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Inside:  **5** Yemeni traditional games: Remembering our childhood  **6** Palestinian-Iraqi refugees get a new lease on life  **12** Foreseeable agricultural crisis to affect the livelihoods of twelve million Yemenis 

Taiz citizens protest against injustice, poor living standards

By: Yemen Times Staff

TAIZ, Nov. 14 — Thousands of citizens gathered at premises of the local authority of Taiz governorate in the biggest protest ever seen in Yemen since the popular revolution against the British Occupation. Despite the government's efforts to tighten the noose around protests and demonstrations by taking heightened security measures throughout Taiz city, thousands of citizens reached the rally scene and raised slogans similar to the ones recently seen in the southern and eastern governorates.

The angry demonstrators raised slogans pressing the government to improve their living standards, eradicate corruption and enhance the principle of equal citizenship and distribute service and development projects fairly to different parts of the nation.

By the end of the demonstration, participants circulated a statement confirming they streamed into streets because the government refused to meet their demands and continued its arbitrary practices against civil community organizations and unions that voice people's concerns via peaceful means.

The statement demanded the government to create more job opportunities to the idle youth and called on the youth to express solidarity with the journalistic activist Tawakul Karaman, Chairwoman of Women Journalists Without Chains. The protestors strongly denounced all the arbitrary practices and attacks against great politicians and journalists.

"Taiz, once the city of culture and trade, has turned into a venue for poverty and

unemployment," the statement commented, claiming the government to have a merciful look at the governorate, which is known for its great scientific and cultural status, as well as being the most populous governorate in the country. According to the statement, Taiz locals, who played an important role in the outbreak of 26 September and 14 October revolutions, are entitled to enjoy equal rights in terms of obtaining government jobs in order to sustain their families and lead a stable life.

Yemen Times has learned that the security forces prevented large masses of people from nearby districts as they were heading toward Taiz to take part in the protest, which was supervised by the Council of Coordination between NGOs and Idle Youth Organization, which has been recently established in Taiz.

Change, an under-establishment organization chaired up by the resigned MP Ahmad Saif Hashed and involves many parliamentarians, politicians, rights activists and journalists, said in a statement circulated to the media that it is enthusiastic to rescue the Yemeni people from the current crisis and seeks people's support. It said that people have to protect themselves and revolt against their oppressors, who confiscate their basic rights and freedoms.

"Yesterday, your brothers in Aden, Al-Dhale", Hadramout and Shabwa took to streets in protest against the poor living standards in their home governorates, but many of them were shot dead. With their blood, those martyrs wrote a great statement for human dignity and freedom, the organization said. It told people to have patience as rights can not be obtained eas-

ily. It went on to say "You reject starvation, illiteracy and telling lies. You once again establish the first step for restoring dignity of the Yemeni citizens, who went through different stages of humiliation."

The preparatory committee in the Idle Youth Organization in Taiz claimed the government to suggest a clear and specific employment policy and approves transparency and fair distribution of jobs among university graduates. It also insisted on the government to eradicate bribes and favoritism in the distribution of job opportunities, as well as put an end to the high unemployment rates by the end of 2008, according to promises made by the General People Congress's presidential candidate ahead of last year's elections.

In Abyan, hundreds of military retirees and their supporters held a sit-in in Ahwar district on Wednesday, expressing solidarity with the detained protestors, who are still in the government's jail and demanding security authorities to release them. The protestors called on all civil community organizations to stand in solidarity with BG Nasser Al-Nuba, who is detained in an Aden security prison, and the Socialist leader Hussein Baom, who is jailed in a Hadramout's jail without any clear reasons.

In the same context, pensioners who were working for the intelligence organization and the political security, complained of being mistreated by the authorities and that they are deprived of their basic rights to be equal to their colleagues in the army and interior ministry. During a sit-in, which they held at Al-Ayyam Daily building in Aden, the protestors regretted



The security forces prevented large masses of people from nearby districts as they were heading toward Taiz to take part in the protest.

that they used all the options to resolve their problems but to no avail, adding that the committee, mandated to discuss their issues, did nothing for them.

"We have our demands, which we filed to the concerned authorities in Sana'a, but until now none of these demands has been met. We insist on enjoying our rights and receiving kind treatment similar to that of our colleagues in the defense and interior ministries," said the protestors. They urged all human rights groups and civil community organizations, as well as

opposition forces to back them.

Regarding the government's attitude toward the crisis, a Joint Meeting Parties leader in Aden told media that all the demonstrations and sit-ins taking place nationwide are indicators of a peaceful nationwide revolution. Ali Monasser Mohammed added that these protests against injustice, mistreatment and oppression, which people suffer from day to day. "Citizens are protesting to restore their confiscated rights and insulted dignity," Mohammed said.

Asked about consequences of defection slogans raised by citizens during protests, Mohammed replied that some of these slogans don't necessarily reflect wills of those who organize the protests. I believe that some of them were deliberately raised by some elements loyal with the regime while others were chanted as a reaction to the barbaric practices that targeted participants in the sit-ins.

The rights activist Jamal Mohammed

Al-Ja'abi forwarded a note to the Attorney-General, demanding him to accelerate investigations into the killing of many demonstrators in Lahj governorate. He told the Attorney-General to immediately arrest the perpetrators who opened fire at protestors, killing some of them and injuring others, and refer them to the court.

"Procedures, which Lahj-based Prosecution took, are incomplete, nor are they effective. They still require your intervention in order to satisfy victims' relatives and curb spread of murder crimes," Al-Ja'abi said in his note addressed to the Attorney-General.

JMP called the government to respond to the legal demands filed by citizens and implement Phase No. Two of the Wage and Salaries Strategy, as well as demonstrate positive interaction with concerns and issues of different social groups and fulfill all the promises contained in its platform.

Ex-detainees organize a campaign against illegal detention

Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Nov. 14- A national campaign to release all prisoners who have

been detained illegally by Yemeni authorities is to be launched next month, said Yemeni human rights activists.

"We are going to launch this campaign to release all these people who were arrested illegally. The campaign will also target all prisoners who have been in detention for a long time without any charge or trial," said Ali Al-Dailami, executive director of the Yemeni Organization for Defending Democratic Rights and Freedoms.

A website containing information about these prisoners will be launched at the beginning of the campaign. Al-Dailami said: "We will also work to encourage people to inform us of their relatives or friends, who have been arrested illegally by security authorities or any powerful authority."

The main reason for organizing the campaign is the increase of demands and complaints of the detainees' relatives. "At first, we thought of launching the campaign to for the release of people arrested over Saada war or the protests in the south regions. However, we came to know, through people's complaints, that there are many people who have been arrested over criminal suspicion," Al-Dailami noted.

According to the human rights activist, many of these prisoners have been in detention for more than eight months without trial or clear accusations. "It is against the Yemeni law to detain them. The law says putting a detainee in custody for more than 48 hours without charge is a crime," he said, revealing that his organization has received more than one 100 complaint files from prisoners' relatives, mostly from Saada, Hajja, Ibb, and Dhamar provinces.

At this stage, the organization is gathering information complaints from the citizens. "We have made field visits to different governorates. We also keep

contact with some prisoners, who work secretly to provide us with the names of prisoners who have not been tried," Al-Dailami said.

The campaign will also include seminars and workshops that would bring together security authorities and human rights activists. "We will do our best to insure that this campaign will have a huge media coverage. We will put announcements on the website, as well as local newspapers, to encourage people to come to the organization and inform us any kind of illegal acts against their detained relatives," he added.

Al-Dailami, who was illegally arrested in 2006, expects some obstacles at the beginning of the campaign "I was arrested for my humanitarian activities.. They (security authorities) kidnapped me and put me at the political prison for twenty four days and forced me to sign empty papers. However and due to the international pressure, they released me. I think when we will start our campaign, police may chase us," he stated.

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Germany constant supporter of Yemen's water sector, says official

By: Mohammed Al-Jabri

SANA'A, Nov. 14 — Specialists from Yemen's Ministry of Water and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) held a workshop on Wednesday to discuss results of the study tour in Germany and Morocco.

The tour was conducted in May 2007 by a high level expert delegation headed by Yemen's Deputy Minister of Water, Mohammed Al-Hamdi. The delegation included the governor of Abyan and representatives from the urban and rural water sectors.

The visit was organized and arranged by the Integrated Water Resources Management project (IWRM) and the Technical Secretariat at the GTZ. It aimed to introduce experiences from the two foreign countries on water resources management and ways of providing water and sanitation services to urban and rural areas.

Al-Hamdi said at the Sana'a work-

shop that the German government has been a constant supporter for Yemen, especially in the field of water problems. He also thanked the technical support provided by the GTZ. "We thank the GTZ, which is a reliable partner. We depend on their constant support, and we thank them for their technical support," he said.

He added that the visits to German and Morocco were useful and helped open perceptions on what is going on in the Western and Arab worlds. "We hope to apply what we have seen in other countries. We would adopt experiences that suit our country," he noted.

According to Al-Hamdi, an initial agreement was reached between Yemen and Morocco to cooperate in the water sector. A draft of the agreement has been prepared and sent to them, he stated.

Further German cooperation

Jochen Renger, head of the GTZ Water Sector Program, confirmed that a core

policy of GTZ is to facilitate regional mutual learning processes and the exchange of knowledge for the sake of regional cooperation and integration. "GTZ is ready to further assist in a regional exchange of experience and knowledge," he said.

The expert further noted that the Middle East offers many opportunities for mutual learning in the water sector. "I remember the Syrian delegation that came in 2006 to Sana'a in order to learn from Yemen. In order to make progress I am convinced that focusing on sector issues creates opportunities because many countries in the Arab World face the same or similar constraints and challenges," he added.

Renger revealed that the IWRM team and National Water Resources Authority (NWRA) have scheduled a mission to Jordan next month to learn about water usage groups that have a long history and track record in Jordan.

In May next year the International

Water Fair (IFAT) will be held in Munich, which is one of the most important water events in the world, he added.

Dr. Michael Klinger, IWRM team leader, said the IWRM wanted to create an event in which different stakeholders in the water sector could come together to create an environment of friendship and support using this trip as a team building process. "It is very useful to improve links between all relevant organizations in the water sector in light of all the tremendous water problems we already face in Yemen," he added.

Yemen is one of the countries in the world that face water shortage. According to the NWEA, the total renewable freshwater resources in Yemen are 2,500 million cubic metres (MCM) annually, of which 1,500 MCM is surface water and 1,000 MCM groundwater. Current water demand is 3,200 MCM a year - a gap of 700 MCM.



Left: Dr. Michael Klinger and (right) Mr. Ringer

YT PHOTO BY MOHAMMED AL-JABRI

Arabian leopard in danger

By: Hamed Thabet

SANA'A, Nov. 11 — a walk was held by Sana'a International School (SIS) students in order to save the Arabian leopard, which is in danger of becoming extinct. Moreover, The World Wildlife Federation (WWF) is no longer sponsoring the walk, so the students continued the tradition with the focus of raising funds to help save the Arabian leopard from extinction.

Students walked for about 45 km on foot around the school in order to raise money to give to organizations in charge of saving the leopard. However, for 11 years the school has organized this activity, but they used to give the money to other organizations and let them do the work.

Officials at SIS noted, "We are walking to save the Yemeni animal and we will choose how this money is spent. It is also unique in that our supporters at WWF -Pakistan, IUCN Cat Specialist Group, the Cologne Zoo, the London zoo, the Breeding Centre for Endangered Arabian Wildlife, Sana'a University, the Yemeni Society for the Preservation of Wildlife, the Yemen Ornithological Society and others are all supporting us."

The main threats to the wild Arabian leopard are direct persecution, illegal hunting and human population growth, in addition to depletion of natural prey species.

Rayman Aryani, 17 years old, studying in Grade 12, expressed, "Of course, helping poor people who are suffering is so important and we have to help them. However, helping the Arabian leopard is necessary as well; we have to start from somewhere. When we walk, we feel tired, which makes us feel that we are doing something good, because it is different when we participate."

Noor Al-Haidari, 13 years old, studying in Grade 8, said, "In the school they keep teaching us about the



Student, before starting the walk around the school.

environment, and this walk is good practice for what we study. Moreover, I feel that by doing this we can make a different and save the Arabian leopard from extinction."

Amina, Alia and Salwa, all 7 years old, studying in Grade 2, said, "We are walking and collecting money because we want the Arabian leopard to be protected."

The Arabian leopard (*Panthera pardus nimr*), or nimr in Arabic, is the largest surviving cat species in the Arabian Peninsula and once thrived in the mountain regions of Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Moreover, it is

smaller and lighter than its African counterpart.

Nowadays, however, the Arabian leopard is one of the world's most endangered species; less than 100 are believed to survive in the wild in the whole of Arabia.

A nocturnal and very secretive animal, it grows to no more than 1.3 meters in length from head to tail, compared with African leopards, which can reach 1.8 meters and up to twice the weight. The size and very pale ground color of its coat, with small, widely-spaced spots, are adaptations to the bare, rocky habitats in which it lives.

In Oman the leopard is classified as Critically Endangered and is protected from hunting and capture. It was once widespread in Musandam, the Hajar mountain range and the mountains of Dhofar. Severely persecuted by man, the leopard disappeared from the Hajar Mountains in the 1970s. Multi-disciplined surveys in these regions confirmed that by the early 1980s few animals remained in Musandam and none in the Hajar Mountains, but that leopards were still present in Dhofar.

In Yemen, the main responsibility for wildlife conservation and environmental protection lies with the Environment Protection Council.

Shabwa bombs did not influence LNG activities

SANA'A, Nov. 13 — Yemen Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) has denied on Tuesday that its activities have been affected by latest clash occurred in Shabwa resulting in deaths of citizens and military personnel.

Last week an armed clash occurred between citizens from the tribe of Bilharith and a military battalion assigned to guard a Ukrainian oil company working in the Jana Valley area.

In a statement to press, the deputy general director of LNG Ameen al-Mathhaji said

"The event was between citizens and an oil company, we had no hand. We have agreements with ministries of oil, interior and defense regarding the LNG security." He added that the security of LNG's project in Belhaf is the responsibility of the contractor, pointing that a security company uses inhabitants in guarding the project.

Al-Mathhaji said that the number of

employees working in the project reached 11,000, most of them are Yemenis. He pointed that some 200 Yemeni employees are being trained in Egypt and Indonesia to able to operate Belhaf Liquefied Gas Station.

He expected that Belhaf projects might start exporting gas early in 2009, he said the first gas shipment will be exported to Korea.

Al-Mathhaji said in a press conference last Tuesday that the Belhaf project is the 21st project in the world and that the government has 60 percent of it and the other 40 percent is for partners.

The shareholders of LNG: Total (Project Leader - 39.62%), Hunt (17.22%), Yemen Gas Company (YGC) (16.73%), SK Corporation (9.55%), Korea Gas Corporation (Kogas) (6.00%), Hyundai Corporation (5.88%), The General Authority for Social Security & Pensions (GASSP) (5.00%).

Gulf investors intend to establish economic zone at al wadieah port

SANA'A, Nov. 14 — Saudi businessman Abdullah bin Mahfouz Chairman of the Yemeni-Saudi businessmen Council said that the Council met in Riyadh, discussed implementation of the economic zone in Al wadieah port with cost of 500 million dollars.

Bin Mahfouz told 26 September website that the project, which its detailed study provided to YSCC committee to be contributed by Gulf businessmen, especially Saudi Arabia with 70% where Yemen share reach to 30%.

According to the website, Al wadieah economic city will treat many economic problems facing Yemen and will help to rehabilitate Yemen to integrate with Gulf economies, where many Yemeni labor would be involved.

Bin Mahfouz pointed out to the contribution of a number of Gulf investors; Kuwaiti and UAE, would facilitate flow of Yemeni exports of fish, agricultural and livestock into the territory of the Kingdom and the rest of Gulf States.



Arabian leopard



Students walked for about 45 km on foot in order to save the Arabian leopard

New Chef at Mövenpick Hotel Sana'a

Movenpick Hotel Sana'a is pleased to announce that Georges A. Zeidan has taken up the position as Executive Chef.

