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# YEMEN TIMES

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**Inside:**  **5** Yemen's elderly receive little attention  **11** General Irrigation manager talks about water abuse and misuse  **14** Renaissance of the Masjid-Madrasah- Part 1

## At least 5 killed, 16 injured at Aden rally



Thousands of people from different governorates joined the "Forgiving and Reconciliation Rally" on the occasion of the Jan. 13 Civil War in Aden.


**By: Ridhwan Al-Saqqaf and Mohammed Bin Sallam**  
ADEN, Jan. 13 – At least five people have been killed and 16 others injured, two seriously, as security forces used teargas and fired upon citizens at the "Forgiving and Reconciliation Rally" involving thousands from various governorates, eyewitnesses in Aden said Sunday, adding that security authorities arrested nearly 40 people.  
According to the witnesses, Air Force troops and Military Police were deployed to the scene of the rally. The same sources reported that

Aden's Sheikh Othman area witnessed chaos and lawlessness after police quarreled with demonstrators allegedly chanting "secessionist slogans" and raising the flag of the former People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen prior to reunification). However, the area was relatively calm after police dispersed protestors while troops remained deployed throughout Aden. Further, the sources said protesters burned tires in some Aden streets and blocked roads while the city's Khor Maksar area experienced fierce clashes and gunfire between citizens and police.


Other sources said citizens from Al-Dhale' governorate blocked the Sana'a-Aden Highway with rocks and timbers to protest what they termed "arbitrary behavior" by police who arrested citizens for joining the rally. "Because of today's Forgiving and Reconciliation Rally, some malicious elements lobbed percussion grenades at the scene. Further, such individuals forcibly snatched a soldier's gun and fired randomly into the air in an attempt to intimidate the assembling citizens and police deployed in Hashimi Square, thereby killing two and injuring another nine, in addition

to seven police officers," Yemen's Saba News Agency quoted an official source as saying. Additionally, the source reported, "Security authorities arrested those who lobbed percussion grenades and fired live ammunition randomly, seized their arms and transported the injured to a nearby hospital. All of this was done after the rally was over and people began to leave the scene. "The local authority has appointed a committee to investigate the event and its motives," the source added.

Continued on page 2

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## In brief

## SANA'A

## More than one million books entered Yemen in 2007

More than one million new titles of books entered the country last year, according to Department of Categories and Cultural Privacy in the Ministry in Culture.

Director of the department Abdul-Malik al-Qata stated to 26sep.net that the book market of Yemen receives more than one million new books in 2007.

He attributed that to the new policy adopted to left restricts on book importers to get such big amount of book in the country.

## Statistics: 1008 Yemeni females and males got married from foreigners in 2007

Around 1008 cases of marriage of Yemeni females and males to foreigners in 2007, according to official statistics.

The statistics of the Justice Ministry shows that 830 Yemeni females got married to foreigners compared to 849 cases in 2006 and about 178 Yemeni males got married to foreigners compared 159 cases in 2006.

Director of Documentation and Registration Department in the ministry Ahmed al-Qbalani said that these cases have been approved by the ministry after making sure from credibility of the documents by the Ministry of Interior and embassies of these people.

Al-Qbalani added that the Ministry of Justice concerns on reliability of the legal measures of this marriage to insure its success and rights of the Yemeni women who accepted to get married to a foreigner and live with him abroad.

He added that this marriage is not named as "tourist marriage" as press claims, it meets all legal conditions of marriage.

## AMRAN

## 30 awareness activities about AIDS carried out in Amran in 2007

The branch of the National Program for Combating AIDS/HIV in Amran province executed during 2007 about 30 activities aimed at raising awareness about the risks of the AIDS.

The director of the program in the province Ubaid Mardam told Saba the activities included delivering lectures and holding symposiums on social, economic and health risks of HIV and means to prevent the spread of the epidemic.

## ADEN

## Training course on AIDS held in Aden

The Integrated Social Services Center in Aden in sponsorship with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) launched on Saturday a training course on the risks of AIDS/HIV.

About 24 male and female youths from al-Buraiqa district will receive trainings for five days on how to communicate with others to introduce them to the risks of AIDS and its means of transmission.

Head of the al-Ferdous Foundation that took part in organizing the training course Samira Abdullah Nasr asserted the importance of holding such courses since they help youth, the targeted class, in realizing the risks of HIV.

## TAIZ

## Taiz women center for development launched

Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Amat al-Razaq Humad opened on Saturday Women Center for Development in the Eradication Illiteracy and Adult Education System of Taiz governorate.

During the opening, the minister launched a training program for eighty women from the beneficiaries of the Social Welfare Fund (SWF) in the areas of sewing, handicraft, hairdressing and frankincense industry funded by SWF branch in the governorate.

In a statement to Saba, director of Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education System Sabah Mohammed said that the program included various training courses which targeted 1200 women to meet the needs of the labor market and production rather than relying on SWF aids.

## International conference opposes US Guantanamo policy

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Jan. 13 — In a move organized by the National Organization for Defending Rights and Freedoms, known as HOOD, in cooperation with NGOs, Parliament and human rights groups, the International Action Conference on Guantanamo detainees urged the Yemeni government on Jan. 9 and 10 to designate its representative to the committee, formed by the conference, to be in charge of defending his compatriots detained in Guantanamo Bay.

According to the conference, the Yemeni representative has to free of other commitments in order to respond to any developments regarding Yemeni citizens detained in Guantanamo and other U.S. secret jails.

The international conference demanded that the Yemeni government prepare weekly reports on its efforts to release Yemeni citizens detained in Guantanamo. It also urged President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his government to send a message to the U.S. administration demanding that its citizens detained in U.S. jails be treated according to international law.

In the statement's conclusion, the conference called on the Yemeni government to have a clear position on conditions of its detained citizens, among them Aljazeera cameraman Sami Al-Haj, who are all going on a hunger strike. It recommended that the government warn the U.S. administration against mistreating its detained citizens or forcing them to eat in an inhuman way, claiming that this will complicate the issue.

The conference participants have undertaken to continue working hard on behalf of the detainees until the U.S. government sets them free and returns them home as soon as possible.

The Sana'a Conference selected February 4, 2008 to stage a protest in front of Parliament if the government doesn't respond to its listed demands.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi said that Yemen is one of the first countries that requested U.S. authorities to hand over its citizens detained in Guantanamo Bay. It is also one of the few countries that sent a security delegation to assess prisoner conditions and investigate their identities.

Giving a speech at the conference on the conditions of Yemeni detainees in Guantanamo, held under the slogan "Release Citizens", Al-Qirbi noted that U.S. media claims that Yemen refused to receive its citizens detained in Guantanamo are fraudulent and baseless.

The event was organized by HOOD in cooperation with Reprieve, a British organization, and attended by representatives from London-based Amnesty International and New York-based Constitutional Rights Center, as well as many detainees' defense-advocates.

Yemeni Human Rights Minister Huda Al-Ban urged the U.S. government to allow a Yemeni team to visit the Guantanamo detention center and assess the conditions of Yemeni inmates there.

"There is no respect for the Universal Declaration for Human Rights, the 60th anniversary of which was marked by the international community on the 10th of last December. Inmates in this prison experience miserable conditions and

mental disorders. They don't know whether they will face a fair trial or be released," she added. "Now, we need an immediate solution to their problem."

Al-Ban asked the U.S. Ambassador to Sana'a, Steven Seche, to provide adequate information about Yemeni citizens detained in Guantanamo, they way they are treated and the legal guarantees they are enjoying. She also demanded that the U.S. State Department free any inmates not connected with the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the U.S., which the Yemeni government strongly condemned after they occurred in 2001. The Human Rights Minister demanded that those found guilty of involvement in the event be handed over to the Yemeni judiciary for prosecution.

Delivering a speech at the conference, Parliament member Abdulbari Dughaihs called for the formation of a national committee to handle the case of Guantanamo detainees, advocate their release and prosecute perpetrators who exercise human rights abuses in the detention center. According to Dughaihs, the proposed committee can work in coordination with national and international organizations interested in human rights and public freedoms. He called on U.S. President George W. Bush to immediately shut down the prison and release the inmates.

Lawyer Clive Stafford, Reprieve chairman, said that U.S. authorities transferred as many as 776 detainees to Guantanamo Bay, among them 136 Saudis and 113 Yemenis, who stood first and second from among the multinational inmates in the detention facility. The U.S. government has released up to 501 detainees, including 123 Saudis and



275 people are still detained in the U.S. military base, among them 100 Yemenis and 13 Saudis.

13 Yemenis, since the prison was first opened on Jan. 11, 2002.

According to Stafford, 275 people are still detained in the U.S. military base, among them 100 Yemenis and 13 Saudis. He urged the Yemeni government to benefit from the experiences of European countries and Saudi Arabia in order to free its jailed citizens.

The British lawyer mentioned that Pakistani people collaborated with the U.S. in the arrest of nearly 47 percent of Guantanamo detainees for an amount of \$5000 per detainee. He stressed that most of the inmates are innocent and that the U.S. Administration doesn't have adequate evidence to convict them.

Regarding the inmates' hunger strike, Stafford revealed that 880 days have passed since Yemeni detainee Tareq Ba Audha started the hunger strike. He dis-

closed that the American army fed detainees via pipes pushed through their nostrils with the malicious intention of torturing them.

David Rims, a military lawyer defending Yemeni detainee Salem Hamdan, said that his client fell victim to negligence exercised by the U.S. authorities, who allege that Al-Qaeda commander Osama Bin Laden was hiring engineers, drivers and cooks to work with him. He added that the U.S. government has no evidence convicting Hamdan except for a one-second video shot, which was displayed on CNN.

The military lawyer indicated that the Yemeni government may have a secret deal with the U.S. Administration and that the latter might have refused to release Yemeni detainees over the former's failure to fulfill agreed-upon terms.

## Yemenis lack appreciation for their own history

By: Hamed Thabet

SANA'A, Jan. 13 — Situated at the crossroads of spice and incense routes, Yemen is one of the oldest continuously inhabited regions in the world that has not touched the winds of modernity, with a colorful history dating back to primeval times. Yet Yemen remains a medieval land and modernist fantasy to be discovered.

Only in Yemen, the valuable historical information is lost. According to Dr. Adbud Al-Razaq Al-Eiti, a sociologist at Taiz University, "We are living in a stagnant time, because those without a past don't have a present, and definitely won't have a future. People should develop and progress to a higher level in order to realize their past, as it is an important part of their national pride."

Al-Eiti added, "Illiteracy and cultural illiteracy play a major role in neglecting history. Cultural illiteracy means that people do not have any idea about their history; only a few are interested."

Monther Ishaq, sociology director in Taiz University, gave an example that when many Yemenis visit Marib, which dates back thousands of years, they only go to visit friends or relatives. Only a few go there in order to see the antiquities of the Sabaean and Queen Bilqis dynasties. However, foreign tourists head to Yemen for its long history, known for thousands of years.

Al-Eiti confirmed, "Awareness of history among Yemenis is nonexistent." He went on to say that locals constantly hear officials talking about the importance of antiques and history, but in fact are tired of listening to plans that are not implemented; instead, he asserts, they want action.

Al-Eiti expressed that "it is crucial to know our true history in order to know where we have come from. Although sometimes there are subjects in schools about Yemen's history, it is not taught correctly, which can make students understand it very well."

Mohammed Al-Aroosi, Sana'a University archeology lecturer and former president of Yemeni General Organization of Antiques and Museums (GOAM), said, "The information in many Yemeni museums about our antiques is not accurate. The few people who are interested will be misguided in Yemen's museums. Moreover, if anyone goes to a museum or any historical site, there are no services to guide them or qualified experts

in history and antiques to explain the artifacts. Visitors can only go sightseeing and take photos."

He confirmed that when he was president of GOAM, he asked officials to provide more specialists who graduated from Sana'a University to work in museums. At present, the government only provides jobs for guards in museums and sites; there are around 250 guards in Marib and a higher number in Al-Jawf.

He went on to say that when he was in office, he provided for 45 antique specialists to work in museums and sites, especially in Sana'a and Dhamar. He noted that "Those who work in museums now have no idea about anything. They just read what is written on a piece of paper about the antiques."

A lot of people believe that Yemen's ancient structures are nothing more than stones on the ground. According to Abdul Aziz Al-Jendari, Sana'a National Museum director, stated,

"Attention is given to stones in order to know their historic value and to what period they are linked. By knowing the date of the stone or antique, we can learn information about the civilization of our forefathers."

According to Al-Aroosi, "In many other countries, antiques are subject to special care by experts. No one can touch or desecrate them. But unfortunately, here in Yemen historic antiques are everywhere and anyone can access them. Because people here don't know their value, they do just that."

Ishaq went on to say that Yemen's history is a heritage on the same level as that of Egypt and Persia. He wishes that Yemeni citizens would show some respect to study and preserve their history and understand their great and historic civilization. He said, "In Egypt, if an individual is cursed he/she could ignore and forgive, but no one can say anything negative about their historic heritage."



## Continued from page 1

## At least 5 killed, 16 injured at Aden rally

Numerous Joint Meeting Parties members from Aden, Hadramout and other governorates, as well as other citizens supporting the opposition, Parliament and Shoura Council members, and NGO and union representatives participated in the rally.

Reporters from Al-Jazeera and Al-Hurra satellite channels and other media personnel — both Yemenis and foreigners — were prevented from covering the day's events. Al-Hurra correspondent Marwan Al-Khaled told Marebpress.net that police prevented him from videotaping the events, maintaining that a senior officer pointed his gun at him following the arrest of the channel's cameraman, Akram Al-Hayyani.

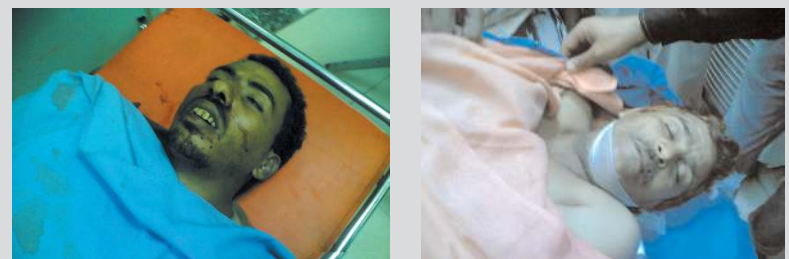
The correspondent further confirmed that police threatened to shoot him dead if he attempted to videotape the event. He regretted that he was unable to cover the events amid the heavy deployment of troops and heightened security.

Once the rally ended, its organizing committee released a statement affirming participants' adherence to the values of reconciliation, forgiveness and soli-

darity among citizens in the southern governorates. It called on those who gathered to open a new page and coexist peacefully, as well as to forget about the bloody events of 1986 and any prior incidents of mass killing.

