yemen

By: Ali Al-Zakry

Since the Al-Houthi violence broke out in June 2004, Yemen has been suffering from the fire of the sedition as a homeland paying a high price as people and as a nation. With every passing day the Houthis go further in their rebellion and Yemen's reputation deteriorates more as well as the losses of its economy, tourism and industry, let alone its stability and security that are subject to collapse.

The chief of the National Security Apparatus, Ali Mohammed Al-A'nsi, has lately disclosed that the Houthis war in Sa'ada has led to the death of 727 persons and the wounding of 5,296 in addition to losses in public and private property he estimated at \$6 million.

We are in the face of a real crisis that can no longer be ignored, marginalized or hidden. The political leadership has done well to inform the political parties and forces on developments of this worrying file despite objection of those forces on the nature and volume of the information.

After the elapse of all those years on the Al-Houthi crisis it appears it is a complicated affair intermingled in an illogical form. Nevertheless it leads to a group of lessons that should be thought about and learned. It should be studied

without agitation or submission to action and reaction.

First, giving priority to the narrow partisan interest to national interest would lead always to disastrous results the price of which the homeland will pay with lives of its people and it will lose its stability, security and safety as well as its prosperity.

Second, to play the card of sectarianism in a country sustained on religion will always lead to ignite a fire of sedition that is difficult to extinguish and that is why it will burn everything and the high price paid by those who inflame it before those intended to be the target of burning.

Third, "Houthism" is the most obvious tumble of the Yemeni political leadership. This leadership remained managing with great capability and cleverness the game of reproducing of parties and sheikhs, the social symbols and notables and commercial powers, dealing a blow to this by using the other. And the attempt of sectarian reproduction was I think the tumble that leadership is the one that is severely regretting.

Fourth, the worst thing that certain people can be afflicted with are a leadership and political parties and social forces experienced in playing the card of political intrigues, and each of them is ready to go with it very far without care for a homeland or interest.

Fifth, the absence of transparency and dealing with disregard with issues in which the political, religious, national and ethical is intermingled, always

lead to disaster and changes them from problems easy to control and direct into crises impregnable to solution and decoding their signs.

Sixth, the attempts to jump over a crisis as this one and to internationalize or regionalize is something that will not serve the country and would not exempt the ruler from his responsibilities for it whatever there were indications or implications of involvement of those parties in feeding it.

Seventh, the mediations and delegations that do not possess decision or authority or do not have a real vision or outlet are futile and will lead only to more insistence and more bloodshed as well as more loss. Consequently there must be thinking about such mediations. It maybe useful here to point out a saying by the Pakistani President Musharraf. During his latest visit to Abu Dhabi he was asked if he could conduct mediation between Syria and Iran and the United States of America, he mentioned that the mediation is need of a strong and effective voice in order to succeed and he said his voice was not strong or effective enough to conduct mediation.

Eighth, unless such issues are eliminated from their roots and tackling the causes that led to their emergence they will change, as Dr. Abdulkarim Al-Eryany, the political advisor to the president, said that the malignant tumor cannot be cured, but by immediate elimination. Here I will also tell Al-Eryany it will not be but with cauterization.

Source: Al-Bayan Newspaper of the Emirates.

4-Open bridges for dialogue with the American leadership opposing Bush's policy inside Congress with personalities from both parties as a means of pressure on the present government so that to put their weight and support the idea of holding an international conference to be taken part by all regional parties with no exception of any one in quest for a settlement coinciding and balanced for all interrelated crises of the region at one time and for good in addition to building an agreed upon order for collective and human security in order to guarantee that those settlements are to be accepted internationally and regionally.

It is wrong to believe that what is going on in Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan and Palestine are the beginning of civil wars. They are, in reality, political conflicts made by an American-Israeli project to dominate the area. Unless all join forces to abort that project Israel

will be able to take advantage of these conflicts and change them to civil wars.

Will those possessing live consciences awake and begin to prepare for saving their peoples from danger of a coming deluge? All are equal in wrong and think that their well-equipped ships are capable of protecting them against the danger of this deluge.

It is our opportunity while we are preparing for holding the Riyadh summit conference to think about all the issues of the nation and to present an accurate account of what has happened and what is happening since the previous summit, taking into consideration all promises of the American promises since its invasion of Iraq.

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

SILVER LINING

The Government, the Sheikh and the agony of Rua'ash

This situation is really awful and disgusting. I guess you guys agree with me that it is inhumane that 26 September newspaper, from the Ministry of Defense, stands by the barbaric act of the Consultative Council member Sheikh Mohammed Ahmed Mansur. His atrocities are on his fellow villagers in Rua'ash, Ja'ashin region. The newspaper said that the people of Rua'ash, who escaped their village due to the oppression of the sheikh, are on a "picnic" in their tents set in Sana'a. Wow! Just imagine, the people left their houses to find justice in Sana'a and the newspaper of the military says they are there for fun. They are running from Parliament to the Attorney General's office just to amuse themselves. This claim is truly scandalous and a shameful lie. It is the Ministry of Defense media standing by oppression and tyranny against helpless people who are facing displacement and all sorts of injustice. Again, a spokesman in the name of the Ministry of Interior dismissed the report broadcast by Al-Jazeera TV on the agony of the people of Rua'ash and the whole story is being fabricated to defame the sheikh.

I wonder why the newspaper and the interior ministry defend such acts. Has the man become part of the taboo that should not be touched or criticized? Why have they tried to politicize such an issue, trying to make the sheikh a hero who is being targeted by the opposition? This claim is again a ridiculous and stupid argument. It is also dangerous that we attempt to even politicize the questions of human rights and freedoms.

Those Yemeni citizens sleeping in tents are looking for justice. They have not done anything wrong except behaved in a civilized manner to defend their rights. They have carried the posters of President Ali Abdullah Saleh and chanted slogans of support to him, seeking his help to end their plight. We expect the state-run media, funded from the taxes paid by the Yemeni citizens, to keep silent as they do usually when it comes to the heart of the matter and the concerns of the ordinary people vis-à-vis the aggression of influential people. But it is awful to find media defending the oppressor.

We should all clasp to the people and advocates of the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms who have left no stone unturned in an attempt to advocate the people of Rua'ash and many more similar issues. These people need our support to carry out their campaigns in seeking justice for oppressed people and accountability for the oppressors and outlaw acts. I am afraid that the people of Rua'ash will not find justice by the end of the day. This is what we should all work not to materialize and make the oppressors win over the oppressed. Justice should not get lost in the labyrinth of corruption.

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



By: Mohammed Al-Qadhi



Letters to the Editor

Yemen, Kuwait and Saddam Hussein

The government's policy to unnecessarily provoke Kuwait by public manifestations of support and sympathy for the former dictator of Iraq doesn't make sense at all.

Saddam Hussein is dead and gone - he is history. But Yemen and Yemenis have to survive and move forward. Given our poor economic condition and the desperate state of our people, we need all the help we can from any quarters. What do we gain from antagonising or insulting the people and

sensitivities of Kuwait and its people?

