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**Readers' Voice**  
Last edition's question:  
Do you think Yemen has a chance to save Zabid's title as a world heritage site within one month?  
I don't know (10%)  
Yes (37%) No (53%)  
This edition's question:  
Could the Information Minister's refusal to license Without Constraints newspaper be seen as defying the Prime Minister's order?  
Yes, it is  
No, it's just a matter of time for the license to be issued  
No, it is just an oppression of press freedom  
No, there are other reasons  
Go to our website at: [yementimes.com/poll](http://yementimes.com/poll) and have your voice heard

## When children cried out: Where's the water, governor?

By: Fouad Mossed  
For The Yemen Times

AL-DHALE', May 11 — Ayman didn't spend a regular day last Thursday. Rather, he was a part of a children's demonstration led by parents demanding water. Asked what brought him out to the streets, Ayman replied, "Thirst!" Around 100 children marched in a demonstration on the main streets of Al-Dhale' governorate last Friday, demanding clean drinking water. They held signs and shouted, "Where's the water, governor?" and "When will the water problem be solved?" However, security forces broke up the demonstration and arrested its organizer, Mahmoud Obaid, a concerned parent from Al-Dhale'.

"There isn't a drop of water in my home, so we had no choice but to head to the streets and demand something be done. We're asking for our basic rights and what do we get in return? I was arrested for three days on charges of disrupting traffic!" Obaid complained.

Parents and local citizens in Al-Dhale' organized the march due to the area's scarce water resources. Marchers highlighted the main problems as being lack of a central water network and unavailability of nearby wells to meet the needs of Al-Dhale', a governorate

of 450,000 inhabitants. Locals depend on buying water trucks to fill rooftop tanks for their daily use, costing them large amounts of money every month.

But why involve children in the demonstration? Ayman answered this question by saying, "We leave politics and political parties to the adults, but water is our issue too. We all need water because water means life. The children were shouting, 'Water is life!' because this is the slogan of our demonstration today and it will be that of many others to come," he added challengingly.

When security came to break up the demonstration, the children and their parents decided to turn it into a time of prayer for rain. Their prayers were answered and rain poured in Al-Dhale'. "God is merciful and kind. He answered our prayers, but the authorities just ignore our pleas," Obaid remarked.

The district's local council Secretary-General Ahmed Talib Amin affirmed that there is a problem. "We contacted the Water Ministry and told them our concerns and the required budget to finance a central water network. The ministry agreed to the proposal and it's planned for inauguration this October."

*Continued on page 2*



Give us water! The children shouted while carrying water bottles and water retaining containers before their demonstration was dispersed in the main roads of Al-Dhale' city. Inset: Obaid the demonstration leader.

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## As Sa'ada war continues Yemen recalls its ambassadors to Iran and Libya

By: Mohammed bin Sallam

SA'ADA, May 13 — Tribal sources report that bloody clashes continue in most Sa'ada districts, especially in rough areas such as Razih Mountain and other surrounding areas in Qulal Al-Muwaqr, as well as Shawahia site, the highest peak in Al-Nadhir area and dominated by Houthis since last Monday.

Further, fierce confrontations between the Yemeni army and Houthi loyalists have continued since last Thursday in Sahar district's Ayoub and Ahsan Mountains, as well as Sha'ban and Bani Ma'een areas east of Sahar, where Yemeni army forces advanced in an attempt to re-enter Razih district after having evacuated it at the end of last week.

Likewise, battles are being waged in Sahar's Bani Mu'ath, Magz and Saqeen districts. However, media sources reveal that the fiercest battles have been fought on the Dhahian front, killing and injuring dozens on both sides.

Last Friday evening, Houthis attacked two military camps in Umm Aisa and Al-Salah in Al-Safra district, areas the Yemeni army had conquered for the first time. Houthi loyalists also waged offensives last Thursday on military camps in Al-Ablah and in the mountains surrounding Dammaj area, resulting in more victims among both warring parties.

Some Sa'ada locals describe what

occurred in Sahar, Magz and Al-Safra districts as "unprecedented mass murder."

Regarding the number of victims among soldiers, Aleshteraki.net reported more than 60 dead and more than 90 others injured in clashes between Thursday and Saturday. Victims were transferred to the Sana'a Military Hospital, as Al-Sallam and Al-Jumhuri Hospitals in Sa'ada are overflowing with dead and injured soldiers.

Media sources report that Sha'arah, Al-Nadhir and Burkan areas, together with areas located on the main road between Al-Qal'ah and Sha'aban areas in Razih district, witnessed mass evacuation of residents to areas located on the Yemeni-Saudi borders and the Tihama plain in Al-Dhaher district near Harath due to the conflict's expansion.

Such mass evacuation is because of residents' fear of pro-government tribal fighters, who always are accompanied by looting and robbing of personal property.

Al-Nida newspaper reported Najj Al-Ghaithi, head of Sa'ada Education Office, as saying that studies have halted in Ghamer, Razih and Qataber districts because of the war. Similarly, medical centers in Baqem, Magz, Haydan, Dammaj and Qataber districts also are closed for the same reason, according to the head of the Sa'ada Health Office, who also pointed to a shortage of medicine and medical equipment, noting outbreaks of suffocation due to the types of weaponry employed, diarrhea and skin inflammation among emigrants, partially due to food shortages.

*Continued on page 2*

## Make basic education free

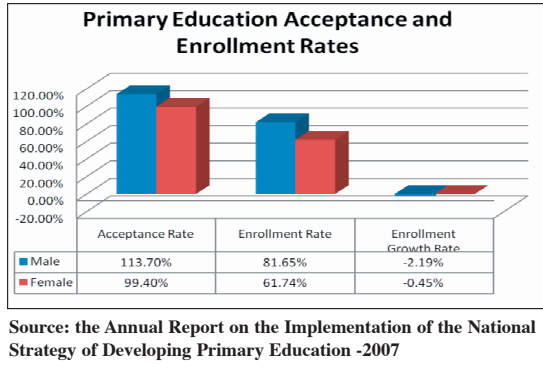
By: Rasha Jarhum  
For Yemen Times

SANA'A, May 10 — The third Joint Annual Revision (JAR) for implementing the National Strategy for Developing Basic Education (educational forum) was held in the period of 7-9 May 2007, under the theme "Effective Implementation of the National Strategy for Developing Primary Education and Improving Education Quality." The meeting was attended by his Excellency Dr Adbulsalam Al-Joffy, Minister of Education, along with some of the ministry staff and a good number of esteemed donors, headed by Dr Herbert Bergman - Donors Coordinator, as well as a number of honored guests; accounting in total to 220 participants.

Bergman indicated that there has been a

noticeable progress and that the future will witness more progress. He also stated that the partnership has been established on a rightful foundation and that the 2003 strategy was not serving the development partners and it was not sufficient to reflect evidence of their work. He also noted that the participation of the ministry of education has increased continuously to reach 25-30% this year of the total expenditure of the annual revision which indicates the commitment and ownership.

*Continued on page 2*



## Information Ministry withholds PM instruction to license newspaper

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, May 13 — As a follow up of their case against the Ministry of Information, journalists, civil society, political leaders and others led by Women Journalists Without Constraints organization protested in front of the Ministry demanding it to adhere to the Prime Minister's instruction. The journalists had protested last Saturday in front of Yemen's Information Ministry and Prime Minister Ali Mujawar's office demanding him to interfere in the oppression against the organization.

As a consequence of the previous protest, a delegation of five representatives to the prime minister to explain the issue of granting newspaper licenses in general and the WJWC issue in particular resulted in him explicitly instructing the ministry to grant the group a newspaper license quickly and without hindrance. An instruction that met a dead end at the Ministry of

Information.

Commenting on the WJWC issue and the protest, Ibrahim Abdulhabeeb, general director of the Information Ministry's Press and Publications, commented: "The application was rejected because organizations and associations are only allowed to issue a private newsletter with limited circulation to their members to highlight their activities, unlike political parties, which are allowed to have their own general political newspapers." He justified this, commenting that since there are more than 6,000 organizations in Yemen, it's nonsense for all of them to have licenses to establish newspapers.

However, article number 40 of the Press Code contradicts this allegation as it clearly stipulates the right of organizations among others to issue their own newspapers, confirmed Dr. Mohammad Al-Mikhlafi head of the legislations department at Sana'a University.

*Continued on page 2*

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## In brief

## SANA'A

## Workshop on school health

May 12 — In cooperation with the World Health Organization and the General Administration for School Health in the capital city, the Ministry of Public Health & Population along with the Ministry of Education are organizing a workshop on preparing the national plan for school health over the period of May 13 – 15. Taking place at the Sana'a-based Higher Institute for Health Sciences, the workshop discusses the issues related to school health. It also discusses the necessary steps and mechanisms for activating school health nationwide.

## New banking systems workshop

May 12 — Under the auspices of Justice Minister Ghazi Shayef Al-Aghbari, activities of the special workshop on financial payment and electronic banking systems began Saturday. Organized by the Yemeni Center for Legal Business Development, the 4-day workshop is to discuss the financial payment and electronic banking systems according to the Law No. 40 of 2006. The event is due to be attended by experts from several Arab countries and many commercial court judges.

## LANJ

## Course on media and communication

May 12 — In cooperation with Health & Population Support Program, part of the National Population Council's General Secretariat, the Information Ministry's Media and Population Communication Program started a training course for media personnel. Undersecretary of the Information Ministry Hussein Omar Basalim, who is also the program executive director, clarified that the workshop aims to train as many as 35 media personnel, who came from the concerned parties in the governorate.

## AL-BEIDHA

## Tribal effort culminates with ceasefire

May 12 — Headed by Sheikh Abdullah Salem Al-Humeiqani, tribesmen from Al Humeiqan Tribe in Al-Beidha went to Al-Teffa Village last week and mitigated a dispute between Ahl Hadi and Ahl Sa'ad tribes, which led to gunfire between both sides for 17 days, leaving several killed and others injured. The mediators helped the conflicting tribes reach a ceasefire and release those detained by the security authorities in the governorate with the aim of pressuring the tribes to cease the gunfire.

## ADEN

## Investor enraged over sheep seizure

May 12 — The Towahi Airport authorities, Aden, are still seizing nearly 600 sheep on board a ship belonging to Al-Awlaqi Company for Navigation and Trade after the agriculture office in the governorate refused to allow the ship to unload the sheep at the airport. The procedure enraged the company as the authorities demanded that the ship sail to the Makha Airport since there is no quarantine in Aden. According to the company manager Ahmad Al-Awlaqi, more than 125 sheep died while being held aboard the ship.

## HADRAMOUT

## US Embassy contributes to schools rehabilitation

May 12 — In cooperation with Hadramout Institution for Human Development, Embassy of the United States of America in Sana'a is due to contribute to renovating some schools in Al-Wadi and Al-Sahra districts of Hadramout governorate. Deputy Governor of Hadramout, Ahmad Al-Junaid, praised the efforts exerted so far by the American Embassy in this sector, confirming that necessary information and data will be provided in order to carry out the project.

## Woman dies as car sinks in gutter

SANA'A, May 13 — An Iraqi woman in her thirties died on Saturday when a car sank in a sewer in Hadda area, witnesses said to Yemen Times reporter. They added that the taxi was driving in a Hadda street with the victim on board, but it suddenly fell down in the sewer.