The 39 years old Lebanese Chef began his culinary apprenticeship in New York at the Hilton Manhattan. He also trained at the restaurant & hotel management of New York Fordham



University and graduated from The Culinary Institute of New York.

Georges, renowned for his expertise in hiring and training talented young chefs, recently worked for other 5 stars hotels in Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon and spent twelve years in the United States of America.

Press Release

Islamic Satellite Channels: Spiritual guidance, political indoctrination, and financial profit

Islamic satellite channels are currently undergoing an unprecedented boom, as are the debates that question their funding and underlying message. Nelly Youssef reports

Many names dominate the world of Islamic channels on satellite networks: "Iqraa" (recite), "al-Risala" (the message), "al-Nas" (the people), "al-Majid" (glory), "al-Fajr" (dawn), "al-Hikma" (wisdom) are among many on offer, each claiming its own distinct direction. For example, "al-Nas" (the people) broadcasts from a flat in the Muhandeseen area in Cairo and is owned by a Saudi businessman.

It began its transmission in 2006 and with modest technical capacities offered songs, a show on dream interpretation, another on weddings and some personal adverts.

When this selection failed to reach a wide market, channel executives changed their strategy by selecting a slogan that would inspire their viewers; al-Nas became "The station that will take you to Paradise",

a makeover which catapulted it to the number one slot among Islamic channels and allowed it to take scholars from the more conservative Salafi movement on board as well as to prohibit women from working on the network.

These Islamic channels need to develop new directions by adding more variety to their output, such as contemporary drama or competition shows, and steer away from their single focus on talk shows.

Issues and problems of contemporary society

During its broadcasts, the RSS feed that runs at the bottom corner of the screen advertises a range of items from food and infertility treatments to job advertisements and call-in requests for religious songs – items whose arbitrary selection reveals the profit factor behind the feed.

The channel "Iqraa" (recite), is another example of religious broadcasting. With its slogan "The Enjoyment of Directed Information" it is considered one

of the pioneering religious channels, its viewers follow its programming with avid interest; so much so that it has managed to entice even a non-religious contingent.

Another channel, "al-Risala" (the message), according to its executive director, Ahmad Abu Hayba, faithfully adheres to its slogan of "Creativity and Tradition" by treating all religious matters in a modern fashion.

By going beyond the expected coverage of purely religious topics such as ritual, its material embraces the issues and problems of contemporary society from an Islamic angle.

He also points out that they exercise



Islamic satellite channels like Iqraa TV have become extremely influential over the past few years. Some of them have even managed to acquire a non-religious audience.

no censorship on content that involves delicate subject matter such as paternity tests, for example, where terms such as "sperm analysis" are used; such subjects are being covered in a way that combines journalistic integrity with a presentation free from any sensationalism, Abu Hayba says.

Ahmad Mahjub, a sociologist, notes that most of these religious channels have failed in their efforts to promote a new religious consciousness characterized by moderation. Instead, most end up as channels that provoke extremism and conservatism.

In fact, these channels, he adds, have come to profit from special programs that focus on the viewers' questions on fatwas (legal opinions or religious decrees) by providing a service known as "fatwa delivery" where a phone number is advertised allowing viewers anywhere in the world to call in with their questions on religious matters, the answer being delivered within twenty-four hours, via e-mail or SMS.

Monitoring strange fatwas

Mr. Mahjub also comments on the number of strange fatwas that were issued via these channels and which, by further contributing to media sensationalism, have drawn in even larger numbers of viewers. It's a simple enough equation: more viewer participation and letters means more advertising and profit.

These strange fatwas include everything from prohibiting a woman from undressing in front of a male dog, or the banning of cosmetics that contain milk ingredients to a more general prohibition on reciting the Qur'an over the dead.

Al-Shaykh Jamal Qutb, former head of the Azhar Fatwa Committee, in an interview with Qantara said he was personally opposed to this type of travesty and endorsed a suggestion made by Dr. Ali Gomaa, the Egyptian Grand Mufti, to appoint a committee for fatwas, whose responsibility it would be to monitor all fatwas issued on the satellite networks.

Furthermore, the committee, in making sure that such fatwas complied with

religion, would help to regulate a process that so far has gone largely unsupervised.

At the same time, Qutb admits the difficulty involved in the introduction of comprehensive monitoring while also noting that respect for specialization, and specialized knowledge, has now become virtually extinct in Arab society, a development which encourages these channels to promote their brand of ad hoc programming that is desperately lacking in any form of planning.

Investing in ideology

Muhammad Abd Allah, a professor in the philosophy of religion at Cairo University, who recently concluded a study on these networks, has shown that their aim is purely one of financial gain.

Moreover, the channels are often run as an investment and subsidized by agencies or people with economic clout, as is demonstrated by their ability to attract famous media personalities such as former film stars, who then don the hijab, to present programs for them.

These religious networks have

become a trend and are part of larger network packages owned by Arab businessmen; "Iqraa" (recite), for example, is part of the "Arab Radio and Television" network owned by the Saudi Salih Kamil while "Risala" (message), as part of the Rotana channels network, is owned by Saudi businessman al-Walid bin Talal.

These Islamic channels need to develop new directions by adding more variety to their output, such as contemporary drama or competition shows, and steer away from their single focus on talk shows. Above all, they could greatly benefit from a policy of impartiality, which would make them less likely to seem to be doing no more than playing a role as mouthpiece to a political ideology such as the Wahhabi or the Muslim Brotherhood.

All semblance of impartiality would certainly be lost were the mouthpiece trend to be encouraged and the networks to become purveyors of nothing but "politicized religion".

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A man experiencing agony due to social class differences

By: **Almigdad Dahesh Mojalli**
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Yemeni society has different social classes, with people belonging to any of the common social classes known as sheikh, sayed, qabili or muzayen.

A sheikh is a tribal leader whom society regards as prominent.

A sayed is someone descended from the Prophet Mohammed's (pbuh) family. The plural of sayed is sadah, which is equivalent to lord in English, as in Lord Howe.

A qabili is one who is originally Yemeni and of good ancestry. The Arabic word qabili is derived from the plural qaba'il, which means tribes.

Last in the pecking order are the mazaynah, plural of muzayen, which applies to those not of good ancestry. According to Yemeni social norms, a muzayen is someone without well-known Yemeni origins. Those in this class are regarded as the lowest in terms of social position.

Mazaynah are recognized by doing menial jobs such as butchering, serving those from other social classes and playing drums at weddings. Thus, anyone

working as a butcher, barber or drummer is regarded as a muzayen and others deal with him differently, that is, with less respect.

Nowadays, many mazaynah are businessmen, government workers, high-ranking state officials and very rich individuals; however, despite this, they still are regarded as lower class.

Sheikhs are the highest social class, followed by the sadah and qaba'il. It's common to find many poor Yemeni families belonging to the sadah and qaba'il classes.

According to social norms, mazaynah can only marry from their same class, meaning they can't marry sheikhs, sadah or qaba'il. Likewise, it's a huge shame if a sheikh, sayed or qabili marries a muzayen; however, sheikhs, sadah and qaba'il may marry each other.

Mohammed Al-Khawlani, 32, who is from the qaba'il class, broke these social rules and took a muzayen bride. Al-Khawlani's family is one of his tribe's best known and highest bred, while his uncle is a leader in his village.

While he knew marrying this girl would mean many problems, he didn't expect it would tear his family apart and cause them to abandon him.

I knew Al-Khawlani very well for many years. A very handsome, ambitious and successful young man, he always wanted to be distinctive. However, when I met him again a few days ago, his appearance had changed remarkably.

His face had become pale and wrinkled, his hair was uncombed and his clothes were worn. Instead of the new suits and jeans he used to wear, he now was dressed in dirty, white garments, a worn out grey coat and a torn white shawl. As we talked, he spoke in a hoarse and sad voice.

While working as a soldier at the Republican Palace, Al-Khawlani went for a walk one day with his fellow soldiers stopping at a cafeteria to drink juice. While there, a beautiful 20-year-old girl was drinking lemonade in front of them. He and the other soldiers stared at her, but she only paid attention to Al-Khawlani.

Finishing his drink, he followed her out, asking his fellow soldiers not to follow. He tried to stop her to ask her name and tell her that he admired her. At first, she hesitated and refused to talk with him or even stop, but after about 15 minutes, she listened as he introduced himself. Unable to get her contact number, he

gave her his phone number and left.

Al-Khawlani was 28 at that time. Prior to meeting that particular girl, he had wanted to marry, but he couldn't because he didn't have enough money and his father refused to help him.

The girl began contacting him day after day and their relationship grew into love. Five months later, Al-Khawlani decided to marry her, but faced a huge problem because she was a muzayen and he was a qabili. Thus, his tribal rules didn't allow him to marry her, so he had an internal conflict.

He knew it was impossible to marry that particular girl because their marriage would cause a scandal and a shame for his family; however, she was beautiful and they were in love. "We decided to marry without anyone from my family or even my tribe knowing about it," Al-Khawlani recalled. Because she loved him, her family didn't refuse him.

In the end, they married without Al-Khawlani's family knowing about their marriage. A year and a half later, they had a daughter. However, at that time, his family decided to help him marry. They engaged him to a village girl without his permission, thinking he would be happy because the girl had good characteristics

and was from a good family.

"I was living a happy life with my wife and no one in my family knew anything about my marriage. I used to visit them every month," Al-Khawlani described, "When I learned that my family had chosen a bride for me, I was shocked. At first, I decided to marry her and keep my first marriage a secret. But on second thought, I knew it would be a huge scandal and trouble if my first marriage was disclosed when I married the second one."

After two months, Al-Khawlani decided not to marry the bride his family had chosen. "So, I took my wife and daughter to my village. When my mother opened the door, I asked her to welcome her guests. When she saw my wife and daughter, she welcomed my wife, mistakenly thinking it was my father's new wife," he recalled.

Tragedy began when Al-Khawlani's father returned from his farm only to see his son's wife and daughter. "When my father learned about my marriage, he immediately attempted to kill me in front of my wife, daughter and the whole family on the pretext that I had married secretly. At that time, he didn't know my wife was a muzayen. After a long quarrel,

he tried to evict me and my wife from the house, but my mother and brothers refused," Al-Khawlani continued.

Wanting to prove to his father that his wife had a family and that she hadn't just come from the street, as his father thought, he invited his father-in-law and brothers-in-law to the house without telling his father about it.

However, his father took the surprise visit in stride, not revealing that he already had gone and asked about her family. After the in-laws left, Al-Khawlani's father stabbed him in the chest in an attempt to kill him and evicted his wife and daughter. His brothers rushed him to the hospital and took his wife and daughter to his eldest brother's house.

In the father's viewpoint, his son had committed an unforgivable mistake only purifiable by shedding his blood or renouncing him. In order not to cause another family scandal by killing the son, his father not only renounced him, but also exiled him from the village.

Al-Khawlani sometimes considers divorcing his wife, but he knows no one would help him remarry. Furthermore, if he divorced his wife, it would separate his daughter from her mother.

Yemeni traditional games: Remembering our childhood

Without disrupting their specialized small world, children still enjoy their childhood by playing traditional games. Traditional Yemeni children's games are many, but some have disappeared while others remain popular. *Fatima Al-Ajel* explores these various types of traditional games in a series. This fifth and final part describes some game songs chanted by both boys and girls, either together or separately.

This part will focus on the various game songs in Yemen, which reflect how Yemeni children depict their social, cultural and heritage life through their songs. Most information in this final part of the series is from the book, "Children's Divan in Yemeni Public Literature," as well as

some Yemeni children who play such games involving singing.

The "Children's Divan in Yemeni Public Literature," is a collection of more than 250 children's songs from Sana'a, Taiz and Ibb, noting the various dialects from one city to another.

In the book, author Ali Al-Hadad notes, "Games are a valid opportunity

for children to communicate with their society, as well as the field where they gain linguistic and kinetic expression through songs performed while playing games."

Additionally, he calls on other researchers who are interested in children's traditional games to dig more into the heritage around Yemen, advising them to look for other aspects related to Yemeni children's games.

Another researcher of traditional children's games, Ahmed Al-Sa'eed, describes singing while playing as an important part of children's games, especially girls' games because, through their simple words, such songs describe the innocence of children's feelings and expressions.

Such songs' melody depends on children's movements while playing, as most game songs seek to organize their movements during play or to assign the players' roles.

Choosing a player
Many games also require selecting a player to start the game. For example, players first gather in front of each other and one chants the song, pointing to each one. The selected one must give a random number, such as five or seven. The singer then counts off the players and the one counted fifth or seventh or whatever starts the game. Such songs are like the following one:

*There was a carpenter
Who wanted to build a house.
How many nails does he need?*

Al-Sa'eed believes Yemeni heritage hides a wealth of Yemeni children's songs in games. However, this heritage requires more effort and research to bring it to light and help readers learn more about Yemeni culture and traditions.

Unknown words
What's ironic and funny is that Yemeni children often don't know the meaning of most of the songs or the words they use while playing, except for some songs describing the game rules, in some cases.

Dahdabah, as it's called in Sana'a, is a girls' game in which two girls hold hands and move quickly in a circle. Children don't know that dahdabah describes the girls' movement, nevertheless, they sing:

*Dahdabati, Dahdabah.
I went with a woman
To look for a fiancée for my brother
From a far place.*

Many researchers have found that environment is the main effective element for children to create and interact with songs in their environment. Al-Hadad



Kilo bamia is another simple game in which players put their hands out and all sing, "Kilo kilo bamia, kilo kilo masaadah." Piling all of their hands in a column on top of the other players' hands, the one whose hand position is different is out.

classifies Yemeni children's game songs into three categories according to children's age, environment and topic.

He further notes that children living in urban areas have completely different songs than those in rural areas or desert nomads.

Stages of song
Certain songs relate to children's age and children acquire songs regularly during three stages. A baby begins hearing a mother's hymns during the cradle age when the mother sings to him or her. The next stage, which Al-Hadad calls "the receiving stage," is between 2 and 5 years old. These two stages feed a child with his culture, environment, etc.

The third stage, which is after age 5, is the beginning of a child's interaction with his environment, as the child starts to express and describe his community through song.

Children's varied song topics each depict a specific side of children. Environment plays a role in such song differences.

There are 62 songs about the relationship between a child and his or her parents, brothers, sisters and relatives. A baby receives these songs from his mother.

An infant's first mental and social features are developed through the tender relationship between mother and child, especially during the cradle stage, when a mother spends the most time talking to her baby, embodying her emotions and anxieties through her songs.

or her.

*Sleep ... sleep
For boys, it's to sleep.
For girls, it's the pigeons.
Sleep ... sleep
Your father is a gentleman.
You are my beloved and others are not.
Sleep ... sleep
Allah will protect you
From the devil and other people.*

Those creatures and animals surrounding a child often appear in children's songs, 43 of which reflect the picture that children draw about the animals around them. Children initially begin discovering their environment through their family. They then watch the animals and other creatures, especially tame animals mostly around them, learning more about them. Cows, chickens, cats and birds are the most popular animals about which children sing.

*A mouse tread on his tail; its friends laughed at him.
The mouse said, "I am not a mouse!
The cat will eat me!"
The cat said she is not a cat. "The dog will eat me!"
The dog said, "I am not a dog! The stick will hit me!"...*

Other children's songs describe what they discover around them, such as the sun, moon, trees, food, vegetables and other items in their daily life.

Songs with names
Children often repeat popular names in their songs, with most names mentioned being those of prophets such as Mohammed or Ahmed, Jesus and religious scholars like Ali, Fatima and Mariam.