The government has to adopt and pursue practical, moderate, progressive and sensible policies to obtain the support of the Gulf and other countries. We should stop self-destructive, emotional and fanatical policies if we want to move ahead, provide a decent standard of living to our deprived masses. We are a responsible country, not a terrorist Jihad outfit like Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda or Hamas, not accountable to its people or to the world. Yemen should learn from the success of Gulf countries, like the

United Arab Emirates or Qatar. They have achieved tremendous progress for its citizens not through religious emotions and passions, but through pragmatism and doing what's best for their people and their country. Our country has big potential, but in order to realise that potential we have to let go of our fundamentalism, feudalism and fanaticism. That's the only way to move forward.

S.A. Abdul Wahab Sanaa, Yemen
smileatlast@yahoo.com

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Yemen Press Review

By: Mohammed Khidhr



Al-Sahwa weekly, 15 Feb. 2007.

Main headlines

- Fierce confrontations in Saada, conflicting news about losses
- Its 4th conference to be held on 24 February, Qahtan: Changing the leaders whose work term expired, a matter decided by the constant system and the woman to take her right
- Al-Ahmar discusses with Saudi crown prince bilateral relations and means of bolstering them
- Teachers unions in Taiz intend to go to court
- Strikers in Aden protest to digging tombs of the victims of 13 January
- Parliamentary committee for fact-finding regarding deportees of Al-Jaashin

Writer Zaid al-Shami says in his article when we talk about disorders and financial and administrative corruption and defect in performance of the state institutions we try by that to contribute to take our country out of the state of backwardness it is experiencing. But the authority tries to convince us that there could not be better than what is done; it does rather go further than that by claiming that talking about mistakes and aspects of dereliction is just a kind of machination, bidings and lies. However, when criticism comes from an official organization, from the central apparatus of monitoring and audit affiliate, of the presidency of the republic it will be a kind of folly to neglect that and it will affirm that corruption is an institutional act having goals,

supporters, plans and protection.

The monitoring annual report on the final account of the state for the year 2005 disclosed failures one of which is enough to create an administration revolution. The report explained the misuse of public revenues, non-commitment to adopted plans and randomness in implementation of different development projects in addition to inability to benefit from loans and absence of priorities as well as the danger of depending on the source of oil. The report also criticized expansion in the current spending that reached at 72% of the total expenditure in a manner incompatible with goals of financial reform.

The statement also criticized the additional appropriation for the year 2005 that amounted to 451 billions in a violation of the constitution and the law. And large part of it was allocated for expenditures having surplus in the budget.

The statement also pointed out to increase in extravagant expenditures at a rate exceeding 28% compared to the previous years at a time there was recession in spending on the sectors of education and health, in addition to disorders in the organizational, administrative and financial aspects in the local authority. The report warned that would lead to aggravation of problems and difficulties and in increase in failures.

The central apparatus for monitoring and audit also confirmed the existence of disorders in carrying out budgets of special Funds saying that estimation of revenues in the commercial sector were still characterized by randomness. It said there were negative phenomena representing a common trait in performance of many administrative units and that they

were acquiring the adjective of generality. Briefly speaking, everything is not as wanted and reality says these are not the words of rancorous ones who are against the homeland insistence on following the wrong road.

The statement tried to select soft phrases and did not miss to mention some positives mentioned in a shy manner. Countries cannot be built by arrogance and blindness and it is no use to bury one's head in the ground and the authority desistance from admitting there are failures because this will not help go out of the dark tunnel.



Al-Nidaa weekly, 14 Feb. 2007.

Main headlines

- Battles intensify in Saada after the parliament and the Shoura approved the option of the use of force
- Mohammed Ali al-Saqf: Demand for extradition of Yahya al-Houthi will boomerang to the government
- Brigade 39 refuses orders of the judicial and executive powers, 5 civilians in a cell in Badr camp
- Activating the case of insolvent prisoners next week
- Security sources demand settling the case of absent soldiers. A soldier commits suicide scan months after stop of spending his salary
- Political parties women divide in line with men stands
- On attending sessions of the parliament, 5 MPs score zero and 14 got full

marks

Writer Mohammed al-Ghubari says in his article the Kuwaiti member of parliament Muslim al-Barak thinks that his most important achievements is the calling names against Yemen and the Yemenis on an occasion or without it under excuse of supporting the feelings of the Kuwaitis.

Three years or more ago al-Barak had gathered all his past and made for himself a heroism that he obtained a document affirming that president Ali Abdullah Saleh advised the former Iraqi president of invading Kuwait and upon this tune he plays his campaign of filthy words against the Yemenis to the extent that mentioning Yemen and anything related to it will cause incurable hallucination to this man.

The launching point of this man was the détente in the relationship between Sana'a and Kuwait that was shaken in the events of Iraq occupation. After al-Barak has gathered all constituents of calling names he possesses he man has announced himself the protector of the Kuwaitis and recruited himself for revenge until he exceeded all rules of, moral and was no longer able to differentiate between political stands and offending of people the number of their population approaches twenty millions.

The last week people have forgotten al-Barak amidst interest in events and issues more important than throwing insults he reiterated to unleash his tongue with insults and left no bad word to use in denouncing the Yemeni hosting of a mourning ceremony for the former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein.

I appreciate that the man is living a psychological crisis caused to him by for-

mer Iraqi president but it is the duty to remind him that the Yemenis were not a party in the tragedy and it is a shame to portray the Kuwaitis as a group of tense people who have no concern but to revenge from Saddam and his men and friends even after the man was buried under the ground.



Al-Wahdawi weekly, organ of the Nasserite Unionist Organization (NUO), 13 Feb. 2007.

Main headlines

- The authority demands Majdudin a-Muayadi to leave his area before shelling it
- The ruling party kills a Nasserite activist
- Al-Atwani congratulates Gaddafi on 10th anniversary of the Coast and Sahara states grouping
- Saada a closed governorate, tendency to a military termination
- The JMP calls for facing plans of Judaizing Al-Quds
- 18 persons killed in traffic accident
- YSP central committee calls for dealing with sequels of Saada war, confirms the importance of holding comprehensive national dialogue

Writer Ahmed Saeed says in his article the authorities media and security instruments should not be biased to injustice and tyranny and market it and defend its perpetrators through deforming facts and deceiving the public opinion with untrue statements. And they should not try to

extort the citizens for wringing out false testimonies to beautify what the authority

On some occasions the mind and conscience get shocked because of ugliness of the ways of violating human rights such as torture, injustice and severity in dealing committed by people who have abandoned their being humans. However we find some who volunteer to defend them for such practices and consider exposure of such persons as a conspiracy against hr regime and the men of the state.

It is now time for the ruling regime to expose such people who violate the constitution and the law and use their influence and posts in the state as a means for practicing social injustice.

The national obligation and duty dictates exposing them and sending all those who violate the law to court to be held accountable instead of siding with them. The authority is demanded to take urgent steps with the aim of sowing trot between it and the citizens who have elected it in order to rid them of those corrupt tools that plunder their living and act harshly agrarians their life.