"The government has pulled the curtain on its hostile policies and its instigative addresses, which motivate killings, confrontations and bloodshed," the committee's statement read. Further, it strongly denounced government threats to foment conflicts among Yemeni citizens, noting that the Eid Al-Fitr sermon by a former government official in Taiz governorate's Janad Mosque is clear evidence of the government's policy to fuel conflicts and clashes among citizens.

"We condemn the conduct of the Sana'a regime, which is exploiting religion in favor of its policies in such a way that contradicts Islamic values by forcing religious clerics and scholars to declare fatwas that provoke bloodshed within the country and labeling protesters as 'disbelievers,'" the statement went on to say. "We demand the July 7



Mohammed Ali (left) and Saleh abu Baker were killed in the demonstration in Aden on Sunday.

regime cancel all of the exceptional procedures left behind by the 1994 Civil War."

The ruling General People's Congress lashed out at the rally's organizers, maintaining that such a rally is only meant to remind victims' relatives of past events that claimed the lives of several innocent women and children.

In a statement released Friday, the ruling party's general secretariat said, "Many opportunistic individuals exploit such events as a means to attain power. These individuals don't care about the nation's unity, security and stability or the bloodshed of innocent people as much as they care about their personal interests."

"Such opportunists are advised to expand the culture of democratic transformation and human rights if they want to gain popularity and have power because they can't attain power through such politicized rallies and riots, which are responsible for destroying public and private property," the statement continued. "Enemies of national unity also are advised to stop telling lies and misleading public opinion."

The statement concluded, "The Yemeni people are well aware of these malicious elements. They also know the reality of such mercenaries and enemies who have lost their government posts due to their malicious plots targeting the nation's security and stability."



## WHAT IT MEANS...

What it means is an analytical feature of Yemen Times, in which Yemeni topics are discussed and analyzed by Yemeni and international experts. Contributions and comments are welcomed, they could be sent to the feature's coordinator: Dr. Abdullah Al-Faqih (dralfaqih@yahoo.com).

## The importance of Aden's Jan. 13, 2008 protest

By: Dr. Abdullah Al-Faqih  
For the Yemen Times

**O**n January 13, 2008, Aden was the destination for thousands of southern Yemenis who showed up for a historic sit-in in the city. Neither sit-ins nor protests are new to the city, once considered one of the world's most important coastal cities. The novelty of the event stemmed from the timing and the message sent by the organizers of the gathering. Aden's Jan 13 protest was seemingly the most blatant attempt by southern Yemenis to face the dark side of their recent past.

**A black day**

On January 13, 1986, a brief but lethal civil war broke out in what used to be known as the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), or south Yemen. The war was between two factions within the ruling Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP). The first faction was led by Ali Nasser Mohammad, who became President of the PDRY in 1981, with the second led by many senior YSP leaders, including the famous progressive—of northern origins—Abdul Fattah Ismail.

The war, which lasted about two weeks, started when President Mohammed, during a YSP Permanent Committee meeting, ordered his body-

guards to open fire on his political rivals. The massacre left around seventy senior party officials dead, including Ismail himself, and led to the ensuing war. According to some estimates, the war left around 10 thousand casualties and ruined PDRY army equipment and weapons. President Mohammed and hundreds of his followers fled to the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR), or north Yemen.

The most significant result of the war, however, was the weakening of the PDRY's army, ruling elite, and state, subsequently paving the road for the unification of the PDRY and the YAR in May 1990 and the creation of the present Republic of Yemen (RoY). Once again, and immediately before unification, President Mohammed sought asylum—this time heading for Syria, where he still resides.

**Another war**

The merger of the two Yemeni states did not put an end to conflict as was expected. On the contrary, the unification intensified the conflict by combining conflict within and between the two states. Political and ideological differences



By: Dr. Abdullah Al-Faqih

between southerners and northerners, which led to war between them in 1972 and in 1979, led them to war for the third time in 1994.

Those who fled to the north with president Mohammed after the 1986 civil war in the south ended up allying themselves politically with Ali Abdullah Saleh—President of the YAR from 1978 to 1990 and of the current republic. They did so following the simple rule: "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." And when the 1994 civil war broke out, President Mohammed's followers sided with President Saleh and his northern forces. For some observers, including the writer of this article, President Mohammed's followers support of Saleh was very critical in determining the war's length and outcome.

After the war, Mohammed's followers were rewarded in various ways for their role during the war. For example, Abdu Rabuh Mansur Hadi, who served as Minister of Defense during the war, was appointed vice-president of the RoY, replacing YSP Secretary General Ali Salim Al-Bied, who fled the country at the end of the war. Many other members

of the faction were appointed as ministers or in senior military positions.

The honeymoon between Saleh's regime and President Mohammed's southern faction did not last long, however. While causes of the rift between the two sides are unclear, the division itself is self-evident. Hadi has served as vice president since 1999 without having his appointment renewed. The president was supposed to reappoint or replace him after the 1999 presidential elections and again after the September 2006 elections, but never did. In addition, Ahmed Al-Hassani—a relative of Hadi—was serving as Yemen's ambassador to Syria, and when his term ended in 2005 and the government refused to extend his term, he sought political asylum in Britain. Likewise, and for ambiguous reasons, Saleh's relation with President Mohammed went from bad to worse.

**A unifying enemy**

The horrific events of January 13, 1986 served, from a southern viewpoint, as a factor determining the outcomes of many subsequent events, including the decision of southern leaders to join the north, and the northerners' victory over the south. For southerners, their 1994 defeat and the ensuing political, economic, and social marginalization within the unified state is a direct result of their internal differences and conflict. For them, as a minority in a

unified Yemen, historical internal divisions not only put limits on what they can do or achieve, but also cast doubts on the legitimacy of whatever demands they place on the regime.

The perennial sign of southern "discontent" has been frequently referred to by various southern sub-groups at reconciliation and forgiveness meetings. The process started about three years ago, and the recent sit-in in Aden is just one of a long series of meetings, demonstrations, and sit-ins. And the events have been snowballing; as they rolled, they got bigger and bigger.

The implicit message sent by the Aden gathering to the northerner-dominated political regime, and to Yemenis in general, is quite clear. It is a strong assertion that the southerners can overcome their deep wounds and turn their days of mourning, self-defeat, and humiliation into days of celebration and continuous struggle against a common enemy. For southerners in particular, the protest was an attempt to face their past shortcomings and to close the largest window from which the common enemy usually enters. The success of the attempt, however, remains to be seen.

The author is an activist, analyst, and professor of politics at Sana'a University. Please send comments to: dralfaqih@yahoo.com

## Their News

**Yemen Commercial Bank makes interests**

The Yemen Commercial Bank (YCB) announced that it made huge pre-tax interests amounted to YR 1.7 billion by the end of 2007, compared to YR 962.5 million in 2006. The announcement came during the celebration staged on Friday in Al-Sabe'ean Park.



A'ed Al-Mashni, the general manager of the YCB, declared that the bank's assets increased to YR 62.3 billion, by 2007, from YR 41.3 in 2006.

He also added that the customers deposits grew into 51.5 billion by 2007, compared to YR 34.7 million in 2006.

The bank liquidities (available money) represented by credits deposited in the Central Bank, deposit certificates and credits in the local and foreign banks amounted to YR41 billion, making 66.3 percent of the aggregate assets, he further explained.

The YCB could maintain enough capital not less than 16 percent during the same year, which is double the percentage approved by international Bazil Criteria, considering such achievements a clear indication of possession rights increase, and decrease of the risks.

During the celebration of distributing the third round's prizes, Al-Mashni highlighted that the YCB inaugurated five branches equipped with modern technologies, systems and staff to deliver distinctive banking services to the customers. The YCB's branches number increased to 13 across the country, adding that there is a plan to increase branches and offices to be announced soon.

The YCB has updated Al-Tajari Gawaher Program, where the specialized system for this program in 2008 is represented by monthly drawing, instead of four months, for three big prizes including Modern international cars and five monetary prizes reaching to YR 2.8 million in addition to 155 symbolic prizes such as lab tops and mobile phones.

Based on this upgrading, the number of offered prizes increased to 1956 a year instead of 1000 prizes presented in 2007. The cars number becomes 36, whereas, in 2007, only 12 cars were pre-

sented according to the 2007 program system. The program will conclude its activities by running golden drawing at Dreams House in Dec, 2008. The cost of this program is YR 50 millions.

At the distributing celebration, attended by Al-Rowaishan, the chairman of the board of directors, as well as a number of businessmen, 341 names were announced as winners of the 2007 third round which is the last one.

The big prizes were won by Saleh N. Khasha'an, one of the customers of Taiz Street branch which is based in the capital secretariat of Sana'a, Mohammed A. Al-Udiaini, one of the customers of bank in Taiz governorate, Wa'el Derhem M. Abdu, one of the head office's customers and Waleed Al-Shurmani for Aden branch. The prizes given to these winners were four modern cars.

**WWF and Abu Dhabi's Masdar Initiative unveils plan for world's first carbon-neutral, waste-free, car-free city**

The WWF and Masdar, The Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, today launched a "Sustainability Action Plan" to deliver the world's greenest city – Masdar City.

Masdar City will be the world's first zero-carbon, zero-waste, car-free city, aiming to exceed the 10 sustainability principles of "One Planet Living™"—a global initiative launched by the WWF (known internationally as the Worldwide Fund for Nature and in the U.S. as the World Wildlife Fund) and environmental consultancy BioRegional.

Housed in six-square kilometres, Masdar City's electricity will be generated by photovoltaic panels, while cooling will be provided via concentrated solar power. Water will be provided through a solar-powered desalination plant. Landscaping within the city and crops grown outside the city will be irrigated with grey water and treated waste water produced by the city's water treatment plant.

The city is part of the Masdar Initiative, Abu Dhabi's multi-faceted investment in the exploration, development and commercialisation of future energy sources and clean technology solutions.

The city, growing eventually to 1,500 businesses and 50,000 residents, will be home to international business and top minds in the field of sustainable and alternative energy.

A model of the Masdar City will be unveiled on January 21, at the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi.

Ground breaks for the construction of the city in Q1 2008.

Jean-Paul Jeanrenaud, Director of WWF International's One Planet Living initiative, said: "Today Abu Dhabi is embarking on a journey to become the global capital of the renewable energy revolution. Abu Dhabi is the first hydro-carbon-producing nation to have taken such a significant step towards sustainable living."

"Masdar is an example of the paradigm shift that is needed. The strategic vision of the Abu Dhabi government is a case study in global leadership. We hope that Masdar City will prove that sustainable living can be affordable and attractive in all aspects of human living – from businesses and manufacturing facilities to universities and private homes," Jeanrenaud continued.

Dr. Sultan al Jaber, CEO of the Masdar Initiative, said: "Masdar City will question conventional patterns of urban development, and set new benchmarks for sustainability and environmentally friendly design – the students, faculty and businesses located in Masdar City will not only be able to witness innovation first-hand, but they will also participate in its development."

**WHO Warns Of Health Workers' Shortage**

The World Health Organisation has said that it is pushing ahead with the task of training primary care personnel in as nearly as 60 countries, mostly in Africa, which face a shortage of four million health workers.

Some 350 health ministers, HIV/AIDS experts and others are seeking to scale up access to HIV/AIDS treatment by moving the tasks to less specialised health workers. An international conference on task shifting – co-sponsored by the World Health Organisation – was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, this week.

The WHO believed that the task shifting maximised the role of primary community-led health care, delivered closer to patients by an integrated team of health care professionals.

"Doctors and nurses are essential but countries cannot afford to wait for years till they complete their training," the WHO assistant director general, Mr Anders Nordstrom, told the opening session.

The session noted that training a new community health worker may take months or even an year depending on the competencies required, a stark contrast to the three or four years required for a nurse to be qualified for the job.

For a doctor, it takes eight years.

"Task shifting not only addresses the two interlinked emergencies of the health worker crisis and the HIV/AIDS, but also offers long-term potential for strengthening health systems in a way that is consistent with the current renaissance in primary healthcare services," Mr Nordstrom said. The conference

opened with the presentation of new WHO guidelines to assist countries in implementing the task shifting, developed in collaboration with the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS, a conference co-sponsor, and UNAIDS, the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS.

The WHO-led initiative called "Train,

Train and Retain" – for increasing access to HIV/AIDS care – are the guidelines after 18 months of consultations involving 167 top public health and HIV/AIDS experts, it said.

They are based on experiences and detailed evaluations in countries where task shifting is already being implemented, it added.

### MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND POPULATION HEALTH REFORM SUPPORT PROJECT (HRSP) –CR NO.3625 CREDIT ADMINISTRATION UNIT (CAU)

#### **Announcement for Recruitment an Arbitrator to solve Dispute between the MOPHP represented by HRSP and CORAL (baseline Health Facilities and Needs assessment Survey) Consultant Health Reform Support Project-Cr. 3625**

**The Credit Administration unit (CAU) within the Ministry of Public Health & Population intends to hire an arbitrator who will be contracted to carry out the following tasks:**

**Objective of the Consultancy**

The arbitrator is expected to solve and settle down the dispute between the Ministry of Public Health and Population represented by HRSP and CORAL (Baseline Health Facilities and Needs Assessment Survey Consultant ) based on the contract signed on December 2004.

**Proposed Tasks of the Consultant**

The arbitrator is expected to carryout the following activities and/or responsibilities, which include but will not be limited to:

- To solve and settle down the dispute between the Ministry of Public Health and Population represented by HRSP and CORAL based on the contract between the two parties signed on December 2004.
- To look for the dispute between the two parties reflected in the following documents.
  - The signed contract between the two parties.
  - The correspondences between the two parties.
  - The final survey report submitted by CORAL
  - The comments on the final report by the Project.
  - Any related documents referred to the subject.
- To review all the documents related to the dispute, and not accept any document from the project or CORAL unless signed by related management officials.
- Any discussions or requests for clarifications from any party should be in the presence of the representative of other party, to assure unbiased according to the arbitration law.
- The arbitrator will be solely responsible for all result and legal affects based on his arbitration, or in any delay.

**Duration of the assignment**

The arbitrator undertakes and finalizes the assignment within **one month** including all the procedures.

**Expected Deliverable**

To provide finale judgment, ensuring both parties rights in accordance with Yemeni laws

**Qualifications and Experience of the Consultant**

- A university degree in Economics/Finance or a degree in Health Care Finance.
- Previous experience in similar analytical studies, preferably in the area of Health Economics or Health Care Finance.
- Capability to carry out related fieldwork activities.
- Verbal and written capability in Arabic Language and preferably in English Language.

Applications with supporting document and CV's- should be submitted to the credit Administration unit by 10 February 2008 to the HRSP located on the 4th floor in the Ministry of Public Health and Population, Al-Hasaba, Sana'a.- Tel : 00 967 1 252224 – Fax : 00 976 1 251622 – Email: hrsp@y.net.ye



# "Y" LAUNCHES ITS NETWORK TODAY

## HIS EXCELLENCE PRESIDENT ALI ABDULLAH SALEH MAKES THE FIRST CALL ON THE NETWORK OF "Y", THE NEW GSM OPERATOR

Aden: President Ali Abdullah Saleh launched "Y" Company, the third GSM mobile service provider in Yemen on Monday.

