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SIGNS OF ISLAH'S WITHDRAWAL

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Islah, the second largest party in Yemen, yesterday threatened its withdrawal from the elections. This could potentially cause the collapse of the elections and the referendum. "We are about to decide whether to withdraw from the elections or not, due to the many violations carried out against us by the SEC during the last few days. If we are to withdraw, we will definitely start with Sanaa,

Mahweet, Taiz, Al-Mahara, and Abyan," said a prominent member of Islah in justifying the reasons for withdrawal. According to Islah's claims, the names of 74 of their candidates were intentionally dropped from the candidate lists. Islah's leader, Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Ahmar openly accused the PGC of violations that intend to diminish the chance of Islah candidates in the local council

elections, which may result in the opposition's decision to boycott both the local and upcoming parliamentary elections. Unofficial sources in Islah also stated that the overall stand regarding the amendments seems to be leaning towards refusal. It has become evident that within the last few days, many dangerous cracks within Islah have become visible, particularly between the tribal sector led

by Al-Ahmar and the religious sector which has public support. 1,000 tribesmen of Hamdan gathered at the SEC building in Sanaa protesting the unjust distribution of ballot boxes in Hamdan, where several armed confrontations led to the disruption of the electoral committee's operations. In case of Islah's withdrawal an extremely low turnout could sabotage the elections.

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During the last few weeks, Yemen Times carried out a public opinion poll of thousands of Yemenis from different regions and cities including Sanaa, Taiz, and Aden and other regions which came up with the following results: 80% of the people are willing to participate in the local elections, while 20% are in favor of boycotting them. According to the poll results, more than 37% will vote for PGC members, 26% for Islah, 18% for the YSP, 3% will vote for all the other parties including the Nasserite, RAI, Baath, and other less popular parties, while 16% will vote for independent candidates.

Times discovered during the opinion poll was that more than 95% of the people to whom we talked knew about no more than two or three of the 17 amendments. This is due to the lack of time for proper preparations for the elections to ensure a truly efficient awareness campaign. More drastic than that is the fact that some of the candidates we interviewed for other survey purposes had no clear idea about what their responsibilities will be. Some of them could not distinguish between province and governorate memberships. The most disappointing of all is that the Supreme Elections Committee failed -perhaps due to the time shortage- to conduct a proper awareness campaign regarding the constitutional amendments and the local council elections.

As for the constitutional amendments, around 85% will be voting, of which only 35% will say "YES", while 65% will say "NO" to the amendments. The most interesting thing that Yemen

Continued on Page 19

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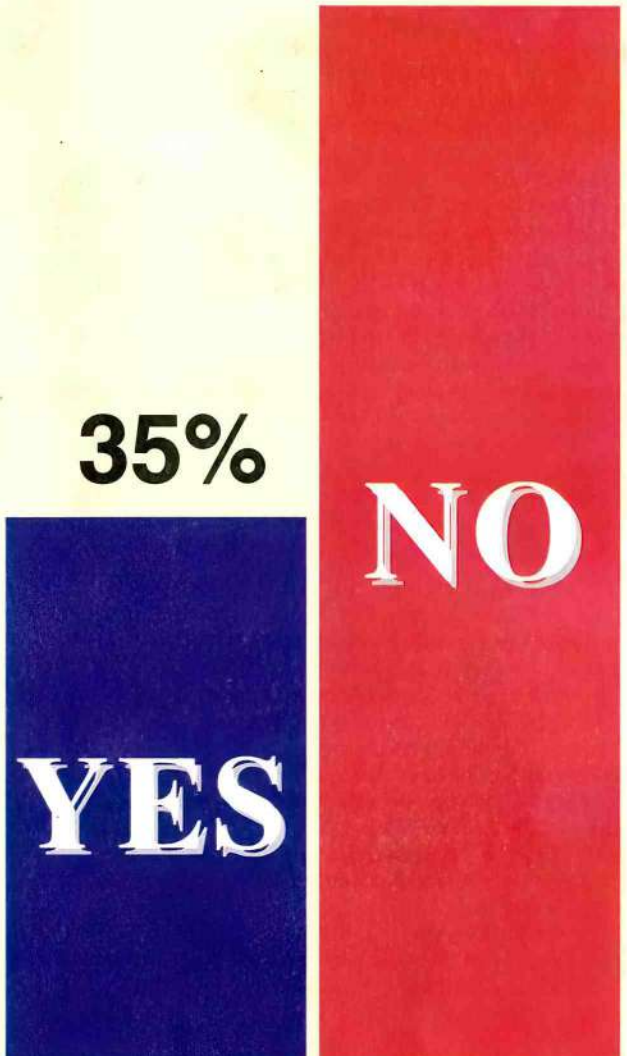
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Important Note
The above mentioned opinion poll was based on random sampling and reflects the opinions of only those literate Yemeni citizens in major cities in Yemen who agreed to give their opinion. Taking into account the fact that most Yemenis are illiterate and live in rural areas, the actual outcome could be totally different or similar to the current. These results cannot be assumed to represent the opinions of the millions of Yemenis who will actually vote in the elections and referendum in general, nor the public as a whole.



Bin Shaji' Appeals to President Saleh

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Hammad Bin Shaji' of Wa'ala tribe in the North-Eastern region of the Yemen Republic, on February 17, 2001 sent a letter to His Excellency President Ali Abdullah Saleh appealing for his help in connection with some problems his tribe is facing in the border areas with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Yemen Times is publishing the full text of the Sheikh's letter in Arabic addressed to the president and an unofficial translation of it without any additions. Dear Reader, After reading the letter, which is published in the spirit of the freedom of press and expression, it is up to you to draw your conclusions!

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الشيخ محمد بن حمد بن شاجع
شيخ قبائل وشيخ
السلطانة الشرقية اليمنية
المجتمعة
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السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته
سؤ أن رغبنا إلى فخامتكم بطلب تقرير معلول في أواخر الشهر الماضي حول ما قامت به الحكومة السعودية من الاعتداء في الأراضي اليمنية الجنوبية والتي لا تزال تواصل الاعتداء حتى الآن دون أن تتقي من حيلتها أي براد وفي أكثر الاستعدادات بضمخاتكم لفضل على إيفاء هذا العهدون المستمر ومجدية التعاون معهم من الجانب الجنوبي اليمنية.
حيث تقوم الآن بالعمل في مساحة أربعة وعشرين كيلو متر في المناطق التي اقتربت منه - وادي حنبل - زابن - جبل الصليب - أرفان - القلا - خياش (يعلمكم في عام ٧٧ م -
إن هذه المناطق المذكورة كلها خلف الحدود الجديدة جنوب جبل قارح وحول جبل أن مثل هذا الصلح من قبل حكومتكم قد عبرنا أن نتخذ ما نراه مناسباً دفاعاً من أراضينا القبلية التي بنا من عهد الجدود من قبل الحكم السعودي في المنطقة وهذا لا نأمله والله بما تعلمكم.
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In the absence of any effective resistance from our government I herewith repeat the appeal for your excellency's help to work towards stopping this continued aggression and to punish those in the Yemeni Border Committees who are found to be cooperating with them. They are now carrying on their atrocities in an area of 24 square kilometers in the following regions seized in 1979: Qafirat Sala, Wadi Sala, Zafeen, Jabal Assaleeb, Labergeen, Laqeela, Khabbash. All these above-mentioned regions are behind the new borders to the south of Jabal Tha' and Jabal Habash. Such leniency on the part of our government might oblige us to take whatever measures we see as appropriate against Saudi rule in the area in defense of our tribal territories established since the times of our forefathers. Please accept the best regards of your brother, Sheikh Mohammed Bin Shaji' 17 February 2001"

"His Excellency the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces,

Peace be upon you, We have previously sent to your excellency a detailed report, specifically at the end of last month, on the kind of aggressions the Saudi government has been carrying out up until now against the Yemeni border territories.

Yemen Condemns Bombing on Iraq
The government and people of Yemen condemned the recent bombing attack on Baghdad, which was carried out on Saturday night by US and UK planes. Yemeni official sources condemned the attack and expressed their grave concern about the sad incident. Continued on Page 19

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Words of Wisdom
 "All those Yemenis who care about the credibility, fairness, and decency of our coming elections must push for the full enforcement of the secrecy clause, especially for the illiterate voters. This step will also put to rest the accusation that the regime is using soldiers to 'help them see the light' regarding the best candidates to vote for. It is easy to design and implement a system that will uphold the constitutional right for full secrecy for each voter. Shouldn't we strive towards perfection as much as possible? It is one more challenge Yemen must face, and overcome. Let us go for it!"

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



Our Opinion

What Has Been Built on Weakness Cannot be Strong!

During the last two days, I received more than 100 letters, faxes, phone calls, and even emails from candidates and representatives of different political parties, all accusing each other, all insulting each other. The election hysteria reached its peak yesterday as we witnessed the madness of some candidates who ordered the posting of thousands of posters in no more than 1 sq km of areas due to the shortage of time.

Every day, people tell me that the decision to hold these elections in such a short time was a hasty decision that resulted in many faults during the preparation stage for the elections.

Islah, as well as many other political parties, was frustrated from what it saw as violations in candidate lists, in campaigning, and in media coverage. The tens of people killed during the few weeks is an indication that there has been something wrong. There was a misjudgment in holding such a huge process in such a limited time. We are a country still in the learning stage. We are yet to be used to regular parliamentary elections, yet we are trying to jump to tremendously advanced local council elections with so little time and preparations, with relatively no experience, and with no clear guidelines and conditions.

In other words, I won't be surprised if the whole process turns out to be a total failure. From the opinion poll of this issue's first page itself, we felt that it has at least failed to convince many to go to the polls. It will also not surprise me if indeed, Islah, which is threatening to withdraw from the elections, does indeed withdraw and put the ruling party in a difficult situation, alone, shocked and disappointed.

Life taught us that whenever we do our homework in advance, study well, make precautions, organize, and plan ahead, there will be little chance in failure. But life also taught us that if we don't prepare well, don't take into account the consequences of neglect, disorganization, and ignorance till the last day before the exam, we will probably fail.

Hence, I do not want you, as our reader, or any other intellectual, either in the PGC or in any other party to be surprised if the process fails or at least leads to what some may call 'unjust results.'

After all, whatever is built on weakness cannot be strong.

Closing Down 20 Drug Companies

Dr. Abdulwali Nasher, Health Minister, asserted that forty treatment grants were provided to Yemen annually by the Egyptian Health Ministry within the scheme of mutual cooperation between the two brotherly countries.

In a statement to YT while attending a meeting with PHARCO board director Hassan Abbas, he said "There are many fields of cooperation, including training Yemeni health workers to deal with the new instruments and labs. Through this, Yemeni workers will be able to treat cases of diseases that at the moment are usually sent abroad."

He indicated that the Ministry closed, in the past year, 20 drug companies whose drugs were not following requirements and specifications defined by the Ministry. The Health Minister signed cooperation agreements with PHARCO headed by its board director Mr. Hassan Abbas, to train and qualify Yemeni pharmacists and doctors. He also noted that there is a joint agreement between Yemen and Egypt stipulating that if Egyptian drug exports to Yemen exceed \$ 30 million, a specific sum will be added to the Health Ministry budget to help in training Yemeni health workers. The meeting was attended by the Egyptian Ambassador to Yemen, the Egyptian trade attaché and top figures from the health Ministry, General Drugs Authority and the PHARCO agent in Yemen Mr. Abdulrashid al-Amiri.

HRITC's "Internet for NGOs" Seminar Concluded

The Human Rights Information and Training Center (HRITC) in cooperation with the Information Resource Center at the US embassy in Sanaa organized a 3-day internet workshop on "Using the Internet for More Effective NGOs." The event was attended by 12 participants from NGOs in different places of Yemen and financed by the Danish Government. The participants were exposed to topics related to the internet and its use in promoting the role of NGOs in Yemen linking them with NGOs all over the world. Mr. Aiz Addin Al-Asbahi, HRITC director said the center aims to conduct a series of workshops on the purpose of introducing the internet and new technology to the Yemeni NGOs.

President Saleh to MBC:

"We have captured two more USS Cole suspects"

In an interview on the MBC TV Channel yesterday night, President Saleh revealed information about developments on the USS Cole incident for the first time.

He said that Yemeni security forces captured two more USS Cole suspects, namely Mohamed Mohamed Al-Ahdal and Mohamed Ahmed Ja'afar, when they arrived to Yemen from Afghanistan. He also said that the major planner of the whole attack, Abdulrahman Hussein Al-Sa'afani, who also goes with the name "Al-Harazi" is still in Afghanistan. President Saleh told MBC that Yemeni investigation officers along with colleagues from the FBI will be travelling to the USA for further operations related to the investigation of the attack, which was carried out using material smuggled during the 2nd Gulf war. Regarding the exact timing of the trial, he said that even though the Yemeni side is almost ready to go forward with the trial, US investigators insist on waiting until they collect enough evidence in this case.

The president also talked about the Yemenia Hijacker, Yemeni-Saudi border agreement, and other issues.

Unveiled Secrets in Adam's Case

Some question marks and restrict their examinations to the corpses of Zainab Suad Aziz, an Iraqi national, and Husen Attya, a Sudanese national, was convicted.

Unofficial yet reliable sources have revealed recently that the German experts who conducted the autopsies in the morgue, have spoken out against the report that they themselves gave to the court. The experts said that their report was full of lapses and mistaken information about the case and that they did not check all parts of the corpses in the morgue as they were influenced by a high ranking government official. They revealed that the official visited Germany under the pretext of a medical check-up and told them to

The sources also added that the experts are ready to appear before any court and reveal all secrets of the morgue case and how it was misdirected.

The final report of the German experts did not give exact information about the date of Zainab's death or about the inconsistency between the head of Husen and the body it was attached to. If

UK Embassy Bomber Arrested

Security sources revealed that police arrested another suspect in connection with the UK embassy bombing and other terrorist acts. Interior Minister Hussein Arab said in press statements that the arrested man is suspected of bombing the UK embassy in Sana'a and of involvement with other terrorist explosions in Aden earlier this year. Arab added that investigations into the suspect are going on and that his file will be presented to the prosecution very soon. Also, the case files of the USS Cole suicide bombing will be transferred to the prosecution in the coming few days as investigations have been completed.

Meanwhile, Sana'a South-West court delayed the trial of Mohammed Ali Al-Jahili, the suspected bomber of the UK embassy just 24 hours after the Cole bombing which killed 17 and injured 37 American navy sailors on October, 12, 2000. The judge, Mohammed Mahdi Al-Raumi, attended the session but the suspect was not brought to court by the police. The trial, supposed to start last Wednesday, was postponed and the judge did not set a new date for the trial.



the experts give their testimony in this regard, this will give the case a new dimension that may reveal the exact number of killings and the extent of Adam's complicity. Adam admitted in the beginning that he raped and killed 16 girls and he was sentenced to death on December, 19, 2000. But the verdict was appealed.

Four Killed & 16 Injured

Tribal feuds between the Tuwaiti and Al al-Bahm tribes in Yarim district, Ibb governorate, have claimed the lives of four persons, including a woman and 16 injuries, some critical, from both sides. These casualties are the results of conflicts that took place on Wednesday evening using bazookas, mortars and machine guns. Tribal sources told YT that fighting was triggered off last month by revenge disputes dating back to the 1982 war in the then two parts of Yemen. Severe damage has occurred to houses near the bombing sites, sources maintained. Mr. Ali Muse'ad Saleh Qalim, a lieutenant from Al al-Bahm tribe, was killed along with one other. Ten other men from Al al-bahm tribe were also seriously injured. Sources also reveal that one death and seven injuries were reported in the Tuwaiti tribe. Bombing is still going on as security forces could not control the situation.

KFAED Delegation Arrives In Sana'a

A press conference was held by Mrs. Muna Bader Gasser Alayyaf, chairwoman of international cooperation at the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) at its headquarters in the Kuwaiti Embassy in Sana'a.

The conference was attended by media men and correspondents of local as well as foreign news agencies. Mrs. Muna talked about the future projects of KFAED in Yemen and expressed a willingness to cooperate with the media to enhance relations between the fund and Yemenis.

Mr. Bader M. Al-humaidhi, KFAED chairman, met last Saturday with the President and discussed projects adopted by the Kuwaiti fund.

It is worth mentioning that overall loans and grants provided to Yemen from the fund from 1962 to 2001 have reached 89,786,619.340 Kuwaiti Dinar while aid has reached 2,312,335.285 Kuwaiti Dinar.

Japan Grants YFCA US \$ 36,000

The government of Japan has extended a US \$ 36,000 financial grant to the Yemen Family Care Association (YFCA) for the purchase of a mobile clinic to deal with emergency delivery cases in Sana'a. The government had, two years ago, extended a similar grant to YFCA for the expansion of family planning services to rural areas of Taiz governorate.

The agreement to this effect was signed at the Embassy of Japan February 14, 2001 by Dr. Yahia al-Babily, executive director of YFCA and His Excellency Akira Hoshi, Ambassador of Japan to Yemen. The grant is to be allocated for health, education, poverty relief and public welfare.

The Launch of the Basic Education Expansion Project

Under the motto "Towards Adequate and Quality Basic Education" a workshop of the Basic Education Expansion Project will be held on 26-28 February 2001. Dr. Abdullatif Almaneefi, Project Director, declared that the workshop will run for three days, and that more than 100 persons from the Projects four governorates, Sana'a, Amran, Al-Mahweet and Al Dhalea, will participate, in addition to the Ministry of Education staff working in the Projects implementation.

