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WE WISH YOU EID MUBARAK AND MANY HAPPY RETURNS

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Spiritual defeat is a persistent problem in the Muslim community

Al-Houthi warns of annihilative catastrophe amid indicators of fifth Sa'ada war

The military authorities are deploying huge army units these days throughout the restive governorate of Sa'ada. The excessive presence of troops implies a government's intention to wage a new war against Houthi supporters after Eid Al-Adha vacation.

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam
SA'ADA, December 16 — Sa'ada is currently experiencing much scornful conducts by authorities such as the extensive arrest campaigns, demolition of homes, forcing children and women to live outdoors and the excessive deployment of troops. "Such procedures usually indicate a government's intention to wage a war against innocent people in the war-ravaged governorate," Abdulmalik Badraddin Al-Houthi, field leader of Houthi loyalists said in a letter sent out to Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) and NGOs last week.

He confirmed that he and his supporters are compelled to defend themselves and confront any new attacks by the government troops against them. "I fear any destructive consequences of such a tragic and dangerous situation in the war-torn governorate. Earlier, we sent you a letter during the fourth war urging you to intervene in the crisis, taking into account that you are concerned with what is happening in Sa'ada and that you are partners in religion, homeland and fate," Al-Houthi said in his letter, addressed to JMP leaders. "All the Yemeni people suffer from the consequences of Sa'ada wars. Those who don't suffer from murder and property

damage are bound to face negative economic impacts because the influential groups exploit the country's wealth and exercise property theft at the expense of starving and poor citizens."

The leader of Houthis went on to say, "I do remind you (JMP leaders) of the risky consequences of the indifference toward what happens in Sa'ada. I do remind you of the tragedy and the destructive events that necessitate closer attention in order to help the governorate escape an unprecedented catastrophe."

"Taking an initiative in this stage is a religious, national and human responsibility. It is not wise to wait until a fifth war breaks out, thereby destroying any remaining infrastructure and killing thousands of people on both sides (Sa'ada citizens and the military troops). A fifth war is bound to make the wound more painful and cause more tragedies in the nation," he added. "If the concerned agencies and organizations don't pay attention to such crises and issues, the doors of evil will remain open and the doors of goodness closed. This indicates the lack of clear conscience and human reaction to what is taking place. It also means that the country prepares to be a battleground for endless confrontations."

Concluding his letter, Al-Houthi said, "We care about ceasing bloodshed. We care about the national security and stability. We exerted hard efforts and tolerated repeated tragedies with the purpose of preventing bloodshed and restoring security to the horror-stricken governorate. But, anyway, we are obliged to defend ourselves and confront any new assaults against us and our families."

A public opinion poll, conducted by the Sana'a-based Yemeni Center for Strategic Studies and the results of which were published by Al-Quds Al-Arabi newspaper last week, revealed

that the government's mistakes are the primary reason behind Sa'ada war over the past three years. These mistakes are still threatening security and stability in Yemen.

Focusing on the Sa'ada war and targeting a randomly selected sample of university teachers and students, politicians, members of parliament and ordinary citizens, the poll revealed that 72 percent of those surveyed are of the opinion that the authority could have avoided the Sa'ada war that began in 2004 and renewed four times. Seventy-one percent of the sample attributed the war to the government's misconducts while 66 percent of them said the war has not targeted the Zaidi sect, adhered to by slain Hussein Badraddin Al-Houthi, founder of Houthi Movement and also son of the top Zaidi reference in Yemen Sheikh Badraddin Al-Houthi.

Asked whether the authority expended serious efforts to avoid the Sa'ada war, 24 percent of the respondents said yes, compared to 50 percent who said the authority was not serious enough to avoid the fighting.

Giving an answer to a question about Houthis' adherence to the Zaidi sect, 38 percent of those surveyed replied that Houthis do adhere to the Zaidi Sect, 34 percent of them said no while 9 percent provided that Houthis somewhat adhere to the sect and 19 percent said they don't know.

Thirteen percent of the sample believe that Sa'ada war is a war on the Zaidi Sect and 66 percent of them revealed that the war has nothing to do with this sect. 14 of the respondents mentioned that position of tribesmen who backed the government during the Sa'ada war originates from a sectarian motivation and the same percentage of respondents somewhat agreed with this notion, compared to 56 percent who don't agree and 16 percent who don't know.

According to 66 percent of the interviewees, the Yemeni public opinion doesn't know what is happening in Sa'ada, compared to only 11 percent who said people know about the Sa'ada fighting in details. Twenty-five of the sample told that the state was serious to

compensate citizens whose property was damaged in the war while 45 percent revealed that the state was not serious to do so.

Similarly, 45 percent of those interviewed noted that JMP's attitude toward Sa'ada war stems from these parties' belief in the national interest, opposed to only 13 percent saying that such opposition parties have no national position toward the fighting.

Fifty-eight percent of the sample believes that the Houthis rebellious movement receives support from foreign forces, 16 percent of them somewhat agreed with this idea and only 7 percent rejected such an accusation while 19 percent told that they don't know.

The poll revealed that 78 percent of the interviewees are of the opinion that the government's war against Houthis in Sa'ada has a negative impact on the development process in the country, compared to only 4 percent who believe that the war has no influence on the national development. Eleven percent of the sample somewhat agree with the notion while 6 percent said they don't know.

The poll targeted a randomly selected sample of 250 participants, including 50 university teachers, 50 university students (males and females), 30 politicians, 20 members of parliament and 100 ordinary citizens.

According to media sources, fierce clashes broke out last Wednesday between military forces and Houthi supporters in Ketaf district, leaving three soldiers and eight Houthis dead. Also, three soldiers and dozens of Houthis were injured in the clashes that continued for more than one hour.

During the clashes, army units deployed in Kahlan area of Sehar District, east of Sa'ada city, carried out a fierce offensive with mortars and tanks against some of Nishour areas, but the aftermath is still unknown.

The sources told that corpses of dead Houthis were taken to the morgue of General Jumhuri Hospital in Sa'ada city while a helicopter transported the corpses of dead troops, along with the wounded to Sana'a.

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In brief

Yemenis in Children's Art Festival
Dec. 16 – Yemen will participate in this February's Sharjah Children's Art Festival in the United Arab Emirates with 80 works by numerous creative Yemeni children.

Najibah Haddad, deputy culture minister for arts and theater, says Yemen will participate in the festival's first round with a number of artistic and creative works by talented children in various fields.

The festival seeks to honor such childhood dreams, as well as follow up their problems, thus affirming the importance of children's issues.

ADEN

Socotra art exhibit opens in Aden
Dec. 15 – An art and cultural exhibit about Socotra opened Sunday at Aden's Fine Art Institute and will continue for 15 days. Salah Ba-Fadl, director of technical projects at the British Council, notes that the exhibit highlights photographs of the island's variety of nature, adding that some 50,000 visitors attended the exhibit.

Additionally, on the sidelines of the event will be a symposium about the island this Monday, which will include both Yemeni and British academics presenting papers on Socotra's history and environment.

AL-MAHRAH

Foreign firms to invest in minerals
Dec. 14 – Both local and foreign companies have voiced their desire to invest in Al-Mahrah governorate's minerals sector.

Sadaq Tajaddin, director of the governorate's Oil and Minerals Office, reports that the corresponding Yemeni ministry has inked agreements with foreign firms to share in oil production in the governorate's oil blocks under the 2008 Investment Plan.

SANA'A

Over 90,000 students receive anti-bilharzias medicine
Dec. 16 – Yemen's Ministry of Public Health and Population has launched a 12-day anti-bilharzias campaign in seven infected districts of Sana'a, distributing anti-bilharzias medication to 90,320 students.

Khalid Al-Muntasir, director general of the Sana'a health office, explains that the campaign, which is being conducted by 150 health workers, targets students between ages 6 and 18 at 554 elementary and high schools.

SOCOTRA

Delegation to evaluate Socotra
Dec. 15 – An Italian delegation recently arrived to evaluate the Socotra Archipelago Conservation and Development Program's performance during the previous period.

Salem Ali, director general of the Environmental Protection Authority office on Socotra, notes that the delegation will be briefed on the program's activities regarding both land and marine studies, establishing nature reserves and operating environmental surveillance programs. The Italians' schedule will include a workshop and organized field visits to the island's nature reserves.

TAIZ

Wastewater management workshop
Dec. 16 – A two-day workshop on wastewater management was held Saturday in Taiz with the participation of 100 specialists from Taiz and Ibb universities.

Taiz Deputy Governor Abdulqader Al-Hatim stressed the importance of increasing public awareness regarding rationing water usage via all available media outlets, in addition to mosque imams, in order to come up with practical recommendations and distribute them to citizens in other Yemeni governorates to implement in their real-life situations.

Banned herbicides smuggled

TAIZ, Dec. 16 – Taiz governorate's Agriculture and Water Office reports that it has seized two trucks carrying approximately 43 tons of illegal herbicides and chemicals within the past two weeks.

The office confirmed that the herbicides and chemicals, some of which were expired and/or internationally banned, were smuggled into the country. Their report added that the trucks were prevented from entering Al-Makha port, but later smuggled in by mixing legal herbicides among the illegal ones.

Agriculture and Water Office general manager Abdullah Al-Junaid explained that following an investigation, they discovered that the trucks carried seven types of herbicides, three of which are internationally banned.

Sit-ins continue, protestors demand reforms or resignations

By: Mohammed Bin Salam

HADRAMOUT, Dec. 16 – Thousands of locals and people from surrounding areas gathered last Friday in Tareem, Hadramout, to hear opposition speeches about the current crisis in Yemeni and how to overcome it.

They unanimously agreed that Yemen's unification is jeopardized by corruption, injustice and public dissension and inequality.

The speakers reviewed the suffering and marginalization to which Hadramout's locals are exposed to, demanding that Hadramout be given its quota of positions in government and the Higher Institute for the Judiciary.

Former presidential candidate Faisal Bin Shamlan also delivered a speech to the crowd, saying, "The current political situation in Yemen has reached an impasse.

Unity is necessary; without it, Yemen has no future, nor does it have a presence. Unity will not be achieved unless rule is decentralized. In demanding this, we are preserving national compliance and struggle."

Shamlan further asked, "Why are the southern governorates considered feudal, especially to influential figures of the Arab Republic of Yemen and the existing regime?"

"Fears of secession haunt the ruling

party leaders' minds. Unity is the choice of the entire people of Yemen. We will not resign to become second class citizens, whether in the northern governorates or in the southern ones," he added.

Shamlan also said, "You will be surprised to learn that most northern citizens want change. Therefore, it is hard to turn a blind eye to the tragedies and deterioration happening to Yemen on a level it has never before reached. The regime has lost its grasp and balance due to rampant corruption. The struggle should be continued, as the existing regime is not good for the country. A fair and democratic state should be established, but will not emerge without struggle and solidarity in both the northern and southern parts of Yemen. The struggle should be peaceful, led by the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) stressing the importance of changing the political system in the country. Such a change will not take place unless the entire election system is reformed."

"Why was the picture of Ali Salem Al-Biedh removed when the unification flag was raised? This is a historical fact, regardless of our opinions towards Ali Abdullah Saleh or Ali Salem Al-Biedh. We are the unity makers and its partners. Those who don't want to acknowledge this should go to the sea," he added.

Parliamentarian Muhsein Ali Ba-Surah shared Shamlan view by saying, "After independence, there was a real republic in the hands of the National Front and Liberty Front revolutionists. Today, a counterfeit republic is widespread. Today, there is a fragile democracy, missing freedom and justice."

Ba-Surah concluded his speech by declaring, "We are in need of new independence, against a legacy of power and regression. A tribal mentality and corruption must be removed. What we struggle for is not only just but also political. Our struggle will persist until the government, economy and equality are given back. We demand the ruling party to make reforms or resign from office." He also expressed the desire for the JMP to suspend its membership in Parliament in unified protest.

Meanwhile, in Arahab district, 25 km away from Sana'a, thousands of tribesmen participated in a massive rally organized by the JMP last Wednesday. Protestors repeated slogans denouncing starvation and corrupt policies undertaken by the successive governments of the GPC.

In the rally, parliamentarian Mansour Al-Haneq delivered a speech in which he said, "Under the rule of the GPC's successive governments, Yemen incurred despotism, corruption and price hikes, which encumbered, over-

burdened and doubled Yemen's suffering," adding, "We expected that prices would go down according to the electoral pledges of the ruling party, but, unfortunately, they went up disproportionately."

He also accused the authority and ruling party of corrupting democracy and politics by counterfeiting electoral processes and people's determination, calling for the quick response of the demands of Arahab tribesmen, which he stated are part and parcel of the demands of all citizens.

Other speakers invited Arahab locals to stand against injustice, despotism, and corruption in order to reclaim their rights, guaranteed in Yemeni law and the constitution, and expressed their hope that the government will respond to their demands quickly.

In the statement released by the sit-in, Arahab locals demanded the cessation of unreasonable and continuous price hikes which lead to deteriorating living standards. They claimed that extortionate prices also increased poverty and lead to a lack of job opportunities. They also demanded that the government support farmers by providing them with agricultural equipment and decreasing oil-related products, namely diesel fuel. University graduates having different specializations should be employed, they further claimed.

The sit-in urged the government to find urgent and quick solutions to the sanitation problem in the district, leading to drinking water contamination. It also demanded the development and rehabilitation of Aumara' and Haifa hospitals, namely, providing them with qualified medical staff along with prerequisite requirements such as free medicine for incurable diseases and helping those unable to afford medicines.

The protestors also demanded that the government quickly complete the electricity grid in the district, provide pure drinking water, and finish the road in Arahab, Hazm and Al-Jawf, in addition to telephone lines connecting them to all areas.

Protests began when military and civil retirees organized sit-ins in the southern and eastern governorates in Al-Dhale' governorate in March, expanding gradually into many other governorates such as Taiz, Abyan, Hadramout, Sana'a, Dharmar, Ibb, among others.

The demands were increased by the protestors from sit-in to sit-in, reflecting the daily suffering of citizens, who speak out against price hikes, deteriorated infrastructure, unemployment, land looting, corruption, freedom of expression, and equal citizenship, among others. Such demands have become the foundation of the sit-ins and protests.

Editor describes how he was tortured

By: Yemen Times Staff

MUKALLA, Dec. 15 – One week has passed since Editor in chief of Al-Muharrer Weekly sent a public plea to concerned authorities demanding an investigation into the brutal abuse he had received in the hands of local security in Mukalla city in Hadramout. So far his case has been ignored by the authority. "It seems I have to come to Sana'a and talk to the Ministry of Information, because the local authority has failed me," he said.

