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Government, Houthis make concessions to end ongoing war

By: Mohammed Bin Sallam

SA'ADA, Feb. 17 — The new mediation committee, comprised of eight Qatari military officers and conflict management experts and chaired by Qatar's Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Saif Muqaddam Bin Saqr Abu Al-Ainein, held a meeting with military and security commanders on Saturday in the Sa'ada provincial capital-based Republican Palace, said reliable sources from Sa'ada governorate. The sources added that the government and Houthis both made painful concessions to end ongoing confrontations.

According to the same sources, the meeting involved Northwest Military Flank Commander Ali Mohsen Al-Ahmar and Sheikh Saleh Habra, who represented Houthi field leader Abdulmalik Al-Houthi in the recent Doha-brokered peace deal.

The sources noted that the meeting resolved various differences between the Yemeni government and Houthis, one of which concerned forming a joint committee to count the missing and search for them. Other agreements made in the meeting were for Houthis to abandon strategic mountaintop positions, the government to pull its troops out of the governorate and for both sides to release their prisoners of war. The Qatari Red Crescent Association started on Sunday a field survey assessing damage to Houthi supporters and other citizens' property during the 4-year war between Houthis and government troops.

Other sources confirmed that government troops withdrew from the areas of Juma'a Bin Fadhel and Jabal

Al-Sauma, overlooking the Haidan district, where fierce clashes between Houthi followers and military forces had occurred.

The sources said that citizens witnessed the 17th Military Division forces withdrawing from Juma'a Bin Fadhel, Jabal Al-Sawma and nearby areas, where fierce confrontations occurred last month, adding that the withdrawal began on Friday. Eyewitnesses also said that the two military detachments, which have been besieged by Houthi supporters since mid-January in the sub-districts of Wald Ayyash and Wald Nawar, were pulled out from their sites.

Eyewitnesses expected that troops gathering in the Haidan district, following the withdrawal process, may head for the Marran area, in Haidan if they don't plan to move to another area in the Marahedh district.

According to the sources, 17th Armored Military Division Commander Abdulaziz Al-Shehari, an Salafi extremist, as well as Western Military Flank Commander Ali Omar Qaied and six of their escorts were among those who left the Haidan district along with the troops following a two-week siege. The military commanders and their escorts were besieged by Houthis after their helicopter was forced to land in the Juma'a Bin Fadhel area.

Houthi supporters decided to lift their siege of government troops in the area and allow the division to leave the area. They also decided to press the government to abandon its military positions and pull its troops out from confrontation zones in the Haidan district.

Abdulmalik Al-Houthi reconfirmed to the mediation committee that his followers have nothing to do with the lockdown of troops in the Juma'a Bin Fadhel area, adding that it is the area locals who besieged the troops in retaliation for the division's operations that damaged their property in the war. But the mediation committee, according to Sa'ada sources, managed to convince both sides of its vision, aimed at implementing terms of the Doha peace deal signed by both sides on Feb. 1, 2008.

The deal stipulates that the government must pull out its troops from the populated areas and Houthis must abandon their positions on the mountain tops and return home, according to official sources, who also pointed out that the army has taken a positive step toward ending the tension between both sides and ensuring that they remain committed to the agreement.

Political observers considered the step important in promoting peace and ending any potential reasons for clashes. The move has been received positively among Sa'ada locals.

The Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) Higher Council expressed that it is time for a responsible national position to end the ongoing war and exterminate any tensions that may cause renewed confrontations between both sides. The council said in a letter to the president of the Republic that the war may not end unless there is a joint national effort involving all the Yemeni people.

The opposition parties pressed the government to give top priority to any efforts aimed at ceasing bloodshed in



A Yemeni journalist greets a government soldier during the only organized media visit to Sada'a in 2006.

Sa'ada, even at the expense of what is happening in other governorates. In this context, the JMP called for an official declaration of agreement terms so that the public can have a clear picture of both sides' commitment to the ceasefire agreement.

The JMP's letter highlighted the opposition coalition's reaction to the government calling on its members, who were part of the previous mediation committee, to attend a new meeting that will take them to Sa'ada in light of the new developments. It also showed the JMP position toward the crisis since the war broke out in June 2004.

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In brief

SOCOTRA

Ban on transporting qat into Socotra

An anti-qat festival was held on Saturday in Socotra by the Association to Combat Qat (ACQ).

During the festival, which aims at raising awareness to combat qat on the island, many speeches were delivered to stress the importance of implementing the island's local council decision preventing people from chewing qat on the island.

Socotra's local council approved a ban on bringing qat onto the island, a decision which has been enforced since the beginning of the year.

The council agreed to confiscate any qat found entering the island and penalize those carrying it.

The council requested qat sellers to sign pledges not to attempt bringing qat to the island. The sellers refused to do so unless qat was banned nationwide, saying that the island is a part of the country and is not ruled by independent laws.

SANKA

Dutch government to support education program for Yemen

A Yemeni official said that the Dutch government had extended a support program for Yemen in the field of high technical education and vocational training.

Minister of Technical Education and Vocational Training Ibrahim Hajri, who paid a visit to the Netherlands last week, said that the Dutch government agreed to support a new project related to technical education for increasing scholarships offered for Yemeni students.

During his visit, Hajri spoke with Dutch officials on aspects of cooperation between the two countries in the area of technical education and vocational training.

Hajri paid visits to a number of Dutch technical education universities, which form relationships between education institutions and labor markets.

Yemeni-Gulf media company officially declared

The Yemeni-Gulf Company for Culture and Media Production (YGC-CMP) was formally declared on Saturday to be the first Yemeni-Gulf joint company in the fields of drama, cinema and information production.

YGCCMP General Director Safwat al-Ghassm declared that the initial capital of the company amounts to \$5 million, indicating that the company's opening project will be producing the first Yemeni-Gulf fictional film "Nasr al-Jeel" (Eagle of the Generation), to be shot in Yemen with French and Moroccan assistance.

MUKALLA

New group of African refugees arrives in Yemen

About 93 African refugees, 71 males and 22 females, arrived on Saturday in Hadramout province, fleeing disturbances in their countries. Security sources were quoted by the state-run *26sept.net* as saying that the African refugees were transported to a refugee center in the province.

African refugees are usually smuggled into Yemen by boat, and sometimes refugees are forced to swim if the boat capsizes, often resulting in their deaths.

Overall, 157 people have been reported dead or missing during the first 19 days of 2008 in the perilous trip across the Gulf of Aden, which last year claimed over 1,400 people dead or missing.

ADEN

Hadi, al-Sufi discuss increasing salaries of Oil Institution employees Vice President Abdu-Raboo Mansour Hadi urged the Civil Service and Insurance Ministry on Saturday to increase salaries of the Oil Institution employees.

During his meeting with Civil Service and Insurance Minister Hamoud al-Sufi, Hadi asked al-Sufi to determine any legal request for the employees of administrative units of the government in accordance with the laws in force.

Al-Sufi presented a brief on the concerned case, noting what has been presented by the ministry to the Cabinet for approval, according to the strategy of salaries and wages.

He confirmed that the second stage of the strategy was approved last October and would be expended to all the government bodies immediately after completing the necessary data.

Germany donates refugee kits to Shabwa's Mayfa'a Center

By: Hamed Thabet

SHABWA Feb. 14 — German Ambassador to Yemen Michael Klor-Berchtold handed over more than 5,000 refugee arrival kits to the Mayfa'a Refugee Reception Center in Shabwa governorate on Thursday.

Representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the local community were on hand to witness the donation ceremony in Shabwa.

Financed by a \$7,500 donation from the German Embassy, the arrival kits were assembled locally. "The purpose of this donation is to secure the immediate survival of refugees arriving on Yemen's southern coastlines by giving them some very basic assistance, such as food, water, clothing, soap, a blanket, bed sheets and special material for women," Klor-Berchtold explained.

The German Embassy's donation is meant to assist the Yemeni government in shouldering the burden of caring for the refugees, as well as being an expression of gratitude to the Yemeni people for their noble hospitality and tolerance toward the refugees, Klor-Berchtold stated.

"Since the civil war began in Somalia in 1991, between 2,500 and 3,000 Somalis — sometimes even more — leave their country every month seeking refuge in other countries, particularly Yemen," noted Adel Jasmin, acting representative of UNHCR in Yemen for the past three years, "So this is why we wanted to help the Yemeni government and share this responsibility together."

"Before I became ambassador at the German Embassy, I was a special European Union envoy to the African Horn," Klor-Berchtold remarked, "As I traveled, I witnessed the Somali tribes and the hard and difficult lives they experienced."

Klor-Berchtold said he learned of the refugees' plight and their difficult entry via boat from newspapers once he arrived in Yemen. He succeeded in obtaining support from Yemen's Foreign Ministry for Refugees, while the German Embassy collaborated with Yemeni authorities and

UNHCR to help this new generation of boat people.

According to Jihan Bawazeer, field coordinator for the Mayfa'a Refugee Reception Center, the center took in nearly 115,000 Somalis from 1999 through 2007. In just the first two months of this year alone, the facility already has received nearly 1,300 arrivals.

Ethiopians were the second largest group to come through the center, with 11,716 arrivals from 1999 through 2007, and 417 arrivals so far this year. Additionally, Bawazeer noted that the facility also has assisted refugees from other countries such as Eritrea, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sudan and Tanzania.

Within the past decade, Yemeni coastlines have witnessed a massive influx of refugees. Because they arrive by boat, they often carry little or nothing with them in order to survive. Mayfa'a Center helps register the refugees and offers basic help and support.

"Politically, this program about the Germany's donation of these kits in Mayfa'a center seeks to bring awareness that Germany hasn't forgotten the situation in the African Horn and resist the reoccurrence of this situation in Yemen, and that Germany is always talking care to help the refugees and cooperating with the Yemeni government in its responsibility with refugees who continually coming to Yemen," Klor-Berchtold explained, "Even though Yemen is a poor country itself, it is openly accepting and shouldering most of the burden for these refugees."

Currently, Germany is Yemen's largest European donor regarding development, as well as being one of the largest donors to the UNHCR based in Switzerland, Geneva, Switzerland. Germany also provides humanitarian aid directly to Somalia itself, such as offering services in various fields in order to protect and support refugees there.

Established in 1996 with the help of UNHCR, Shabwa's Mayfa'a Refugee Reception Center assists refugees by providing free medicine, food, water and other necessities, according to Aouad Baobaid, UNHCR field specialist at the



German Ambassador Michael Klor-Berchtold hands over an arrival kit to a Somali woman.

center.

One of the most difficult situations such refugees experience is when their boat capsizes and many die from drowning. As bodies washed ashore, the Mayfa'a Center collects them and gives them a decent burial.

"We have a team on the coast that constantly keeps an eye on these boats. We also receive great assistance from the Yemeni military and the government to do our job well," Baobaid explained.

"Those who survive and are severely injured immediately are taken to Mayfa'a," the center's resident physician Hussein Samen noted, "If their situation is critical, they are taken to Mukalla, Aden or Ataq Hospitals."

Mayfa'a Center can accommodate between 800 and 1,000 refugees at a

time, who are allowed to remain at the center from 24 hours up to three days. Refugees then must register to go to Al-Kharaz Refugee Camp in Lahj governorate. Those who don't are free to leave the center and live elsewhere. Many refugees die at sea every year. For instance, there were more than 130 casualties in early June 2007. However, at the end of that month, the Yemeni Coast Guard saved the lives of 140 refugees marooned at sea due to their disabled boat.

UNHCR's Jasmin explained that refugees are granted refugee-status documents that are effective for three months. While they are given all of the necessary information about the refugee camp, most prefer to go to Yemen's larger cities in search of any type of work to earn a

living.

Lahj's Al-Kharaz Refugee Camp has approximately 9,000 refugees — most of them Somalis — with smaller numbers of Ethiopians and Kenyans.

Because the camp has difficulty keeping up with the rapidly increasing number of refugees, Jasmin noted that the UNHCR are attempting to enlarge it.

Additionally, "We have self-help programs to help them begin a better life," he noted, adding that three HIV cases currently are receiving treatment at Al-Kharaz Camp.