The Opening Ceremony will be attended by Ministers, members of Parliament, members of the Consultative Council, Ambassadors of donors' countries, international organizations representatives and agencies working in the education sector. Dr. Almaneefi added that this workshop will aim to discuss the status of education in general and basic education in particular, government policies and strategies and the role of the Project in supporting the Ministry strategies.

The workshop will include a number of papers and panel discussions on the Project components and implementation, the papers will be presented by the Ministry of Education staff, implementation teams, Project management as well as The World Bank which is the main financier of the Project. Dr. Almaneefi pointed out that the projects implementation will be decentralized and will be carried out by Educational Offices in governorates and districts, following the new policies of decentralization and local administration in the country.

LOST US PASSPORT

My name is David L. Motloch and I lost my U.S. Passport issued on 26 JUN 97 at Houston, TX. If anyone finds my passport, please report to the American Embassy in Sana'a at 303-155 ext. 118 or call me at 416-080, ext. 2219.

Yemenia Hijacker Verdict Upheld

The Sana'a Appeal Court upheld in its Saturday session the 15-year prison sentence against Yemenia hijacker Jaber Ali Sater. The Court Judge Abdul Farwan said that during the appeal sessions it was found that Sater committed the crime of hijacking and jeopardizing the lives of 91 passengers on board. The hijacker was also fined \$72,610 as compensation to Yemenia Airlines as well as the expenses for the medical treatment of Eng. Adli Al-Baghdadi who was injured in his arm by a bullet fired from the pen gun of Sater. The court also confirmed the confiscation of the fake ID and the pen gun. The judge asked the hijacker if he

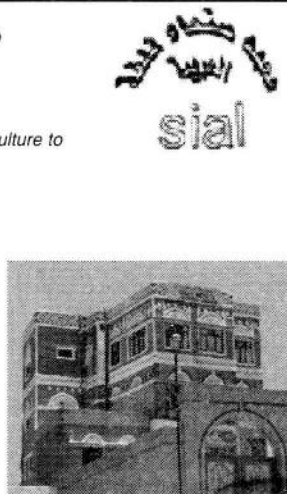
wanted to disprove this verdict or not. He was very much confused and asked the judge what it meant to invalidate the verdict and the benefit of that. But he said that he has the right to disprove the verdict at the Supreme Court which most of the time approves the verdict of the appeal court.

Sater attempted hijacking the Yemenia plane on its flight to Taiz. Among the 91 passengers was the American ambassador, Barbara Bodine and other diplomats. The crew was able to foil the hijacking attempt at Djibouti airport where the hijacker was disarmed and given to the airport police. None of the passengers were hurt.

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Dr. Hassan Abbas to YT:

“Yemen is a free and open market. We seek to build up a distinguished Yemeni-Egyptian partnership.”

Dr. Hassan Abbas is one of the renowned Arab businessmen in the medical field. He is the chairman of board directors of PHARCO, the biggest drug company in Egypt. The company is exporting drugs to Yemen, the biggest consuming market. He arrived in Sana'a last Monday to hold talks with some officials in the Health Ministry and in the Drugs General Authority to study possibilities of establishing investment projects for the company in Yemen. He asserted his willingness to cooperate to provide treatment grants for Yemeni patients in Egypt. The company also provide grants of training for Yemeni pharmacists in Egypt. Jalal Al-Sharaabi of YT met with him and filed the following interview:

study the possibility of investment in Yemen.

Q: How do you find the Yemeni market?

A: Our agent in Yemen is doing a great job and there is a good scope of cooperation from the Yemeni side. We cooperate and train Yemeni pharmacists in Egypt. We also exchange experts and doctors.

Q: Are you planning to establish hospitals and other medical investment projects in Yemen?

A: We did not include hospitals in the plan we are going to discuss with the Yemeni officials. However, we can put this for the Egyptian Health Minister to consider and see what is best we can do. We may think of opening a manufacturing unit for our drugs in Yemen.

Q: Could you please brief us on the background of the company?

A: PHARCO is the biggest drug company in Egypt in regards to the manufacturing units. Last year the company produced 100 million cartons. The company covers 8% of Egypt medical needs and reaches 30 other countries. Yemen is at the top of the list of these companies. We also send drugs to the north of Europe, Romania, Saudi Arabia, china, Germany and US. We have offices in Romania and Uganda. In Yemen, we have an agent and we are thinking of cooperating more in terms of increasing the distributing outlets or manufacturing here in Yemen. The objective of this visit is to

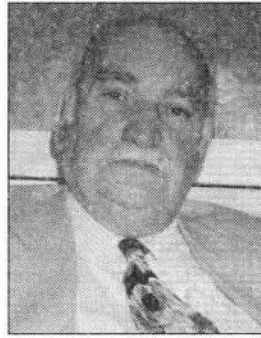
Q: How do you assess the investment atmosphere in Yemen?

A: Through our contacts with Mr. Abdulrashid al-Amri we felt that there is stability. I think Yemen is a promising open market and we in Egypt seek to build up strong ties and contact with this market.

Q: What distinguished PHARCO from other drugs companies?

A: The point is that we do our best to produce high quality of drugs with reasonable prices which is of heightened importance as we are joining the GATT and the open market policy. We plan to keep on the high quality of our drugs. This should be the objective of

the whole Arab countries to maintain a good and high quality of drugs. Drugs can be very cheap, however, with a very low quality and this is not what we apply. The quality of our drugs match that of the western countries with the advantage of having reasonable prices.



Dr. Hassan Abbas



Mr. Abdulrashid al-Amri

Q: Smuggling has a negative impact in the past few years on drugs. Has it affected the sales of the company?

A: The company position in Yemen is very big. The company could overcome most of the smuggling obstacles which, in turn, started to disappear.

Q: What is your future plans in the Yemen?

A: We plan, hopefully, to increase our sales through studying the idea of manufacturing here in Yemen.

YT met also with Mr. Abdulrashid al-Amri, PHARCO agent in Yemen, who said “Though the company came to Yemen late in the 1993, it could mark its presence in the market within a two-year period. It could gain the trust of consumers through its high quality. It has become drugs company number one in terms of covering the market needs.

Mr. al-Amri said that the Health Ministry is cooperating with the com-

pany and viewed relations as distinguished and in accordance with the law.

In regards to the obstacles, he said “There is a random registration to the drugs and companies entering Yemen. I do request the authorities concerned to check quality of drugs before sanctioning investment activities for companies in the country.”

On the other hand, he indicated that talks and discussions are conducted to create a strong Arab industry that is able to compete in this era of globalization and open market. He noted that the company did a great deal in combating smuggling through providing drugs with reasonable prices.

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General Abdulrahman A. Al-Barawi

“The New Identity Cards Are Impossible to Forge”

Authorities and institutions of civil affairs & registration everywhere are invaluable sources for information on people. Upon such information countries can outline accurate development policies and plans. Owing to this importance, the government allocates a handsome budget for the Authority to enable it to do its duties as proper as possible. Recently the Authority issued new identity cards classified as impossible to forge. To shed light on the newly issued identity cards and other related issues Ismael Al-Ghabery met with General Abdulrahman A. Al-Barawi, president of the Authority of Civil Affairs & Registration and filed the following short interview:

Q: What are the responsibilities of the Authority?

A: Responsibilities of the authority have been identified in its bylaw regulation issued in 1998 as to outline the general strategy of the authority according to valid laws, register social events such as marriages, births, deaths, divorce, etc., issue identity cards and family cards, cooperate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to issue identity cards for Yemeni emigrants, develop the Civil Registration Law and facilitate services for the public, etc.

Q: What Are The Features of The New Identity Cards?

A: The new identity cards are the outcome of careful studies of a number of Arab identify cards. The most distinguished features of the new cards are



that they can not be forged. The photo of the ID card holders is taken upon applying for the card by a specialized officer and is inserted by computer in the card. Some information related to jobs has been dropped because they are changed from time to time. The card also include a secret line in which all information is stored. By this, none can get two cards from two different places. The computer will notify the officers wither the person is applying for an identity card for the first time or he has already applied in another town.

Q: What kind of facilitation the authority offers to make the new ID cards reach all Yemenis?

A: The Authority forms a number of ad hoc committees to make field visits to all government offices, schools, etc. to encourage and make it easy for people to get the new identity cards or any official documents at the specified price.

Q: Do you plan to deliver the new ID cards to Yemeni emigrants?

A: We have been doing this since unification. All Yemeni emigrants who meet the conditions have the right to get identity cards. We have organized committees to shoulder responsibility of issuing identity cards to Yemenis in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and other Arab countries. lack of financial support did not enable us to continue visiting other countries. There are future plans to visit Malaysia and Indonesia where Yemenis concentrate in big numbers.

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Walid Akkaoui to YT:

“Proud to say that people in most of the Yemeni cities are linked together and will always be connected.”

Mr. Walid Akkaoui, Marketing Manager of *Spacotel Yemen*, proudly announced to the public the first mobile to mobile call as a sign of the grand launch of GSM network on February 13 2001.



“The network has been planned to cover 8 cities immediately as from the official launch,” said Mr. Akkaoui revealing that in February the launch would be a test to make sure that everything is fine before proceeding to other cities.

What distinguishes *Spacotel Yemen* from other GSM operators is the fact that it will be launching GSM services in several cities immediately after the official launch. For almost 19 years, *Spacotel* has been working in the field of telecommunications, and today it is confidently adding a feature to the entire telecommunication infrastructure in Yemen.

The state-of-the-art equipment, latest models of mobiles along with the highly qualified team of *Spacotel Yemen* are bound to bring about quality services to ensure customers’ satisfaction. “We will strive and do our best to deliver the best services and meet customers’ expectations,” said Akkaoui. “Now we are proud to say that people in most of the Yemeni cities are linked together and will be **‘ALWAYS CONNECTED’**,” he added.

On the subject of tariffs, Mr. Akkaoui said it would be competitive in comparison with other operators or even compared to the regions around Yemen. “This project is a long-term investment. We are here not to make only revenues; we are here to invest in the country because we believe that this country has good potentials,” he said.

As far as international calls are concerned, they will be conducted through Teleyemen, since it has exclusivity in this service that will end in 2003. Within this period customers will be able to call internationally through Teleyemen, hence tariffs will be the local tariffs, 10-14 rials, plus Teleyemen’s charge of international calls. To enrich and enhance the skills of the Yemeni people, *Spacotel Yemen* has

already started employing tens of Yemenis. Although the primary plans were to hire around 50 people in the first year, Yemeni staff have so far exceeded this number in the first month.

The GSM services have multi-functional features such as security, better quality than the other systems owing to the use of a digital signaling, Caller Identification (CLIP), Short Message Service (SMS) which enables customers to send and receive text messages, voice mail, Internet and other features.

Mr. Akkaoui stressed that *Spacotel Yemen* belongs to people and the whole community. “We will be transferring the know-how to the local Yemeni people because we are not planning to stay here forever as managers. We believe in the Yemeni peoples abilities to understand the state-of-the-art systems. That is why we will be investing a lot in terms of providing the proper training for our local employees and even sponsoring university events to acquaint students with this technology,” Akkaoui said.

The shareholders of *Spacotel Yemen* are mainly Investcom Holdings, a Lebanese-based company that started a long time ago in Lebanon and today is operating in many countries round the world, the Omani-based Zubeir Company and a number of local shareholders as well. The company is managed by Investcom Holdings which has long-term experience in this field.

Yemen’s Constitutional Referendum and Local Elections
A Human Rights Watch Backgrounder

If Yemeni voters cast a “yes” vote in the constitutional referendum on February 20, Field Marshall Ali Abdallah Saleh’s term as president will be extended for two years and enable him to be re-elected in 2006 for another seven years. President Saleh seized power in 1978 and was first elected president by popular vote in 1999. The govern-

ment states that the referendum on constitutional amendments and the local elections, scheduled for the same day, will advance Yemen’s “democratic experience.” Yemeni critics say it is essentially meant to strengthen the power of the president and the ruling party, the People’s General Congress (PGC).

The Republic of Yemen has been hailed as a showcase for democracy in the Arab World since the political opening that accompanied the unification of North and South Yemen in 1990. However, unresolved political differences resulted in a full-fledged civil war between the forces loyal to the former states in early May 1994, and southern leaders declared secession in late May 1994. The Sana’a government restored unity by force in July 1994, and heavily restricted freedom of association and expression.

The Ministry of Information dragged opposition and independent journalists and publishers into court, usually on defamation charges. The Political Security Organization, an agency that reported directly to the president and operated without judicial authorization, harassed and imprisoned activists and journalists critical of the government. Recent elections have been praised more by outside observers than Yemeni monitors themselves. The 1997 parliamentary elections were boycotted by the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) and a number of smaller parties. US observers judged the voting as “generally fair and free,” but local monitors deplored the rigging of voter registration and other irregularities. In the first presidential elections in autumn 1999, President Saleh won 96.3% of the popular vote. Former President Clinton commended Yemen for “its democratic achievements” when Saleh visited the US in April 2000.

Constitutional Amendments
The proposed constitutional amendments will extend the parliamentary term from four to six years and abolish

the president’s right to issue decree laws when parliament is in recess. However, the amendments will also lengthen the presidential term from five to seven years. This would enable President Saleh, serving uninterruptedly since 1978, to rule until 2013, granted reelection in 2006. The amendments also authorize the president to appoint a 111 member Consultative (shura) Council. The precise rela-

tionships between the elected parliament and the shura Council, and the shura Council and the executive respectively are not specified in the amendments. The opposition is apprehensive that the appointed body will be a means of exercising presidential control over parliament.

Local Elections

Administrative decentralization has long been on the political agenda in Yemen but the election of local councils was put off during the first ten years of the Republic.
Continued on Page 18

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As Election Hysteria Dominates the Scene in the Last Days of Election Campaigning 70,000 Troops to Secure Local Elections

Under extremely tense security measures with more than 70,000 troops surrounding electoral centers and poll stations, tomorrow, February 20, Yemeni electors will be heading to the polls to elect the ones who will be representing them in their respective local councils. There are currently thousands of armed troops equipped with all sorts of artillery machinery and wireless communication equipment (walkie-talkies) seen all over the country, particularly at polling stations. Military units are in their top readiness and security officials are working around the clock to prevent any sort of expected violence or armed confrontations, especially in tribal areas. Brigadier General Ali Salah of the Security Committee of the Supreme Elections Committee (SEC) stated that all security forces have been given top-ranking instructions to be highly alert in case of any act of violence anywhere in the country.

According to official statistics, more than 34,000 candidate (145 women) are applying in the elections, less than half of them independent, 6,000 of the PGC, 3,800 of Islah, and 2,100 YSP, and the rest from other parties including members of the Opposition Supreme Coordination Council.

All of the 34,000 candidates are competing for just 7,032 positions in the first local councils of the Republic of Yemen. Along with the local council elections, Yemenis will also be voting either in favor of or against the 17 constitutional amendments in a national referendum to be held along with the local council elections.

Observers and political analysts say that acts of violence are expected to occur in many areas where there is heavy military presence by the armed forces. In particular, some tribal regions such as Mareb, Jowf, and Al-Dhale' are expected to witness confrontations during the hours of elections. In fact, deadly conflicts in many areas in the country had already started to emerge as a number of deaths and injuries occurred in many gover-

norates. Last week, a candidate of Islah was killed in Ibb governorate, while another PGC candidate was injured. An armed confrontation in electoral Center (126) in Amran Governorate resulted in the death of 3 and injury of many others, leading to the halting of the electoral preparation activities in the region. Another major incident occurred last week when a large convoy including the Ministry of Trade and Supply, Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Kumaim was subject to an assassination attempt by an armed group in Mahweet governorate after the delegation was on its way back after launching a water project in the area. Governorates of Lahj and Al-Dhale' also witnessed some armed showdowns for reasons related to local council elections.

On another level, the war of words among the largest parties continued to intensify during the last few days, particularly between the Islah and PGC. Al-Mithaq Weekly, mouthpiece of the PGC waged a war of accusations against Islah in particular, and all opposition parties in general. In its latest issue, Al-Mithaq openly accused Islah of violations and the use of religion in its campaigns for its candidates. It also considered Islah's ambiguous stand in whether it is with or against amendments as self-contradictory due to the fact that it approved the amendments in the parliament. PGC supports its claims against Islah by pointing at the internal contradictions within Islah as members of the radical wing lead by Sheik Abdulmajeed Al-Zindani is openly against the constitutional amendments as they see them as a means to limit the freedoms and rights of the public and give the regime more central authority. The official viewpoint of Islah however is represented by members of the tribal moderate wing of the party lead by Sheikh Abdullah bin Hussein Al-Ahmar, who does indeed support the constitutional amendments. From what has been so far observed from its campaign, the PGC is trying to bring an image of Islah as a divided party with no clear vision. On the other hand, Al-Sahwa Weekly, mouthpiece of Islah responded vigorously by accusing the PGC of abusing its

administrative and financial powers to support its candidates. The newspaper even published a check of the PGC to support one candidate in its latest edition's last page. The newspaper blamed the PGC for the deteriorating economic, social and security conditions of the country within the last four years. It openly accused the PGC government of being the most corrupt government that ever ruled Yemen. The official media, which is obviously biased in favor of the PGC has given the constitutional amendments priority by focusing on official governmental events and symposiums that call upon the public to say "YES" to the amendments.