Editor Sabri Ba Makhasin had been subjected on Dec. 3, 2007 to physical and mental abuse by local security. This was the 20th time this newspaper and its editors had been subjected to some kind of harassment by the state. The attack was in reference to a court case that editor Sabri Ba Makhasin had with the state due to critical articles published in his newspaper in November this year. However, the case was annulled shortly after that because of local and international intervention. Despite this, because of "High Level Orders" he was abducted, jailed, and abused for a little less than 24 hours in a solitary cell at Ba Aboud Jail.

In his statement dated Dec. 11, he demanded justice and called on authority and concerned bodies to assist him in his battle to the right of expression. Here is what happened to him:

Monday Dec. 3, 8:00 PM: A military group of eight soldiers broke into the newspaper's offices and demanded he comes with them to Ba Aboud Police Station. The group was composed of members of the criminal investigation department at Hadramout governorate



What saddens me is not to be thrown in jail just like that. This is a price I am willing to pay for freedom of expression. I am sad because of the degrading level they had declined to in treating people when in custody.

level, and members of the Mukalla district security.

Ba Makhasin was denied access to his lawyer and was taken on a security vehicle to the police station.

Monday Dec. 3, 8:30 PM: Abuallah Al-Jabri head of the criminal investigation unit at the police station orders the editor to leave his personal belongings at the station in preparation to be sent to jail. The head of the CI unit refused to listen to the editors questioning, and when Ba Makhasin presented him with a letter from Mukalla Attorney stating the annulment of the case, the head of the CI unit snatched the paper and tore it into pieces in front of everyone in the

room including the editor's friend who had come with him to the station.

Monday Dec. 3, 9:00 PM: Editor Ba Makhasin was thrown into a dark smelly cell full of roaches and various kinds of insects. Soon he discovers it is the toilet. He spends the night trying to wear the insects off his body. Nearing dawn the next day he has a vomit attack and he goes into a fit of convulsions. The guard rushes to report his state to his superior, who indifferently refuses to do anything about it. Ba Makhasin goes into coma for several hours.

Tuesday Dec. 4, 10:00 AM: Lawyer, friends and family of the editor are demanding his release. They bring a release order from the general attorney. However, all the efforts fail, again because of "high level orders".

Tuesday Dec. 4, 12:00 AM: Journalists syndicate branch in Mukalla and head office in Sana'a, issue a statement and demand the editor's release. Local political figures threat to organize a riot in the streets.

Tuesday Dec. 4, 2:00 PM: Editor Ba was shaken awake by a security guard who brings him some food from his family. The editor refuses to eat and goes on a food strike until he is released. Despite the probing from the security guard confirming that the papers for the release are being processed.

Tuesday Dec. 4, 5:00 PM: Editor Ba Mukhasin was released. He is still recovering from the humiliating ordeal. And he still had not received all his personal belongings from the police station until date.

Socotra declared free of malaria

By: Hamed Thabet

SOCOTRA, Dec. 15 – This year, Socotra finally has become malaria-free, according to Yemen's Ministry of Health and Population last week.

"Socotra now is completely free of malaria following efforts by Yemen's National Malaria Control Program, which began in 2000," says Shoki Al-Maori, deputy director of the program.

In 2005, the Health Ministry declared that the malaria rate had fallen from 36 percent to 1 percent on Socotra, Yemen's largest island with a population of 40,000.

Seeking to eradicate malaria completely by 2015, the program next will focus on Aden, Al-Mahrah and Hadramout following its success in Socotra, Al-Maori indicated.

Malaria had spread throughout nearly all Yemeni cities and villages; however, the number of malaria patients recently has decreased, according to Al-Maori, "Yemen has achieved some success in combating malaria and could reduce incidents of the disease from 2 million to just 600,000 cases annually."

For this reason, the Yemeni government is cooperating with neighboring countries and other organizations.

In this regard, the Gulf Cooperation

Council gave Yemen \$48 million to fight malaria, according to a source at the Ministry of Public Health and Population, which warns that 60 percent of Yemenis still may be exposed to malaria infection.

Saudi Arabia gave Yemen 6 million Saudi riyals (YR 318.26 million) this year, in addition to several pieces of required equipment related to this same field.

In addition to the Saudi support, Yemen also receives support from Oman. Such support allows Yemen to provide pesticides, spray equipment and vehicles.

Numerous other countries and authorities also grant Yemen funds and materials to halt malaria's increase, including the United Arab Emirates' Red Crescent Authority, the World Bank, UNICEF and the Global Fund.

The World Health Organization established its National Malaria Control Program in Yemen in 2001. WHO's strategy includes early diagnosis and prompt treatment, surveillance and information systems and applied research in cooperation with Yemen to fight malaria.

An official report notes that 156,925 mosquitoes were annihilated last year under another program to fight malaria, meaning that there's serious cooperation to fight malaria.

Maternal and Newborn Health Program Program Support Unit

The Program Support Unit (PSU) of above mentioned development program implemented under the responsibility of the population Sector of the Ministry of Public Health and Population for five years 2007-2012, and supported by the PSU-with amongst other two expatriate technical assistant- is as of early 2008 looking for a Reproductive Health (RH) Specialist.

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Exploring womanhood in George Eliot novels

SANA'A, Dec. 16 — She could be viewed as a philosopher ahead of her time. George Eliot, a controversial writer in the 19th century explored the concept of women and men as human beings regardless of gender stereotyping.

"Her philosophy on humanity has influenced her attitude and treatment of women issues in her novels. She treated women as a sexless human being. And advocated for a relationship between women and men that is not based on their gender, but rather based on humanity," says the now Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi, who had just been awarded PhD degree in English literature from University of Sana'a.

Al-Qadhi's research investigates the question of womanhood in the novels of George Eliot, and explores the concept, which she defined as religion of humanity.

Although she wrote during the peak of the feminist movement in Europe, she did not try to idealize women. Which is why her controversial philosophies, at the time, were heavily criticized. According to Al-Qadhi,



Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi: Women and men need to be more sympathetic with each other.

who had chosen this study because of his admiration of Eliot's philosophy, she was trying to intellectualize and philosophize fiction.

"I hope that this is a significant contribution to the literature of George Eliot. This is not a gender study per se, but deals with gender issues in George Eliot writings. I feel her view of women and men as androgynous beings is sophisticated and good for humanity at large," Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi said.

George Eliot, whose real name was Mary Ann Evans, was a journalist and an author in the nineteenth century. There are many explanations as to why she had used a male's name in her novels. One of which, according to Dr. Al-Qadhi is to avoid the prejudice

she could have faced as a female author.

"We in the modern times need such kind of androgynous thinking because, we don't need more conflicts between men and women. There is a man in every woman and women in every man," He commented.

Mohammed Hatem al-Qadhi, was awarded his PhD degree last Thursday. The

Thesis was entitled "A Study of Womanhood in the Novels of George Eliot".

The examination committee was composed of Prof. A. K. Sharma, head of English Department at Faculty of Languages, Prof. Meena Rani, external examiner from Taiz University, and Prof. Sayed Rafik Azam, internal examiner from Sana'a University. The committee praised the study and considered it an excellent contribution to the study of George Eliot's fiction.

Dr. Al-Qadhi is the correspondent of the Saudi based Al-Riyadh Daily and a prominent columnist at Yemen Times. He is also a lecturer at Sana'a University since year 2000.

Red Sea's Island in danger, says officials

By: Hamed Thabet

SANA'A, Dec. 16 — 10,000 livestock have sunk in the red sea as a result of a U.A.E ship turned over. Likewise, another boat, belonging to Yemeni traders, carrying a huge quantity of pesticides made the same problem in the red sea. Livestock and pesticides endangered the Red Sea resources, confirmed Yaha Al-kynaei. Chairman of the Yemen Authority for Developing Yemeni Islands.

Many fishes seen dead on the red sea especially in Al-Solaif coasts, Kamarn Islan and also Al-Lelhia province in Al-Hodeidah. Moreover, this accident shows that the pesticides quantity was toxic and dangers.

According to Dr. Mohamed Al-Qobati, the former director of water and environment committee in the parliament confirmed that there must be serious research for knowing the damages which are caused in the red sea. However, the government must give a real attention to this disaster by litigate the both U.A.E company and pesticides traders.

The Yemen Authority for Developing Yemeni Islands are concerning to sue the U.A.E company and the Yemeni pesticides traders. On the other hand, noting that the Chemical residuals reached the Yemeni Islands such as; Honish, Kamarn and Zaqar Islands and also coasts like Al-Solaif. And about on the

way to other coasts in Yemen.

Moreover, because the sea recourses are polluted and none knows the real damage that is caused, the government has warned and ordered all the fishermen in order not to go fishing until the effect of pesticides is clear.

Al-kynaei also confirmed that a special joint between the assembly of developing and saving the Yemeni Islands and Al-Hodeidah University had taken some samples from the dead livestock and the pesticides which almost reached to the coast. These samples have been taken in order to know level of damages. Professors in Al-Hodeidah University had a very big role in talking simple as they did their best in analyzing the

toxin that pesticides include.

Some sources which are investigating in this case confirmed, "In fact, pesticides traders tried to enter their quantity to Yemen throw Aden port but they couldn't because their pesticides internationally banned they asked to returned it back to place of manufacture. So instead of returned back they went to Djeboty and from there they used small boats to Yemen and one of the boats turned over."

The government should sentence traders for causing this disaster. However, some sources said that the pesticides ship is unknown till now. Moreover, concern parties are now investigating in this case and soon everything will be shown.

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According to Al-Qobati said, "This action is sovereignty of Yemen's water. Noting that coast guard and the police weren't there and did not do anything to avoid this disaster and maybe they weren't attending. Nevertheless, he suggested that the government should take the responsibility to know ship's name and the country it belongs to in order to sue it in the international courts. Also the Yemeni Traders who tried to broke the law by entering ban pesticides in Yemen.

Whereas, he continued, this is considered as a crime that cannot be ignored. And other ships and traders must respect Yemen's water before they try to do any such thing."

Kamran Island and Al-Solaif coasts

are in danger and become a catastrophe place. And there is a need to face this disaster noting that this disaster will be speared to other coasts soon if it doesn't stop.

Al-kynaei said that Kamran Island and other islands and coasts which have been affected by this disaster are one of the most aesthetical places in Yemen. And it is famous with its sea resources which includes fish and also coral reef. So for not letting our valuable sea resources to be damaged the government should focus on how to solve this problem as soon as possible. On the other hand, according to Al-Qobati, next time coast guard must take its responsibility in order to not let this disaster happens again.

Their News

Germany and Yemen to sign a Preliminary Agreement on Teaching German at Yemeni Secondary Schools

Attention will be signed to include German as a subject at 25 Yemeni secondary schools from 2008 till 2010. With the future conclusion of a formal agreement, German would be taught from secondary level onwards at Sanaa, Aden and at secondary schools of other cities, enabling Yemeni students to benefit from the newly opened German-Arabian universities in Egypt, Jordan and Oman.

In this connection, five successful participants of the 3rd German Teacher Training Cycle carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and the Goethe-Institute Cairo will receive participation certificates on Monday, 17 December 2007. They will work as German language teachers at different schools in the capital.

The certificates will be handed over during a ceremony taking place at the German House for Cooperation and Culture by the Vice-Minister of Education H.E. Prof. Dr. Bin Habtoor and the Deputy Head of the German Embassy, Dr. Michael Reuss.

Fighting corruption program



Women Journalists Without Chains media organization in partnership with Middle

East Partnership Initiative are launching the organization's first annual program on the role of journalism in fighting corruption and endorsing concepts of good governance.

The program will commence with a training course between 13 and 16 January 2008 on investigative journalism and will target 20 male and female journalists from around Yemen. The journalists will be trained on how to investigate corruption and how to write critical stories and analysis of national financial, accounting, and budgeting reports. By the end of the training the journalists should have an idea on how to identify and expose violations and financial corruptions to eventually support the endorsement of good governance in Yemen.

3-day Door to Door Vaccination to Save Children from Polio Gets a Flying Start



Yemen's 3-day door to door National Immunization Days campaign for polio eradication was given a flying start on Dec. 15 by the Vice President, Abd Rabu Mansour Hadi by administering the polio drops to children in the capital city of Sana'a. The impressive ceremony organized at his residence captured the spirit of door to door initiative and illustrated Governments strong political will to send mobile teams to every home in the country.

A mobile team equipped with cold boxes and enthusiastic to embark on gigantic 3 day campaign was greeted by the Minister of Public Health and Population, Governor of Sana'a, Officer-In-charge of UNICEF, WHO Representative and senior officials of the Health Ministry. After administering the polio drops to children, the

Vice President told the media representatives that the Government attaches a high priority to keep Yemen free from polio. He urged the parents to participate actively in this national effort and give their children polio drops and save them from this incurable and disabling disease.

UNICEF Acting Representative, Anne-Marie Fonseca said this campaign is important in sustaining Yemen's successful effort for controlling the polio outbreak that seriously threatened the country in 2005. For this mass vaccination effort, UNICEF has procured 5 million doses of oral polio vaccine, at a cost of 635,500 \$ US Dollars. The country wide mass vaccination is being led by Ministry of Public Health and Population with the support of UNICEF, Centre of Disease Control (CDC), WHO and USAID.

During the mass vaccination drive, supported by a communication and social mobilization component, more than 4 million children, under five years will be given polio drops by mobile teams who will go from house to house to reach all children. Door to door drive helps to ensure that children, under five years often end up missing vaccination due to distance and poor level of awareness on the part of parents are also provided coverage. As many as 18084 mobile teams and 2062 teams at the fixed centers will be busy for the three consecutive days to reach more than 4 million children. A distinguishing feature of the 11th Round is that a four-level supervisory system comprising 4,200 Supervisors has been put in place to monitor the work of vaccinators and health workers at the level of the community, district, Governorate and Center to facilitate the work of the teams on daily basis.

The mobile teams of vaccinators assisted by volunteers from the com-

munity will administer polio drops and engage in dialogue with families to allay their fears about immunization and to help reduce the number of refusals.

The door-to-door vaccination was necessitated by outbreak of polio in 2005 after re-emergence of polio in Yemen. The outbreak reached its peak in July 2005 when a total of number of children were infected by the polio virus reached 479 cases. Hodeida and Ibb were among the worst affected Governorates.

Sabafone launches Yalla

New offers are being launched from Sabafone mobile and Telecommunication Company that include discounted rates, and a longer validity period.

The service also includes SMS, MMS, Ringtone downloads and a constant provision of other offers.