The absent justice, poverty and unequal citizenship are all factors touch directly the life of the people and slackness in not treating them heralds more social disturbances and instability.

The ruling party that won in the presidential and local elections five months before should have taken the initiative of drawing up a schedule of its presidential candidate's platform and to start implementing it. But it seems that the ruling party is running against its electoral promises while the country is heading towards more collapse.

Countdown for Iran

The relationship between Iran and the United States is one of peculiar temperament: intense but accommodating at times, barefaced and seemingly self-destructive at others.

Currently, the latter estimation rings truer: the US naval military build up in the east Mediterranean and the Gulf, conjoined with an intense and sinister propaganda campaign that is being drummed up at home, among other signals, are all pointing to one ill-fated conclusion: the Bush administration, entranced in its foolishness, has decided to discard, and in its entirety, the Baker-Hamilton recommendations; instead of engaging Iran politically, the US is opting to engage it militarily.

Is it possible that the increasingly prevailing analyses are true, as fluently communicated in a recent commentary by Australian journalist John Pilger, that the Bush administration is gearing up for an attack against Iran as a way of "buying time for its disaster in Iraq"?

Pilger suggests another motivating factor for Bush's new possible war: "As the American disaster in Iraq deepens and domestic and foreign opposition grows, neocon fanatics such as Vice-President Cheney believe their opportunity to control Iran's oil will pass unless they act no later than the spring."

But how can attacking Iran buy the 'Bushites' time, if they, more than any one of us know the deeply entrenched

Iranian presence and influence in Iraq, often directly over prominent elements of the pro-American Shia government: one of whom is the indestructible Abdel Aziz Al Hakim?

"Al Hakim spent 20 years in Iran prior to the fall of Saddam and is clearly allied to the Mullahs," writes US commentator Mike Whitney. "His militia, the Badr Brigade, was trained by the Iranian Republican Guards (as well as the CIA) and is perhaps the most feared death squad in all of Iraq. Al Hakim's militia operates out of the Iraqi interior ministry and is deeply engaged in the purging of Sunnis from Baghdad."

Isn't it rational to envisage that an attack on Iran would upset the cozy relations that the Americans have cultivated with al-Hakim and such disreputable characters, thus lead to further destabilisation of Iraq, to more of the same unmitigated violence, where well over 3,000 US soldiers, nearly 1,000 contractors have met their doom, not counting the 45 thousand who were evacuated due to injuries and other medical emergencies, as indicated by Iraqbodycount.org?

US sources claim that innumerable Iraqis receive their salaries from Tehran (that is aside from the alleged 40,000 Iranian agents in Iraq, which the US media ceaselessly talks about), an indication of Iran's incessant efforts to obtain the loyalty of many of Iraq's Shia, and to dig into such valuable human reserves whenever needed, such as in the case of a

war with the United States.

Considering Iran's "natural affinity with the Shia majority of Iraq", as accurately depicted by Pilger, by provoking a military showdown with Iran, the US is condemned to broaden its military confrontation in Iraq, which would then include Shia as well as Sunni, in a most imprudent barter to achieve an impossible military mission in Iran. Since airpower and commando style "surgical" operations inside Iranian territories -- that would most likely involve some Israeli special army units -- are all that the US can conjure up at the moment, for ground troops are no longer a palpable option (half of the recently announced US military surge of 21,000 troops in Iraq will constitute from the same soldiers who are already serving in the country, simply by prolonging their tours and cancelling some vacations) one can safely conclude that any US military adventure in Iran will bring an indecisive outcome, at best, if not a wholesale disaster, a most likely possibility.

How about the other suggestion, that neocon fanatics believe their opportunity to control Iran's oil will pass unless they act no later than the spring?

This suggestion would also seem doubtful, for the neocon's war architects are still scrambling to avoid the blame of the Iraq fiasco and are at odds with Bush himself and his war generals, using their wide sway over US mainstream media to blame the president for all the ills that

have befallen the country -- ills that were born mostly from their own ominous war stratagems and their unwarranted commitment to Israel's security at the expense of their country's own. How can such a group of intellectuals still effectively hold sufficient clout to lead the US into another ill-advised war? Moreover, how can Cheney and his discredited ilk even contemplate the seizure of Iran's oil if Iraq's oil industry is still in shambles and has proven ineffective to settle the heavy bill of war, which is moving its way toward the half trillion dollar mark?

Considering these difficult questions, one must assume that any attack on Iraq is both irrational from a military viewpoint and self-defeating from a political one. However, the quandary with any political analysis of this subject that consults reason or even Machiavellian realpolitik is that it fails to consider history, and in this case, recent history which taught us that the Bush administration functions in a vacuum, separate from commonsense or any other kind of sense. It was around this time, some four years ago, that many hoped that the American military buildup in the Gulf region was aimed at strengthening the US political position against Iraq, to simply convey to former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein that the US "means business". It was clear from the outset to any even-headed observer that a war against Iraq would destabilise the region and harm the United States' overall interests in the

Middle East. I stated that numerous times on American radio programmes, receiving all sorts of censure for being anti-American and unpatriotic.

Now, we stand at the same critical juncture, four years later, as US news networks are readying for another awesome fireworks show, this time over Tehran; dehumanisation of the Iranians has already begun; the public is being fed with all kinds of half-truths and all sorts of rubbish about the Islamic Republic and its people; insanity has returned and the voices of reasons are again, labelled, shunned and marginalised. But for obvious reasons, this time around, war is an evident mistake, a fact that should irk and make every sensible American, every Congressman, every commentator question the wisdom of a new war while the country is on the verge of defeat in another.

Such a reality suggests that the Bush administration is working against the interests of his own people and makes Pilger's analysis the more poignant; indeed, as irrational as it may seem, the US could very much be on its way to war with Iran.

But as explained by Joschka Fischer, Germany's foreign minister and vice chancellor from 1998-2005, "getting into Iraq and defeating Saddam was easy. But today, America is stuck there and knows neither how to win, nor how to get out." Fischer writes: "A mistake is not corrected by repeating it over and over again.

Perseverance in error does not correct the error; it merely exacerbates it."

But this is exactly the key trait that has defined the current Bush administration since its early years in office. It's committed to duplicating failures; instead of abandoning the Iraqi ship, it insists on setting sail in the same tumultuous sea, another defected one.

Indeed, the US is again back on the same self-destruct mode, in the name of national security, regional stability, staying the course, and all the rest. Reality cannot be any further from the truth, however. A war against Iran will further exasperate the instability of the region and compromise the security of the United States, at home and abroad. It might also be the end of American military adventurism in the region for some time, but at a price so heavy, so unbearable. If Iraq's cakewalk has cost the lives of 650,000 Iraqis, how many more must die in broader war before Bush bows to commonsense and brings the grinding wheel of war to a halt?