On another level, the initial plan of the member parties of the Opposition Supreme Coordination Council caused a lot of optimism in gaining significant votes in the elections. However, the unity of the parties was not further emphasized

or even mentioned weeks after its declaration, which led to a general belief by the public that there is no more a united opposition, especially after some parties decided to boycott the elections, while others did not declare a clear position regarding constitutional amendments. In some cases, smaller opposition parties also openly endorsed the constitutional amendments.

Opposition parties along with Islah continued during the last days to accuse the PGC of abusing its powers to influence the public's opinion through official media and public funds. Opposition parties claim that the SEC openly gave priority to PGC in terms of number of candidates and flexibility in nominations. They say that the SEC's bias stand became clearer when it revealed the lists of electors, which indicated that the number of electors were higher than the population in some areas.

In opinion polls held by many independent organizations including Yemen Times, the PGC -just as expected- seems to have a good change in getting the

largest share of local councils in the country, just as it dominates the house of parliament. Despite the fact that polls show that there is very little awareness about the details of local elections and the 17 constitutional amendments, they also show that PGC candidates will probably win all governorates where PGC influence is strong such as Ibb, Mahweet, Sanaa, Dhamar, Amran. Islah on the other hand is competing in governorates such as Mareb, Al-Jowf and some areas in Hadramout, Taiz, and Hodeidah. The YSP however, has good chance in gaining ground in Aden, Dhale' and Lahj. This comes in a time observers claim that there is good coordination between Islah and YSP in an effort to limit the influence of PGC in some provinces, particularly in the southern and eastern parts of the country. This made the PGC launch a new war of accusations against both opposition parties to the level where it accused them of trying to cause disruption to national integrity.

Some NGOs and interested committees confirmed that there indeed is vigorous

competition among the three strongest parties to a level that may cause illegal and undemocratic action. Some supervisory committees expect some violations to take place during the electoral process, particularly in the referendum for constitutional amendments.

Some experts from international organizations including the Washington-based National Democratic Institute and Human Rights Watch say that this is a normal consequence of holding premature local councils elections in such a short time with little preparation. Many sources describe the last two weeks as the nastiest weeks in the history of Yemen in terms of election campaigning as accusations of all sorts were displayed openly and straight forward to the public through faxes, newsletters, newspaper reports, etc. The dirty campaign reached a level in which religious, racial, and secessionist claims were used, which may unfortunately, have a long-lasting damaging effect on the public's opinion regarding elections in the future.

Hassan Al-Zaidi, Yemen Times

Constitutional Amendments Into Focus

Dr. Ali Mohammad Al-Saqqaf

Before unity:
In the 1990 constitution of the YAR there were two articles pertaining to the local administration and administrative units and local councils; article No. (109) concerning local administration and its divisions and article No (110) concerning administrative units and local councils. However, the latter, article No. (110) did not clarify whether these councils should be elected. Contrary to this, the 1978 constitution of the PDRY chapter No. (4) was specific on this issue. The Local Institutions of the state were considered to be the local councils of the people. They were to be elected by the people in a free and fair election and through secret voting in all electoral constituencies in accordance with article No. (112). Article No. (114) defined the scope of the People's Local Councils' activities, to work within their regions to develop and improve the social, economic and cultural dimensions in accordance with the plans

drawn up and the local budget. People's Local Councils were also to monitor and observe the work of institutions affiliated with them. They were also to elect executive officers in accordance with law No. (115).

Article No. (117) specified that members of the People's Local Councils were the people's representatives in these councils. Article No. (118) emphasized that institutions of the centralized government were to support and develop these councils. They were also to expand their authorities through transferring more and more power and authority from central government.

After unity:
In the light of these two samples of the then two parts of Yemen, the 1990 constitution of the unified Yemen adopted an article similar to that in the constitution of PDRY. However, it was not implemented.

Article (118) of the constitution specified the election of local council members. However, the same article indicat-

ed that the duties and authorities of these councils are to be defined by law. The constitution of the PDRY was quite specific in terms of defining a constitutional text for this issue and not through a law stipulating their election. The constitution of the PDRY also looked at them as people's representatives in these councils, making it mandatory for the state to support, develop their work and expand their authority. That means that the constitution was to ban laws restricting their activities. However, the way local councils members were elected and the law defined their authorities and duties in the new amendments was a setback for the constitution of the unified Yemen.

There has been a qualitative development in the constitutional amendments for 1994 when compared to the constitution of unity and that of the PDRY in the sense that the former endorsed electing directors of the administrative units and members of the local councils. The new constitutional amendment for 2000 actually calls for abolishing the provision of electing the directors of administrative units and has stipulated their appointment by the authority.

The other thing is that the constitution of the unified Yemen authorized the

Cabinet to hold governors accountable. Constitutional amendments for 1994 attributed the president as the first party, along with the Cabinet, to hold governors accountable.

To conclude, in both the constitutions of the then two countries and in the constitution of the united Yemen, including the amendments, there has been an emphasis on dividing the administrative division of the RY. Despite the fact that there have been some laws pertaining to this in the then two parts of Yemen, the political policies among the ruling parties prevented reaching a compromise formula based on an objective standard to divide the republic into governorates or districts. This situation poses a big question mark over organizing local councils in the absence of a law dividing the republic.

This might be the reason behind some international organizations not taking part in monitoring the local elections. The constitutional amendments themselves are a violation of the effective constitution, particularly in the matter of extending the Parliament and the President's term for two extra years. This, in fact, contradicts the principle of election and the peaceful transfer of power.

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Symposium on Combating Poverty

A Yemeni Strategy for Easing Poverty within the 5-year plan 2001-2005

Mahyoob Al-Kamali

A symposium has recently been organized by the ministry of Planning and Development in cooperation with the World Bank to discuss the Yemeni government policy aimed at drawing up a strategy and policies for mitigating poverty. Minister of planning and development Ahmed Mohammed Soufan has presented the outlines of the national strategy on easing poverty in Yemen scheduled to be implemented during the second five-year plan 2001-2005. The strategy has defined causes of poverty in Yemen, embodied mainly in population distribution, qualitative

imbalance in proportion of males and female, decrease of women's role in the economic process, the water crisis, the spread of qat tree cultivation and its impact on agricultural products, in addition to the weakness of health, education services and vocational and technical training.

Economic studies have confirmed that the percentage of Yemeni families under the poverty line has reached 27%. As for percentage of the population below the poverty line, it has reached one million, or 5.3%. The unemployment indicators, according to 1999 figures, have amounted to 35% out of the labor force, while males occupied 82% and female 18%. As far as illiteracy is concerned there are one million people above ten-years

of age who do not know reading and writing. The educational figures, according to 1999 figures, are 84% in the primary stage, 8% secondary stage, 6% higher education and 2% technical education and training.

Concerning durable means of living for the same year, 7% of families possess farms for breeding livestock, 3% of families own houses for lease and 12% of families possess real estate for lease.

The strategy says that health services in the countryside are available to around 30% of the population, 80% of those in urban areas, while no more than 3% can benefit from a sewage system and 17% get electricity services. With regard to telephone lines in rural areas they amount to nil, and the

same percentage is applicable to paved road networks.

Figures also point out that there is a deficiency in population distribution as a result of the existence of 11,000 population groupings in spacious geographic areas and high population growth reaching 3.5%, in addition to limited arable lands whose proportion reaches 2.9%. The Yemeni individual share is 2% of the world average.

Regarding the water crisis, only 44% of Yemenis get healthy pure water. The national strategy on combating poverty concentrates on the improvement of the infrastructure, encouragement of investment, decreasing population growth rate, rationalization of water consumption and combating desertification.

National Bank of Yemen:

A Great Enterprise in the Banking Sector of Yemen

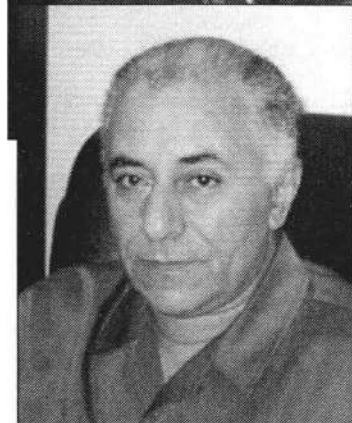
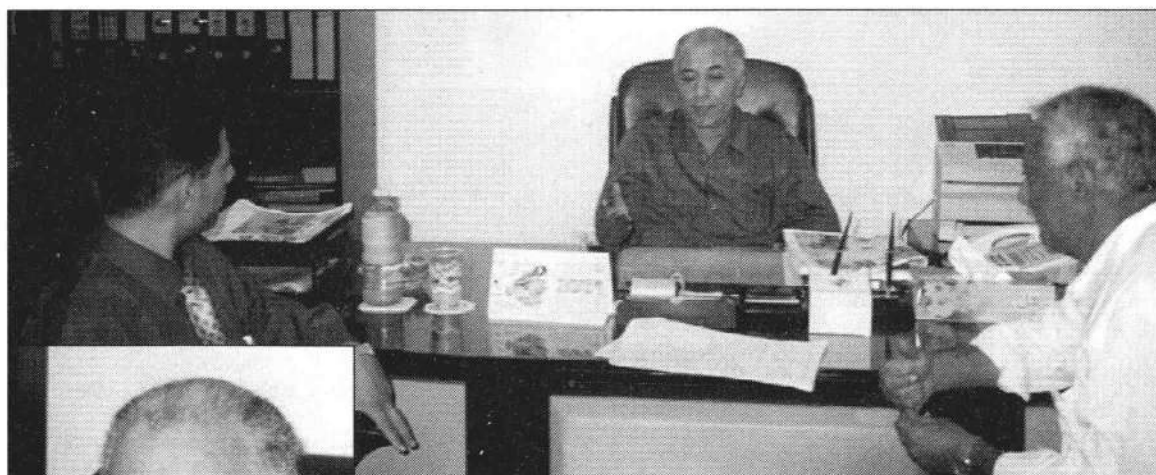
Banking is among the most important financial means that support national development by providing financial resources along with the ability to provide cash flow directly into any country. The National Bank of Yemen is one of the greatest banks in the Republic of Yemen that participated in the commercial, economic developmental process in the country.

The National Bank of Yemen has witnessed tremendous growth with great leaps after Mr. Abdulrahman Mohamed Al-Kuhali took over the administrative affairs of the bank in 1998. During the last three years, the bank was able to gain the highest ever profits in 2000. Mr. Al-Kuhali, 51, obtained his Bachelor degree in economics from Baghdad and his Masters degree from France. He worked in the field of banking and financial administration in several posts since 1975. He was the General Manager of the Tax Department in 1975, Deputy of Customs in 1978, Tax Authority Manager in 1980, Deputy Minister of Finance in 1984, Custom Tax Authority Manager in 1990, and since 1998 Chairman and General Manager of the National Bank of Yemen. He was well-known for his hard work and dedication to his work, which made him a great model for financial managers countrywide.

To focus more on the activities and history of the National Bank of Yemen, Ridwan Al-Saqqaq, Aden Bureau Chief of Yemen Times met with Mr. Abdulrahman Al-Kuhali who was busy in his work as usual in administering 29 branches of the bank, and filed the following interview.

Q: Could you give us a brief introduction on the National Bank of Yemen?

A: The National Bank of Yemen was founded in 1969 in former South Yemen as a 100% government-owned bank, and developed through the last 31 years until it reached its peak at the end of 2000. During these 31 years, the bank gained a lot of experience and a prestigious status as the only bank for southern and eastern areas of the country before unification in May



1990. It continued to develop and grow in direct interaction with the granted financial freedom and banking competition after May 22, 1990 until today.

To evaluate the position of the National Bank of Yemen on the local level, we can see the statistics of 2000, which obviously show that it has been the leading bank compared to local banks due to its activities during 1997-2000. The financial changes during these three years reached tremendous amounts, which obviously marks a great success for the company.

Q: What was the factor behind the tremendous progress of the National Bank of Yemen during 1998-2000?

A: There are two main factors behind our success, particularly during the last three years during which I was the Chairman and General Manager of the bank. These are:

1- The priceless trust of our customers in our bank, which is a major source of pride and honor for us as administration and also as staff members. Maintaining this pride is our main objectives.

2- Efficient administration of banking transactions, which is an extremely difficult task that requires keen vision, especially when realizing that the bank went through many obstacles, which require much time to

explain.

In brief, the positive relationship between administration and profit during this period is a proof that our policies towards the operations of the bank are efficient and objective. Our strategies concentrated on:

- 1- Restructuring the administrative, financial, structural system of the bank.
- 2- Planning, follow-up, and assessment of operations
- 3- Continuous modernization of the financial and administrative services of the bank's main and all branch offices, including Internet online services.
- 4- Implementing laws and regulations of the bank, which were all neglected in the past.
- 5- Working on regaining most of the bank's rights and properties moveable and immovable.
- 6- Working on enhancing bank operations by:
 - a) Working on enhancing the standard of living of bank employees by raising their salaries so as to increase their work efficiency.
 - b) Working on regaining our old customers.
 - c) Contracting the skillful and professional employees of the past.
- 7- Enhancing the bank's official relationships with others including foreign correspondents and other local banks operating in Yemen.

Q: The National Bank of Yemen is among the largest banks in the country, with great banking abilities. What are the great abilities that make you distinguished?

A: The bank indeed has several distinguished services in addition to the large value of assets and deposits. Our

bank played an important role during its years of operation in directly financing several huge economic investments in all fields.

The bank is currently involved in doing so on well-studied bases according to the present economic developments on the local arena. We offer a special credit policy to our customers with great flexibility. This will provide easy loans to all sectors. The bank also has a special credit branch (Public Loaning Bank Branch) to provide all the facilities for loans and credit and has well-defined policies to avoid credit risks. Certain types of sufficient insurance, which is of course one of the rights of any bank to demand before providing any loan is essential to carry on credit transactions. The National Bank of Yemen always makes sure that it provides the best of services with the best means and facilities available precisely, swiftly, and accurately. This is possible with the efficient administration of the different branches of the bank scattered all over the country, and with the correspondent network abroad and all over the world.

Q: What are your future plans?

A: We have future plans to further develop our banking services in all aspects, especially that we now have 29 branches all over the country after the addition of the recently opened Hodeidah branch.

Q: Any final comments?

A: I would like to thank Yemen Times for filing this short interview, in which I was able to deliver to the public some of the bank's achievements and ambitions. I would also like to say that the banking sector in Yemen first, and the Arab world second, will be facing the challenge of globalization, which has started to draw the dimensions and future of the new global economic, financial, and banking order. Hence, we will need to overcome this challenge by working on modernizing our banking sector and adding more facilities required in this rapidly changing era of information technology. We also need to create stronger united entities on the local, Arab, and regional levels.



Dr. Najat Mohamed Juma'an

Capital Pirates

PART II

To identify the problems resulting from capital pirates and work on solving them, we need to understand the mentality of investors and capital owners. We know that capital is initially without identity and its owner looks for a place where it could find stability and growth. We know that we are slowly joining a global system in a new world order, in which the World Trade Organization (WTO) is of great influence, and in which a stronger role is played by the national and international economic market. This resulted in opening the door for national capital to gain international momentum and move from poor countries with little investment opportunity to powerful and profit offering countries. In most cases, capital owners look for easy profit and risk-free investments. This is only achievable in gigantic banks that usually guarantee risk-free investments with competitive profits. In such conditions, capital owners could achieve easy success and growth, especially with the emergence of the capital and stock markets, which welcome capitals from all over the world to be invested in various projects in developed countries. These capitals are invested in markets that meet the conditions of efficiency which are measured using available information about the specific market's share in the stock exchange and the risks of a possible loss in investments because of general risks related to the market environment.

On the other hand, the emergence of stock markets and stock exchanges has resulted in development skills in fund management as it has become the responsibility of fund managers to collect assets from all over the world and gather and invest them in long-term investments with very little risk.

Hence, it is obvious that with the current conditions, it is more secure and profitable for capital owners to respond positively to the calls of capital pirates and put their capital in their hands.

The main conclusion out of what has been mentioned so far is that the mass one-way flow of national capital from developing countries to developed countries is very difficult to prevent. It is also obvious that this leads to devastating effects on the national economy including scarcity in available capital to be used for national investment. This in turn hinders the economic progress and prosperity of the country in preventing capital owners from using their assets in industry, agriculture, and long-term investment using the available resources. The lack of investment of national capital in Yemen has further far reaching effects including increasing unemployment and inflation, leading to a decrease in the average annual income, which in turn widens the gap between the rich and the poor.

As mentioned earlier, there are many businessmen who decided to invest their capital in Yemen rather than sending them to capital pirates. However, there are also many examples of failed investment attempts in the country. For example, some locally available capital were used by their owners in national investments, but it was later discovered that the provided capitals were not enough to complete the started investment projects, leading to their eventual and inescapable collapse and the loss of all the capital used. This further discourages investors to invest in Yemen and encourages them to send their capital to overseas investors, particularly in risk-free investments, again run by capital pirates.