The Yalla deal according to Marketing Manager Pierre Emad, is targeted to all customers especially the youth.

The deal also includes Yalla Daiman which provides call and sms services at almost half price, and Yalla Kallam which is another offer for cheap prices with Sabafone in partnership with other networks. Yalla Layali is another offer that gives users discounted rates on calls between 11 PM and 7 AM. Also there is Yalla Rasail, which offers SMS at reduced prices.

GTZ launches Private Sector Development Project

In spite of the official launching of its activities last September,

the GTZ German Yemeni Private Sector Development Project- (PSDP) has organized over the last two days (11-12 December) a workshop at the GTZ office.

The workshop aimed to demonstrate its vision on how it will intervene to strengthen private sector participation in the overall economic development process and to reach consensus with other main and field related players on the best ways and means to enhance the role of the private sector in Yemen.

All key PSDP partners expressed their full supports for the proposed policies, structure and the concept of PSDP to be applied over the next years. In this workshop all national key players and the main donors working in the field of sustainable economic development were involved, i.e. MoPIC, GIA, SFD, SMEPS, the YFCC, MOIT, MTEVT, WB, IFC, the German as well as the Netherlands embassies who contributed actively for leveling the path for better cooperation and coordination.

The interest and willingness of all organization representatives for better coordination were remarkable. Therefore, it is being commonly committed to proceed with further meetings so as to develop a common and overall related concept to ensure sustainable applications in the future and to include active and arrival players in the same field. Participants agreed to establish a working group for the private sector development every two months. This trend is consistent and may be based on the Paris Declaration which called all donors for focusing on alignment and harmonization policy aspects as indicated by the German embassy representative. Obviously, at the national level this may be justified and can be traced on the creation of special Unit under MoPIC mandated to take care for coordination and har-

monizing all applied intervention policies in Yemen.

"Meanwhile the main areas of cooperation between the PSDP and its main partners have been discussed and agreed upon as a solid basis for the preparation of long term planning and monitoring system," said Tawfik al-Dobhani, National Coordinator-Advisor of the PSDP.

It may be concluded that PSDP, as a new GTZ project in the field of sustainable economic development and supporting the development of private sector through focusing on business and investment enabling environment as well as on facilitating business related to services, is being appreciated. As it is planned to operate for two phases (three years each), it is expected to contribute for the achievement of local applied plans and strategies and play leading role, together with other main players, in coordinating donor interventions in the field sustainable economic development. "The commitment made and supports addressed by all participants in the two days, the workshop indicated and confirmed the importance of PSDP as valuable input in the framework of the ongoing Yemeni-German technical cooperation," said, al-Dobhani.

As an international cooperation enterprise for sustainable development with worldwide operations, the federally owned Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH supports the German Government in achieving its development-policy objectives. It provides viable, forwardlooking solutions for political, economic, ecological and social development in a globalised world. Working under difficult conditions, GTZ promotes complex reforms and change processes. Its corporate objective is to improve people's living conditions on a sustainable basis.



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“We are surrounded by lies and besieged by falsehood,” – retired officer

Fuad Musa'd and Abdul-Raqeeb Al-Hadyani interviewed Brig. Qasim Al-Da'iri, chairman of the Coordinating Committee of Retirees' Associations in the southern governorate of Lahj.

If 96 percent of the retirees' situation has been solved, why are you escalating it?

What's the source of this information?

President Ali Abdullah Saleh and the Defense Ministry said this.

People are judged by their actions, not by their words.

What do you mean?

The authority considers lies its philosophy and one of its main pillars to continue, as well as to pass its plans. All statements and speeches it delivers are futile. We are surrounded by lies and besieged by falsehood. Where are the Agreements and the Constitution of Unification, in addition to the Code of

National Consensus, the authority's commitment to the Security Council?

Where are we since the Security Council Decree issued during the 1994 Civil War? Where are the authority's promises it committed to in the various elections?

What about the presidential decrees to promote retirees to a higher rank?

Such decrees and resolutions published in newspapers may remedy 40 percent of the retirees' problem. The concerns of those individuals included in these decrees have increased, particularly after their pensions were transferred from the post office to other areas away from their homes.



Brig. Qasim Al-Da'iri

There was no real will to deal with the problem.

Therefore, I request my brothers included in the reinstatement decisions only to accept their full rights: full salaries and high ranks. They must hold accountable those who made them suffer throughout this period. Collectively, they should organize activities in the units to which they'll be reinstated.

All of the issues of political security personnel, police and civilians should be solved. There must be a comprehensive political decree because promotions and "painkillers" are futile.

The Radfan rally prompted varying and contradictory reactions, both locally and internationally, whereas the voices of retirees and idle youth were weak. What happened?

Actually, I think the retirees' speech was strong. I don't think it was weak because it was retirees who took to the streets and instituted all of these protests and demonstrations nationwide.

It's really about the weakness or strength of our speech. The most important thing is what the message or speech conveys. We organized the Radfan rally to let local residents and others speak out and have their say.

The Interior Ministry has mentioned some lawbreakers who broke into the rally's stands Oct. 13. What's the story from your viewpoint?

According to the decision of the Coordinating Committee of Retirees' Associations for months, we instituted an open-ended sit-in at the stands where the alleged incident occurred. We organized everything for the rally.

When some of the participants arrived at the stands military forces and central security fired upon them with medium-sized firearms and machine guns, killing four and injuring 15 others. The incident now is being referred to prosecution in Lahj governorate, but it was supposed to be in a special location in Al-Habilain, where the incident took place.

Statements by Interior Ministry sources have become routine, wherein they agree to fabricate the truth; thus, we declare that we won't remain silent until there's a fair trial.

The authority accuses you of instigating rumors and fighting throughout the nation on the pretext of rights when you really have another agenda that's damaging national unity. What's your response to this?

The authority is used to lying. It believes in lies and fabrication. It creates talismans to blur public opinion, both locally and internationally. It repeats lies. When the talismans fade, the authority confesses, admits a few facts and then tries to patch things up and find solutions.

It disseminates accusations according to local attitudes, alleging that some want Imamate rule, while others seek secession, etc. This failed authority is like an animal in danger that releases a bad odor in order to find shelter from harm.

The country seeks help from its citizens to rescue what's left and repair what has been destroyed. We want to bring back what was confiscated and take our nation to safe shore, riding it of thieves. We want to fight price hikes and injustice inflicted upon our nation.

A lawsuit regarding the incident in Al-Habilain now is in prosecution. Why did you institute it?

We want to see the state's true intention, and see those who carried out the massacre at Al-Habilain Prison sentenced to death as retribution.

Radfan recently has been at the top of the protest movement in Yemen. Is this due to its historical reputation as being the place from where previous revolutionists came?

This symbol is both psychological and moral. Historically, Radfan has been the stronghold of revolutionists, so Radfan locals have inherited such traits. For example, they abhor lies, they won't delay national struggle and they defend themselves against injustice. They would rather add to their fathers' and grandfathers' history by sacrificing themselves in the fight against injustice.

Will you spur this on more forcefully?

If we find that the concerned bodies don't respond to the perpetrators before justice is served, then we intend to provoke the issue, whatever it costs, because such perpetrators should be referred to judiciary.

"It's really about the weakness or strength of our speech. The most important thing is what the message or speech conveys. We organized the Radfan rally to let local residents and others speak out and have their say."

You say the issue doesn't relate to rights, but rather, that it has a political dimension. What are those dimensions and is secession included in that?

We were deliberately retired via political decree, thus stealing away our money and aspirations. We're now deprived of our jobs. The pension by which we provided and guaranteed our children's future was the victim of that political decree.

We were technicians, specialists and leaders with technically accumulated experience and qualifications. We were leaders in the state's civil and military administrations.

We are the protectors of our land and our wealth, which we submitted – without any harm to our dignity – on May 22, 1990. However, today, this land and wealth is being wasted by those who don't own them, so I must question whether this is acceptable.

Moreover, we are a part of this nation. It is our children's future, so it must be kept safe and stable. Unification must be established in equal partnership.



Thousands of refined officers and soldiers gathered in Radfan asking for their rights



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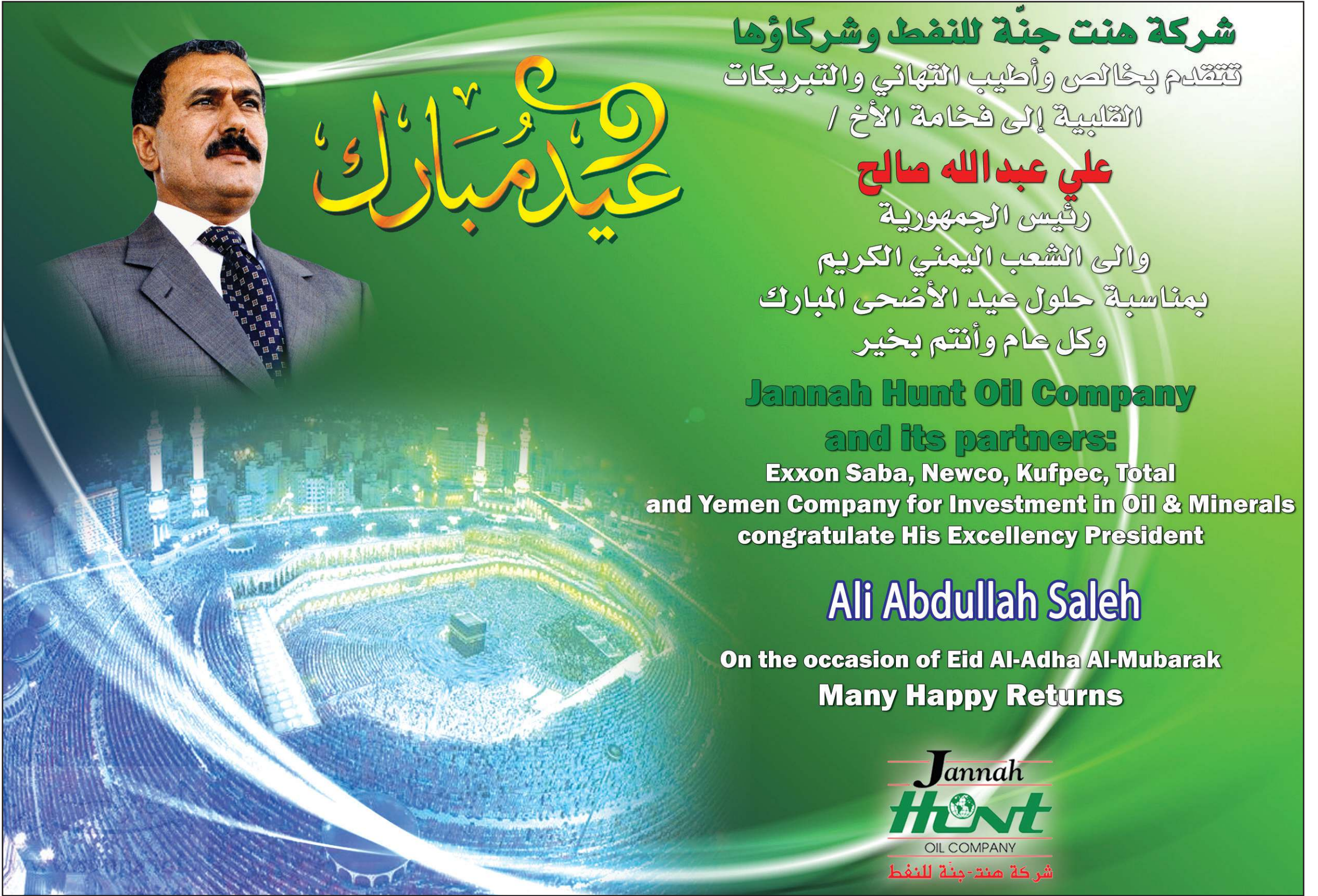
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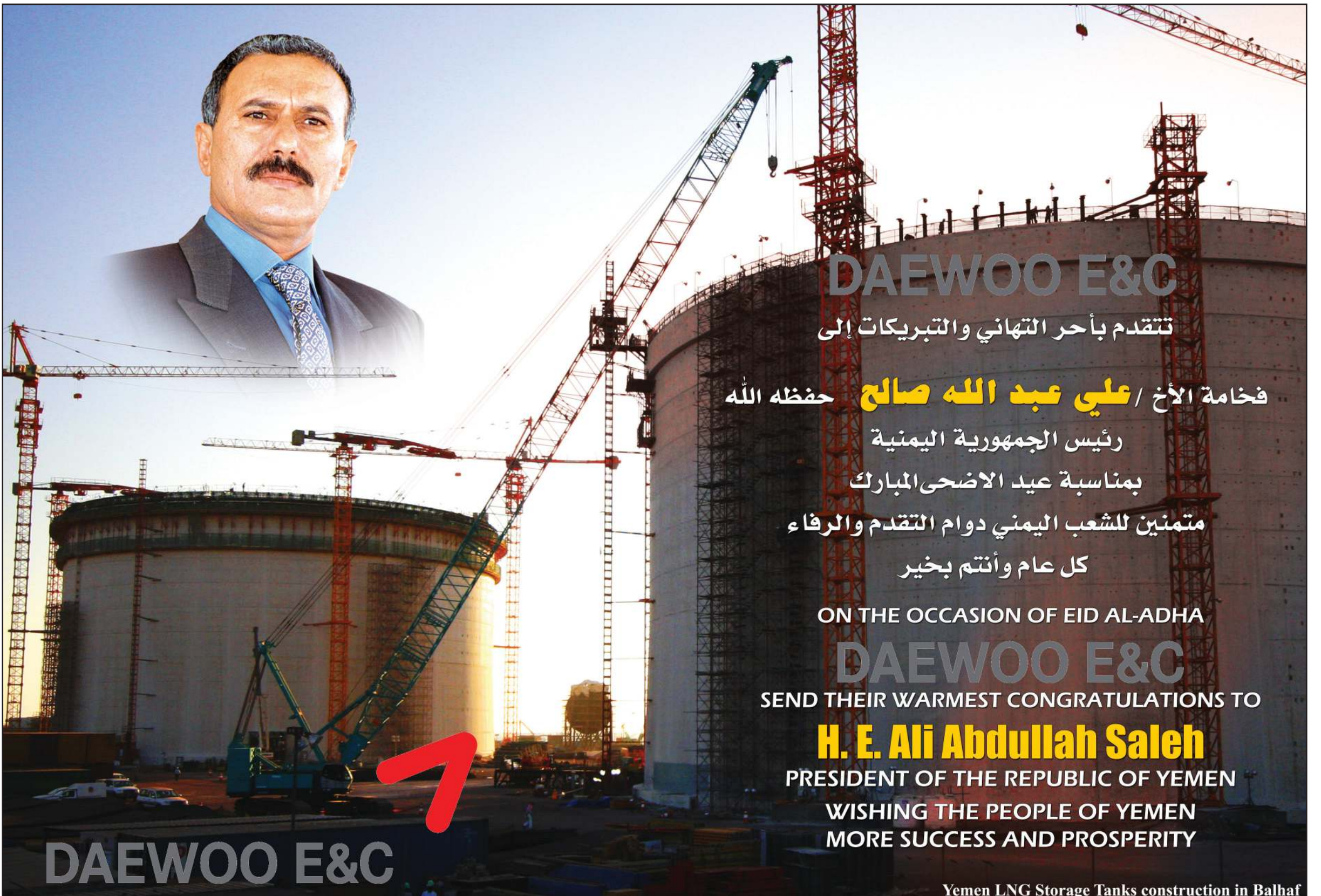


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Past achievements a source of pride, aspiring for greater performance

By: Saddam Al-Ashmori

American Language and Training Institute (ALTI) hold the best reputation due to its excellent qualification and competence, making it preferable above other institute working in the same sphere.