As Klor-Berchtold concluded, "While all nations must give more attention to finding solutions to the Somali war, Yemen continues to play a unique role in the effort to help solve the Somali refugee problem."

Oil spill in Hodeidah kills large numbers of marine life

By: Almidad Dahesh Mojalli

HODEIDAH, Feb. 17 — The General Authority for Maritime Affairs, Hodeidah branch, warned of large-scale pollution at Al-Erge tourist coasts near the central power station north of Al-Hodeidah city. Yasser Al-Obiri, a branch official, stated to the Yemen Times that the pollution was caused by approximately six tons of exhaust oil leaking from the station into the coast.

The oil spill covered an area 14 kilometers long, four kilometers wide and three millimeters thick over the affected waters, leading to the deaths of large quantities of fish and other marine life. The pollution also affected the trees that the fish use to lay their eggs.

Many fishermen in Al-Jabbanah and Fenar Al-Shami districts stated that they have lost the source of their livelihoods as a result of the environmental pollution. People in the districts were surprised Tuesday to find black spots covering their coasts, considered the only source of their livelihood.

Tens of fishermen sent a message to the governor of Hodeidah appealing for compensation for the damage to their fishnets and boat engines. They also asked in their message for an investigation into concerned authorities involved in discharging oils in the sea, who they said didn't care about the negative consequences on the area's fish resources and citizens.

Sources in the General Authority for the Maritime Affairs have mentioned in journalistic reports that they went directly to the southern coasts of the power station immediately after receiving the news of the pollution. "When we saw the size of the dangerous pollution and the environmental damage that befell the district, we provided all the required equipment to fight this tremendous pollution. We formed three fighting teams and distributed them to three polluted districts, respectively: Al-Jabbanah, Fenar Al-Shami and Al-Rajeah island. The first step was to collect the coastal



Huge numbers of fish can be killed by sudden changes in their environment, like pollution.

grass polluted by the oil in order to dry and burn it. The second step was to skim the oil off the water into cases," said the report. It added, "We faced many difficulties, like the trees under which fish put their eggs, which we had to deal with carefully, as they constitute the environment for fish and other marine life reproduction. Oil stuck to the trees was removed and shifted to the coasts of the front island. We collected around thirty cases of oil from the southern district, Fenar Al-Shami, 50 cases from Al-Jabbanah and Marsa Al-Sayadeen districts, 57 cases from Al-Rajeah island and 40 cases off the island's coast. Each case weighs 30-40 kilograms."

Sources in the public prosecution in

Hodeidah governorate mentioned that the public prosecutor Abdullah Al-Olofi went himself last Wednesday to Hodeidah to investigate the issue, moved to the location of pollution to evaluate the volume of the pollution and discover the perpetrator behind the incident.

The prosecutor stated that he went to all the locations of the pollution, investigated, acquainted and reported about the pollution in each district. He added that he went to the reservoir of the power station to make sure that oil leaked from it, took patterns and send them to Sana'a for analysis.

The ministry of Energy and Electricity was unavailable for comment.

Norwegian oil firm predicts profit loss from Yemen's poor production

By Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Feb. 17 — Norwegian Oil Company DNO said it expects to post operating profit losses for the quarter partly because of poor petrol production in Yemen.

DNO reported in a press conference on Friday that their production in Yemen hasn't lived up to the company's expectations, producing 2,000 fewer barrels of oil this year than it did last year.

Reuters News Agency reported that oil industry analysts were not upbeat about the company's 2008 profits in part because of DNO's reserves falling by 10.8 million barrels in Yemen.

Additional problems came from the company's oil fields in northern Iraq, where they have yet to acquire an

export license and have been transporting oil by truck from the autonomous Kurdish region.

DNO's Chief Executive Helge Eide remained positive even though the company's stock fell 9.4 percent on the Oslo bourse when the forecast was announced. "We have an extensive program in Yemen and in Kurdistan with great potential," said Eide.

Eide also praised the company's drilling efforts in new Yemeni on-shore wells, and said that the annual production from that region was in line with DNO's target for the fiscal year.

The company, which first invested in Yemen's oil sector in 1998, also has contracts to drill in Equatorial New Guinea, Mozambique and Syria. DNO was also the first company to explore drilling options for oil in post-war Iraq.

Court passes death sentence against spies

By Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Feb. 17 — The State Security Court, specializing in terrorism cases, sentenced on Saturday two Yemeni nationals to death for being found guilty of spying for Egypt. The court verdict read, "Hamad Ali Al-Dhahouk and Abdulaziz Hassan Al-Hatbani will face execution after being convicted of eavesdropping in favor of foreign states."

The 50-year-old Hamad Al-Dhahouk, a former Saudi army soldier of Yemeni origin, lost his Saudi citizenship in 1995, while Al-Hatbani, 45, is a member of the Yemeni army. The defendants' defense advocates said they would appeal the verdict.

Both defendants were accused of providing the Egyptian Embassy in Sana'a with information that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were funneling money to a terrorist cell in Yemen in order to carry out offensives against foreign tourists in Egypt, and that the Yemeni government knows about such terrorist plots.

The two men refused the verdict and

asked for an appeal. They also denied the charges, saying they were fabricated.

Public Prosecution charged Al-Dhahouk with submitting documents, including false information, to the Egyptian Embassy and asking the embassy to pay him in exchange for the information.

On June 26, 2007, when the trial began, the prosecution accused Al-Dhahouk and Al-Hatbani of contacting a diplomat at the Egyptian embassy in Sana'a on March 7, 2007 and giving him untrue and misleading information. According to the prosecution, the false information may harm Yemen's relations with the Gulf States, particularly as the Yemeni government is stepping up efforts and improving its economy with the intention of joining the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Interior Ministry official Najeeb Al-Salwi stated that the spies' illegal activities to damage the government's reputation may have a negative impact on Yemen's official efforts to integrate into the Gulf cartel.

WHAT IT MEANS...

Premature retirement of public university teachers

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 (drafaqih@yahoo.com).

Countries both in the Arab world and worldwide take care of academics working at their universities, exerting untold efforts to utilize them to the utmost and retain them as long as possible.

Such academics are afforded the necessary resources to continue contributing creatively to their fields, being asked to retire only when they no longer are able to work due to old age or illness, which typically appears after age 75.

However, contrary to the above, official minutes were drafted Aug. 21, 2007 featuring an agreement between former Prime Minister Abdullqader Bajammal, former Finance Minister Alawi Al-Salami and Civil Service Minister Hamoud Al-Soufi, providing that:

1- Teaching staff will retire upon reaching age 60 or after serving the state for 35 years.

2- Decisions regarding extending any teaching staff member's service will be canceled and that staff member will be retired immediately if a sabbatical decision has been made, even if the member is fully eligible for the sabbatical, but has never taken it throughout his or her academic service at the respective university.

3- The prime minister will make a resolution approving the extension of service of any teaching staff member if the respective university wishes to retain that member and further utilize of his or her academic services.



By: Prof. Hasan Ali Mugali

If applied accordingly, this retirement decision would remove talented academics from Yemeni universities and deprive retired teaching staff of their statutory right to complete their term of service, as specified in Article 31 of the Prime Minister's 1998 Resolution No. 238 issued pursuant to Article 58 of the Universities Law.

Article 31 sets forth the conditions for retirement, defining the end of the term of service at age 65, whereas the above agreement stipulates retirement at age 60. Therefore, this administrative resolution violates Article 31 of the Retirement and Pensions Law and Article 4 of the Civil Service Law.

The abovementioned resolution confiscates the legal right of teaching staff to continue their academic activity until the end of the statutory term, i.e., age 65. Additionally, this right allows teaching staff to apply for a five-year extension and then another five-year extension, even under contract, until that individual reaches age 75, unless he or she is unable to work due to illness or the like.

This flagrant interference in university affairs and requiring the prime minister's approval to extend the term of service upon arbitrary retirement, as per the above notorious ministerial agreement, violates the autonomy of universities.

Moreover, this invalid resolution connotes political, oppressive and ignorant impulses,

potentially leading to detrimental outcomes. It only serves narrow illegal partisan ends, contrary to applicable laws and the Yemeni Constitution, and its achievement will be at the expense of scientific advancement and public interest.

Implementing the said resolution inevitably will evict those teachers dedicated to education, particularly given that a large number of professors don't attend the university setting, such as police and army officers, who are retired only by the departments where they work, not by the university, via presidential decree.

As the official responsible for executing general policy as well as running academic, administrative and financial affairs as per Article 13 of the Universities Law, Sana'a University Rector Khalid Tameem has done his best to prevent some risks related to this premature retirement resolution in an effort to maintain his university's pedagogical performance. Thus, he made several resolutions extending the terms of service for a number of retired teaching staff, given their considerable academic competence and irreplaceable talent.

What underscores the politicized nature of this retirement resolution regarding university teaching staff is the retirement list, which includes more than a third of university teaching staff, excluding those with government positions, those teaching at police or military academies, some Supreme Court judges, police and police directors, ministers and deputy ministers, heads of government authorities, military and judicial institutes, etc.

The resolution canceling an extension of service if a university approves a sabbatical for a relevant staff member is against the constitutional and legal rights of teaching staff

who never have received a sabbatical throughout their academic careers. This is a right on par with other employee rights to accumulated leave.

By stipulating that the prime minister approve such extensions, the resolution concerning retirement at age 60 or upon serving 35 years will reinforce the subservience of Yemen's public universities to the state's executive apparatus.

The Universities Law sets the retirement age for professors at 65, extendable to age 75, pursuant to certain procedures in the law and the 1998 Ministers Cabinet Resolution No. 238. The wisdom behind such legislation is retaining academic resources represented by experienced, high-brow and professional university teaching staff.

Yemen's public universities can lead their society creatively and be a veritable fountain of brains and talent, as well as an instrument of reform and development – but only if they are financially independent from the executive authority, namely the Finance Ministry, by allocating their finances according to Article 3 of the 1998 Universities Law No. 18.

This article recognizes universities' financially and administratively independent juristic personality in implementing a fundamental constitutional principle provided in Article 27 of the Yemeni Constitution:

"The State shall ensure freedom of scientific research and literary, artistic and cultural achievements that comply with the spirit and goals hereof, as well as providing the instruments for them. The State shall provide all assistance to advance arts and sciences and shall encourage artistic and scientific inventions as well as artistic creativity."

Not stopping this slaughter of Yemen's public universities will show the world and those observing the Yemeni situation irrefutable proof that public universities in Yemen are no home to independent thought, nor producers of free scholars and scientists, but rather mere administrative space controlled by the government – namely the Civil Service and Finance Ministries – and the political tentacles of the ruling apparatus.

Issuing this early retirement resolution shows that Yemen's ruling authority disrespects the academic and political consensus of Arab states and the world at large. The resolution constitutes an affront to the resolutions and recommendations of the Arab Higher Education Ministers, who met in Yemen itself, designating age 70 as the minimum retirement age for university academics.

Hasan Ali Mugali is a criminal law professor at Sana'a University.

Their News

UN World Food Program to extend food assistance to dozens of HIV patients

The UN World Food Program (WFP), in collaboration with the Education Ministry's School Feeding Department (SFD) and Ministry of Public Health and Population's National AIDS Program (NAP), organized a workshop for 40 SFD staff. The workshop aimed to educate the participants about HIV, as they play an important role as supervisors and educators. The 2-day workshop was held in Shahrhan Hotel in Sana'a on February 16 and 17. Education Minister Abdulsalam Al-Jawfi and WFP Representative and Country Director Mohamed El-Kouhene attended the opening of the workshop.

Al-Jawfi emphasized the importance of the subject matter at hand and the need for cooperation among all official bodies and concerned organizations to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. He indicated the importance of the female trainees' participation to ensure the delivery of the workshop's message to school girls, thus drawing attention to the important role women play in raising

social awareness. Al-Jawfi also pointed out that the WFP has been in Yemen for about 40 years and that its work is not limited to food distribution, but includes raising awareness and supporting education and social productivity. He pointed out that as youth are the most productive social group, society must ensure they are free of diseases that might negatively impact their creativity and productivity.

In his opening speech, El-Kouhene touched on the subject of social rejection and the associated problems that HIV patients undergo, particularly the shame and guilt related to the disease and public ignorance about it, which results in the patients being stigmatized by society.