This also comes at a time of competition, because globalization requires more sophisticated and technologically advanced equipment along with a skilled and professionally trained workforce, which obviously require a larger capital for investment. This in itself constitutes a major challenge for good-will attempts to invest on national soil. The state has tried to combat the effect of outgoing capital and worked extensively to cover the deficit in the national capital, or in other words, work began on finding other ways to escape the development crisis in national capital deficit. These efforts included joining international companies as shareholders, creating income from taxes and customs, getting financial support from friendly countries, or in the worst case, depending on facilitated loans on the condition that these loans will definitely lead to true economic development. No matter what the strategies of the government are, there is no doubt that preserving what is left of national capital and reclaiming the national capital abroad is important for national development. Eventually, the responsibility of creating an environment that encourages investment is a national duty and obligation that should be fulfilled by the government, who could help in bringing national capital back to its homeland and working on limiting the reasons why national investors choose capital pirates over local investment.

We find ourselves facing the might and power of these capital pirates in the form of worldwide renowned international banks and companies that try to take away our capital and invest them for their own sake. Why can't we learn from them and know how they succeeded in attracting these assets? Only a little effort is needed to realize that the main factor behind any success in attracting capital is the psychological factor that supports long-term investment. This factor lies in our faith that there is potential for considerable profit in investing in our country and that we could work hard to create a national environment capable of competing worldwide and attracting national capital owned by Yemeni investors abroad. Long-term investment requires an optimistic look to the future and the abandoning of all pessimistic ideas and thoughts by many of Yemeni businessmen who believe that Yemen is not a country suitable for investment. Even though the future is promising, the responsibility of working on limiting the effect of capital pirates falls on all of us as citizens, businessmen, strategy-developers and decision-makers.

In fact, if we strategically analyze Yemen's points of strength, I am confident that we would conclude that it has great potential to provide more profit to capital owners, who will also be confronted by the fact that they would have served their national economy instead of the capital pirates. With its mountains, deserts and seashores, Yemen is a country with interesting geological diversity, making it a haven for agriculture due to its different climates. It is a country known for its hard working and talented population of which 60% are in the productivity age, and which if given the appropriate vocational training and human resource development could be more efficient than any foreign workforce. Our country is also rich in many natural resources including oil, natural gas, natural gems, fish, plus many other resources.

It is no surprise that if we take the appropriate steps for building a truly investor-friendly environment, we can not only bring back the exiled capital, but also attract foreign investment in large amounts as well.

Another factor to bring back the national capital to the country that had been pirated by capital pirates, is to create trust among the different investors in the stock, product, and service exchange market and this can only be achieved by developing alliance strategies instead of competitive strategies.

Having trust in the political leadership is also of vital importance at the local and international level for investors. Even though some are trying to misguide capital owners about this fact, there always is a vital association between the trust of the investor or businessman in the leadership and the amount and period of his investment. When the political leadership is capable of taking major political and economic decisions and enacting them appropriately in favor of the national economy, it raises the confidence within national and foreign capital owners, thus encouraging them to put their capital into national investments on national soil. The trust of the general public in their political leadership and the trust of the leadership in the potential in the public are both of equal significance in this respect.

In conclusion, the one-way flow of national capital from Yemen to other countries in search for a better place for stability and true growth is a sad fact caused mainly by powerful capital pirates that know what they are doing and how to attract capital. It is our role as politicians, economists, administrators, and citizens to work on creating an investment-friendly environment that could attract not only overseas national capital, but also foreign capital that seek a place for investment. It is a matter of commitment and understanding what we should do to prevent further damage by capital pirates.

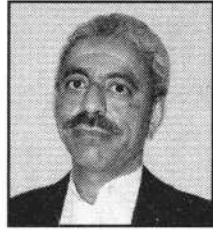
Correction

Yemen Times would like to correct a statement in Part I of the "Capital Pirates" article published last week. The correct statement that should have been the first sentence of the third paragraph is, "Financial assets pirates emerged recently as a number of influential persons, who represent multi-millionaire international banks that have offices.. etc." *Our Apologies.*

| CHANGEABLE RATES | DEC 1997 | DEC 1998 | DEC 1999 | DEC 2000 |
|---------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Total assets | 23.385 | 23.517 | 29.311 | 34.237 |
| Capital & reserves | 986 | 612 | 2.528 | 2.658 |
| Investments & loans funds | 8.796 | 10.792 | 12.694 | 16.283 |
| Funds in other banks | 10.098 | 7.422 | 9.470 | 12.490 |
| Customer charge | 21.970 | 22.597 | 26.411 | 30.954 |
| Ownership rights | 254 | 612 | 2.527 | 2.658 |
| Net interest | 285 | 566 | 969 | 1.223 |
| Net profit | 199 | 358 | 528 | 672 |

COMMON SENSE

By: Hassan Al-Haifi



The Epitome of Extreme Frustration

If the Israelis could signal to the world that the likes of Ariel Sharon is what Israelis have no qualms about as their Prime Minister, surely their victims, the Palestinians, who have known torment and destitution in all its form and by all its synonyms, must also make it clear that theirs is not yet a lost cause, and that their fate cannot and will not be decided by merciless egomaniacs who relish on spilling human blood and disseminating suffering among fellow humans to feed their lust for power, glory and blind chauvinism. The Palestinian bus driver, who a week ago was yearning to come out of the agony of economic siege on his oppressed people, for no reason except deploring what ever sense of justice that there is left in this world, that there is a lot of things wrong going on in the Holy Land that should be remedied, had underscored the obvious fact that indeed there is immense suffering to which no idea of justice and human rights could allow to be sanctioned, let alone supported by the Global Superpower.

This man, whose name slipped off the tongue of this observer, is bound to raise serious and sincere questions as to what could motivate such individual drive to let out his frustration on those with the uniforms that he has seen unleashing their terror and persecution, and firing their lethal weapons at the hundreds of Palestinian children killed and wounded for saying that we have had enough injustice meted against us, and that like all human beings, the Palestinian also has his dignity. Understandably, the bus driver was careful to make sure that his victims are part and parcel of the apparatus that has been mercilessly gunning down his fellow Palestinians, and understandably he did it with the most effective tool he has at his disposal - a bus that could be turned into a fatal weapon by the mere turn of the steering wheel, making the impressive killing tools that his victims once unleashed against his brethren seem like mild play toys when compared to a harmless bus, set loose against the oppressor. Such unilateral actions, lacking any organized backing or

sponsoring and coming out of a man who has passed all the enemy's strict and rigid security clearance checks underline the point that frustration is such a powerful stimulus to anger that no knows no dead ends. This kind of action is not fomented by hatred, prejudice or any irregularities of the mind. This kind of individual drive comes from severe pain and humiliation to a man who has decided to show the world that even the strongest of human beings cannot bear to see themselves and their fellow brethren treated like caged animals for no reason at all except to further the ungodly aspirations of chauvinists, who pride themselves on defrauding God's sense of justice, mercy and the love He has for all of mankind.

The Palestinian bus driver has come to realize, as many Palestinians and many Arabs outside the arena have come to understand, that talk of peace is fine and dandy, but the facts on the ground depict that nothing but misery, deprivation and disrespect for all human values have become the normal plight of his people, who are already the victims of an unjust dispossession of their domicile, to which, for thousands of years, no one has ever contested their title of. Not even their former occupiers, who have come from many a distant land, have ever found cause to uproot the indigenous population of the land, of whom there was even some Jewish representation as well, although a small one.

What the frustrated bus driver was reflecting was not just a reaction to a current situation, but to a long systematic program to eliminate his people, their past and their hopes for any meaningful future as neighbors of the State born out of their destitution, and the blind justice of Big Power games and intrigues. Israeli logic has it that the only way that Israel can guarantee its longevity, is by refusing to accept any form of a stabilized Palestinian enclave so close to their former domicile. Such things as recognition of an injustice by their hands is a despised anathema to a State that refuses to recognize that all human beings are endowed by their Creator, with human rights and the right to live without fear

of bulldozers coming the next day to knock down your home to make room for alien settlers, who probably never knew where Palestine lies on the map, let alone that it was the "long lost land of their forebears". Ever since their forced expulsion from what used to be most of Palestine (It always dumbfounds this observer how many sympathizers of the Zionist cause in the Western press always insist that there was never such a territory as Palestine and that only Jews have lived in the territory that now comprises Israel, yet any one would be naïve to reject the records of the British mandate holders and the Turkish occupiers who continued to describe the territory and the indigenous people thereof by their historical and biblical nomenclature). Surely, those Palestinians cannot be frustrated for nothing and are merely expressing their resentment for the sake of fun. Nobody throws rocks against an armed force for the sake of fun. But the facts have been twisted so much by the Zionist machine (see last week's Common Sense), and the reliance of the latter on distorting the truth have become so entrenched in the institutions and organs that stand behind one of the greatest injustices of man against man in history. A people, who have been waiting for over fifty years to be meted out some - not all - the justice they deserve, after having become victims of an ugly chauvinism carried out in the name of God, who we all know can never condone such a systematic, well planned, and deliberate campaign of ethnic cleansing (Incidentally, it is worth pointing out that the Israelis vigorously supported the Serbs in their ethnic cleansing campaigns in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo with substantive material and technical assistance). So what drove the Palestinian bus driver to such an amazing feat of disenchantment? He had after all been lucky to have a job now after only suffering for more than four months without any access to income generation, since the Israelis have put a lead on all the potential of their Palestinian neighbors, who have accepted to let bygones be bygones and make do with whatever remains of their domicile, to

access to possible economic viability, and insisted that what ever economic potential there is for the Palestinians must come from their masters and lords, the Israelis.

For sure, the Israelis fully comprehend what drove the bus driver to literally tell the Israelis, that their might can be turned to useless hardware when faced with deeply rooted frustration and loss of all hope that their Israeli neighbors have any serious intention of living in peace with the Palestinians. In fact the Israelis have no intention of even leaving them at peace, for the Palestinian cannot ever believe that he can enjoy peace and solace near the ones who have deprived their parents of their homes, their livelihood and human dignity. The bus driver underscored the point that human dignity cannot be treaded on forever and this easily translates into a powerful form of anger that defies any explanation. It is understandable to most supporters of human rights and liberty that the actions of the Palestinian bus driver are sensible and logical and indeed justified, when viewed from a historical and social perspective and in light of the untold misery which the Palestinians continue to face to this day. Furthermore, the bus driver was making it clear that there is a lot more where that came from, with the gist of the emotions lying behind the bus driver's act of rebellion against not only Israeli occupation but the inability of the Palestinian leadership to take on the struggle for their people's right to a meaningful conclusion, whether peacefully or by force if necessary, not to mention at the other Arab states that do no more than give lip service to the struggle for the rights of their Palestinian brethren. These are common fundamentals in the struggle for liberty and justice and the right to live in peace, which can be understood by all human beings who cherish such values and are reinforced by all the just struggles against tyranny and oppression as well as forced occupation, history has depicted, which freedom lovers everywhere look back upon in setting the example of the sacrifices that are sometimes required to deliver a message that is clear and loud: human beings should never let anyone step on them, whether they are aliens or from their own kind and that no force is mightier than the desire of men to live free and with their dignity intact. It is a matter of honor, no more ... no less, and without honor there is no life.

Isn't It Time to Take Stock?



Mohamed Al-Hakimi
Yemen Times
Taiz

In our society, political and social life is determined by a serious disease, which has played a powerful role in cracking the common laity and sending away aspiration of a much better life.

This bane is fanaticism. To add insult to injury, most of the Yemeni people have not yet clearly distinguished between darkness and light. Some people can simply sell their votes and dignity in case they get some rials in return. And what gets one's goat is that most of them aspire of change and they themselves sign corruption and are standstill.

In fact the tribal, sectarian and party fanaticism in the Yemen have already resulted in a lot of massacres and scandals. It killed many great Yemenis during and after Imamate. Killing sheiks during the era of president Al-Hamdi in the seventies was also a consequence of partisanship. Fighting among several Yemeni tribes is still taking place as we speak. January 1986 incidents in Aden killed several dedicated and noble figures. During the transformational period after the 1990 unification civil war erupted in 1994 between the two main parties of Yemen. The killing of a lot of people during the presidential, parliamentary and local elections were all a mere fall-out.

It is tribal, denominational and factional fanaticism which dominates over issues related to our political and social life. It has been clear that this fanaticism has not only influenced the common man, but was also adopted by many great writers; intellectuals; politicians, parties and even kingpins. And its negative role in ignoring the future prospects and common goals were deeply felt within the Yemeni society. This is almost true with our government, which keeps teaching people how to profession lying and corruption. Once there are

elections, the authorities promise change into the better and promises to make miracles as soon as the elections are over. However; every and each election, the people get deceived over and over again. In fact, this has made people in charge calm down and never think or trouble themselves with planning to meet what they had promised since it is easy to buy votes with five hundred rials or a bundle or two of qat a day or even an hour before elections. This has been a quite well-known and successful policy in our present-day democracy. We should not lose sight of the fact that fanaticism has encouraged people to seek interests of their parties, neglecting totally the interests and destiny of their motherland or even their own families.

To confound the readers, let me mention that the president Ali Abdullah Salah stressed in his speech delivered in Taiz University a month ago that corruption has covered almost every sector, official and private. To make it clear, he gave an example of what is wrong and what is mishandled expressing his uneasiness towards such sorry states of affairs. He said that social security, which should only be granted to the poor, was being given to officials and corrupt individuals. He also highlighted the rate of the unemployment, which really threatens the government and Yemen in general. In fact, the president looked fatigued and uneasy with the fact that some officials in key positions with tremendous responsibility are corrupt and untrustworthy. Even though this proves the president's ability in understanding the conditions of the affairs of his country people, yet he also should realize that there is much to be done.

Tomorrow, our country's first local council elections will be held. People should not repeat the same old mistake once again. They should all realize that it is they are the ones who will either fight or support corruption depending on their votes and whom they will be electing. Let's hope that Yemeni electors will seize this opportunity to start a real change and say, "We have abhorred corruption, inequity and fanaticism."

Why Keep the Ministry of Industry?



Radhwan Al-Saqqaf
Aden Bureau
Chief

The government's commitment to involve the private sector in the development process has been accompanied by serious efforts to help it smooth away obstacles and difficulties. The privatization process which began in 1997 and the recent announcement of the privatization of the Aden Refinery Company are all meant to encourage this sector to invest in industry and contribute to the general development of the country.

After selling all industrial sectors, one question may rise to the surface; is it then necessary to maintain the Ministry of Industry? Industry is one of the most important sectors through which strategies can be outlined to get rid of unemployment and to help lessen the burden on the budget. Therefore, maintaining the Ministry of Industry is a must. It should be noted that talk about the

industrial sector includes those industrial institutions guided and directed by other ministries such as Fish Wealth, Agriculture, Education, etc. The present cooperation and contacts with the WTO also necessitate the existence of a specialized ministry to supervise and organize the work of industrial institutions.

The Ministry of Industry can carry out a lot of plans to organize and encourage investment in industry through supporting national industry and improving its quality, etc. It must do specialized studies to be able to outline sound strategies to ensure successful industries, protect national industries from smuggling and the dumping of foreign products onto the market, specify standardization for quality, make studies and suggest ways and means to encourage and improve the national industrial exports, etc. taking into consideration that export is a basic pillar of any national economy.

If the present Ministry of Industry is not well-aware of the above, studies should concentrate on reasons and solutions to activate and move the stagnant policy framework.

Would the Pope employ a Muslim in his Vatican government? That's somewhat sarcastic, but there is clear evidence in that sarcasm, even though being true.

Perhaps the government of Yemen should consider rewording its General Elections Law? It's not a simple solution we require these days. Do we want good practicing Muslims with upright conduct to enforce our laws (is this not what each person should aspire to be, a good Muslim?) or do we want to take that out and replace it with a good per-

son with upright conduct?

Well, in that case what would make us any different from any other non-Islamic country? I think that the problem lies in the definition of Muslim and being a Muslim and the relationship the state shares with the Islamic Law: you can not force Islam upon anyone, "no compulsion in religion." But if we scrap all mention of Islam from our law, then we would lose all ties with our past and the principles of the divine decree.

Mohamed Hammoud

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

First of all, let me condole the relatives of the victims. I was disappointed when I was scanning the headlines of the newspapers in one of Dhamar's bookshops. "Mosque Massacre", the main headline of your "Yemen Times", stirred up my curiosity because a month ago there was a similar incident, although the place differed. The latter incident concerned a Sudanese. I have read the report written by Hassan Al-Zayidi and despite the efforts of the reporter to find out the main reason, I think elections and constitutional amendments are not enough for a normal person to commit such a crime. I hope you will agree with me that your newspaper headline may be reckoned as negative evidence against our people. I mean Arabic nations, particularly those countries which are wrongly classified as terrorists or terrorist hosts. However you know better in cases like these and from now on I will be a close friend and devoted client of Yemen Times. So would you be so kind and accept my friendship? "When I do right nobody remembers, and when I do wrong nobody ever forgets!" I'm also going to pose before you an important question and I wish you and your readers together would be able to find a reasonable answer. Why do the majority of Yemeni people carry guns? Carrying guns is a familiar appearance in Yemeni streets!! "don't be surprised!" said my old colleagues who resides in the Republic of Yemen when he saw me raise my eyebrows in astonishment. But I am still waiting for an answer, why do almost all Yemeni people carry guns even in the streets of large towns? No one gives me a clear

cut answer, even the carriers themselves. My surprise began to melt away when I discovered that every Yemeni citizen can find any weapon whatever its size, and found out that there are many markets for selling weapons without any permission or legal license from the responsible authorities. Despite my deep sorrow and bitter feelings when I read the report about the Amran mosque massacre a few weeks ago, I came to believe that such crimes are not unexpected. According to my point of view authorities can reduce the possession of weapons by issuing severe regulations preventing weapons from getting into citizens' hands. They should impose high taxes on the weapons trade and permit certain people like herdsmen, businessmen to possess arms. You will agree with me that anything can be useful and at the same time harmful when misused. It is described as a double edged weapon. But I think it will be of one edge when it goes into illiterate hands. I am looking forward to hearing a reasonable answer.