The new company was officially launched through a call phone conversation between the President Aden and H.E. the Minister of Telecommunications Information Technology and "Y" main Mobile Switching Center in Sana'a. The President announced the establishment of mobile services to create a competitive environment with companies offering low cost services at better to end-users. Saying, "We believe that

"Y" will play a large role in presenting better services in the telecommunications sector in terms of revenue. We hope these companies will benefit the country."

Telecommunications and Information Technology, Kamal Al-Jabri the Ministry is working to

"Y" Imad

telecommunications sector in Yemen, and will positively impact mobile users." He added that the total investment cost of the project is approximately 2 billion YH and that "Y" launched

## THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE BOOKED THEIR "Y" NUMBERS

"Y" the third GSM operator in Yemen has recently opened a number of points of service in Yemen in a progress to open service in main cities and other important areas.

Service have been opened in Sana'a, one in Taiz, Mukalla, and Ibb.

Locations of the points of service have been

Important locations have been chosen for Zubairy Street, Hadda Street, Taiz Street. In Khwa cross-roads has been chosen as the location in Taiz City, and Orater Street is the location in Aden with a new location in Shiekh Othman

In Sana'a, Sana'a is the POS location and in Ibb, has been opened.

The campaign has exceeded people wishing on the minute butlers' offices and in of success since riding competitive services.

By launching a cities and in

the last

"Your Number" "Y" numbers has until the network

## PREPAID SERVICE

An unprecedented exceptional

For the first time in Yemen, Sana'a hosted a concert in Al-Fhawra Sports City on Wednesday, GSM Company "Y" celebrating the anniversary.

The invitation to the Concert was open to a huge crowd exceeding 40,000 Wednesday. Everybody was obvious enthusiasm was

The concert witnessed incomparable atmosphere from the public. The artist's performance was full of joy, music and rhythm. The artist's performance was met with applause and admiration from everyone around.

Ragheb Alameh inaugurated the concert, at 8:00 pm, with a small speech in which he showed his deep love for Yemen and asked God to protect the country unity and political leadership.

"I consider Yemen my second and first country. For this reason, I am really glad to welcome you at this event, which "Y" sponsored, at the announcement of its prepaid Service, "tamam". Ragheb said at the start of his first song at the concert.

He also added: "I really wish for all of you to be always "tamam" (fine) with "Y", which allowed me to

Ragheb sang a number of hits that marked his career as a singer. He started the evening with a Yemeni song dedicated to all Yemenis, "Sirru Hobbi", which revealed his true love to Al Mehddar (the famous Yemeni writer and composer), Yemen and the Yemeni art as a whole. He also performed various Yemeni songs with his orchestra, in an atmosphere full of joy, music and rhythm.

The artist's performance was met with applause and admiration from everyone around.

Ragheb kept on delighting his cheering audience through this unique concert

At the end of the concert, Ragheb Alameh expressed his gratitude to the Yemeni government and President Ali Abdullah Saleh for their support. He wished everyone success, thanks to the services offered by "Y", raising his both thumbs up, more than once, in what was the trademark sign "Y" used for its "Tamam" product.

Ragheb Alameh was hosted by Yemeni foreign affairs minister, Dr Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi, who offered him a Yemeni gift in appreciation to his achievements in the domain of art.

The artist ended his trip with a visit to "Babb el-Yemen", which he considered to be one of the most important tourist sites. He admired the place and its historical value. He

During the press conference, Mr. Nader Al Kalai revealed the future intent of all the investors in HIITS-Unitel to start other investments in Yemen in a number of different fields,

Mr. Al Kalai... ment, "said... Mr. Al Kalai... A very informative presentation was performed by Mr. Imad Hamed, HIITS-Unitel CEO, in which he displayed the company's business plan headlines, technical and human resources capabilities and the coverage plan during the first phases of operations. Mr. Imad inaugurated his presentation by talking about the Company's Mission Statement, vision, values and objectives in details as follows:

**Mission Statement:**  
"We are working towards service excellence to become among the best GSM operators in Yemen, aiming to reach and exceed the expectations of our customers, shareholders, vendors, dealers, employees and community alike".





# Yemen's elderly receive little attention



An elderly couple from Tihama on the west coast of Yemen, one of the poorest Yemeni regions.

By: Khalil Al-Khaubari  
For Yemen Times

Ali Al-Ansi, who is in his sixties, is a guard at a government utility. Easygoing, funny and welcoming with his companions, he's always smiling at his friends.

However, behind that smile, Al-Ansi hides much sadness and sorrow. Asked about his situation, he begins to cry, complaining about his old age and his bad health, which prevents him from attending work, especially in the winter.

"I suffer a lot of pain in my chest and other parts of my body. The physician didn't determine the cause of such pains; instead, he gave me painkillers," Al-Ansi describes.

Living alone in the capital secretariat of Sana'a, his family members remain in their village. "I've been here for about 15 years now. I left my family in order to provide them with a pension when I die."

Al-Ansi's circumstances are difficult, as he's unable to send his family even a small amount of money, nor can they send him any either. His salary isn't even enough to

cover food, drink and clothing for himself.

"I don't spend much money each day. My breakfast is limited to just bread and tea because I can't eat anything else," he adds.

He'll continue living this way for the next five years until his civil service ends and he and his family can reunite, unless something happens to him.

Al-Ansi isn't any better off than other elderly people in Yemen, many of whose families or relatives deny or discard them, thereby forcing them to live in cheap hotels, where they spend most of their time, on sidewalks or beside charitable societies.

For instance, "We discovered an 80-year-old man whose relatives had left him at our entrance. We had no alternative but to take him into our society, which is mainly for the disabled," recounts a woman in charge at Al-Ihsan Charitable

Society.

The needs of the elderly are one challenge facing Yemen today as it experiences rapid population growth. Poverty and the high cost of living have increased to the extent that the elderly are neglected.

"The Yemeni community's previous circumstances were much better than now and it was able to care for its elderly members. Even those without any relatives could find households to look after them," observes Noor Ba'abad, deputy undersecretary for social care at the Social Affairs and Labor Ministry.

She continues, "However, today, social integrity and solidarity are practically absent, as population and economic changes have led to negligence of the elderly at the individual household, community and government levels, as well as within its development plans."

Yemeni society is a youthful one, which justifies that the elderly aren't

included or targeted in programs launched under governmental development plans.

Ba'abad further states, "The responsibility isn't only the government's, but also society's. It's wrong to hold the government accountable for everything because the community is responsible as well. Yemen's progressively increasing population additionally burdens its government to provide its youngest members their needs and requirements, including education and health, among others."

This past November, Yemen's Social Affairs and Labor Ministry issued the first report of its kind on the conditions of the elderly in Yemen.

Requested by the United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia, the report addressed the economic, social and legislative conditions of Yemeni elderly, showing that the state offers them care within its plans and strategies, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy, because poverty was at 35.5 percent up until 2005.

The government's Social Care Fund offers monetary aid in several categories, and only 18 percent of the fund's aid is provided to the elderly.

The report also called on all state bodies including civil society organizations operating in humanitarian fields, to unite their efforts, maintain solidarity and determine appropriate solutions for this remarkably increasing group and its needs by delivering services, making laws and guaranteeing their rights.

While some 3,569 charities and unions were operating just in the field of social care in 2005, such associations don't target the elderly with their own special or direct programs; rather, they are included in those for the poor and the disabled.

"While we don't have any elderly programs, they are given priority when discovered within poor families and other targeted cases," notes Sa'd Al-Aqra', director of Islah Charitable Society's social care and education department.

Elderly care ranges from providing food and shelter for those without relatives or those in strained circumstances to finding and/or preparing entertainment programs for those who are better off and residing with their families to spend their leisure.

The strained circumstances of Yemen's elderly are exacerbated in rural areas, where large numbers reside. Approximately 74 percent of Yemen's population lives in rural areas, where the maximum poverty level is 45 percent, as opposed to 30 percent for urban areas.

"Because the majority of elderly don't work for the government, they don't have a pension; thus, if their income decreases, they become poor and their situation worsens until they are forced to beg," Ba'abad explains.

In discussing adopting the issues and concerns of the elderly, perhaps the problem isn't financial. For instance, the Yemeni state spends much to construct utilities with high standards and specifications in both the capital secretariat, as well as its other governorates. Further, charitable societies and individual

**4U**

Whose responsibility is it to take care of the senior citizens?

- The family
- Charity organizations
- The government

Send your opinion to:  
khalil.alkhaubari@gmail.com

philanthropists often build more than one mosque within a single zone rather than creating housing for the elderly or those in other needy groups.

As Ba'abad notes, "We don't lack funds or experience in caring for groups such as the elderly; rather, we seriously need the administration to be concerned about these issues and the expenditures at the government and charity levels."

Many elderly are pleased when they find those willing to listen to their concerns. Al-Ansi was unable to hide his happiness at someone discussing his situation, for which he adamantly maintains that he's entitled to his rights and that the concerned parties should provide for the needs and adopt the issues of elderly citizens like him.



**EMBASSY OF INDIA  
SANA'A  
REPUBLIC DAY 2008**

The Embassy of India, Sana'a cordially invites all Indian nationals in the Republic of Yemen along with their families, to join in the celebrations of 59th Republic Day of India on Saturday, the 26th January, 2008 at 0845 hrs. at the Embassy premises (Building No. 12, Djibouti Street, Off-Haddah Street, Sana'a).

(Cameras/Mobile Phones/bags etc. not allowed).



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees  
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

**INTERNAL / EXTERNAL VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT  
(Date: 12th/01/2008)**

**Title of Post:** Senior Community Services (HIV/AIDS) Clerk  
**Post Number:** FTA  
**Category / Level:** GL5  
**Location:** Sana'a  
**Entry on Duty:** 01 February 2008  
**Duration:** One Year  
**Closing Date:** 28 January 2008

**DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Under the direct supervision of the Associate Protection Officer in the Branch Office Sana'a, the incumbent is expected to perform the following duties, guided by the humanitarian principles and values of the United Nations, and adhering to the UN Code of Conduct:

**Terms of reference (Duties):**

1. Provide counselling, referral and protection services to refugees with HIV/AIDS cases and Under-Age Minors (UAM) presenting themselves at the office;
2. Ensure that referral to other agencies and services corresponds to the genuine needs of the refugees seeking UNHCR assistance and to the guidelines and procedures agreed with the agencies concerned;
3. Liaise with operational partners to ensure effective coordination of the referral and counselling services offered at the duty station;
4. Ensure that refugees with HIV/AIDS cases receive appropriate medical care;
5. Maintain comprehensive records of individual cases received and of referral and counselling services provided;
6. Draft reports on incidents involving individual cases; &
7. Perform other duties as may be requested from time to time.

**QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:**

**Education:** Completion of Secondary Education. Possession of a Certificate in HIV/AIDS related training will be an added advantage.

**Experience:** At least four years of previous job experience relevant to the function.

**Others:** Possession of good computer and communication skills is essential.

**Languages:** Very good knowledge of Arabic and English.

**For internal UNHCR candidates:**

Staff may apply to vacant posts at their own level at any time. Under the reduced seniority requirement, staff who have completed at least half of the required seniority in grade will be considered. Candidates whose grade is two levels below that of the post may also be considered. Candidates who do not meet the criteria as internal candidates can be considered as external candidates.

**For external candidates:**

While priority will be given to Internal Candidates as per UNHCR guidelines, suitable External Candidates will be considered.

**IMPORTANT:**

Applications received after the above mentioned closing date will not be considered. All applications should be sent to:

The Administration Officer,  
UNHCR BO Sanaa  
P.O. Box 12093  
Sanaa.

Tel. Contact: +967-1-469771/2

FAX: +967-1-469770



A homeless old man from Sana'a, despite his misery he still smiles to the camera. Some elderly people have no place to go other than the sidewalks of the streets.



**STC ( Sana'a Trade Center ) Latest Jobs**

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Interested and qualified individuals should send their C.V's to

**STC Administration**

☑ Fax: 448471

☑ Email:- [Mag@y.net.ye](mailto:Mag@y.net.ye)

☑ P.O.Box : 4548 ( Sana'a )

Yemeni Nationals only to apply. The deadline for receiving cvs is 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008. Only short – listed candidates shall be contacted.



# Where boys were Kings, a shift toward baby girls

By: CHOE SANG-HUN

When Park He-ran was a young mother, other women would approach her to ask what her secret was. She had given birth to three boys in a row at a time when South Korean women considered it their paramount duty to bear a son.

Ms. Park, a 61-year-old newspaper executive, gets a different reaction today. "When I tell people I have three sons and no daughter, they say they are sorry for my misfortune," she said. "Within a generation, I have turned from the luckiest woman possible to a pitiful mother."

In South Korea, once one of Asia's most rigidly patriarchal societies, a centuries-old preference for baby boys is fast receding. And that has led to what seems to be a decrease in the number of abortions performed after ultrasounds that reveal the sex of a fetus.

According to a study released by the World Bank in October, South Korea is

the first of several Asian countries with large sex imbalances at birth to reverse the trend, moving toward greater parity between the sexes. Last year, the ratio was 107.4 boys born for every 100 girls, still above what is considered normal, but down from a peak of 116.5 boys born for every 100 girls in 1990.

The most important factor in changing attitudes toward girls was the radical shift in the country's economy that opened the doors to women in the workforce as never before and dismantled long-held traditions, which so devalued daughters that mothers would often apologize for giving birth to a girl.

The government also played a small role starting in the 1970s. After growing alarmed by the rise in sex-preference abortions, leaders mounted campaigns to change people's attitudes, including one that featured the popular slogan "One daughter raised well is worth 10 sons!"

In 1987, the government banned doctors from revealing the sex of a fetus before birth. But experts say enforcement was lax because officials feared too many doctors would be

caught.

Demographers say the rapid change in South Koreans' feelings about female babies gives them hope that sex imbalances will begin to shrink in other rapidly developing Asian countries — notably China and India — where the same combination of a preference for boys and new technology has led to the widespread practice of aborting female fetuses.

"China and India are closely studying South Korea as a trendsetter in Asia," said Chung Woo-jin, a professor at Yonsei University in Seoul. "They are curious whether the same social and economic changes can occur in their countries as fast as they did in South Korea's relatively small and densely populated society."

In China in 2005, the ratio was 120 boys born for every 100 girls, according to the United Nations Population Fund. Vietnam reported a ratio of 110 boys to 100 girls last year. And although India recorded about 108 boys for every 100 girls in 2001, when the last census was taken, experts say the gap is sure to have widened by now.

The Population Fund warned in an October report that the rampant tinkering with nature's probabilities in Asia could eventually lead to increased sexual violence and trafficking of women as a generation of boys finds marriage prospects severely limited.