Ramzy Baroud, a veteran Arab American journalist, teaches mass communication at Australia Curtin University of Technology, Malaysia Campus. He is the author of the forthcoming book: Writing on the Palestinian Uprising: A Chronology of a People's Struggle (Pluto Press, London). He is also the editor-in-chief of PalestineChronicle.com. source: www.khaleejtimes.com

The war of the words

Nowadays, words are often seen as a source of instability. The violent reactions last year to the caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad published in a Danish newspaper saw a confused Western response, with governments tripping over their tongues trying to explain what the media should and should not be allowed to do in the name of political satire. Then Iran trumped the West by sponsoring a conference of Holocaust deniers, a form of speech punished as criminal almost everywhere in Europe.

As Turks well know, it is dangerous to take a position on the Armenian genocide of 1915. The most recent Nobel laureate in literature, Orhan Pamuk, was prosecuted in Istanbul for denying Turkey's official history by saying that the Armenian genocide actually occurred. Other Turks have faced prosecution in Western Europe for saying that

it did not.

So words are now clearly a battlefield in the cultural conflict between Islam and the West. The West has learned that, simply as a matter of self-censorship, not legal fiat, newspapers and other media outlets will not disseminate critical pictures of Muhammad, and the Pope will no longer make critical comments about Islam. But these gestures of cooperation with Muslim sensibilities have not been met by reciprocal gestures.

Instead, Mahmoud Ahmedinejad, Iran's president, has threatened to wipe Israel off the map. The Israeli Foreign Ministry now seeks prosecution of Ahmedinejad for incitement to commit genocide -- a violation of international law.

But the Israeli press is also bellicose. Israeli newspapers regularly carry stories about why Israel may need to attack Iran to prevent it from acquiring an arsenal of nuclear weapons. President George W.

Bush has made similarly ominous, if more vague, statements about Iran. In Germany, preparing and calling for preemptive military strikes from within the government are subject to criminal sanctions.

The world's different legal systems have never been in much agreement about the boundaries of free speech. Even between good neighbors like Canada and the United States, there is little agreement about punishing hate speech. Canadians punish racial insults, but Americans do not, at least if the issue is simply one of protecting the dignity of racial minorities.

But threatening violence is more serious. Many countries are united in supporting the principle that if, say, Ahmedinejad does meet the criteria for incitement of genocide, he should be



George P. Fletcher

punished in the International Criminal Court. Indeed, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda punished radio station operators who made aggressive public broadcasts urging Hutus to pick up their machetes and murder Tutsis.

A decade ago there would have been a good argument in international law that the Hutu-Tutsi example supports prosecution only after the damage has been done. All the international precedents -- from Nuremberg to the present -- concern international intervention after mass atrocities. Domestic police may be able to intervene to prevent crime before it occurs, but in the international arena there is no police force that can do that.

It follows, therefore, that the crime of incitement should apply only to cases like Rwanda, where the radio broadcasts

actually contributed to the occurrence of genocide. In cases where bellicose leaders make public threats to "bury" another country (remember Khrushchev?) or to wipe it off the map, the courts should wait, it was said, until some harm occurs.

But the international community has become ever more intrusive in using legal remedies against persons who engage in provocative and dangerous speech. In September 2005, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1624 -- paradoxically, with American approval -- calling upon all member states to enact criminal sanctions against those who incite terrorism. The model of incitement they had in mind is the same one that British Prime Minister Blair has publicly invoked: Muslim leaders standing up in their mosques and urging their congregations to go out and kill infidels.

Americans have traditionally said

that, absent a risk of immediate unlawful violence, this form of speech should be protected under the First Amendment. US courts reasoned that it is better to allow the release of hateful sentiments than to call attention to them by showcasing them in court. But when it comes to terrorism in today's world, most countries, including the world's democracies, are not as tolerant as they used to be.

So the traditional liberal position in support of giving wide scope to freedom of speech, even for extremists, is losing ground everywhere. When it comes to fighting terrorism and the prospect of genocide, the world is now becoming afraid of dangerous words.

George P. Fletcher is Cardozo Professor of Jurisprudence at Columbia University. His latest book is Romantics at War: Glory and Guilt in the Age of Terrorism. Source: Project Syndicate, 2007.

Renowned Yemeni poet commemorated

By: Saeed Al-Batati
albatati88@yahoo.com

The Hadramout Governorate witnessed an extraordinary flurry of cultural activity last week as a result of the 7th anniversary of the death of the great Yemeni poet Hussein Abu Baker Al-Mehdar.

Many intellectuals, poets, friends and admirers of the deceased gathered in his house in Sheher (15 kms north east of Mukalla). The mass put some of his poems under the microscope for discussion and a wide variety of papers were presented. Mr. Saeed Farhan presented a paper on "Place in Al-Mehdar's poetry". Al-Mehdar was, and still is, unquestionably one of the great poets of this era. "His poems fuse together word and melody" he said, adding also that his poems equally contained wisdom, proverbs and jokes.

The second part in the programme of cultural activities was a night-time musical concert. The musicians sang some of the songs written by Al-Mehdar. At the end of the concert, the only son of Al-Mehdar honored the old friends of his father.



Portrait of the Yemeni poet Hussein Al-Mehdar.

As part of the program, the intellectuals visited Al-Mehdar Museum.

Giving some information regarding the museum, Mehdar Hussein Al-Mehdar said that his father's museum is currently under the sponsorship of the late's family, and that they refused to hand over the museum to the ministry of Culture. "If

they were given the museum, they wouldn't do anything. There are many clear examples of such ministry-run museums".

Mr. Hussein said that when the president inaugurated the museum officially, he had told him that they were in dire need of the government's support in preserving the great heritage of his father. "The president asked me to write a letter containing all of the problems. I wrote the letter and sent it to the office of the president's secretary in Sana'a and till now I haven't received any response".

The son of Al-Mehdar said that he had also demanded the ministry of culture's financial help through a letter sent to the Minister of Culture. "We need three workers and a body guard. We want to maintain the upper hand with regard to the museum. We tried the supervision of the ministry in many museums only to see the apparently deliberate ignorance of the ministry."

Mohammed Al-Habani was a close friend of Al-Mehdar. He brought back some old memories of him. "For me, this day is for the memory of Al-Mehdar. We celebrate his 7th anniversary as if he were among us. Our life with him was like heaven. His life was a school in which we studied both tunes and measures".

Mr. Al-Habani noted the enthusiasm for cultural events in Sheher during the days of Al-Mehdar "We had bi-weekly literary sessions on Monday and Friday but after the death of Al-Mehdar those sessions faded away".

The Yemeni Writers Syndicate (YWS)-Hadramout Branch- organized a lecture devoted to the poems of Al-Mehdar.

Dr. Saeed Al-Juriri, the Head of YWS said that the primary factor that distinguishes Al-Mehdar's poems from those of others is his ability to convey reality in a highly sophisticated way.