Furthermore, there's a certain respect required when speaking about elders, so

children must say sir, uncle or aunt before mentioning the name. For example:

*Ya Fatima, daughter of the prophet,
Take your horse to Mawiyah.
My brothers are eight,
Playing Khawlania
In the high views ...*

Religious songs
Children also sing during religious occasions, for example, to welcome Ramadan, to celebrate eids and share their elders' religious rites. For example:

*Dad prays the eid prayer,
Mom cooks eid cakes,
Grandfather slaughters eid sheep,
And I wear eid clothes.*

Folklore games are common among children around the world. They love to play games, regardless of their language, culture or religion. This can be seen when children from different cultures play together because they instinctively understand each other and communicate well during play, especially in song. Children never have difficulty memorizing such songs, especially when performing them chorally.

Concluding this five-part series, we have attempted to highlight Yemeni children's games. This series classified such games according to gender, noting that there are games only for boys or only for girls and then those for both. Because songs are important to many children's games, especially girls' games, it was important to dedicate a portion of this series to such songs as well.

Because there's scant research about Yemeni children's games, it was difficult collecting such information, so this is an invitation to all of those interested to give more attention to this important and interesting cultural topic.



There are many simple games where children gather and sing using simple movements and efforts. Sabahkim bilkhair is a simple sung dialogue between two lines of players.



Boys rarely sing in their games, but they will sing to arrange the players' roles or start the game. Min Kobet Al-Tayyar is one game requiring singing in order to select a certain player's place to become empty, so the other players must listen to the song carefully and then move about to change their place in the circle.

Palestinian-Iraqi refugees get a new lease on life

By: **Mohammad Ben Hussein,**
The Media Line Ltd

A family of nine Palestinian refugees, who fled the mayhem of war in Iraq and lived in the squalid Rweished refugee camp near the Jordanian Iraqi borders, were flown to Brazil for resettlement on Monday, after more than five years of arduous waiting in the desert camp.

"We know that many people were involved in making this happen, and we thank them for this opportunity and for their perseverance and their patience," said 76-year-old Rashida, who was the last refugee in the camp.

Other residents were flown out for resettlement over a period of four and a half years.

Last week an Iraqi family, which had been keeping Rashida company, was flown to the U.S. for resettlement, leaving her stranded alone in the camp.

Rashida had to stay in the empty camp on her own for a few days, but officials from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were able to reunite her with eight of her family members, who had been living in the Walid refugee camp for Palestinians near the Syrian border with Iraq.

When Jordan began implementing a strict policy on its borders, many Palestinians tried to enter Syria. But the latter, also burdened with more than a million Iraqi refugees, also prevented further refugees from entering its country, leading many to settle in the Walid refugee camp on the border.

The family comprised Rashida's daughter, who had four sons, two of whom are married. There was also a child with the group.

The majority of Palestinian refugees were evicted from their homes in

Baghdad at gunpoint.

Rweished camp was erected by Jordan prior to the American invasion of Iraq, when officials expected an influx of refugees similar to that of the 1967 and 1948 wars between the Palestinians and Israel. But Jordanian authorities found themselves compelled to close the camp, for fear of inviting countless refugees from the war-torn Arab country.

In the first few weeks after the war broke out the Rweished camp became home to more than 1,200 Iraqis, Palestinians, Somalis, Sudanese, Moroccans and Iranian-Kurd refugees.

Over the past four and a half years that number has dwindled to around 500. Many have gone to resettle in other countries, including New Zealand, Ireland, the U.S., Australia, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway. Jordan allowed a number of Palestinians with Jordanian spouses to settle in the kingdom.

"I feel that today is a dream come true," said Rashida's daughter Subieha. "First I had a chance to be reunited with my mother and then we are going to a place where I believe we will be safe, far from the sounds of bombs and rockets, where we will all sleep better at night, I hope"

"When I was a young boy in Baghdad we used to always cheer for the Brazilian football team and now they will be our national team," said Hussam, Rashida's grandson.

The family caught a plane for São Paulo on Monday.

With the arrival of this batch, Brazil will have received nearly 110 Palestinian refugees after several Western countries with immigration policies refused to host them.

The group underwent several orientation sessions to familiarize them with



Rashida's family.

the type of life they could expect to see in Brazil.

A statement by UNHCR said the Palestinians would receive rented accommodation, furniture and material aid for up to two years. A network of volunteers and local communities has been set up to provide moral support during the integration of the Palestinians, who have been settled in the states of São Paulo and Rio Grande do Sul.

"All of the Palestinian children will initially be given the opportunity to attend classes in [learning] Portuguese until the start of the next school year in March 2008, when they will be able to fully participate in school," added the statement.

According to the resettlement plan, at least 22 Palestinian families are to be settled in Sao Paulo, while 18 families will be settled in Rio Grande do Sul, in the southeast and southern regions of

Brazil.

Unaccompanied elderly refugees were settled in a home for the elderly where medical treatment is provided.

Various local NGOs helped refugees in their hard living conditions in Rweished refugee camp by providing them with food and medication. But life at the camp was too hard to endure.

Residents often complained of harsh living conditions in this desolate tent camp, with the nearest town 50 km away. Residents complained of extreme weather conditions; in the summer blinding storms and scorching heat add to the misery of residents, who were vulnerable to snake and scorpion bites. The winter season was no better, as residents had to endure bone-penetrating weather conditions.

But all that is over with the departure of the last family.

Officials from UNHCR, as well as the last family, were equally happy the

issue was over.

"They were very relieved to end four years of uncertainty. Now they will have a stable life in a new environment," Rana Sweis, spokesman of UNHCR told The Media Line.

"UNHCR is grateful for a generous offer by the Government of Brazil to resettle the refugees. They have faced extremely harsh conditions in a dusty and scorpion-infested desert camp, with nowhere to go," added a UNHCR statement.

The Palestinians are the first group of refugees from outside Latin America to benefit from the "solidarity resettlement programs," proposed in the 2004 Mexico Plan of Action.

But the departure of Palestinian-Iraqi refugees is in no way the end of Jordan's troubles with refugees resulting from the war in Iraq.

Official figures point out that there are no fewer than 700,000 Iraqis living

in the kingdom, putting increasing pressure on the fragile economy.

Jordanians complain of increasing prices in real estate, as well as other basic commodities, as the refugees try to settle into their new home.

Jordan had threatened to close down the camp last year and urged the U.N. agency to take measures to end the disastrous conditions of the refugees.

The camp was run by the Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organization (JHCO), a group affiliated with the Jordanian government.

An estimated 4.2 million Iraqis have been forced to flee their homes due to violence and sectarian unrest, according to the U.N. refugee agency.

"Sometimes, I thought I would never leave this place," Rashida said, as she folded a blanket for the flight to Brazil. "The day has come and now we all have a second chance in this life, in a place where we will try to forget the past."

Brookings to open Doha Center

WASHINGTON, D.C. & DOHA, QATAR — The Brookings Institution announced that it will open a center for public policy research and current affairs programming in Doha, Qatar, the first Brookings facility in the Muslim world. The center — a project of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at Brookings — will undertake research on the socio-economic and geopolitical issues facing the Muslim world, and encourage more understanding between U.S. and Muslim policy-makers.

The new center will contribute to scholarship and dialogue between the United States and the Muslim world through a partnership between one of America's oldest and largest think tanks, Brookings, and a visionary Muslim state, Qatar.

"Through the Brookings Doha Center, we will continue to expand the Brookings tradition of independent, in-depth research and quality public policy programs to Doha," said Strobe Talbott, president of Brookings. "At the same time, it further establishes

Brookings as a truly global think tank."

Events sponsored by the center will begin this fall, in anticipation of an official opening ceremony in February 2008, to coincide with the U.S.-Islamic World Forum—a unique annual dialogue in Doha that is co-organized by the Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World and the Permanent Committee for Organizing Conferences of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar.

"The Brookings Doha Center will seek to forge a lasting partnership between the leading policy makers and scholars of the United States, and those of the Muslim world," said Martin Indyk, director of the Saban Center at Brookings and former assistant secretary of state for Near East affairs under President Bill Clinton. "It will also host visiting fellows both from Brookings and the Muslim world."

This is the second time in its history that the think tank has established a presence outside of Washington. A Beijing location was opened last year.

"At a time of great tension between America and the Muslim world, the center will serve as a model of true, productive partnership," said Hady Amr, the director of the Brookings Doha Center, a former appointee at the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at National Defense University. "Open to a broad range of views, the Brookings Doha Center will be a meeting point for the leading minds from government, business, academia, the media and the public to debate public policy in the Muslim world, including its relations with the United States."

The Center will host leading scholars who will conduct independent research on the socio-economic and geopolitical issues facing the Muslim world; host forums, workshops and seminars to engage in the public policy debate on these issues; and help organize the annual U.S.-Islamic World Forum in Doha.



Vacancy Advertisement

The World Bank Middle East and North Africa (MNA) Region intends to hire an experienced **Procurement Specialist**, who will be located in the World Bank Sana'a Office to work on projects in Yemen. He/she will also work on procurement system improvements. The work implies frequent interaction with Managers and Technical Specialists in the work unit and staff from other agencies, donors, consultants and borrowers. More specifically, under the direction of the Country Manager in Sana'a, the Country Procurement Coordinator based in Cairo, and the Regional Procurement Manager (RPM) based in Washington, the incumbent will:

- Work independently on procurement matters across sectors in the performance of the Bank's fiduciary and service functions, seeking guidance on complex projects/issues from senior procurement staff;
- Review and handle the technical, commercial and legal aspects of procurement (in consultation with Legal and Policy departments as necessary) at all stages of the project cycle;
- Provide operational advice to clients and Bank staff on concepts, policies and procedures for international and local procurement;
- Participate in missions as procurement expert on projects; assess procurement implications of project design, evaluate institutional capacity of borrowers and develop suitable procurement plans; conduct prior and post reviews of Bank-financed contracts;
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- Knowledge and understanding of technical, commercial and legal aspects of procurement at all phases of Bank lending operations;
- Demonstrated analytical clarity, problem-solving skills and negotiating skills with ability to balance project objectives and procurement requirements with client needs;
- Task/ Project management skills;
- Strong communication skills in presenting, discussing and resolving difficult issues, both orally and in writing, and excellent listening skills;
- Ability to deal sensitively with a multi-cultural environment and build effective business relationships with clients and colleagues;
- Ability to function effectively in multi-disciplinary teams with a matrix management environment;
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- English language mandatory; Arabic highly desirable.

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صندوق الأمم المتحدة للسكان

Urgent invitation for Bid

Call for Tender to undertake a "Programme Baseline End Survey" under the UNFPA Country Programme Cycle 2007-2011

UNFPA Country Office in the Republic of Yemen is planning to conduct the above survey in the six governorates covered by its current country programme 2007-2011: Aden, Hadramout, Hodaida, Ibb, Hajjah and Mahweet. The overall objective of this survey is to establish a benchmark set of indicators in the areas of Population and development, reproductive health and gender. A number of quantitative and qualitative indicators will be identified from the relevant document of UNFPA country program that should be used to monitor achievement of deferent program levels e.g. outputs and outcomes.

The qualitative indicators will be measured for women, communities and service delivery points (SDPs). These indicators represent the target groups (beneficiaries) of the programme (women and communities) as well as service providers including human power and services. The qualitative indicators address policies, strategies and procedures. These indicators should be tackled through special research work including reviews, assessments, etc.

A Steering Committee will be established by UNFPA Country Office to be responsible of the overall supervision of the survey. A team of individual, consultant or institution staff will implement the planned survey. A team leader will be selected/recruited by UNFPA based on technical competencies and relevant survey expertise. He/She will be the overall responsible in planning and implementing the survey activities including timely completion and submission of the final report(in English and Arabic) according to specific terms of reference.

Based on the above, UNFPA country office is calling competent relevant institutions, firms, academia, and individuals willing to undertake these tasks to provide their detailed offers/bids supported by relevant documents, profile(s) showing their technical, managerial, institutional, and demonstrated experience for conducting such surveys. The bidders are requested to submit a preliminary conceptual **administrative and financial plan** for undertaking this survey.

Offers are to be sent in sealed envelopes to the registry of the office in:
Sana'a, Algeria Street, United Nations Population Fund Building.

For any inquiries or more information, Please call: 209003/4 or visit our office

Due to the urgency of requirements, **Saturday November 24, 2007 at 1:00 pm** is the deadline for receiving offers. Offers sent by email or fax will NOT be accepted.

Please note that only winning bidders will be notified.

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- Review general safety and Company Emergency Response Plans and HES Procedures to ensure statutory compliance and current application to practice. Recommend changes as necessary.
- Advise Line Managers and Supervisors regarding incidents and provide support to investigation teams. Ensure flow of vital information to the Company database in a timely fashion. Follow up remedial actions until they are completed.
- Be appointed Radiological Protection Supervisor for OXY Yemen Operations.
- Perform gas tests as required.
- In the event of a station emergency, assume role as designated by Field Operations Manager, for example: Fire Team Member, Investigation Member, etc.
- Responsible for the safe handling and disposal of waste material.
- Attend daily production meeting, attend production Safety meetings with other operations personnel.
- Convene and facilitate Supervisors Weekly HES Meeting
- Participate/Lead in accident/incident investigations as requested.
- Report all accidents / near misses to Field Operations Manager and prepare initial incident reports (Exhibit A) for submittal to HES Director
- Attend HES and technical training as deemed necessary by the company.
- Conduct HES training as needed
- Train Yemeni understudy assigned to perform all of the functions above.
- Participate in the development and progression of HES Staff.
- Liaise with Contractor HES Personnel and assist them with their development as HES Professionals where required.

The key measure is quality management of safety, achieving levels of risk as low as reasonably practicable, and program goals of zero lost time incidents with all operations in compliance with Regulations and Oxy Policy. A high level of environmental occupational health sensitivity is also expected to achieve reduction of health and pollution incidents.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelors Degree in Engineering, HES or Equivalent
- Certified Safety Professional or equivalent
- 10 years of Industry Experience
- Additional production, drilling, and construction experience is a +
- Must have International work experience
- Be able to manage people
- Speak English Language

Sr. HES Advisor

Job Number Y068

(Field Based)

- Reports to the HES Supervisor

Essential Job Duties

- Assist in a supporting role in hazard identification and risk analysis.
- Maintaining the HES hard Copy Filing system.
- Maintaining the Action Tracking Data Base.
- Assist the Safety Supervisor, Line Managers, and site supervisors to provide regular audits of work permits.
- Assist in reporting and maintaining a HES action item database and track results and remedial HES actions until completed.
- Assist HES Supervisor(s) to motivate and coordinate emergency preparedness plans, drills and exercises, and assess and report performance. Provide emergency team support, leadership in addition, training and participate as required.
- Be familiar with the general safety and Company Emergency Response Plans to ensure statutory compliance and current application to practice.
- Assist the Line Managers and Supervisors regarding incidents and

provide support to investigation teams.

- Monitor and assist in initial gas tests for Confined Space Entry.
- Carry out safety equipment checks.
- Perform Task Observation.
- Assist in the responsibility for the safe handling and disposal of waste material.
- Be fully versed with Emergency and Operating Procedures and all relevant Statutory Regulations; be aware of and adhere to such regulations to develop a safe and efficient working environment.
- Attend daily production meeting, attend production Safety meetings with other operations personnel.
- Participate in accident/incident investigations as requested.
- Report all accidents / near misses to HES Supervisor, who will then interact with site management.
- Attend HES and technical training as deemed necessary for your knowledge offered by the company.
- Conduct HES training as needed
- Monitor housekeeping of the operations and inform HES supervisor and Production Superintendent of any unsafe conditions.
- Train Yemeni understudy assigned to perform all of the functions above.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelors Degree in Engineering, HES or Equivalent
- Certified Safety Professional or equivalent
- 10 years of Industry Experience.
- Additional production, drilling, and construction experience is a +
- Be able to manage people
- Speak, read and write English

Jr. HES Advisor

Job Number Y069

(Field Based)

- Reports to the HES Supervisor

Essential Job Duties

- Assist in promoting safety, health and environmental-conscious culture.
- Work with the rest of the HES team to follow up remedial actions until they are completed.
- Learn to be proficient in performing gas tests for Confined Space Entry when asked to do so.
- Assist and learn to carry out safety equipment checks with the HES team.
- Perform Task Observation.
- Learn the Emergency procedures as to develop a safe and efficient working environment.
- Attend daily Safety meetings with other HES team members when asked to do so.
- Learn the objectives and procedures in an accident/incident investigation as requested by the HES team.
- Attend HES training as deemed necessary for your overall HES learning process as deemed by the HES supervisor.
- Assist in the HES training program in order to familiarize you with the concept and content of each training module.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelors Degree in Engineering, HES or Equivalent
- 6 years of Industry Experience
- Additional production, drilling, and construction experience is a +
- Be able to manage people
- Be able to speak the English Language.