Yahya Mu'eedh, a telephone center operator, said that he witnessed the accident from his center as the car suddenly sank in the sewer. He added that waste and mud were dispersed to the center as the car fell down. He mentioned that the driver survived the accident as he went out through the car window but the woman, who was overwhelmed by the sewer water, could not get out because she was sitting on the back seat.

Eyewitnesses said that the rescue operation was very slow due to the lack of good equipment. Additionally, the rush hour traffic at the afternoon helped exacerbate the situation.

Owners of shops in the vicinity of the accident scene told that the woman appeared alive immediately after the car sank, but her life wasn't saved due to the lack of sophisticated equipment, coupled with the slow rescue operation which lasted for one hour.



The car sank in a ten meters deep gutter.

The accident is not the first of its kind but there have been numerous similar accidents over the past few months. For instance, by the end of 2006, three people sank in a sewer in the Sixty St. in front of Al-Khatib Restaurant. One of them was drowned to death while the other two were rescued.

General Manager of the Water and Sanitation Corporation in the capital Eng. Ibrahim Al-Mahdi held the public work offices accountable for the tragic acci-

dent. He confirmed in a statement that his corporation doesn't grant people licenses to dig deep sewers in the streets, but citizens receive licenses from the public work offices.

According to Al-Mahdi, digging sewers in the main streets breaks the law. "There are two hundred thousand sewers in the capital city. The Water and Sanitation Corporation buried more than 10 thousand sewers over the past years," he elaborated.

## Democracy school forms a group of lawyers to help delinquent children

SANA'A, May 13 — The democracy school, which is a non-governmental organization concerned with child rights, announced on Wednesday the formation of defense union in cooperation with UNISAF organization. The union, which aims to help the delinquent children who could not pay for lawyers and need to defend their cases, included a group of volunteer lawyers who will present legal consultation for the delinquent who are under the age of 18 according to the international agreement for human rights, that Yemen had signed.

On Saturday, the union started its work in following up children's cases in the police stations to know the exact

number of delinquent children and accelerate carrying out their sentences. "The union members started to collect information about the delinquent children and their cases in the police stations and then they will plead them before courts to defend these children," the legal consultant in the union, Nabila Al-Mofti, stated.

The media officer in the democracy school, Alham Al-Kabsi, mentioned that forming such a union is considered one of the democracy school programs which aims at making a strategy for children protection in the institutions that deal directly with children such as juvenile centers, orphan centers, or police stations.

The program's strategy is to launch some activities like workshops and training courses in many schools in which a transparency project is to be established among pupils. This project aims basically to identify children with the principle of transparency and reinforce the principle of partnering children in interacting with the social cases.

The first steps of the project will be carried out at the beginning of 2008 in ten schools, in which children will take course on fighting corruption and how to make arbitrages. "The minister of education gave orders to the Ministry's offices in the governorates to generalize the project to all public schools," Al-Kabsi noticed.

## Sana'a University Staff Members Syndicate calls for strike

SANA'A, May 13 — Sana'a University Staff Members Syndicate called for a partial strike, starting from Saturday, May 12 and continues for two days. The strike is scheduled to be two hours a day.

The syndicate's spokesman Abdullah Al-Azazi assured they will escalate their strike to be four hours a day as of Tuesday, May 15 and until Thursday, May 17. He added that they will start an open and inclusive strike, which will continue until all demands and rights of staffers are met, on Saturday, May 19.

In a statement released by the syndicate, the staffers noted that their strike comes after they staged a number of

protesting activities such as pleading a case against the government and meeting many officials in different government institutions.

It added that the government parties resorted in the past to signing agreements to escape strike dilemma; while they stalled the implementation of such agreements including the last agreement signed on April 7 and upon which demonstration was abolished then.

The statement also indicated that such measures are taken because of politicizing academic and administrative jobs and linking appointments with political affiliations instead of capability and eligibility.

Moreover, the statement asked for implementing wages and salaries law numbered 43 issued in 2005, stressing the importance of correcting all shortcomings that accompanied transferring them to new jobs ladder. It also demanded clearing campus from arms especially when many aggression cases were recorded against some staff members.

Meanwhile, the statement called on all civil society organizations and mass media to react with the nation's issues and work for reforming the university education and meeting the staffers' demands as prerequisites for reforming the whole society.

## Anti-Corruption meeting wraps up

SANA'A, May 13 — Yemeni and Arab parliamentarians concluded Thursday a two-day meeting on corruption and ways of eradicating it. 200 participants from civil society organizations and parliamentarians from Yemen, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Bahrain, Kuwait, Morocco, and Algeria participated in the meeting, which was organized by Yemeni Parliamentarians Against Corruption (YPAC), a local NGO.

Prime Minister Ali Mujawwar decided to attend the meeting, but he was absent. It is worth mentioning that the government's participation in the meeting was absent too.

Vice-president of Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) Nasser Al-Sanei' awarded Sakhr Al-Wajeh, president of YPAC, for his organization's efforts and keenness in combating corruption.

Al-Sanei' said corruption is a fierce, huge creature, and it is important to know its danger and size so as to get ready to fight against it.

"We condemn every politician in the Arab world who speaks of corruption but has no clear strategy to hold the corrupt accountable," Al-Sanei' said.

"We don't like the slogan of 'corruption' to be used during elections, and we don't want famous corrupt to join the organization," he added.

The meeting was held following the announcement of Anti-Corruption Authority (ACA) late March this year. The Shoura Council has approved 30 candidates for the ACA, but still the Parliament has postponed electing the Anti-corruption Authority in order to verify nominees' credentials and complete the legal procedures required for nomination.

YPAC was officially established in December 2005 as a member of GOPAC and Arab Region Parliamentarians Against Corruption (ARPAC). It aims at developing transparency and good governance in the country as well as enhancing the role of law, audit, and control.

The organization also seeks to develop the capabilities of parliamentarians on supervising the activities of the government. Also, it encourages the Parliament and its members to enact legislations and implement them for the sake of good governance. Furthermore, it raises public awareness on corruption and its danger and it enhances ways of tackling this issue.

## HRITC discusses youth issues

TAIZ, May 13 — Within the frame of its program, Human Rights Information and Training Center launched a symposium last Thursday to discuss youth's issues and their participation in society activities.

In his welcome speech, Abdulqawi Salim from the center assured the importance of the symposium as it deals with youth on whom countries depend for their development and progress. He also stressed the importance of encouraging youth particularly with decision making.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Dhaifani pointed out that youth stage is an important as it is the time of strength and vigor. He added that Arab youth in general and Yemeni youth in particular suffer from the lack of special programs for containing their strength as well as the lack of direction toward success. He believes that there is no suitable environment for containing youth's ideas.

"Youth are before a closed path. I also think that they have not found a path prepared for their progress yet," noted Al-Dhaifani. "We can not say that they do not come to the level of responsibility as they are not granted responsibilities at all."

Speaking of youth and child strategy, Al-Dhaifani makes clear that youth did not contribute to it and it has not been read by them too. Further, he

called the center to hold a symposium for discussing the strategy and its shortcomings.

Lawyer Ghazi Al-Sam'ae asserted we can not speak of real development with the absence of youth, adding that youth do not get the required care by state. In addition, he pointed many challenges youth face including economic difficulties as poverty and unemployment together with social challenges including societal and family sidelining.

Al-Sam'ae went on to say that illiteracy rates among age group 15-25 reaches 50 percent. He also noted that there is a lack of media messages directed to youth, whether private or public.

He further deems that over 4500 public and private societies are interested in youth; however, their contribution is dim and does not come to the wished level, stressing the importance of improving health services and adopting legislations that ensure a real participation of youth in political life.

Dr. Anisa Dowcam declared that youth should not surrender before marginalizing and sidelining, stressing they should struggle to take their own positions. She also noticed an absence of real citizenship which is one-sided and focuses on duties rather than rights.

## Continued from page 1

## When children cried out:

Security officials justified disrupting the demonstration by saying that it wasn't licensed. However, Obaid rejects this excuse, saying that when it comes to a life and death matter such as drinking water, citizens have every right to demand water in a peaceful demonstration led by children. Yet, the head of the local council's Service Committee Abdulghani Al-Khateeb, disagreed with him and condemned the attack against the protestors and sided with the locals' right to demand water.

The problem with citizens buying water is that even when there are those in Al-Dhale' who can afford it, it isn't always available. "We have to fetch it from far-away locations, so many times, we can't attend to the requests we get from citizens," said Fawaz Abbadi, a water truck owner who sells water in the governorate.

The water problem still persists in Al-Dhale' and parents await a solution from authorities. In the meantime, some are being driven from the city because of the problem, as housewife Umm Hamza noted, "Water is the main concern for all of us in this governorate. We're seriously considering leaving because of it."

## Sa'ada war continues,

Meanwhile, the Yemeni government has recalled its ambassadors in Tehran and Tripoli for consultations over alleged involvement of both capitals in the Sa'ada events and Houthis' support.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi indicated that both ambassadors were recalled to Sana'a for consultations. He further hinted that the periodic existence in Libya of Yemeni Member of Parliament Yahya Al-Houthi, Abdulmalik Al-Houthi's brother, is evidence of Libyan support for Houthis, especially since Libya declined the Yemeni government's request to extradite the MP.

Al-Qirbi further added that Houthis are receiving support from Shi'ite sources in

Iran, but not necessarily from the Iranian government.

Thus far, the Yemeni government hasn't indicated the possibility of cutting or freezing diplomatic relations with Libya and Iran.

Al-Qirbi pointed out that his government is considering conducting talks with Houthis, led by Abdulmalik Al-Houthi; however, he considers such dialogue to be of no avail, especially when the rebels' demands are unclear.

For its part, Aleshteraki.net revealed that Qatari mediation continues via back channels and that a meeting involving Yahya Al-Houthi and envoys from President Ali Abdullah Saleh took place in Germany.

The same source added that MP Yahya Al-Houthi previously met with a member of the German Parliament's Foreign Relations Committee, together with members of the European Parliament, asking them to mediate a halt to the war in Sa'ada.

Libyan President Moammar Al-Qaddafi told Al-Jazeera channel that President Saleh asked him to mediate the termination of the second Sa'ada war, as well as a meeting with Yahya Al-Houthi at that time.

Such developments against Libya come just one day after a Yemeni-Qatari summit in Sana'a. Close sources mention that influential, tribal and military leaders and individuals foiled the Qatari mediation.

General People's Congress Secretary-General Abdulqader Bajammal mentioned that his party is willing to negotiate with opposition parties regarding the Sa'ada events, additionally rejecting their attitude toward the conflict.

Opposition party leaders assure that they are about to announce a national project addressing their stance on the Sa'ada war and further criticized the ruling General People's Congress party for ignoring its political process' partners regarding the Sa'ada crisis, despite the fact that it deals with all public forces.

In statement distributed last week,

Yahya Al-Houthi noted that Houthis are ready to cease fire, provided the Yemeni army retreats to its positions prior to the war's eruption in 2004.

In his first public stance, Yemeni Speaker of Parliament Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmar described Houthis as "a group of adolescents and dreamers who want to turn back the wheel of history."