Due to its management materialistic administration, proper methodology and teaching aids, ALTI really does bring out itself into the limelight of educational sphere. The secret behind this promotion is the selection of the best teachers as well as keeping up with developments.

ALTI continues to convey its message based on scientific well-studied foundation, bringing this effort into obvious fruition. A lot of students graduated from it, changing their lives for the better.

Success breeds success

"I graduated from the secondary school successfully. Even though I seemed scared of having to fail the English subject. Yet I enrolled in ALTI, and there I took many courses which made my English better. I attained the best marks in English" said Saleh Al-Naqeeb, one of the students at ALTI. I further more "Special thanks go out to those who established the Institute as well as its teachers and staff. I gladly advise those who are eager to learn English to enroll in ALTI."

Another student, Sa'ad N. Al-Umaisi, considered ALTI to be a typical example of an English institute. He proclaimed that having to study in ALTI due to its good reputation has somehow improved his level way high. "Those who wish to register at ALTI will not regret a bit" Sa'd explained.

Aseel Al-Hetari, a female student at the Institute, considered that ALTI was ans has been one of the major institutes for teaching English language. She praised the teaching staff of ALTI and its supervisors. She said, "I began to study English in this Institute because it is well known and it excels in staff, numerous activities are conducted during each course. My English improved, and I do advise other students to go there and check it out for themselves."

"My level of English had improved 70 percent more right from the start of my studies in the Institute. I attribute this to the good teaching staff and methodology. I studied in many other

Institutes but found that ALTI was the best for those who want to learn English language," Elham Al-Alawi shared.

Aspiration to improve educational process

Redha Al-Ahdel, Deputy Director of ALTI, confirmed that they are promptly seeking to propel the wheel of education process forward. They provide learners with modern teaching aids such as videos, trips, meetings with foreign teachers and educational competitions that aim to enrich students' vocabulary, dialogue, and grammar skills through debated topics held in conversation sessions.

"We are very careful to choose the right teaching staff who are qualified enough to use modern teaching aids to teach English perfectly. We are also keen to provide students with enough learning atmosphere to practice English language with native speakers associated with the curricula being taught in ALTI" Al-Ahdel noted.

Curricula selection's curricula

Ibtisam As-Sa'wani, Academic Principal in the ALTI, said, "selecting curricula in ALTI is based on the simplicity of the curricula, giving English learners a chance to learn English. The curricula contain plenty of vocabulary and visual rules that help improve cognitive ability of students. It is also taught with American accent and with lots of conversations aiming to enable students to use the language as authentically approved."

"Graduates from Faculty of Education are selected as being capable in conveying information and communicating with the other students. They have solid knowledge and the experience ont how to teach English" added As-Sa'wani.

The well dedicated instructors

Labeeb Al-Dubai, one of ALTI teachers, said "We seek to improve every student's levels by using the requested teaching tactics such as flashcards, prompts, and videos. Therefore, we also create catchy topics for discussion aiming at developing student's skills in reading, listening, writing, and speaking, in order to acquire the language via practice."

"The Institute presents many curriculum equipments of English to the students to help them improve their English. That

means there are many skills such as listening, watching movies, writing poetry, essays, and journals and reading different kinds of stories. We focus particularly on the listening and speaking issues.

In addition to the curriculum given to the students, I always support students, especially those in level one and up, with some other needs related to English learning. I also provide them with idioms, which can be used in their daily life, free tutorial classes, phrasal verbs, and lastly some ideas and sound related to phonetics that help in pronunciation. We suggest others to use the dictionary in the best way in memorizing the definitions of words and pronunciation of the word properly, Mohammed Qasim shared.

Foreigners' impression

However, some paid visits to ALTI and were very impressed when they looked at the curriculum usage, and its teaching staff and the talented performance of the students.

Tim Brian, a Teacher from Charleston, South Carolina, USA stated, "I've found ALTI to be a very organized and developed language school. It reminds me of a typical Yemeni person, welcoming, enthusiastic, generous and eager to better him/herself," and I have with appreciation become friends with the staff and students."

"Students are very eager to learn English, practice English, and use these skills with native speakers. I've taught English in several countries, but have never found such enthusiasm" adding: for a language Institute, ALTI is doing very well. Students seem to be achieving their goals and enjoying themselves at the same time. ALTI should keep it up", Brian further explained.

Asked about his visit to ALTI, Mohammed Sharif, a Yemeni Canadian, said "Imagine, being at a place where everywhere you looked, you saw nothing but smiles on every individual, so, I guess what I am trying to say is that only such a place like ALTI leaves you leaving home with the gratitude of having to benefit something."

There is not a description of that specific place of beauty, because as long as the students are happy being here, then there beauty is blossomed within. However, I do have that one special place a person prefers to go for relaxation.

He also believes that ALTI has the required level of all fundamental of what's needed in education backgrounds. The teachers are very eager and competitive in giving out more of what they have and do feel appreciated by students and mostly by staff. We work to inspire students to overcome any difficulties and achieve the best. "Knowledge is the lessons learned through life"

Numerous activities

ALTI offers several activities such as conversations, competitions, and interacting with native speakers.

Ibtisam As-Sa'wani said "ALTI's administration continuously follows up students and solves their problems by locating the root of the case of the problem. It also encourages them to study English. They have constantly an open eye on students closely to have an intimate relationship with them.



Good facilitation

Radha Al-Ahdel said that ALTI's administration helps facilitate the process of enrolling students. They run an excellent placement test to outline the students' level of education in the language of English.

They highlight points of weakness and follow procedures to strength the students. Based on these criteria, they register students in the right level to have a rightful beginning.

ALTI offers also reduction (discounts) of registration fees taking into consideration all the society segments. They further grant students free courses and diplomas for individuals or groups. So, where would you like to put your money into work, a place where you come out winning or losing?



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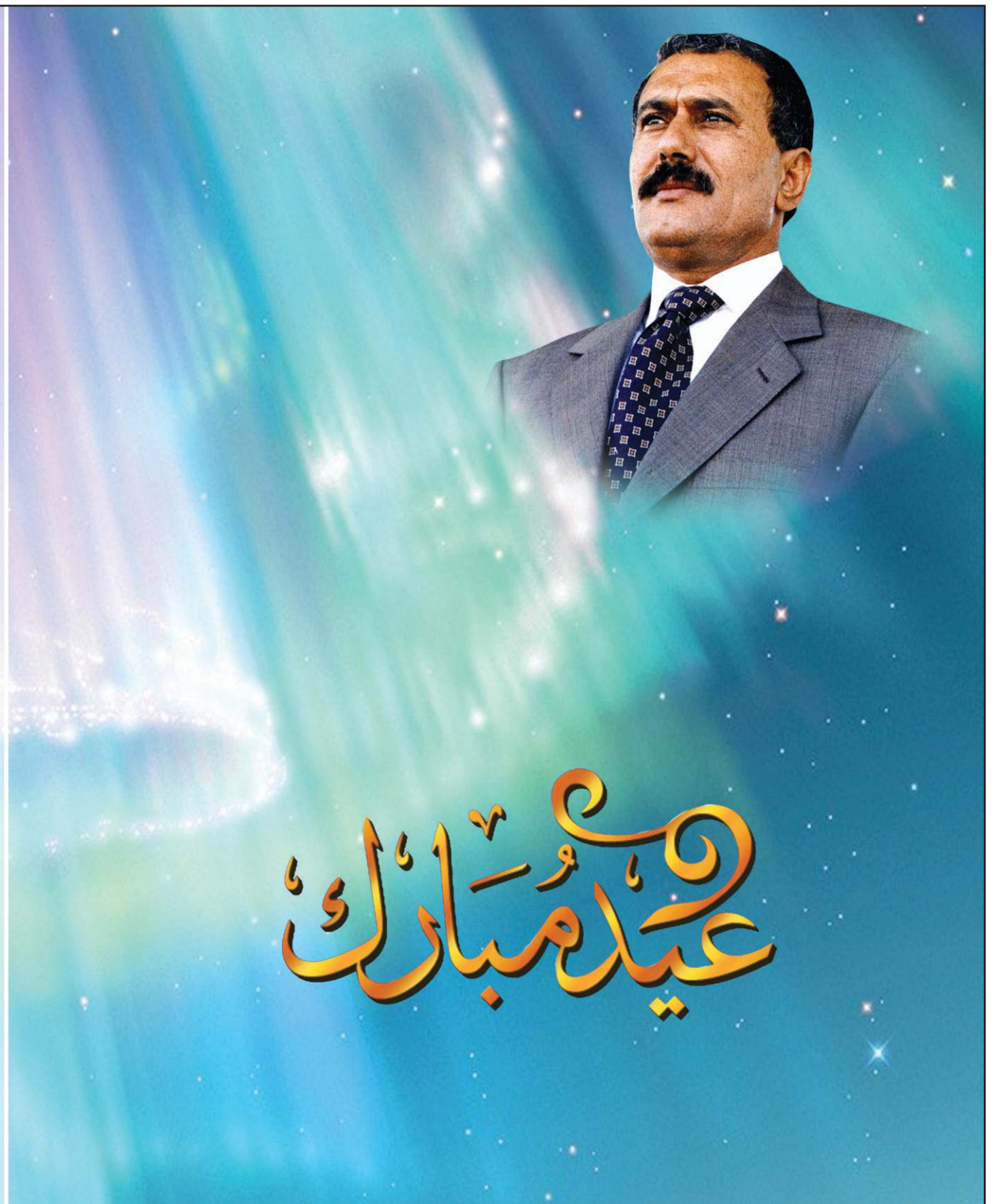
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الموزع المعتمد من موتورولا

المركز الرئيسي : صنعاء شارع القيادة تلفون ٢٥٨٥٨٢ ٠١ فاكس ٥١٢٣٨٨٨ ٠١
فرع عدن : عقبة كريتر شارع الملكة اروى تلفون ٢١٧٠٥٢ ٠٢ فاكس ٢١٧٠٥١ ٠٢
فرع عدن مول : محل رقم (١٣) تلفون ٢١٣٠١٦ ٠٢
فرع تعز : التحرير الاسفل جولة المغتربين تلفون ٢٨٠٢٠٠ ٠٤ فاكس ٢٨٠٠١١ ٠٤
فرع المكلا : الشرح الشارع الاول امام فرزة بير علي تلفون ٣١٤٩٣٩ ٠٥ - ٧١١٥٩١٩٨٧

موبي
كبير

الضمان المعتمد

Words of Wisdom



If more meaningful change is to be made in respect for human rights, the daily violations against the rights of ordinary citizens have to be addressed. This means introducing new values through education and re-education. One clear target is to train law-enforcement agencies and officers on the rights of citizens and how to respect them. Another has to do with re-training of prison wardens and personnel.

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

OUR
OPINION60 million
Yemenis by 2050

The UNFPA and Women National Committee held a joint workshop on gender for media this week. The workshop aimed at sensitizing Yemeni media to gender and giving women and gender issues their fair share of attention in media.

Hans Obdeujn, UNFPA country representative addressed the audience in an opening keynote. "If the growth and fertility rates remain as they are now, the Yemeni population will reach 60 million by 2050," he said.

In forty years, the Yemeni population will triple.

"Who will feed all these people?" he asked. "Who will house them? Who will educate them? Who will employ them?"

"Who will give them a bright future?" he insisted.

What Obdeujn was talking about scared me. I started imagining swarms of new babies flooding the streets crying and asking to be fed and attended to. Perhaps the pressure from juggling a demanding job and a demanding toddler has gotten the best of me, but seriously, it was a really scary thing to imagine.

Yet, apparently people at the high levels, although pretend to understand the significance of population and gender issues, have no idea what they are up against. They think if they sign off a project or a conference on gender or population, the problem will go away. Worse, is that they think if they hand over the responsibility to a department in a ministry to take care of women issues, they could relax feeling satisfied that they have done their job.

It seems there is a lack of understanding that population and women issues should be integrated in all socio-economic & political strategies.

"The decision makers at the highest levels fail to understand that women's role in political, economic, social and even family decisions are key to the development of Yemen," Obdeujn went on.

To be honest, while he was stressing on the importance of women and population mainstreaming in the general strategies, I was still thinking of the 60 million mouths waiting to be fed.

How are we going to be able to handle so much pressure with our diminishing resources? We have so many challenges as a country in terms of economic and social development with the existing 20 million already. The maternal mortality rate in Yemen is the highest in the world, where 365 women deaths for every 100,000 child births. "It is like a plane full with women crashing down every year and killing all its passengers," Obdeujn explained.

As media people we really have to act soon to spread the message. There is no point in waiting, because every day that passes with out doing something only brings us closer to the flood of babies overwhelming our economy and using our energy. Don't get me wrong, I love kids, but 60,000 for a country like Yemen, is simply too much.

The Editorial Board

Gulf's Yemen: An integrated system

By: Dr. Saleh Basurrah

Only the international relations that are based on mutual interests can permanently survive. And, when we talk about interests, we don't mean the direct materialistic interests, but the interests in their general concept, materialistically and spiritually. The civilized interests in the relations between states, for instance, play an effective and primary role in determining the nature of these states. The states that have a unified civilized vision usually move toward forming cartels in order to achieve the goals of their peoples, and such cartels are strong and well-established, as well as able to overcome any problems hindering the development of bilateral relations between countries.