Musa Hamid Mohammed
Anas Ibn Malek School, Al-Moshahazah

Dear Editor,

As a foreigner and a regular reader of Yemen Times, I wish to comment on your editorial column in issue 5 titled "That is who we are". Of course, I am not commissioned to write for all the foreigners reading your paper nor could I claim knowledge of the impression your paper is making on them. I can therefore only express my own objective (or maybe subjective) view on the

question whether the press must in any case build up a positive image of their respective countries. And in my opinion the answer to this question must unequivocally be "no!"

The press, and especially the press of a democratic State, is under the only obligation of telling the truth. Certainly, truth is sometimes a bitter medicine, but which doctor with a sincere interest in the health of his patients would prescribe a remedy solely because it tastes sweet? A free press is the engine of the vehicle called democracy. It encourages those in power to act for the best of the society and educates the latter so as to make them well-informed and consequently committed and responsible citizens. A foreigner who gets a bad impression of a country the press of which is doing but its job is in fact neither a friend of this country nor one it would be desirable to make friends with.

If Yemen has gained the reputation of being a model of a newly developing democracy, a large amount of the credit is unquestionably due to the freedom of press. The process of solving problems starts unavoidably with their pragmatic identification and goes on with a controversial discussion within a pluralistic society. Consequently, lending a voice to all those who feel committed to the development of a society is of prime necessity and should therefore be considered a noble and praiseworthy task.

Let me conclude with an aphorism of the French humanist and philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778) which I think has lost nothing of its pertinence today: "I don't share your opinion, but I would die in order to give you the possibility

to express it."

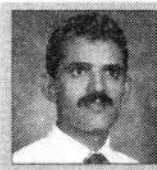
Edgard ARENDT, Luxembourg
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A quick opinion on the Jew's candidature

We must not forget that Mohammad befriended many Jews and in fact, his diplomacy is what turned many Jews into Muslims. The great Prophet of Islam only waged war against transgressing Jews who broke their trust. During the golden years of Islam, Jews served as viziers to many a caliph and contributed to a lore of knowledge... "for seek knowledge, even if you must go to China". Now, about a Jew seeking a position in politics in an Islamic/Arabic country today, I am not sure. First, it is true that we must not judge based on a person's adhering to Islamic shari'ah, how many of us are true Muhammad's and practice our faith relentlessly? This is certainly between the person and his Creator. We must, however, take into consideration that Islam also calls upon us to reflect upon the state of affairs and in a time when Zionism is threatening the Islamic cause par excellence. I am not sure we want to be employing Jews in our country's state of affairs because Islam does not divorce state and religion, though many Muslims and Islamic regimes no longer regard this as a truth or even acceptable. Furthermore, we are bound to Islamic principles first and foremost, not to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which I believe could be secondary to Islamic Shari'ah. Should we employ Jews in our governments, when the Zionist Jews today are a hostile enemy to the Islamic Cause?

SPECIAL ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS IN A SERIES: PART III

Salafi Movement: Origin, Principles & Objectives

Hassan Al-Zaidi
Yemen Times

Salafis define their movement as a pioneering reform movement that emerged at a time of backwardness and intellectual stagnancy in the Islamic world. The movement attempts a return to the 'true' principles of Islam. Some scholars call it a Wahhabiyah movement, after its founder in Saudi Arabia, Mohammed ibn Abd al-Wahhab.

Foundation & Followers

The movement was founded by Mohammed ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1791). He had many followers, including Sa'ud ben Abd al-Aziz, Salman ben Abdullah ben Mohammad Abd al-Wahhab and Sheikh Abdul Aziz ben Baz who before his death was the chairman of Iftaa in the KSA, the original home of the movement.

Intellectual and ideological background

Three great Islamic scholars provided the ideals of the movement. These were: 1) Ahmad ben Hanbal (164-241 Hijrah) 2) Ibn Teimiyah (661-728 Hijrah) 3) Mohammed ibn al-Qaiym Al-Jawziyah (691-751 Hijrah) The movement prospered in Saudi Arabia, and since then it attracted many scholars. Then it spread to many Arab countries, including Yemen. Despite the internal divisions in the movement at home, there have been no differences in their opinions or thoughts.

The movement in Yemen.

Sheikh Moqbel Al-Wadei, presently in the USA for medical check-ups, is one of the main founders of the movement in Yemen. Al-Wadei was deported from Saudi Arabia to Yemen in 1979 after he

spent a three-month term in prison. He was accused of preparing seditious letters for Joheiman while he was preparing for his MA degree in the science of Hadith.

On returning to his native city, Saadah, he founded 'Dar al-Hadith' (the House of Hadith). Although the Zeidi doctrine was dominant, he was able, with the protection of his tribe, to spread the thoughts of his doctrine. He built a mosque, a big library and an educational center which today includes hundreds of Arab and foreign students.

Present Situation of the Movement in Yemen

Recently, some other groups of Salafi teachings started to emerge, independent from the Al-Wadei' movement. The Salafi movement can be divided into three parts:

- 1) Sheikh Al-Wadei's group and his followers.
- 2) Al-Ihsan Charitable Society
- 3) Al-Hikmah Charitable Society

Relations with the state

There are no specific limitations controlling relations between the state and the movement. The movement forbids pluralism and elections. They also feel that the present president is a guardian who should be obeyed. "The Islamic government is there. It lacks only 'Ilm' (knowledge.) Al-Wadei says.

Relations with the Ikhwan movement

Describing it as an innovated movement (Bid'ah), they think that the Ikhwan movement is not eligible to reform society owing to its relationship with politics.

Relations with Al-Tableegh group

This group depends on many fabricated



Hadiths and bid'ah for their teachings, Salafis claim.

Relations with other Islamic movements

The Rawafidh, Shiite and Sufi movements are viewed as incapable of facing their 'enemies'. As for the Jihad movement, it is a corrupted movement that tends to offend people.

Their activities in Yemen

One of the main factors that has helped the movement spread its activities is its peaceful nature.

The Sheikh Al-Wadei group is the largest and most important Salafi group. It has the Dar Al-Hadith center in which more than 3 thousand Arab and foreign students are taught. About 600 students reside there with their families. Accommodation is provided by Al-Wadei himself.

The other educational centers include: Mohammed Al-Imam Center in

M'abar/Dhamar, hosting about 1500 students, Abu Al-Hassan Al-Mariby Center in Mareb - 200 students, Mohammed ben Abd al-Wahhab al-Wisabi in Hodeidah - 200 students, Abdul Aziz Al-Buray Center in Ibb - 100 students, etc. There are also centers in Utmah, Hadhramaut, Taiz, Sana'a and Aden. The movement also owns a number of publishing houses.

Finance

The movement depends on some Salafi traders, emigrants as well as the Haramein Organization.

The other Salfi divisions

Although they are Salafi in thought, the Al-Ihsan Charitable Society disagrees with the Al-Wadei's group which treats the President as a guardian who should be obeyed. They think that they can

rebel against the President when they are able.

Followers of this group have good relations with Al-Jihad Group. It is believed that members of Al-Jihad group depend on the teachings of Al-Ihsan in many doctrinal matters.

The educational centers of this group include Al-Dawah Center in Sana'a supervised by Sheikh Abdul Hameed Al-Buray, which embraces more than 400 students. They also have centers in Ibb, Al-Beidha'a, Shabwah, Sana'a, Hadhramaut and Aden.

The society has branches in many cities and these are among the main supporters of the movement. The society also receives donations from inside and outside the country including the Qatar Charitable Society and some Saudi businessmen and traders.

Unlike the group of Al-Wadei which focuses on the doctrinal matters, the Ihsan group teaches other sciences such as politics, economics, etc.

The group's most important figure is Mohammed Ben Sorour who lives in London and chairs the Islamic Studies Center and publishes a magazine called the Al-Sannah. His followers are called Al-Sorouriyoon and among the activities they organize in Yemen are seminars and summer camps.

Al-Hikmah Charitable Society

It has many branches all over the republic. Among its out-standing figures is Sheikh Hussein Omar Mahfouh.

The society has a number of educational centers in which it teaches religious subjects. Although they forbid pluralism, they sometimes side with Islah.

An Open Letter To Yemen Times

Gary Vey
garyvey@earthlink.net

I read with great interest the discussion of the Yemen Times' critique for publishing the social and economic problems within the country. Although I agree that these stories have a negative impact on the potential for tourism, I fully support the publication's steadfast commitment to print and report the truth, the way things really are inside Yemen.

A few weeks back, the Yemen Times ran an article I wrote describing the potential for tourism and the influx of money that would remedy many of the remote tribal concerns and support the entire infrastructure of the country to be brought up to modern standards. I suggested that Yemen capitalize on the ancient Biblical archaeological sites, especially the temple of Saba in Bilqis, as a pan-religious zone where all religions and denominations could worship the One God, by

whatever name He is known.

I received hundreds of e-mails from all over the globe in support of my ideas and expressing the strong desire to visit Yemen once these safety concerns are resolved. There was also extremely positive support for a pan-religious tourism industry and for Yemen to remain neutral in the intifada.

The recent debate stated that many government officials read the Yemen Times. In the event that this is being read by one of these officials, please understand that there are many people who have learned of Yemen's great history and her special mission as peacemaker of the world and are anxious to offer their assistance.

In particular, my own case is an example. I am an American citizen who is trained in computer science and specialize in Internet programming and web design, specifically of the type that could draw thousands of tourists to your country. Although my current salary is excellent here in the States, I would be willing to perform this task for Yemeni tourism pro bono, requiring only the needed

visas and transportation and permits to film and document the sites of interest in your country. I offer this because of my respect for your country and its people. You need only to ask.

There are hundreds of people who feel as I do and experience the sadness of each new story about kidnapping and political unrest. Each story makes it more unlikely that a visit and the dream of a revitalized Yemen will happen soon. But we can always change the future — because it has not happened yet. Why not make these changes NOW? The human resources are available and there are many others like myself — only waiting for some response and the welcome gestures from Yemeni officials. So, if you are listening, Yemeni officials, let's start.

Yemen was once the greatest nation on Earth. Rise up from the sand and take your place and meet your destiny as a great people. It can all start happening with the acceptance of help. Please do it soon.

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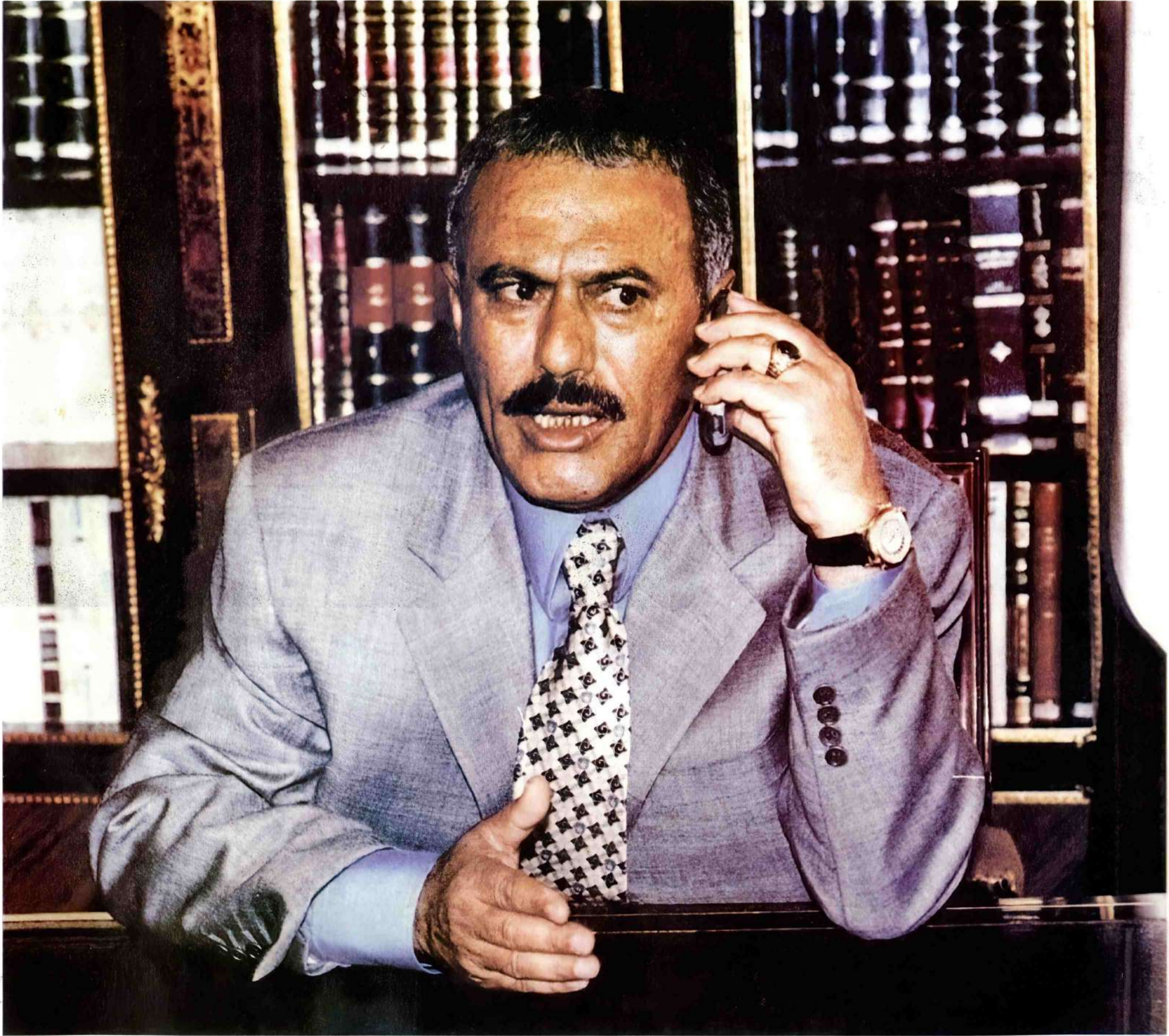
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THANKS

to H. E. President Ali Abdullah Saleh

**The leader of Modern Yemen's
progress, prosperity and development
for his inauguration of the**

**digital GSM mobile telephony system
on February 14, 2001.**



Yemen Company for Mobile Telephony

Message of H.E. Indonesian Ambassador Yulwis Yatim on the Occasion of H.E. Abdurrahman Wahid and spouse's visit to Yemen, 22-23 February 2001



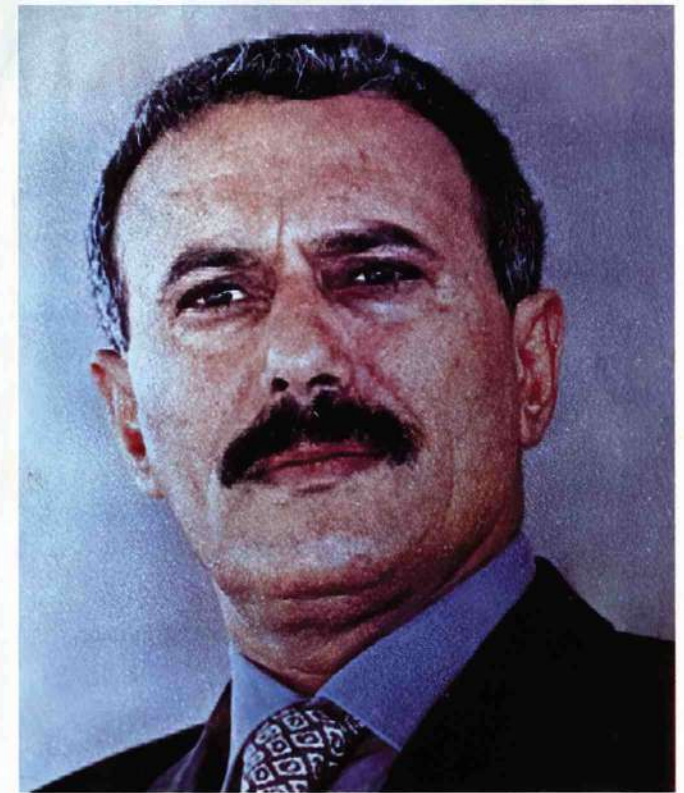
Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, and of other religions.

It is worth noting that the history of Islam's emergence in Indonesia dates back to the 13th century, i.e., 800 years ago, when our Yemeni brothers came from India to spread Islam and also to trade. Hence, the Islamic regulations that have come from Yemen still effect Islamic evolution in Indonesia until this very day.

Our Yemeni brothers had a distinguished role in fighting for the independence of Indonesia, as they fought side by side with their Indonesian brothers against the occupiers. The Indonesians of Yemeni origin continue until today to play a vital role in the national development process in Indonesia. In the political arena for instance, there are many prominent politicians and businessmen who have Yemeni blood.

The relationship between Yemen and Indonesia is no doubt warm and exceptional. The relationship was strengthened further after the visit of H.E. President Ali Abdullah Saleh to Indonesia in February 1998. Four major agreements were signed during that particular visit: a Trade Agreement, an Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement, an Agreement on Establishing a Joint Commission, and an Agreement on Cooperation of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the two countries.