Al-Mehdar was born in 1931 in Sheher and joined the school of Makarem Al-Akhag in 1940. He became acquainted with Hadrami Dan poets and regularly attended their sessions. In 1951, he got married and his vocation in Hadrami Dance emerged. After ten years, he wrote his first lyrical poem Ya rasouli (Oh my messenger). He met Abu Baker Salim Balafageh during the latter's visit to Sheher in 1963. He wrote his first collection of poems Domo Al-Aushag (Lovers tears) in 1966. In 1998, President Saleh awarded him a decoration. He died in February 5th, 2000.

Innovative forms of qamariyya to Europe: Age-old qamariyya prove popular

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori
For Yemen Times

One of the most eye-catching features of Yemeni buildings is the high-arched windows decorated with colorful stained-glass panels. Since ancient times, Yemen's stained-glass windows, known as qamariyyas, have represented an important part of its gorgeous architecture and now there's a growing demand for it outside of Yemen. Nowadays, innovative forms of qamariyyas are emerging and becoming well-known outside Yemen. Those new forms can be hung on walls or over windows to reflect the light or one may place a candle or a light inside them.

"We exported the first batch of antiques to Holland. It was approximately 2,000 pieces," explains Tariq Jabber, project officer at the Small Micro-Enterprises Promotion Service. "A huge range of good-value designs, shapes, sizes and colors are available from the organization. They're handmade by hundreds of small producers throughout the country at the customer's request."

Those involved in the project depend upon the quality they make, as well as the innovative shapes.

"We now deal with three handicraftsmen, telling them the sizes and shapes the traders want. We help them with the ideas," Jabber added. "Yemeni handicrafts are handmade from local materials and then refined into unique products with skill and creativity. Most of them are still undiscovered outside of Yemen, so we're trying to market their goods outside Yemen to give them the chance for more gains."

A second batch of nearly 900 pieces was exported to Switzerland last month, with the approximate \$1,400 in profits going directly to Yemeni handicraftsmen.

"We're working to identify and promote unique products produced by small and micro-businesses and social organizations with the goal of expanding the country's domestic and international trade. The program also aims to give advice on how to improve their businesses regarding production methods, quality control, marketing and product design in order to make Yemeni products more attractive to export markets," Jabber explained.

The startling contrast of brown bricks and qamariyyas is eye-catching in the sunlight, but during an evening stroll, one will be amazed that the qamariyyas sparkle in the darkness like multicolored jewels.



Qamariyyas are traditionally used to decorate buildings, and more recently as antiques.

Qamariyyas are unique because they reflect several colors of light at once, whether used to decorate buildings or as antiques.

The qamariyya shapes are made of gypsum and then poured onto a silicone board. Colored glass that's been cut to take a particular shape is affixed onto the gypsum mold. Afterward, the craftsman polishes it.

Qamariyyas used to decorate Yemeni houses and affixed mostly above window frames and doors are made of gypsum.

"The materials used to make qamariyyas are very simple. We mix them with water and put them either on a large board or on the wall. We cut the gypsum according to the shape. We affix the colored glass onto the surface and

carve until we reach the surface of the colored glass affixed at the front. The last step is polishing the qamariyya," explains Mohammed Hussein Jamra.

The origin of the name qamariyya is up for debate, but it's certainly a name reflecting its beauty.

"In fact, there's no accurate evidence for calling it a qamariyya. However, some people think it comes from the root of the Arabic word for moon. The reason behind naming it after the moon is the way the colored glass penetrates the moonlight and reflects the colored light inside houses, especially in the past, when people had no electricity. Others think the term qamariyya comes from qumrya, a beautiful woman," explains Hussein Mahdi.

Regarding the qamariyya's size, Mahdi adds, "It depends on the customers' request and where it will be placed. Qamariyyas actually are affixed above window frames, doors and in the space between two windows. There are various shapes and designs - some are rectangular, semi-circular, circular, square or other shapes."

The Small Micro-Enterprises Promotion Service has numerous programs, of which the handicrafts program is one. It launched in 2004 as a subsidiary of Yemen's Social Fund for Development. Several product groups have been classified for promotion: baskets, natural fiber items, textiles, dresses, silver jewelry, metalwork, pottery, decorative items, window decorations, incense, myrrh, recycled crafts, furniture, natural cosmetics, medicine and mocha coffee.



The splendor of such antiques is to reflect the candle's light. They are used in Christmas as well as in birthdays, Jabber stated.

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Manda's Portraits: Secret Messages

By: Abdulwahed Abdullah
For Yemen Times

The portraits of German artist Marianne Manda depict the affect Arab culture has had on her. The latest two-week exhibit closed last week in Aden and it concerned an enduring legacy: Arabic calligraphy.

Manda's describes her work as hidden messages in color and drawings.

"Each portrait consists mostly of eight layers. Once the first layer is drawn and painted, I draw the second layer over it with different. Accordingly, I need eight days to paint a portrait," she explains.



Each portrait consists mostly of eight layers, the last layer is one of Arabic letters.

Named "Secret Messages" these portraits are a series of color etchings of Arabic calligraphy. Individually represented, each letter has its own designs and drawings.

Although Manda has no background in Arabic calligraphy, she has successfully come closer to the Arabic culture and calligraphy through her extended stays in Arab countries. She noted when describing her art form, "I consider my work fine art."

One plainly perceives the various layers in the drawings. These portraits are like excavations where you remove layer after layer to discover the secrets of its beauty and the messages within the art.

Viewers showed amazement at Manda's innovative style. Hady Al-Awlaqi, a doctorate of history at the Aden University said, "The exhibit is very exciting in terms of color harmony. I think she adds something new to the world of art. No one paints the way she does."

The merger of colors and drawings in her portraits and the dappled effect of the pictures are mysterious for some viewers. Jordanian graphic designer Eyad said, "Once we follow the letters and words that are artistically formed, we need to spend some time analyzing the meaning of the whole word."

One of Manda's plans includes a portrait of the spectacular views found in Yemen. It is scheduled to be about 12m wide and 3 m long.

"My painting will represent the stone engraved roses and grass mostly found in excavations sites. Excavations usually reflect what remains of the living things yet they actually symbolize life. They indicate something, that at one time, was alive," Manda explained. The other plans involve travel to the United Arab Emirates and Oman to present her art and, "On the April 19 I will be honored in Salzburg for my works".



Manda describes her works as excavations where you remove layer after layer to discover the secrets of its beauty and the messages within.

German born Marianne Manda studied Painting and Graphic Art in Munich. She draws for the German Institute of Archaeology in Yemen. Manda balances life between Salzburg, Austria and Crater, Aden. She first came to Yemen 19 years ago. Aden has become her second home during the winter months. Impressed with both Aden and the nation she states, "Although people here are very poor, they are very good."