Relations between the states that have a unified civilized frame can not

be established from the very beginning on the basis of the common values and principles experienced in these states although they print in the minds of decision makers the driving force for relevant work. In our current circumstances, there are subsequent developments that brought about changes in the nature of international relations and made economy as the effective controller of the state's conduct. The businesses, activities and functions of the contemporary state are concentrating on the economic theme. This leads one to say that any state at the age of globalization becomes an economic state.

Undoubtedly, Yemen has mutual interests with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. As long as Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf states have strategic interests that can not be abandoned or neglected, no attempts may have strong influence in ignoring such a fact. And, any relations estab-

lished in a way contradicting their nature will ultimately fail. This fact implies historic and cultural dimensions in the nature of state's relations, coupled the contemporary changes in the regional and international system, and variables of the states' internal environments.

It is not a monotonous repetition to talk about brotherhood, the same religion, culture and language, closeness of relations and traditions, population interaction and common history since they are basic facts constituting the civilized correlation among different states in a unified group. Via their shared interests, these states can form an integrated civilized cartel to protect themselves and their interests in a changeable world that believes only in the strongest. They can also make out of this cartel a strength for establishing contacts with each other with total confidence.

This fact interprets the nature of intimate relations between Gulf

nations, including Yemen, and the efforts expended by political systems in event serious disputes occur. Such disputes are perceived to hinder any efforts aimed at building brotherly ties between nations of the region. However, through a precise study of the history of these relations, one can find that Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states deal with Yemen in a more distinctive manner than they do with other Arab states. This originates from decision-makers' belief that Yemen is an integral part of the national security system with its comprehensive concept as eyed by Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.

Had Yemen hadn't undergone severe conditions of wars and fragmentations, it would have been the Sixth Member in GCC. Even after the national unity was established in Yemen, the Arab conflicts obstructed Yemen's admission into the Gulf cartel. These conflicts negatively impacted Yemen's relations with

other Gulf states despite the fact that peoples of the region were bearing in mind that such conflicts might not have considerable influence on these relations. Having realized the detestable effect, all the Yemeni official institutions and civil community organizations pursued hard efforts with the aim of removing any subsequent obstacles and accelerating Yemen's accession into the Gulf cartel.

The Yemeni-Saudi Coordination Council, plus the lavish support from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states for Yemen's development is substantial evidence of mutual understanding between decision-makers in GCC member states and the prospective sixth member. Gulf decision makers are aware of the strategic importance of Yemen, as well as its stability and security to help serve the interests of their nations in the long term.

Source: NewsYemen.net

Media performance and release of prisoners

By: Nabeel Al-Sofi

Different media reported that army fighter jets struck demonstrators, belonging to the opposition parties, on the National Independence Day in Aden city. The problem was not in the breaking news, however, it is related with other media means continuing to publish inauthentic facts and stories. At this point, I don't talk about the professional responsibility toward the readership and events, as well as my colleagues, who committed such mistakes. I will refer to the negative influence such a news story has on our profession as media personnel and the community's vision to us. Hadn't I seen Sama Al-Hashimi, a women journalist who wrote the story, at that time, I would have said

that such a news story is somewhat correct.

For us, it doesn't matter to discuss the report including mistakes about the killing of two or six people, but what does matter is that when the report said a fighter jet struck demonstrators, which did not happen at all. As far as I am concerned, writing a report in this way functions as an alarm for us and tells us how to deal with political controversy news.

Aircrafts were hovering in the air-space of Mansoura and Sheikh Othman districts, as well as flying between the Sport City, which was waiting to host the official celebration, and Al-Hashimi Square. In the meantime, President Ali Abdullah gave directions to military and security authorities not to delay the festival saying, "They (the opposition members and supporters) will not say more than what they say in

newspapers," particularly as the opposition applied for a permission to hold a festival, several days before the government decided to have celebrations of the 40th Anniversary of the National Independence Day organized at the specified location and time. The opposition's request was declined.

As the security authorities and Aden Governorate leadership said the aircraft in question was hovering as part of a parachuting rehearsal during the course of the official festival, its hovering over Al-Hishimi square is not justified, nor was this enough to convert hovering into an artillery strike, which resulted in the killing of dozens.

We need to observe the political activities and convey them to the readership, including the government, opposition and ordinary citizens, as an ideal goal for publishing

information. This duty requires a technical care to avoid mistakes that seem to be in favor of a certain party.

Absolutely, there is no preference for the government-funded official media, which are led by a media policy that has never recognized what we have been saying until now that Yemen is a democratic country. We don't demand the official media to publish the address of Mr. Ahmad Omar Bin Fareed though he is a citizen having his own share of the official media. We only demand the official media to at least publish news about opposition activities and functions. If these media are deaf and thereby unable to hear about freedom and pluralism, they should stop publishing any political news provoking controversies and heated debates between the conflicting parties.

Release of prisoners:

A decision, described to be totally different from our administrative, political and intellectual heritage, is the one under the Nasser Al-Nuba, Hassan BaAum and their companions have been detained for one month in Hadramout and Aden jails and then released.

As opposed to the way the list of prisoners was prepared and distributed, and the news reporting that President Ali Abdullah Saleh refused to release the detainees, plus the heighten security anticipating any peaceful popular protests, Mr. President's decision and its implementation deserves our highest consideration.

We will be more able to speak loudly in defending our unity when peace and peaceful means become stronger in defending our moral values and legal rights. The use of force

Concerns and expectations

By: Essam Hussein Al-Matari

The Islamic and Arab nations are encountering a series of conspiracies and challenges at different levels and aspects of life. Now, these nations have become face to face with strong challenges amid the current changes and developments in the new world system, which was announced in 1990 in the wake of the preceding system's fall. The old system was characterized by political balance and equation following the split of socialism.

The previous system, known for its balance and the two polar powers governing the whole world, had been playing a great political role in supporting the Islamic and Arab nations. The Arab and Islamic states were a source of attraction for the two superpowers in the world, which turned to include these small states in any power or coalition they form.

The United States of America, for instance, supported the Islamist groups in Afghanistan in the fight against the communist and socialist presence in Moscow and reached commendable success in this respect. Today, this superpower is fighting the Afghan Muslims and occupying their lands because the Islamic country's interest appeared

to contradict the American interest and presence in the region, as well as in the entire world.

We put the blame on the Arab and Islamic media in different countries, be they official, private or partisan newspapers, because they don't truly express the concerns and expectations of the Arab and Islamic System under the shadow of the larger world system that emerged recently. The Arab and Islamic media means turned to pelt each other with slanders and charges, thus losing their objectives and goals during the current standoff.

Now, we are facing a fierce war against the Arab and Islamic presence, excluding nobody. It is the war of teeth that destroyed all that is green and dry in the Muslim nations and communities, and in the meantime, the Islamic giant become submissive to the western plans and strategies without employing even the peaceful struggle as a way to achieve its sought objective and goal. Also, the submissive giant backs neither jihad, militancy nor resistance in its occupied land to restore even some of its legitimate rights, stipulated by international conventions and upheld by comprehensive peace negotiations.

The Arab and Islamic media demonstrated a negative attitude toward the domestic issues in their nations and helped caused

fragmentations, splits and conflicts between Muslims in favor of their Zionist enemies who did what they wanted to serve their interests. And, judicious people in the Arab and Islamic states are extremely engaged in disputes and differences over personal interests, letting only a narrow margin in the press for the freedoms and rights of Muslims.

We don't know how to get rid of the Zionist conspiracies, not less dangerous than a malignant tumor,

that infected the Arab and Islamic nations, which, at the same time, are suffering from political congestions, economic recession and poor education systems. Having a glance at the deteriorating situations in the Arab and Islamic lands, one can find that the western conspiracies made the mud moister.

What we want is a unified Arab and Islamic media to rigidly resist any western conspiracies and challenges against their nations,

specially as media is known to contribute much to modifying behavior of the youth and the younger generations as well. We expect these media to understand well the concerns and problems of the Arab and Islamic citizens and work harder and harder on the different social, political, economic and cultural spheres in the Muslim communities.

Source: Al-Thawra State-Run Daily



By: Samer

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Tel: +967 (1) 268-661

Fax: +967 (1) 268-276

P.O. Box 2579, Sana'a, Yemen

E-mail: editor@yementimes.com

Advertisement: ads@yementimes.com

Letters: letters@yementimes.com

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

Managing Editor
Amel Al-Ariqi

Feature Editor
Mohammed Al-Jabri

Copy Editor
Dana Patterson

Head of News Dept.
Mohamed bin Sallam

Head of Design Dept.
Ramzy Alawi Al-Saqqaf

Editorial Staff

Al-Ajel, Fatima Mojalli, Almgiddad
Al-Ghabri, Ismail Addu'ais, Essam

Offices

Aden Bureau:
Ridhwan Alawi Ahmed
Tel: +967 (2) 347-057, 346596
Fax: +967 (2) 347056
Email: ytaden@y.net.ye

Taiz Bureau:
Imad Ahmed Abdullah
Tel: +967 (4) 217-156,
Telefax: +967 (4) 217157
P.O. Box: 5086, Taiz
Email: yttaiz@y.net.ye

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Yemen Press Review



Al-Sahwa Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Islah Party
Thursday, December 13

Top Stories

- Assassination attempt on a security investigative committee fails
- Committee to Defend Moayyad and Zayed discuss the pair's issue with diplomats
- Aden agricultural societies threatens to escalate protests against land grab
- Marib Forum accuses authority of fomenting seditions, shaking government's stability
- JMP Supreme Council warns against violating social compromise in amendments

Supreme Council of the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) has warned against violating the social and political compromise in any reforms or amendments planned by the government, the weekly reported in its lead story. It added that the opposition parties' council stressed in its meeting, held on Wednesday, the necessity of sharing all national forces in any amendments, pointing out that the constitution reforms require national reconciliation.

Addition, it discussed its own constitutional reform project and approved presenting it to the public opinion, political parties and the civil society organizations. According to the weekly, the council condemned repression, arrests and arbitrariness practiced by security authorities against citizens and demonstrations. The JMP coalition discussed the government's failure and inability to

address low living standards and citizens' constant sufferings due to the skyrocketing prices of basic foodstuffs, expressing sorrow at what was reported about the killed and wounded in Sa'ada governorate, demanding the concerned authorities to immediately end any clashes.

JMP also discussed the updates of Al-Moayad and Zayed' case, appealing the U.S public opinion and all human rights organizations to stand by them and put pressure on the U.S administration in order to release the pair. It also appreciated the important results reached by the summit of Gulf Cooperation Council member states, praising the presence of the Iranian president into the summit and considering his participation a positive step to enhance Islamic cooperation and strengthen regional peace.



26 September Weekly, Organ of the Yemeni Army
Thursday, December 13

Top Stories

- Supreme Commission for Elections and Referenda begins technical preparations for coming parliamentary elections
- Yemen enjoys a distinctive regional and international status as a democratic state, says Iranian Foreign Minister
- Security authorities investigate five citizens over forging 49 Hajj visas
- Official source: Parliament Speaker enjoys good health, receives treatment in London
- HDR ranks Yemen among countries of medium development

The Human Development Report for 2007-2008 issued by the UNDP classified Yemen for the first time among the countries with medium human development, occupying the rank No. 153 among 177 countries, the army's organ reported. Unlike the previous report issued in 2006, which put Yemen among the three Arab countries categorized as those with low human development, the most recent report indicates that human development in the country has improved.

According to the weekly, the report indicated that the average age of people in Yemen is 61.5 years, while the best average of age among the Arab countries per capita in Emirates is worked at 78.3 years. It showed that 18.6 percent of the population dies before reaching the age of forty years.

The report also mentioned that about 61.6 percent of women die before the age of 65 years, compared to 55 percent for men. And the middle ages of 39.8 years old in 1975 have been improved to 61.5 in 2006, while the infant mortality rate lowered to 76 children per thousand children compared to 3.3 children in 1970.



Al-Wasat Independent Political Weekly
Wednesday, December 12

Top Stories

- Thousands of citizens attend funerals of Radfan martyrs, insist on punishing perpetrators
- A Khawlans' armed band kidnaps an investor from Ibb

- Al-Houthi lashes out at Salafite groups
- Ibb Sheikhs and politicians to found a committee to resist any citizenship rights abuses
- Authority is active in violating freedom of expression
- Local council seize 48 items of expired medicine
- Opposition leaders abroad advise the regime to abide by Document of Pledge and Accord

Remarkably, President Ali Abdullah Saleh's call for opposition leaders abroad to return home provoked similar reactions from all those called toward the regime, the independent weekly reported in a front page story. These opposition leaders, the most prominent of whom are former Vice President Ali Salem Al-Beedh and former PM Haidar Abu Bakr Al-Attas, cast doubt that the government is serious to resolve the repeated crises at the domestic level, advising it to abide by the "Document of Pledge and Accord".

This means, according to observers, that Saleh's call doesn't lead to positive results, contrarily to statements made by the ruling General People Congress's Media Circle that the government is dialoguing with Yemeni politicians abroad to convince them return home.

President Saleh called opposition leaders abroad to return home during celebrations of the 40th Anniversary of the National Independence Day on November 30, but most of them responded that they are not willing to come unless the government reform the deteriorating situations in the nation and alleviate citizens' sufferings.

Speaking to Al-Methaq Weekly, GPC mouthpiece, Ahmad Ghanem,

Head of GPC Media Circle, refused to give further details concerning the nature of dialogues between the authority and opposition leaders abroad. "I can not say more than this," he told, denying there is a deal between both sides. The GPC Permanent Committee member expressed hope that Saleh's call may lead to complete response in order for everyone in the country to work for the sake of unified Yemen. However, he confirmed that if there is no interaction with the initiative, this doesn't necessarily imply a standoff facing the national work.



Al-Wahdawi Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO)
Tuesday, December 11

Top stories

- JMP announces its proposal for amending election law
- British airport authorities prevent President Saleh's armed bodyguards from entering Britain
- Yemen PAC: Rampant corruption in Yemen still constitutes biggest barrier to development
- Security authorities hold staff of Aljazeera and Alarabiyya televisions, prevent them from covering martyr's funerals
- Civil Community Coalition warns of hostile policies toward rights and political activists
- Kuwait denies that it opposes Yemen's GCC entry

The State of Kuwait denied reports published by different media that it objects to Yemen's admission to Gulf

Cooperation Council, the weekly paper reported. It quoted Kuwaiti political sources as saying that their government never opposed Yemen's entry into GCC during the most recent Gulf summit, held in the Qatari capital Doha, in the presence of Iran's President Ahmadinejad.