The economic relationship between Indonesia and Yemen has also witnessed noticeable progress as commercial exchanges between the two countries increased significantly in 1998 compared to 1997. Due to the economic crisis that Indonesia went through in 1999, commercial exchanges decreased in that year. We do however hope that economic cooperation between the two countries will increase in 2001. For the first time, in October 2000 the Indonesian embassy organized a trade delegation consisting of 34 Yemeni businessmen. During the visit, the Yemeni businessmen contacted their counterparts in Jakarta and Bandung. In the cultural sector, the



I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Indonesian community in Yemen, to warmly welcome the official visit of the President of the Republic of Indonesia H.E. Abdurrahman Wahid, his respectful spouse and the Indonesian delegation, to the Republic of Yemen. This visit comes as a direct response to the honorable invitation of H.E. President Ali Abdullah Saleh, and in response to the Yemeni president's visit to Indonesia in February 1998.

The distinguished bilateral relationship between Indonesia and Yemen has been in continuous growth during the last 9 years since the Republic of Indonesia opened its embassy in Sana'a on 16 November 1992. However, the deeply rooted relationship between the two brotherly nations is several centuries old, beginning when Yemeni traders came to Indonesia for trade purposes and to spread Islam all over the country.

Indonesia consists of 17,300 islands with a total population of 208 million. The Republic of Indonesia is the largest Islamic country in the world in population terms with roughly 176.8 million Muslims constituting 85% of the total population. The remaining 15% are

Indonesian embassy, in cooperation with the Sheraton hotel and supported by the governor of Jakarta, will organize an "Indonesian Cultural Show and Indonesian Food Festival" in Sana'a in mid March, 2001.

In the investment sector, Hayel Saeed Group of Companies has invested in the fields of palm oil and its derivatives such as margarine and soap, along with the production of milk powder, yarn, and tea planting in the cities of Medan and Jakarta. In return, the Indonesian Bakri Group of Companies, which changed its name to "GALO OIL COMPANY," started investing in the field of oil exploration in Yemen, and Pangansari Catering Yemen was established through cooperation between two private sector companies from

Indonesia and Yemen. Super Store "Shumaila-Hari" of Indonesia was the result of fruitful cooperation between two private sector companies from Indonesia and Yemen and there are currently 34 agencies for Indonesian products operational in Yemen.

In the educational sector, many Indonesian students continue their studies in Islamic Science in the Republic of Yemen. Most of these students study in a number of private educational institutes in the city of Tarim in Hadramout, which is famous among the Muslims of Indonesia for being a city of scholars. The scholars of both Hadramout and Indonesia enjoy a distinguished and warm relationship in all respects.

Hence, the visit of H.E. Abdurrahman Wahid

to Yemen in the coming few days is not only an official visit, but also an excellent opportunity to strengthen the bilateral and warm relationship that exists between the two brotherly nations.

Finally, allow me to present my warmest welcomes again to H.E. the Indonesian President, his spouse, and the accompanying delegation. Of course, I would also like to present my sincerest and warmest regards and gratitude to the leadership, government, and people of the Republic of Yemen for their warm hospitality towards the Indonesian President and his accompanying delegation. I hope that this historic visit will result in stronger bilateral relationships to the benefit of the two brotherly nations.



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Welcome

The President of The Republic of Indonesia,

H. E. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID

&

**MADAM SINTA NURIYAH
ABDURRAHMAN WAHID**

for the State Visit

To Yemen, 22-23 February 2001

**On this occasion we extend our sincere wishes to
strengthen our bilateral and brotherly relations which so
happily exist between Indonesia and Yemen**



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H. E. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID

&

**MADAM SINTA NURIYAH
ABDURRAHMAN WAHID**

for the State Visit

To Yemen, 22-23 February 2001

**We are pleased to present our compliments and
great welcome for the State Visit.**

**We hope that this visit will be fruitful for the
benefits of the two brotherly countries.**



M. Awad Al Shaibi & Sons; Agent of Eveready and Energizer batteries,
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 Tranka Kabel Company,
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 and Al-Fairuz Medical Corporation
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 The President of The Republic of Indonesia,
 H. E. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID
 &
 HIS SPOUSE MADAM SINTA NURIYAH ABDURRAHMAN WAHID
 for the State Visit
 To Yemen, 22-23 February 2001

On this occasion we are pleased to extend our sincere wishes to strengthen
 and continuing the bilateral relations between Indonesia and Yemen



PANGANSARI YEMEN
 MANAGEMENT AND THE STAFF OF
 PANGANSARI YEMEN

Present their great welcome for
 The President of The Republic of Indonesia,
H. E. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID
 &
HIS SPOUSE MADAM SINTA NURIYAH
ABDURRAHMAN WAHID
 for the State Visit
 To Yemen, 22-23 February 2001

On this occasion we are pleased to extend our sincere
 wishes to strengthen and continuing the bilateral relations
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ALRA'ED FARMS ENTERPRISE

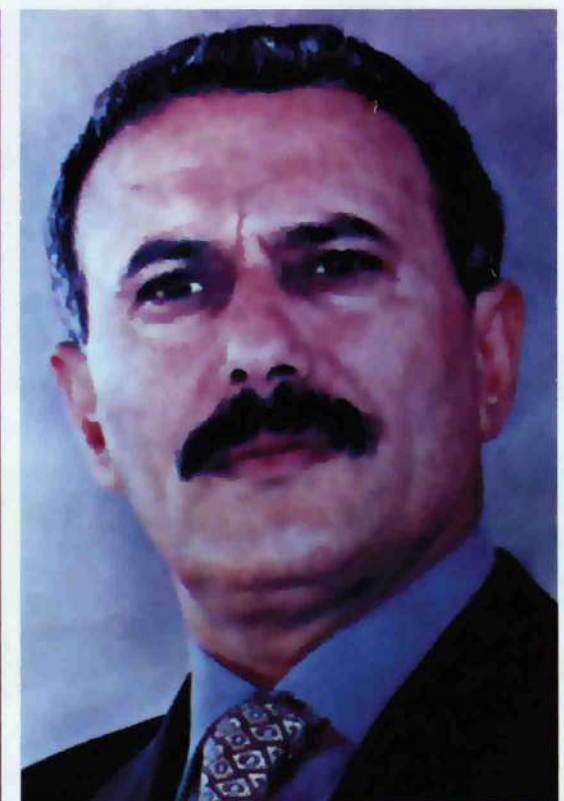
Sana'a

MOHAMMED AHMED A. ALKOR
AND BROTHERS

Welcome

The President of The Republic of Indonesia
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 &
MADAM SINTA NURIYAH
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 strengthen the bilateral and brotherly relations which
 so happily exist between Indonesia and Yemen



SABAFON STARTS GSM SERVICE IN YEMEN

SabaFon, the "Yemen Company for Mobile Telephony" officially inaugurated on Thursday, February 15, 2001 the first ever GSM digital network in Yemen. The inauguration, which took place at 11:00 am in Sheraton Hotel marked the beginning of a totally new dimension of telecommunications in the country using the most advanced digital communication technology. Sheikh Hameed Al-Ahmar, Chairman of the prestigious company announced the official inauguration of the service, which has started service in Sanaa and will spread throughout the country. SabaFon was honored to have President Ali Abdullah Saleh to be the first to actually use the service minutes before the official inauguration. The SabaFon company started providing service to the public two days later on 17 February, and hence, became a pioneer in the field of telecommunications in the Republic of Yemen. The day before the official inauguration, a press conference was held in Sheraton Hotel with the presence of several journalists from local and regional newspapers to focus on the services and facilities that will be offered by the company. During the press conference and to know more about the services SabaFon will be offering to the public, Yemen Times interviewed Mr. Hassan Kabbani, Chief Executive Officer of SabaFon, and came up with the following interview.



SabaFon Blue Building

Q: Could you give a brief introduction about SabaFon to our readers?

A: SabaFon, the first GSM operator in Yemen, is a group of leading local businesses and international experts in mobile operations and technology: Al Ahmar Group, Orascom, Hellascom, and CCIC. Our in-depth knowledge of the local consumers and business practices, and our expertise in building and developing telecommunication operations around the globe consist the core strength of SabaFon.

A successful and strategic alliance with Siemens Information and Communication Mobile (ICM) has also led to a record time of less than 6 weeks in network deployment: hence, meeting the announced date of February 14th, 2001 to really be the first GSM operator in Yemen.

Q: What are the special features of GSM in general over the available mobile systems?

A: GSM (Global System for Mobile telecommunication) is a digital advanced system. Unlike the analogue systems, it is considered to be safe, secure, and cloning free: nobody can tap your calls or make calls from another phone or your account. Also, the GSM subscriber enjoys a variety

of services and features that will allow him to manage his calls properly and keep his day well organized. As a SabaFon subscriber, you will have your office carried in your pocket.

The main features and services offered are: CLIP (Caller Line Identification Presentation), Call Wait, Call Hold, Call Conference, Voice Mail Service, International Direct Dialing, Short Message Service, International Roaming and others. (Most of these services will be offered by SabaFon to its subscribers FREE OF CHARGE)

Q: What are the special features that your company will provide to the public?

A: SabaFon is a vital project to most of the Yemeni population: A kind of project that spreads its benefits even to rural areas. Apart from increasing the telephony penetration rate and from speeding up the economy wheels, SabaFon will contribute directly and indirectly to a higher employment rate: SabaFon direct staff and indirect related to companies and entities who will benefit from this new service in the country.

SabaFon's contract with Siemens helps serve the Republic of Yemen

with the latest technology in GSM networks and switching equipment. The difficult geography of the country couldn't be met without a tailor made design for Yemen.

The subscribers will be served 18 hours a day through the customers care hot line 211 - FREE OF CHARGE, an IVR system assists all subscribers 24 hours a day, and nationwide spread Service Centers, to assist personally the subscribers' queries and to solve their problems.

Q: What are your company's strategies and activities in regards to the available competition?

A: It is generally known that SabaFon ranks first in the licensing procedure, thanks to the efforts of the consortium's four arms who could meet the different customer oriented conditions set by the government. Therefore, our strategy is competitive since the starting point: reasonable prices, affordable to the majority of the Yemeni population, an outstanding network roll out plan that covers all the major cities and extends to the rural areas, and customer care unit to handle all the subscribers' problems.

Needless to mention that SabaFon contractual investment is at least 1.5



Sheikh Hameed and Kabbani answering questions from journalists during the press conference



View of some journalists attending the conference

| Price List | | Valid Services | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| DESCRIPTION | YER | SERVICE | YER | REMARKS |
| Connection | 14,490.00 | Call Hold | FREE | |
| SIM Card | 1,650.00 | Call Waiting | FREE | |
| Administrative Expenses | 1,860.00 | Voice Mail | FREE | |
| Total Fee | 18,000.00 | Billing | FREE | |
| | | Call Barring | FREE | |
| Monthly Fee | 966.00 | Multiparty Conference | FREE | |
| | | Follow me / Divert | FREE | |
| Airtime | | Roaming | 650.00 | Monthly |
| SabaFon to SabaFon | 9.98 | On-Demand Roaming | 1,300.00 | On Demand |
| SabaFon to other networks | 14.00 | Caller Identification (CLIP) | 80.50 | Monthly |
| SabaFon to fixed network | 14.00 | Professional Voice Mail | 1,200.00 | Monthly |
| Deposits | | Itemized Billing | 80.50 | Monthly |
| for Local connection | 8,000.00 | On-Demand Billing | 805.00 | On Demand |
| for International connection | 20,000.00 | Special Number | 16,000.00 | One Time |
| for Roaming connection | 40,000.00 | Silver Number | 32,000.00 | One Time |
| | | Golden Number | 80,000.00 | One Time |
| | | Platinum Number | 160,000.00 | One Time |
| | | Call Barring International | 250.00 | On Demand |
| | | Fax | 1,200.00 | Monthly |
| | | Data | 1,200.00 | Monthly |
| | | Short Message Service (SMS) | 21.00 | Per Message |
| | | Directory | 14.00 | Per Minute |
| | | CLIR | 1,000.00 | Monthly |
| | | So-CLIR | 1,200.00 | Monthly |

times larger than the competitor's, i.e. the end user will benefit from a better network quality of services, offered by highly professional experts.

Q: How extensive is your experience in the Arab World?

A: Orascom, the network-managing arm of SabaFon has running operations in more than 20 countries. An entity specializing in launching new telecom operations, building the related infrastructure and the organization and making available all the necessary

know how in order to immediately answer the requirements.

Orascom's operations in the Arab world spread between Yemen (SabaFon), Egypt (Mobinil), Jordan (Fastlink), Syria (Syriatel), and is currently preparing for the license in Algeria, Sudan and Libyan. This is to add to the existing 14 operations in Africa.

Q: Any other comments you may have?

A: As mentioned before, the network

rolls out and all the necessary preparations took only 6 weeks for "D-Day": February 14th, 2001.

In our previous answers we mentioned all the different parameters that led to a successful start up.

SabaFon owns a lot of its success to the people of Saba. The support we encounter on daily basis, the level of understanding and the appreciation to what we are doing will always remain the prime booster to our activities and the influencing parameter in our future steps.

SabaFon Promised and Delivered Now It's Clear

The Stigma of Undernutrition

Yasser M. Ahmad
Yemen Times

Poverty is a global problem, threatening the safety, security and development of communities. In 1996, the World Food Summit committed itself to half the number of undernourished people by 2015. More than 186 countries pledged to lessen the stigma of undernutrition within their boundaries. During the summit the undernourished were classified according to calories in meals served. Studies show that undernourished people in the advanced countries lack 130 calories while this number is tripled in poor countries. Natural disasters are one of the main causes for the phenomenon of undernutrition.

Statistics estimate that there are about 792 million people in 98 countries who do not get enough nutritious food to be able to carry out their daily routine energetically. The number of undernourished people must decrease by 20 millions annually, if the goal of the summit is to be achieved. However, this seems no easy task. Since 1990, the number of undernourished people who have been helped has not exceeded 8 million. Despite this, studies are hopeful that the summit's aim can be achieved once committed

efforts are undertaken. These include settling conflicts, achieving peace, utilizing investments to achieve sustainable economic development, developing school nutrition programs, directing agricultural research to improve products, etc.

Women are more affected by undernutrition than men due to the physiological differences between them. Generally, women need a



greater quantity of food during pregnancy or breast-feeding. The increase in deaths among newly born babies is sometimes attributed to undernutrition, especially when mothers are



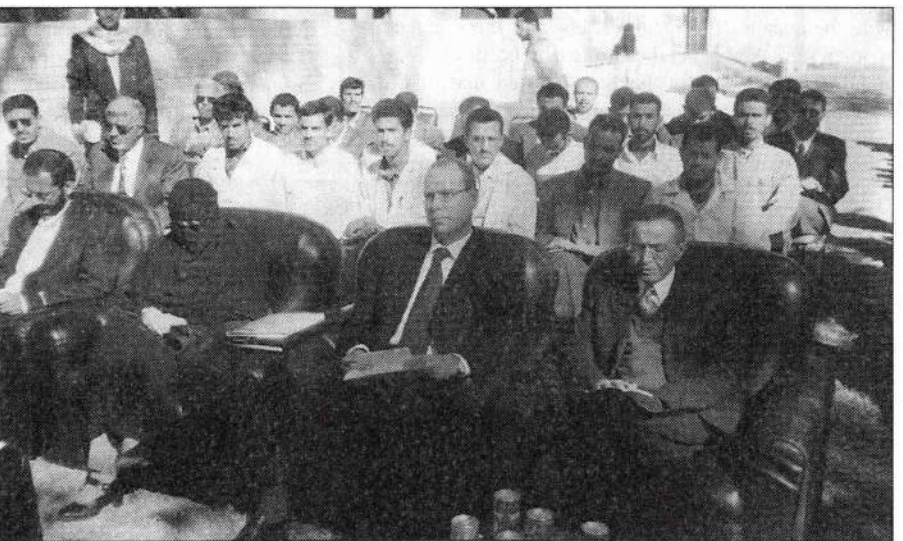
young. A number of international initiatives have been taken to fight this phenomenon. Today, the FAO is the largest specialized UN body involved in the fight to combat undernutrition and improve people's living standards. Unfortunately, the resources of the organization are sometimes prone to be misused, especially in developing countries. Conflicts and hard circumstances sometimes make the efficient functioning of these organizations difficult. It is the responsibility of countries, particularly, the developing countries, to ensure the provision of help to the poor. Countries wishing to get rid of undernutrition must cooperate with international organizations by providing them with accurate studies on poverty. If favoritism dominates studies, all efforts to eradicate poverty will be blown away with the wind.

Third Psyche Training Course to Enhance Mental Health Care

The third psyche training course of four weeks duration was inaugurated on February 3, 2001 in the Psychological and Neuro Hospital. The course was organized in collaboration with the British Council and funded by the British Embassy. A number of specialized doctors from the hospital, Sana'a University and Science and Technology University will train 30 persons working in the hospital, Central Prison Authority and some governmental hospitals in the Capital.

The course is to improve mental health and the quality of psychiatric care in Yemen. Psychiatric Nursing is now a key component of mental health care in every setting. In Yemen, mental health care is constrained by lack of resources and hence, the course was organized to train and qualify trainees to grasp and understand more about psychiatric disturbances and the principles of psychiatric

nursing. They will also learn and apply the principles of psychiatric nursing and be trained in the teaching of knowledge and



skills to others. It should be mentioned here that this is the third psyche training course; the first was organized in the hospital, while the second and the third were organized in collaboration with the British council with funding from the British Embassy.