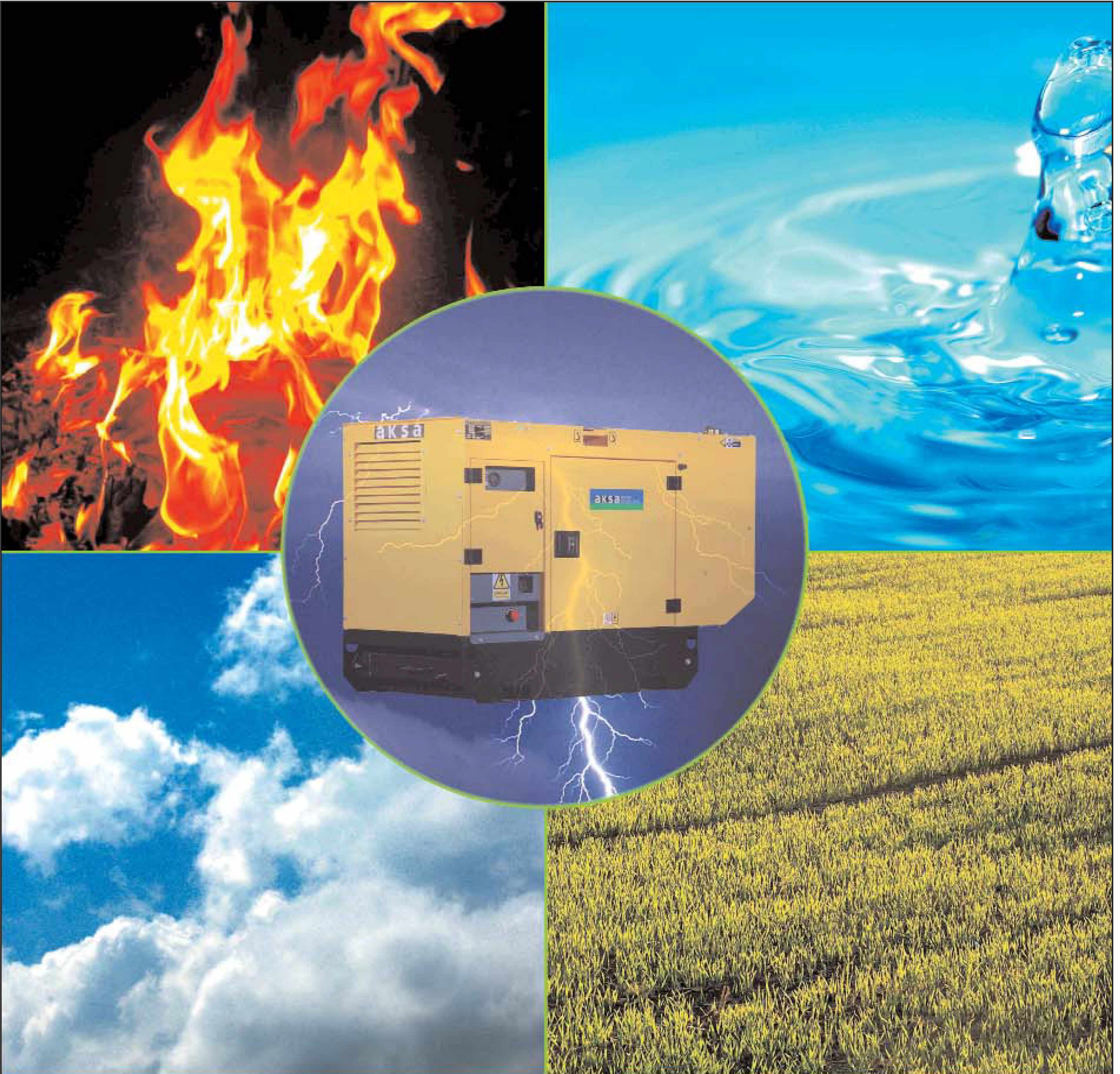
The one place she finds irresistible in Yemen is Mount Shamsan saying, "I've climbed it four times!"

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Street cleaners want medical privileges

By: Al-Migdad Dahesh Mojali
& Nawal Zaid

People talk about cleanness and dirtiness and their respective impacts on the environment, as well as the budget and government expenditures on cleaning the nation. However, they rarely want to discuss the difficult circumstances and life stories of most city street cleaners.

Unfortunately, those who clean the streets and take the rubbish from in front of our houses are always in danger and exposed to numerous skin and respiratory



Cleaners buy their own gloves to avoid diseases.

diseases without any care paid by the state.

"I constantly have a fever due to being in the sun all day. I also suffer skin diseases, especially on my hands," complains 40-year-old street cleaner Abdullah M. Sa'eed.

Mohammed Obad, 30, comments, "I suffer from asthma because of the dusty air I inhale while sweeping the streets."

Omar Abdu Khalil, 23, explains, "I have tuberculosis and when I sweep the street, I feel strong inflammation in my chest. Consequently, I stay at home many days without payment. If I work, I feel sick, but if I stay home, I'll have nothing to give my children."

Women and girls also experience their share of diseases, as 18-year-old Nujoud Al-Khamisi describes, "I experience constant hypersensitivity in my eyes and nose. I'm sometimes affected by allergies on my hands and, as a result, I rub them until they bleed." She adds, "Because of working in the cold weather, my bones ache strongly."

Economic situations play an important role in the decline of health and dissemination of diseases among street cleaners. Sa'eed notes, "My salary is YR 15,000 and YR 3,000 overtime, but the problem is that I can't meet all of my family's needs. Consequently, my family and I suffer malnutrition, as well as other diseases."

Al-Khamisi describes her situation, "I make YR 20,000, which goes for house rent and trivial amounts of food for us. Consequently, I have no money to buy medicine or good food or fruit. Believe it or not, I've never gone to a doctor."

Dermatologist and allergist Dr. Mohammed Ali Al-Shami was surprised when asked about the most common skin diseases among street cleaners, saying, "It's difficult to say which diseases affect

street cleaners because I've never treated any of them."

He continued, "However, generally speaking, many factors contribute to skin diseases, such as skin color, environment and economic situations. We know that street cleaners' economic situations are bad and their environment is polluted; therefore, they're exposed to infections like hepatitis and allergic conjunctivitis."

Most street cleaners work eight to 12 hours a day, beginning at around 7 a.m. or earlier and finishing during the afternoon. They may work overtime and on weekends after public events, such as official holidays. Working outside every day of the year - whatever the weather - the work of street cleaners is active, involving walking, bending and lifting. However, while carrying out these activities, street cleaners don't have protective clothing, such as waterproof clothing, overalls, gloves and high-visibility jackets.

Jamal Juhaish, general manager of the Capital Secretariat's cleaning project, says, "Many street cleaners are affected by skin and respiratory diseases as a result of being in a polluted environment, while others have lost body parts due to car accidents."

Sana'a University associate professor, Dr. Ahmed Al-Hammami, a bronchoscopy specialist, explains, "As a result of the polluted and dirty environment where they spend most of their time, street cleaners are exposed to infections like bronchitis, asthma, tetanus and hepatitis."

Many government employees are provided health care, medical insurance and, sometimes, financial aid during illness; however, street cleaners don't receive any health care or financial assistance to help them when going to the hospital.