"What's going on in your areas harms us. You and the tribal sheikhs are held responsible as those reckless youth defame you and your existence. Nothing encourages them except your silence," Al-Ahmar said while addressing Sa'ada sheikhs.

## Make basic education free

The two-day revision discussed many important working papers such as the Annual Implementation Report for 2006, Observations on the Implementation of the Partnership Agreement between Donors and the Yemeni Government, Medium-term Expenditure Framework Draft, the Influence of Abolishing Social Participation Fees, and Improving the Quality of Education — the Challenges and Orientations.

The meeting came out with recommendations to focus on early childhood such as enhancing the school environment to attract both female and male students. Abolishing school fees which are considered social participation fees, should extend to include all female and male students in grades 1-9, obligating the government to provide working capital for schools according to a study to the actual requirements of schools.

In the meeting, Al-Joffy stated that he was happy to develop a mechanism of JAR and his ministry is glad of being benefited from the experience acquired in previous years. He also indicated that the new mechanism of JAR for this year is that it started from the governorates' level and extended to civil society with participation of 10 students from Sana'a to initiate a true

evaluation to the performance.

Additionally, he emphasized that the most important achievement for this year was the preparation for the annual plan which is a social responsibility shared by all developmental institutions.

Regarding enhancing the quality of education, the meeting resulted in a set of recommendations which are to put up national standards for examinations, to evaluate the performance of students, teachers, and schools' management, to specify educational objectives according to grade and subject, and to update methods of examinations according to the analysis of the targeted scope represented in the knowledge, spiritual and psychological areas.

The meeting provided recommendations on the Medium-term expenditure framework; those are, to set up a financial system that links the budget with outputs and becomes the foundation to prepare and discuss budgets, specifying expenditure, as well as, following-up and evaluating them.

A number of general recommendations suggested building the collaboration between the ministry and the development partners, whether international or national, developing and updating working mechanisms, following the medium-term plan on the identified outputs groundwork, and distributing the available resources in the direction of reaching those outputs.

It is worth noting that enrollment rates of students in primary education have reached 72.2% out of which 81.6% are males and 61.7% are females in 2006. Statistics also indicated that for every 100 male students there were 68 female students in 2006 and hence the gender gap has reached 19.9 with a male advantage in terms of the total enrollment rate, i.e. at an increase of 5.59.

## Information Ministry withholds

Khalid Al-Anisi, a lawyer for HOOD, the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, stated that Yemeni

law grants organizations and political parties the right to establish newspapers without obtaining a license and they are only obliged to inform the Information Ministry about the newspaper for registration purposes.

"They would know that I am right had they read the law," complained Karman. The same justification to the rejection was given to a delegation of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate who had a meeting with the Minister of Information yesterday.

The reaction to Karman's outrage has pushed the Information Ministry a further step, as it warned the Ministry of Communication to suspend the organization's SMS news services, declaring that any such services require Information Ministry permission.

Al-Anisi commented on this by saying "The Information Ministry is looking for ridiculous excuses to suppress freedoms, which explains our anxiousness at reappointing the current information minister, from both before and after unification, because he has a history of suspending newspapers owned by individuals or organizations and even political parties, such as Al-Sahwa, which recently was threatened with suspension because they appointed a new editor-in-chief, although publishing news of the new appointment represents legitimate information in itself."

Karman maintains that her organization is holding onto its right to obtain print and audiovisual means according to Yemeni law, which grants all Yemeni citizens the right to expression and to establish newspapers. "In Yemen, freedom of opinion and expression are pledged by the constitution, but forbidden by the authorities," she said.

Karman declared that her group won't stop fighting for their right to obtain a newspaper, adding that they also have applied to the ministry for a license to establish a radio station; however, she noted that the ministry refused the application without even filing it.



# Once upon a time, there was a queen (part 1)

In the small museum in Jibla at the far end of Ibb governorate, laid neatly were the costumes and furniture of a Yemeni queen known as Queen Arwa bin Ahmed Al-Sulaihi. Most interesting were the dishes and earth wear confirmed by the museum's keeper, the late queen used to eat in.

As we toured the museum, the history of Al-Sulaihi Kingdom was posted on the walls. A line of one citation reads: "A woman destined to rule is no good to bed her husband, said queen Arwa to her husband Al-Makram, so let me be to attend to my tasks as a queen"

By: Yemen Times staff and extracts from Al-Sulaihi Kingdom by Ahmed Hamoud Al-Dahmash

It all started with a dream. Arwa bin Ahmed was living in the shelter of her later to become father in law King Ali Al-Sulaihi and his wife queen Asma. One day when she was yet a young lady she dreamed that she was sweeping Al-Sulaihi castle. When she told queen Asma of her dream, the later made a prophecy that Arwa would rule Al-Sulaihi Kingdom one day.

Arwa was born in Aden in 440 Hijria, daughter to the ruler of Aden. When her father died she moved to live in Al-Sulaihi castle, where she learnt the various sciences and Quranic studies.

Ali Al-Suleihi, as Ibn Al-Jowzi, an Islamic historian said, was a young man with fair beard and blue eyes, there was no Yemenis like him. His father Judge Mohammed was obeyed by his people and family. He lived in Katr village. And his son Ali grew up according to his father's way of life.

Ali Al-Suleihi grew up in a good environment. During his youth, he was noticed by wise people who told him that he would rule all Yemeni cities one day. Ali fell in love with and married his beautiful cousin Asma' bent Shihab. He was an active politician and created a revolution through which he gained power in 455 Hijriah. Ali Al-Sulaihi was a loved king who tried to sustain a stable and developed country.

One day, Al-Suleihi prepared to go to Mecca for Haj. He left the country's affairs to his son Al-Makram. He ordered him to lead every thing properly. He ordered him to be just, wise and a real. Al-Sulaihi left Sana'a leaving every thing to his son to be assisted by Sultan Ahmed ben Mothafar Al-Sulaihi, taking his other son Al-Muwafak and his wife and brothers with him to Mecca.

Naturally, such as success does is not complete and there must be enemies and jealous people. Historians wrote that Saeed Al-Ahowal leaders of Bani Al-Najah's hated Ali and wanted to ruin Al-Sulaihi kingdom. On the king's way to



The royal table at which Queen Arwa used to dine, dishes were generally made of earth wear during those times.

Mecca, his slaves who were friends of Al-Ahwal betrayed the king and murdered all the men and captured queen Asma.

Following his father's death in 459 Hijriah, Al-Makram became king. He realised that in order for him to remain in power he needed to gain the support of the many powerful leaders in Yemen. He built many castles for them and when he went for Haj, he took them with him. After several attempts and battles he managed to rescue Queen Asma and retrieve his father and uncle's dead bodies and had a royal funeral for them. Al-Makram stayed in Sana'a, and he ruled the country from there until his mother's death in 467 A.H.

### Queen Arwa bin Ahmed

Queen Arwa, Al-Makram's wife, found that Jibla is the best place for her and her husband to live. So she talked to the king about that. She wanted to show the king the difference between life in Sana'a and

in Jibla, So she asked him to order people to be gathered, and she asked him to get out to see them. When he got out he found people with swords and spears. And then when they went to Jibla, she asked him the same thing. When he got out to see people and the queen's family in Jibla, he found them dressed nicely and presenting gifts to the royal family. He got the feelings of peaceful life. Then she said, "Living with these is better because life here is easier for you. It is in the middle between the north and the south of the country."

Al-Mokrem was persuaded that Jibla is the best place for living. He left Sana'a and moved to Jibla and settle in Dar Al-Ez Castle, which he had built there. He stayed there and then he became sick. The doctors advised him to be away of people. So he went to Al-Ta'kar fort for the rest of his life leaving the country affairs to his wife, Arwa.

During his rule, Al-Makram found that currency is considered as a sign of the country sovereignty. So he decided to unite the currency in order to facilitate trade. He ordered for a Dinar coin to be made. Al-Makram was brave, articulate, intelligent and generous. He had unified the cities of Yemen. But he could not continue because of his illness. He was forced to stay in Al-Ta'kar fort away of people leaving the country affairs to his wife, the queen Arwa who ruled for 15 years until his death in 477 Hijriah.

To be continued

# Women put their mark on MidEast peace efforts

Women are pushing the envelope on peace activism in the Middle East, with a nearly 30-country annual bike ride for peace followed a few days later by the shooting of a Nobel Prize-winning Irish peace activist at a West Bank demonstration.

By: Brenda Gazzar

Freedom is Feminine." That's the message 20-year-old Nida Awine chose to paint in large, Arabic script on the structure Israeli officials call the "separation fence" or the "security fence" and Palestinians often call the "apartheid wall."

Awine's handiwork appeared on the section of the structure located in a West Bank village bordering Jerusalem.

The towering cement structure was blank until Awine and other women painted it with political art, including a door bearing the words, "To be opened," and a yellow sphere proclaiming, "The sun will rise one day."

The Palestinian university student was one of about 350 women from nearly 30 countries who joined the third annual cycling tour for women through Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and the occupied West Bank. Organizers hope the event draws attention to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to promote peace and freedom in the region. Even Syrian first lady Asma Al-Assad joined the women by cycling with them through her country.

This year's "Follow the Women" ride lasted 12 days and ended April 18, just days before well-known peace activist Mairead Corrigan, who shared the 1976 Nobel Peace Prize for her activism in the Northern Ireland civil conflict, attracted more attention to the barriers, which have become symbolic of the Israeli-

Palestinian conflict.

Corrigan reportedly was wounded by a rubber bullet on April 20, along with a number of other activists, while protesting the separation barrier near Ramallah in the West Bank, according to local press reports. Two Israeli border policemen also were injured by rock throwing protesters.

Organizers call these weekly protests non-violent, but Israeli officials say they regularly turn violent, with at least some participants hurling rocks with slingshots or even attempting to cut down the barrier and Israeli forces responding with measures such as tear gas, stun grenades and rubber bullets.

### Women become peacemakers

Grassroots and other women's initiatives around the world are becoming more directly involved with efforts to resolve the conflict, as the state of Israel celebrates its 59th birthday on April 24 and Palestinians commemorate their "naqba" or "disaster," in which at least half a million Palestinian refugees fled during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war.

"I don't count on these politicians - men and women - to free my Palestine, my people," says Awine, who was armed with a paintbrush dipped in red paint for the activity and who dreams of being a writer. "I count on human beings, on the people, because these persons have the power, the will and know the value of living as a free human being."

Since the start of the second Palestinian intifada or uprising in September 2000, nearly 4,040 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli security forces, mainly in the

Occupied Territories, and 705 Israeli civilians and 316 Israeli security personnel have been killed by Palestinians through the end of March 2007, according to the Jerusalem-based B'Tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.

While more men than women have been killed during the conflict, women suffer in a broad range of indirect ways that can be further complicated by cultural morés, says Fabrizia Falcione, a women's human rights officer for UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

### Conflict's heavy burdens

For example, a Palestinian woman cut off from her land, and thus her work, by the separation wall, military checkpoints or via denial of permits will have a more difficult time finding another job than a man.

"Very often, men allow women to go cultivate their land" due to cultural restrictions on their mobility or expectations of acceptable roles for women. In Palestinian society, "Women don't have all the range of possibilities to have liberty of movement," Falcione said, "but that's the only job they can do."