As the Inauguration of UNAIDS Day Take Place

AIDS: A Matter of Concern

HIV is the virus causing AIDS, the ever dangerous disease. If such a virus enter the body it starts destroying the immunity system gradually. Consequently, infected person won't be able to resist any bacteria or whatsoever that may affect his body. AIDS is the last phase of infection. The word AIDS is an abbreviation of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. The WHO celebrates the international day for fighting AIDS. An annual report is being issued pertaining to this issue emphasizing the hazards of this disease and ways of protection. The virus is transferred through the sexual intercourse in all its forms, through blood transfer, surgical instruments, teeth brush, etc. 90% of the virus is being transferred through sexual intercourse. The report also revealed that every day 22,000 persons are being infected by



tions to recalculate current estimates on people living with HIV/AIDS. These calculations are based on the previously estimates for 1997 and recent trends in HIV/AIDS surveillance in various populations. A methodology developed in collaboration with international experts was used to calculate the new estimates on prevalence and incidence of HIV and AIDS deaths, as well as the number of children infected through mother to child transmission of HIV. Different approaches are used to estimate HIV prevalence in countries with low-level, concentrated or generalized epidemics. The current estimates do not claim to be an exact count of infections. Rather they use a methodology that has thus far proved accurate on producing estimates that give a

good indication of the magnitude of the epidemic in individual countries. However, these estimates are constantly being revised as countries improve their surveillance systems and collect more information. In Yemen, information on the current status of HIV prevalence is limited. In 1988, 5 percent of six workers tested in one site were HIV positive. Among STD clinic patients, HIV prevalence among patients tested increased from 2 percent in 1993 to 5 percent in 1997. In 1998, 3 percent of STD clinic patients tested were HIV positive. We are looking forward to seeing the fruits and hard work of the UNAID programs so as to prevent any further sufferings in our country.



this disease. People carry the virus for ten years before developing the symptoms of AIDS. In 1999 and during the first quarter of 2000, UNAIDS and WHO worked closely with national governments and research institu-



OPHTHALMIC EDUCATION (25)

TRACHOMA - Part 1

Dr. Tawfik K. AL-Khatib
Ass. Prof. of ophthalmology
Faculty of Medicine
Sana'a University

The epidemiology of trachoma

Trachoma can vary from a mild to a very severe disease in different situations, the most severe form of trachoma is called hyperendemic trachoma and it is seen in some rural village communities, where almost every one has either active trachoma or scars from an earlier infection.

Why does the same infection produce a mild disease in one situation and a severe blinding disease in another situation?

Factors that influence the pattern of the disease are: -

1. Trachoma produces such poor and short-lived immunity that reinfection is very likely to occur.
2. Trachoma can only spread in poor, overcrowded communities with poor hygiene where conjunctival discharges frequently pass from eye to eye. This condition is sometimes called promiscuity, just as sexual promiscuity describes close genital contact in a community.
3. The main carriers of infection are children below the age of 10.

Trachoma is the most common cause of preventable blindness in the world, with some 5.6 million people blind and around 146 million cases of active disease in need of treatment. The word Trachoma comes from the Greek word for "rough," which describes the surface appearance of the conjunctiva (the white part of the eye) in chronic trachoma.

The highest incidence of trachoma is in the dry, hot, dusty, climatic zones which stretch from North India through the Middle East to North Africa and the Sahel region of central West Africa.

In Yemen it is common in western and southern areas such as Mareb, Hadramout and Shabwah. The organism that causes trachoma is called Chlamydia Trachomatis, which has characteristics halfway between a bacteria and a virus.

The symptoms and signs of trachoma:

The symptoms are typical of any conjunctivitis:

1. Irritation of the eye;
2. Red eye;
3. Discharge;
4. Eyelid swelling;
5. Pain;
6. Light sensitivity and
7. Conjunctival and corneal changes like follicles and papillae.

The disease spreads from child to child by: -

- a) Direct contact from the fingers of children and their mothers;
- b) Via cloths, handkerchiefs and pillows;
- c) Overcrowding;
- d) Poor hygiene and
- e) In particular, large numbers of flies help the disease to spread.

Reference:

Eye diseases in hot climates by John Sondford Smith, 2nd Edition.

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To

50%



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Women Prisoners' Conditions Reviewed



**Tawfeek
al-Sharaabi**
Yemen Times

Under the auspices of the al-Afif Young Girls Forum, the program of Yemeni Woman's Issues in Arab Woman Year was organized last Monday in the headquarters of al-Afif Cultural Corporation. The program extends over the whole year and is held on Mondays. The program discusses a wide-range of important points and issues pertaining to women and their crucial role in the society.

The first meeting focused on women behind bars in the world in general and in Yemen in particular. The meeting was quite informative and enlightening as many creditable papers were presented. There were also many valuable interpositions and questions which enriched the deliberations with actual happenings from inside the Yemeni society.

The al-Afif Young Girl Forum, con-

sists of Ibtihal al-Dula'ee, Belqis al-Lahabi and Zaidah Shibam, the working team of the program, who exerted commendable efforts to make the program a success.

Belqis al-Lahabi said "At first the whole program was conceived as an idea to hold two or three discussion meetings in one month. However, as we reflected at length on it, it became bigger and bigger. It was like a snowball that gains momentum and becomes bigger the more it rolls down. We felt encouraged to do something for Yemeni women as this is the Year of Arab Women which was announced at a conference that was held in Egypt. We talked to many women, many organizations and got a clear vision of what we are going to do. At the end of these meetings I'm pinning high hopes on doing something for Yemeni women in general and women prisoners in particular."

In his paper, **Mr. Stefan Schwarz**, representing the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and person in charge of visiting prisons said "The ICRC has certain princi-

ples that are followed in all the countries of the world. We visit prisons, talk with prisoners and then we talk with prisons' officials so as to find solutions for prisoners' problems. After paying visits to prisons, the committee present a report to the authorities concerned so as to improve conditions inside the prisons. It has been a firm stand and basic principle of the committee not to report about what we see but about what we did. This will help us a lot to help the prisoners."

Mr. Stefan laid strong emphasis on many social problems that have a negative effect on Yemeni women prisoners. He said "These social problems outside have a strong negative effect on their conditions inside. Most women prisoners are convicted of immoral crimes which lead them to face a more hazardous situation. By and large, they are no longer accepted in society. This makes them feel that they are forgotten, which may have harmful psychological effect. Being completely isolated from their families outside and due to limited medical facilities in Yemen, women in prison also face medical problems. Some of them give birth to children who become isolated and disintegrated from the society just like their mothers. This is not just. They have committed no crime and still they are oppressed and isolated."

He pointed out a new program the ICRC is working on to improve the conditions of women prisoners and improve their financial and moral situation. He said "I believe that the greatest thing to do for these women is to maintain their contact with the outside world. We want other women to make at least one visit per month for every Yemeni woman prisoner. Women from the Red Crescent or National Women

Committee or from any humanitarian organization can do this. This will help improve their psychological situation as they won't feel isolated. If women visiting these prisoners come to reflect their conditions to the people, the picture will be clearer and the people will organize more assistance and help for them and for those who leave prison. Women visiting these prisoners could also help teaching them any crafts such as sewing, reading, etc. This will stand them in better stead and give them a push to start a new life after leaving prison. So jail period can be properly used to prepare them for the period after leaving prison.

The first project of the ICRC will be launched this month in Mahweet. The committee will provide women prisoners with some sewing machines. Volunteers from the local Red Crescent will visit the prisoners on a regular basis. They will also teach them sewing. The ICRC will also provide some extra sewing machines as gifts for those finishing serving their jail terms."

Mr. Stefan said that the project was an experimental one in Mahweet and would be applied in all the prisons of the Republic. He encouraged other organizations to join hands and collaborate in serving this noble purpose.

Mrs. Nadiyah Ali, lawyer, presented a paper pointing out reasons behind the lack of social studies and research on women prisoners, reasons behind women becoming involved in the field of crime. She said "The reasons behind that are many, however the most outstanding is the framework of Yemeni society and the conventions, social customs and norms."

Mrs. Nadiyah asserted that this situation is in urgent need of serious consideration, especially as there have



been great social, economic changes within the country in which women are a major part.

The society still does not look at women from the traditional angle. Yemeni society cannot understand or envisage that women can take to violence as men do. As a result they have an antagonistic stand against them.

The phenomenon of women prisoners is worth consideration and research as the woman is the main block of the family. When a woman is in prison the whole family is certain to suffer and this will upset the social balance of the whole society."

In her paper, **Mrs. Nadiyah** indicated that the Reformatory has failed to achieve and fulfill the reason behind its establishment, to train and re-qualify them psychologically and technically.

"Some women are charged with being alone with other men. After some time these women are sent to prison alone while men are left free. Besides, this has no legal background and there is no reference to this in the Criminal and Procedure Law.

The passive attitude of officials towards women when they are suspected of any crime makes them come up with biased and unjust decisions. Besides, when there is no legal background they depend upon their jurisprudence so as to settle the case. This is wrong and is not at all legal. Sometimes we come to find that the two parents are sentenced to prison at the same time. So they are locked in

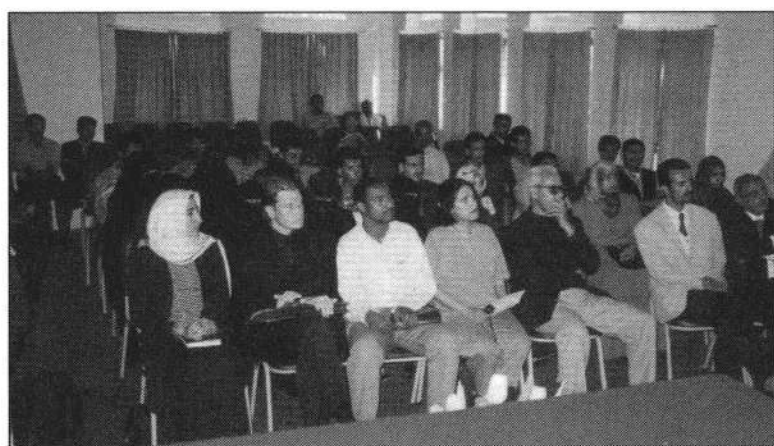
two separate prisons, despite the fact that this goes in contradiction to the Criminal and Procedure Law. As a result the children come to find themselves with their mother inside prison. Detention Pending Investigations are also set up to keep those suspected of any crime until he is convicted or acquitted of the charge. This is only applied for men. So women are convicted from the first time they enter jail."

In the meeting **Mrs. Sameena A. Nazir**, coordinator of women's Rights Advocacy Program in the International Human Rights Law Group, also talked about a project that is to be launched in Yemen to support women's rights. The project will be in collaboration with the Sisters Arabic Forum.

Fawziah Hassan, a lieutenant and in charge of women's prison in Sana'a asserted that no violations of women's human rights are taking place inside the prison. She also noted that their number is not much less than what it was reported to be, and that is 1000 women prisoners.

The meeting was enriched by many interposition and questions from attendants and media people who focused on many issues of great importance.

The second meeting of this program, held in al-Afif Cultural Corporation, is put off till the coming Saturday instead of today Monday 19.2.2001.



Hajj (Pilgrimage) in Islam



**Abdullah S.
Hussein
Al-Hashedi**
Sana'a University

Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is to be done once in a life time. In the Holy Quran, Allah says: "And proclaim to mankind the Hajj. They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, they will come from every deep and distant (wide) mountain, highway (to perform Hajj). That they may witness things that are of benefits to them (i.e. reward of Hajj in the hereafter...)"

Literally, the word Hajj means repairing to a thing for the sake of a visit and technically it refers to the repairing to Bait-Allah (The House of Allah) built by the Prophet Ibrahim and his Son Ismael (God's blessings be upon them.) Allah rewarded them by calling it his own house and by making it the center towards which they must face when saying prayers. In the Holy Quran, Allah says:

"Verily, the first House (of worship) appointed for mankind was that at Bakkah (Mecca), full of blessing, and

a guidance for mankind and Jinns."

[3: 96]

According to the majority of scholars Hajj was legislated in the ninth year after the Hijrah. The months in which Hajj is to be performed are thus spoken of: "The Hajj (pilgrimage) is (in) the well-known (lunar year) months (i.e. the 10th month, the 11th month and the first ten days of the 12th month of the Islamic calendar." [2:197]

Hajj is obligatory for every Muslim who is adult, sane and able, only once in his life. Therefore, one who denies its obligation is not a Muslim. The obligation to perform the Hajj is further subject to the condition that one is able to undertake a journey to Mecca. Allah says: "And Hajj to the House (Ka'bah) is a duty that mankind owes to Allah, those who can afford the expenses (for one's conveyance, provision and residence)...."

In fact, there may be a physical or financial disability. The danger of life may also be a reason for freeing a man from the obligation of Hajj. The prophet (Muhammad) and many of his companies could not perform a pilgrimage after the flight to the town of Madina. That was because their lives would not have been safe at Mecca. Before going to perform Hajj there are many essential things one should

know. A Muslim has got to be ready mentally, spiritually, physically and financially. The following list of things should be kept in mind by all Muslims intending to perform Hajj:

1) Remember that Hajj can be acceptable to Allah only when the following two conditions are satisfied:

a) Ikhlas or purifying one's intention. In other words, Hajj should be done with sincerity to Allah seeking to please Him alone.

b) The careful following of the prophet's example. That is making sure one does Hajj according to the teachings of the prophet (peace be upon him), and sticking to that at all times.

2) Buy your Ihram (Hajj dress) and learn how to put it on comfortably just to avoid any embarrassing situations.

3) Make sure that your passport is valid and you have obtained a visa from your country if you come from a non-Muslim country. If your passport doesn't show that you are a Muslim, then you should get a certificate showing that you are a Muslim.

4) Try to attend a workshop by a local community center to understand the rules and regulations about the day-to-day activities of Hajj. If not possible, you can talk to people who have experienced Hajj or at least get Hajj guide



books and take them along with you, 5) Get yourself a safety belt with safety pockets to keep your money and documents with you all the time.

6) Don't worry about medication as there is plenty of medicine. You can find it easily in hospitals or you can buy it from pharmacies even without a doctor's prescription.

7) Be as patient as you can. Both

towns Mecca and Madina are going to be overcrowded with more than a million Muslim doing the same rites in the same place. And to keep your Hajj in a good standing, try not to be in a position in which you cause harm to others.

8) In some places like Mina and Arafat you will be living in tents which look very identical. Therefore, try to identify the number and the direction of tents so that you can make it back without trouble.

9) Muslim females can not travel alone by themselves. They should take a male member of their immediate family: a father, a brother, a son or a husband who has to be a Muslim as well.

Like all other pillars of Islam, Hajj has its own invaluable values for Muslims. In fact no other institution in the world has the wonderful influence of the Hajj in leveling all distinctions of race, color and rank. People of all races and all countries meet together before the Holy House of Allah as his servants and as members of one Divine family. Not only this but they are also all clad in one dress (two white sheets) and there remains nothing to distinguish the high from the low.

They all move in one way having but one word to speak. *Labbaika Allah-*

umma Labbaik meaning (here we are O Allah, here we are in your presence). Mecca is the center in which Muslims create and refresh in themselves the faith that all Muslims are equal, irrespective of their geographical or cultural origin. All in all, we can say that Hajj is the only occasion on which Muslims are taught how to live in one way, how to act in one way and how to feel in one way.

Another inner value of Hajj lies in the higher spiritual experience which is made possible by the unique assembling of men, the experience of standing in the Divine presence. God is surely not in Mecca to the exclusion of other places, yet that vast assemblage at Mecca sees Him and feels His presence as if he is actually there in their very midst.

Finally, all Muslims know that once Hajj is completed with sincerity, they will lose all their sins so that when they return back home, they go as pure as they were born.

Abu Hurairah, Allah's messenger said, "whoever performs Hajj to this House (Kaaba) and does not approach his wife for sexual relations nor commits sins (while performing Hajj), he will come out as sinless as a newly-born child (just delivered by his mother)." [Sahih Al Bukhari, Hadith No. 1819]

SECURITY VACANCY

The Embassy of Japan in Sana'a announces Vacancies for security guards based on the following requirements:

- Yemeni Male National
- 28 Years Old or Younger
- Good Health
- Secondary School Certificate or Higher
- Security Work Experience (Min Two Years)
- Excellent Communication Skills
- Valid Driving License
- Adequate English Language (Subject to Test)

Interested and qualified candidates must submit their Resume and Documents no later than February 28, 2001, to:

The Embassy of Japan
Algeria St. #2
P.O. Box 817
Sana'a - Republic of Yemen

Invitation for Development

Seeks Developers interested in Developing GASIR AL-GOBAN TARIM, Hadhramout, surrounded by LARGE FARMS outside the FENCE. Prospective developers invited to inspect the location before proposing terms and conditions.

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Improve Your English



Dr. Ramakanta Sahu
Associate Professor
College of Education, Mahweet

I. What To Say

Preparing for Exam

Shafiq: Welcome Sadam. You seem tense and worried. Is any thing the matter?

Sadam: Well, my performance in the terminal exam so far has been anything but satisfactory. Moreover, the most difficult papers are ahead. Such a hell of a lot to memorize.

Shafiq: What is there to feel so much tense about? Tension is enemy No.1 for both physical and mental health. Prepare for the papers as best as you can. Utilize the time at hand. Be relaxed.