IT / Automation Technician

Job Number Y058

(Field Based)

Essential Job Duties

- Works with the Block S-1 IT department to maintain consistent installations according to the corporate standards for information systems.
- Responsible for the maintenance of the instrumentation and control systems.
- Understand and support the OOGC automation server systems under the direction of the OOGC ATG.
- Provide support for the field communications infrastructure, including; fiber optic distribution of the LANs, telemetry systems that will extend the LAN from the CPF, PBX phone system and its connection to the service provider.
- Required to insure the security of the data systems according to OOGC directions.
- Keeps the field facilities documentation of the computer system up to date and ensures that they are synchronized with the Sana'a copies of the documents.
- Ensure that all quality control systems are implemented for new construction and keeps records of those controls.
- Understand and abide by all HES policies, particularly those related to work performed on the automation systems.
- Comply with company Safety, Environmental, and Health rules and regulations. Immediately report all accidents, injuries and hazards to immediate supervisor

- Should be conversant with Maximo

Required Qualifications

- 2-5 years experience in the support of information systems including computer systems and associated communication systems.
- Understanding of basic circuit theory or industrial control systems.
- Expert in Microsoft Office software and Microsoft operating systems.
- Understanding of office LAN and WAN systems.
- Good understanding of communication systems like the office PBX.
- Excellent trouble shooting skills.
- Good understanding of circuits or industrial controls.
- Ability to work on multiple projects simultaneously.
- Field based working 4 weeks x 4 weeks. (Or similar even rotation)
- Travel to Sana'a to work with the engineering team as required

Camp Maintenance Supervisor

Job Number Y059

(Field Based)

Essential Job Duties

- Oversee maintenance of all camp accommodations, and associated facilities.
- Oversee repairs and maintenance of lighting, electrical, water and associated utilities
- Initiate procurement of materials required to maintain camp facilities
- Learn and instigate shop orders required to maintain facilities
- Oversee the operation and insure the proper performance of the R.O. plant and the Sewage treatment plant
- Organize and implement a system of records to meet the requirements of Occidental Corp.
- Must be able to give clear instructions and be able to follow progress of tasks to a successful solution
- Comply with company Safety, Environmental, and Health rules and regulations. Immediately report all accidents, injuries and hazards to immediate supervisor

Required Qualifications

- Should have a High School diploma
- Should have at least 5 years experience in camp type situation, and at least 2 years supervision
- Must be willing to work a flexible schedual
- Should have basic knowledge of electrical and plumbing troubleshooting
- Should be able to enter Shop Orders in the MMS

Facilities Engineer

Job Number Y001

(Field Based)

Essential Job Duties

Experienced Facilities Engineer capable of managing changes to the physical plant. Directly supervises the construction effort in the field. Works closely with the engineering team in Sana'a to implement the OOGC Management of Change (MOC) system. This field position reports directly to the Operations Manager in the field, but reports to the Sana'a based Facilities Engineering Team Leader for the technical aspects of his work.

Required Qualifications

Directly responsible for efficiently managing all facility construction to insure compliance with engineering standards as well and the OOGC MOC policy.

- Directly supervises the mechanical and civil construction efforts in the field.
- Understand and implement the OOGC MOC program.
- During large project implementation, will provide the construction management and reporting working on the project team.
- Responsible for maintaining the facility documentation with respect to mechanical and civil works.
- Provide the interface between the Production Operations requests for change and the Engineering team's implementation of the change.
- Keeps the field facilities documents up to date and ensures that they are synchronized with the Sana'a copies of the documents.
- Ensure that all quality control systems are implemented for new construction and keeps records of those controls.
- Can use AutoCAD to maintain the accuracy of the facilities drawings for minor changes. Major drawing effort will be done by contract or dedicated draftsman.
- Responsible for understanding piping codes related to the construction of production facilities. These include but are not limited to; ASME B31.3, ASME B31.4, ASME B31.8, API 520, API 5L, OOGC engineering guides,
- Leader of the HES effort with respect to facilities construction personnel
- B.S., Mechanical Engineering or equivalent
- 10 - 15 years experience in all major facets of facilities construction, particularly in piping fabrication.



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Executive Assistant

Job Number Y002

(Sana'a Based)

Essential Job Duties

This is a key departmental role that will be suitable for a highly motivated individual capable of multi-tasking while maintaining attention to detail. The responsibilities for this position include but are not limited to the following:

- Implement administrative projects and tasks for the leadership team.
- Manage contacts and schedules for leadership team.
- Setup and maintain department filing system.
- Prepare company correspondence in both Arabic and English.
- Manage company correspondence database.
- Contract Administration

Required Qualifications

- College Degree with a minimum of 5 years experience
- Fluent English and Arabic (written and spoken). Candidates with professional translation certifications will be given preference.
- Proficient in Excel & Word
- Self starter with a high energy level, and the ability to deliver results independently in a multi-tasking, fast-paced environment.
- Analytical and critical thinking skills, with high attention to detail.
- Ability to work overtime as needed

Instrument Technician

Job Number Y007

(Field Based)

Essential Job Duties

- Maintain, calibrate and repair pneumatic and electronic controls, meters, and equipment, used in Block S-1
- Repair equipment as per work request from Operations. Obtain all the necessary permits and ensure that it is safe to start work. Must have knowledge of and utilize the Lock, Tag, and Try system
- Maintain control panels on all reciprocating and centrifugal gas compressors. Maintain control room instrumentation and repair associated field equipment within Block S-1
- Responsible for control and commissioning of any new instrumentation on new equipment or plant installations. Work with engineering to recommend changes or improvements
- Must be able to use a variety of test equipment, such as, dead weight tester, multimeter, pressure testing equipment, oscilloscope, decade box, temperature bath, current and signal simulators, P.C. frequency and pulse generators, fire & gas sensor calibration. Be familiar with 24volt and 110volt power supplies
- Must be able to work on a variety of laboratory equipment, chromatograph, O2 analyzer, moisture analyzer, PH meter, vapour pressure analyzer, RO units, and be familiar with PLCs. Should be able to do orifice plate calculations, control valve sizing, repair control valves, controllers, valve positioners and position indicators
- Must read and interpret schematics, drawings and technical manuals. Should be able to make "As Built" drawings
- Review daily work requests with Maintenance supervisor, assign a priority to each request and work
- Comply with company Safety, Environmental and Health rules and regulations. Report all accidents, injuries and hazards to immediate supervisor

Required Qualifications

- The technician should have a secondary education
- Must be able to speak, read and write English
- Must be able to read and comprehend parts books, service manuals and technical literature
- Must have a knowledge of standard craft tools and safe working practices
- Should have a minimum of a two years technical certificate in the instrumentation field and completed a three to four year apprenticeship training program and have up to one year experience
- Should have experience with production separators, desalters, LACT units, oil and gas wells, heaters-treaters gas compressors, air compressors, gas turbines, NGL plants, pneumatic and electronic instrumentation.

Electrical Technician

Job Number Y014

(Field Based)

Essential Job Duties

- Perform maintenance and repair of all electrical equipment in Block S-1
- Report Maintenance supervisor on expected downtime and should

any unexpected problem arise, communicate to Operations any delay.

- Review daily work requests with Maintenance supervisor, assign a priority to each request and work accordingly
- To be able to recognize equipment or component failure and suggest remedies.
- Be conversant with correct and safe maintenance procedures and practices on equipment of Block S-1.
- Maintain all electrical equipment from generator to distribution and consumption (total load approximately X Megawatts). Initiate requests for material, identify marginal areas and recommend improvements. Be familiar with the requirements of the NEC and work to these standards paying particular attention to hazardous areas and personnel safety. Participate in training.
- Responsible for ordering spare parts and setting up materials stock with Maintenance supervisor.
- Must be able to troubleshoot a variety of equipment such as Deutz and Caterpillar generator packages, Reda pumps & Keltronic controls, Trane & Carrier air conditioning units. Westinghouse motor control centers, etc.
- Must read and interpret schematics, drawings and technical manuals. Should be able to make "As Built" drawings.
- Must comply with company Safety, Environmental and Health rules and regulations.

Required Qualifications

- The technician should have a secondary education.
- Must be able to speak, read and write English
- Must be able to read and comprehend parts books, service manuals and technical literature.
- Should have a minimum of a two years technical certificate in the Electrical field and completed a three to four year apprenticeship training program and have up to one year experience.
- Must be able to use a variety of test equipment, meggar, multimeter, amp meter, frequency meter, power factor meter, cable and pipe locators etc.
- Must have experience with power generation, power distribution, motor repairs, cable sizing, conduit bending, air conditioning and refrigeration, submersible pumps, desalters and other oil field related equipment.

Mechanic

Job Number Y025

(Field Based)

Essential Job Duties

- Knowledge and experience on low and high-pressure reciprocating compressors; Gas and diesel engines; and centrifugal and piston pumps.
- Daily routine inspections and periodic inspections as per manufacturers recommendations.
- Be able to disassemble and overhaul mechanical units and components.
- Know troubleshooting techniques, be able to analyze equipment or component failures and suggest or correct problems associated with the failure.
- Knowledge for checking and correcting alignment.
- Knowledge of hydraulics and pneumatics
- Ensure that a high standard of housekeeping is maintained in all designated areas.
- Must participate in all phases of Safety training.
- Must be able to follow directions, set by his immediate supervisor
- Comply with company Safety, Environmental and Health rules and regulations. Report all accidents, injuries and hazards to immediate supervisor.

Required Qualifications

- The Mechanic should have a high school education.
- Requires a minimum of 4 years experience in the oil and gas industry:
- Must be able to speak, read and write English.
- Must be able to read and comprehend parts books, service manuals and technical literature.
- Must have a knowledge of standard craft tools and safe working practices.
- Should have a valid driver's license or documentation to procure.

Jr Warehouseman

Job Number Y049

(Field Based)

Essential Job Duties

Individual will be responsible for control of goods & materials received in at the CPF and Satellite Pipe Yards. Warehouseman will receive & issue material based upon established procedures. Incoming shipments will be

checked to confirm order requirements are met & Material issues will be based upon approved requests from end user with appropriate financial approvals. Warehouseman will participate in resolution of any material discrepancy disputes.

- Confirm receipt of newly arrived material complies with PO details.
- Check incoming shipments for any signs of damage or discrepancies and issues the Material Discrepancy Report in the event of shortage/overage or damages.
- Receives the material, enters the information in Oracle & stores it in warehouse per established procedures.
- Takes the necessary precaution with hazardous materials, following the storage recommendations as per the MSDS's.
- Keeps an updated file of MSDS's for all chemicals and hazardous materials.
- Notify end user of receipt of Direct Charge material & issue material
- Issue warehouse material and enters the information in Oracle.
- Actively monitors warehouse stocks to assure timely replenishment of materials.
- Utilize the proper PPE & comply with all Safety requirements related to warehouse activities
- Keeps clean and in an orderly manner all Warehouses and Yards and all materials properly marked and tagged.
- Coordinate incoming & outgoing logistics shipments with the Logistics & Customs personnel related to cargo activities.
- Utilize proper PPE and comply with all Safety requirements related to Warehouse activities.

Required Qualifications

- 3 - 5 years of experience, preferably in the oil field or construction industries.
- Microsoft Office PC skills: Excel, Word desired
- Working knowledge of Oracle is beneficial.

Additional Desired Qualifications

- Knowledge of oil field - construction materials & logistics
- Fluent in English: reading & writing.

Radio Operator

Job Number Y065

(Field Based)

Essential Job Duties

- To insure that radio communications are maintained at all times
- To insure that telephone communications are maintained and that there is someone to receive and send messages at all times
- To organize personnel on interior flights to and from the field, from Sana'a
- To assist Production techs. with office duties
- Comply with company Safety, Environmental, and Health rules and regulations. Immediately report all accidents, injuries and hazards to immediate supervisor

Required Qualifications

- Should have high school diploma
- Must be willing to work a flexible schedule
- Should have some prior oilfield experience
- Must be able to speak, read and write English

Finance Manager

Job Number Y056

(Sana'a Based)

Essential Job Duties

This is a key senior level position with the opportunity for advancement. This position is open to Yemen Nationals only. The successful candidate will be considered for promotion to Finance Director when he/she demonstrates their ability to perform at a satisfactory level. Responsible for internal and external financial reporting and analysis for all Yemen operated blocks. Prepare/review governmental reports. Liaise with auditors and resolve audit issues. Provide financial analysis support to drilling, operations, logistics and other groups. Train and develop accounting staff. Monitor compliance with internal controls and accounting procedures. Assist Finance Director in other tasks as required.

Required Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in Accounting
- 15 years experience in Accounting & Auditing including 5 Years Experience in a Managerial Position in the Oil industry or Auditing Oil Companies
- Strong Managerial Skills
- Strong Interpersonal Skills
- Excellent communications skills - English & Arabic
- Self-starter with high degree of initiative and strong analytical skills

Additional Desired Qualifications

- Higher accounting qualification - MBA, ACCA, CPA
- Oil Industry experience

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Starvation or the explosive capsule

Prices, not anything else, are the primary concern for people in this beloved homeland. Even in the last holy month of Ramadan, which was supposed to be a divinely occasion for increasing worship and reducing sins, all the prices of basic foodstuffs and other commodities madly skyrocketed, except for the price of man. Here, I rather mean that natives lost their value and no attention paid to their sufferings.

And, starvation, not anything else, is what makes man anywhere see nothing except for his belly and has no direction to refer to other than the direction of his stomach. From this point, judicious officials in any country – be it developed, underdeveloped, rich or poor – are those who expend hard efforts in order not to make people sensitive to their bellies or extremely concerned about them.

Additionally, the responsible government has to take into consideration that prices of basic foodstuffs match the purchasing powers of all the rich and poor families as well, and that prices continue to increase. It should

take into account that foodstuff prices broke a record at the international level while criticism of importers, wholesalers and retailers is impossible to suggest effective solutions to the phenomenon. The government must provide commodities to its people taking into account the purchasing powers of the majority of social groups, particularly those of limited incomes. This is the only hope, which poor families and employees, the salaries of whom stand far below the international average payment scale, pin in their government.

The government, any government of the world of today, spends billions of whatever currency on protecting its borders and enhancing its security, and it is entitled to allocate much spending for maintaining security as the top priority task. But, any government should not forget that providing necessities for citizens is part of protecting borders and maintaining security. Any sol-



By: Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh

dier serving at hot sandy worksite in a remote area wants to be assured that his family members get enough bread to survive so that he can be extremely engaged in his job, which he sacrificed himself for. So, bread-winning is an integral part of protecting borders and maintaining national security.

Leaving bread to tradesmen and wholesalers – be they of clear-conscience or guilty-conscience – to handle it as they want is not the right thing. This matter is dually imposed by the necessities of capitalism and social justice. It should have been understood by politicians sometime earlier.

Privatization must not be comprehensive in order for the state not find itself in a critical dilemma, and for the people not to find themselves unable to tolerate behaviors of tradesmen, who impose new pricelists, be they authentic or not. Anyway, people must be given precedence to benefit from any

price differences over tradesmen, who can make money and interests from commodities other than bread and basic foodstuffs. I expect that the government have learned from this lesson and understood its role after the capsule was about to explode and people ran out of their patience.