Mohammed Nasser, 34, describes, "I lost my leg in a car accident, after which I spent much time and money. However, the administration only gave me YR 10,000, which is nothing because the treatment cost approximately YR 70,000."

Abdulaziz Yeslam 28, recounts, "I lost my hand in a machine while working, but the administration gave me only a month's medical leave. They then transferred me to an administrative position within the cleaning project because I can't work as a street cleaner anymore."

Street cleaners who work around hospitals are more exposed to infection by virulent diseases like AIDS and hepatitis than other cleaners are; however, they receive neither health care nor financial aid. Some employees even provide their own protection.

"My colleagues and I work near a hospital. We realize that hospital waste contains broken glass, sharp instruments, needles and contaminated blood, but our administration doesn't give us gloves or socks, so we buy them ourselves in order to protect ourselves," 22-year-old Ayman Najeeb explains.

Not only is Ministry of Health careless about the health of street cleaners, it also is careless about the health of the cleaning project's administration, where neither cleaners nor administration employees are subject to periodic physical checkups to protect against the prevalence of diseases.

"We've never been subjected to physical checkups since we began this work," notes Ayesha Ali.

Juhaish agrees with most of the cleaners' complaints, commenting, "Honestly, neither street cleaners nor we receive health care or physical checkups and it's the same with those cleaners around hospitals."



street cleaners' salaries aren't enough for their basic needs.

Regarding the administration's aid for the sick or those who've had accidents, he says, "I admit that some street cleaners have had accidents wherein some lost hands and others lost legs. However, we grant an open-ended holiday until they recover and even take over their treatment expenses. Once they return to work, we don't let them work as street cleaners but rather as guards or any other position suitable to their physical and health conditions."

As a result of the extreme poverty and although they are below the working age, many young boys and girls join the street cleaning project in order to earn their livelihood despite the modest salary earned in proportion to their efforts. In order to secure their acceptance, they pay the supervisor many thousands of riyals because the supervisor is in charge of employing street cleaners.

One administration manager who

asked to remain anonymous remarked, "There are many underage street cleaners, particularly ages 13 and 14. Despite this, they are accepted into the cleaning project and work like the other street cleaners. I think they do it out of extreme poverty because many have nothing to eat."

He mentioned the administration's aid offered to those street cleaners affected by disease, saying, "The administration gives them money, but if treatment costs exceed YR 10,000, they won't give anything."

Juhaish points out, "According to Yemeni law, the working age is 16. We accept [the underage children] because their ages on their identification cards are over 16; therefore, I have no justification to reject them. Actually, the district supervisor is in charge of employing street cleaners. Sana'a is divided into districts, each with its own supervisor responsible for everything in that district, including street cleaners."

Decoding DNA: Why Yemen lags in testing?

By: Yemen Times Staff

The majority of countries in the world use the DNA test as absolute evidence of paternity, and in forensic medicine. Yet, in Yemen, DNA testing isn't used at all, despite the crucial need for it.

"Unfortunately, we don't have a laboratory for testing DNA in Yemen, although we need it. But it is planned for the coming years. We sent some students to the Faculty of Medicine in order to have a primary course, and then they will travel to Germany to study forensic medicine. Inaugurating the laboratory is planned at the time of the graduation of these students," said Mohammed Saleh Al-Hamdani, the general manager of the administration of criminal evidence.

But the existence of the laboratory will not change anything as long as the judiciary doesn't consider the DNA test as an absolute evidence of paternity.

Abdullah Al-Ansi, judge of personal affairs, said that the judiciary may use

the DNA as sub-evidence in testing paternity.

"Yes, we can use DNA in the lawsuits related to the denial of paternity, but as sub-evidence and not absolute evidence because the infant is traced back to his father by two things only: the marriage contract or the confession of the father that the infant is his own. We can use the DNA as evidence of paternity but only when accompanied by other evidence."

"We can't use DNA as absolute evidence because of Islamic law. All of the personal affairs' rulings are derived from Islam, and Islam doesn't consider DNA as evidence of paternity," said Badr Al-Jamrah a student in the Supreme Institute of the Judiciary.

"Although I'm convinced that DNA is an absolute evidence of paternity, and the Yemeni law doesn't prevent the judiciary from using it, I can't rule that in a lawsuit," Al-Jamrah added.

In the lawsuit of Mohammed Adam, the Sudanese guard who worked in a morgue at the Faculty of Medicine and killed many women, the police needed

DNA testing to identify the bodies of the victims, but the judiciary's decision wasn't based on the DNA test.

"Because Yemen doesn't have a laboratory for DNA testing, Yemen sent parts of the dead bodies to Germany for DNA testing in order to identify the bodies and to find the criminal," Al-Hamdani said.

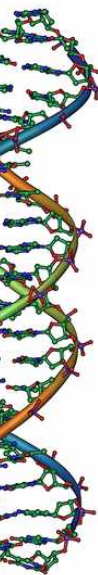
The DNA test helps immensely in identifying people and in forensic medicine. Explaining the significance and the uses of DNA, Dr. Al-Hamdani said, "Recent developments in recombinant DNA

technology offer specific tools in human gene-disease mapping and forensic applications. The forensic analysis of DNA may be the most significant

advance in solving modern crime and enforcement law.

DNA can simplify the identification of an individual based on molecular evidence left at the scene of a crime, such as a drop of blood, a semen stain, human body remnants or even a single hair," Dr. Al-Hamdani added.

"The DNA can be coding DNA which carries the heredity from parents to their offspring, and non-coding DNA which forms the largest portion of DNA. It seems that the non-coding DNA isn't responsible for heredity, but has the characteristic of never being the same in two individuals," Dr. Al Hamadi



DNA helix

said. DNA's significance isn't restricted to transferring heredity from the parents to their offspring and detecting criminals,

but also includes mapping genetic diseases and gene therapy.

"DNA is used in mapping genetic diseases and gene therapy, so that it is possible now to detect the gene responsible for a certain disease, such as breast cancer, sickle cell anemia, polycystic disease, leukemia and others. The recent advances in molecular genetics made it possible not only to discover the diseased gene, but also to replace this gene by a normal one extracted from a normal human."

DNA is also used in plant and insect genetic engineering.

"DNA is used to modify the genes of crops, vegetables and fruits in order to develop the quality of these products, but the safety of the use of such products is still unknown. Genetic modification for plants to compete against certain pests and insects had proved highly effective," explained Dr. Al-Hamdani.

The study clarified the significance of using genetic engineering in Yemen where it stated:



Dr. Nabeel Al-Hammadi

"There is still an urgent need to develop guidelines for their safe application and to control the impact of the modification operation on human health and agro-biodiversity. These deficiencies, combined with the unavailability of policy and legislative framework for regulating biotechnology and biosafety issues, are likely to cause a high level of risk on the country's fragile ecosystems and economic species."

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Hadam Branch

Moses' staff and Joseph's coat – in Yemen?