Falcione added that violence against women seems to be rising in the Occupied Territories because the conflict has weakened the rule of law and women's ability to seek and receive justice, a finding that echoes a 2006 Amnesty International report about Palestinian women and violence.

Since October 2006, the Israeli non-governmental organization Isha L'Isha-Haifa Feminist Center has held a number of workshops and a conference in Haifa to foster alternative dialogues about women, peace and security, including the economic and emotional costs of conflict.

Last year, the group also trained

women in Israel for conflict-resolution negotiations as outlined in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325, which urges member states to include more women at all decision-making levels for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict.

### Call for diplomacy

Using another tactic, the International Women's Commission, a body of prominent Israeli, Palestinian and international women working for a just and sustainable Israeli-Palestinian peace, recently called on Israel and the international community to normalize relations with the new Palestinian government.

When the Islamist group Hamas won a majority in the Palestinian Legislative Council in 2006 but refused to recognize the state of Israel or renounce violence, the United States and many European countries cut off all funds to the Palestinian National Authority.

In March, Hamas and the secular Fatah, which previously had maintained power as the ruling party for 12 years, formed a new unity government in a thus far unsuccessful effort to end international sanctions.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has boycotted the new government for the same reasons, but is involved in a new round of talks with moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in an effort to revive the stalled peace process.

"We believe that without negotiations - without talking to the Palestinian government - nothing is going to move," says Palestinian-Israeli Aida Touma-Suleiman, a member of the International Women's Commission steering committee.

Brenda Gazzar is a freelance journalist based in Jerusalem.

Source: Women's e-News

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**Based in:** Sana'a , Yemen

**Position Summary**

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**The main Responsibilities of this position are:**

1. Identification of positive youth development case studies and best practices for inclusion into the Youth Leadership Development (YLD) training package/took kit and promotion into local and regional media.
2. Assist in the delivery of YLD shared learning workshops
3. Assist in the preparation of regular reports on the progress of Siraj for the Yemen Country Office (YCO).

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## Words of Wisdom



Gentlemen, Yemen does not need more money! It needs a system. Yemen needs accountable officials, and it needs people with some decency in the way they work. If the IMP, World Bank and other organizations pump loans into Yemen, where will it go? More importantly, how will it be paid?

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

OUR  
OPINIONDying in a gutter,  
the Yemeni style

No words can describe the tragedy. It is by far the height of heights in carelessness and deteriorating living conditions. Two days ago, earth beneath a taxi carrying a woman in a busy road located in one of the "modern" streets of Sana'a - Hadda Road - broke up pulling the car down into a ten meters deep gutter.

The driver made it through, the woman drowned in the sewage and the authorities are still bouncing the blame back and forth. Apparently it was an Iraqi woman. She escaped death in Iraq, only to meet it face to face in a Yemeni gutter.

This is not the first or only incident of the like. October 2006 in Ibb, five people met their fate the same way, and in March the same year a man with a child drowned in gutter in Sana'a. That very month in Taiz four people died while digging a sewage den for their home, knowing little that they were actually digging their own grave.

The way things work at this part of the world, people randomly dig cavities in the ground and connect it through pipes from their home outlets. Once that shabby hole is filled with waste, it leaks out and erupts causing a terrible smell and semi liquid mess in the neighbourhood.

If authorities get wind of this, which is really a very easy thing considering the smell, they come to the location and demand the citizens to deal with the problem. Now there are three scenarios: one is that the citizens don't mind the problem, buy some dirt and bury the gutter and start digging another one. Obviously they would need to buy off the "very concerned" authorities with a few thousand riyals for Qat. The second scenario is that the people really want to do it right, so they ask the authorities to build them a modern sewage system. Then they have to fill an application, sign and stamp it by X, Y, and Z, and cough up thousands of Riyals. The government workers would then dig up the whole road, break the asphalt, stop the cars from coming and going for weeks, and worse the people would have to go somewhere else when they have to "go". Eventually the neighbourhood would have their sewage system and a very messy street.

Then after a few months, when the authorities remember that they need to fix the electricity connections, or the phone cables, or anything else underground, they would dig the whole thing all up again and work on it for several weeks.

Finally the third scenario is that the stuffed gutter would spill its contents into the surface, cause diseases and break the texture of the ground causing the death of an innocent child or an Iraqi woman in a cab minding her own business.

We are still waiting to see who will win in the finger pointing competition to identify the culprit behind this mess. As for me, I would advise you to try as much as possible to walk against the walls, for you can't be safe enough. But then again if a gutter could open, it is very likely that a wall would collapse on your head. Perhaps better to use one of inspector Gadget's flying hats and manoeuvre your way around the city from above. Well, what do you know? This way you can even avoid traffic too.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf  
Editor-in-Chief

## Confusion between having a dialogue and maneuvering

Sometimes, it appeals to my mind that the current American conduct, or the conduct of the extremist administration that dominated the White House on a dark and a gloomy day, has left a negative impact on the Arabs, rulers and ruled, with regard to dialogues with each other. One can realize slim exceptions here and there in the Arab land which is overcome by numerous problems and issues.

The conduct followed by the extremist administration at the White House is based on the refusal of dialogue with its opponents. This administration considered dialogue with opponents as a kind of disgrace, degradation, and humilia-



By: Dr. Abdulaziz  
Al-Maqaheh

tion. From this point, the western administration only dialogues with its friends or itself.

Through this conduct, the White House violates the simplest conventions of dialogue, which is the basis for dealing with other parties irrespective of their differing view-

points and orientations. Our dialogue with the White House is merely a simple means for us to get closer to the House or guide us to discover a third way that may help in making it a success.

But, conversing with ourselves and negotiating with those who back us is not considered a dialogue, nor is it valuable in the daily life of people and communities. As mentioned above, it is a dialogue with oneself, which neither changes reality nor adds something to it.

The most important condition of a dialogue is the mutual admission of both parties of the dialogue with difference that persists until the dialogue comes to tackle it. If there is no mutual admission and both par-

ties are convinced, it will be only a maneuver and not a dialogue. The two sides get engaged in this maneuver, however, either party conceals something other than what is announced or announces something other than what is concealed.

The Arab nations have experienced numerous maneuvers in the past two decades of the 20th century, and in more than one place and site. As Arabs, we haven't got rid of the circle of conflicts and disputes that generate new ones. This makes us to go around within an empty circle until an unspecified time. The advanced communities in the world go with fast steps forward, but we go backwards with faster steps. No wise man stops and contemplates on our direction to say to us, "Stop... Stop... we are going in the wrong direction."

I confirm that we are going on the wrong path. Rather I say: "Through these words, I don't mean a particular country or a particular social group, but I convey a real picture about all the Arab World from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arabian Gulf. And, between these extremes, there is a nation in a state of fragmentation as if it has got out from a cave where it spent tens of centuries seeing the world around it moving and adding something new to the daily life.

This nation laments its misfor-

ture and its incapacity to confront its enemies. It has no alternative but to be engaged in conflict with its sectarian and ethnic components. During the conflict, it forgets to give answers to a question about its fate, as well as another question, which is "What have we prepared to confront our enemy?"

Now, it is time for people of the unified nation to come together and forget about their internal and national differences. I advise these people to try to do good for themselves in order for the future to remember them. They should start dialogue with themselves before having a dialogue with others, as well as to remember that they are living at the age of plurality and diversity.

If the United States has become tested with an administration that is not different from the bad administrations existing in the third world, this doesn't give us the right to imitate this administration and halt progress toward democracy in its ideal picture, not in its Bushist picture that has been leading the United State toward the remorseful path.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaheh is Yemen's prominent poet and intellectual. He is the director of the Yemeni Center for Studies  
Source: Al-Thawra Daily

The European Union Common  
Foreign and Security Policy

By: Mr. Gilles Gauthier

Does Europe exist on the diplomatic scene? Answers vary and are uncertain.

However, it is certain that the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) is a reality today. A fragile, recent and imperfect reality, but it increasingly enables Europe to speak with one voice, to influence global issues and intervene in international crises.

Indeed, after a long experience of European political cooperation that started in the 70's, the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of a bipolar world have offered Europe a new capacity of initiative mixed with a will to follow its economic achievements with a political project.

The incapacity of Europeans to fulfil expectations during the Balkan crisis that took place on their doorstep in 1990 has boosted the will to build a real common foreign and security policy, launched by the Treaty of Maastricht in November 1993. The aim of Europeans through this new policy was to contribute themselves to the stability of their surrounding environment (Balkans, Middle East and Eastern Europe), to make Europe a global actor and give it means to prevent and manage crises.

The European Union foreign policy, restricted to customs and trade as well as development aid, has continuously increased on a political level.

The diplomatic interventions of the European Union extend themselves to all continents. Today, the European Union has an important say on nearly all issues: it is a mem-

ber of the Quartet for the peace process in the Middle East; it has become, through its secretary general / high representative for CFSP M. Javier Solana, the representative for the whole international community on the Iranian nuclear crisis; it had a primary role in the peaceful transition in Ukraine end 2004; it supervised, with 5 countries member of the South-East Asian Nations Association, the implementation of the cease-fire agreement in Aceh that ended a 30-year long conflict, and then supervised the disarmament of the militia and the retreat of Indonesian forces; through a civil and military support to the actions of the African Union in Darfour, the European Union intervened to help suffering populations while reinforcing African capacities to respond to crises...

The «European reflex» has considerably developed itself: whereas ten years ago, countries mostly responded unilaterally with regards to diplomacy or security issues, an international crisis today will usually be discussed urgently in Brussels in order to know and test partner reactions and then define a common European position to act on a diplomatic level concerning the crisis, before intervening if necessary in the field through European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) operations, civil or military. This European reflex also develops itself locally with increasing initiatives by heads of mission in the field.

The custom of these exchanges contributes slowly to the creation of a common diplomatic culture following the goal of contributing to peace and security and in which each Member State brings his expertise and convictions: the Union would certainly not have acted in Ukraine in the same way before as after the entrance of the ten new Member states on 1st May 2004, with their own history and sensibility. The need to find answers to the crises in Africa has been understood since the Artemis operation conducted by France in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The historical attention given to this continent by a few Member states is slowly spreading to an increasing number of partners. As such, Germany led the EUFOR operation for the security of the elections in the Democratic Republic of Congo and, along with France, many other Member States have brought important contributions, mainly Spain and Poland. The stabilisation of the western Balkans, considering the historical role of this region in the creation of the CFSP and the amount of tools deployed there, certainly offers the best example of a diplomacy conducted first at a European level and supported by each Member State who feels individually responsible.

The CFSP is a young, imperfect and fragile policy. It therefore needs to be consolidated and deepened. European diplomacy faces some major challenges: pursuit of the development of its tools, ability to make them work better together, and the creation of a real common European ambition that would enable the Union to be a main actor of the international scene.

If the Balkan war revealed the absence of a real European foreign policy, the Iraqi crisis was the first crisis of this policy due to the absence and total silence of a Europe incapable of reaching an agreed position. The European Union has not been spared by critics for insufficiently taking position concerning the escalating crisis and hostilities in Israel, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories.