The government and people are lucky enough to perceive the mistake that occurred. The former must remain committed to protecting bread in order to have the latter in its side defending any decisions it takes in this respect. People will not forget to support their government when they see it providing all their necessities with reasonable and affordable prices. In any country, citizens are entitled to get their necessities with affordable prices and oppose any fake pricelists imposed by greedy tradesmen under baseless and meaningless guises.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh is Yemen's prominent poet and intellectual. He is the director of the Yemeni Center for Studies.

Source: Al-Thawra State-run Daily.

COMMON SENSE

In light of the CHF aACCESS-MENA report

In Yemen, the future is even more dismal



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

The ACCESS-MENA (Alternatives to Combat Child Labor Through Education and Sustainable Services in Middle East and North Africa) findings on Yemen as given in the Yemen Times last Monday gives a lot of fuel for thought. The ACCESS-MENA program is sponsored by CHF (Community, Habitat and Finance) an NGO that seeks to advance democratic practice and advance the welfare of communities through supporting programs that cater to pedagogic issues and children's social welfare, especially in least developed countries. The numbers entailed in the report cited above are frightening and indicate that there is substantial work needed if Yemen is to get on the right track of development and progress and get out of the pit of continuous social and economic deterioration. For all intents and purposes, it could be said that the Government of Yemen has failed in arranging its priorities and channeling the meager resources of the country towards realizing the greatest benefits to the people now and in the future. In fact, one can surmise that there is almost a deliberate effort to ensure that Yemen never gets on the right track towards enhancement of the social welfare of the people of the country. The obvious implication of having more than 55% of our children of school age out of school is that Yemen is bound to keep at least more than half of its population at starving or near starving levels for a long time to come. Another connotation may be seen in that the overwhelming majority of the population will remain under the mercy of a sleazy very small minority (far less than 1% of the population) that has full access to the resources of the land and full control of the channels of authority, information, finance, education and even foodstuffs. The rest of the population will be prevented from any access to these important factors of sustenance and sustainable growth and development by the mere fact that they have been denied access to the knowledge needed to find the avenues to these vital factors, let alone to make use of them to further advance their lives. It is a terrible picture that the ACCESS-MENA report clearly shows, when most of our children have been confined to serfdom status for at least two generations to come, assuming that the Lord Al-Mighty will finally cleanse the helms of authority from all the evil that has corrupted the functions of Government systematically and deliberately. Eventually, this is leading to the deterioration of the society to the point that the Yemeni people are denied any access to any of the resources of the land, and intentionally kept ignorant from any know-how to improve their lot in life.

The report in fact paints a frightening picture of a society mesmerized in the quest for simply surviving, while the chosen elite, who have in one way or another been allowed to dispossess the Yemeni people of the resources and mechanisms by which they can realize their own personal hopes and ambitions and the overall aspirations of the nation at large, live in lavish splendor and extravagance far beyond all the acceptable moral and ethical standards that are allowed by religious dictates, as well as the mundane provisions of man-made laws and social legislations.

It is really a sign of irresponsibility on the part of government, if more than half of the children of the land – the hope for the future – are left to have all their hopes for survival in the future limited to whatever they can find by searching in the garbage bins. Already, this has become a widespread scene that can be witnessed throughout the unnecessarily crowded cities, as the impoverished rural people are forced to flock to these under-resourced cities in search for a mere fraction of the lavishness displayed by the horrendous mobsters, who have become the masters of the hopeless destiny that they have put in place for the overwhelming majority of the Yemeni people, young and old, rural and urban!

To what extent can the unforgivable methodical and frighteningly meticulous degradation of Yemeni society in all aspects continue?

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

Yemen and the most difficult challenge

By: Muneer Qaied Ahmad

Today, we can confirm that our beloved nation and its great people have passed the most difficult challenge in their history, thanks to wisdom, prudence and ability of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, as well as awareness of the community members, who strongly stood against those who try to destroy the country from inside and abroad. The Yemeni society proved to be a loyal defender of originality, civilization, history and majesty and maintain components of these facts in its conscience and emotion despite the fact that malicious elements skillfully mastered forgery of facts.

Of course, the Yemeni people have passed the biggest challenge amid a crowd of fabricated crises, different problems, prevalence of fake speeches, plus misguidance, intimidation and poor living standards. Also the great

people managed to overcome all the bad economic situations and bad consequences, which corruption forces and terrorist groups left behind. From now on, Yemen has no space for narrow interests, fragmentation and discrimination.

Yemen proved to have great people, who rely on reason and logic and never pay attention to nor consider any influential ideas of those who defected from the homeland unity and were misled by the devil. We have before us good omens of a new life for the people of Yemen, the blessings and blooms of which will never deplete. These blessings and blooms represent the salient titles of the real and pure face of New Yemen that remains adherent to its glorious history and majesty, as well as its unique human civilization.

The Yemeni people are also known for drawing their unique civilization from their rare heritage and exalting performance values, which they inspired from various valleys and pains

throughout the nation. And, like they calmed restless waves of the sea to build intimate relations with them, the sea became their permanent friend that opened its shores for them to discover its secrets and benefit from its wealth.

Yemeni people's relation with the sea has flourished until affecting emotions of all the natives throughout the homeland, thereby helping them learn a lot from the sea about the language of hormonal coexistence with the earth and its lifestyle.

The sea remains the indispensable element in coexisting peacefully with the earth while the bloom of homogenous diversity and multiplicity, which Allah Subhanah Wa Ta'ala bestowed on Yemen, helped elements of the society have strong enthusiasm to defend their national unity and sacrifice everything they have to maintain it.

There are some unpatriotic elements, who ignored such facts and wanted to exploit congestions and destructive chaos to harm the beautiful diversity

in Yemen and stain it in favor of serving their individual interests. But they found that this beloved nation has strong natives, who can scarily all they have for the sake of protecting their unity from any harmful conducts.

Associating democracy with unity has been a historic challenge for the people, as various foreign forces betted on passing their failed project into the Country of Belief and Wisdom. But, the Yemeni people, on the contrary, betted on implementing their human project, which contained all the characteristics of the Yemeni mind in terms of its correlation with faith, wisdom, will and destiny, thereby utilizing all the social contributions in favor of the nation. Then, enemies of the national unity found before them nothing more than entire submission and acknowledgement of Yemeni people's determination to remain unified.

Source: Al-Methaq Weekly.

Platforms promising to eradicate corruption

Platforms of the consecutive governments under Abdulqader Bajammal promised to diagnose corruption, its causes and environment and then take tough measures to eradicate the rampant phenomenon. In Yemen, it has been made clear that spread of corruption is the result of weak government mechanisms and the lack of moral values on the part of corrupt officials, who are merely interested in making wealth and money illegally at the expense of law, order and the public interests.

Many uncultivated beneficiaries are involved in this phenomenon, which is in itself a product of interaction between various factors, as well as an overlapping between direct and indirect economic and social interests, plus different cultures.

Amid awareness about such a persisting issue, the government finds in the local councils a great possibility to combat all the aspects of corruption as soon as they emerge, thanks to an effective democratic system that is more able to control all the administrative units via the popular mechanism (local councils). This system should also have the capacity to mobilize comprehensive social participation in monitoring the phenomenon, activate all the laws and orders and make out of them an effectively strong force for building the new state of law and order. Now, it seems that we are nearer and nearer to applying anti-corruption measures and adopting solidarity and cooperation between

executive offices and local authorities to make Yemen a corruption-free country.

Any remaining legal and administrative gaps must be bridged in order not to let a chance for corrupt individuals to embezzle public money and loot public property, since the phenomenon has terribly proliferated due to ineffective laws and regulations. As a result, these gaps were employed in favor of justifying corrupt behaviors while corrupt individuals learned how to shrewdly interpret anti-corruption measures and regulations to serve their own interests. These individuals reversed all appropriate concepts and counterfeited social awareness so as to make such an irresponsible behavior a norm for any government job. No doubt that confronting all these complications and suggesting suitable solutions to them requires a considerable period of time.

The agenda of Bajammal's second cabinet, which was formed in June 2003, promised to eradicate all the forms of corruption and terrorism in the Yemeni society and the various institutions. As corruption, its origins, causes and climate are all symptomatic of the state's ineffective mechanisms, coupled with the lack of immoral values on the part of those who administer the country, the agencies concerned with fighting

corruption find difficulty suggesting prompt cures to the phenomenon.

Political stability, security and social peace all constitute an interrelated system that has a direct effect on the economic and social development while the phenomena of corruption produces the key challenges facing this system. If terrorism constitutes a catabolism for foundations of the political, economic and social structures, as well as a picture of the immoral corruption, there will be inevitably a strong relation between terrorism and corruption, and this relation is represented by the malicious intents for weakening performance of the state, paralyzing its movement and dismissing its role. Nevertheless, both corrupt individuals and terrorists operate according to an identical ideology that rejects law and order, and scorns them.

The government needs to confront these phenomena that hinder construction and development via adopting a series of programs and policies to fight all the forms of corruption as a legal and moral commitment. It also needs to reform the civil service system and minimize the bureaucratic procedures that reproduce numerous chances for corruption, as well as review legislations on a regular basis, ensure they are applied on real-life situations and enhance the role of the

Central Organization for Control and Audit in monitoring performance of the government offices.

The author is an activist, analyst, and professor of politics at Sana'a University. He welcomes comments by email to: dralfaqih@yahoo.com
Source: Al-Wahdawi Weekly.



By: Dr. Abdullah Al-Faqih



SKETCHED
OPINION

To the
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By: Samer

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Africa's integration imperative

By: Sanou Mbaye

Karl Marx predicted that states would wither away in anticipation of an idyllic communist society capable of auto-regulating economic imbalances and empowering the masses. So he would have been flabbergasted to see his prophecy realized, not by communism, but by the globalization of Anglo-American economic liberalism. Opening up markets to the free flow of capital, not the dictatorship of the proletariat, has rendered state power obsolete.

Today's capital markets raise money for governments, corporate clients, and individual customers, manage pension funds' investments, and bet on the level of interest rates or the stock market. Trading in derivatives by investment banks, hedge funds, and other market participants, reaps huge profits for traders while depriving the real

economy of productive investment and job creation.

No population in the world is spared from the harsh treatment of such a system. Some 40% of the world's 6.5 billion people live in poverty, and a sixth live in extreme poverty. However, the world's black populations are the prime victims. In the United States, one-eighth of all black males between the ages of 25 and 34 are in jail, and three out of five black American households with children are headed by a single mother.

As for African countries, the politics and economics of globalization have stripped them of their assets and natural resources and left them with an unbearable debt burden. As a result, the percentage of Africa's population living in extreme poverty increased from 41.6% in 1981 to 46.9% in 2001.

On the other hand, in the era of globalization, regions in which internal trade exceeds external trade have better economic outlooks and stronger social cohesion. This is the case for Europe,

Asia, and, increasingly, Latin America, particularly among the member states of Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, and Paraguay). The opposite is true for regional groupings in Africa and in the Middle East where trade with the outside world is more important than intra-regional trade.

As a result, any country formulating strategies to counter the destructive forces of globalisation should give overriding priority to a self-centred economic development strategy, preferably within a regional framework. This is a prerequisite to defending against market fundamentalism and avoiding the iniquitous conditions of the international marketplace.

In this respect, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) constitutes an edifying example. The ASEAN economies adopted a united front on international economic issues

and accorded priority to internal economic integration and expanding linkages with major trading partners.

Exports have remained the main driver of economic performance for the ASEAN countries, contributing to 5.8% regional GDP growth in 2006. ASEAN foreign direct investment (FDI) flows reached US\$38 billion in 2005, up by 48% from the previous year. The outlook for 2006 was also bullish, with preliminary data for the first quarter indicating that FDI flows had already reached US\$14 billion, up from US\$7.4 billion in the year-earlier period. ASEAN's drive to establish a fully-fledged economic community has been underlined by implementation of its Priority Integration Sector Roadmaps.

By contrast, sub-Saharan Africa's historical legacy of artificial and unmanageable colonial boundaries, ethnic antagonisms, its citizens' deficit of self-respect, and an appalling record of leadership failures has hampered its quest for economic integration. But a

sector-by-sector approach could mitigate these handicaps, and, given the pressing need to address demand for energy and climate change, it might be strategically advisable to start with the energy sector.

Africa is a continent rich in energy, holding two-thirds of the world's reserves of hydro-electric power – trillions of kilowatt-hours representing about half of total world resources. The Congo River alone holds more than 600 billion kilowatt-hours of annual reserves. The Sanaga (Cameroon) and the Ogooué (Gabon) hold half as much. Technological breakthroughs have made it feasible to transport electricity via high-voltage direct current (HVDC) over long distances without incurring great losses (only about 3% per 1,000 kilometers).

Carbon-free hydroelectric power is the right choice as sub-Saharan Africa's principal source of energy. Harnessing the hydroelectric power of the Congo Basin alone would be enough to meet all of Africa's energy

needs, or to light the entire continent of South America. Moreover, establishing an African grid would enable power from the Democratic Republic of Congo to be delivered to southern European countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Italy.

However, while 90% of world reserves of hydraulic energy are concentrated in underdeveloped regions like sub-Saharan Africa, HVDC technology remains the preserve of developed countries. There is thus an imperative not only for regional integration in Africa, but also for a joint strategic vision and partnership to help build global energy and climate security.

Sanou Mbaye is a Senegalese economist and former member of the African Development Bank senior management team.

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Musharraf's last act?

Hassan Abbas

Desperate to hold onto power, Pervez Musharraf has discarded Pakistan's constitutional framework and declared a state of emergency. His goal? To stifle the independent judiciary and free media. Artfully, though shamelessly, he has tried to sell this action as an effort to bring about stability and help fight the war on terror more effectively. Nothing could be further from the truth. If Pakistan's history is any indicator, his decision to impose martial law may prove to be the proverbial straw that breaks the camel's back. General Musharraf appeared on the national scene on October 12, 1999, when he ousted an elected government and announced an ambitious "nation-building" project. Many Pakistanis, disillusioned with Pakistan's political class, remained mute, thinking that he might deliver. The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on America brought Musharraf into the international limelight as he agreed to ditch the Taliban and support the United States-led war on terror.

Musharraf clamped down on some religious militants operating inside Pakistan and also on those fighting Indian forces in Kashmir. As a result, Pakistan was rewarded with American

financial assistance and arms. In furtherance of his re-alignment, Musharraf sent the Pakistani army into the tribal areas bordering Afghanistan for the first time since Pakistan's independence. Operations there against Taliban and al-Qaeda forces brought mixed results.

Although the US viewed Musharraf as an agent of change, he has never achieved domestic political legitimacy, and his policies were seen as rife with contradictions. For example, he made alliances with Islamist political forces (who in 2004 voted for constitutional changes legitimizing his position and actions). At the same time, he sidelined moderate, mainstream political leaders while claiming that he stood for "enlightened moderation." A series of ill-planned military operations in the tribal areas further complicated the situation in the volatile border region. Last March, Musharraf took his boldest step, removing the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Iftekhar Chaudhry. To the surprise of many, the country's legal community organized a nation-wide movement to restore the Chief Justice to his post. Hundreds of thousands of ordinary people demanded the rule of law and the supremacy of the constitution, emboldening the judiciary and changing the country's political dynamic. In a historic ruling that Musharraf had little choice but to accept, the Supreme Court itself

reinstated the Chief Justice in July. Subsequently, the energized judiciary continued ruling against government decisions, embarrassing the government – especially its intelligence agencies. Government officials were held accountable for actions that were usually beyond the reach of the law, ranging from brutal beatings of journalists, to illegal confinement for "national security."

Musharraf and his political allies tried to adjust to this new reality, but their patience ran out when the Supreme Court took up petitions against Musharraf's decision to run for president. According to the constitution (originally promulgated in 1973 by an elected parliament), a serving military official cannot run for an elected office. Musharraf was not ready to give up his military post, but also wanted to be a civilian president. While he announced that he would leave his military position "if" he was elected president, his track record of renegeing on his promises haunted the judiciary.