The workshop comes as a continuation of WFP efforts to raise awareness about HIV. In December 2007 the WFP – in collaboration with the NAP and Ministry of Education – conducted workshops of a similar nature to over 300 teachers from 300 WFP-assisted schools in 6 governorates, including Aden, Lahj, Hadramout, Taiz, Ibb and Hodeidah, to raise HIV awareness among school chil-

dren. In addition, the WFP – in cooperation with the NAP, UNICEF and UNHCR – conducted HIV training in Aden for 30 volunteers from the refugee community to raise awareness about the disease in the refugee community.

As a result of discussions held during the workshop, the WFP has agreed to extend food assistance to dozens of HIV patients under treatment who are registered with the NAP to encourage people to undergo tests and receive treatment.

Wildlife protection functions held in Sayun

Activities for the "Wildlife Protection" event in Hadramout were concluded late January, ending the 1-week program. The event, which was held under the motto of "Together to Safeguard Life", was organized by the General Authority for Environment Protection.

During the event, a number of environment-oriented functions were carried out in order to raise awareness among citizens in several areas of Wadi Hadramout, targeting students in particular and persuading them to contribute in the protection of animals in danger of

extinction, for example the endangered Capra Ibx, whose numbers in the valley have been remarkably decreasing as a result of aggressive hunting by residents there.

More than 70 students from different schools in the area participated in the events, which focused on environmental concepts aiming at increasing the students' awareness about methods and practices to protect animals living in the wild.

The students staged dramatic skits reflecting their role to safeguard the environment. Meanwhile, the General Authority for Environment Protection organized a visit to a habitat for rare animals, where students became familiarized with wildlife. In addition, photos of Yemeni wildlife were exhibited, and a program in Sayun Radio was broadcasted during the course of the week.

The events began with a workshop attended by a number of local council members and environment and wildlife specialists, who discussed the role of wildlife reservations in protecting the animals, and proposed setting up a reservation in Hadramout Valley.

A leading company in the field of Automobiles and Heavy Equipment (General Motors – Yemen) Has the Following Vacancies:

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Job Announcement

The YPHR/ Health Systems 20/20 Project funded by USAID announces two positions, 6-month (minimum/each). The HS20/20 project focuses on health systems strengthening world wide. In Yemen the project provides support at the central and governorate levels to activities such as HIS/GIS strengthening, National Health Accounts and Community Awareness components. The following positions will work as part of the project team in Sana'a with travel to other governorates.

Position 1: HIS/GIS Project Assistant

- Assist HIS/GIS team with updating databases, preparing statistical reports, organizing training and workshops, and monitoring project activities.

Qualifications/Skills Required:

- Completion of Secondary School required, BA/BS Desirable
- 2+ years of relevant work experience
- Excellent inter-personal and communication skills.
- Substantial experience with computers, internet, data processing, and spreadsheets
- Strong writing skills.
- Fluency in English and Arabic required.

Position 2: Community Awareness Project Assistant

- Assist Community Awareness program with organizing training and workshops, collecting, entering and analyzing data, and preparing reports.

Qualification/Skills Required:

- Completion of Secondary School required, BA/BS Desirable
- 2+ years of work experience
- Excellent inter-personal and communication skills.
- Experience with computers, internet, data processing, and spreadsheets
- Excellent writing skills.
- Fluency in English and Arabic required.

Deadline for application is February, 23, 2008. Only short listed candidates will be contacted. Please send CV and a cover letter in English to Fax: 967 1 302 722, or email to ralmansoury@yemenphr.com.

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- مهندس انابيب خزانات الغاز المسال عدد (6).
- مهندس لحام خزانات الغاز المسال عدد (6).
- مشرفين كهرباء عدد (6).
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آخر موعد لقبول الطلبات : 2008/2/25

على المتقدمين ارسال السيرة الذاتية على البريد الالكتروني التالي:
Daewoo_yem_tdd@hotmail.com

Documentary "Football Under Cover" Soccer under the veil

The film "Football Under Cover" turned out to be the surprise tip of this year's Berlin Film Festival. It tells the story behind the meeting between a multicultural women's soccer club from Berlin and the Iranian national women's team. *Ariana Mirza reports on the film*

Rowdy singing in the stands, as in any other soccer stadium in the world. But a warning rings out from the loudspeakers: in the event of indecent behavior, the game will be called off. The announcement is meant to be taken seriously; we are in Teheran. The gripping duel between the players of the Berlin club BSV Al Dersim Spor and the Iranian national women's team has feelings running high. Some of the spectators' veils are already suspiciously askew, and the chants are becoming more and more audacious.

Though today all men – no exceptions – have been banned from the stadium, the pious guardians of Iranian decency have not forgotten that cameras are present.

"In Iran everything is possible" Fortunately, despite the uproar in the stands, the game is not called off – just one example of how nearly everything turns out well in the end in the documentary "Football Under Cover".

"Officially, in Iran nothing is possible – but almost everything is possible", Iranian director Ayat Najafi had explained to co-initiator Marlene

Assmann several months previously, and the film documents how accurate this assessment proves to be. In the face of all obstacles, the unusual project – pursued for over a year by the filmmakers and the players – turns out successfully.

In actual fact the filmmakers first came up with the idea of the film and the meeting of the two teams; only then did the project get underway. Thus the documentary reports on an event which it itself brought into being. By April 2006 everything is set: the fifth division team of the Kreuzberg club Al Dersimspor flies to Teheran for a friendly match.

The grotesque contortions of Iranian bureaucrac

In "Football Under Cover" viewers learn that Iran had a national women's team as early as 1968, and that there is no lack of female referees, functionar-

ies or stadium announcers today. However, the film also reveals the grotesque contortions the Iranian bureaucracy is capable of in its attempts to unobtrusively thwart the plans for the friendly match, as well the lack of support on Germany's part. The jerseys for the Berlin team were ultimately sponsored by the Iranian soccer star Ali Daei, who spent several years playing in the German national league for such teams as Bayern München and Hertha BSC Berlin.

However entertainingly and humorously this struggle with bureaucracies, functionaries and sponsors is presented, the special strength of the film by Ayat Nayafi and David Assmann lies in the sensitive portrait sequences. For a brief moment viewers are immersed in the lives of very different young women who share a passion for playing soccer. And further parallels emerge.



Soccer as a male domain

In both countries, an important issue is the struggle for recognition in a football world that – in the west as well – is dominated by men. When the Berliner Susu tells how happy she is when she plays better than a boy, it is not far removed from Niloofar's satisfaction when she manages once again to disguise herself as a boy when training in a public park.

All the same, the documentary does not gloss over the major differences between the lives of its protagonists.

The Berlin Muslim Susu can practice with boys at any time. And the players only need to wear veils when visiting Teheran. By contrast, the young Iranians Niloofar and Narmila are not allowed to play soccer with boys, any more than they can doff their veils in public.

Despite the differences between the worlds they live in, on the playing field the players meet as equals: the match ended in a draw, 2:2.

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Ras Issa Oil Terminal Project Ministry of Oil & Minerals Republic of Yemen

INVITATION FOR BIDS

For the Second time

1. The Project Directorate Ras Issa Oil Terminal Project, Ministry of Oil & Minerals, Republic of Yemen (the "Employer") intends to develop off shore crude loading facility incorporating jetty and/or SPM at Ghubb Diknaw Bay.
2. The Employer invites sealed bids from eligible international firms to carryout investigative studies with regards to "Geophysical, Geotechnical Investigations and Hydrographic Studies" to facilitate detailed design of the off-shore loading facility at Ghubb Diknaw Bay and Dredging of Navigation Channels
3. Intending Bidders may purchase the Bidding Documents from the Office of the Employer, located at **5th floor, Yemen Oil & Gas Corporation Building, Haddah St., Sana'a, Republic of Yemen.** (Telephone: 00967 1 440283 / 446854 , Fax: 00967 1 440723, E-mail: ras_issa_proj@yahoo.com) on submission of a written application to the above office and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of US \$ 500/- transferred to the following bank address:

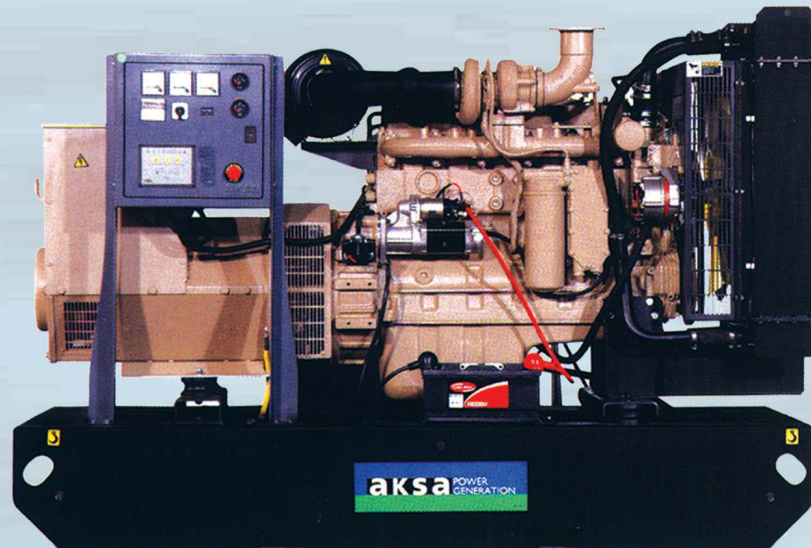
Account Name:	Ras Issa Project
Account Number:	01-1010-10155
Bank Name:	Central Bank of Yemen
Bank Address:	P.O. Box 59 Sana'a – Republic of Yemen

In case the bidder wishes to receive the subject documents through courier, additional amount of US \$ 100 will be payable.

4. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the amount of **15000 USD in the form of bank guarantee from any bank of Republic of Yemen or from any international bank having its branch in Yemen.** The Bid along with Bid Security must reach the office of Employer at or before 1100 hours, on Saturday 1st March 2008. Bids will be opened at 1200 hours on the same day, in the presence of bidders' representatives who may wish to be present.
5. As provided in detail, in the bidding documents, the Bidder shall submit, with his Technical Proposal, the details relating to similar projects in hand and those executed in the past ten years, equipment, vessels and soft-wares owned by the bidder. List of technical staff on bidder's pay roll and all financial details necessarily required for the post qualification.
6. **Financial bid and technical proposal shall be submitted in separate sealed envelopes.**
7. The financial bids will be opened only for those whom technically qualified in second session. Unqualified bidders will receive back their financial bid unopened.
8. For more information about the Project please log in to our website at (www.yogc.com.ye) and contact us for any query on any of above mentioned addresses.

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Children who become the family caretaker

By: Nisreen Shadad
For Yemen Times

Children whose parents either are mentally or physically ill often end up dropping out of school to support their family.

Girls stay at home to look after sick parents while boys are compelled to work to provide the family's basic needs. According to Mona Salem, director of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor's Child Labor Unit, "child laborers" specifically refers to those children between ages 5 and 15 who work.

There are no recent figures regarding the number of children working to support their families. In fact, the only field study on child labor in Yemen was conducted in 1999 and 2000 by the Ministry of the Social Affairs and Labor in cooperation with the International Labor Organization, or ILO, and focused only on child laborers between ages 10 and 15.

"The last study revealed the number of working children as approximately 400, regardless of the reasons leading them to work," Salem noted, indicating that the unit will announce more current and accurate statistics on child labor in Yemen next month

following an updated survey.

The ILO, which monitors labor conditions worldwide, will assist the Social Affairs and Labor Ministry with the new survey, which "will display more information about the reasons these children work," Salem added.

Eleven-year-old Emad Al-Raimi is just one example of a Yemeni child who dropped out of school to wander the streets collecting money to feed his family, selling tissues and bottled water for two years. He also begged to provide his two little sisters the means to attend school and complete their education.

Mohammed Al-Rawhani, a social worker at the Childhood Safety Center in Sana'a, noted that Al-Raimi's parents were satisfied with the income their son brought home every day, adding, "They neither asked him where he got this money nor why he returned home so late."

A policeman brought Al-Raimi to the center when he saw him begging on the street.