It is certainly from European citizens that the necessary impulse to incite Member states to put aside their differences can come. If the compromises in Brussels are sometimes difficult, citizens and people form the most consensual element and the best advantage of the CFSP. Indeed, they express the desire, every time they are questioned, to see Europe play a major role on the international scene, defend them against new threats such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, environmental threats, pandemics, and promote their common values such as human rights, democracy, a better-managed globalisation, solidarity, sustainable development.

Despite the imperfections of our model, for many countries in the world that still are, in Africa, in Latin America or in Asia, in the first steps of a regional integration, the construction effort that the European Union represents remains an example.

The European Union can make its particular voice heard, including on major sensitive issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (construction of the wall, establishment of a temporary mechanism to help the Palestinian population after the local elections of January 2006, opposition to the death penalty, support to the International Criminal Court, the fight against global warming, the promotion of a multilateral model under the rule of law... On all these issues, Europe speaks in one voice. It can also express its differences and, occasionally, convince its partners, for example by mentioning the case of Guantanamo at the highest level with the United States at the Vienna Summit in June 2006, or by obtaining Russia's commitment to sign the Kyoto Protocol during the European Union-Russia Summit in May 2004.

Mr. Gilles Gauthier is the French Ambassador to Yemen.

## SILVER LINING

## Curriculum reform

Last week, the department of English at the faculty of languages, Sana'a University, kicked off a workshop on curriculum adjustment and reform. I am in charge of the department and the faculty underscored the necessity of upgrading the curriculum so that they can send off graduates with necessary skills and qualifications that meet the market need. In addition, Faculty of Media, at Sana'a University, is also carrying out an overhauling reform to its curriculum with the support from the Danish, Dutch, and British governments.

I understand such projects are touching our pains and real problems. This is because the existing university curricula are very much outdated and do not reflect students and market's needs.

As a matter of fact, part of the problem of our backsliding educational level both at the schools and the universities is the out-of-date curricula which are theoretically oriented and produce students with either knowledge or skills not both. For instance, most of the students of the media college graduate without the basic skills of news story writing, let alone the use of the computer and the internet.

To your knowledge, once I asked some media graduates to write me news stories, I was astonished when they said that they could not type their reports or send them by e-mail. More worse, one of them told me that he had a computer at home but he has never touched it or had an email address.

You see, this is part of the plight of theory-oriented education. I remember when I was a student, we had a course on educational methods which covers the use of overhead projector and others. We were shown the overhead projector but we never operated or worked on it. We were given handouts on how it works to memorize like parrots and then reproduce during the exams.

It is shame that university students at present time do not know how to start a computer set or use the internet. In some European countries, people are now considering the internet something old and are talking and debating about the future of mobile technology.

Certainly, it is a very wide gap which we need a lot of time and effort to bridge. Some would argue we do not have enough financial resources to run such programs. But, I would say we do have. If the government, for instance, channeled the budget of the al-Saleh grand mosque being constructed in Sana'a to renovate the educational system of the universality, it could have done something tangible and improved the miserable situation of our universities.

I believe our universities have to revisit their curricula every now and then to cope up with the developments and changes in the field of education. They need to upgrade them so that our graduates do not go hanging around in the streets unable to pick up jobs which, of course, require certain skills. I guess the ministry of higher education is currently carrying out a higher education reform strategy which I hope it will hit the nil on the head.

Every now and then, our president shrugs his shoulder in the pride that he has now seven universities. Okay, that is fine. But, are they functioning professionally and graduating the competent people that the business market needs? This is the question which I hope to be answered!

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



By: Samer

## YEMEN TIMES

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# Yemen Press Review

By: Adel Al-Khawlani

## الوطنية

**Al-Wahdah Comprehensive Political Weekly**  
Wednesday, May 9

**Main Headlines**

- Political dialogue between parties reaches impasse
- Consumer Protection Society blames traders for raising prices, government for indifference
- Industry and Trade Minister: We won't be lenient toward those who play with prices
- Civil Service Ministry to distribute job cards to government employees this week
- European support for Yemen to increase during the coming four years
- Traffic accidents kill and injure more than 87 thousand people
- Qatari Emir arrives in Sana'a on Wednesday

An official source in the Foreign Ministry confirmed that the Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Than is due to arrive in Sana'a on Wednesday, along with a high-ranking delegation in an official visit to Yemen, the comprehensive political weekly reported on its front page. During his visit to Yemen, the Qatari leader is due to conduct discussions with Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The source indicated that the discussions are due to concentrate on the bilateral ties between the two brotherly countries and people.

The weekly added that both leaders will discuss the means of developing the bilateral relations in various areas. It quoted the official source as saying that the discussions between Saleh and Al Than will cover several Arab, regional

and international issues, as well as the latest developments in the region, mainly the political situations in Palestine, Iraq and Somalia. In addition, the discussion is due to include the Arab Peace Initiative.

## الناس

**Al-Wasat Independent Political Weekly**  
Wednesday, May 9

**Main Headlines**

- Parliament Speaker calls on Sa'ada sheikhs to clear their areas of rebels and dissidents
- Consumer Protection Society holds government and traders accountable for price hikes
- Authorities dismiss 35 school principals in Al-Dhale'e governorate for poor education standards
- Parliamentary report confirms that it impossible for the government to reach administrative reform goals.
- COCA report reveals financial violations in the agriculture and fisheries ministries.
- Retired military servants form 17 associations to activate their demands
- Poverty is expanding within the Yemeni community, official report says

The newspaper reported on its front page that an official report revealed that in every hundred people of the Yemeni society, 30 suffer severe poverty and have nothing to fulfil their necessities such as residence, education, healthcare and other basic services. In addition, the report argued that in every hundred people, 20 can not meet the basic needs such as food, water and wears. The report attributed the severe poverty to

multiple factors including the low economic development, the limited job opportunities, the rapid population growth, the rarity of natural resources, and the negative consequences related with authorities' being unserious to carry out economic and administrative reform programs. Additionally, the report blamed the concerned authorities for being unserious to fight corruption and corrupt officials.

The report was announced at the inauguration of the Third Economic and Social Plan for Development and Poverty Alleviation during the period 2006-2010. The event was inaugurated last week by several civil community organizations and under the patronage of Abdulkarim Al-Arhabi, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation. According to the report, the cities have less poor people than villages and rural areas.

## 26 September Weekly, Organ of the Yemeni Army

Thursday, May 10

**Main Headlines**

- Yemen, Qatar care for developing brotherly ties, stance coordination
- President Saleh: Democracy is a national option
- Yemen, Cuba mark the 35th Anniversary of strong ties
- 736 new projects in Ibb at a total cost of YR 74.6 billion
- Yemen participates in the meetings of the Organization of the Islamic Conference
- Singaporean Foreign Minister to arrive in Sana'a next week
- Parliament Speaker to Sa'ada sheikhs: You are responsible for

clearing the governorate of terrorist elements

Parliament Speaker and Chairman of the Yemeni Islah Party Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Al-Ahmar sent a letter to prominent Sa'ada sheikhs in the tribes of Sahar, Jama'a and Khawlan Bin Amer, demanding them be responsible for clearing the restive province of rebels and terror elements, the weekly reported. He urged these sheikhs to confront those who violate the law and order, praising the historic role Sa'ada sheikhs and their sons played in the past.

"We are concerned about what is happening in your governorate. Known for your glorious history, we expect you to play an integral role in clearing your areas of the extremists," Parliament Speaker said in his letter.

## الهدوي

**Wahdawi Weekly, Organ of the Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO)**  
Tuesday, May 8

**Main Headlines**

- Somali pirates detain as many as 180 Yemeni fishermen
- Saudi Arabia stood behind the assassination of Yemen's former President Ibrahim Al-Hamdi, NUPO Chairman says
- NUPO General Secretariat condoles family of the deceased MP
- Joint Meeting Parties hold authorities accountable for assaults against journalists
- Report reveals financial violations in Amran governorate's tenders
- 40 people killed in Sa'ada fighting, attacks on aid caravan condemned

The International Committee of the Red Cross condemned the assaults against its human aid caravan in Al Al-Saifi area in the restive Yemeni governorate of Sa'ada, the NUPO-affiliated weekly reported. It quoted the Geneva-based committee as saying the caravan was composed of 15 trucks loaded with foodstuffs to some 560 displaced families in Baqem district. The committee pointed out that at the time of the attack, the caravan was including a delegate from the ICRC and 40 volunteers from the YRCO. Two of the volunteers were injured, but were transferred to a Sa'ada hospital to receive treatment.

The ICRC hasn't got any information about the cause of the assault and its mission in Yemen is investigating the motives of the incident. "Such an assault exposes the humanitarian work to risk. The committee condemns all the attacks that target civilians and aid workers," ICRC commented in a statement. According to the International Humanitarian Law, all the aid and relief workers have to be respected and protected, and all the required measures must be taken to ensure safety and liberty of their movements. The weekly newspaper reported that nearly 40 thousand citizens have evicted their homes due to the fighting, which is considered as an extension of the two previous wars waged by Shiite rebels against the regime

## الميثاق

**Al-Methaq Weekly, Mouthpiece of the General People Congress**  
Monday, May 7

**Main Headlines**

- Politicians and academics: Success of

Saleh's visit to Washington disappointed opposition leaders

- Former Prime Minister: General People Congress to experience great changes to reach political professionalism
- Thoughts of coupe prevail minds of Joint Meeting Parties leaders
- Endowment Ministry investigates mistakes contained in a new edition of the Holy Book
- Court discusses YR 10 million embezzlement case
- 22 stand trial over expired vaccination medicine
- Political Empowerment Program nominates 66 women for Parliamentary elections

Manager of Woman Department at the Supreme Commission for Election and Referendum (SCER) Elham Abdulwahab said the Yemeni Woman Political Empowerment Program aims to nominate as many as 66 qualified women for the coming parliamentary elections through three mechanisms, the ruling party-affiliated weekly reported on its front page. It quoted Abdulwahab as saying, "The SCER is due to start implementing the project in the middle of 2007 and until the middle of 2008. The project includes the training of 66 women, with an average of 3 women from each governorate, in coordination and cooperation with civil community organizations and political parties and organizations."

The woman leader continued to say that the project carries a new vision on how to ensure increase of women seats at Parliament in the coming parliamentary elections, scheduled to take place in 2009. According to Abdulwahab, the project is a summary of three national legislative components, as well as international conventions and agreements approved by Yemen.

# Balancing the world's imbalances

By: Rodrigo de Rato

Good times – and these are good times for the global economy – are rarely the moment for concrete initiatives to deal with difficult problems. It is against this backdrop that I find welcome this weekend's announcement by a group of major economies acknowledging their shared responsibility for the orderly resolution of global imbalances while sustaining robust growth.

For the past year, China, the euro zone, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and the United States have been discussing these plans among themselves and with the IMF. Behind the somewhat forbidding label of "multilateral consultation" are discussions that are the first of their kind, and that have proved to be a promising tool for dealing with an issue of global importance.

These five economies are relevant to global imbalances in different ways: either on account of their current account deficits or surpluses, or because they represent a very large share of world output. They all agree that resolving these imbalances is in each of their interests. But they also recognize that it is a multi-lateral challenge and a shared responsibility for them all.