The proceedings of the court over the last few weeks made Musharraf jittery. The decision of the 11-member bench might easily have gone against him. Legally cornered, Musharraf has now decided to abandon constitutionality, removing the leading judges of the Supreme Court and provincial high courts and putting curbs on the media. Lawyers, human rights activists, and

political leaders have since been arrested.

There is widespread public resentment in response to these moves. Rather than taking responsibility for the deteriorating security situation (as evidenced by regular suicide bomb attacks) and the increasing Talibanization of the tribal areas, Musharraf has tried to blame the judiciary and media. To be sure, in some cases, judicial activism was obvious (though within the realm of constitutional law), and the media also made mistakes; but by no stretch of the imagination can these be linked to religious extremism or support for militancy.

It is unlikely that Musharraf's latest gambit will succeed, as his popular

support is at its lowest ebb. Pakistan's armed forces – repeated targets of suicide bombers – have become demoralized. It is difficult to imagine them standing with Musharraf should civil conflict erupt. Nor can a weak, embattled, and disoriented Musharraf be expected to fight Islamic militancy effectively or bring political stability to Pakistan.

Opposition political parties are drawing closer together, and former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, despite progress in her power-sharing negotiations with Musharraf, has strongly condemned his actions. Human rights bodies, media associations, and lawyers' organizations are expected to defy the emergency, which will pit them against

the security forces. Terrorists may also benefit by attacking a preoccupied army and political forces aligned with Musharraf. In the event of sustained protests and potential violence, top military commanders may decide to send Musharraf home – a decision that would not be unprecedented in Pakistan's chronically turbulent history.

Hassan Abbas served in the administrations of both Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and President Pervez Musharraf. He is now a research fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and is the author of *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army and America's War on Terror*.

Lucky little countries?

By: Ian Buruma

Western Europe's small democracies have, on the whole, been exceptionally fortunate. Freer and richer than almost anywhere else in the world, countries such as Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland would seem to have little to worry about. This is why the world normally hears less about them than about Afghanistan, say, or Kosovo. Yet all three have been much in the news of late – and not for happy reasons.

The most successful political force in Switzerland today is Christoph Blocher's Swiss People's Party. The party's propaganda material tells its story. A poster shows three white sheep kicking a black sheep off the Swiss flag. And images of junkies and Muslim women in headscarves are contrasted in a promotional movie with idyllic pictures of Alpine scenery and efficient banks – the People's Party's Switzerland.

Vlaams Belang, the Flemish nationalist party, may not be the biggest party in Belgium, but it has done well in local elections. Like the Swiss People's Party, Vlaams Belang feeds on popular resentment of immigrants – especially Muslim immigrants – of the European Union, and, of course, of the French-speaking Walloons, from whom the Flemish nationalists would like a divorce. This last sentiment is posing a serious threat to Belgium's survival.

Although the Dutch government is still managed mostly by mainstream, steady-as-you-go Christian Democrats, right-wing populism is growing. Geert Wilders' Freedom Party wants to ban the Koran, halt Muslim immigration, and deprive delinquents with an immigrant background of Dutch citizenship. The new Proud of the Netherlands Movement, led by Rita Verdonk, the former Minister of Integration, promotes a somewhat more respectable version of this hard line.

These parties and movements share a sense that native-born citizens have been

let down by liberal political elites, who seem unable or unwilling to stem the tide of immigration, crime, and Islamist militancy, as well as the erosion of national sovereignty by EU bureaucracy and global capitalism.

Such fears are by no means confined to Europe's small countries. Nicolas Sarkozy's election in France has at least something to do with similar feelings. But anxieties about being swamped by foreigners and dominated by outside powers are more acute in smaller countries, whose political elites seem particularly impotent.

The Dutch case is the most surprising, because, unlike Belgium, the Netherlands has no significant tradition of right-wing populism. Nor does it share Switzerland's insularity. On the contrary, the Dutch pride themselves on their openness and hospitality to foreigners.

The case of Somalia-born Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the bestselling author of *Infidel*, best illustrates both the popular resentments and the relative openness that mark contemporary Dutch society. Much criticism and even abuse has been heaped on the Dutch for the way her adopted country has treated her. She has received death threats from Muslim extremists ever since she renounced – indeed, denounced – her Muslim faith, and was forced to live as a virtual fugitive, albeit under the protection of the Dutch state. Before moving to the United States, she was forced out of her apartment in The Hague by complaining neighbors, and almost deprived of her passport. Now that she is a permanent US resident, the Dutch government no longer wants to pay for her protection.

Commentators in the US and elsewhere have accused the Dutch of "unacceptable cowardice." Salman Rushdie called her "the first refugee from Western Europe since the Holocaust." French intellectuals, never shy of public posturing, are campaigning to give her French citizenship.

The way the Dutch government handled the affair was not elegant, to say the least. But I'm not sure how many gov-

ernments do pay for the protection of private citizens who live permanently abroad. The US doesn't pay to protect its citizens who are under threat even at home.

It is easy to voice contempt of the Dutch government. But what has been lost in all the commentary is the nature of Hirsi Ali's rise to prominence. It is hard to imagine many countries where a young African woman could become a famous member of parliament only ten years after seeking asylum.

But the reasons for her rise are not entirely salubrious. Whatever the merits – and they are considerable – of her arguments against the bigotry of Islamic or African customs, especially those concerning the treatment of women, she lent respectability to bigotry of a different kind: the native resentment of foreigners, and Muslims in particular.

Indeed, contrary to what some commentators have written, it wasn't cowardly liberals who hounded Hirsi Ali out of the country because of her politically incorrect views about Islam. She was betrayed by her own former ally, Rita Verdonk, and a variety of Dutch xenophobes, who don't like an outspoken black female immigrant from Somalia any more than they like Muslims.

But the truth is these matters count for less than the emotions. And the emotions in this case betray an element of Schadenfreude: look at how even the Dutch, always boasting of their superior tolerance and liberalism, have responded like cowards when their principles are truly tested.

It is true that the Dutch, proud and comfortable inside their narrow borders, have, like the Swiss, often viewed the outside world with a degree of smugness. And for this they are now being punished. That, too, is the natural fate of being a lucky little country in Western Europe.

Ian Buruma is Professor of human rights at Bard College. His most recent book is *Murder in Amsterdam: The Killing of Theo van Gogh and the Limits of Tolerance*.

Another Buddha destroyed

By: Vishakha N Desai

The world watched in horror when Taliban forces destroyed the monumental Buddha statues in Bamiyan, Afghanistan in 2001. Political and cultural leaders from around the globe condemned the attacks. Offers of help poured in. Everyone asked: will the world be ready next time? Alas, the answer is a resounding "no." In northwest Pakistan's Swat valley armed Islamist militants recently attacked one of the oldest and most important sculptures of Buddhist art. Dating from around the beginning of the Christian era, and carved into a 130-foot-high rock, the seated image of the Buddha was second in importance in South Asia only to the Bamiyan Buddhas.

This, moreover, was the second attack in less than a month. Murtaza Razvi of Pakistan's *Dawn* newspaper has pointed out that the image that was attacked was not in a remote area. In fact, it was next to the central road that runs through the valley.

Despite repeated requests by Pakistani archeologists to the local authorities to protect the seated Buddha and other sites, especially after the first attack, no action was taken. In fact, militants were able to carry out their work – drilling holes in the rock,

filling them with explosives, and detonating them – in broad daylight.

They did this not once, but twice. The first time, the image escaped heavy damage because of the militants' incompetence. The second time, they were more successful, destroying not only the sculpture's face, but also its shoulders and feet. As if that were not enough, there are now reports of a third attack.

In 1995, I traveled through the Swat valley to study the area's Buddhist treasures. Carved in the cliff side or protected in small beautiful museums, these remarkable objects were the pride and joy of local Muslims, followers of the faith for more than a millennium. As a non-Muslim, Indian woman, I was able to travel through the region without any fear and received warm support from local residents. People of all stripes welcomed me, and were often willing to take me to important Buddhist sites. Today, little over a decade later, the atmosphere is so poisoned that neither local community leaders nor the local police came forward to protect these monuments or claim them as their own. Even sadder is that while Pakistani newspapers widely condemned these attacks and criticized local officials' indifference, there has been almost no coverage in the international press.

Can it be that after the Iraq war, and

the dismayed images of looting at the National Museum in Baghdad, we have lost our capacity to be outraged? Or is it that we have become so inured to bad news surrounding the war on terror that we have no desire to know more?

There is a vast number of important Buddhist sites in Swat and other areas of northwest Pakistan. At this point, all of them are under threat of destruction, thanks to the influential voice of the Islamist leader Mullah Fazlullah, whose father-in-law, Sufi Mohammad, founded one of the extremist orders.

This order was responsible for bringing more than 10,000 *jihadi* fighters to Afghanistan to fight alongside Taliban soldiers against the United States in 2001. While Mohammad is believed to be languishing in a regional jail, Mullah Fazlullah operates with impunity, using the radio to spread a message of hatred and intolerance. It is time that the world community not only registers its outrage against such destruction of cultural treasures, but also joins those Pakistanis who are desperately trying to pressure their government to preserve – for their sake and ours – their pre-Islamic cultural heritage. If the world does not act this time, we risk losing one of the most precious legacies of early Buddhist history.

Vishakha N. Desai is President of the Asia Society.

Foreseeable agricultural crisis to affect the livelihoods of twelve million Yemenis

By: YemenTimes Staff

Yemen is still an agricultural based economy, employing almost half the workforce and providing livelihoods for over two-thirds of the population. However, the agricultural sector is facing enormous challenges that obstruct its development, ranging from policy issues, to trade, production, and water issues. This report sheds the light on the recent developments in the Agricultural sector and the outlook for upcoming years.

Yemen's Agricultural Economy is Shrinking. The contribution of Agricultural to the GDP is falling from 18 percent in 2004 with an expectation to drop to 13 percent in 2007, while production of crops in the country has been decreasing, along with the landmass allocated for agricultural activity, and therefore the Agricultural Sector is also employing less people, and in turn affecting the livelihoods of more than twelve million people

Desertification:

Director of the desertification unit within the Yemeni Ministry of Agricultural and Irrigation Mr. Ali Al-Dhamiri told media sources that less than 14 percent of the Yemeni landmass is cultivatable area, and 20 percent out of that cultivatable area is being used for agricultural production of all crops, including Qat. He stated that 95 percent of the agricultural areas face the risk of deterioration, mainly because of the lack of water and Qat's heavy water requirements, as well as the continuous desertification of landmass once agricultural activity becomes non-profitable for farmers, given the increasing cost and scarcity of water resources.

Al-Dhamiri emphasized that although Yemen has a sound anti-desertification strategy, his unit hasn't been able to implement it due to the lack of resources. Al-Dhamiri states that agricultural areas in the northern, eastern and selected southern parts of the country are facing the most serious desertification threat due to the accumulation of desert sands in the agricultural land.

Qat to blame:

Research done by the Ministry of Agriculture states that the increased cultivation of Qat is the prime reason for the increase in prices for other agricultural commodities, such as tomatoes, potatoes and coffee. The research also states that Qat consumes around 70 per-

cent of the water resources dedicated to the agricultural sector, and given the current rate of Qat cultivation in Sana'a governorate, the Sana'a basin will run out of water by 2015 and all agricultural activity, dependent livelihoods and employment opportunities will be lost for good.

Minister of Agriculture Dr. Mansour Al-Hawshabi stated that his ministry has taken a few measures in order to reduce cultivation of Qat the negative side effects of the crop, stating that all chemical agents used in cultivation of Qat has been banned, and that improved extension services and technology has been introduced to farmers to help them increase agricultural yield of other crops which are more beneficial to the people and the economy as a whole.

Director of the general authority for research and agricultural guidance Dr. Ismael Moharam stated that Qat cultivation during 2005 has consumed over 926 million cubic meters of water, while water costs in Qat cultivation reach 46 percent of cultivation cost, while the use of chemical agents to stimulate growth costs around 40 percent of cultivation cost. Moharam also added that farmers are increasingly growing Qat because of the high economic returns compared to other crops.

Growing Coffee and Wheat

The Ministry of Agriculture has a plan to plant over a million coffee trees in selected areas where coffee production can be more viable. In order to compensate for the deterioration in coffee production since 1970, which exceeded seven thousand hectares compared to a mere 127 hectares today. The Ministry is also trying to work with agricultural associations and cooperatives in order to organize the coffee industry in terms of production, grading and export mechanism.

Director of Agricultural guidance and communications within the Ministry of Agriculture Dr. Mansour Al-Aaqil has stated that expanding coffee and wheat production was initiated by President Saleh in order to improve agricultural exports and food security. Dr. Al-Aaqil reiterated that almost half a million hectares will be targeted through this three-year strategy (2007-2009), which has access to water and are most suitable to growing wheat and other grains.

The Strategy also includes introducing genetically-modified crops which are resistant to diseases and provide more agricultural yield, with a hope that these crops will increase wheat production per hectare to come closer to inter-



Genetically-modified crops will hopefully produce more yield per hectare.

national standards of wheat production per hectare, especially since Yemen imports over 92 percent of its wheat from the international market.

The Minister of Agriculture Al-Hawshabi has stated that there is a lot of hope in the success of this strategy, hoping that the direction to increase local production will decrease dependence on exports by 15-20 percent throughout the next two decades. He also added that the government is willing to buy local wheat production as a higher rate than the market in order to encourage farmers to produce more wheat instead of other crops which might have lower returns

and are uncompetitive in the market.

Local Agriculture under the WTO

Future prospects of the Agricultural Sector are also dependent on the changes in the international market as well as the relationship between Yemen and the World Trade Organizations. Several large countries have established boundaries and conditions in order to protect their local agricultural industries, with reference to examples such as the United States and the European Union. Following suit, Director of the coordination unit with the WTO affiliated to the Ministry of Trade Dr. Hamoud Al-Najjar

has stated that the current negotiations with the WTO aim at protecting the local agricultural producer from the consequences of opening the market.

On his part, Professor of Economics in Sana'a University Dr. Mohammed Al-Maitami has emphasized that over 33 percent of the value of imports are foodstuff, which creates a considerable burden on the balance of payments, he stated that in 2005, Yemen spent around 100 billion Riyals on food imports, which equals roughly half the income generated by Oil sales for that year.

has issues a report regarding the state of agriculture,

Economic Growth's Many Recipes

By: Dani Rodrik

CAMBRIDGE, MA. -- Development "big think" has always been dominated by comprehensive visions about transforming poor societies. From the so-called "Big Push" to "Balanced Growth," from the "Washington Consensus" to "Second Generation Reforms," the emphasis has been on wholesale change.

Today's fashion in development is no different. The prevailing obsession with the "governance" agenda entails a broad-based effort to remold institutions in developing societies as a prerequisite for economic growth. The United Nations Millennium Project involves a large-scale, coordinated big push of investment in human capital, public infrastructure, and agricultural technologies.

But there have also been iconoclastic dissenters from such comprehensive approaches, among whom Albert Hirschman was without doubt the most distinguished. Indeed, Hirschman's seminal contributions have now been recognized by the United States Social Science Research Council, which this year established a prize in his honor.

Hirschman's interests shifted away from economic development over the course of his illustrious career. But when he was still involved in development debates, he would frequently

remind his contemporaries that any country that had the capacity to undertake comprehensive programs would not be underdeveloped to begin with.

Indeed, he once chided John Kenneth Galbraith for enunciating a long list of prerequisites for foreign aid to be effective. If developing countries could meet these conditions, he wrote, they would be in a position to send foreign aid to the United States!

Hirschman believed that the possibilities for economic development are not nearly as constrained as comprehensive theories would lead us to believe. The imbalances specific to underdevelopment create opportunities that policymakers can seize on. Instead of relying on fads emanating from abroad, we need to experiment and look for the unique solutions that will allow us to circumvent ingrained social structures that inhibit growth.

Hirschman's central insights on development have held up extremely well. The key lesson of the last half-century is that policymakers must be strategic, rather than comprehensive. They have to do the best with what they have instead of wishing they could transform their society wholesale. They need to identify priorities and opportunities, and work on them. They must seek sequential, cumulative change rather than a single, all-inclusive breakthrough.