According to the weekly, the Saudi newspaper, Al-Watan, quoted other Kuwaiti official sources as saying that Kuwait has been and is still backing the GCC member states' unanimous decision to strengthen their relations with Yemen. The sources told that the summit did not discuss the issue of Yemen's GCC entry, nor was this issue included in the agenda. They confirmed that Kuwait retains strong ties with Yemen, particularly in the economic area, adding that all the previous summits focused on developing relationships between GCC member states and Yemen, which started with involving Yemen in sport, health and social activities.

Media sources revealed that the State of Kuwait objected to a proposal set up by a Gulf state's leader backing Yemen's admission into the Gulf cartel and that leader explained why he conserved confidentiality of the proposal, the weekly said. It added that London-based Al-Hayah newspaper quoted Gulf high ranking officials saying that one of the Gulf leaders, whom it refused to reveal his name, spoke at a closed meeting for leaders about the future of Yemen's relations with other GCC state members.

Al-Hayat reported that the Kuwaiti side reserved this proposal and justified why it did so, however, many of those who participated in the meeting attributed Kuwait's conservation to Yemen's positions during the Second Gulf War.

Peace in Darfur not possible without justice

By: Lisa Clifford, Katy Glassborow and Sonia Nezamzadeh

At times, it seemed as if the international community was willing to abandon the threat of criminal prosecution against those accused of committing war crimes in Darfur in exchange for a reduction of violence in the troubled region of Sudan. After all, members of the United Nation's Security Council had repeatedly failed to mention the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court against two Sudanese leaders in their dealings with the Khartoum government.

But all that changed earlier this month when three Security Council members - Britain, France and the United States - all called upon Sudan to cooperate with the court and hand over the rebel leader and government minister wanted by the ICC. "Countries have realized that the Darfur situation has gone from bad to worse, that all diplomatic measures have come to nothing and words have proved useless until now," said Richard Goldstone, former chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

The court's chief prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, told the council that "massive crimes" are still being committed in Darfur and said that he would open two new investigations into what he termed "pattern of attacks" by Sudanese officials against civilians forced from their villages and into camps.

He said he would also investigate attacks against peacekeepers and aid workers, such as the killing of 10 African Union peacekeepers in

October.

We are witnessing a calculated, organized campaign by Sudanese officials to attack individuals and further destroy the social fabric of entire communities," Moreno-Ocampo told the council.

"All information points not to chaotic and isolated acts but to a pattern of attacks." Unlawful killings, illegal detentions and sexual violence are among the crimes being routinely committed, he said, while those living in camps for internally displaced people "are deliberately kept in a state of destitution. Obstacles to the delivery of aid are part of the pattern of attacks.

Sudan has steadfastly refused to hand over any of the accused to the court, a position reiterated by the country's UN ambassador, Abdalmahmood Abdalhaleem Mohamad. In the past, the council has been reluctant to press the issue. But this time, both Britain and France responded by saying such a position by Sudan was unacceptable and called upon the entire council to give its "full and public backing" to the court.

Even the United States, which has refused to sign up to the ICC, demanded that Sudan cooperate, while Sudan's most important ally, China, called for a stepping up of communication and cooperation between the court and Khartoum.

Only intense and sustained pressure can bring an end to the humanitarian disaster in Sudan, most observers believe. "Very little has changed on the ground, (and) the reason for this is the relaxed reaction of the international community to what is going on there," said Abdelbagi Jibril, the executive director of the Darfur Relief and Documentation Center in Switzerland.

"The U.N. resolution to refer the Darfur situation to the ICC has yet to

be followed by concrete action to force the government of Sudan to comply.

Some suspect UN negotiators may have been reluctant to threaten Sudanese officials with criminal prosecution while negotiating the arrival of a peacekeeping force with the government in Khartoum. But that focus on peace over justice has backfired, says Abdelsalam Hassan, a London-based Sudanese human rights lawyer.

"In recent months, it is clear the government is not serious on reaching peace in Darfur," he said. "They are constantly putting obstacles (in the way). Because the international community did not get behind the court, it certainly sent the wrong message to the Sudanese government that it could get away with what it was doing.

And with new ICC investigations set to begin, Hassan said, world leaders must not make the same mistakes again. "If the states do not support the decisions the ICC takes there is no meaning to the establishment of the court and investing resources into it," he said. Dick Leurdijk, senior research associate at the Netherlands Institute of International Relations, believes sanctions against Sudan could be next on the UN's agenda. "Ocampo's main message (to the international community) is that it's up to you to pressure Sudan," he said. "Basically, he's asking for sanctions against Sudan, whether through political or economic means.

Lisa Clifford, Katy Glassborow and Sonia Nezamzadeh are reporters in The Hague who write for The Institute for War & Peace Reporting, a nonprofit organization that trains journalists in areas of conflict - MCT. Source: www.kuwaittimes.net

Finding understanding in a teddy bear

By: HRH Prince Hassan bin Talal

The case of a teddy bear in a Khartoum classroom has become headline news across the world. The events seem ridiculous to most, politically motivated to some and worthy of outrage to only a small minority. But the facts of this debacle are less important than the emotions and reactions that the whole sorry event has unleashed. We live in a world that is so charged with anger, offence and distrust that the slightest spark can set the tinder aflame. Unless we work to quell underlying hatred and to dispel misunderstanding, we risk conflagration at any moment.

The "world" of Islam is not a united entity with set policies and constitutional certainty. It is a borderless union of the *ummah*, believers who hail from a multitude of racial, national and social backgrounds. Islam is a universal set of values that are often appropriated by governments, interest groups and bands of individuals with interests other than the promotion of the common good or peaceful understanding between the three Abrahamic faiths. As occupiers of a world in turmoil and recipients of so many bytes of mediated media information, we all have a responsibility to cipher the codes of news stories and to understand the realities of our times.

There is great anger in many Muslim communities at the perceived attack by western governments and media on their faith and on their brothers and sisters in faith around the world. Similarly, for many westerners, the isolated voices of unrepresentative men like Osama bin Laden have received so much airtime that they become iconised on all sides, their twisted words misinterpreted as a message from all Muslims. Both of these perceptions have been given life by fear, misunderstanding and media emphasis.

But it matters little that these are merely inaccurate perceptions of the "other". Perception has been a powerful force throughout history: it has fuelled hatred, ignited wars and brought misery to the lives of millions who have been denied their right to share the resources of our world.

So let us not pursue this mutually destructive course of perceived division. The case of Gillian Gibbons is not a further example of the western imperialist disdain for Islam and its traditions, nor is it further confirmation of Islam's intransigence and intolerance. We must intelligently deconstruct events such as this and discuss them for what they are. No doubt, this case would not have arisen at another time or in another place. The particularities of Sudan's relationship with the United Kingdom had a large impact on how the case was handled and reported, as did the personal relationships and communication structures at Unity High School. The legal and diplomatic procedures that were set in motion quickly developed their own locally-charged impetus.

What is perhaps most worrying about this case is that it emerged from a classroom. This has become an increasingly prevalent feature of that perceived clash between Islam and the West in our time. Undoubtedly, that seven-year-old boy who shared a name with the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and who innocently suggested it for a symbol of love for children around the world is questioning his own very identity. If he cannot give his name in genuine love than who is he and what is his value?

The name of the Prophet Muhammad is indeed deserving of our respect, protection and elevation above the profane. But it is what the name represents that matters. The standards and values of the Prophet Muhammad are what guide Muslims through life. His teachings must be interpreted for our own circumstances

and his life must act as an example for us all. If it was merely a question of revering the name then we would not give it to our children - for what child, no matter how loved, could honour the Prophet by living a life as worthy as his? And for those parents whose children have failed to live the life of a good Muslim, should they be punished for dishonouring the Prophet's name?

To those in the West who have chosen to see this latest media event as further proof that Islam is that threatening "other", only to be feared and reviled, I would ask that you also exercise rationale and analysis in grasping the meaning of this case. Take it for what it is, a particular set of actions and reactions in a troubled country. Its relevance for understanding between people should act as a warning of how far down the path of misunderstanding we have already wandered.

In an increasingly globalised world, our contact with other peoples and cultures can only increase. However, we cannot expect to enjoy cultural affinity with all those we meet on our travels or theirs. I believe this is a cause for great joy, for diversity has always been a driving force in the achievements of human civilisations. But an understanding of underlying causes of anger and distrust must guide our actions.

We must strive to understand the cultures we encounter and we must welcome those who come among us with good intentions. These are difficult times and there are many who would cause offence and create rifts where they have no place. Let us ensure that we do not help them in their destructive task.

Prince El Hassan bin Talal, brother of the late King Hussein of Jordan, is chairman of several organisations in fields which include diplomacy, interfaith studies, human resources, and science and technology. Source: The Guardian.

Children use dolls to fight AIDS

By: Fatima Al-Ajel

Talented children are selected to be trainers for children in the future by using dolls and present plays.

About 20 children from the Safe Childhood Center and the Juvenile Center participated on Monday in a three-day program which aims to educate children on the dangerous and negative effects of AIDS.

At the beginning of the coming year, the trainees plan to transfer their experi-

ence and knowledge about the danger of AIDS to their friends in the juvenile centers by using dolls and games as attractive tools for communicating with and educating the children.

The program procedures consist of five steps, starting with providing the children with materials to make their own dolls. Then the children write and rehearse scenarios related to AIDS, design the décor of the theater, and lastly perform the plays.

The program, implemented in Hodeidah, Taiz and Aden, reflected the children's remarkable achievements, as

they model how juveniles and street children in society can participate in community development if they get the chance and support to do so.

The project's coordinator, Mohammed Al-Arifi, described how the children portrayed their suffering in the street through the roles they played in the theater. He mentioned, "These children are the ones who most need such a program, especially for educating them about the danger and negative effects of AIDS. Most of them face sexual abuse and physical abuse. So, it is important to provide them with such program." He added that there were some children in the program who are illiterate, but they are creative and they performed well.

The program is the second step of a project developed by the Ebhar Foundation for Childhood and Creativity, in cooperation with the Children's Protection Program in the The United Nations Children's Fund - UNICEF. The first step of the project started in Taiz and Aden, then moved to Hodeidah. It will be concluded in Sana'a from Dec. 15th-17th, 2007.

According to latest statistics from the National AIDS Program in the Ministry of Health, reports of AIDS cases in Yemen are increasing. The number of AIDS cases in June of this year reached 2,890.

Official figures estimate the number of



A doll portrayed by street children shows their suffering.

child laborers in Yemen at over 400,000. In 1999, the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated that 19.2 percent of children aged 10-14 were

working in Yemen.

According to Yemeni law, children aged 7-15 are considered juveniles, while internationally a juvenile is

defined as anyone 18 or younger. The government has yet to approve a proposal to make 18 the legal age limit for juveniles.



Some of the doll productions produced by street children and juveniles during the training program

Diabetes patients at risk from alternate medicine

With 8 to 10 percent of Yemen's population suffering from diabetes – 2 to 3 percent of whom are children – both diabetes patients and health experts say alternate medication provided by the Ministry of Health is ineffective at treating the disease. *Wojoud Mujalli* reports.



Sweet temptation: Diabetes patients cannot have sweets as it affects their health condition.

Yemen's Health Ministry previously purchased diabetes medications such as Actrapid, Insulatrd and Mixtard insulin from a Danish pharmaceutical company and the benefits to diabetes patients were evident. However, the ministry abruptly stopped dealing with the Danish company in early 2006, instead contracting with Egyptian and Indian firms for the same diabetes medication.

According to the ministry, one reason for purchasing the medication from such other sources is that they're cheaper. However, patients and some health specialists say the alternate medication isn't as effective as the previous ones, with several patients recently holding sit-ins and marches to protest the medicine.

Diabetes patient Adel Mahyoub of Sana'a agrees that the alternate medicines aren't as good as the old ones. "Since I started using this medicine, I've developed a lot of problems with my liver and kidneys. This is why I sometimes buy the German medicine Lantus, which is the best, but rare to find," he

notes.

Mahyoub further recounts, "I recently went to the Ministry of Health and asked why they contracted with such unqualified firms and why they didn't purchase [Lantus], at which they replied with satisfaction that the German medicine is too expensive and they can't afford it."

Yemeni health specialists allege that the medicines from these alternate sources damage the liver and kidneys and may cause patients allergies because they aren't effective as those from Denmark and Germany.

The Health Ministry offers some 100,000 diabetes patients nationwide free medication via its Central Pharmacy located in each governorate; 30,000 diabetes patients in Sana'a alone receive free medicine this way.

Dr. Abdul-Kafi Al-Haddad, supervisor of the Yemeni Diabetes Center in Sana'a, points out that some diabetes patients get their medicine from other hospitals instead of from the center itself.

However, the center is new and the health minister is attempting to have

diabetes patients obtain their medicine from only one source – the Central Pharmacy – so as not to mismanage the filling of prescriptions, as quantities are limited and sometimes don't cover all patients' needs.

He adds, "If there are any issues or problems with this alternate medication, doctors must say something about it and

take care of their patients."

Because the health minister controls the Central Pharmacy, hospitals have no control over it; thus, even if hospitals request medication transferred somewhere else, such directive won't be followed or even considered.

A common disease

According to health workers, diabetes is one of Yemen's most common diseases, with 8 to 10 percent of the nation's approximately 21 million population suffering from it.

There are two types of diabetes – type 1 and type 2. The most common is type 2, wherein the B-cells in the pancreas can't secrete insulin; thus, problems begin. Type 1 mostly is related to genetic factors and is where insulin is secreted but not active.

Dr. Zaid Atef, head of the Yemeni Diabetes Center and deputy manager at Al-Thawra Hospital, explains, "People are becoming lazy, because of which diabetes is increasing more quickly. Not exercising and the increasing rate of obesity in children are also important contributors to diabetes. Additionally, women who give birth many times are more likely to develop the disease, while genetic factors also play an essential role."

According to him, too much glucose (sugar) in the blood for a long time can cause diabetes, noting that, "This high blood glucose (also called blood sugar) can damage many parts of the body, such as the heart, blood vessels, eyes and kidneys. Heart and blood vessel disease can lead to heart attacks and strokes."

Atef explains further, "Diabetes slows circulation, which can make body tissues more susceptible to infections and reduce the body's resistance to infection."

According to Al-Haddad, diabetes has many effects upon the human body, as well as many causes, one of which he



Too much glucose (sugar) in the blood for a long time can cause diabetes

agrees with Atef is the lazy life to which many are becoming accustomed. "People must take more care of their health, paying attention to what they eat and exercising more."