Over the last year, partly reflecting past policies in these countries, the

imbalances have shown signs of stabilizing and, indeed, even of improving slightly. But these countries must signal that policies will continue to ensure a progressive and orderly reduction in imbalances together with sustained growth. Otherwise, the global economy will remain at risk from renewed protectionist pressures and economic or political events that might trigger a disorderly resolution of the imbalances and undermine growth.

The five economies spelled out their policy plans in considerable detail to the semi-annual meeting of the IMF's membership, which gave them a warm welcome. This is the first time such plans have been presented together. As Gordon Brown, the chairman of the Fund's International Monetary and Financial Committee, noted, these plans are fully in line with the medium-term approach to solving imbalances that the Fund's membership has consistently supported:

China has elevated the reduction of external imbalances to a major national objective in 2007. It intends to boost domestic demand and is committed to moving gradually toward greater exchange rate flexibility.

Euro-zone countries reaffirmed their intention to press ahead with structural reforms across a broad front, in product, labor, and financial markets.

Japan plans to accelerate labor market

reforms, strengthen competition, and advance fiscal consolidation to sustain domestic confidence.

Saudi Arabia is boosting its spending on social and infrastructure investments substantially, as well as expanding oil sector capacity.

And the US is taking steps to balance its budget, boost private savings, and enhance energy efficiency. The US also intends to strengthen capital market competitiveness and ensure that it remains an attractive environment for foreign investment.

Just as global imbalances were not built up overnight, nor will they be solved quickly. The aim of multilateral consultation was not to seek to solve imbalances in one fell swoop, but rather to solidify agreement on a medium-term approach that could reduce imbalances gradually over time.

The policies outlined by the participants will, when implemented, constitute a step in that direction. Publication of their plans sends an additional signal of their commitment and provides a valuable roadmap with which to assess

progress, and thus help build confidence that all countries are working to reduce imbalances. The IMF, for its part, will monitor these plans regularly as part of our responsibility to provide policy analysis and advice. The countries have made it clear that their future policy plans will continue to be consistent with the strategy called for by the IMF's membership.

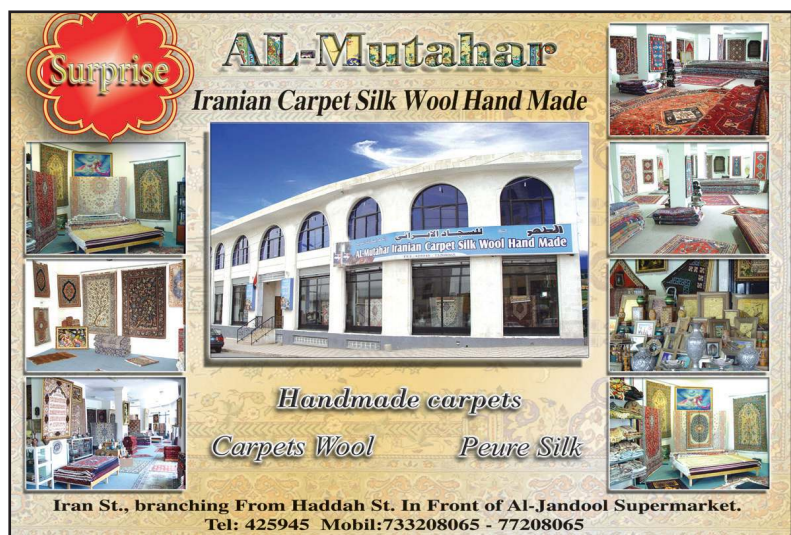
The five participants and the rest of our members, as well as we at the Fund, all agree that this has been a fruitful exercise. An indicator of success is that a

second multilateral consultation, aimed at fostering dialogue on how financial globalization and innovation influence growth and stability, is under consideration. Like the first round of talks, this consultation would occur between a group of economies that have special relevance to the issue.

Rodrigo de Rato is Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund, and was formerly Spain's Finance Minister. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2007. [www.project-syndicate.org](http://www.project-syndicate.org)


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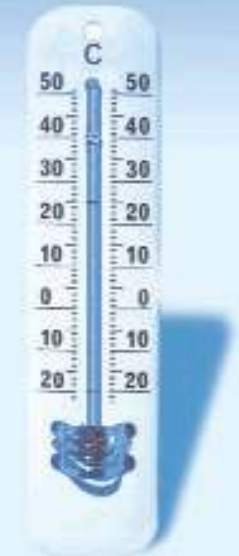



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# Sea turtles of Yemen: The great survivors

By: Alice Firebrace  
For Yemen Times

It was the dead of night as we ran along the beach toward the flashlight shining into a hole somewhere in the darkness. I heard a shout as one of our party obviously stumbled into an unseen trench. I turned to look, my eyes not quite adjusted from the glare of the car headlights now in the distance. I took her hand, hauled her out and headed for the flashlight again.

Arm in arm we trundled through the sand when down we both went, pulling each other into another burrow as we grappled for each other's support and tried to maintain our dignity by avoiding falling yet again into another sea turtle hole.

The 'Green Turtles' (*Chelonia mydas*) we saw that night on Sharma beach are just one species of turtle living in Yemeni seas. The Hawksbill turtle, the Loggerhead turtle, the Oliver Ridley turtle and even the rarest Leatherback turtle also have been recorded in the waters of the Gulf of Aden.

Sea turtles return to the beach where they were hatched to lay their own pile of 100 or so eggs. A sea turtle may lay up to seven times a season, hanging around

shallow water near beaches for a week or so before hauling themselves back to lay another batch or sometimes just to dig a false hole in order to confuse their many predators.

Female sea turtles don't eat during this time. Also, preparing the many nests and traveling thousands of miles to nesting beaches significantly depletes their energy reserves, so they need to recuperate from the ordeal for four years or more before breeding again.

Eggs incubate for about two months, after which the hatchlings dig their way to ground level. Since the daytime heat causes them to become sleepy, most sea turtle hatchlings occur during the cool of the night. They can do little to avoid their many predators, such as ghost crabs and feral dogs that pick them off during their short trek to the sea.

During the next couple of years, the tiny sea turtles drift with the sea currents, eating what they can in order to gain size and be less of a target for the many fish, etc., that may eat them. It's estimated that only 0.1 percent of hatchlings ever reach sexual maturity.

After approximately 10 years, the survivors move to feeding grounds where they remain until large enough to breed at around 40 years old. After this, they return to breeding grounds to mate and lay their eggs and then return repeatedly over a lifespan that can reach up to 150 years.



Turtle digging its nesting hole on Sharma beach.



Turtle tracks in the sand heading to the sea.

We finally found the sea turtle we were headed for that night. It heaved itself up to above the tide mark, leaving tractor-like marks in the sand behind it. With focused determination, it began paddling sand out of the dunes with its back flippers, flicking it in waves into the darkness behind. We watched in silence, punctuated by deep puffs from the exhausted turtle, until a large hole had been made.

It then angled its flipper inward and dug a smaller, deeper box-shaped hollow at the bottom of the crater it had just created. It slowly filled this with eggs before covering it with sand to disguise the nest. Then, heaving from fatigue, it crawled back to the sea and, with an agility barely recognizable on land, vanished beneath the dark waves.

Unfortunately, despite all of the turtle's attempts at disguise, both poachers and dogs quite easily find and dig up the eggs to eat, thus killing a disproportionate number of sea turtles before they've even had a chance to hatch. Collecting their eggs may not have a visible short-term impact on the number of sea turtles in the wild, but once the older ones have died off or been killed, the lack of a younger generation will be felt.

Besides the pressure on their eggs are many other threats to sea turtles worldwide that have threatened to eradicate some species completely. As seems to be the case with many species facing extinction, man has been the greatest menace.

For one thing, sea turtles are very selective about which beaches to lay their eggs. As the human population has grown, many communities have moved onto beaches or use them for fishing. Beaches also are lost through erosion, either natural or due to interference with the natural coastline, such as building jetties, etc. The loss or reduction of even a single nesting beach can seriously affect the sea turtle population.

Sea turtles easily can become caught in fishing nets, especially those trawling near the coastline, thus trapping turtles that may have come to the coast to lay their eggs. This drowns the turtles because they're prevented from coming to the surface to breathe.

There are reports that a more direct turtle slaughter still takes place on Sharma beach, which we visited. One occurred a couple of nights before I visited and you could see empty shells just a couple of meters from the road. Although agile in the sea, they are laboriously slow movers on land and thus, easy targets.

Historically, turtles have been eaten, especially by sailors, who considered them a good supply of protein on long voyages, and turtles were sold in Europe to make turtle soup. They also are sold around the world for their shells, although this practice is now illegal in Europe and many other parts of the world.

Sea turtles also are killed for use in traditional children's medicines, although it's unknown whether they actually have beneficial medicinal properties. Nevertheless, such medicines are held in high regard and fetch a good price, but this practice clearly isn't sustainable. Medicines that don't threaten these endangered animals must be made available.

Additionally, those who profit from such killing must be made aware of the economic advantages of protecting them, for example, through engaging in the growing ecotourism sector. The latter could have both positive and negative effects and should be monitored, as it's important not to disturb nesting sea turtles or scare them away from beaches. The past 100 years have seen sea turtle numbers significantly decrease due to these growing demands.

Other threats include their eating plastic and litter that too often find their way into the sea. Additionally, hatchlings can become distracted by artificial lighting that has been installed in recent times, meaning they hang around longer on beaches, thus making them more susceptible to their many predators. Light also



dissuades female sea turtles from coming to beaches and laying.

Like all animals, sea turtles also suffer from tumors and other diseases. Declining water quality due to pollution also can affect sea grasses that turtles eat.

Protecting sea turtles makes good sense because the strength of a turtle population is a good gauge of how healthy an ecosystem is as a whole, including fish stocks. However, defending sea turtles is a complex business because although they may be protected in some areas, the distances they migrate may land them somewhere where measures aren't in place for their protection.

Conserving sea turtles effectively entails conserving the seas as a whole, which requires education and a dramatic rethinking of our attitudes and ways of dealing with the environment. "Conserving marine turtles means protecting seas and coastal areas, which in turn means protecting a complex, interconnected world on which human societies depend" (Frazier 1999: Research and Management Techniques for the Conservation of Sea Turtles, Publication No. 4). Other benefits include tourism, research and education.

Yemen's Sharma and Jethmoun beaches are the second largest sea turtle nesting areas in Arabia after Oman, so protecting them here means protecting a large proportion of the sea turtle species as a whole.

In Yemen, killing sea turtles is banned, as is collecting their eggs, although effective enforcement is difficult for the time being. It seems education is the best way to stop the killing of such turtles. To date, Yemen's conservation efforts have included running workshops to tell locals about the benefits of protecting sea turtles

and their environment. Nevertheless, people still come from the cities to collect the eggs, meat or shells because there's still a market and they still fetch a good price.

However, the Ministry of Water and Environment's Environmental Protection Authority is planning ahead and will be attempting to halt the declining sea turtle numbers via several means, mainly by introducing a system whereby an area is zoned according to its environmental significance. For example, in places such as Sharma and Jethmoun, human activity would be limited so that nesting sea turtles are left in peace. Fishing in these specific areas would be constrained, as would other activities that might harm the turtles.