Al-Rawhani recalled, "I asked him why he was forced to beg and work rather than study and play and he told me his father had a severe chronic disease, so he's unable to support the family."

One of Al-Raimi's older brothers even traveled to Saudi Arabia to find



Many Yemeni children drop out of school to support their families.

work, but the family has heard no news from him. According to Al-Rawhani, another older brother is earning money, but spending it only on himself.

For these reasons, the young lad found himself in charge of the remainder of his family - his sick

father, his mother and two younger sisters - leaving school to provide for them.

"Al-Raimi carried a heavy burden," Al-Rawhani pointed out, "working from morning to night - sometimes as late as 10 p.m."

Children in these situations grow up

uneducated and lose both their childhood and their hope of a better life later. They lose their childhood because they are subjected to all types of violence and abuse on the streets, whereas they lose their hope because without education, they have limited possibilities for the future.

As Al-Rawhani noted, "What future awaits a child taught on the street, where he neither feels safe, nor finds love or mercy?"

Usually, after visiting a child's family and explaining the abuses and violence children may be subjected to on the streets, their families agree to return them to school. Likewise, Al-Raimi's family also eventually agreed to send him back to school.

Support from the center

Programs like those at the Childhood Safety Center are glimmers of hope for these children. As Al-Rawhani explained, "Many children are brought to the center every day where we seek to build them up. We also visit their families to inform them of the dangers children face on the street."

Approximately 40 children currently are at the center where there are many programs to help cultivate them. "We contact their families, asking them to allow their children to continue their education. We then

4U

If you know of children in these circumstances, please contact the Childhood Safety Center at 260-655

return the children to their families, visiting them periodically to ensure that they are good," he added.

One of the center's projects is to provide the children's families some money, depending on the family's situation and the amount of government subsidy the center receives. "However, we haven't received any subsidies," Al-Rawhani noted.

"When Al-Raimi's older brother learned of the dangers his little brother may face, he began working to support his family by opening a repair shop for electrical equipment," Al-Rawhani explained.

Now that his older brother is earning income for their family, the younger Al-Raimi has returned to school and helps his brother in the repair shop only in his spare time. However, many Yemeni families like Al-Raimi's still need help making ends meet to get their children off the street.

Qat culture permeates non-Yemeni youths in Sana'a

By: Haitham Mohammed
For Yemen Times

For 23-year-old Mazen Abu Watfa, chewing the mild narcotic qat helps him study hard and better understand his lessons. Having previously worked in Saudi Arabia, the Palestinian young man now is a student at a private Yemeni university in Sana'a.

Abu Watfa admits that he's become addicted to qat, chewing it for 16 hours nonstop during exams. He notes that his Yemeni friends convinced him to start chewing.

"[Qat] is a blessing and a curse at the same time," Abu Watfa observes, "It's a blessing because students who chew it don't think about doing anything else, so their thoughts are limited to studying and how to achieve higher marks."

However, he says qat also is a curse because it's both expensive and it negatively affects chewers' health. "I don't like anyone to see me chewing qat other than my friends," he admits.

It's common knowledge that many foreigners from all over the Arab

world live in Yemen. Although they may have cultural differences from each other and from Yemenis, they set aside these differences to join their Yemeni friends in the afternoon qat chew. Thus, qat no longer is just a popular activity for Yemeni youths, but for most Arab youths living in Yemen to spend their leisure time.

Whereas other Arab countries have lush public gardens, entertainment venues and theaters, Yemen lacks such places or, when found, they are filled to capacity with crowds. Additionally, such entertainment venues are open only for a limited time, from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m., with more than 200 visitors to each place.

Mohammed Abdul-Rahman, a 27-year-old Syrian national living in Yemen and working as an omnibus driver for Al-Rowaishan Company, has chewed qat for six years, having taken it up during his vacations from work because he couldn't find anything else to do. Unable to find any place to relax with his family or anywhere with suitable entertainment, he now spends most of his leisure time at the Ali Baba, an entertainment club for males.

Abdul-Rahman also claims that chewing qat has helped him earn Al-Rowaishan's "best driver" prize twice, attributing his success to qat because it keeps him calm yet full of energy.

Fun City, Hawaii, New Land, Ali Baba Club, Faraah Land, Fridays, Gulf Nights and Funny Bunny are some of the only places young people in Sana'a wish to spend their leisure time because in such places, they can play billiards, video games and table tennis, among other activities, such as smoking shisha.

However, such venues also can stir up fights caused by harassment and/or mockery of appearance, hair style or clothing, which youths often discuss while there.

Many Arab foreigners say they resort to chewing qat because there are very few entertainment venues, such as theaters. In Sana'a alone, there's only one cinema, which only shows Indian movies. For this reason, as Abdul-Rahman explained, youths are obliged to purchase movies on DVD, mostly watching American and new Arabic movies.

Coming to Yemen in 2003



following Iraq's occupation, 25-year-old Iraqi youth Omar Al-Ubaidi recounts that he became acquainted with some Yemenis and after forming relationships with them, he discovered that one of them had a revenge killing issue.

Having heard how such issues can

be resolved in Yemen, Al-Ubaidi decided to go and see for himself, but his Yemeni friend told him he could only attend the session where the revenge killing would be resolved if he chewed qat and dressed in traditional Yemeni clothing. At the same time, his friend pointed out that

it was a good chance for Al-Ubaidi to try qat and judge for himself what he thought about it.

So, Al-Ubaidi decided to take up his friend's challenge and discovered that qat distracted him from constantly worrying about the bad news related to his relatives in Iraq.



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Sana'a - Yemen



Vacancies Announcement

AMI is a humanitarian, apolitical and non-profit French non-governmental organization. Now present in 9 countries, for over 25 years AMI has brought medical care to those most vulnerable populations excluded from all health care systems.

AMI has been working in Yemen since the beginning of 2007 supporting Primary Health Care in Hodeidah governorate. Activities are implemented in closed collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and Population. They mainly consist in increasing the technical, material and organisational capacities of public facilities of both Al Marawa and Al Hali districts in order to enable them to provide quality, appropriate and affordable care services to the population.

The country representative office based in Hodeidah is currently seeking for:

- 1 doctor general practitioner (male)
- 1 english translator (female)
- 1 doctor general practitioner (female)
- 1 logistic assistant
- 1 nutritionist
- 1 pharmacist

Candidates must meet the following requirements:

- Graduate from official diploma and or successful experience in the related sectors
- Command of Arabic (both written and spoken) and English would be an advantage
- Computer operating skills would be an advantage
- Available for full-time job in Hodeidah

Contract:

- 6 months contract with possibility of extension
- Salary according to AMI salary scale

Applicants should apply submitting their C.V. and a covering letter detailing their relevant experience and their motivation at one of the following addresses:

- AMI Hodeidah office, Al-Hai Al-Tijari close to Dar Al-Maaref school (Telfax: 03.208.385)
- yemen@amifrance.org

Deadline for application: **February 29th 2008 at 7.00 pm**
Only short listed candidates will be contacted and invited for interview.

Vacancy

Position
Financial Accountant

This role involves taking full responsibility to independently handle all the aspects of accounting up to finalization. You will work closely with the General Manager in Yemen, Commercial Manager in the head office abroad and other line managers in Yemen.

Qualification
Chartered Accountant

Experience
The candidate should have a minimum 5 years experience with a Multi National Company in a senior level position. As the role is cross functional, you must possess excellent oral and communication skills in both Arabic and English.

Capability to independently handle all the aspects of accounting up to finalization of accounts (imports, sales, cost and purchase management, inter-company product transfer accounting, inventory control, banking, budgeting and receivables), and some knowledge of logistics. Should have experience in interaction with auditors of the company.

Proven experience in ERP (preferably Sage), MS Office (Word and Excel) and other accounting applications is required.

Please write attaching your updated resume and photograph stating your current salary and future expectations, to: chapman.stanley64@yahoo.com

NB: Only those candidates who match the job profile will be contacted.

Words of Wisdom



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

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

OUR
OPINIONFor these reasons,
Yemen needs a new plan

These are bad times for press in Yemen. They are also bad times for businesses, tourists, and ambitious young Yemenis. The reasons being that there is a clamp down on freedom of press, the Ministry of Information does not understand the power of the Internet for example and does not realize it cannot control information any longer. It is a bad time for businesses because of the increase in prices and hence the deterioration of purchasing power among other instabilities that are hurting the national economy. It is also a bad time for tourists because of the continuing instability and violence in the country, and finally it is a bad time for ambitious Yemenis because of the lack of an encouraging environment for creation, whether from the point of education and skills development or the point of fair competition and care for talents.

For any country all of these elements which are struggling in Yemen are vital to its prosperity. A country needs its free press, it needs its economy movers and shakers, it needs its image and reputation worldwide, and it needs its youth. If all these factors are suffering how will Yemen overcome its challenges and catch up with the world? With the situation as is, there is no telling how we will be able to survive as a country any longer. It is like cutting off a bird's wings and telling it to fly. Worse, Yemen today is like cutting off a bird's wings, pushing it over a cliff and telling it to fly or die.

Although rather comical this is not an exaggerated metaphor. We need help in working out our problems, and we need it urgently. I believe that the current regime is not able to control the country or take it to the future. It can only save itself before angry masses and wicked retaliation and chaos starts flooding and overwhelming the feeble state institutions. We need help to strengthen our infrastructure, our communication and transportation systems, our education and health care services, our rule of law and governance. Instead of pushing every decent Yemeni out of the country and forbidding international intervention under the pretext of the state sovereignty, we need to be humble enough to reach out and accept help. There is no point in pretending we can take care of ourselves because with all that is going on Yemen cannot take care of itself on its own, Yemen needs a new plan, and definitely a new man.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

How does our government
understand the free economy?

By: Mayisa Mahmoud

It is often said that 'if you want others to obey you, your orders must be affordable.' We had experienced totalitarian governance under which people became accustomed to relying on houses and livelihoods provided by the state. The same thing applies even to job opportunities. Then, we turned to live a new stage of time said to be characterized by free economy and free markets, and one can seek a job, house and subsistence and not stop depending on his/her government.

The state's prestige, status and role in planning and regulating are missing because it doesn't understand the concept of free economy, except in doing things randomly. Under economies, a state has moves, general plans, as well as a role for supervision, oversight and

direction. The Yemeni state proved unable to do such things, notably as it cannot create job opportunities for the idle, nor does it work on providing livelihoods for its simple citizens. Instead, it started destroying every passive thing in the community and established ghost housing societies, as well as distributed plans and neighboring units, however, such processes are usually repeated.

The result was limitless problems with regard to the housing issues. It also added an extra burden to the complicated problems, which we are suffering from, due to the irresponsible behaviors of greedy persons holding key government's posts.

Had we but had a look at the experience of other people in the neighboring countries and seen how they do organize their affairs, we would have been shocked. According to their seniority, govern-

ment employees in the neighboring countries get well-furnished apartments and sometimes villas from their government, plus top quality water and electricity services for very low bills.

In short, citizens in Yemen are the weakest thing since they don't enjoy care, dignity nor even the simplest values of humanity. There is a huge difference between a citizen oppressed in his homeland and a citizen pampered by his government. In Yemen, the government seems to be waging a fierce war on its citizens, who always complain of the expensive electricity and water bills as they can not afford to settle them. Another problem, which the government created for its citizens, is represented by the official procedures related with obtaining permits from municipality agencies to construct houses. Even tax payers, they always complain of being extorted

or forced to pay bribes by government servants in the different offices. This situation forced some citizens to seek safer living at the tops of mountains in rural areas where there are no bribes.

Over the past few months, it has been remarkable that citizens turned to immigrate from cities to rural areas and not vice versa. In the past, cities were attracting thousands of rural families that search for better services and living standards, thereby causing prices of estates to sky-

rocket by at least 20 percent per year. We are questioning when the situations will get improved as the irresponsible government officials are carrying the hammers of destruction to destroy hopes and dreams of the Yemeni people. Frankly, speaking this proverb or famous saying "Those claiming to protect the property are the real thieves" applies to the situations in Yemen.