For this reason and to raise public

awareness, he says, "We marched for International Diabetes Day in late November, celebrating it then instead of Nov. 14 for many reasons, one of which was that it was a Thursday and thus would attract larger crowds."

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In a Climate of Impunity Honor Killings in Jordan

Brazil, Ecuador, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, Morocco are just a few countries where honor killings occur. Anja Wehler-Schöck has studied the phenomenon of honor killings using the example of Jordanian society. Naima El Moussaoui talked with the political scientist. *Interview conducted by Naima El Moussaoui*



Anja Wehler-Schöck

The murder of Hatun Sürücü in 2005 sparked a heated debate in Germany about crimes committed in the name of honor. What actually is honor killing?

A honor killing is when a woman is murdered by a male member of her family in order to reestablish the family's honor. The violation of honor ensues from an actual or alleged act of moral misconduct by the woman. This misconduct is typically sexual in nature, but it can assume many different forms: from general disobedience to contact with a man or an extramarital affair. It can even be the misfortune of having been a victim of an – often incestuous – rape.

How widespread is the practice of honor killing?

According to the estimates of the United Nations Population Fund,

approximately 5,000 women and girls around the world are assassinated every year in honor killings. Pakistan, with around 500 cases a year, is considered to be one of the countries in which the highest number of honor killings occur. But it is difficult to work with precise numbers, as the number of unrecorded cases is very high. In many cases honor killings are not registered as such by the police – either because there is no awareness of it or because the murders were cleverly disguised as accidents or suicides.

Pakistan is an Islamic country. This confirms the predominant assumption that honor killings are the expression of an Islamic culture.

Because the majority of honor killings are committed in Islamic countries, it is assumed that this practice is connected with Islam. Islamic scholars and adher-

ents of Islamic organizations are occasionally heard claiming that honor killing is justified or even called for by Islamic law.

However, neither the honor complex nor the practice of honor killings is rooted in Islam. The idea of transferring dishonor from one person to another or to a collective is foreign to Islam, for example. Moreover, the Koran contains a fundamental ban on murder. Individuals are also prohibited from taking the law into their own hands.

The honor complex I describe can be found everywhere where the societal structure is shaped by familism, paternalism, and a strong religious influence. The practice of honor killings is found not only in Islamic and Arab countries, but, for example, also in some Latin American countries, such as Brazil and Ecuador.

"Neither the honor complex nor the practice of honor killings is rooted in Islam."

You studied honor killings in Jordan and not, for instance, in Ecuador, which would have contradicted existing prejudices. Why?

I felt it was important to study an Islamic, Arab country especially in order to pursue your previous question, that is, whether honor killing has roots in Islam, in Arab culture, or in tribal law. For me Jordan represented a particularly interesting case because the country has received an unusual amount of public attention in the recent years in the international discussion over honor killings.

Moreover, compared to other countries in which honor killings occur, Jordan stands out with several progressive measures directed toward violence against women. And not least of all, it should be kept in mind that the political climate also plays a certain role for such research. Unlike in Iran, for instance, or in Pakistan, liberalization has made a public debate over the problem of honor killing possible in Jordan.

What are the legal consequences of honor killings according to Jordanian law?

The crime "honor killing" does not exist in Jordanian law. Thus, the designation would most likely be second-degree homicide (prison sentence up to 15 years) or first-degree murder (death penalty). But these maximum penalties are seldom imposed. As a rule, the

offenders in honor killing cases walk off with very mild sentences.

On one hand, this is because honor killing – as I've already mentioned – are often disguised as a suicide or accident, and the police and the judiciary show little motivation to investigate the circumstances of these cases more closely. On the other hand, Jordanian law has a number of provisions that allows for the mitigation of a sentence and even grounds for exculpation, which are frequently drawn on in honor killings.

Another interesting aspect is that families sometimes order a young member of the family to carry out the act, since persons under 18 years of age come under juvenile law. In most cases the question of instigation, complicity, or indirect involvement should be clarified. Yet such deliberations have thus far not been taken into consideration in the legal proceedings. Thus, overall a climate of impunity prevails with regard to honor killings. Of positive note, however, is a slight trend recently toward harsher sentences.

On one hand we have a climate of impunity. But on the other hand members of the royal family participated in a demonstration against honor killings. Was this only for the sake of publicity, or what is the royal house doing against the practice of honor killing?

The Jordan royal family emanates a certain liberality and advocates for social issues. Often, however, it involves symbolic acts – such as the participation in a demonstration – rather than lasting measures to improve the situation. In civil society the royal family's approach is thus perceived very critically and seen as a strategy to put a damper on inconvenient acts in civil society by appropriating certain

initiatives.

King Abdullah is not expected to take the offensive against honor killing in the near future. The situation in Jordan is marked by a sustained climate of political tension, which has intensified in the past few years. The government's number one priority is thus internal security. Against this backdrop King Abdullah is neither willing nor in the position to risk pursuing further drastic reforms leading toward democracy and social liberalization, which could result in permanent changes.

Does the ongoing political conflict as well as the resulting economic uncertainty play a role in the problem of honor killing?

The situation of a constant threat has been used by the Jordanian government to justify the curtailment of political and social liberties. Human rights, particularly women's rights, have had to retreat behind state security. Not only in the conservative camp is violence against women at times regarded as insignificant compared to "real" problems such as poverty and unemployment.

It is conceivable that the climate of sustained conflict has led to a brutalization of Jordanian society. According to an analysis by amnesty international, a higher incidence of honor killings can be observed in many societies whose everyday life is marked by violent conflicts.

Anja Wehler-Schöck is a political scientist (Free University Berlin/ Institut d'Etudes Politiques Paris) and works as a consultant for Gender, Family, and Youth Politics for a political foundation in Berlin.

Translated from the German by Nancy Joyce

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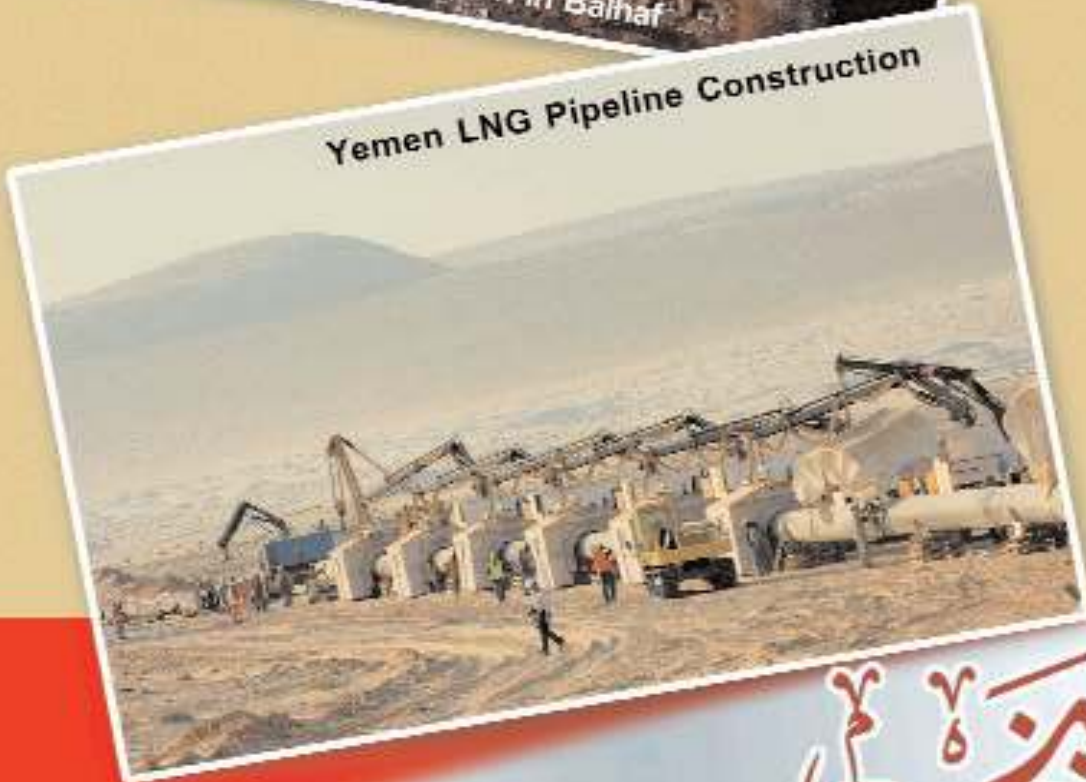
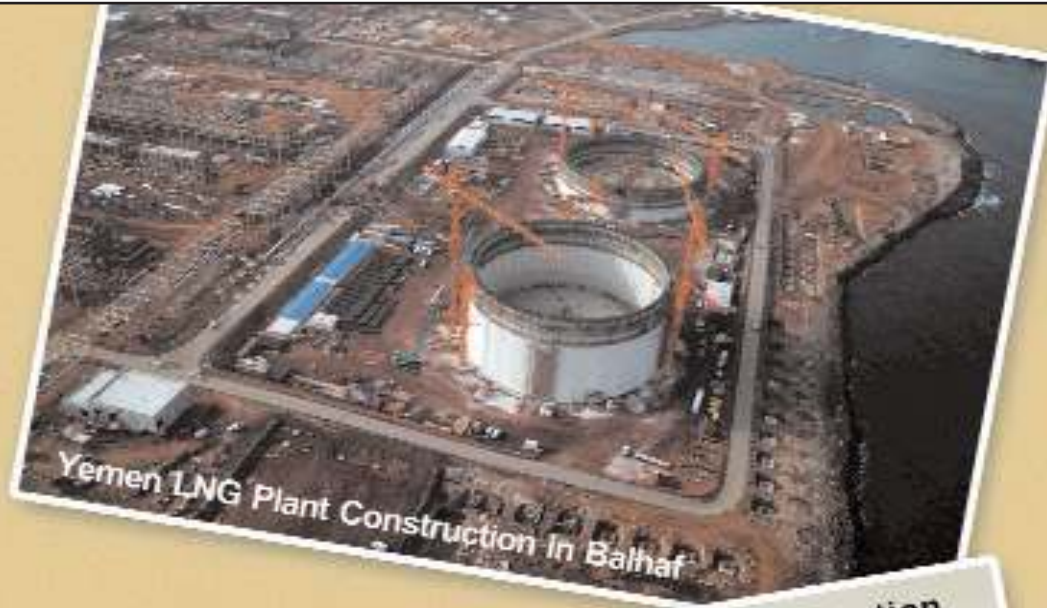
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Islamic herald Mohammed Al-Arifi to the Yemen Times: Spiritual defeat is a persistent problem in the Muslim community

Islamic thinker Dr. Mohammed Al-Arifi of Saudi Arabia is one of the most prominent callers to Islam. He has gained popularity through his repeated appearances on the screens of numerous satellite channels, as well as authoring numerous books, the most popular of which is, "Enjoy Your Life."

The way he delivers lessons and communicates with his audience is more than simply attractive, as manifested by his great influence in reforming youths in the various Arab and Islamic states.

Al-Arifi is known for his frequent movements between various countries, calling people to draw closer to Allah in a prudent and didactic manner, and thanks to his efforts, many non-Muslims have converted to Islam.

During his most recent visit to Yemen last month, the Hikmah Yamaniyyah Charitable Society prepared a program for him including several lectures, televised symposiums and meetings with religious scholars and statesmen in various Yemeni governorates.

After a lengthy wait, *Hassan Al-Hashidi* interviewed the famed Islamic herald, who answered the following questions:

What are the most important subjects of your missionary work, which you focus on through your interviews with satellite channels, and what is their main objective?

Undoubtedly, a herald's engagement with all means via which he may convey his advice to various communities is essential in doing that job. In the past, God's messengers pursued this method in calling people to draw closer to Him and have stronger faith in Him. Such messengers used to walk in the markets, conversing with others with the aim of reforming them.

Roaming through popular markets, the Prophet Mohammed said, "Who can give me shelter to convey the message of my Lord because Quraish prevented me from doing so?" He used to call people to draw closer to God wherever he met them, notably in the markets where evil acts such as adultery, the selling of wine, etc., had spread.

Including Mohammed, none of Allah's messengers paid attention to such vices; rather, they devoted most of their efforts to conveying their Creator's message. Likewise, Islamic heralds in today's world expend much effort advising unbelievers and calling non-Muslims to convert to Islam via available means, notably satellite channels.

The task's subjects are many and varied. If a particular satellite channel is known to be popular among young people, the subjects will differ from those targeting girls and women and aired on channels with female popularity. Topics of discussion are chosen to match a channel's programming and its viewers.

Today's Islamic heralds imitate the tradition of the Prophet Mohammed, who was known to select subjects in light of the nature of his addressees.

However, I generally attempt to have diverse subjects, some of which relate to ideology and faith, while others concentrate on thought, education or marital relations. I once discussed subjects related to contemporary sects, Western philosophy, etc.

Most of the time, I try to facilitate my presentation or delivery of such lectures to be easily understood by the simple grassroots, as well as the educated and elites because this helps make my mission a success.

Spiritual defeat

What are the most prominent ailments within the Muslim community and do you think such illnesses require an urgent cure?

Most of these diseases have nothing to do with the social nature. These days, many Muslims are afflicted by spiritual defeat, which makes them feel that Islam is suffering humiliation at the hands of unbelievers, who daily oppress Muslims and abuse their rights. As a result, Muslims have conflicting concepts regarding conveying the message of Islam, not knowing how to convey it, so this is one issue that needs remedying.

Another regards Muslim youths, who are inordinately occupied with sitting in front of screens displaying instant message chats and SMS texts in order to establish prohibited relations with girls at the expense of their nations' issues and concerns.

Such youths never concern themselves with their brothers being killed in Baghdad; instead, they only care about their girlfriends' replies on their screens. Similarly, having seen their sisters raped or abducted in various parts of the



Islamic thinker Dr. Mohammed Al-Arifi

world, Muslim girls show no concern for such incidents.

Money doesn't generate happiness
Because materialism appears to take precedence over spiritualism, what are the persistent problems today's youth encounter in this regard?

If humans don't improve their relationship with Allah, fear and love Him, they undoubtedly will encounter much trouble and worry, as highlighted in numerous Qur'anic verses warning those who deviate from worshiping God of bad consequences, such as permanent annoyance and dissatisfaction. Those deceived by materialism and temporary lust at the expense of their spiritual strength will not achieve the happiness they seek.

"Enjoy Your Life"

Thus far, you've authored many valuable books, the most famous of which is, "Enjoy Your Life," which has gained popularity in various countries. What's the idea of the book and to whom is it addressed?