In South Korea, the gap in the ratio of boys to girls born began to widen in the 1970s, but experts say it became especially pronounced in the mid-1980s as ultrasound technology became more widespread and increasing wages allowed more families to pay for the tests. The imbalance was widest from 1990 through 1995, when it remained above 112 to 100.

The imbalance has been closing steadily only since 2002. Last year's ratio of 107.4 boys for every 100 girls was closer to the ratio of 105 to 100 that demographers consider normal and, according to The World Factbook, published by the Central Intelligence Agency, just above the global average of 107 boys born for every 100 girls.

The preference for boys here is centuries old and was rooted in part in an agrarian society that relied on sons to



Girls now have a fighting chance in South Korea as the preference for boys recedes. Photo by: Seokyoung Lee for The New York Times

do the hard work on family farms. But in Asia's Confucian societies, men were also accorded special status because they were considered the carriers of the family's all-important bloodline.

That elevated status came with certain perquisites — men received their families' inheritance — but also responsibilities. Once the eldest son married, he and his wife went to live with his family; he was expected to support his parents financially while his wife was expected to care for them in their old age.

The wife's lowly role in her new family was constantly reinforced by customs that included requiring a daughter-in-law to serve her father-in-law food while on her knees.

"In the old days, when there was no adequate social safety net, Korean parents regarded having a son as kind of making an investment for old age security," Professor Chung said. It was common for married Korean men to feel ashamed if they had no sons. Some went so far as to divorce wives who did not bear boys.

Then in the 1970s and '80s, the country threw itself into an industrial revolution that would remake society in ways few South Koreans could have imagined.

Sons drifted away to higher-paying jobs in the cities, leaving their parents behind. And older Koreans found their own incomes rising, allowing them to save money for retirement rather than relying on their sons for support.

Married daughters, no longer shackled to their husbands' families, returned to provide emotional or financial support for their own elderly parents.

"Daughters are much better at emotional contact with their parents, visiting them more often, while Korean sons tend to be distant," said Kim Seung-kwon, a demographer at the government's Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.

Ms. Park, the newspaper executive, said such changes forced people to rethink their old biases. "In restaurants and parks, when you see a large family out for a dinner or picnic, 9 out of 10, it's the wife who brings the family together with her parents, not the husband with his parents," she said. "To be practical, for an old Korean parent, having a daughter sometimes is much better than having a son."

The economic changes also unleashed a revolution of a different sort. With the economy heating up, men could no longer afford to keep women out of the workforce, and women began slowly to gain confidence, and grudging respect.

Although change is coming slowly and deep prejudices remain — in some businesses, women are pressured to leave their jobs when pregnant — women are more accepted now in the workplace and at the best universities that send graduates to the top corpora-

tions. Six of 10 South Korean women entered college last year; fewer than one out of 10 did so in 1981. And in the National Assembly, once one of the nation's most male-dominated institutions, women now hold about 13 percent of the seats, about double the percentage they held just four years ago.

Shin Hye-sun, 39, says she has witnessed many of the changes in women's status during her 13 years at the TBC television station in Taegu, in central South Korea. "When I first joined the company in 1995, a woman was expected to quit her job once she got married; we called it a 'resignation on a company suggestion,'" she said. Now, she said, many women stay after marriage and take a three-month break after giving birth before returning to work.

"If someone suggests that a woman should quit after marriage, female workers in my company will take it as an insult and say so," Ms. Shin said.

According to the World Bank study, one of the surprises in South Korea was that it took as long as it did for the effects of a booming economy to translate into changes in people's attitudes toward the birth of daughters.

The study suggests that the country's former authoritarian rulers helped slow the transition by upholding laws and devising policies that supported a continuation of Confucian hierarchy, which encourages fealty not only to family patriarchs, but also to the nation's leaders.

With the move toward democracy in the late 1980s, the concept of equal rights for men and women began to creep into Koreans' thinking. In 1990, the law guaranteeing men their family's inheritance — a cornerstone of the Confucian system — was the first of the so-called family laws to fall; the rest would be dismantled over the next 15 years.

After 2002, the narrowing of the gender gap signaled that attitudes about the value of women — and ultimately of daughters — had begun to catch up to the seismic changes in the economy and the law.

And last year, a study by the Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs showed that of 5,400 married South Korean women younger than 45 who were surveyed, only 10 percent said they felt that they must have a son. That was down from 40 percent in 1991.

"When my father took me to our ancestral graves for worshiping, my grandfather used to say, 'Why did you bring a daughter here?'" said Park Sumi, 29, a newlywed who calls the idea that only men carry on a family's bloodline "unscientific and absurd."

"My husband and I have no preference at all for boys," she said. "We don't care whether we have a boy or girl because we don't see any difference between a boy and a girl in helping make our family happy."

Source: NY Times

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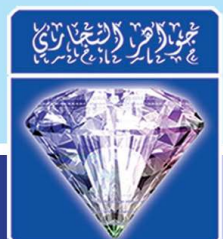
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## Words of Wisdom



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

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

OUR  
OPINIONWhat's happening  
to our country?

Thousands of Yemenis have taken to the streets again in the south city of Aden yesterday, Jan. 13. This time, their assembly was organized not to protest, but to remember. The old history of southern governorates is very much different from that of the northern governorates. For one, the political movements, and international influence has taken deeply into the lives of Yemenis in the south. Because of the Imamate rule that isolated north Yemen from the rest of the world, the locals' participation and awareness of the public and international sphere was very limited. But people in southern areas were influenced by communists, British colonies, Indian immigrants...etc. This also means that when there are more than one political choice, there would be struggle.

Jan. 13, 1986 was a day when a bloody civil war took place in the south because of such political disparities and power struggle. Yesterday's assembly was to remember the atrocities of war, and to "forgive and forget". Members of the parties and towns that were involved in the 1989 struggle met in Al-Dhale, Aden and neighbouring governorates in the south in order to let go of the past, or at least that is what they claim.

Banners and slogans displayed in the demonstration talked about peace and forgiveness. They talked about leaving the bloody past behind and working for a better future without grudges.

In essence, it sounds like a beautiful cause, especially that this is the second anniversary since the first one last year in Al-Dhale governorate, where leaders and affiliates of the parties that were in conflict in the past, came together in a large assembly, to "forgive and forget".

Unfortunately, this demonstration did not go as peacefully. Until the writing of this article four men have been killed and more than 16 injured, two of which are in critical conditions. The reason for these violent results is that the demonstration was not allowed to take place as planned. Consequently some of the protestors opposed the limitations on their right to protest by firing arms into the air, and attacking the security that were surrounding the area. As a result security forces retaliated with live bullets, and tear bombs...etc.

The violence grew, air force, military, anti-terrorism unit, and political security went to action. Tens have been arrested, and the anger is still rising. There is a good chance that by Thursday noon the number of casualties would have doubled. And the number of arrested people multiplied ten folds.

What is the point in all this? Why did the state not allow for the demonstration to take place? What did they fear would happen? If what they were afraid of was to allow a violent riot, then this is not the smart way to go about it, considering the number of deaths and injuries.

Did the state fear that if the southern people came together they would create a unified front against the northern controlled regime? If so, do they think that by using force they could prevent the demonstrators from lobbying against Yemeni Unity? This is like a marriage gone bad, where the wife wants out, and the husband wants to keep the marriage by beating his wife on every protest. I used to believe in Yemeni Unity, but to be honest, seeing the costs I am not sure it is still worth it.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

When demise causes  
a nationwide shock

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussein Al-Ahmar died. But such a short sentence can not clarify any traces and allegations emerging in the wake of the Sheikh's demise. What we can say in this respect may have something to do with the past only. But, how things will go on in Yemen without Sheikh Al-Ahmar entails that Yemeni people still need the power of inspiration in order to be enabled to exercise imagination. In short, the death of Sheikh Al-Ahmar shocked the whole nation.

The Late Sheikh has spent an age full of military and political events, developments and conflicts, and during which time, Yemen saw great transformations, some of which forward while others backward. During those transformations, Al-Ahmar has been demonstrating a key role in their progress, and he used to move to another braver and riskier role, as soon as he finishes the previous one. His movement from one role to another proved to leave behind a great influence in time and place until the extent of making it impossible for anyone to imagine the late man's life without hearing the sounds of fire shooting, sound judgment or brave positions.

When Imam Ahmad killed his father and his brother Hameed in 1961, the destiny selected Sheikh Abdullah, who was at that time a youngster having no experience in politics and political conflicts, to place him on the frontline of the theater of Yemen's dramatic events, the rhythm of which has not slowed down since that day. The jail penalty, which Sheikh Abdullah faced following the execution of his father and brother, prepared him psychologically to quit the hard life



By: Ali Al-Sarari

he led during the early days of his age.

Those surrounding the Sheikh used to push him toward the political theater, and lights remained being shed on the social dignity from different directions.

Regardless of the various positions of those surrounding him, be they proponents or opponents, all of them agreed that the Sheikh was not that simple, nor was his role secondary in the sequence of events and developments. Rather, his proponents viewed him as the bystander and supporter of their issues while his opponents were seeing Sheikh Al-Ahmar as a powerful man with a stronger influence on the trail of transformations.

The most important thing is that Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmar remained an intimate and honest friend for his proponents, as well as a noble rival in the eyes of his opponents. As a result, the man retained the same unique living style, thereby leading observers to label him as "an uncomplicated character that gives no wrong impression about its reality". Reality of the late man discloses that both his opponents and proponents unanimously acknowledge that honesty and credibility are the most prominent qualities of his actions and sayings. When he says, "This is wrong," he used to do so innocently without any trickiness. And, when he says, "I differ

with this," he used to do so without any exaggeration.

In general, the Sheikh remained a unique political and social phenomenon, having its own an uncontrollable context, throughout his life. He was not a separated or enclosed phenomenon. Over decades of his political and social activities, he had demonstrated a pioneering role in the formulation and direction of events.

The scene of his funeral services was unprecedented in the history of Sana'a, especially as his funeral combined the official style with the popular one. Thousands of tribal leaders and ordinary citizens came from different governorates with the sincere intention of attending his funeral services, praying for him and carrying him to his final resting place. The unprecedented event implied the prestigious status the late Sheikh had in the Yemeni society and his demise is judged by all means as a great loss for Yemen, particularly amid these critical conditions in the country.

In fact, Sheikh Al-Ahmar was not careless about the tragic fate Yemen is awaiting because of the corrupt and random policies pursued by the government. That was demonstrated in his description of the government's policies a few years ago, saying "they took Yemen into a gloomy tunnel since this government neither review its plans nor assess its performance". In the wake of Sheikh Al-Ahmar's death, talk about avoiding or escaping an inevitable catastrophe for Yemen has become useless.

Ali Al-Sarari is a Yemeni Journalist and a well-known politician. He is the head of the information department at the Yemeni Socialist Party. Source: Al-Thawri Weekly.

Who complicates the  
population problem?

By: Mohammed Al-Ariqi

Despite the significant work papers presented at the National Population Council's Fourth Conference, which were discussed in groups, the ideas and remarks highlighted by group members had been reflecting scenes of the population problem that was not indicated by the papers themselves. The problem is supposed to be necessarily included and highlighted in the papers' findings and recommendations in a manner helping participants understand the problem well and then think of possible solutions to this problem during its stage of infancy and before it becomes more intricate.

I have heard from people, who participated in discussing the theme related with balance between population growth rates and sustainable development, a number of essential points that made the discussion more dynamic and effective. Similarly, I used to hear louder voices from the neighboring hall where others were discussing the reproductive health theme. Enthusiasm for closer observation, as demonstrated by one of the female participants speaking at the event, made all the

attendees give her a hand although the nature of discussion in such groups doesn't necessitate hand clapping or applause.

But the woman might have said something vital to reproductive health in a brave way. Likewise, discussion between members of my group moved toward listing some issues that are mostly repeated at every debate or meeting. Such a repetition may confirm that all the people are serious enough to search for possibly actual solutions to our persisting problems that are the result of various reasons and causes. Therefore, it is illogical to select the problem of rapid population growth as the only reason for all the obstacles we are facing and suffering.

The event revealed multiple causes and pictures, which have been all contributing to slow and ailing economic growth. Such causes need to be immediately addressed through suggesting workable cures and solutions before the problem exacerbates and goes complicated.

Prepared by a group of researchers and academics, the paper indicated that continued economic deterioration will lead to continuity of uncontrollable population growth.

Such a persisting gap between economic development and rapid population growth is bound to make poverty more severe and rampant, as well as worsen citizens' living standards and weaken Yemen's capacity for achieving population policy objectives and third millennium development goals.

In order not to be excessive in talking about rapid population growth rate, we have to move toward correcting our economic, administrative and health systems, create sustainable human development, exploit our available resources efficiently and rationalize spending.

Having done this, we will find that ghost of the population problem, notably the rapid population growth, is overcome by expedited progress of economic and social growth, thanks to the serious efforts of man.

Via randomness, impoverishment and absence of responsibility, we may make out of man a complicated problem. But, via strong will, determination and hard work, we can make out of man a miracle for creativity and luxurious living.

Source: Al-Thawra State-Run Daily.

## SILVER LINING

Stop Beating up  
University Students

I have asked one of my friends last week: Did you have police officers or soldiers positioned at colleagues when you were a university student? His reply was "No, what for? Only during protests, we used to see riot police; otherwise we did not have any." My friend studied in Tunisia during the 1980s. Sana'a University students have been protesting the harassment and beating up of the two brothers Jameel and Murad Soba'e at the hands of the chief intelligence officer at the faculty of arts. It is disgusting to hear such kind of news. They have demanded the stop of the militarization of the university and cried for change of the university guards and holding the attackers accountable.



By: Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi

Normally, universities are established to be centers for creation and service of the community; they are places for scientific researching, providing solutions facing communities, generating skilled people and therefore are a key instrument in the overall development drive. However, in Yemen this role is not envisaged and therefore, the government deploys security and intelligence personnel to universities, turning them to military barracks. Their business is to tease students and professors and be a source of fear and threat for these people. They do not stick to the tasks assigned to them, but go beyond to harassing and even brutally beating up students. The case of the Soba'e brothers is not the first as similar abuses were reported before. Nevertheless, perpetrators were not held accountable.

At least, these soldiers and police officers should be trained before they are sent to serve at the universities. They should be told they are to deal with universality students and academicians rather than criminals. If they received such kind of training, we would not have heard every now and then stories of brutal acts exercised by university guards against students.

I wonder why we need a security or intelligence department at each college. When you go to the head office of the university, the security office is the first to see. Security men are hovering around in their uniform dress. They are even paid bonuses from the university budget. This gives you the impression you are in a military compound rather than a university. Why is this militarization of universities and education institutions?

Even the appointments of deans and rectors have been politicized. These people are not selected because of their merit and competence but their political affiliation. Such standards have brought very weak people who are run by people outside the university campus. Are the people in charge so afraid of the universities? Why should they turn them into centers for their intelligence operations, political showdown and do not respect the role for which they have been created? I guess such things do not exist even in totalitarian regimes.