By: Sa'eed Al-Batati
albatati88@yahoo.com

It was like manna from heaven when a new acquaintance said he'd seen what's thought to be Moses' staff and Joseph's colorful coat at the home of an old man in an out-of-the-way village in Doan, Hadramout governorate. Even though the in-between valley district is my home turf, I've never heard about the location of the staff, let alone the fact that it was within easy reach.

Several unanswered questions cropped up: How and when did it arrive here? Who brought it? Most importantly, is it really Moses' staff?

Biographers are united in the opinion that neither Moses nor Joseph was buried in Yemen, only touching on prophets like Hud and Saleh.

As a journalist, it's my job to chase down stories whenever or wherever they are. I was with some friends on a tour of the Hadramout. Before hearing the news about these sacred items, it wasn't at the top of our agenda to visit this place, but once we learned of the staff's location, we made it our top priority.

A dense forest of palm trees rings the rugged village of Boudhah nestled in a knoll on the eastern side of Doan Valley. Because the road is bumpy, an off-road vehicle is best to reach it. Despite the rough way, I comforted myself with the thought that I'd soon see Moses' magical staff and Joseph's colorful coat, which would be a major scoop!

As soon as we got out of the vehicle, we asked the Boudhah villagers about the location of Sheikh Mutahar Abood Ahmed Al-Amoudi, custodian of Moses' staff. A septuagenarian yet strong-limbed man took the initiative to lead us to Al-Amoudi's house.

With joy and anticipation, we climbed a stone-paved street, passing through narrow alleyways. By the time we got to the top, we all were huffing and puffing, as well as marveling at how our guide moved with such a spring in his step.

Before us was an impressive lime-covered mansion with two cannons in its façade, a testament to Al-Amoudi tribe's power in the past.

A bearded man, who we later learned was the sheikh's assistant-keeper, received us with warm hospitality and took us to the living room on the first floor. Al-Amoudi kept us waiting in the



Sheikh Al-Amoudi says he'd rather die than allow anyone to take the sacred staff and coat from his family.

well-carpeted room for nearly a half hour, while the marvelous staff was the centerpiece of our speech.

After keeping us waiting for so long, the sheikh made it very dramatic, sending his assistant many times, possibly to ensure that we weren't going to snatch the items from him. As we neared the end of our ropes, the assistant called to us, "The sheikh is ready to meet with you."

Climbing more stairs to reach Sheikh Al-Amoudi's room, we entered a well-appointed room with wooden columns and pillars. A nonagenarian and an imposing man wearing traditional Hadrami clothes was sitting in the corner of the room, welcoming us with his ear-to-ear grin.

Apparently hearing-impaired, he asked us to repeat our questions many times as we pumped him for more information about the staff. As we took our places in the room, I immediately got to the point, telling him the purpose of our visit. "Yes, you'll see the staff, but you must bear in mind that Allah is the Creator and he makes all things benefit or harm you," he replied with a shrinking voice, directing his assistant to bring the staff and the coat, which were kept in a steel box.

The assistant first brought the three-cubit staff, the tip of which was made of whitish brass tinged with silver. Undoubtedly, the wood used to make it was very interesting, as one can imagine that from Moses' time until today, it had survived all kinds of weather and climates and crossed the Red Sea to reach the Hadramout and then into the rugged region of Boudhah.

I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the fascinating staff, which was once in Moses' hands and now was in mine! The staff smelled sweet and much use had left a black smudge along the staff – one could feel how the staff was weathered by touch.

My inner feeling was that I had touched the staff Allah had prescribed as one of the miracles to go up against the

Egyptian Pharaoh – and now it belongs to us in the Hadramout!

Apart from the staff was a cube-shaped bundle of cloth tucked inside a green velvet cloth also shrouded in mystery. The cloth's presentation was fascinating, as the mixture of deep yellow satin along with green satin made for an astonishing combination.

Al-Amoudi claimed that inside the bundle was the coat that Joseph's envious brothers showed his father as proof that he had been killed by a wolf.

We were allowed to touch the staff, but when we tried to see what was inside the cloth bundle, the sheikh vehemently refused and held it tightly. "Our ancestors wouldn't have had the guts to open the cloth, so why do you want me to dare and open it?" he said angrily. We didn't know what to do except accede to his wishes.

But how did he get the staff and coat? "We got them from Morocco. They were in the possession of a Moroccan Muslim man called Shaib Abu Madihan hundreds of years ago. Before his death, he directed in his will that the staff and coat be sent to Fagiah Al-Mugadam (an Islamic authority living Tarim in the seventh century according to the Islamic calendar) in Hadramout," he explained.

Regarding the staff's authenticity, Sheikh Al-Amoudi welcomes experts to come examine the staff and see for themselves the truth of his claim.

The sheikh explained that after Abu Madihan's death, another one took the staff and coat and headed toward the Hadramout. "The staff traveled via Iraq and then reached Mecca, where the man became sick. He pledged to continue his trip if he recovered from his illness; however, he died and so another man took the staff and traveled to the Hadramout," he recounted.

After a long journey, the staff reached Mugadam's hands in Tarim. Sheikh Sa'eed Al-Amoudi, an Islamic scholar living in the seventh century according to the Islamic calendar and an ancestor of Sheikh Mutahar Al-Amoudi, was one of Mugadam's students in Tarim.

Because Sheikh Sa'eed Al-Amoudi was such an outstanding student, Mugadam gave him the two items in order to honor him. Sheikh Sa'eed Al-Amoudi died and was buried in Doan; thus, the staff and coat transferred to his heirs.

The elderly sheikh claims to know quite a lot about Al-Amoudi clan, believed to be descended from the son of the Prophet Mohammed's (pbuh) first caliph, AbuBakr Al-Sideeq. Because of the honorable position the clan has, the coat and staff came into Sheikh Sa'eed Al-Amoudi possession and he is now the sole heir of the staff and property.

However, he admits that the staff has caused irreconcilable differences within his family. "The staff came into our possession after much conflict. These items have been with us for 27 years," he adds.

For those seeking blessings from the staff, he instructs, "Your faith in Allah should be strong, then run your eyes along the staff while reading special verses from the Qur'an."

According to the sheikh, many people have visited and interviewed him. "Today, a group from the U.K. and East

African countries studying at Dar Al-Mustafa in Tarim came and saw the staff and the coat."

Although the number of visitors is increasing daily, Al-Amoudi isn't making money off of it, which causes many of those I interviewed to trust his word. Asked whether non-Muslims may see the staff, he replied, "No, no it's not permissible for them to visit me."

Al-Amoudi refuses the suggestion to hand over the staff and coat to a museum, declaring, "We'll die behind it! We won't allow anyone to take it from us!" Sheikh Mutahar Al-Amoudi's heirs will inherit custody of the items upon his passing.

Word has it that Moses' staff actually was 10 cubits long; however, in any event, it seemed to be an interesting story, which I leave for the readers to decide.



Shrouded in mystery, we were allowed to touch the staff, but when we tried to see what was inside the cloth bundle, the sheikh vehemently refused and held it tightly.

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An African of Yemeni origin traveled all the way to touch the cloth and was overjoyed at the opportunity.

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