Successful countries do share some common features. They all provide some degree of effective property rights protection and contract enforcement, maintain macroeconomic stability, seek to integrate into the world economy, and ensure an appropriate environment for productive diversification and innovation.

But how these ends are achieved differs. For example, greater integration with world markets can be achieved via export subsidies (South Korea), export-processing zones (Malaysia), investment incentives for multinational enterprises (Singapore), special economic zones (China), regional free trade agreements (Mexico), or import liberalization (Chile).

The best-designed policies are always contingent on local conditions, making use of pre-existing advantages and seeking to overcome domestic constraints. That is why successful reforms often do not travel well. Reforms, after all, are not hothouse plants that can be transplanted at will in any soil.

Moreover, generating economic growth requires hitting the right targets, not doing everything at once. What matters at any point in time is to alleviate a society's immediate binding constraints — another reason why different policies are needed for different places. China was constrained by poor supply incentives in agriculture in the late

1970's. Today's Brazil is constrained by inadequate supply of credit. El Salvador is constrained by inadequate production incentives in tradable goods. Zimbabwe is constrained by poor governance.

These problems all require different methods for unlocking growth. What we need is selective, well-targeted reforms, not a laundry list.

Countries run into trouble when they do not use high-growth periods to strengthen their institutional underpinnings. Two kinds of institutions in particular need shoring up: conflict management institutions to enhance economies' resilience to external shocks, and institutions that promote productive diversification. Growth collapsed in Africa in the late 1970's because of the weakness of the former, and fizzled in Latin America after the first half of the 1990's because of the weakness of the latter.

This line of thinking has vast implications for the design of appropriate global economic arrangements. Hirschman would be aghast at the extent of intrusion into domestic policymaking that the World Trade Organization or the International Monetary Fund engage in nowadays. As international bureaucracies with a penchant for "best practices" and common standards, these institutions are woefully unsuited to the task of seeking innovative, unique pathways suited to

each country's particular circumstances.

But Hirschman also would not doubt chide developing country governments for not living up to their responsibilities and for passing on the buck so freely to these external agencies. For, ultimately, it is up to each country to say, "Thanks, but no, thanks; we'll do it our way."

Many economists were skeptical about Hirschman's approach because they could not quite fit it into the economics they had been trained to practice. But, over the years, economics has become richer, too. Dynamic models have become much more common, an economics of the "second-best" has flourished, political economy has become mainstream, and behavioral economics has thrown the "rational actor" into doubt. As a result, Hirschman looks less and less the maverick that he fancied himself to be. Conventional wisdom may finally be catching up with him.

Dani Rodrik, Professor of Political Economy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is the first recipient of the Social Science Research Council's Albert O. Hirschman Prize. His latest book is *One Economics, Many Recipes: Globalization, Institutions, and Economic Growth*. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2007.

Business in Brief

Government expects US\$ 2 billion deficit in 2008 budget

Minister of Finance Noman Al-Sohibi told the parliament that the government expects of a deficit of 8 percent of the total budget for FY 2008, of 399.34 billion Riyals. This deficit in financing can be overcome if the record-high Oil prices are maintained, as the budget estimates income from oil prices basing the price of oil at an average of US\$ 55 per barrel.

Government allocates 407 billion Riyals as Oil subsidies

The government of Yemen stated that 407 billion Riyals has been allocated as Oil subsidies in 2008, compared to 424 billion Riyals as Oil subsidies in 2007. The decrease comes inline with government policy to reduce all subsidies and liberalize the national market. This decrease also confirms rumors that the increasing local consumption of Oil will result in a price hike in the retail prices of Oil and Gas products in the local market towards the middle of 2008.

Yemen Speeds up compatibility reforms with GCC

Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Al-Arhabi stated that Yemen has accelerated the compatibility reforms which will allow the various government agencies to be more compatible with their counterpart in the Gulf Cooperative Council Countries, towards enhancing economic and business partnerships and establishing strong regional integration in the Arabian Peninsula.

Greek company wins bid to restructure Yemen Construction Bank

A Greek Banking Information Systems (BIS) company has won the bid to restructure the banking system of the Yemeni Bank for Construction. The proposed BIS will ensure that the banking standard of the bank meets European standards, as well as implement the T-24 bank management system for administration, monitoring and control functions of the bank's operations.

Arab Small Industries Conference: Expect a milestone

Minister of Trade and Industry Al-Mutawakel has stated that over 18 working papers will be discussed in the upcoming Arab Small Industries Conference, to be held in Sana'a on November 25-26. The papers will discuss the transformation of the Small and Micro Enterprises in the region towards creating Small Industries which can attract large investments in turn creating an industrial backbone for the Arab economies in the longterm.

IFC's investments reach US\$ 132 million in 2007

Country Director of the IFC in Yemen Sa'ad Sabra has told media sources that IFC's investment in Yemen has reached US\$ 132 million in 2007, compared to the initial US\$ 12 million when the corporation started operation in Yemen in 2005. He stated that the most recent investment agreements included Cement, Health, and Infrastructure, as well as providing technical assistance to the government of Yemen to help reform the business environment.

New Islamic Bank to be formed in Yemen

Yemen Commercial and Agricultural Credit Bank (CAC Bank) has announced plans to form a joint Islamic bank with Qatar's Al-Doha Bank, with an initial paid-up capital of US\$ 100 million. CAC Bank also announced that Al-Doha bank intends to buy 9 percent of CAC Bank's shares from the Yemeni Government.

3 companies to establish Petrochemical Industry in Yemen

Three regional companies have made joint plans to establish a petrochemical industry within the Aden Free Zone, with an initial capital of US\$ One billion. Yemen businessman Saleh Al-Surayma stated that the alliance was announced after consultations with a number of officials and President Saleh who gave his blessing to the project.

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صنعا - شارع تعز ٦١١٠١٠ - معرض السيارات شارع الستين: تلفون: ٩٦٧ ١ ٤٤٣٥١١/٢ فاكس: ٩٦٧ ١ ٤٤٣٥١٤

TOYOTA

سنتر هابي لاند Center

One month of Italy Products in Happy Land Center

As usual, Happy Land Center seeks to display the needs of the consumers. A new division has been recently opened special for Italian products.

Under the slogan of "Month of Italy products", Mrs. Bernardetta Gravili the Commercial Attaché in the Italian embassy, cut the ribbon, inaugurating the new division for Italian products.

Sami Thabet, the Marketing Manager in the Happy Land, said that the inauguration of the Italian products division is a new addition to Happy Land Center in

order to provide consumers with their demands in one place and under one roof. It is also to meet the shoppers' desire who want to find variety of all commodities in his shopping place.

"In order to meet our clients' demands and due to the quality and global fame of Italian products, we decided to open this division. The displayed products are Affreschi, Ferrero Rocher, Nutella, Tonon, Elledi and Parmalat." he said

On this occasion Happy Land Center makes big sales for these Italian products as well as for other ones. This is for a limited period.



The Youth Forum section is an uncensored space for youth-related issues written by Yemen Times readers.

Goodbye, dearest uncle

By: Lamis Abdulkarim Shuga'a
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First, an actual event occurred behind what I'm going to write. A month ago, I received my usual call from my friendly 37-year-old uncle. He used to phone me from time to time to talk as if we're friends and not as an uncle and his niece. Actually, he was a kind man, not only to me, but also to others.

Five days after that call, I unexpectedly received another call informing me that my uncle had just died.

I remember several events and many things I heard on that ill-fated day, but only one thing drove me out of my mind – a traffic accident lasting less than five minutes took my uncle from me forever. Really? Alas, I'll never see him again. What ugliness of this present life, to deprive us of those dearest to us. I pray that Allah, the most merciful and gracious, will show mercy toward my uncle.

I know some amazed readers may say that what I've described is regarded as a usual and normal daily event. Of course, I agree completely, but hearing something like that is absolute-

ly different than experiencing it yourself.

In fact, it's difficult to describe my state at that time. Whatever I've written thus far, my pen still is unable to express my inner feeling and my sadness. Simply, I see everything in this life as if I'm wearing dark glasses. This has been my feeling, but what about his family's feelings, i.e., his wife and children? They seem as if they've lost their way. I ask God to help them and grant them patience and forgetting.

Actually, I want to take this occasion to convey an important message to drivers and motorists to avoid such a situation first for their families and then for themselves. I hope my advice is heeded. A point that mustn't be denied is that death is guaranteed to us all; everyone must satisfy his fate and destiny. However, we should be more careful and cautious in all aspects and situations in this life.

Allah grants us innumerable gifts; for instance, He created ears for us to listen, eyes to see and, above all, minds to think. The latter is what distinguishes humans from animals. Therefore, we must use each gift more correctly and appropriately; otherwise, we may deliver ourselves and our lives to

destruction or, at the very least, we'll certainly face many problems and difficulties.

Dear drivers, obey the rules of the road, take care while driving, drive as slowly as you possibly can and always remember one thing: arriving late is better than not coming at all.

Many drivers, especially youth, don't adhere to speed limits and furthermore, they are proud of it. In other words, the faster they drive, the prouder they become. On the other hand, another group drives so fast in competing with others – bus drivers in particular – to gain more riders and thereby, more money, neglecting the fact that Allah is the provider. Still others drive hurriedly, as if they're driving on a racetrack.

Dear drivers, you must know that it's just a race to the end, to death and the afterlife. The Qur'an asserts, "Don't throw yourselves away by your hands to destruction, but do well because Allah loves beneficent ones." (Surat Al-Baqarah: 195)

Indeed, compared to other countries, many laws and traffic rules aren't strict enough in Yemen; for example, seat belts, speed limits, obtaining licenses, drunk driving, using mobiles, etc.

Everyone must consider himself master of his situation or like a traffic officer, whose job is to make the roads safe for all users. Drivers may apply these rules to the road, even if there are no obligatory rules in our country in particular and in other countries in general. Of course, this is for their sake as well as for that of others.

Another piece of advice for all is that we must always be aware of the fact that this present life is transient and we are just passersby, whereas the afterlife is eternal. As the Qur'an says, "The present life is just fun and amusement, while the afterlife is good for those who fear Allah." (Surat Al-An'am: 32) It also states, "You prefer life in this world, but the afterlife is good and eternal." (Surat Al-A'ala: 16-17)

Finally, everyone must live his life as if he'll live forever and live for the afterlife as if he'll die tomorrow. In fact, I often hear such words, but I've never felt and appreciated them as I have at this moment.

Lamis Abdulkarim Ahmed Shuga'a is an English teacher from Taiz currently pursuing her master's at Taiz University in the English Department's Language Center.

Through The Mind's Eye



By: Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy
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To the Ministry of Electricity

By: Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy
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Immeasurable benefits are offered to the entire world daily by electricity and even its absence through cutoffs provides other services. No one denies its importance, even those living in villages and undeveloped areas unreachable by the ministry's curse – I'm sorry, its mercy.

However, I wonder if anyone takes into account the benefits the Ministry of Electricity offers when it cuts off the power. In two hours, or sometimes more, it actually does provide citizens with additional services.

This matter took some thinking when the sound of children both outside and inside the home, together with the evening darkness, announced the cutting of power at a time when everything is completely electrified. That is to say, almost all lights are on, guests are interested in watching television, while heated discussions about politics are going on, especially after passing by news channels like Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabia.

At least one person is interested in checking his computer folders, from which emit clamorous songs especially for qat gatherings, while another is fighting with the mobile charger, claiming that he is expecting some very important calls.

Noise from televisions and children comes from the other rooms and neighboring houses too. Worse still, there's loud music from a band at a nearby wedding hall, which seems to be playing for all of the area's residents, and for that, its owner is happy, thinking that he is doing them a service. Many other things are electrical, such as washing machines, heaters, Play Stations, etc.

For this, we as permanent customers of the ministry do feel gratitude and it is necessary to thank it officially and pay for this regular service.

In a blink, it had ended all of the surrounding electrified disturbance as silence and peace of mind suddenly blanketed the entire area. No longer were there televisions, no computer, no musical band or any type of disturbance. Even the children calmed down. In return, no more than two candles offered sufficient light to the entire place, causing the situation to become quite romantic.

It brought to my mind a birthday party I attended, but one with a big-cheeked qat chew rather than cakes, sweets and juice. Everyone then went into their own "Suleimaniah hour," during which I began listing the benefits we receive from such electrical power cuts.

Having listed these advantages, I discovered it a good thing for the ministry to be paid as thanks for the benefits it provides customers through this continu-

ing habit. From an economic and financial perspective, it's a moneymaking project for the Yemeni government in general and for the Ministry of Electricity in particular.

Under a new project, the ministry will affix meters and issue special bills for these cutoff hours; however, such meters must be able to run on batteries, candles or something else, as there will be no electricity. I think the price of silence and calmness must be higher than the price of electricity because no generators or other machinery can offer such silence.

Customers actually are happy when the electricity is off because their normal meters are off, which lowers the monthly bill in the end. However, this negatively affects the ministry's income. Because of this, it loses money every month and this is the reason for its failure to make any new improvements or extensions of its current status.

What astonished me even more was when a friend of mine used a candle to light his cigarette. I realized that he no longer needed to buy and carry a box of matches or a lighter. In addition to saving money, citizens will save their effort of keeping a lighter or a box of matches, which may cause a fire if children play with it.

I felt relaxed because it was evening, the time when one wants to be with family. I don't think anyone really is bothered by electricity cuts, since it warns guests of the time to leave.

This could be exploited further as a new source of income for the ministry by making contracts with those who have guests regularly. In such contract, the ministry would pledge to cut the power at a time suitable to such individuals so that it will remind their guests of the time to leave.

have listed only these benefits, although there may be many others. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Electricity gains nothing, while it spends much for programs, machinery and employees especially to provide customers this cut-off service.

In contrasting such benefits with what customers pay for, I found that two candles cost only YR 20; thus, the ministry should study the feasibility of this project, which I hope it will begin soon for sake of the public's interest.

Last, I want to stress this project's exclusivity to the Ministry of Electricity, as there's no need for other ministries to include it in their future plans.

This is the status of electricity in our happy Yemen. Since Yemen is happy, as it is claimed, there's no need for any new projects.

I sincerely hope the above suggestion will not be taken into account. Additionally, there's no need to ask the relevant authorities to look at it through their mind's eye, as I usually say.

The most important skill

By: Adel Hassan Al-Adlany
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It was a surprise to find my friend Mohammed Al-Moqri knocking on the door of our house one morning, inviting me to go with him to his Faculty of Education in at Sana'a University along with many students from different levels and perhaps from various colleges.

They go there to participate in heated discussions, which could be described as a fight, but not violent, as one might think. Rather, the purpose is to say peaceful things resulting in effective output and offering a glimmer of hope for the future.

That particular day was the last on which every pupil was ordered to stand on stage and be asked a question, which was obligatory to answer as a type of language learning and a way to gain self-confidence.

I was even more surprised when I was forced to stand on stage by the emcee, Abdulqader Al-Jarbani. Regardless, the important thing I like referring to is that there was one question that attracted my attention from among all of those crowded in my head

and it has caused me to take up my pen to expand more upon it.

One female student asked me, "In your opinion, what's the most important skill?" I took several breaths to comprehend, contemplate and just to collect my thoughts in order to organize them into a logical and persuasive approach.

I then replied bluntly that I believe the four skills involving language are related to each other, that is, they cannot be separated from one another; however, other more basic and primary skills should be taught and learned before others. In other words, some skills are prior to others because they represent the principal steps in building what's known as "language."

For example, listening and reading come before speaking and writing because the former are receptive skills, whereas the latter are productive skills greatly dependent upon what has been received. Thus, none of them can give up the others and if this exists, it may be described as a special case due to the fact that these skills are four faces of one cube.

Additionally, if we look carefully at university curriculums, we'll find that reading and listening skills have priority at the basic level, after which come teaching and learning productive skills.