In short, the government should cherish the role of the university and stop embroiling it into its political fights and games. In fact, both the ruling and opposition parties should give up using the academic institutions as instruments in their fight. For God's sake, hold your hand and let these institutions operate freely and according to the set academic standards if you want them to contribute into the welfare of this society.

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

## Bush visit to the Middle East

SKETCHED  
OPINION



By: Samer

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# Yemen Press Review



**Al-Thawri Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Yemeni Socialist Party**  
Thursday, January 10, 2008

**Top Stories**

- JMP rejects government's decision to increase prices, warns it instigating army against citizens
- YSP former Secretary General: Our party will never abandon any national issue, the authority has no unionist project
- Aden to host a reconciliation and forgiving conference on Sunday
- Citizens stage huge protest against government in Dhale' as retirees' demands remain unmet
- Yadoumi takes job of late Al-Ahmar as Islah Party Chairman until the party holds conference
- JMP praises peaceful struggle, warns authority of destroying national partnership

Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) leadership warned the ruling party and its government of taking a step toward addressing any of the national issues without involving the opposition parties, the weekly reported in a front page story. It added that the JMP leadership confirmed such behavior may destroy the rules and principles of national partnership and peaceful coexistence.

The weekly quoted JMP Official Spokesman Mohammed Al-Sabri as saying that "the meeting held by JMP leadership and the coalition's executive staff gave a top priority to the phenomenon of price hikes, experienced in the Yemeni markets. It criticized the government plans and policies that failed to improve the country's ailing econo-

my and citizens' living standards, accusing it of taking secretive decisions that may lead to destroying social security.

According to JMP spokesman, the meeting discussed the escalation of protests nationwide, commending the peaceful struggle, which is practiced by citizens in different Yemeni governorates, specifically the southern ones. He clarified that the dialogue between JMP and the ruling party is over because the latter mishandled the dialogue-related agreements, once reached and approved by both sides.

Al-Sabri confirmed that the meeting discussed the government's use of military force against citizens, who claim their legal rights via peaceful protests, and the series of threats it directs against the opposition parties. He further added that the authority turned to investigate army forces against innocent citizens at the expense of doing their national job that is of defending the country and protecting its borders.



**Al-Sahwa Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Islah Party**  
Thursday, January 10, 2008

**Top Stories**

- Nationwide rage over secret price dose by the General People Congress's government
- Military campaign withdraws from Taiz Shara'ab district as government awaits tribal arbitration outcome
- Article 19: Yemeni authority harasses NGOs leaders, prosecutes journalists
- Hajja tribal sheikhs threaten to rebel against the government as of coming

- Saturday
- U.S. Ambassador's statements provoke popular outrage

The weekly reported that Chairman of the National Committee for Defending Al-Moayad and Zayed , Hamoud Al-Dharihi, said that the US Ambassador's statements regarding Sheikh Mohammad Al-Moayad and Mohammad Zayed would deepen Yemenis' animosity and hatred toward America. He explained that all Yemeni people agree that Al-Moayad and Zayed are innocent.

Al-Dharihi stressed that support for the Palestinian people is not a crime in the Arab and Islamic people and that Al-Moayad was a victim of US arrogance." Yemenis will only rest when they see Al-Moayad and Zayed released" he added. The US ambassador to Yemen, Stephen Seche, had issued statements which aroused widespread resentments at the popular and official levels of the country.

During a press conference, organized by the Yemen Female Media Forum, the US Envoy said that sheikh Al-Moayad funneled money to Hamas movement, the US administration accused him of conspiring to support Al-Qaeda and that he is currently punished on his acts.

Responding to statements by the U.S. Ambassador, who also demanded the Yemeni government to hand over Jamal Al-Badawi, suspected of involvement in bombing the U.S. Destroyer Cole in 2000, Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi said the Yemeni constitution prevents handover of Yemenis to foreign states. He further pointed out that Seche's remarks regarding Sheikh Mohammad Al-Moayad is a premature statement, adding that his arrest contravenes the international human rights laws and

conventions, particularly as Hamas Movement receives funds from most of the Arab states and organizations.



**Al-Nass Comprehensive Independent Weekly**  
Monday, January 7, 2008

**Top Stories**

- In the wake of Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmar, Yadoumi Chairman of Islah Party and Al-Ra'ie Parliament Speaker
- Unannounced price dose due to government's poor polices
- Khawlan Tribe organizes a sit-in in Sana'a outskirts as a form of pressure on U.S. to release Sheikh Al-Moayad and Zayed
- Protestors in the Square of Liberty claim government to release religious Shiite cleric
- Military forces still deployed in Shara'ab, but shifting to new positions
- Saudi government digs a trench along its border with Yemen to prevent entry of illegal immigrants
- President Saleh direct military and security servants to maintain a high level of vigilance against conspirers and traitors

Without naming particular agencies or people, President Ali Abdullah Saleh renewed its warnings to servants of the military and security institutions to maintain a high level of vigilance against those whom he called "conspirers, traitors and mercenaries", the independent weekly reported. It added that Saleh sent a letter to senior officials at the defense and interior ministers, as

well as military and security staff, on the advent of the New Training Year, telling them to prepare themselves for the new package of training.

"You the heroes, and proofs in testimony of your being heroes are available before you, please take care of yourselves and your institutions. There are malicious conspirers who preferred to trigger animosity toward the national institutions and Yemeni people at the expense of national development and progress," Saleh said in his letter addressed to military and security staff. "Those conspirers and traitors will never stop their hostile operations although you did defeat them, nor will they make use of the lessons related with your bravery and their cowardliness."

Saleh added that conspirers against Yemen's unity, security and stability, are continuing their malicious plots during daytime and overnight, in private and in public. "These elements are playing with their tails with the aim of harming the military and security institutions and spreading chaos in the safe country," the paper quoted Saleh as saying.



**Al-Methaq Weekly, Mouthpiece of General People Congress (Ruling Party)**  
Monday, January 7, 2008

**Top Stories**

- Sana'a to host consultative meeting with donors in February 4 in the presence of GCC Chairman
- Reports on electricity and water before Parliament, says MP Awadh Al-Suqatri

## Reviving Europe's universities

COPENHAGEN

Writing at home sometime ago, with Wimbledon on TV in the background, it occurred to me that just as Britain hosts the world's top tennis tournament but never wins it, so we Europeans are in a similar situation with education. The world's first university was Plato's Academy in Athens, venerable old universities are scattered across Europe from Coimbra to Cambridge to Copenhagen, and the modern university, uniting research and education, was pioneered by Wilhelm von Humboldt in Berlin. Yet today, universities in the United States easily outperform their European counterparts. Less than 2% of the European Union's GDP is devoted to research, compared to 2.5% in the US and 3% in Japan. Spending per student on tertiary education is just over \$9,000 in France, slightly under \$11,000 in Germany, and almost \$12,000 in the UK. Some EU countries, such as Denmark, do better, but still lag far behind the US, which spends more than \$25,000. Measuring the quality of output is difficult, although The Times Higher Education Supplement attempts to do so every year. Only three European universities – Oxford, Cambridge, and Imperial College in London – made it into the top ten in the most recent list; all the rest were American. Only ten universities from the entire EU have ever made it into the top 50. Germany's top university, Heidelberg, ranks 58th. As a result, roughly 400,000 European scholars currently reside in the US, and almost 60% of European citizens who received doctorates in US from 1998 to 2001 chose to remain there. There are twice as many Europeans studying in the US as there are Americans studying in Europe. Europe's "education gap" doesn't stop at the Atlantic. China and India represent more than mushrooming factories and low-cost semi-skilled labor. Just as in Europe, the industrial revolution in "Chindia" is also creating an ambitious new middle class that is willing and able to send its children to university. But in today's world, students and researchers choose a university much as consumers shop in the international marketplace.



By: Lykke Friis

Europe has made some modest efforts to regain university competitiveness. In March 2000, EU leaders meeting in Lisbon set the goal of making Europe the world's most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy by 2010, and two years later they agreed that investment in R&D must reach 3% of GDP by 2010. Such ambitious goals, however unrealistic, can have a disciplining effect, leading some EU countries to increase their spending, while the EU itself has launched a number of promising schemes. The seventh Framework Program, worth some €50 billion – a 40% increase over the sixth program – is perhaps the most prominent funding source tool through which the EU supports R&D activities.

But the EU and European governments must do more. Overall spending is still dwarfed by US federal research and development spending, which will total \$137 billion in the 2007 fiscal year. European leaders must therefore substantially increase research funding when the EU budget is next due for revision in 2008 and 2009. Although the core financial burden will be on the member states, the EU level can make an important contribution. Moreover, although the European Commission clearly has a duty to prevent mismanagement and fraud, every application for EU funding requires extremely onerous procedures. Eliminating bureaucratic red tape, as the Commission has now pledged to do, would be a substantial boon to European researchers.

Finally, Europe must place more emphasis on basic research. Of course, our scientists should respond to current problems in society. But if basic research is neglected, attempts to produce quick innovations through applied research will be futile. Basic research is the primary organism in the food chain of scientific endeavor. The European Research Council, which is to award research grants on the basis of peer-reviewed excellence, will therefore be an important step forward, and the EU should further increase its funding.

But just throwing money at universities isn't enough. As the former Financial Times editor Richard Lambert, together with Nick Butler, commented in a report published by London's Centre for European Reform entitled The future of European universities: Renaissance or decay? , EU governments are stuck in a vicious circle: "The universities will get no more money unless they reform, and they cannot reform without more money".

The Danish government has sought to break free from this vicious circle by introducing reforms before pledging to increase budgets. In 2003, Denmark's universities were turned into self-governing institutions run by governing boards dominated by external representatives. Last year, the government merged 12 universities into eight in order to achieve substantial economies of scale, and the Danish parliament approved a nearly 50% increase in government spending on research by 2010. The Danish case highlights the pivotal role of governance reform if Europe is ever to meet its Lisbon goals. The University of Copenhagen's mergers with the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University and the Danish University of Pharmaceutical Sciences have made it the largest university in Scandinavia. We now aspire to becoming the most significant health and life science research center in Europe, owing to a remarkable cluster of knowledge based 5,000 researchers, an excellent medical school, 11 university hospitals, and a thriving biotech business environment that already includes market leaders in diabetes and neuroscience.

Until we embarked on governance reform, this would probably have been impossible. Our experience so far has taught us that university managers should not accommodate rising student populations by inflating their core business. However fierce the global competition, they should concentrate on safeguarding quality and achieving excellence in research and education.

Lykke Friis is Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Copenhagen.  
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## Workers' paradise?

CAMBRIDGE -- Will

the political resurgence of labor unions throw a wrench into the wheels of globalization? Or will their growing strength serve to make globalization more sustainable by fostering great equality and fairness? One way or the other, unions stand as a major wild card for the evolution of our economic system in 2008 and beyond.

Unions' rising influence is evident in many recent events: German Chancellor Angela Merkel's controversial deal to raise minimum wages for postal employees; several American presidential candidates' open misgivings about trade and immigration; and the Chinese leadership's nascent concerns about labor standards.

Along with their political clout, unions' intellectual respectability is also experiencing a renaissance. After decades of vilification by economists for raising unemployment and strangling growth, the union movement is now receiving backing from thought leaders such as Paul Krugman, who argues that stronger unions are needed to counter globalization's worst excesses. The sudden emergence of unions as a political force is particularly surprising in the United States, where private-sector union membership has fallen from 25% in 1975 to 8% today. From high-tech Google to mass retailer Wal-Mart, US companies have found ways to keep their shops union-free. Only the public sector, where the membership rate is 35%, has remained a union bastion. One of my best friends from childhood married a union organizer who found it so difficult to land a job in the US that he eventually moved his family to strike-happy Canada.

Today, US political leaders such as Congressman Barney Frank want to bring back unions.

But there is good reason to be

skeptical. For a relatively poor country like China, real unions could help balance employers' power, bringing quality-of-life benefits that outweigh the growth costs. Factory conditions in parts of China are all too reminiscent of the early twentieth-century, pre-union US. Thousands of Chinese workers die each year in coal mines that sometimes lack basic safety precautions.

But, for the US and rich countries in Europe, the argument that stronger unions would bring more benefits than costs is far more dubious. Nowadays, most workers already have legal and statutory rights that cover the basic protections that unions originally fought for a century ago.

Instead, union influence today all too often serves to promulgate inflexible work practices and flat salary structures that do not adequately reward work effort and skill.

It is no surprise that the public sector, where productivity is low and fiscal constraints soft, typically has the greatest union concentration. Teachers' unions, especially, are a catastrophe, blocking any rationalization or improvement of many countries' education systems.

Before the modern globalization era, unions could thrive by organizing on a national scale, giving them enormous bargaining power vis-à-vis both employers and consumers. Now, after the explosive post-war expansion of global trade, most unions have seen their monopoly power eroded, if not shattered. That is why unions throughout much of the developed world have been fighting so hard to block free-trade negotiations that might erode their position further.

Some of the issues that unions are promoting, such as human rights and environmental quality, are unassailable. When they try to connect these issues with trade, however, their motives become questionable.

- National Gas Company: Gas priced at YR 500 per cylinder
- Security authorities seize 85 tons of prohibited pesticides during 2007
- Government approves hardship allowance for university teachers
- Presidential system reflects real development in Yemen, says Yemen expatriates in the U.S.

Bureau of the General People Congress in New York, the United States of America, confirmed that Yemeni expatriates there back the constitutional amendments, suggested by President Ali Abdullah Saleh in his most recent initiative, the ruling party's mouthpiece reported in a front page story. In a letter addressed to President of the Republic from GPC members in New York, of which a copy was obtained by the weekly, the ruling party's bureau declared its absolute support for Saleh's initiative to conduct constitutional amendments and move toward a more presidential system in their home country.

They described Saleh's initiative as "historic", saying that replacing the parliamentary system by a presidential one helps boost democracy, mainly as they have experienced effectiveness and feasibility of such a system in the United States.

According to the letter, the initiative represents a turning point in developing Yemen's political life and democratic experience, in a way fitting reality and privacy of the Yemeni society. It added that such a unique initiative may help encourage political participation for both men and women in Yemen, as well as develop the local governance. The New York-based GPC Bureau reaffirmed that it is willing and ready to work harder for the sake of the country, and protect its tenets and achievements.

A case in point is union lobbying against the US-Colombia free-trade agreement, ratification of which would greatly advance US-Latin American relations. Legitimate questions about how the Colombian government conducted its epic civil war with drug-financed rebels do not trump broader issues. So anti-pact activists have complained that Colombia is anti-union because it does not protect union members from rebel violence.

Yet the Colombian government notes that all Colombians suffer from rebel violence – union members actually experience less of it than the rest of the population.

Unfortunately, this play is being reenacted across a host of trade issues, including many involving China.

For rich countries, income redistribution is much better handled through taxes and benefits system, rather than by government edicts to strengthen unions.