Source: Al-Ishtraki.net

SILVER LINING

Dr. Mohammed Al-Qagh apologizes to readers for being unable to write his column for this issue due to illness. His column will reappear in next Monday's issue.

Tourism crisis management

In the last few years, we have witnessed an increasing number of natural and man-made disasters, including Yemen's recent Spanish and Belgian tourist bombings.

Plummetts in tourism are becoming more frequent and more visible with events like these and tourism, like any other activity, can be affected by any crisis at any time.

"A crisis is an unexpected event that affects traveler confidence in a destination and interferes with the ability to continue operating normally," according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization.



By: Khaled Alduais
alduais@yahoo.com

Besides Yemen's recent problems, the tourism industry has had several acute reminders in the recent past of the need for crisis preparedness, like SARS, September 11, 2001, the Bali bomb

attack, continuing political instability in Israel and Foot and Mouth disease in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the tourism industry has proved to be the world's fastest growing economic sector, with average growth of 12.5 percent in receipts.

Employees need to be familiar with the problems that they are likely to encounter after an incident, including mass panic and emergency evacuations. Although it already has a recognized presence in other fields, crisis management is still a relatively new concept within tourism field.

The Minister of Tourism recently created a Tourism Crisis

Management Unit to deal with problems like these. The newly established unit will provide guidelines to the different governmental and non-governmental organizations about how to resolve tourism-related crises. The unit will also review, monitor and evaluate the management of each crisis.

The newly-established unit has to send out information on a weekly basis to travelers, the travel trade and the media. This unit also has to maintain an around-the-clock hotline to disseminate information and answer specific queries.

Tourism crisis management is vitally important for all tourism

organizations to avoid bad publicity and prevent damage to the business. The ability to communicate quickly and effectively is an important component of successful and effective tourism crisis management.

A comprehensive tourism crisis management plan should be developed to enable the government to respond more effectively to any decline in the number of international tourists to Yemen.

Khaled Alduais is the Dean of the National Hotel & Tourism Institute (NAHOTI)

Today and yesterday are alike

By: Ali Naji Al-Ra'awi

'Today and yesterday are alike' is a famous saying usually used for comparing between the similar cases, which are sometimes repeated to reproduce the same ideas again and again, or due to shrinkage of the course of time and some people's

reliance on the ideas and concepts they had stored during the past days of their life.

As far as I am concerned, the best description for connotations of such a famous saying is the one uttered by Dr. Hamoud Al-Awdi, a man that needn't be introduced to the readers, when he diagnosed the situation of political, partisan, intellectual and educated elites following the Yemeni revolutions against the rule of Imamate and

British occupation.

In reverse to what was expected, these elites became highly interested in setting out at nightfall, speculating and riding over the waves of sophisticated controversy. These elites also enjoy listening to the repeated chanting of nationalist and Islamic slogans.

And, each party deliberated to defend what it believes to be appropriate and applicable for Yemen without feeling the role those elites were expected to play for the sake of enhancing and deep-rooting course of the Revolution, and having its contemporary moves replace heritage of the past, which the Revolution broke out to change.

Under influence of that coma, those elites had been distributed over different directions. We turned to see Socialists without Socialism, capitalists without capitalism and Islamists without a rule of thinking while the result, according to Dr. Al-Awdi was the conflict between Yemeni people themselves on behalf of those who embraced their political and intellectual methodology and theories.

Undoubtedly, these political and intellectual methodology and theories had left negative impacts on the factor of correlation with the national identity and cultural affiliation with the Yemeni reality, as well as with establishment of the

Reunification on May 22, 1990, accompanied by the democratic and pluralistic course.

There was a great hope that those elites may develop their awareness until reaching the level of civilized achievement in the frame of which the relation between the rulers and the ruled became regular through the move from the revolutionary legitimacy to the constitutional legitimacy.

Despite the political and democratic development so far achieved, regretfully some of those elites remained dealing with the concept of democracy, based on its ancient heritage, thereby making democracy and its practices victims of arbitrariness.

The prominent evidence of this violation is manifested by some political parties whose positions, in one way or another, contradict the higher national interests. This is also clear in the behaviors that deliberately confuse between opposing the government and opposing the homeland, as well as between what is public and what is private. The situation led to poisoning climates of the political life and weakening the rings of confidence between its components.

It is not a false accusation to say that some people had joined the political battle armed with one of the two options: 'to rule' or 'to oppose those who rule'. This

behavior contradicts nature of the role of a politician, supposed to be always an ideal example of commitment to addressing the national and social issues.

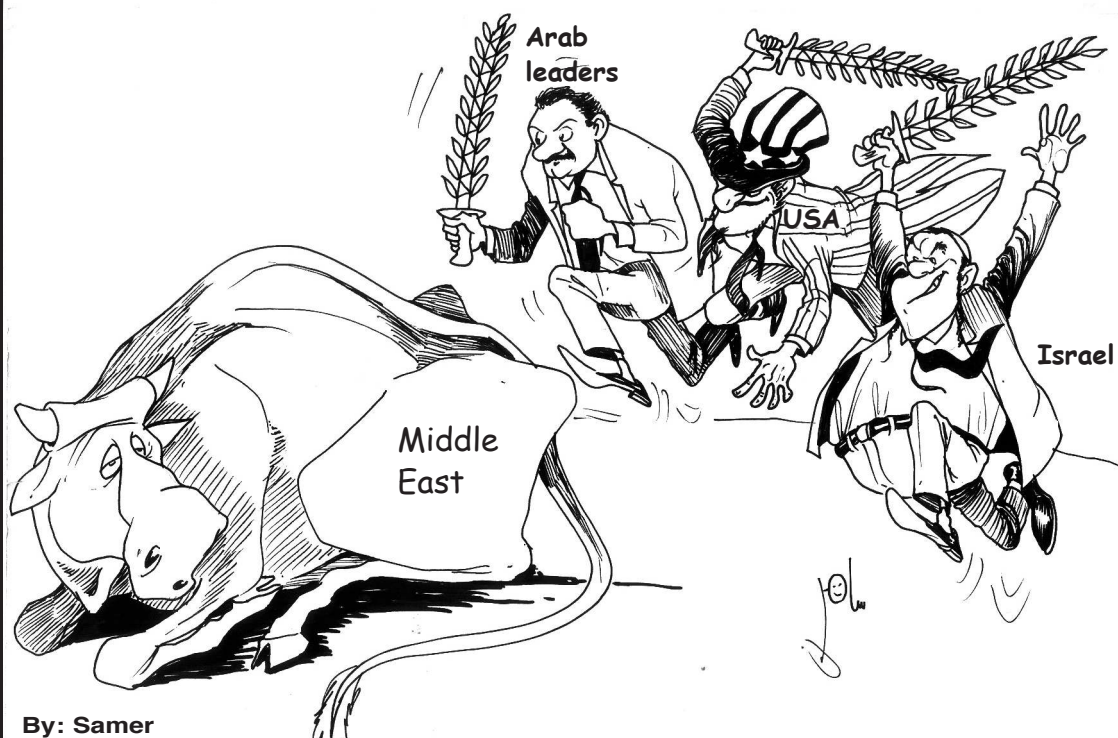
All the above-mentioned are some of the factors leading us to understand that many politicians and partisans learn from experiences of the past with their positions seemingly hesitant more than decisive. As result, some of them turn to be nationalists overnight but regionalists in the morning, urbanized today but villagers tomorrow, or preachers of ethics and morals in the Friday Prayer but defamers of those opposing their viewpoints outside the mosque.

This contradiction reaches its climatic point while we see that those who once used to consider Josef Stalin their first guide, from whom they learned the philosophy of justice and equality between layers are those who say today that Stalin was illiterate who never read even a single book throughout his life since he dropped out of school at an early age. They say about Stalin today that he couldn't master the Russian Language except for its slang because Georgia is his ancestral land.

Source: Al-Thawra State-Run Daily

The author is the Daily Editor-in-Chief.

SKETCHED OPINION



By: Samer

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Yemen Press Review



Al-Wahdawi Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO)
Tuesday, February 12

- Top Stories**
- Anonymous officials attacks Yemenportal.net manger
 - Yemen to hosts the 19th Round of Arab Nationalist Conference
 - Joint Meeting Parties ask for further details on the Doha-brokered Peace Deal
 - Al-Ahmar, Shaddadi and Attiya elected for Parliament Presidency Board
 - Presidential committee arrives in Sa'ada, MPs summon Interior Minister to brief them on the Doha deal
 - International report criticizes Yemeni authority's oppressive practices against journalists and press freedom

A recent international report criticized the Yemeni government's arbitrary practices against press freedom and repeated crackdown of journalists, the weekly reported in a front page article, adding that the report lashed out at authorities for accusing journalists of terrorism. Released

by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, the report stated that crackdown of media means in Yemen is still practiced, and the security authorities are harassing journalists and international media correspondents in streets, saying that the recent crackdown is notably more selective than before (targeting journalists known for criticizing the government and its poor policies).

Issued on Thursday, February 7th, the report discussed the situations of Yemeni journalists over the past year, disclosing that journalists have been exposed to numerous threats and harassments by anonymous security agents. It strongly denounced the invented terrorism charges the government attributes to journalists with the intention of intimidating them and forcing them quit journalism.

Three Web sites became unavailable to domestic users on January 19, joining a list of at least five others that have disappeared within Yemen without explanation in recent months. "We are troubled by the Yemeni government's recent blocking of news and opinion Web sites," CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon said. "Such a blatant restriction on news and information shows the lengths the Yemeni government is willing to go to stifle independent and dissident news. We call on authorities to restore all blocked sites immediately."



Al-Thawri Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP)
Thursday, February 13

- Top Stories**
- NDI trains YSP youths on how to integrate in politics
 - Five government employees kidnapped in Khawlan begin hunger strike
 - Thousands of citizens mark Southern Martyrs' Day
 - American Writer: Saleh's reign represents the gold age for tribe's dominance over governance
 - Yemeni Journalist Syndicates sues senior police officer for ordering soldiers to assault journalists in Hodeida
 - Al-Ayyam editor seeks asylum abroad as gunmen attack his home

Editor-in-Chief of Al-Ayyam daily Hisham Bashrahil is seeking political asylum abroad for the family following a savage attack in which tribesmen fired on his home on Tuesday, the weekly quoted local sources including the editor's son as saying.

The son Bashrahil Bashrahil told Reuters at daily Al-Ayyam's head-office in

the southern city of Aden that his father Hisham Bashrahil, 62, had instructed him to close the newspaper and seek political asylum abroad for the family. 'I don't think we can continue as free journalists under such violent attacks,' said Bashrahil, the paper's general manager. 'We know that some very influential government people are behind the problems we have been facing. It has all culminated in this savage attack against us.'

A government official, who asked not to be named, denied the shootout had any connection with Al-Ayyam or its editorial line. 'This is a criminal incident and the prosecutor's office is investigating with all parties concerned. Those involved on both sides have been arrested. The matter is in the hands of the judicial authorities,' he said to Reuters.

Al-Ayyam, which has angered the authorities with its reporting of a series of anti-government protests in Aden in recent months, says it is the top-circulation paper in Yemen, with a print run of 64,000 copies. The younger Bashrahil said the attack on his father's house in the Yemeni capital Sanaa, by a tribal family claiming ownership of the land, was politically motivated. He added that the authorities were pressing his family to hand over one of its members in what he said was effectively a demand for a 'hostage'.



Al-Methaq Weekly, Mouthpiece of the General People Congress (Ruling Party). Monday, February 11

- Top Stories**
- Parliament members elect Yahya Al-Raei their Speaker to succeed late Sheikh Al-Ahmar
 - GPC wins presidency of Aden Trade Unions' Confederation
 - GPC Caucus nominates MPs: Mohammed Al-Shaddadi, Himyar Al-Ahmar and Akram Attiya for

- Parliament presidency board
- President Saleh presents paper to Revolution History Documentation Symposium
 - Arab Parties Conference: Any plots against Yemeni unity may harm the entire region



26 September Weekly, Organ of the Yemeni Army. Thursday, February 14

- Top Stories**
- Palestinian President: We appreciate Yemeni people's support, international developments suitable for making peace
 - Qatari delegation arrives in Sana'a Thursday to oversee ceasefire agreement
 - Medical staff to receive hardship allowance with retrospective effective from March 2007
 - Yemen takes part in Abu Dhabi Forum for Gulf Investment projects
 - Government presents economic performance report to Parliament
 - New draft unity protection and press laws under discussion in Parliament and Shoura Council

President Ali Abdullah Saleh confirmed on Tuesday the important role of Parliament in decision-making and the legal observation as well as in activating the role of oversight over all state organs, as such can help establish joint coordination with the government to accomplish the homeland's interest, the army's organ reported.