Legislation to enact these measures has been drafted and needs final Cabinet approval and then funding to further the project. Currently, guards are patrolling beaches and scaring off dogs and poachers. Although this is helping, turtles still are being killed, as we witnessed on the beach that day.

In the future, an entire sea turtle surveillance program will be put in place, including tagging turtles to keep track of their numbers and whereabouts, counting their eggs, etc. Plans for ecotourism in the area also are being considered.

So far, humans have been moving in precisely the right direction to wipe out an animal that has outlived the dinosaurs, the earliest known fossils of which are about 150 million years old. Perhaps they won't be able to withstand the impact of the human population. It would be a terrible shame if in the future these creatures were banished to natural history books as one of the many species annihilated by environmental damage and negligence largely caused by humans.

Yemen LNG Company Ltd.

الشركة اليمنية للغاز الطبيعي المسال



## MARINE TRAINEE CADETSHIPS

Yemen LNG Company is pleased to announce the commencement of its 2007 Marine Trainee programme in partnership with MISC Berhad and A.P. Møller-Maersk (APMM) shipping companies. Under this scheme, 15 Yemeni nationals will be engaged and trained at Marine colleges in Malaysia and India. Trainees who complete the course successfully will be recruited by MISC Berhad and APMM as certified officers on the four new LNG tankers which will export Yemeni liquefied natural gas from the Yemen LNG Company gas terminal at Balhaf to world markets.

Applicants for the cadetships must be High School Graduates or holders of college diplomas and between 17 and 21 years old. Preference is given to unmarried candidates, and all applicants must be medically fit with good eyesight (6/6 in both eyes) without any visual aids or colour blindness. All candidates must speak a good level of English before joining the course and must have a sound knowledge of mathematics, physics and chemistry. Candidates with previous marine experience are particularly welcome to apply.

The selection process for all suitable applicants will be held in Aden and all travelling and accommodation expenses will be reimbursed.

The selected candidates will be sent to Malaysia or India for between three and four and a half years of training and will receive a monthly allowance. One paid trip home per year is granted. Successful, motivated candidates can expect steady career progression within either the Deck or Engineering professions, potentially to the positions of Chief Engineer or Ship's Master.

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# JOB VACANCIES

The Yemen LNG project involves the construction and operation of a gas pipeline, a harbour and a liquid natural gas processing plant at Balhaf which will export 6.7 million tons of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) per annum. The project offices are based in Sana'a and the project has an anticipated lifespan of over 20 years. Yemen LNG Company is now recruiting the temporary and permanent staff that will construct and manage the project. All candidates applying for these posts must be Yemeni nationals

## APPLICATION PROCESS

- Visit Yemen LNG's website at (WWW.YEMENLNG.COM) ■ Go to Careers, then to Vacancies to enter our Web Application System.
  - Register your personal and professional data to be able to log in and apply. You will be automatically registered in our recruitment database.
  - Do not make duplicate applications by fax, etc. ■ Yemen LNG Company will contact the selected candidates for interview and further assessment
- Applicants who are not contacted have not been successful but can still apply for future positions.

**Closing Date: 25 May 2007**

**Job Title:** Deputy Head of Information Systems & Telecoms – Reference No. 135

**Reports to:** Head of Information Systems & Telecoms (Finance Dept)  
**Work Location:** Sana'a

### Duties & Responsibilities:

The company operates an Information Systems Network with nodes in Sana'a, Balhaf, Pipeline Construction sites, Paris and London. This network is used for voice and data communications and utilizes the following particular services and facilities:- Centralized Servers, Leased lines, Internet access, VSAT TDMA links, PABX, PRA Access, PSTN access, ISDN lines, ADSL, VPN links, Multiplexers, Switches (LAN), routers and firewalls.

The job holder will assist the Head of IST with the following:

- Develop, maintain and ensure the reliable information systems and telecommunications network and associated servers at the Sana'a Office and the Operational Sites within Yemen (Balhaf and Pipeline Construction sites) and the dependable links to Partner HQs in Paris and London
- Ensure the prompt resolution of all IST problems to maximise employee efficiency and service reliability.
- Represent the company in relations with IT contractors and suppliers and with other national and industrial representatives to obtain agreements and services needed for IST operations.
- Manage external contracts for additional IS services such as telecoms, networks, integrated enterprise software development and support, intranet development
- Prepare and monitor IST budgets
- Recruit, lead and develop a team of National staff, ensuring exposure to all aspects of IST operations

### Qualifications required:

- Bachelor or Master's degree in Electronics, Computer Science or Telecommunications with broad technical IS experience (2 or more areas of Information Systems & Telecoms).
- Minimum of ten years in an Information Systems/Telecoms environment, preferably with the oil industry, with exposure to the most up-to-date technology.
- Well-developed managerial skills, strong interpersonal relations & ability to communicate, influence and negotiate in order to achieve optimum and practical technical solutions
- Experience of recruiting, training and developing staff within a multicultural environment
- Fluency in both written and spoken English and Arabic language

**Job Title:** Procurement Coordinator– Ref No. 136

**Reports to:** Head of Procurement & Contracts (Logistics Department)  
**Work Location:** Sana'a

### Duties & Responsibilities:

- Liaise extensively with departmental colleagues and end-users regarding their service requests in order to provide the effective procurement services in time and in cost effective manner
- Co-ordinate and monitor all procurement activities (both local and international) are done in compliance with company Procurement principle and procedures, propose suggestions to improve procurement process if required.
- Communicate with Customs Clearance section for any update of the Customs procedures.
- Produce all necessary documentation to import goods and equipment for customs clearance.
- Maintain up-to-date files of all the documentation required for audit purpose.
- Maintain local and international suppliers and contractors' data- base.
- Maintain Purchase Orders and Service Orders Database.
- Monitor petty cash for local supplies if necessary.
- Follow-up procurement costs in close relation with budget & cost control section.

### Qualifications Required:

- Bachelor degree or similar in business administration or marketing
- A minimum of 5 years of purchasing experience, ideally gained within an oil and gas or industrial background
- Very good negotiation skills and knowledge of procurement procedure and activities
- Good knowledge of Arabic and English languages both written and spoken
- Good knowledge of standard PC software and willingness to learn related systems
- Autonomous and organized with good interpersonal skills

**Job Title:** Public Relations Officer (Re-advertised) Reference No.129

**Reporting to:** Head of Public Relations **Work Location:** Balhaf

**Duration:** Permanent **Work System:** a rotation of 4 weeks on site followed by 4 weeks of rest period at home

### Duties & Responsibilities:

- To assist the Head of Public Relations and the site manager in handling all communications work in the plant location in Balhaf
- To advise plant representatives, the Public Relations and Corporate Affairs on communications issues related to Balhaf and communities around it
- To help the PR team in Sana'a in the implementation of all public events in the vicinity of the plant and the pipeline route
- To assist the PR team in Sana'a in producing public information materials for various internal and external stakeholders and in populating both the website and the Intranet with first-hand information and documentation of events emanating from Balhaf and the pipeline activities
- To keep abreast of all internal and external developments which might have PR implications, ensuring that supervision are informed promptly of any potential problems
- To effectively supervise the overall operation of the Visitors' Centre in Balhaf and to oversee the work of its support personnel
- To oversee, in liaison with site manager and the Head of Public Relations, the logistical preparations for external visits to the plant to ensure a smooth and organised reception of visitors on site, particularly VIPs
- To help in making safety inductions to visitors and presentations about the project and the company to various visitors, and in filtering unsolicited visitors to site as necessary
- To assist in the implementation of the company's PR Strategy and work plan
- To coordinate with the community liaison team on site the provision of information to representatives from communities around Balhaf as necessary

### Qualifications required:

- University Degree preferably in Communications, Business Administration or Social Science (or other fields provided that the incumbent has a strong track record/ experience in the area of communications)
- Minimum 5 years of previous experience in the area of communications, implementation of complex and high-profile activities and the like
- Strong organisational and managerial skills, the ability to prioritise and deliver as well as a strong sense of judgment
- Excellent command of both Arabic and English, both written and spoken, plus strong reporting skill
- Excellent interpersonal, communication and presentation skills (Arabic and English)
- Good computer skills – Word, Excel, Powerpoint, etc.
- Creativity, innovation, strong respect for confidentiality. Flexibility and adaptability

**Job Title:** Security Officer– Reference No. 137

**Reports to:** Security Coordinator (Security Department)

**Contract Duration:** fixed term duration approximately till end June 2008

**Work Location:** Yemen LNG Pipeline Area- between Marib and Shabwa

**Work System:** a rotation of 4 weeks on site followed by 4 weeks of rest period at home

### Duties & Responsibilities:

- Liaise with local authorities and local population to ensure the maintenance of a positive and cordial working relationship
- Aware of and notify management of any security issues through daily coordination with the military personnel responsible for site protection
- Report any developments on site that create security problems.
- Manage site civilian security personnel and carry out random checks to ensure that constant vigilance is maintained
- Activate local radio coverage and maintain a direct link with the radio room in Sana'a.

### Qualifications Required:

- A minimum of 5 years experience in a similar role, ideally gained within an army, police or security service environment
- Strong leadership and man-management skills with good exposure to work in an international environment or in the oil industry
- Good communication skills both English and Arabic languages
- Basic Computer skills

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# The image of women in Yemeni proverbs

There are many Yemeni proverbs about the position of women. Most give women inferior status and very few give them self-esteem. This series aims to discuss Yemeni society's projection about women's status, as well as how cultural and social factors affect mechanisms that perpetuate women's under-representation in managing and controlling power levers.

Since Yemen is an Islamic country and Islam plays a vital role in shaping its people's perspectives, it's essential to gauge to what extent Islam affects their understanding about the status of women. Most important is how Yemenis interpret the religion to justify their individual interests.

"Walad asi khayr min ash'r banaat mutee'aat"

"A disobedient son is better than 10 obedient daughters."

By: Nisreen Shadad

Although many Yemenis said it was the first time to hear such a proverb, most agreed about its existence in their lives. Sana'a University student Umm Ahmed remarks, "It's the first time I've heard this proverb; however, it somehow is applied in our society because fathers always want to have boys to bear the family's name, even if they're disobedient. The other reason is that fathers mostly depend on boys to assist them in supporting the family."

"Nowadays, many girls are independent and can support their family, but fathers still long to have sons more than daughters," Umm Ahmed observes. "Sometimes when they have disobedient sons, fathers say they hope to have only daughters. However, on the inside, I think they're only words spoken in anger and therefore, untrue," she concludes.

Hafsa Al-Tayyib agrees, saying, "Yemenis usually are interested in having sons more than daughters for numerous reasons, such as thinking that girls bring trouble and shame to a family and believing that boys are capable of supporting the family more than girls. Moreover, even when they're defiant, at the same time in their point of view, boys are the only ones who carry on the family's name because

girls will marry and their children will carry the husband's name."

However, Al-Tayyib points out that Muslims mustn't consider these as reasons because in Islam, what makes one better than another is righteousness, so other criteria should be neglected. "We're all humans and neither our color, race, nor sex makes a difference to Allah. The Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) said Allah doesn't look at our faces, but rather at our hearts. Whether we're boys or girls, we're all asked to be pure inside."