The rich today pay so little in taxes in many countries, that it would be a big improvement simply to move to a flat tax, with a very high exemption level so that lower-income families pay nothing.

For middle-income countries, it is a tougher call.

But here, too, increasing workers' legal and statutory rights, while allowing most unions to fade away, seems like the right approach.

Unfortunately, we are far more likely to see unions' growing political influence become a major destabilizing force in trade and growth, with highly uncertain consequences.

When we see political leaders in many rich countries pander to unions by bashing each other on free trade and immigration, there is every reason to worry about trouble ahead. That is why unions will be one of the main economic wild cards in 2008.

Kenneth Rogoff is Professor of Economics and Public Policy at Harvard University, and was formerly chief economist at the IMF.

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## General Irrigation manager: “Government concerned about excessive water consumption for qat cultivation”

Located in an arid region, Yemen suffers drought due to scarce rainfall in many of its regions, while the high evaporation rates of the country's available water only exacerbates the problem. Yemen's topography also is unsuitable for the formation of lakes and water networks.

In aggregate, the country has scarce water resources, which may pose an insurmountable obstacle to government efforts to improve the nation's agricultural production.

Ismail Al-Ghabri interviews Mutahar Zaid, general manager of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation's General Irrigation Department.

### Do the World Bank and other international organizations support water installations as part of Yemen's development plan?

The World Bank has supported many development plans, such as the Underground Water and Soil Reservation Project, implemented in two stages and now in its second stage, in addition to irrigation development and rain-fed agriculture projects, which are some of the projects directly relevant to the business of the General Irrigation Department.

Additionally, European donors have funded the construction of dams such as the Barqana and Waqir dams in the Tihama Plain, and similar installations now are being implemented with funds from the European Union, specifically Switzerland, which has been supporting Yemen's development projects since the 1970s.

Other installations and projects have been implemented through the French Coffee Project. The government has just received funds from various international donors to construct large dams, such as Abyan's Hassan Dam and Hodeidah's Serdoud Dam, both of which are to receive additional funds from the Abu Dhabi Fund.

**Because there have been conflicts between the tasks of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, represented by the General Irrigation Department, and those of the Ministry of Water and Environment, what are the most critical conflicts still existing?** Republican decree No. 154 of 1995 established the General Corporation for Water Resources, with its sixth article stating that the corporation is the only government agency responsible for making policies and strategies to conserve water resources. The corporation now is affiliated with the Ministry of Water and Environment, which was established under a 2002 republican decree.

Republican decree No. 5 of 1996 concerning reshuffling the Agriculture and Irrigation Ministry granted it the power

finalized the Irrigation Law in the meantime.

After a while, both laws were merged into one called the "Water Law." After numerous meetings and discussions by Parliament, the new law was put into effect, thereby specifying each agency's tasks and duties. Supposedly, there was to be no contradiction between any two agencies operating in the area of water.

The matter requires good coordination between the relevant agencies in conformity with the tasks and duties contained in the legal articles.

### Are there any difficulties ahead for the General Irrigation Department?

Well, there's no business without difficulties. We face numerous difficulties, ranging from those related to financial provisions for the work to conflicts that may occur between citizens in project-targeted areas. Such conflicts leave a negative impact on the implementation of any water installation.

### Having heard about a future plan for 2007-2010 as part of the government's reform efforts, does this plan include any water projects?

Regarding the future plan, the ministry's General Irrigation Department does business according to directives from high-ranking officials and political leadership. Represented by the Irrigation Network Management, the General Irrigation Department has updated an investment program implemented by the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization at a total cost of \$85.4 million and seeking to provide irrigation networks for more than 200,000 hectares between 2007 and 2010.

Additionally, approximately \$444 million has been allocated for water harvesting systems and activities, including rehabilitating agricultural terrain, protecting the banks of valleys, establishing valley water installations and constructing water harvesting systems such as large tanks and dams, thereby maximizing the benefits of rainwater.

The Ministry of Agriculture and



Mutahar Zaid

**“The General Irrigation Department doesn't implement any projects in areas with tribal conflicts if it discovers that locals are disputing a project's chosen location unless the conflicting parties reach an agreement and make concessions regarding the lands/areas selected for dam construction.”**

climate change and daily human activities. Desertification involves a wider geographical scope and negatively impacts the climate and environment.

Yemen embodies all of the general characteristics of desertification, including land erosion and soil destruction, coupled with the effects of heavy flooding caused by torrential rains in some parts of the country.

The Yemeni government has just established the National Strategy to Combat Desertification, targeting several areas. As General Irrigation Department staff, our main job is to fight the spread of such a detrimental phenomenon by conserving water usage, developing water resources and ditches and coordinating between the relevant agencies.

**The Minister of Water and Environment Abdul-Rahman Al-Eryani has declared that agriculture consumes nearly 90 percent of Yemen's water resources, holding qat cultivation accountable for the largest portion of consumption. How do you assess this issue?**

First, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation's role is limited to increasing the public's awareness about rationing water consumption and other relevant issues. Secondly, everyone knows Yemen has been famous for agriculture since ancient times.

According to studies by the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Arab region averages 83 percent water usage for agricultural purposes. But because Yemeni agriculture consumes 90 percent of its water resources, its percentage is similar to that of those Arab countries known for excessive water consumption. So, we needn't hold any agricultural agency accountable for any extravagant water consumption.

We must take into account that water is the most important element in agricultural production; therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation isn't the only agency responsible for water consumption for agricultural purposes because the situation and conditions are similar in Yemen and other Arab countries, as well as worldwide.

However, various techniques and methods for rationing water consumption lead to efficient use of rainwater and irrigation systems, which consequently helps improve the economic returns from agriculture.

We at Modern Irrigation Systems Management currently are exerting much effort to increase farmers' awareness regarding using irrigation means for



Maraqa dam, Hajjah.

agricultural purposes and their feasibility for increasing both product quantity and quality.

Regarding qat cultivation and the significant consumption of water to grow it, this is a reality we can't deny; however, I don't think solving the problem by having farmers grow other crops in lieu of qat is the responsibility of only the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. Because the issue is social in nature, it'll require much time to persuade Yemeni farmers to give up qat cultivation and consumption.

Formerly known as the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, in the past, the ministry has decreed a package of water conservation measures, such as 1992's ministerial decree No. 46, which organized the digging of artesian wells (made by boring into the earth until reaching water, which flows spontaneously like a fountain from internal pressure; such wells usually are small in diameter and often of great depth) in an effort to conserve groundwater because qat farmers primarily rely on such wells in cultivating their crops.

The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and FAO conducted simultaneous studies on the situation and conditions of qat cultivation in Yemen, coming up with findings and recommendations similar to those reached by the National Anti-Qat Strategy.

Did the Yemeni government cut support for some projects related to building dams allegedly due to improper feasibility studies?

The government didn't cancel support for any project recommended via a proper feasibility study. However, concerning the Ministry of Water and Environment's viewpoint regarding special studies on Serdoud Dam, the ministry erred in its evaluation of the project by relying on the opinions of a Dutch delegation it had requested to assess the project, despite the fact that such delegation conducted no feasibility studies and visited the project only once.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation neither knew about the delegation's arrival, nor why it had come to Yemen. In fact, the group visited as part of joint efforts with a Pakistani firm contracted by the Yemeni government to implement the project's feasibility study.

The Ministry of Water and Environment received soft copies of the study, considered the first phase of the project's assessment, on CD, while the second phase included preparing technical reports, layouts and tender documentation.

### How does the General Irrigation Department deal with conflicts between locals in project-targeted areas?

The department doesn't implement any projects in areas with tribal conflicts if it discovers that locals are disputing a project's chosen location unless the conflicting parties reach an agreement and make concessions regarding the lands/areas selected for dam construction. Additionally, the department waits until it receives signed and authenticated documents by concerned local authorities in the area or the province, indicating that the disputes are over.

**Is it correct that there are conflicts between the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation regarding the distribution of projects?** There are no conflicts between these ministries, which are jointly committed to integrated business in such a way that serves the public interest, in addition to being in harmony with the state's general policies and strategies and the government's plans and programs established

according to development needs and criteria.

### Which Yemeni areas suffer water shortage and thus require immediate action by the relevant authorities and can building dams solve the problem?

Many Yemenis know that numerous underground water basins are being threatened with depletion, mainly the Sana'a, Sa'ada and Taiz basins, despite the fact that the government has banned irresponsible consumption of groundwater and digging of artesian wells unless citizens obtain licensing by the relevant authorities to do so. As Yemeni citizens, our duty is to conserve groundwater in order to ensure a better future for our children.

Concerning the construction of dams and other water barriers, the Yemeni government now is giving top priority to harvesting and collecting rainwater during the rainy seasons through various means, including both large and small dams, which, in addition to providing large water reserves for watering agricultural crops during non-rainy seasons, also feed groundwater.

As a first step toward saving groundwater supplies from random depletion, the Yemeni Cabinet recently issued a decree, as well as directing relevant

However, according to a 1992 study by the Higher Water Council, qat cultivation in Sana'a governorate requires an estimated 12,000 cubic meters annually. Additionally, results of various studies and surveys in numerous rural areas estimate that qat plants annually consume between 930 and 1,966 cubic meters of water per hectare in Hajjah, but nearly 1,640 cubic meters in Sana'a governorate.

How much water qat plants consume annually depends on climate changes from one area to another, but the average water consumption for qat cultivation in Yemen is believed to be 8,500 cubic meters per hectare annually.

**Having just said qat consumes much water and that the government plans to encourage agricultural crops other than qat because they are believed to consume less water, how do you encourage Yemeni farmers to quit growing qat and grow other crops instead and who have any farmers done so?**

This can be done by increasing farmers' awareness about the risks of growing qat, which isn't good for the country's development and is responsible for wasting the nation's water. However, such awareness may not successfully attain the



Sana'a dam, Sana'a.

agencies within the agricultural sector to study the various means of water harvesting and collection in addition to the measures required to ration water consumption for agricultural purposes.

### Are there any statistics on the exact number of dams in Yemen and their total cost and why did citizens get involved in constructing dams?

Until now, some 108 dams thus far have been constructed in various parts of the country, with an estimated storage capacity of 20,302,528 cubic meters of water. After Marib Dam, Qufl Al-Sayyad Dam in Dhamar's Ans district is Yemen's second largest, costing more than YR 200 million to build and holding up to 2 million cubic meters of water.

Regarding citizen involvement in dams construction, the government pays close attention to public efforts because they are vital to development processes. The public's engagement in such processes helps the government identify their development needs and thus intensifies efforts to meet them.

### Are there any available statistics on water consumption used for qat cultivation?

Thus far, several studies have been done regarding qat cultivation and its direct effects on local community development. For example, the phenomenon was discussed at a 2002 national conference, which revealed that qat cultivation annually consumes up to 924 cubic meters of water per hectare in Sana'a governorate and 680 cubic meters in Ibb.

desired goals due to the high economic returns farmers receive from growing qat.

### The Yemeni government currently is expending many notable efforts to foster wheat production in various parts of the nation. Are there any studies on the effects of wheat growing on water reserves?

Government efforts to increase wheat production are being made in an attempt to meet Yemenis' growing demands for it. Like other agricultural crops, wheat doesn't require much water, so its consumption is limited. Most Yemeni agricultural areas where farmers grow wheat use rainwater rather than groundwater reserves via artesian wells. Additionally, the government plans to provide wheat farmers modern irrigation means in order to save water.

### To what extent does building dams contribute to solving persistent agricultural problems and water shortage in Yemen?

The available dams and water barriers have contributed greatly to tackling the problem, as dams have proven to be an important and strategic solution to such problems in most world nations suffering water shortage, in addition to numerous other modern techniques for the same purpose.

However, the outcomes of such water installations remain symptomatic of the criteria and regulations governing water consumption by farmers for agricultural purposes.



Saqeeh dam, Taiz.

to exercise technical supervision over the use of irrigation means nationwide. The General Irrigation Department was tasked with constructing water installations, managing the irrigation process and monitoring the ministry's work and activities in its governorate branches.

The department then worked according to the National Water Strategy, established under 1998's Cabinet Decision No. 203, putting more emphasis on the general principles of water resource use and ownership, improving such resources and enacting water-related legislation.

Through this strategy, the General Corporation for Water Resources designated plans and policies for every sector operating in that area, as well as presenting the Water Resources Law to higher authorities for discussion, while the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation

Irrigation has just completed reference requirements for modern irrigation project consultants due to be in charge of conducting relevant studies and layouts. One aim of the project is to help various agricultural areas nationwide gain wider access to modern irrigation systems and provide services for nearly 50,000 hectares of agricultural land. The Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation has allocated YR 50 million for implementing this project's feasibility study.

### Regarding threats posed by desertification, does the General Irrigation Department coordinate efforts in agricultural areas and if not, what are possible solutions?

Desertification is a universal problem involving land erosion in dry areas and caused by numerous factors, including



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## Field Administrator Ref # 12

**Job Description:**

- To liaise with Well Site Supervisor and client representative on all administration aspects of the operation.
- Process Material and Purchase/Service requests, Flight and Travel Requests.
- To maintain constant operating records and data cards for all maintenance and certification of all safety equipment.

**Required Qualification:**

- Bachelor Degree in any administration field.
- Effective English communication skills.
- Must be computer literate.
- Minimum 2 years experience.

## Receptionist Ref # 13

**Job Description:**

- General filing and updating filing system.
- Answering phone calls, taking Appointment and follow up.
- Check all incoming and outgoing couriers and distribute accordingly.

**Required Qualification:**

- Bachelor degree in any administration field.
- Effective English communication skills.
- Must be computer literate.

## Cementing Engineer Ref # 14

**Job Description:**

- Liaise with Drilling Engineers, Engineering Supervisors, and Engineering General Supervisors to discuss and prepare procedures for upcoming jobs
- Operations troubleshooting to address customers concerns and inquiries
- Liaise with Customer Engineering to identify opportunities for Trial Testing new equipment.
- Ensure sufficient numbers of properly trained service technicians to handle service jobs
- Advise clients of latest developments in technology, products and services.
- Know and participate in ISO and API "As required", and quality process, be a leader in development of ISO/API etc.
- Understand and comply with all safety rules and company policies of Weatherford.
- Supervise staff, training; prepare job descriptions, standards of performance and performance evaluations.
- Assure that customer down time is dealt with decisively and thoroughly.