He congratulated the new speaker of the parliament, Yahya Ali Al-Raei and the elected staff to the Parliament Presidency Board, where he addressed the new leadership saying that the poll was the decider and that all people whether in office or opposition were satisfied with that competition and the democratic and brotherly soul that predominated Parliament presidency election process.

On the other hand, he pointed out that the government soon will provide Parliament with a transparent and comprehensive report on citizen's issues, highlighting the obstacles and challenges facing the process of development and construction nationwide.

What we need next in Iraq

By: Condoleezza Rice and Robert Gates

Over the past year, we have seen that Iraqis are committed to affirming their own sovereignty. The Iraqi army and police are taking the lead in providing security over much of the country. Iraq is building relationships with other nations in the Middle East. The Iraqi people want to meet their own needs and control their own destiny. And they desire a more normal relationship with the United States.

Our troops and diplomats have made untold sacrifices to help put Iraq on the path to self-sufficiency. A crucial phase in this process will unfold in the coming months, when our ambassador in Baghdad, Ryan Crocker, begins negotiating a basic framework for normalized relations with the Iraqi government — to include what is known as a "status of forces" agreement. We encourage Congress and the public to support the efforts of our senior diplomats and military officers as they forge ahead with these talks — which we believe are essential to a successful outcome in Iraq

and, by extension, the vital interests and security of the United States.

First, some background. Whenever American troops are stationed or temporarily present on foreign soil, a number of legal questions arise, ranging from the overall scope of their mission to the minutiae of day-to-day life — from authority to fight to rules for delivering mail. In more than 115 nations, we have individually tailored status-of-forces agreements. These agreements are crafted to take into account circumstances in each host country as well as the unique requirements and missions of our forces there.

In Iraq, the presence and role of the United States and our coalition partners have been authorized by U.N. resolutions. The current U.N. authorization expires at the end of this year, and Iraq has indicated that it will not seek an extension. It would rather have an arrangement that is more in line with what typically governs the relationships between two sovereign nations.

There is debate here at home about the future presence, composition and mission of U.S. forces in Iraq. It is clear, however, that U.S. forces will need to operate in

Iraq beyond the end of this year for progress in stabilizing Iraq to continue.

In these negotiations, we seek to set the basic parameters for the U.S. presence in Iraq, including the appropriate authorities and jurisdiction necessary to operate effectively and to carry out essential missions, such as helping the Iraqi government fight al-Qaeda, develop its security forces, and stem the flow of lethal weapons and training from Iran. In addition, we seek to establish a basic framework for a strong relationship with Iraq, reflecting our shared political, economic, cultural and security interests.

Nothing to be negotiated will mandate that we continue combat missions. Nothing will set troop levels. Nothing will commit the United States to join Iraq in a war against another country or provide other such security commitments. And nothing will authorize permanent bases in Iraq (something neither we nor Iraqis want). And consistent with well-established practice regarding such agreements, nothing will involve the U.S. Senate's treaty-ratification authority — although we will work closely with the appropriate committees of Congress to keep lawmakers informed and to provide complete transparency. Classified briefings have already begun, and we look forward to congressional input.

In short, nothing to be negotiated in the coming months will tie the hands of the next commander in chief, whomever he or she may be. Quite the contrary, it will give the president the legal authority to protect our national interest — and the latitude to chart the next administration's course.

There is wide recognition of the need for a normal bilateral relationship of this type. It has the support of moderate political forces from all of Iraq's communities — Sunni, Shiite and Kurd. A bipartisan group of senior senators have called for it — among them Carl Levin, John Warner and Richard Lugar. And it has been promoted by bipartisan panels such as the Independent Commission on the Security Forces of Iraq, chaired by retired U.S. Marine Corps Gen. James L. Jones. Similarly, the Baker-Hamilton commission advocated a series of longer-term missions that would require an agreement of this sort.

There is little doubt that 2008 will be a year of critical transition in Iraq as our force levels continue to come down, as our mission changes and as Iraqis continue to assert their sovereignty. But to continue the success we have seen in recent months, the Iraqi people and government will continue to need our help. Iraqis have requested a normalized relationship with us, and such a relationship will be part of a foundation of success in Iraq — a foundation upon which future U.S. administrations can build.

The writers are, respectively, U.S. secretary of state and U.S. secretary of defense.

UNICEF YEMEN

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TEL: (967.1) 211 400
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CORRIGENDUM EXTERNAL VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT 02/08

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) invites applications from qualified Yemeni national for the following position:

Title: Child Protection Specialist
Level: NOC
Type of Contract: Fixed Term
Duty Station: Sana'a

Under the supervision and guidance of the Chief Child Protection and HIV, the Child Protection specialist will perform the following main responsibilities:

1. Analyze existing information and data on child protection issues for advocacy, policy dialogue with Government, design of strategies and programme formulation. Identify gaps and devise ways to fill them. Contribute to updating the Situation Analysis, Common Country Assessment and other country programme documentation. Provide inputs to the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP).
2. Help build strategic partnerships with senior government officials, NGOs, non-state entities, including the private sector, UN agencies and young people in order to advocate for and support the implementation of laws, policies and programmes that protect children from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.
3. Assist in defining strategies for child protection with programme colleagues based on UNICEF's comparative advantages in the country. Strengthen intersect oral linkages with the child protection and HIV programme as well as with other UNICEF programmes in order to ensure Optimal outcomes.
4. Develop creative child protection interventions and be responsible for their planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Work closely with programme staff to ensure inclusion of relevant advocacy and service delivery activities for vulnerable groups in existing and new projects in other programme areas.
5. Collaborate with communication staff and partners to develop effective materials and strategies aimed at bringing about change in social and individual norms, attitudes, behaviors as well as in laws and administrative practices.
6. Provide technical guidance to UNICEF programme staff and partners in relevant child protection areas. Plan and organize training and orientation activities for government and NGO personnel, community leaders and other target groups as appropriate.
7. In line with the UNDAF framework, ensure coordination and collaboration with other entities to help developing effective information and reporting systems, including useful indicators, to monitor and evaluate national and sub national efforts in the area of child protection. Special attention should be given to the monitoring and reporting of specific child rights violation including: killing and maiming, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, sexual violence, child recruitment and denial of humanitarian access.
8. Carry out field assessment visits for evaluating the effectiveness of UNICEF-assisted interventions, identifying problems and proposing remedial measures.

Qualifications and Skills required:

1. 7 years of progressively responsible professional work experience at national and international levels.
2. Knowledge of Arabic is essential. An excellent command of written and oral English is required.
3. Current knowledge of human/child rights issues, policies and International standards. Good understanding of child protection issues. Demonstrated ability to tackle sensitive issues.
4. Proven ability to negotiate and build consensus with Governments and civil society.
5. Excellent analytical, communication (both verbal and written) and advocacy skills
6. Ability to develop partnerships and network in child protection fields, supervisory and managerial skills
7. Knowledge of computer management and applications

Education required:

Eligible candidates should hold an advanced university degree (equivalent to Master's degree) in social sciences (anthropology, psychology, sociology etc.), law or any other fields relevant to child rights.

Interested and qualified individuals should send their application along with the curriculum vitae to:

Chief of Operations, UNICEF Sana'a, P.O.Box 725

Applications received after 24 February 2008 will not be accepted. Only the short listed candidates will be contacted.

Qualified women candidates are encouraged to apply.

'UNICEF is non-smoking environment'



Invitation for a National Consultant

The Oxfam (GB) programme in Yemen is planning to conduct a Baseline Survey for the project 'Good Governance in the implementation and monitoring of the Third Five Years Plan (3rd F.Y.P. 2006-2010)', funded by the Netherlands Government. This project targets national, governorate & district levels in the governorates of Aden, Hadramout, & Hodaida.

The survey's overall objective is to establish a benchmark set of indicators in the areas of changes in government practices, civil society engagement and gender mainstreaming, in monitoring the implementation of the basic-education sub-sector of the 3rd F.Y.P. (2006-2010). A number of qualitative and quantitative indicators will be identified from the relevant project document, to monitor achievements of different project levels e.g. outputs & outcomes.

What we're looking for

The Oxfam GB- Yemen programme invites competent individuals and/or relevant consultancy firms to apply; therefore a detailed resume showing their technical, managerial, institutional and demonstrated experience will need to be submitted.

The role

The consultant will be responsible in planning and implementing the survey activity, including timely completion and submission of the final report (English and Arabic), according to the specific terms of reference & under the overall supervision of the Good Governance Project Manager.

To apply

The applicants should submit their resume to e-mail yemenjobs@oxfam.org.uk or Fax: +967-1-445650. Only those short-listed will be forwarded with terms of reference as part of request for proposal.

Closing date: 25th February 2008

Cholera afflicts Bani Qais locals

By: Siraj Al-Deen Al-Muqri
For Yemen Times

Cholera is threatening the lives of citizens in Hajjah governorate's Bani Qais district. Home to 50,000, the district is characterized by destitution. Ten-year-old Younis looked miserable. When asked which grade he was in, he said he didn't go to school. Another local explained that the child had survived death after contracting cholera.

Bani Qais locals say they are being threatened by cholera, with the epidemic having killed 40 area residents since late 2007. Local council member Sheikh Yahya Hafja stated, "This disaster is a tragedy. I appeal to concerned authorities and both local and international organizations to intervene quickly to stem this problem."

Although Yahya Ghailan, head of the Epidemic Surveillance Department, was on vacation, he agreed to comment on the situation, explaining that the disease first appeared in the district last October, beginning in Mistaba, northern Hajjah and a district on the Yemeni-Saudi border, before moving on to Bani Qais and Khairan districts.

"Three children from the same family - ages 5, 8 and 10 - died of cholera on December 15, 2007," Ghailan noted, adding that the Bani Qais Health

Department has recorded 16 deaths since the disease's appearance in the district.

"The problem still exists, with the most recent death being a female on January 27 of this year," he added.

The health official further noted that health teams haven't come to the assistance of area residents, despite their calls for help. "Teams from Hajjah city came to offer aid, but then returned without doing anything," he explained.

The grandfather of the three dead children, Hajji Ali Mohammed Bukhait, has lost hope that local authorities will set up a water project in the area to solve the problem. "I wish the deaths of our three children would be an urgent message to concerned authorities," he said.

According to the World Health Organization, cholera is an acute diarrheal infection caused by ingesting the *Vibrio cholerae* bacterium. Transmission occurs through direct fecal-oral contamination or through ingesting contaminated food or water. In its severest form, the disease is characterized by a sudden onset of acute watery diarrhea, which can lead to death due to severe dehydration and kidney failure.

Cholera is an extremely virulent disease affecting both children and adults. Unlike other diarrheal diseases, it can kill healthy adults within hours.

Individuals with lower immunity, such as malnourished children or those with HIV, are at greater risk of death if they contract cholera.

A Bani Qais health worker requesting anonymity said 40 deaths have been observed due to cholera, with the main reason being water contamination, adding that Health Department records are inaccurate because several deaths have occurred at home.

However, health worker Ali Ahmed denies the existence of the disease, maintaining that talking about it will affect tourism in that area.

Mohammed Al-Bahravi, an Egyptian health worker at a private health facility, remarked that his facility has no means to examine or treat cholera to examine cholera at his health facility, further explaining that local cholera patients are sent to either Hajjah city or Sana'a.

Bani Qais resident Ahmed Al-Murji asserted that the Yemeni government lies to local citizens because a water project established in the area in 1990 hasn't worked. "Government officials have inaugurated the project more than three times, with one local council member simply bringing a water tanker to indicate that the project is ready," he recounted, noting that cholera isn't a recent epidemic, as his forefathers knew of it 85 years ago.