The book focuses on interpersonal skills, particularly referencing the Prophet Mohammed's biography and traditions, outlining as many as 92 rules he followed when dealing with people. It's rich in instructions on how readers can enjoy their lives and win others' support.

It also contains some of my personal experiences, as well as those of other scholars, which are intended to be of some help to readers.

Liberal satellite channels

Some have a negative impression about you appearing on liberal satellite channels. What's your reaction to this?

At the beginning of this interview, I talked about the media and how people can benefit from it and its activities, pointing out that the Prophet Mohammed and other messengers used to walk through the markets to convey their Lord's message to others and publicize their divine law, giving others this advice, "Say there's no god but Allah in order to succeed."

These messengers encountered difficulties in doing their job, as their opponents used to advocate evil acts such as adultery and selling wine; however, they paid no attention to such vices while calling others to draw closer to Allah.

In my opinion, whenever an Islamic scholar appears on such channels, speaking or lecturing in an effort to reform others, no matter how unusual those channels seem to be, he's using the content of the Qur'an and the Hadith

to convince others to have faith in Islam's righteous message.

What's broadcast before or after such scholars' programs doesn't negatively impact their program as long as they choose the right topic of discussion without allowing the channel's staff to alter it.

Some heralds hurry to attain the fruit of their efforts

It's now more than two decades since the Islamic Awakening began. How do you assess the general progress of this awakening?

The Islamic ummah hasn't been sleeping in order for it to wake up. Muslims are passive in some areas, but still active in others. Had the Islamic ummah been asleep throughout the years, no new individuals would have converted to Islam and there would have been no new books or new Islamic media.

In contemplating Islamic history, you're bound to find that each of its stages has witnessed strenuous efforts to call non-Muslims to Islam, as well as the publication of numerous valuable books on Islamic teaching and increased numbers of non-Muslims converting to Islam.

No stage of Islamic history passed without such efforts and activities – most notably within the past few years – thanks to the spread of various media.

Islamic scholars have utilized these means to convey their ideas to others and impart valuable advice on how to make use of their short lives and prepare for the Day of Resurrection. Such activities came to be called, "The Islamic Awakening."

These types of efforts and activities positively impact Islam's popularity and the reformation of non-Muslims, which I've seen in my visits to various Muslim and non-Muslim countries. In such countries, I noticed that people are yearning for goodness and crowding into my lecture venues.

Regarding the negatives of this Islamic Awakening, this seems to be unjust judgment because nothing in this life is infallible. Human work isn't free from faults and since heralds are just workers, it's normal for them to make mistakes; however, those who learn from their mistakes are the best heralds.

Heralds are to be kind to their audiences and continue their mission without ceasing, even if there's no fruit from their efforts.

The dynamics of future missionary work

How do you see the future regarding the dynamics of missionary activity, both at the Arab and Islamic levels? Through my meetings, I've realized that

people always accuse me of being excessively optimistic, to which I respond that the Prophet Mohammed once followed this same methodology in conveying the message of his Lord. He remained optimistic throughout his life, instructing others to be optimistic and expect good, as Allah promised victory to the believers and victory results from patience.

While digging the trench, the Prophet Mohammed was optimistic about conquering the Persian region, Yemen and Egypt; however, he was experiencing hard times and difficult circumstances. Thus, we must remain optimistic that this religion eventually will score a great triumph, by the will of God.

Discussing Sept. 11 requires more than one meeting

Following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, various terms and concepts emerged within the Muslim community, such as dialoguing with non-Muslims, conflict and dialogue between civilizations, etc. How best do you interpret these concepts and what are their impacts on the Muslim community?

This is a good question, but it requires a lengthy explanation, as it's not worthy to answer it in a few lines, particularly because you mention many terms, each of which necessitates a different elaboration.

It's unfair to give a short response to such complicated problems, but I hope a broad meeting can be arranged for me or another of my colleagues to explain these matters in full detail.

New heralds

Is it true that new Islamic heralds appearing on satellite channels are influencing the role of traditional scientific references and Islamic institutions specializing in missionary work?

I don't agree with this statement. Heralds are heralds, whether new or old. Young or old, a herald should use the available data and various media to convey his message.

He also should develop his delivery skills and manner of conveying his ideas and addressing others. He must be prudent enough to select subjects and issues related to people's concerns, plus any other persistent issues that provoke the audience's interaction.

Scholars and heralds care about women

According to a study done in Egypt, veiled women don't exceed 85 percent of that country's population, to which the study attributed this to advocacy for women's liberation. What's the role of contemporary heralds and Islamic institutions, as well as Islamic parties, in addressing women's issues during these current times?

Since ancient times, heralds and scholars have been paying closer attention to women and their issues. In fact, the Prophet Mohammed scheduled a women's lesson every Monday, in addition to praying with them in the mosque to remind them about goodness.

Today's scholars and heralds are advised to include in their schedules and itineraries lessons for women and their issues because women comprise half of society, so addressing their issues means caring for society.

Faith and wisdom are Yemeni qualities

As this is your second visit to Yemen, what are the most outstanding phenomena drawing your attention in Yemeni society?

My first visit to Yemen was four years ago and the second was five months ago. This is my third trip to the country and it's such a kind country, nicknamed "The nation of belief and wisdom" by the Prophet Mohammed and well-known for its faithful natives.

Faith and wisdom both are qualities of the Yemeni people, who once supported the Prophet Mohammed in conveying the message of his Lord; thus, all Yemenis at that time converted to Islam, without exception.

CULTURAL SERIES FACES & TRACES

Faces & Traces is a cultural series of concise biographies of local or international famous and obscure personalities in fields such as literature, arts, culture and religion in which these individuals contribute affirmatively. It is a short journey in contemporary history, attempting to tackle numerous effective characters in human civilization.

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, a multitalented and perceptive Palestinian figure

Prepared by: Eyad N. Al-Samman

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra was a Palestinian novelist, poet, short story writer, translator, critic, scenarist (a screenplay writer) and painter.

Born in Bethlehem in 1920 of Syrian Orthodox origins, Jabra commenced his elementary education at a Syrian school, followed by Bethlehem's National School in 1929 before going to Jerusalem, where he studied at Al-Rashidiya High School in 1932. He then attended Jerusalem's Arabic College, becoming well-versed in English, Arabic and Syriac languages.

Jabra received a scholarship to study in Great Britain at Cambridge University's Exeter College, graduating in the mid-1940s with a master's degree in English literature. After graduation, he returned to Palestine, where he was appointed a lecturer at Jerusalem's Al-Rashidiya College and taught art at his alma mater, Al-Rashidiya Secondary School.

Following the occupation of Palestine in 1948, Jabra was forced to flee his destroyed homeland, settling in Baghdad and joining the British archeology mission. He later taught English literature at Baghdad University before being awarded a fellowship to Harvard University in the United States in 1952.

Returning to Baghdad in 1954, Jabra joined Iraq's National Oil Company, in addition to working on several documentary films. During the 1950s, he also founded the Baghdad Contemporary Art Group, as well as being editor-in-chief of Arabic Art magazine and president of Iraq's Art Critics Association.

He continued lecturing at Baghdad University's Faculty of Arts and at Queen Aliyah College until 1964.

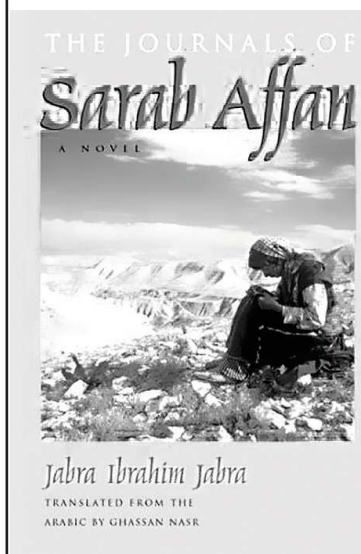
Jabra produced approximately 60 books, including novels, poetic divans and translated material, among other artistic and literary works, some of which have been translated into more than 12 languages.

He won numerous Arab and international literary prizes and medals, including the 1983 Culture Art Prize awarded by the Interart Forum in Rome, the 1989 Saddam Hussein Prize for Fiction, the Emirates' Sultan Al-Owais Prize for Literary Criticism and the 1990 Jerusalem Medal for Literary Achievement.

In 1956, Jabra published a short story collection entitled, "Iraq and Other Stories," whereas most of his novels tackled the peculiar Palestinian personality in exile and the relationship between the protagonists and their motherland.

His first novel, "Passage in the Silent Night," was written in English in 1946 and translated into Arabic in 1955. Also written in English, 1960's "Hunters in a Narrow Street" portrayed the myriad conflicts between Arabs and Jews, dictatorship vs. futile liberal efforts and Eastern tradition vs. Western innovation.

His novel "Al-Safinah" ("The Ship,"



1970) is a masterful exploration of the post-1948 Arab world, with its frustrated yearnings for homeland and the struggle for survival, while his masterpiece, "In Search of Walid Masoud" (1978), explores the Arab intellectual's response to the chaos in the Middle East during the postcolonial era.

Jabra coauthored the 1982 novel, "A World Without Maps," with renowned Saudi author Abdulrahman Munif. Another of his novels, "The Other Rooms" (1986), is the story of a well-informed character who attempts to change his personality to coexist with a world in which he originally is uninterested.

Jabra's last novel was 1991's "The Journals of Sarab Affan," which was set during the first intifada and was a hallmark in contemporary Arab literature. The work is affirmative yet unsettling in its theme of salvation in the face of inescapable loss, alienation and exile.

In the field of literary translation, Jabra is considered one of the best translators of literary works by great authors. He translated Samuel Beckett's play, "Waiting for Godot," and William Faulkner's novel, "The Sound and the Fury." Additionally, he translated two of Oscar Wilde's most famous children's works, including "The Happy Prince," as well as a story collection by French writer Jean de La Fontaine.

However, Jabra's most massive contribution was translating Shakespearean works such as "Hamlet," "King Lear," "Macbeth," "The Tempest" and "Twelfth Night." He translated into Arabic exclusive studies and bibliographical works on these tragedies, including Jan Kott's "Shakespeare Our Contemporary" and John Dover Wilson's "What Happens in Hamlet."

As a literary critic, Jabra authored numerous books tackling literary critique, including "Freedom and Flood" (1960), "The Eighth Journey" (1967), "The Vision's Springs" (1979) and "Glorifying the Life" (1989).

Jabra's poetic collections include four divans: "Tammuz in the City" (1959), "The Closed Circuit" (1964), "The Sun's Anguish" (1979) and his last divan, "Seven Poems" (1989).

Having painted since childhood, Jabra founded the Jerusalem Art Club during the 1940s. In Iraq, he participated in fine arts exhibitions and closely associated with Baghdad's new and powerful art movement in. He penned several artistic critical books, including "Art in Iraq Today" (1961) and "The Grassroots of Iraqi Art" (1983).

As a fictional scenarist, Jabra authored two books entitled, "The Sun King" (1986) and "Days of the Eagle: Khalid and Al-Yarmouk Battle" (1988).

Jabra also penned his autobiography in two volumes, the second of which was entitled "Princesses' Street: Baghdad Memories" (1994), which continued his story begun in 1987's "The First Well: A Bethlehem Boyhood."

An exceptional 20th century icon in Arab literature, Jabra died in Iraq at age 74 on Dec. 11, 1994, leaving a literary heritage that will remain a brilliant representation in contemporary Arabic cultural history.

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Oddly enough news

Lonely guy shocked to get \$83,000 phone bill

TORONTO (Reuters) — A Canadian oil-field worker, stunned to get a C\$85,000 (\$83,700) cell phone bill, has had the charges reduced to C\$3,400, but is still fighting them.

Piotr Staniaszek, a 22-year-old oil and gas well tester in rural northwest Alberta, became a figure of international media attention this week when his father went to the press to complain about the size of his son's bill.

Staniaszek's father, also named Piotr Staniaszek, said his son thought he could use his new phone as a modem for his computer as part of his C\$10 unlimited browser plan from Bell Mobility, a division of Bell Canada.

He downloaded movies and other high-resolution files unaware of the charges they would incur.

"He's working in the field sometimes, alone, in the shack. What to do? Drink vodka or go on the Internet?" Staniaszek senior told Reuters on Thursday from Calgary, Alberta.

"Now it's \$85,000 and nobody told him," he said.

According to his invoice, the son rang up C\$60,000 in charges in November, and they have since climbed to C\$85,000.

Staniaszek senior said Bell has agreed to reduce the charges to C\$3,400 for "goodwill".

"It's still high...Who can afford it?" he said, adding his son can barely make payments on a new truck he bought for work, and will continue to fight the charges.

A Bell spokesman said the plan is not intended for downloading files to a computer, and that's clear in his contract.

Staniaszek said his son did not want to talk to the press after the interest his story has received and that he is afraid to use his cell phone and incur more long-distance charges.

Banning samurai swords

LONDON (Reuters) - The government said Wednesday it would ban the sale of samurai swords because the weapons had been used in a number of serious, high-profile attacks.



The Home Office said the swords would be added to the Offensive Weapons Order from April next year, meaning they could not be imported, sold or hired.

However collectors of genuine Japanese swords and those used by mar-

tial arts enthusiasts would be exempt from the ban.

"In the wrong hands, samurai swords are dangerous weapons," Home Office Minister Vernon Coaker said.

"We recognize it is the cheap, easily available samurai swords which are being used in crime and not the genuine more expensive samurai swords which are of interest to collectors and martial arts enthusiasts."

The Association of Chief Police Officers said the swords were not a common weapon but they had been used in a number of significant incidents.

In 2000, Robert Ashman murdered a Liberal Democrat councillor at the offices of Cheltenham MP Nigel Jones, who was also seriously hurt in the attack.

A year earlier, Eden Strang seriously wounded 11 people when he went on the rampage with a samurai sword at a Roman Catholic Church near his home in Thornton Heath, south London.

Maradona wants tattoo of Chavez

BUENOS AIRES (Reuters) — Argentine soccer great Diego Maradona wants to add an image of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez to his well-known collection of tattoos of leftist leaders.

"I'd like to get some sort of Chavez tattoo, really," Maradona told reporters on Wednesday ahead of a celebrity indoor soccer match.

Maradona has a tattoo of Argentine-born revolutionary Ernesto "Che" Guevara on his right shoulder and another of Cuban leader Fidel Castro on his left leg.

Maradona, considered by many the best soccer player of all time,

lived several years in Cuba while recovering from drug addiction. There he made friends with Castro, who is a close ally of Chavez.



Chavez has made socialist reforms in Venezuela and using his oil wealth has spread his leftist influence in Latin America.

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