**Required Qualification:**

- Degree in petroleum or engineering discipline.
- Knowledge and 5 years experience in running and operating different float equipment (float shoes, float collars, stage tools, inflates and surge reduction equipment).
- Knowledge and 5 years experience with different mechanical casing products, (centralizer, centralizer subs, different casing accessories).
- Familiar with Torque & Drag calculation software
- Familiar with Surge & Swab calculation software
- Familiar with centralizer placement proposals
- Candidate should be able to provide customers with recommendations and technical advice on different cementation equipment.
- Effective English communication skills, both oral and written are essential.
- Field experience between 3 to 5 years
- Competency with general MS Office application
- Computer literacy and mathematical skills

## TRS Service Technician Ref # 011

**Job Description:**

- To report at the advised customer locations, at the required time and in a fit state to commence work or travel.
- Upon arrival at the location of work and in collaboration with the assigned Crew Leader/Job Supervisor, report to the Customer Representative and to establish detail of the job to be performed.
- At first opportunity and in collaboration with the Crew Leader/Job Supervisor check all Weatherford equipment to be in satisfactory condition to fulfill the specific job requirements.
- To attend on location pre-job safety meeting if so required and wear Personnel Protective Equipment issued by Weatherford during the job and when required by the customer.
- Report any operational problems which may occur before, during and after the job to the assigned Crew Leader/Job Supervisor as soon as possible.
- Make recommendations for the safe execution of the job and report any un safe acts or near miss accidents/ incidents.
- Attend all monthly HSE meetings and initiate changes to existing HSE procedures or initiate new procedures.
- On completion of the job; rig down the equipment, clean and prepare for back loading.
- Report any short comings or status of non-conformance of equipment on the Weatherford equipment fault report.
- If assigned as Stabber in collaboration with the Crew Leader, inspect the stabbing board, safety line(s) and safety points. Before commencing the job, discuss with the driller on signals and procedure to be used and repeat this each time the drilling crew changes.
- To attend HSE training, equipment training and medical checks as required and arranged by Weatherford.

**Required Qualification:**

- Effective English & Computer skills.
- Minimum 2 years experience on rig.
- High diploma education or equivalent.
- Evaluation of at least "Satisfactory" as an Assistant / Operator.
- Valid driving license.

## Air Drilling Operator Ref # 14

**Job Description:**

- Submit Service Delivery Tickets to Field Service Supervisor after completion of each well.
- To maintain constant operating records and data cards for all maintenance and certification of all Hammers and equipment used in the operation.
- To assist in the inspection and repair of Hammers.
- Accurate logging of parameters well drilling.
- Compliance of all Q&HSE procedures during the operational project activity
- Document and distribute to all parties Safety meetings, toolbox talks and SAFE start cards
- Submit Final job report to Field Service Supervisor.
- Maintain computer records of all pertinent information.
- To assist in the recording of consumables, in accordance with regular system checks during the operations, ensuring that relevant records are completed and up to date.
- To notify the need of any consumables, in accordance with regular system checks during the regular course of duties.
- To liaise with the Company man on all activities well drilling.
- To actively participate in the Weatherford Safety program.

**Required Qualification:**

- Effective English communication skills.
- Minimum 3 years experience on the rig.
- High diploma education or equivalent.
- Evaluation of at least "Satisfactory" as an Assistant / Operator.
- Valid driving license.

## Controlled Pressure Drilling & Test Services Operator Ref # 3/19

**Job Description:**

- Co-ordination of equipment, during the rig up and rig down under the guidance of the Separation Supervisor.
- To oversee the operational staff activity ensuring that all safety precautions and practices are followed at all times.
- To oversee and document all maintenance that is suitably performed in the field. To prepare and discuss all repairs/ maintenance reports with the Separation Supervisor, prior to his signing and submission for filing.
- To advise and assist Separation Supervisor with pre-activity safety meeting preparation and action points to be discussed.
- To ensure further compliance, and assist the crew's implementation, of all Q&HSE procedures during the operational project activity.
- To oversee the crews, whilst assessing the correct ability is being applied during the operation of the various UBS system components during the project, relaying personal performance assessment information to the Separation Supervisor.
- To specifically co-ordinate all shutdown system, choke manifold, separation activity onsite, as per the drilling program requirements, and whilst under the direct guidance of the Separation Supervisor.
- To assist in the recording of consumables, in accordance with regular system checks during the drilling operations, ensuring that relevant records are completed for the Separation Supervisors post well reporting.

**Required Qualification:**

- Effective English communication skills.
- Minimum 2 years experience.
- High diploma education or equivalent.
- Evaluation of at least "Satisfactory" as an Assistant / Operator.
- Valid driving license.

## Wireline Senior Operator ( OH-CH) Ref # 2/15

**Qualifications:**

- High diploma education or equivalent.
- Effective English communication skills, both oral and written are essential.
- Basic QHSE training, H2S and Firefighting course.

**Experience:**

Minimum of 5 years experience in the Oil Field Service Company

**Skills:**

- Open Hole and Cased Hole wireline logging operation including Winch operation
- Conveyed Logging Experience
- Should be able to assemble, disassemble, install and maintain pressure control equipment.
- Working experience with hazardous materials including Radioactive materials

## Wireline Hydraulic Technician Ref # 2/16

**Qualifications:**

- High diploma education or equivalent
- Technical Institute Diploma in Electrical/Mechanical field
- Minimum 5 years of working experience on a similar position with a reputed oil field service company.
- Effective English communication skills, both oral and written are essential

**Experience:**

Minimum of three years experience in a similar position.

**Skills:**

- Open whole and cased hole logging operations.
- Working experience as Hydraulic Technician for at least three years if qualified otherwise minimum of 5 years experience
- Should be able to read the hydraulic designs and can work independently.

## Wireline TCP Specialist Ref # 2/17

**Qualifications:**

- High diploma education or equivalent
- Minimum of three years work experience as a TCP Specialist
- Effective English communication skills, both oral and written are essential

**Experience:**

Minimum of three years experience as a TCP Specialist

**Skills:**

- TCP Operations
- Cased Hole wireline logging operations
- 10K Pressure Certified

## Wireline Field Engineer Ref # 2/18

**Qualifications:**

- Bachelor of Engineering
- Minimum of two years experience as a Field Engineer in the Wireline Services with a reputed company.
- Effective English communication skills, both oral and written are essential.

**Experience:**

Minimum of two years experience in Wireline Services

**Skills:**

- Compact Memory Logging and Well Shuttle
- Pipe Conveyed Logging
- Open Hole and Cased Hole Wireline Logging

**\* Closing date February 15<sup>th</sup>**  
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# Renaissance of the Masjid-Madrasah- Part 1

By: Qazi Dr. Shaikh Abbas Borhani  
For Yemen Times

The word Madrasah is an Arabi word, which has its origin from the word Mudarris, and this comes from the root word of Daras, which means to enlighten or to teach. Therefore, Madrasah is a place of learning, with a similar meaning to that of school. Particularly it is similar to the Church missionary school.

In both these places Education is given, and people go there for acquiring knowledge. The role of Madrasah in Muslim Society has been linked with the dawn of Islam. Till the medieval era of Islam, it was the Madaris, which produced a large number of scholars, in all branches of Knowledge, who bestowed inventions to the world in their respective fields. Prior to the beginning of the Crusades, the power of the Muslim intellect activities started declining due to the weakness of their educational system.

It was not revised to the requirement of their times or era, while the West completely transformed the Sciences of the East, especially from the Muslims. A great renaissance was experienced in the dark history of western civilization. With a limited approach, this spirit of the East continued in the Ottoman Empire, and in the Central Asian region, especially in Iran, but civil wars, differences, and military expeditions never allowed the progress of the Eastern institutions. Monarchs paid less attention towards the development of educational institutions, which weakened the internal system and ultimately declined the power and command.

In the Indian Subcontinent, the history of Muslim contribution is very limited. Monarchs spent their time in luxuries mostly. They built gardens like Shalamar and mausoleum of love, like Taj Mahal, but did not pay attention to building and reforming educational institutions like those of Al Azhar, Al Anwar, Al Aqmar, Jame Arwa (Zeejiblah-Yemen), Oxford, Cambridge, Sorbonne and Harvard. Perhaps, if they had paid a little attention to educational institutions; the history of Muslims would have been different. Lack of support of Muslim monarchs never allowed Madaris the opportunities of progress and standardization according to the need of the time. As a result, the unfortunate Muslim community has paid a very heavy penalty. Seizing this golden opportunity to control the power and command of the Muslim dominated areas, non Muslim colonial forces snatched the spirit of understanding, and drastically introduced Church missionary Schools, and created a vast gulf in between the School educated and Madrasah trained class.

## Isolated profession

These colonial rulers closed the doors of professional activities on the Madrasah trained and confined their role within the boundaries of religious customs and activities. As per colonial designed policy



A student cleans a painting in the Amiriya Madrasa, Yemen

these foreign foxes diminished the role of Madrasah trained class in the socio-cultural life of the Muslim dominated countries. They declared only those eligible for handling the affairs of the socio-economic system who were groomed from their nurseries.

Therefore, the controlling power reached the hands of the Westernized Muslim minds. It was the English master brains, like Macaulay, that injected the slow poison that the only job of the Madrasah class is to reinforce the orthodox practices of the Religion. Lord Macaulay's address to the British parliament 2nd February, 1835 is self explanatory. He says:

"I have traveled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief,



Yemeni Madrasa Children gathered at foyer of Syedna Hatim RA Qubba Mubarak, Yemen.

such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very backbone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and, therefore, I propose that we replace her old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than own, they will lose their self esteem, their native culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation".

British followed this advice as a policy, in their all colonies. To minimize Muslims socio-economical as well as political role, official media played a significant function. It is unfortunate that these Madaris did not up-date their curriculum according to the need of the time, and thus their area of operation shrank. It curtailed the role of Madrasah trained class and made them powerless, as well as helpless in professional fields. A huge gulf was created in between the class of Madaris trained and the School educated community.

I have observed fairly closely a Madrasah and its functional system. Round the year donations are campaigned by the clerics for Madaris. Due to non-accountability of funds, the management of the Madaris enjoys the donations more than the students. Their lavish life style is dependent on non-countable sources of donations. It is a dire need of the time to use rightly the public funds. It is the responsibility of the donation providers to keep a strict vigilant eye on the utilization of their funds.

It is also necessary to observe the teaching atmosphere by the media. Majority of the students of the Madaris are very fanatical. They never study Islam according to a scientific system or manner; but follow it blindly. Several research reports provide the conclusion of observation regarding the most favorite topic of Madrasah students. They largely discuss on Jih'ad more often than

think themselves not less than "Hindu Sacred Cow". Islam does not allow any space for Hindu Mythology.

There is no "Sacred Class", nor is anyone above the law or accountability. It is the arch responsibility of the Muslim scholars to establish among the students an approach of understanding to fight against the evils prevailing in society. It is time that the attention of the students of the Madaris should be drawn to the fact that to kill your opponent is not a Jih'ad but a misdeed.

To kill their personal evil misdeeds is real Jih'ad. Equal stress should be paid on the other fundamentals of Islam, i.e. Muam'l'at of their daily life. In fact, as long as the Muslims at large will not clear their role in Muam'l'at of the daily life, an ideal Muslim society can not be established. Likewise, Madrasah graduates are taught how to put down other schools of thought, through an interesting expertise called "Refutation", whenever chance permits. Rival sects do not target other religions, but at the various Muslim sects.

## Quality of education

The quality of Education and manner of instruction in the Madaris today is not up to date. Definitely, Madrasah education is not serving its required goal. In the rural area especially, children from the masses have the only source of learning i.e., is a Madrasah. It is the need of the time to improve the quality of education by drastic changes. A strong, up-to-date curriculum is indispensable. Government should control the education policy and introduce a country-wide syllabus. Awareness with modern subjects like Mathematics, General Science, information Technology should be introduced.

If we examine the Church controlled schools, we find them well organized in all manners. Christian missionaries are trained through well known Trinity Academic Institutions, where they learn modern subjects and languages as well. Thus producing a seasoned person who can play the role of a bridge between the material and spiritual world. Not only the Pope and the Cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church, but the head of the City mission are highly skilled in the Sacred Sciences; hold doctorate degrees from well

known recognized institutions, which groom them into highly talented scholars. In the present day's world, preachers of all religion are highly skilled. Contrary to them, very unfortunately Islam is preached by characterless, shortsighted, and a corrupt clergy, who are not well versed with the language of Qur'an and Islam. As a dilemma, result is right before our eyes.

The Clergy of the Madaris should not try to teach technical, as well as professional subjects unless they have command, ability and qualification. Modern scholars are strictly needed, but how do you draw the attention of the competent scholars to serve in Madaris? You can not enjoy the passion of driving a BMW in a price of a Suzuki. The curriculum in the Madaris needs serious "Reconstruction". So, what do we do? If any highly skilled faculty member approaches you and you ask him to leave a lucrative job and join the Madrasah service with lower remuneration along with no job security or attractive package ... would any sensible one agree? Surely not—Management should offer high remuneration to faculty members. The Government, of course has to be dynamically involved. The responsibility of providing the required resources and finances for such operations descends primarily on the Government's shoulders. A modest increase in budget allocated annually to education can serve a grand purpose in this regard. A reform in education through announcement is not enough;

practical changes are needed.

It is a high time to change the mode of education and provide country wide opportunity to students to leave the expensive schools, which are in fact money generating industries, by establishing Masjid Madrasah chain everywhere. It may be the last chance to rebuild the Muslim Community, across the global village, and to return towards lost glory. Bold steps must be taken; a portion of each large Masjid premises must now be earmarked for a modern Madrasah imparting knowledge to the student in both, the religious as well as scientific social and modern subjects. If these steps are not taken, the already decayed structure may be doomed, and recovering from it even be impossible.

The present educational system is the outcome of social injustice; it is anti progressive, and anti-social in nature as well as anti-Islam in spirit? The literate class is well aware of the faults of the current colonial educational system prevalent in the third world especially in Muslim countries, but none of them could muster enough moral and political courage, or enough integrity to Ban them. This is the best possible solution to clear the Madrasah from the hostiles. Masjid Madrasah students were never involved in terrorist activities in the past one hundred and fifty year's history.

## Political purposes

It was the CIA who used Madrasah for their nefarious political cause, to destroy Soviet Union. You will not find in any Madrasah curriculum, violence as subject. It is necessary to reform the mode of Madrasah and use it as the most modern tool to produce a society of welfare. Diversification of courses (instead of one masters degree called Shahadat or Dawrah, they can offer also courses in Economics, Business administration etc by adjustment of syllabus in the higher classes), replacing old system into most modern scientific study of Tafsir, Hadith and Fiqh. The only alternative to improve the standard of education through Madrasah similar to international institutions, syllabus should be revised under consultation of the highly skilled technocrats. Basic reform is needed in the present stream of education, which is basically now producing people without firm values, just like a robot, who knows only how to earn money, without having human values. We urge all to make a proper assessment of the Madrasah and not to be carried away by propaganda against Madrasah institution in the West.

It's completely ridiculous to treat Madrasah system less valuable than others. There is a difference of approach between a modern school system which are minting factories and Madrasah which are playing their role with the help of philanthropist nicely. Over the centuries, it was only the Madaris, which produced literate class of Muslims, at large, besides the home trained scholars. At present, there are several thousand Madaris spread in different countries, but very limited are eligible to provide Education according to the modern scientific standard. Most Madaris are attached with the Masjid, as per tradition, where children acquire education.