Known as "the father of teachers



Contaminated water is one of the reasons behind cholera.

and the poor," local teacher Ali Murshed enjoys a good reputation in the area. During a short car ride through the district, he remarked that the district's health conditions are insufficient.

"Area health facilities are neglectful in terms of performance and tasks and

there are no medical laboratories. Poverty, illiteracy and disease have gone hand-in-hand and invaded our area. School dropouts also exist due to disease, namely malaria, which is the number one killer in this area," he noted.

Mohammed Al-Sayyed, another Bani

Qais resident, believes water contamination is the main reason for the disease, as the district's market is polluted with animal dung, slaughtered animal remains and rotten fish.

"Above all, illiteracy is extremely high, so citizens are unaware of this disaster," he added.



Medical facilities in Bani Qais are very poor and cannot carry out tests.



Three children died of cholera in this house.



Younis, 10, survived death after contracting cholera.

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EXTERNAL VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 04/08

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) invites applications from qualified Yemeni nationals for the following position:

Title: Nutrition Officer
Level: National Officer Category - A
Type of Contract: Temporary Fixed Term (one year with possibility of extension)
Duty station: Sana'a

Under the supervision of the Nutrition Officer, (NOB), the incumbent will perform the following main responsibilities:

- Assists as needed in the situation analysis, strategy development and the development of basic information system for UNICEF supported nutrition/micronutrients projects
- Undertakes ongoing field visits to UNICEF project sites to follow on the implementation and monitoring of project activities and local conditions. Prepares routine reports on results of visits and project progress.
- Collects and assembles data and background information with regard to micronutrients deficiencies (iron, Vit A, Iodine) and provides updated information on micronutrients' project financial and administrative status for analysis and report purposes. Analyzes programme/project status and recommends appropriate adjustments. Prepares tables, graphs or other statistical data for technical review/monitoring Follows up on the production of materials and oversees the qualitative aspects of production (e.g., quality control, translation, review of layout and graphic design).
- Monitors the flow of supply and non-supply assistance to local authorities. Draft supply and financial documentation Collects and records information on supply and non-supply inventory, distribution and utilization.
- Ensures raising cash payment & supply requisitions (PROMS) and follow up on CAG to ensure timely liquidations by the counterparts. Investigates queries regarding payments and follow-up with finance, admin, supply and programme staff on processing of payments, CAGs and liquidation of accounts. Ensures that activities are in accordance with plans of action.
- Undertakes arrangements for visits to project sites (industry, market, laboratories fro government and other partners, which include providing information and briefing on project activities and status
- Drafts sections of donor, annual and other reports as required

Qualifications and Skills Required:

- University Degree in Health and Nutrition Social Sciences or related technical field.
- Five years professional work experience in project administration, including data collection and analysis related to health and nutrition.
- Fluency in English is required
- Analytical and conceptual ability communications skills.
- Initiative, passion and commitment to UNICEF's mission and professional values
- Ability to research, analyzes, evaluate and synthesize information.
- Ability to express clearly and concisely, ideas and concepts in written and oral form.
- Proven skills in communication, networking, advocacy and negotiation, especially at the community level.
- Computer skills, including internet navigation, and various office applications.

Interested and qualified individuals should send their application along with the curriculum vitae and copies of the performance evaluation report (most recent two reports) to - The Operations Officer, P.O. Box 725, Sana'a, and Republic of Yemen. Applications received after 29 February 2008 will not be considered.

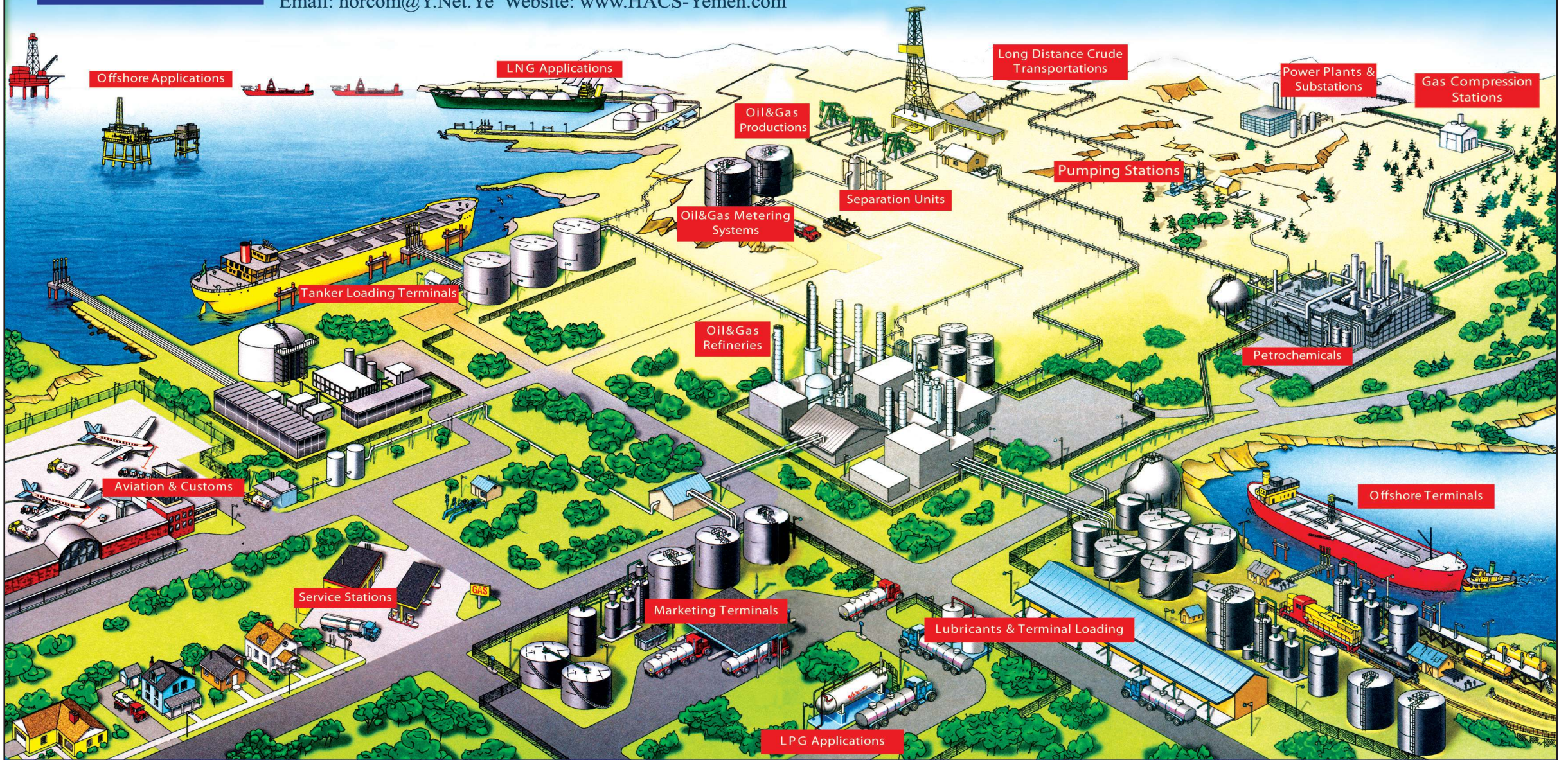
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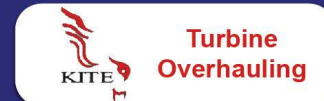
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Requirements:

- a. 8 years of experience in the oil and gas industry and good knowledge of drilling operation and HSE regulations.
- b. Good team supervisory skills, good personnel relations and communication skills.

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Requirements:

- a. Bachelor in electrical/mechanical engineering discipline or higher
- b. 8 years of experience in the oil and gas industry and excellent knowledge of equipment, maintenance system and methods.

Application Criteria:

- All candidates can speak both Arabic and English fluently, must be healthy and can do the field-work.
- The candidate with experience in same position should have the priority.
- Please send your CV in English with your qualification only by e-mail to the following address: zpebym@v.net.ye
- Applications must be submitted no later than Feb 25, 2008



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Seven Yemeni handcrafts face extinction (Part 3)

By: Nisreen Shadad
For Yemen Times

Many traditional Yemeni handcrafts are in great demand due to their elegant style and the high quality of raw materials used. However, many more have disappeared completely or are in danger of losing their identity because each craft demands a set of specialized skills and raw materials of high quality. Because Yemen's raw materials are exported outside the country, their prices have increased.

A December 2007 field study attempting to catalog and document traditional handcrafts in the Old City of Sana'a found that while 28 percent the area's residents are craftsmen, most have discontinued such work for several reasons, most importantly, low income and more cheaply imported similar handcrafts.

A national team from Yemen's General Organization of Antiquities, Museums and Manuscripts, under the auspices of the Social Fund for Development, worked for a year to document all Yemeni handcrafts in the Old City of Sana'a, which are an important part of the nation's cultural heritage created by various civilizations throughout centuries of history. Thus, they are experiences handed down from generation to generation.

The seven-member research team consisted of: Amat Al-Bari Al-Adi, Amat Al-Razzaq Jahaf, Abdulqadir Al-Shaibani, Zaid Al-Faqih, Ibrahim Al-Hadid and Abdulaziz Ibrahim.

Team leader Al-Adi believes that imported handcrafts affect Yemeni handcrafts. According to initial team estimates, Jahaf says only 35 percent of such handcrafts exist today in the Old City, which threatens craftsmen with losing their livelihoods.

Further, because raw materials have become rare, many craftsmen depend on exported raw materials, which affects the quality of the handcrafts.

Al-Adi explained that in order to reach those outcomes, the team conducted its research in four stages, the first of which was a survey to determine the number of handcrafts, craftsmen and handcraft shops. The survey involved the type of handcraft, the number of shops selling it and the name of the street where it's



Traditional keys and axe made by a Yemeni blacksmith.



A door with a latch and locks.



An ancient shoe called a sarim

located.

The team leader continued, "Next, we analyzed the results and used them to apply stage two," which was collecting the historical background of the 27 Yemeni handcrafts.

"Stage three was preparing a meeting of specialists in this field to study what we did and to continue our work of cataloging the handcrafts," Al-Adi noted. The final stage was a comprehensive field study wherein the team surveyed and documented Old City handcrafts by pho-



Al-maghamiq dyed with different colors.



A wooden scale.

tographing and recording everything, even the songs the craftsmen sing while they work.

Handcrafts facing extinct

Out of 27 Yemeni handcrafts, seven are threatened with vanishing. They are: traditional lock making, scale making, blacksmithing, dyeing, tanning, shoemaking and traditional *kawafi* (hats).

Traditional locks

The main material used to make these locks and their keys is *al-tanab* wood, which is renowned for its hardness and durability.

"This handcraft developed over time until blacksmiths began making lock parts and keys," Jahaf noted.

Yahya Al-Soyari, a 42-year-old craftsman and a professional in this handcraft,



A tanned coat.

has worked in this craft since 1976. Jahaf documented the traditional locks and their keys she found in Al-Soyari's shop, including a lock with an iron handle and another made of wood. Also found were a door lock and two wardrobe locks.

Scales

Like traditional Yemeni locks, most traditional scales (*makayeel*) also are made from *al-tanab* wood. Traditional scales were used not only in Sana'a, but in most regions of Yemen, with Al-Adi affirming, "Numerous manuscripts prove that scales were used since the time of Sheba."

Those who make such scales should be honest, just, righteous and wise due to the fact that their work is extremely sensitive and requires a higher degree of accuracy.

As Al-Adi explained, "There were different types of scales, but the only type remaining by the 1920s was a Sana'ani scale called *Al-Zabdi*. But nowadays, this type also is no longer in use."

Blacksmithing

"Because Yemen is an agrarian country, blacksmiths attained a high status," Al-Adi noted, adding, "Nearly all agricultural implements and tools are made by blacksmiths."

Moreover, Yemen was famed for its arms industry. Historical resources and documents from the Rasulid state prove that raw iron ore was excavated locally. The most famous is *Al-Sa'adi* iron taken from Sa'ada. Because of the high quality of this iron, Jahaf said it also was exported to India and Egypt.