She continues, "More importantly, I can say to all of those with daughters that the Prophet speaks of such individuals entering paradise if they educate them well. 'Whoever takes care of two girls until they reach adulthood, he and I will come together on the Day of Resurrection like this - and he interlaced his two fingers, meaning in paradise. Can we find any greater honor given to daughters and their parents?' he asked."

Kawkab Al-Thaibani, a journalist at the Yemen Observer, responds, "This proverb is a real reflection of the ideology of Yemeni society, wherein women are totally dependent on men, they can't live independently and they must have a man in the form of a close relative - a father, brother, husband or son - to protect them."

"Therefore, according to this ideology, what's the use of having so many

daughters, if there's no man to protect them? On the other hand, some people feel that it's easy to raise boys, but the opposite with girls because they're a source of shame, even if they're good."

She continues, "The phobia about a woman being dishonored is overwhelming to the extent that a bad man is better than a woman because people are worried about any reaction, but I believe this is due to lack of faith in Allah. People think men can protect their daughters and they forget God's will."

"Additionally, they also forget that no one can force anyone to be good or bad and if they aren't the Creator, they don't have the right to accept women begrudgingly. If a man or a woman isn't totally convinced about being good, nothing will force them to do so. So rather than wasting time on the phobia about preserving honor, they should teach them how to be real human beings, bearing every elevated human principle, including honor," Al-Thaibani concluded.

Fathiyya Hazz'a, public relations officer for Al-Fatah Foundation, said according to the book, "The Women's Movement in Yemen," written by Anwar Al-Khadhri, "The call of women's liberation leans on the principles and values of the French Revolution. The philosophy and arguments that came after it are due to the oppression in which women lived. The image of women that was widespread in Europe at that time in the Romantic or Middle Ages was so bad - they were evil, inhuman and the source of iniquity, a philosophy essentially based on Greek philosophical heritage."

"After that, the call for women's liberation took place and big changes encroached powerfully in Europe, especially France and Britain, and America during the 18th and 19th centuries," Hazz'a continued.

"As stated in the book, this movement came for a particular purpose. What fits in Europe isn't important to fit in the Middle East. Not everything new means it's right and not everything old is something backward. We need to think and rethink, not follow the blind and the deaf," she concluded.

Abduaziz Atiq, a teacher at the Science and Technology University, confirmed that proverbs such as this are adopted from other cultures, explaining, "Man was influenced by the milieu and his surroundings, so he adapted and imitated it without investigating its accuracy or fabrication."

"Nowadays, people still worship what they inherited from their ancestors in the Dark Ages, and unfortunately, they're uninspired by the scientific revolution of the 21st century, the so-called Age of Enlightenment. Man simply and blindly follows his intellectual heritage dominated by illogical thinking, yet approved in the name of freedom of religion," he continued.

Atiq further explained, "When Islam arrived, people had reached a state wherein they worshipped idols and exercised much injustice against their relatives, including women. With the teachings of Islam, Muslims had become the leaders of the entire world in the field of human management and social etiquette, especially between men and women. They treated women equally like men, taking into consideration the physiological differences between them."

"However, Muslims deviated from their sublime teachings and drifted via the current of many religious denominations, such as those of the Greeks, Jews and Christians. Muslims inherited the idea from Christian sources that Eve is the one who tempted Adam to eat from the forbidden tree," he added.

Atiq quoted an excerpt from Genesis 3, verses 12 and 13, in the Bible (New American Standard version) clarifies the point: "The man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.' Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.'"

"Then God punished her in verse 16: 'To the woman He said, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.'" Atiq said.

Muslim scholars' response  
Abdullah Al-Hashidi, a teacher of the



The image of a Yemeni woman, by Mohammed al-Yamani

Hadith and its sciences at Iman University and the Scientific Da'awa Center, says, "This proverb is humiliating to women and belittles their value. This is an ignorant, pre-Islamic belief from when they used to bury girls. Allah said, 'When news of (the birth of) a female (child) is brought to any of them, his face becomes dark and he is filled with inward grief! He hides himself from people because of the evil of that whereof he has been informed. Shall he keep her with dishonor or bury her in the earth? Certainly evil is their decision' (Surat Al-Imran, 3:38)"

"However, Islam came to place her at a high level as a mother, sister, daughter and wife. He recommended people deal with women gently. Allah also legislated many regulations to save women from being exploited," he added.

"This proverb and others can never reflect Islam, nor can they be proof

against Islam because people simply say them out of ignorance of the religion," Al-Hashidi concluded.

Murad Al-Qadasi agrees with Al-Hashidi. "This proverb can be neither an example, nor a wise saying circulated by people because it's against Islamic law. First of all, Islam forbids a person to wish for a disobedient son. Righteous people used to ask Allah to give them virtuous progeny. 'At that time, Zakaraya invoked his Lord, saying: 'Oh my Lord! Grant from you, a good offspring. You are indeed the all-Hearer of invocation.' (Surat Al-Imran, 3:38)"

"Secondly, this proverb is negative about girls, even when they're obedient. How can it be acceptable for a society to prefer someone disobedient and unvirtuous, but hate having virtuous children, who actually are a blessing from Allah?" he concluded.

## A disorderly tale

By: Late Zaid Muttee Dammaj  
Translated by: Shaker Al-Molst

Deliberations between the two sides moved to another prestigious hall. My eyes roamed around the exquisite and luxurious hall, opening widely at the rare masterworks and scintillating chandeliers suspended from the ceiling.

Sitting face-to-face at the table, the arms of the two delegations were extended. I huddled myself among my colleagues to look on. The papers were still in front of them, at their hands, with pens still lying on the papers. The faces were cheerful and mouths were smiling. My goodness, happiness surely must come, that's certain.

I clasped my sweaty fingers. I was jubilant and proud because the head of my nation's delegation could convince our brothers tactfully. At this moment, final endorsement would be executed. It would be a fruitful accord bringing about welfare and prosperity. Many a road would be paved, many a city would be illuminated, many a school and hospital would be erected, many..., many...

The two delegations consisted of high-profile figures, all of them ministers, and even their companions bore the title of "minister." The luxurious hall where we were still attracted my attention, perhaps because it was my first time abroad. I was accustomed to our dim, humble and neglected halls, which tell visitors, "Leave, please."

Soft, white hands prepared to take up pens. There was no talking, just wide smiles, some of them boring and artificial. The head of their delegation pulled himself up and looked at the head of our delegation sitting beside him, who became entirely happy and glad at this noble gesture.

Suddenly, the head of their delegation ordered photographers and cameramen exclusively from his nation's press and news agencies to be let in. A flood of dazzling yet confusing flashes of light overwhelmed the hall, as cameramen and photographers selected the best angles to shoot the head of their delegation, following his silent movements, while the



Late Zaid Muttee Dammaj

head of our delegation gathered his saliva in order to wet his lips.

The cameramen and photographers left and silence prevailed in the hall - complete silence.

Suddenly, a sound snapped, deafening the ears and being amplified by the echo of the luxurious hall.

It was a fart, whose stink reached the nearby attendees. I perceived that the face of their delegation's head displayed confusion mixed with embarrassment and anger.

To my horror, a laugh burst from a fellow delegate like a bomb. He couldn't hold it back because he hadn't expected it. He had tried to suppress it, but in vain. He rushed out of the hall, which echoed his suppressed laughs. Some of the attendees involuntarily joined him. A solemn moment of silence prevailed, during which I and some others tried to busy ourselves - with anything.

The session ended after the head of their delegation left with quick steps, surrounded by a retinue and bodyguards...and the members of his delegation. None remained in the hall except the head of our delegation, his fellow delegates and companions. The lights were turned off and the papers remained blank in front of them.

The next morning, the situation grew critical and the press, radio and TV had no news about the important meeting.

At the end of the day, the members of our delegation were seen at the airport, shading themselves under the wings of an old airplane as they prepared for departure.

The BBC quoted a variety of news

reported by its correspondents about the release of mutual accusations between the two brotherly nations.

The news broadcast by the BBC developed, as it reported a severe crisis between the two countries. Diplomatic ties between them were cut; however, the BBC did not explain the reason.

An important BBC news story reported that the borders between the two brotherly countries had been closed and according to the BBC, only foreign newspapers featured photos of both sides' diplomatic missions, homeward-bound well before the completion of their set terms.

The BBC commented that, with apparent wounds and heavy bleeding, it seemed from the photos that officers from both embassies were assaulted somehow. A BBC correspondent observed a member of our mission with his clothes torn and blood flowing heavily from his left eyebrow, while his wife and children were in a poor psychological state.

Events developed, with the BBC reporting conflicting news about the eruption of border clashes between the two countries, each party accused the other of their initiation.

The situation exacerbated to the point where the UN. secretary-general dispatched a mission to deliver urgent letters appealing to the two brotherly nations to exercise self-control and hold peaceful negotiations under U.N. auspices.

The BBC recently quoted its regional correspondents as saying that airports in both nations indeed had been shut down and lights had gone out in all cities and villages. They later reported that the U.S. had begun evacuating its nationals from the region aboard its giant airliners.

I switched off the radio and went out into the street to look for my fellow delegate who had been unable to control himself in the face of laughter.

Kuwait, Feb. 15, 1981  
Zaid Muttee Dammaj was Yemen's foremost novelist and short story writer, having authored Yemen's most famous novel, "The Hostage."

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## The Military Museum (Part 1 of a series) Yemen's great history and heritage



The Military Museum's Ancient Yemeni Civilization Hall.

By: Fatima Al-Ajel  
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Museums are a mirror of a nation's civilization and strong proof of its heritage. Likewise, Yemen's museums offer some of the proof of the richness of its civilization. Journeying through Yemen's Military Museum in Sana'a, this series of articles will provide a general view of Yemeni civilization from both national and military history. This series will be published gradually, according to the order of the museums' halls, beginning with the "Era before History" or the modern Stone Age in

6,000 B.C.

Visitors should follow the museum layout, initiating their journey from the right side, where the ancient age begins. The first hall is the Ancient Yemeni Civilization Hall portraying the Stone Age, the Islamic Age and Yemeni participation in Islamic conquests and ending with the age of British occupation. Considered one of the museum's largest, the hall is divided into three sections, each illustrating a specific era of Yemeni history.

In the first section of the hall are some arrows from 6,000 B.C., which is called the Stone Age. In this age, everything is made of stone. For example, the arrows are made of stone, which displays ancient Yemeni

experience in using them for various purposes, such as self-defense, shooting prey, etc.

The second part of this section portrays the pre-Islamic Age and reflects how ancient Yemenis worshipped at that time. It includes a group of inscriptions, figures, censers, statues, marble and bronze vessels related to Yemen's ancient temples.

Additionally, this section displays Islamic Age acquisitions, such as coffee calligraphy written in boards, famous Yemeni weapons and some Arab items, such as the dirham and the dinar, used during this age.

The age of foreign occupation is included in the third section of the Ancient Yemeni Civilization Hall.

This section displays several guns and cannons the Turkish and British occupations used against Yemen during their occupation era, as well as photographs of several Turkish buildings in Sana'a.

Some British acquisitions also are exhibited here, including a corner displaying the tombstone of a British soldier killed in Amran governorate and some Turkish coins.

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