History provides us the extensive multipurpose role of Masjid as an ideal Madrasah. Masjid al Nabawi is a glorious example for coming generation to follow it as a role model. This Masjid served its significant role, as Madrasah, during Nabawi era prominently. Masjid al Kufah is famous for learning; Ali conducted series of Asb'aq in this place. Likewise, Jame Jayushi, Jame Ibn Tuloon are the living testimonial seminaries of Al Qahira, which is attached with Masjid from its birth. See Jame Arwa, Zeejiblah, Yemen, which was the focal point of learning around 1000 years ago. In the mountainous region of Yemen, surrounded by rivers, this Masjid Madrasah had played a vital role to prepare a team of scholars of high calibre.

History can not ignore the shimmering fact that the mentor of the scholars was a lady, Syedah Arwa bint Ahmad, who conducted series of lectures behind the curtain. Scholars of Iran, Afghanistan, India, Qahira, Hijaz attended her series of lectures, with profound devotion. Intellectuals of the time visited Yemen from far and near to acquire Knowledge. Yemen witnessed this glorious era from 440(A.H.) to 532. A poet of the Yaman described the status of Zeejiblah in these words so nicely:

"Neither Qahira (of those days) nor Baghdad can be compared to the city, which lies there;

Surrounded by two rivers, with its mighty fortress, the high 'Takar', Yemen belongs to that city"

These Madaris were equipped with up to date scientific equipments, observato-

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## Naguib Al-Kaylani, a theorist of contemporary Islamic literature

Prepared by: Eyad N. Al-Samman

Naguib Abdul-lateef Al-Kaylani was an Egyptian novelist, short story writer, poet, critic and playwright.

Born in June 1931 in Shirshabah village in Egypt's Al-Gharbiyah governorate, at age 4, Al-Kaylani began attending elementary school to memorize the Qur'an and the Hadith, as well as the fundamentals of reading and writing.

He then moved to the Elementary School of the American Mission in Sunbat village and then to Tanta City, the capital of Al-Gharbiyah governorate, where he completed high school.

In 1951, he enrolled at King Fuad I University (now Cairo University) to study medicine while being a member of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement at the same time. During his college studies and because of his political activities, Al-Kaylani was arrested in 1955, prosecuted and sentenced to 10 years in Asyut Prison before being banished to Cairo Prison, where he spent four years in prison before being released in mid-1959 due to his poor health.

He returned to Cairo University to complete his studies, graduating as a physician in 1960, after which he worked for several Egyptian hospitals. However, he was rearrested in 1965 and remained in prison until 1967.

After his final release in 1968, Al-Kaylani left Egypt and traveled to Dubai to work as a manager in the Emirati Health Ministry's Health Education Department. He stayed in the United Arab Emirates until his retirement, when he returned to settle in Egypt.

Considered one of Egypt's most prolific writers, many of Al-Kaylani's novels have been translated into more than 10 languages and numerous academic dissertations at Arab and European universities were submitted regarding his literary works.

His first literary attempt, a divan entitled, "Toward the Top," came in 1950 during his senior year of high school in Tanta City. He penned his first novel during his stay in Asyut Prison from 1955 to 1959. Entitled, "The Long Night," it was published after his banishment to Cairo Prison.

Discussing Egypt's struggle against the 1956 Tripartite Invasion by Britain, France and Israel, the novel won the 1958 Egyptian Ministry of Education award and approved for secondary school curriculums in 1959.

Also in prison, Al-Kaylani wrote his first historical novel, "Signs of the Dawn," portraying the struggle of Egypt's Rosetta City against the English invasion. His other winning literary works in 1958 included "The Ill Society," which portrayed prison culture, and his memoir, "Shawqi in the Immortals' Procession." Al-Kaylani was granted the Mohammed Iqbal gold medal for his 1957 memoir, "Iqbal, the Revolutionary Poet."

Al-Kaylani's fictional productions were in four phases, the first of which was the romantic novel expressing the people's concerns and the different social states between them. These novels include 1988's "Story of Jad-Allah" and "Virgin of the Village."

In a slightly different vein, his socio-romantic novel, "The Slaves' Night,"



discussed aspects of administrative, political and social negative attitudes in modern society. That novel was turned into a movie entitled, "Night and Bars," and won first prize at the 1964 Tashkent Film Festival.

Al-Kaylani's historical novels generally tackled the prophetic memoir and other phases of Islamic history. Among them are "The Land of Prophets" and "The Quarter of Jews." His historical novel, "The Light of Allah," is considered one of his masterpieces in the field of Islamic literature, depicting the era of the Islamic religion's emergence and Muslims' battles and victory against unbelievers led by the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh).

The third phase of Al-Kaylani's fiction was the perceptive novel, in which he expressed the concerns of forgotten Muslims living outside the bounds of the Arab world. "Virgin of Jakarta" (1974) and "Giants of the North" are among this genre.

The events of his novel, "Nights of Turkistan," take place in the lands of Islamic Turkistan, in which the author predicts the collapse of communism.

The last phase of Al-Kaylani's fictional career involves the realistic Islamic novel and deals with the social causes of the working class in their homelands.

Among these novels is his Abdul-Mutajalli trilogy consisting of "Abdul-Mutajalli's Confessions," "Abdul-Mutajalli's Wife" and "Abdul-Mutajalli's Immigration," which he didn't write due to severe illness.

One of his best realistic novels, 1991's "Malikat Al-'Ainab," (The Queen of Grapes) tackles social and economic events during the Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Al-Kaylani also wrote 10 short story collections, including "The Narrow World" and "Tales of a Physician."

In the field of poetry, Al-Kaylani penned eight divans, including "The Strangers' Songs" (1963), "The Martyrs' Age" (1978), "City of Obscenities" (1988), "Songs of the Long Night" (1990), and his last, "Pearl of the Gulf."

As a playwright, Al-Kaylani wrote two plays: "On the Walls of Damascus" (1958) and "Sarajevo, My Sweetheart" (1995), which deals with the tragic situations in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 1992 civil war.

As a critic, Al-Kaylani penned several books, including 1963's "Islamism and Literary Ideologies" and 1985's "My Journey with Islamic Literature."

Suffering from pancreatic cancer, Al-Kaylani died in Tanta City on March 6, 1995. However, he occupies an eminent standing in Islamic literature for having introduced the true image of such literature and proving that it is relevant to real life and stands proud among other international literature.

ries, laboratories and more to all this vast collection of manuscripts, which recorded deep experience of the past generations, as source of further inventions. Forgotten institution of Masjid Madrasah alert our conscience and attention to take advantage fully again from it. Many large Masjid remain vacant round the year, and filled only during the month of Ramadan. If intellectuals consider taking blessing from this ignored institution, as our predecessors did in the past, they could frame and design the role of Masjid-Madrasah, according to the need of the present time.

Through such magnificent Masjid, education can be provided freely or on low fees bases. In each community and in each locality some spacious Masjid are available that can play a vital role in upgrading the rate of literacy.

Traditionally, the goal of Madrasah is to produce a team who can interpret Education of Islam in relation to the demands of the specific time. Through modernization of the Madrasah institution, we can provide an opportunity to our coming generation to survive in the modern world better. Rate of literacy can not improve by the hypocritical statements of our rulers. Nor reform is possible through seminars and conferences, in five or seven star hotels. Such junk-activities benefit only the filthy-character bureaucrats. For the Renaissance of the Masjid Madrasah, role of kindhearted philanthropist is indispensable.

The author PhD (USA), NDI, Shahadat al Aalamiyah (Najaf- Iraq), M.A Attorney at Law Member, Ulama Council of Pakistan



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# Yemenis use energy drinks as a sexual stimulator

Many rural Yemenis travel miles to major cities in search of energy drinks, which they believe are a good sexual stimulant. **A report by Hamed Thabet.** The reporter can be reached at [hamed\\_thabit@hotmail.com](mailto:hamed_thabit@hotmail.com)

**M**arried villager Hassan Al-Aowdi traveled from his village of Al-Sada'a in Ibb governorate to Ibb city to purchase an energy drink because he heard that such drinks will increase his sex drive.

He narrates, "Two years ago, no grocery store in my village sold energy drinks, so I had to take a two- to three-hour taxi ride to Ibb to purchase them. To satisfy my curiosity, the first time, I bought two cans and I've drunk them ever since. I really feel that my power in power in sex did increase once I started using them. That's why whenever I want to have sex with my wife, I drink one."

Married Yemenis, especially those who are middle-aged, use energy drinks the most, with some preferring to drink them while chewing qat, a mild narcotic. Statistics show that seven million Yemenis (including both men and women) chew the green stuff

Nadim Al-Saqqaf, who used to work for energy drink companies in the Yemeni markets and now he is a sales manager for Juices Company in Aujan

Industries observes, "The strange thing is that while energy drinks have spread nationwide within a very short time, there was no marketing in remote areas and villages years ago, but villagers still went to the cities to buy these drinks. They did and still are doing it for one reason only - to increase their sex drive."

Al-Saqqaf express that according to some international studies which have been made on the Middle East, says that Yemen is the Middle East's top consumer of energy drinks. This study is Al-Saqqaf notes, "There are more than 100 varieties of energy drinks on the Yemeni market. Many say that impotency is increasing due to qat, so energy drinks provide needed power."

Energy drinks have blanketed Yemen over the past 10 years. They are considered a health drink not causing any problems for the body or mind, when, in fact, no specialized studies or research have been done to confirm that these drinks actually possess their touted advantages.

However, the truth that only a few know is that these drinks actually play no role in boosting sexual energy. The



Truck and taxi drivers who commute between cities and face lengthy travel times also use energy drinks to stay awake.

majority of Yemenis think they become stronger by using these drinks because they lose nearly all of their energy when they chew qat. In reality, such drinks simply energize or empower the body's muscles, which are useful for those in hard jobs, such as laborers, builders, etc

According to 26-year-old Hani Al-Harazi, a habitual energy drink user

who does so in order to have a good sexual relationship with his wife, "I drink a Red Bull whenever I chew qat and then one more afterward, after which I feel like I could fly because of the huge energy burst I experience. With all of this power, I become stronger and filled with power to do what I must and in the right way."

He concludes, "I recommend all married men drink such drinks in order to have a good marital life."

#### Other uses

Truck and taxi drivers who commute between cities and face lengthy travel times also use energy drinks to stay awake. Because they must return the same day, many such drivers either can't or don't want to have to stop and rest, so they consume such drinks.

Abdulwase'e drives a truck for a private company in Sana'a and must drive between Sana'a and Aden and sometimes Hodeidah, returning the same day. A roundtrip journey takes 10 hours.

"To stay awake, I drink Red Bull three times a day while I chew qat and it works," he says, "But honestly, instead of gaining energy, I sometimes feel even more tired and get a strong headache, which may be caused by the energy drink or maybe because I'm so tired."

Others consume energy drinks to enable them to study extra hours. For example, Sana'a University student Ibrahim Al-Wae'1 says, "I have a lot of books to read in a little time and I get tired, so instead of chewing qat like other Yemenis, I drink Power Horse so that I can study more," admitting that he sometimes gets a headache, but it works for him in the end.

Likewise, some businesspersons use energy drinks to overcome tiredness and enable them to work more than a normal individual. Moreover, some believe such drinks are beneficial in order to gain energy for the gym or to be more energetic throughout the day.

#### Health hazards

Energy drinks are designed to increase stamina and improve physical performance, with some being designed especially for elite athletes; however, most are produced and marketed for the general public.

According to Dr. Erfan Y. Al-Shammari, an internist and specialist cardiThoracic and vascular diseases, in Babylon specialized hospital in Sana'a, consuming such drinks poses numerous risks.

The 32 milligrams of caffeine contained in each bottle has a dangerous effect upon the body and mind. "People don't realize the negative effects that drinking such drinks can cause. Over time, this stuff catches up with you. Consumed regularly, they'll eventually cause problems such as heart disease



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Married Yemenis, especially those who are middle-aged, use energy drinks the most, with some preferring to drink them while chewing qat, a mild narcotic. However, the truth that only a few know is that these drinks actually play no role in boosting sexual energy.



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and heart failure later in life," Al-Shammari explains.

Caffeine is a stimulant that acts on the central nervous system to speed up the messages to and from the brain so that one feels more aware and active. Because individual responses to caffeine vary, these types of drinks should be treated carefully because of how powerful they are

*"Because I have a lot of work to do and little time, I often drink energy drinks when I'm tired so that I won't fall asleep. In my experience, such drinks don't give me any added Power in sex and make no difference when I have sex with my wife."*

The stimulating properties of energy drinks can boost the body's heart rate and blood pressure (sometimes to the point of palpitations), in addition to causing dehydration, and, like other stimulants, preventing sleep, as Al-Shammari notes, "The high amount of caffeine makes the heart beat faster, thus causing heart attacks and other heart problems."

Additionally, he points out, such drinks cause gastritis, wherein the stomach secretes excess gastric acid

Those with bone-related health problems shouldn't consume energy drinks because they absorb and leech the calcium from the bones

The most important and negative effect of these drinks is that they fatigue the nerves and the mind, thereby causing lack of perception and an inability to understand. Such drinks are only able to keep one awake longer despite tiredness.

Many times, frequent consumers of energy drinks experience a change in urine color, with it turning either dark brown - the color of energy drinks themselves - or a dark yellow. All this happen in kidney filtration.

According to Al-Shammari, "The caffeine in energy drinks is approximately doubles that in other normal soft drinks."

He goes on to say that while some consumers claim to be addicted to these drinks, studies and research done on them don't show that they are addictive; however, the caffeine in them is the most dangerous ingredient.

Bader Sallam, who favors energy drinks, says, "Because I have a lot of work to do and little time, I often drink energy drinks when I'm tired so that I won't fall asleep. In my experience, such drinks don't give me any added Power in sex and make no difference when I have sex with my wife."

Al-Shammari concedes that while using energy drinks in combination with qat does provide an energy boost, it doesn't boost sexual drive, as evidenced by those who "crash" or become extremely tired and exhausted after consuming both.

Marwan, a supervisor for Red Bull, indicates that most Yemeni purchasers of energy drinks are qat chewers, drivers, university students and those working in workshops. He emphatically confirms, "These drinks don't give additional power in sex, as many people think. They simply provide energy for hard work and long waking hours."

He continues, "Based on my experience in this field, I can say that it's simply psychological when people believe they are energized only by consuming energy drinks, with some even saying, 'We're addicted to these drinks and can't live without them.'

As Al-Saqqaf points out, such drinks not only are widespread in Yemen, but also in the United States, where they don't chew qat, but consume alcohol instead

Al-Shammari references an international report, which indicated that Yemen has the highest percentage of divorce among Middle Eastern countries. The study found that when men chew qat, their sexual abilities decrease and they ejaculate quickly, as opposed to women, whose sexual appetite doubles when they chew qat, thus creating problems between couples because men can't satisfy their wives