Moreover, reading offers language input, just as listening does. However, because it is fast and silent, an efficient reader is exposed to much more accurate linguistic content in a short space of time than when listening. This is why Allah says in the first verse of the Qur'an, "Iqra." or "Read," because reading is the key to science in general, aside from just language.

Indeed, reading and knowledge are

the brain's nutrition. Reading enriches the mind with wisdom and dispels much of worries, superstitions and delusional thoughts. I conclude with Francis Bacon's saying, "Reading makes a full man, conferences make a ready man and writing makes an exact man."

Thus, we can say in short that reading has priority precedence within the educational hierarchy.

To see you again

By: Ahlam Al-Awkabi

Don't say that I'm inane!
Rather, let one thing be in your
brain,

I want to see you again
Before the travel of the train,
Before the sky and eyes rain,
Before the sun dips behind the
mountain,
Before death comes, which I can't
entertain.

I want to see you again
Before love breaks under the strain,
Before I lose your love, which I
maintain,
Before I dive into the pain,
Before my efforts are in vain.

I want to see you again
To tell you about my love, which I
can't contain,
To tell you about my respect, which
I can't explain,
To tell you about my love, which
the days detain,
To rid the yearning of my heart
from the chains.

I can't do anything except constrain
To tell my heart that sees all the
handicaps with disdain

That I will gain
By your love, which I will regain.
I'll pray for my God to give me the
strength to make our memories
remain,
To make our love regain,
To let me see you, my friends,
again.

Ahlahm Ahmed Musa'ad Al-Awkabi
was born in Kuwait on Feb. 12,
1983. She earned a bachelor's
degree in English from Sana'a
University's Faculty of Education in
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Duet Pain

By: Fuad Noman
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A mere of tears come loose on
A maid and dame's cheeks
Irrigated by a sorrowful fountain
Painting the image of a duet pain
Life's malice driving
A wiser into an insane
With any luck,
All birds drone alluring hymns
Love has no a shameful stain
It falls in soul profluent
With twangs of rain
Passing its best
In the river of veins
Being same
In a thane's blood and a swain's
A fervent love can be hained
In the Peace fane
The duct of soul would be so plain
In veracity
Love became a big deal of trade
No more than Just a claim state
It has not become naturally innate
Only my heart
For love can translate
As My soul's waves
With dawn's light softly vibrate
In the love's contest
My heart has been chosen
The first and best
That is why
My gentle song crammed
With the human's respect

Never... Never... Never
The lion's eyes have wept!
So my pain has become duet
As usual and maybe soon
The frames of essence became
As an impassive Goth
My elation would be quite mute
So,
My soul's melody won't lilt
a tempting tune
Oh my God!
Kindly save and bless
My vibrant heart
My cute sense
Always terminates
At a bitter halt
In the rain of my eyes
My soul's scream
Diving to melt my heart's salt
To gain a deep quietude
To grow with my innocent root
As my survival cure
To be more pure
And whiter than a wisp of rime
Trying to avoid
The life's filth and grime
Our planet is ill
With a cruel time
Life's canto
Written by a doleful rhyme
Feeling my gone days as dolts
My wit and reverie chained
By ghost's bolts
But in my soul's ballroom,
My pretty vibes still dance waltz

High school graduates and specialization

By: Abdullah Bin Abri Al-Nahdi
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There are many reasons high school graduates specialize in the wrong section, as high school is divided into two sections:

If you ask why a student chose one section over the other, the answer usually is that by doing so, he or she escaped certain subjects he would have had to face in the other. Thus, the student didn't so much as choose a section, as he or she escaped one.

In doing so, he or she had no goal and didn't decide his or her future yet. Thus, his or her future is built on the basis of escape, which surely will end in failure. We should face our problems

rather than escaping them or holding them in ignorance.

Most high school students graduate without even a basic knowledge about university. They have no idea what university is, nor do they know what college is. The relationship between high schools and universities is utterly lost due to lack of guidance in high schools and lack of information about college for high school students.

Thus, upon graduating, high school students find themselves lost in this world, not knowing how they got there or where they're heading. They go like helpless ships without a captain, carried wherever the wind pushes them.

Another reason involves high school results, whereby some students leave the decision to their results to decide which field they will enable him or her

to enter, although they aren't supposed to let their results decide, but rather, decide their results.

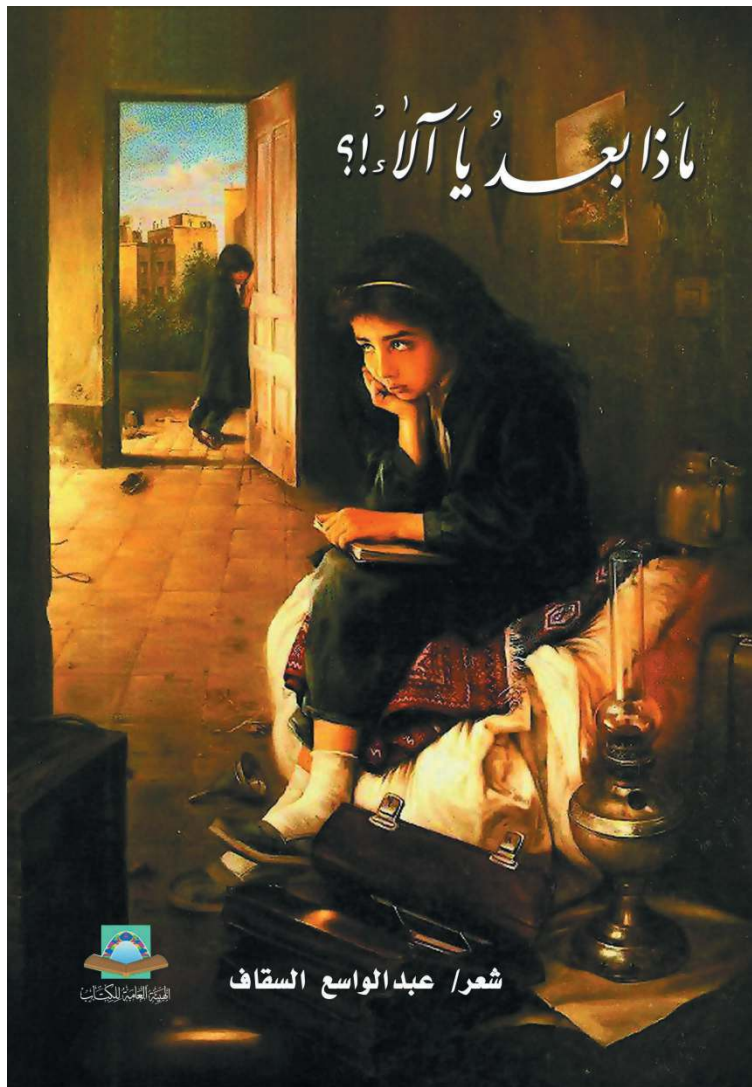
In any event, high school students need some information to guide them, so the following is some helpful advice:

- Try to know your abilities: Knowing your abilities will help you choose the right field for you.
- Get more information: Information can be obtained by visiting universities and meeting with responsible parties there, as well as not neglecting modern means such as the internet, etc.
- Don't be influenced by outside events: What happens to others won't necessarily happen to you. Make your choice independent of others

because you may succeed where they don't.

- Take others' counsel: Ask those who have experience and try to avoid their mistakes.
- Admit your mistake and change: If you discover that your decision was wrong, change it rather than insisting upon your original decision, which may cost you too much in the future.
- Optimism and satisfaction are important: When going to college on your first day, be optimistic because the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) likes a good omen.
- Finally, if you don't feel comfortable with the field you chose, be satisfied with what was written for you by God because in the end, you'll have happiness in this life and reward in the next.

Tribute to Dr. Al-Saqqaf



Abdul-Wasa Al-Saqqaf, a Yemeni poet and translator, wrote a collection of poems titled 'Alaah: What Next!'. The book was issued by the General Authority of Books in 2007. It falls in 131 A5 size paper, including 44 different types of Arabic Standard poems (laments, lyrics, epics, social, love, & political poetry) written between 1995 and 2007.

The collection has been released in the 24th international Book Fair that ended early this month in Sana'a city. "The book had met a great acceptance by readers as the whole quantity of the collection has been sold," said Al-Saqqaf.

One of the laments in the collection was for the late Dr. Abdul-Aziz Al-Saqqaf, founder of Yemen Times newspaper.

The poet, AlSaqqaf, said that he wrote these poems after the sudden death of the late and recited it in his 40th funeral party before a big audience of ministers, diplomats and VIPs.



Al-Saqqaf And The Untimed Death*

Pen!
What's happened!? What makes you cry!
What makes your lips purple and dry!
Happy yesterday, good all the news,
Yet today you are missing that amuse!
Filling all the paper with bloody shame,
Killing hope and feeling, is it your aim!
What has happened! Tell the people what,
Makes the mountains shiver, like a tiny cat!
Abdulaziz is dead! Yeah, in the grave,
Value and truth are buried alive!
Yes, He is dead, sent-off by life,
His guidance, however, is still alive!
Whom to be accused, our Giant is gone,
Tell those who censure, never hide the sun!
Giant of no match, no substitute,
His foe is pygmy, whatsoever a cute!
Thousands of these fools are climbing thousands,
They never are forming, not even his hands!

A grave hiding you! That was amazing,
Can a mountain fall or the mount swaying!
Never thought of hearing, simply your death,
And the people mourning, and I'm on the earth!
Following your death, what becomes of life!
Whom to be respected & how to be in safe!
Following your death does the noble able,
In pride survive and the pen for people!
You closed your eyes, not to see their vice,
Nor to see vengeance spread like mice!
Not to see on earth so many poor men,
Strive for the bit, here of no sin!
Not to be the seer of dreadful scene
Or to be, in sorrow for the people, seen!

You, a humble man for the help of people,
In a time, the man is a careless devil!
Has given all love to the entire world,
East also west, kind was your word!
"Wise" said people of the distant west,
"No! A famous leader" described by east!
Like a meadow is, you given your days,

With horizons for the people's ways!
A courageous man that's what you were,
When our leaders have adopted fear!

Has the death been able realizing you?
With bravery moving as a tornado!
Capable was not he, to utter your name,
Once you allowed, like a robber came!
Ultimate is Death, whenever it came,
What a shame I say, whoever to blame!
Why to hide in us every shiny star,
Why to let the clouds covering afar!
Death be not happy, we often content,
Offering the greats, no any contempt!
No misers are we, nor are magpies
Come to us we do hospitalities!
If any has gone, we award another,
Following his path, like son like father!
Tell the death; fear none, bad or evil,
So the world, let know, we're still able!
Counts we make none, for our stars,
Since they're shining Venus until Mars!

* Translated by the poet

Odd news

Man in India marries dog as atonement

NEW DELHI(AP) — A man in southern India married a female dog in a traditional Hindu ceremony as an attempt to atone for stoning two other dogs to death — an act he believes cursed him — a newspaper reported Tuesday.

P. Selvakumar married the sari-draped former stray named Selvi, chosen by family members and then bathed and clothed for the ceremony Sunday at a Hindu temple in the southern state of Tamil Nadu, the Hindustan Times newspaper said.

Selvakumar, 33, told the paper he had been suffering since he stoned two dogs to death and hung their bodies from a tree 15 years ago.

"After that my legs and hands got paralyzed and I lost hearing in one ear," he said in the report.

The paper said an astrologer had told Selvakumar the wedding was the only way he could cure the maladies. It did not say whether his situation had improved.

Deeply superstitious people in rural India sometimes organize weddings to dogs and other animals, believing it can ward off certain curses.

The paper showed a picture of Selvakumar sitting next to the dog, which was wearing an orange sari and a flower garland.

The paper said the groom and his family then had a feast, while the dog got a bun.

Caption:

P. Selvakumar, left, places a garland on a sari-draped former stray female dog named Selvi

New York mulls \$1,000 fine for feeding pigeons

NEW YORK (Reuters) — A New York City lawmaker wants to declare war on the city's pigeons and says he will not be dissuaded by the difficulties faced by London and Venice in ridding themselves of the ubiquitous birds.

City Councilman Simcha Felder on Monday called on the city to levy a fine of as much as \$1,000 (490 pounds) on people feeding pigeons, distribute bird contraceptives, and employ hawks to scare the birds away.

He also suggested appointing a "pigeon czar" to orchestrate the fight, a plan that has ruffled the feathers of animal lovers.

"Cities are lifeless places. People don't appreciate the fact that we have some wildlife," said Al Streit, director of The

Pigeon People, an organization that rescues injured birds.

Felder said he doesn't expect to rid the city of pigeons but that it was time to combat what he called a public health hazard.

Felder said pigeons and their droppings are host to several severe communicable diseases, though a report released by his office noted that cases "are rare and the threat is often exaggerated."

London has outlawed feeding pigeons in Trafalgar Square and brought in trained hawks to kill them. But pigeons still flock to the square, and Mayor Ken Livingstone has come under fire for the program's high cost.

Venice is trying to stop the sale of bird seed in St. Mark's Square and prevent pigeons from chipping away at marble statues and buildings. Licensed bird feed sellers do not want to go and animal rights activists have also expressed concern.

This summer, Los Angeles said it would introduce a pigeon contraceptive called OvoControl P to reduce the population.

"The fact is that people have been disgusted and annoyed," said Felder, adding that he frequently dodges pigeon droppings at his Brooklyn subway station. "I might as well say that I'm sick and tired of it."

This isn't the first time New York City has tried to control its pigeon population. In 2003, a hawk was briefly employed to scare pigeons in a Manhattan park but the program was abandoned a few months later after the hawk attacked a Chihuahua.

Hearings on Felder's plan may be called before the end of the year.

Snake bite No. 44 'definitely the worst'

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. (AP)- Maybe "Cobraman" should consider a new line of work. Ray Hunter, 44, of Port St. Lucie is still hospitalized nearly two weeks after being bitten by an eastern diamondback rattlesnake. He said it's his 44th venomous snake bite and it's "definitely the worst."

"Cobraman," who is licensed to possess venomous snakes, got the 5- 1/2 foot rattlesnake from animal control officers.

Hunter was bitten on the right hand while cleaning his snake cages, but managed to drive himself near the hospital despite feeling like he was drunk.

He got as close as he could to the hos-

pital, but then passed out behind the wheel. A passer-by told police that he appeared to be unconscious, and he was taken inside the hospital.

Hunter is in renal failure and his right arm remains largely swollen and it's not clear when he can return home.

The snake is now at a zoo in another state.

Saudi Prince Alwaleed buys his own A380

PARIS (Reuters) — European plane-maker Airbus named on Monday Saudi billionaire Prince Alwaleed bin Talal as the first private buyer of an A380 super-jumbo, the world's largest passenger airliner.

The prospective buyer's identity had been kept secret for months but was unveiled to coincide with the Dubai air show.

Prince Alwaleed, whose interests span Kingdom Holding to Euro Disney, hotels and banking, has ordered a VIP version of the A380 dubbed the Flying Palace. He already owns a Boeing 747-400, the newest type of the original jumbo jet currently in service.

The bigger Airbus superjumbo has been hit by production delays but entered service with Singapore Airlines last month.

It can seat 525 passengers in three classes or more than 800 in an all-economy layout by using less space between seats.

Leg room will not be a problem on the Flying Palace, which features 551 sq metres (5,930 square feet) of usable floor space on twin passenger decks -- enough for a couple of tennis courts.

Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich recently denied reports that he had bought himself a private A380.

The ordinary passenger edition sells for over \$300 million (144.5 million pounds) but the price of the special-edition aircraft was not disclosed.

The A380 can be fitted with cocktail bars, casinos, showers and sleeping quarters for first class passengers on ordinary airlines. For the super rich, the sky is the limit.

"It would depend very much on what sort of cabin interior the purchaser wanted," an Airbus official said this year. "On our VIP jets we offer the option to include whatever they want."

Boeing has three VIP clients who have bought five of its latest giant, the 747-8 Intercontinental which is due to enter service with airlines in 2010, a Boeing spokesman said.

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