At 85, Ahmed Al-Aroosi is considered one of the oldest blacksmiths in the Old City of Sana'a and, according to Jahaf, he can attest to the veracity of the aforementioned information.

Dyeing

"Yemenis used natural resources, such as pomegranate skins, black raisins, *hurud* (a type of spice made to color food) and even ash, to dye textiles" Al-Adi explained.

"We documented this handcraft with the assistance of the most professional craftsman in the Old City of Sana'a, Ali Al-Milsi, because he's the only one who knows the steps in traditional dyeing." However, Jahaf explained, he abandoned the craft due to imported *maghamiq* from India. *Al-maghamiq* is a piece of fabric used to cover a woman's head. She also may wrap it in such a way as to veil her face.

Tanning

The traditional method and process of tanning has endured for a long time. "According to the study, changes that developed in this handcraft involved some of the materials used, as well as the tools," Jahaf explained.

Craftsman Yahya Kabee, 53, remarked, "I've been working in this craft for 34 years. Additionally, I make clothing made from the leather that I tan."

Shoemaking

This is one of the oldest traditional handcrafts due to the large quantity of locally dyed leather. "Many ancient statues before the birth of Christ show them wearing leather shoes," Jahaf noted.

"Moreover, the shoes of one of the mummies in the museum at Sana'a University's Antiques College are considered a prominent example of accurate and skillful shoemaking in Yemen," she added.

Al-kawafi, traditional men's head covering

"Most people have abandoned traditional clothing and just wear modern ones," Jahaf said. One reason is that the exported materials used to make *al-kawafi* aren't as good as local ones, which are either imported or no longer available.

Al-kawafi are well known in the Tihama as a type of men's head covering. "Most people who wear it are seekers of knowledge, such as those studying Islamic Sharia or those about to receive their academic degrees," Jahaf explained.

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Ibrahim Al-Hadhrani, a magnificent contemporary figure of originality

Prepared by: Eyad N. Al-Samman

Yemeni poet, revolutionist, politician and diplomat Ibrahim Ahmed Al-Hadhrani was born in 1918 in Dhamar governorate's Kharbat Abu Yabis village. Never attending regular school during his childhood, he learned his primary studies from his father, who was a well-known poet.

When he was 9, Al-Hadhrani and his father moved to Al-Beidha city where the young lad lived as a hostage with Sheikh Al-Rassas until his father paid the money he owed him. During his nearly two years in Al-Beidha, the young Al-Hadhrani was treated aggressively and forced to work hard and exhaustively.

Returning to Aden in 1929 from his journey to India and the Far East, Al-Hadhrani's father dispatched the money he owed Sheikh Al-Rassas and recalled his son to Aden, after which they moved to Taiz where Al-Hadhrani enrolled in school.

During his adolescence in the mid-1930s, Al-Hadhrani lived in Dhamar and attended Al-Shamsiah School where he studied religious and Arabic language sciences, after which he again moved to Taiz.

While in Taiz in the early 1940s and due to the dire economic, social and political situations Yemen suffered under imamite reign, Al-Hadhrani joined the Freemen who were opposed to the imamite, continuing to correspond with those Freemen who escaped to Aden, including Mohammed Mahmud Al-Zubairi and Ahmed Noman.

Following the outbreak of the 1948 Revolution, which ended with the



manent delegation in the Arab League and being a cultural counselor for the Yemeni embassies in Cairo, Kuwait and Baghdad, starting from the late 1960s until well after the mid-1970s.

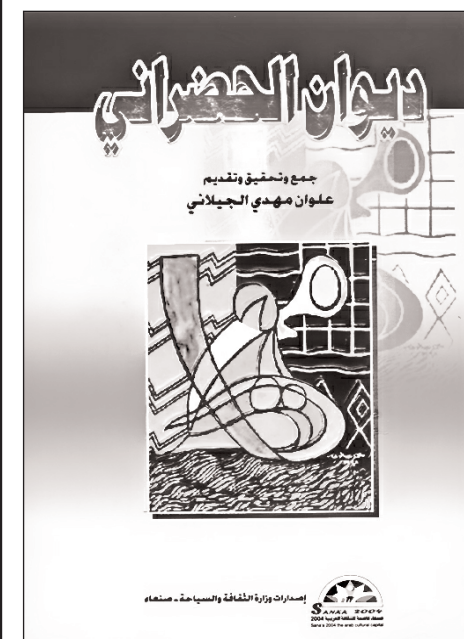
Considered a significant icon in the history of Yemeni poetry during the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods; during the country's imamite and post-imamate periods and the beginning of the 21st century, Al-Hadhrani began writing free verse in the early 1940s – 10 years before any other Arab poet would venture into that field.

Publishing his first poem in Al-Hikmah Al-Yamaniah newspaper in 1939, other newspapers of that time, including Al-Bareed Al-Adabi, Sawt Al-Yaman and Fatat Al-Jazeera in Aden, continued publishing his poetic works.

During a short stint in Kuwait, Al-Hadhrani published some of his poems in Al-Bayaan and Al-Kuwait magazines, as well as proofreading for Kuwait's renowned Al-Arabi magazine in the early 1970s.

Al-Hadhrani penned prefaces to several divans and many famous Yemeni singers sang songs of his lyric poetry. He even composed the poem, "Rimal Atsha" (Thirsty Sands), for famed Arab singer Um Kulthum to sing, but she died before receiving it.

The poet himself is mainly to blame for his excessive carelessness regarding documenting and publishing his poetry, as he was age 73 when he began thinking about collecting and issuing his poetic works in a divan. Other reasons hindering the collection of his poetry were that much of his work remains lost among his friends and students. Some work also was lost during his imprisonment and burned due to fear of the imam's



assassination of Imam Yahya and three of his 16 sons, Crown Prince Imam Ahmed fled to Hajjah and soon thereafter regained power in Sana'a.

Immediately following this succession, Freemen Noman was arrested in Dhamar while returning to Sana'a from Aden. Al-Hadhrani was asked to go to Dhamar to try to tempt the city's notables with money to release Noman.

Unfortunately, Al-Hadhrani was arrested in Yarim, joining the other detainees in Dhamar. All then were imprisoned in Hajjah governorate's Naafa'a Prison before being moved to Hajjah's horrible Al-Qahira Prison. Many Freemen were executed while in prison, but Al-Hadhrani escaped death and was only imprisoned for three years.

After being released in the early 1950s, Al-Hadhrani worked at the Foreign Affairs Office in Sana'a during Yemen's Mutawakkil Kingdom. He held this diplomatic position from 1953 until the outbreak of the 1962 Revolution, after which he was appointed a deputy for the Information Ministry and responsible for Yemen's national radio station.

Al-Hadhrani later was nominated for diplomatic posts including becoming a member of Yemen's per-

guards.

A considerable portion of Al-Hadhrani's poetry was published in the 1991 divan, "Al-Qutoof Al-Dawani fi Shi'ar Ibrahim Al-Hadhrani" (The Approaching Fruitage in Al-Hadhrani's Poetry), prepared by his friend and fellow poet, Mohammed Al-Shami.

Al-Hadhrani's second poetic divan, "Diwan Al-Hadhrani" (Al-Hadhrani's Divan), was published in 2004 during the commemoration of Sana'a as the Arab Culture Capital. This divan included many poems gathered and published for the first time, in addition to lost poems penned during various periods in the poet's life.

Al-Hadhrani was bestowed his country's 2002 Ministry of Culture Award and he also was granted a love letter "a written expression of love and appreciation" in 2007 from Chile's international movement, Poets of the World (Poetas del Mundo).

Al-Hadhrani died November 24, 2007, at age 89 and is buried in Sana'a. For more than half a century, Al-Hadhrani enriched literary life with his prolific poetic works and his literary and poetic body of work will stand as a considerable addition to Yemeni culture throughout the ages.

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DOLLAR

Refugee Somalis encounter abuse by smugglers

By: Hamed Thabet
Hamed_thabit@hotmail.com

Somalis are being raped and killed by the smugglers paid to transport them to other countries. The notorious failed state in the Horn of Africa has been facing increasingly dire political and humanitarian conditions for the past 17 years. During this time, many Somalis have illegally crossed the Gulf of Aden seeking refuge in Yemen.

Since Somalia began experiencing political problems in 1991, approximately 2,500 to 3,000 Somalis leave their homeland every month, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Nearby countries such as Yemen have provided safe haven for refugees fleeing instability and violence in Somalia.

Nearly all Somalis enter the country from Yemen's coastal areas by paying smugglers to ferry them by boat. During their flight to supposed safety, many refugees are abused, raped or even killed by the human traffickers whom they pay to transport them to Yemen.

Sharifa's story
Approximately 140 Somalis escaped their country via a smuggling ship last week, with the price for the three- to four-day journey being \$80 for adults and \$20 for children.

Last week, at midnight, three Somali smugglers approached Sharifa Mohammed Ali, 19, who had her small daughter with her. She feeling they were going to rape her. "The three smugglers asked me to go with them, but I refused," she recounted.

Following this refusal, they attempted to take her by force and began beating her. As this was happening, her mother and sister screamed for help. "Other male refugees stood up to the smugglers and fought with them," Sharifa said, "The result was that the three smugglers were thrown overboard by the other Somali refugees."

Swimming for their lives
Sharifa's mother explained that because



From the left, Sharifa's sister, Sharifa, her mother, with their children. Noting that smugglers tried to rape Sharifa and after the failed, the smugglers throw them in the sea.

of this fight, the other 30 or so armed smugglers aboard threw all of the refugees into the southern coastal – women, men, children and the elderly – to fend for themselves in the water.

"We were thrown into the sea and spent all night swimming," Sharifa's mother recounted, adding, "Many Somalis died of fatigue from swimming, as well as from the cold water."

After Sharifa and her family spent all night in the seawaters, a Yemeni fishing boat chanced upon the refugees and took whoever was left, depositing them on the Yemeni coast. Sharifa was unaware of where in the country she was.

The Somali refugees walked around without any specific destination until military vehicles found them and brought them to the Mayfa'a Refugee Reception Center in Shabwa governorate.

The center can accommodate between 800 and 1,000 refugees, offering them food, medicine, clothing and a safe place

to sleep for a few days. From there, refugees can decide whether to apply for residence at a refugee camp or fend for themselves in Yemen's larger cities. Sharifa's family spent nearly a week at the center.

Why are Somalis fleeing their country?
Sharifa's family is from the town of Karan in Mogadishu, Somalia. During the war with Ethiopia and the Union of Islamic Courts, Sharifa's father and 25-year-old brother were killed by members of the Ethiopian army, which her family claims took their land and possessions by force as well.

Sharifa and her family faced a sad choice: remain homeless in Somalia and be subjected to more violence or make the perilous journey across the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden and try to start anew. The family felt they had no other choice but to enter Yemen illegally with the help of the smugglers.

"What can we do now? We have no place to go. We can't even have a respectable life," Sharifa's mother lamented.

Another victim of smugglers
A 19-year-old Somali youth was beaten by his smugglers during his journey to Yemen. "I was working as a farmer in Mogadishu, but because of the war and the dangers that all Somalis are facing, I decided to come to Yemen to save myself and attempt to change my life for the better."

The youth pleaded with his smugglers to take him to Yemen for \$40 – all he had left of his savings. The trip usually costs \$75 to \$80.

As their boat neared the Yemeni coast, the smugglers insisted he swim the rest of the way to shore. When he refused for fear of drowning – a fate shared by many Somali refugees – the smuggler beat him. "They fought with me and beat me with a stick and a butcher's knife in an

attempt to throw me into the sea," he recalled, "Finally, I fell into the water and was injured when I hit some rocks while I was trying to swim."

Yemeni military found him on the beach and took him to the Mayfa'a Center. Once he recovers from his injuries sustained from the beating and the rocks, he'll leave the Mayfa'a station for Al-Kharaz Refugee Camp in Lahaj governorate.

Each one of these Somali refugees says they just want to have a good and safe life in Yemen and they look forward to finding work here. They also hope that one day peace will replace war in their homeland.



A 19-year-old Somali boy was beaten up along his journey to Yemen by his smugglers and he fell in the sea and got injured. YT PHOTO BY HAMED THABET



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