Sadam: I really envy you. You are always calm and are never nervous like me. What is the secret?

Shafiq: It's so simple. I never keep the things till the last moment. I try not to cram. I understand the lesson as clearly as I can, make notes on it by synthesizing information from various sources and revise it at regular intervals. As a result the pressure on my memory is considerably reduced at the time of the exam.

Sadam: That's the real difference between a cautious student like you who takes his studies seriously and a careless student like me who postpones things until the exam is round the corner.

Shafiq: You know we have short term memory and long term memory. Once we read a thing, it is stored in the short memory and is forgotten shortly afterwards. But the more you practice and revise, the new incoming information passes from the short term memory to the long term memory where it stays. You can draw from this reserve as you draw money from a bank.

Sadam: How systematic and convincing is your logic.

Shafiq: There is one more thing I would like to mention. Well, before the exam, cultivate the practice of writing your answers. It will help you make your answers precise and relevant. You can also discover your own problems in writing such as spelling and punctuation errors. That would help you to organize your material better in a more appropriate format. All these have to be practiced in a regular manner.

Sadam: Do you know, Shafiq, my problem? It is tomorrow mindedness. That's why I suffer.

Shafiq: Now that you are aware of your shortcoming try and get over it. Remember. Consistency is the key to success.

II. How to say it in one word:

1. He is such a person that no one can hate him
2. The little boy was lazy and careless.
3. Mohsen worked hard and failed.
4. You are old and not weak.

5. Immediately the minister finished his speech, I started reciting my poem.

Answers to last week's questions:

1. He is **either** a fool **or** a scoundrel.
2. My car is **superior to** and **more expensive than** yours.
3. He is **not only** honest **but also** sincere.
4. This is the reason **why** our football team suffered a defeat.
5. It is really surprising that he did not behave **as** he should have.

III. How to express it in one word:

1. loud enough to be heard
2. clear enough to be visible
3. handwriting that can be read easily
4. gathering of persons for the purpose of hearing a speaker or a singer.
5. official examination of accounts

Answers to last week's questions:

1. Smallest unit of one element that can take part in a chemical reaction: **atom**
2. Person who is attached to the staff of one ambassador- **attaché**
3. Room within the roof of a house: **attic**
4. Person with legal authority to act for another in business or law: **attorney**
5. Public sale at which goods are sold to the highest bidder: **auction**

IV: Re-write the following sentences according to instructions given in brackets:

1. The government has *established* a number of new schools (Replace the italicized word with a phrasal verb)
2. Health is a that money cannot buy. (Use the appropriate form of "bless" in the blank)
3. He cannot lift the box. (Use the contracted form of the negative)
4. The teacher told the students to behave (Use the appropriate reflexive pronoun)
5. He is so honest that he won't do such a thing. (Rewrite the sentence using 'too')

Answers to last week's questions:

1. Faiz **always** goes for a walk.
2. Abdullah **often** watches films.
3. Ameer **sometimes** works in his garden.
4. Sadiq **never** plays cricket.

V. Words of wisdom:

"The childhood shows the man,
as morning shows the day."

—John Milton

Mr. Ahmad Abdu Al-Sa'ad, Head of the High Institute, Mahweet talks to the Yemen Times

Teacher preparation is a key factor in bringing about a qualitative improvement in any educational scenario. Teacher effectiveness is to a significant extent determined by the nature and characteristic of the pre-service training package that teacher-trainees are exposed to at the High Institutes. As such, various High Institutes of Yemen are playing a pioneering role in achieving social transformation and the Deans of these Institutes are performing a yeoman's job in the educational hierarchy.

With a view to assessing the role and significance of the High Institutes Dr. Ramakanta Sahu, along with Khalid Ali Ali Al-Quzahy talked to the Dean of High Institute, Mahweet, Mr. Ahmad Abdu al Sa'ad. Excerpts.

RKS: Please give us a brief idea about the High Institute, Mahweet and highlight the value of the Diploma Program for preparing teachers.

AAS: The High Institute, Mahweet was set up in 1993, with the objective of preparing qualified teachers for teaching the first four levels of the Elementary schools and remedying the shortage of teachers in the province. The Ministry of Education played a key role in taking a perceptive step in setting up this institute as well as equipping the institute with qualified teacher trainers and text books for successful implementation of the academic agenda of the institute. The institute offers a two-year diploma course in Education. Initially our clientele included freshers who graduated from high schools. But we give priority participants who, after graduating from high schools, have been employed as teachers. So, currently we are offering both pre-service in service teacher training courses.

RKS: How many trainees are currently enrolled in the institute?

AAS: At present there are 530 participants on the institute's rolls. Out of this 136 are inservice teachers and the remaining 394 participants are pre-service trainees.

RKS: How adequately and efficiently does the course module equip the trainees for their future task?

AAS: As far as the course module followed at the institute it was prepared by a qualified and experienced team consisting of Jordanian and Yemeni experts. I personally think that the course is tailor made for the trainees in the Yemeni context.



RKS: How many pupil-teachers have graduated so far from this institute? Have all of them been employed?

AAS: The year wise break-up of students graduating from this institute are as follows:

| | |
|---------|-----|
| 1994-95 | 60 |
| 1995-96 | 105 |
| 1996-97 | 210 |
| 1997-98 | 250 |
| 1998-99 | 170 |

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks and gratitude to the Ministry of Education, especially to the Minister of Education Dr. Yahya Asuaiby as well as to the Education office in the province, who have taken steps to provide employment to all trainees graduating from this institute.

RKS: How many High Institutes are there in Mahweet governorate?

AAS: This is the only High Institute in the entire governorate and it receives students from all parts of the province.

RKS: How would you evaluate the course structure in English? Does it impart to the trainees the knowledge and skill in English to teach the foreign language effectively?

AAS: The English course is being taught for one semester which is not enough to build competencies of the trainees. It is not an essential course because the graduate teachers are expected to teach the first four levels of the elementary School where English is not a part of the curriculum.

RKS: Are there any plans to give English more focused attention in the Institute's curriculum in future?

AAS: In future, by God's will, we shall open an English department and offer enough courses in English to our students so as to qualify them as teachers of English.

RKS: What, do you think, can be done to promote proficiency in English?

AAS: I think the following measures would enhance our learners' competence in English:

- (i) Teaching English should begin from early stages in the elementary grade;
- (ii) Continual in-service training programs should be organized for teachers of English;
- (iii) In view of the fact that English is a global language, the media should play a more dynamic role in teaching English;
- (iv) New and modern methods and techniques should be adopted in teaching English.

RKS: Are the pupil-teachers given sufficient opportunities for classroom interaction with teacher educators?

AAS: We are trying our best to promote the trainees ability of interaction with the teachers who are well qualified and experienced enough to monitor classroom interaction. But I regret to say that despite all our efforts most students don't open up. Most of them are craving for a certificate only and are not keen to gain knowledge. We are unhappy also over their final scores.

RKS: What could be causes leading to this lack of motivation?

AAS: Most of them are not interested to do hardwork. Of course, the role of circumstantial factors cannot be overlooked, one of which is the poor living conditions.

RKS: Anything more you would like to add?

AAS: I very much thank Yemen Times to have given me this opportunity. I implore mercy of Allah to be upon late Dr. Abdul Aziz Al-Saqaf, the founder of Yemen Times. I also thank you for this interview.

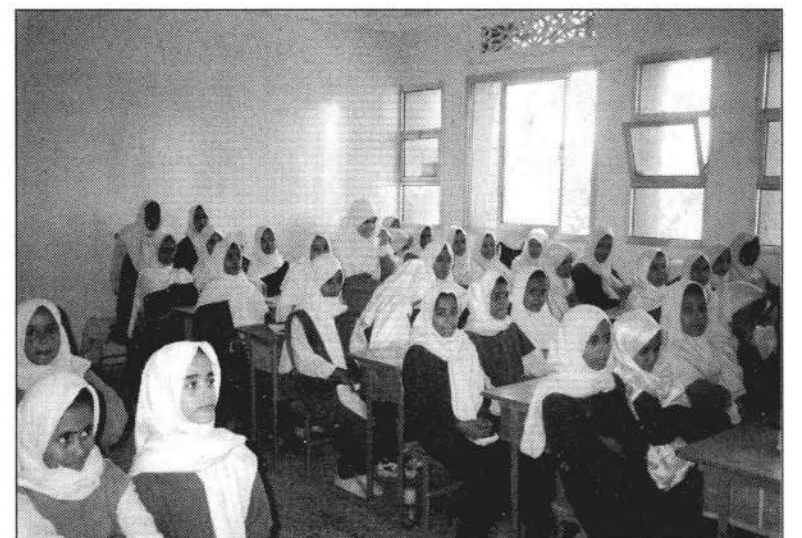
The Role of Education

Ali Saleh Mashar
Lodar, Abyan

No doubt education is the back bone of every society and the real criterion by which a society is judged. So what is education and how does it affect a community in general?

Education is considered a training, a discipline of mind that brings out hidden powers in the individual and at the same time brushes him up. It is well known that the inborn abilities of a man are like natural plants. They may serve him to some extent but the benefits that a man gets from these abilities will be more fruitful if these natural abilities are perfected by education. Thus education acts as a positive stimulus which does not only arouse the hidden powers but also perfects and organizes them for the benefit and welfare of individuals as well as the society.

Childhood is the best time to begin one's education. This is because of the importance of the childhood period in every man's life as psychologists and educationalists point out. It has been proved that children acquire knowledge, experiences and skills more easily and in a shorter period than grown-ups.



Besides, the knowledge that children acquire lasts longer. Because of this the need of early education arises and much care is to be expended on this. It is obvious that children's home is their school where they receive their primary knowledge in the hands of their mothers. And when children join schools and colleges at a much later stage, they find they are adding something new to their previous knowledge. As years pass by, a man starts his self-education through further studies, observations and experiences. Thus education accompanies man all through his life.

The more a man learns, the better he can serve himself and the society. Nothing can boost the level of social and economic progress in any nation unless it identifies first the men who will definitely contribute towards building up the whole country. Because of this demand, governments should see that people get a considerable amount of basic education. In our country we have various schools, training institutions and colleges with different specializations for the purpose of preparing qualified citizens who can share the task of building up the future society.



YOUTH FORUM



The Depth of Despair

I just want to say that I am very eager to express my sincere wishes to all the staff of Yemen Times. I also should mention that YT has improved above limits. I am really regular to have its issues every Monday.

I am a young man always eager to know who I am. A child or young! I am a symbol of those who are always idling in the streets as if these places are their safest resort. The attainment of maturity was the major aim we were looking forward to. We, the young generation, are bound to come to this stage one day. Now here we are, mature and ambitious but unfortunately encouraged by none. Nobody cares for us but our parents. Undoubtedly, we are young as we know but children as they think.

We study with no hope for the future, the only idea we have is that we study to be at home. In our society, a mediator and money are two significant things we need to achieve our goals. So we usually have the employment

not because we are graduates but almost because we have the two major assets, a mediator and money. As we know some of our friends have two or more salaries at the same time while they only attend one while others have none. I hope the government would do something against this deadly virus that defeats our capability of sharing the development of this country. Our life is full of emptiness, nothing useful to fill the time with, no public clubs to waste the time in. Actually, I could only see some ray of hope I wish no one to erase it.

Finally, I wonder who we are. Children or youth! I asked and am still asking who is responsible for this sordid state of affairs. Please save our youth before it's too late!

Aatef A'Moula Saleh
e-mail: aatefsaleh@hotmail.com

Call for local elections

Promptly act my friends! so as not to repent
Choose the one you see as the best

Be it the "Horse", "Sun" or the "Crescent"
But think of the future in terms of the present
Make up your mind, be not a fanatic
Never be careless about such a topic
Be tension-free and forget parties' narcotic
Never fear them since Yemen is democratic

You may belong to no party, yet do participate
Your vote's crucial for your fate
See not the party nor relation nor money of the candidate
Be honest and for the best unequivocally advocate

To make our beloved country great
Elect the best person who you deem fit.

* The words of "Horse", "Sun" and "Crescent" are symbols of some parties in Yemen

Khalid Ali al-Quzahy
Mahweet

Views of Candidates on Local Elections



Farouq Al-Kamali
Yemen Times, Taiz

Thousands of Yemenis are going to the polls tomorrow to vote for members of the local councils in all governorates and districts. By this, Yemenis will be establishing a real democracy through honest elections if they commit themselves to it.

It is a pity that we have not benefited from the experience of 10 years during which we have held elections three times. People discovered that, during those elections they were cheated with tall hollow promises. I can confidently say that the elections were unfair owing to lack of people's awareness and lack of neutrality of the government machinery, army and the media.

It is common experience that when campaigning for election, candidates distribute money and make tall promises. The president and government officers intensify visits and lay foundation stones for many projects. Ironically, smiles of candidates before elections turn to an unequivocal frown at the face of people after elections are over.

Many people tend to vote for people who have no clear programs, no objectives, no qualifications; what matters is the tribal, social and political affiliation.

Will Yemenis make the same mistake tomorrow? Are they electing unqualified people who don't know how to write or read? Or are they going to make a change? Have they taken a lesson from past experiences to elect

qualified candidates this time? In Taiz, 2900 candidates are contesting for membership of local councils. These include only 17 women. I met with a number of candidates - independents or belonging to different political parties - to ask them about their expectations, plans and the like.



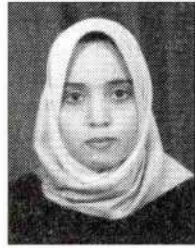
"Local Councils will transfer power to a different domain," said Mr. Faisal Saeed Farea, nominee of the Supreme Coordination Council of the opposition. "People will be able to manage their affairs by themselves and will participate in drawing up of a vision that will help lessen their sufferings," he added.

Mrs. Amat Al-Rahman Jahaf thinks that Yemenis are capable of developing their governorates and districts. "There cannot be a successful system of local councils unless people are fully aware of its importance," she added.



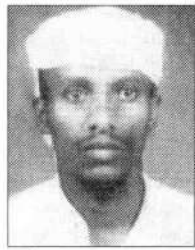
Mr. Imad Al-Saqqaf is the only independent journalist running for elections. He says: "Local councils have been among the important goals of Yemenis who have highlighted their need on many occasions. I consider local councils a positive beginning for building an institutional

democracy. A more important positive point about local councils is that they will draw the attention of the authorities to the remote and neglected areas."



Advocate Intisar Al-Atourney, independent, was surprised to find out that her name was dropped from the candidates' list. She fought hard to enroll her name again and she did it. It is worth mentioning that Intisar is the only candidate who holds a university degree among the other 22 illiterate candidates! She said that local councils would enhance public participation in the decision-making process and help them enforce laws in reality.

Wahbiah Mahmoud agrees with her saying that local councils are a system set up to unite the efforts of the government and the people in the decision-making process. "They will encourage people to contribute to the general development of the country," she added.



Ali Ahmad Abdullah Al-Ra'e, a candidate from a very marginalized section of society, the Al-Akhdam, is one of the runners for the elections. He is a qualified person and is among the few Akhdams who hold a

university degree. He deplored the practice of exploitation in the projects in his area, Asselow, by a specific class of people. About his expectations of the results he said: "People of my village respect and love me. Some parties wanted me to join them. But I decided to be an independent candidate and I hope that you as a newspaper will support me."



Another interesting candidate in Taiz is a strong-willed man raising the slogan "look at my abilities before you look at my handicap" He is Yasser Hamoud Al-Sharabi the only handicapped candidate in Taiz. He is a holder of a BA in Management. He said that he decided to run for the elections to improve the situation of handicapped people. "We are scorned by people, rejected by the government, we do not have schools, technical centers, etc." he said. As he concluded his statement he expressed the hope that people will treat the handicapped as productive.

Wahibah Jamal, a principal, decided to participate in the elections as a candidate due to her inner belief in women's rights. She said that she would do her best to represent women and find solutions to their problems. We wish all candidates, in general and the qualified women, handicapped and journalists in particular, all success. We also hope that people will live up to the challenge that faces them.

SILVER LINING

Mohammed Hatem Al-Qadhi
mhalqadhi@hotmail.com

Local Elections: Unfair Competition

Around 5.6 million people will cast their votes in the local elections tomorrow for 23,892 candidates competing for 7,032 seats. They will also nominate their representatives for governorate councils and say "yes" or "no" to the constitutional amendments. During the last few months, these two events have been at the top of everybody's agenda. In fact, there has been no event that has been debated and discussed elaborately like the constitutional amendments, which also received due attention from regional and international media.

The proceedings of these two events were associated with some security lapses and breakdowns that were visible in some areas. These incidents claimed the lives of some and caused injuries to some people too.

The most important point I would like to spotlight is to ask whether there is any fair competition between political parties in this election or not. The answer would be NO for various reasons.

First of all, the ruling party has got the power to exercise whatever pressure and influence it likes on public opinion. It has got the money too and other means, like media, which are of important value.

As we know, the government is still monopolizing television broadcasting stations which are very influential and effective in a society like Yemen where most of the people are still illiterate (75%). That is, media is still the first source of information for people particularly in the countryside where around 85% of the population live. This is one advantage for the ruling party.

It has also been using the official dailies to serve its political ends as these papers have reflected the one-sided opinions of the ruling party, favoring the constitutional amendments. In other words, the parties opposing constitutional amendments and those with comments on the way the elections will be run, did not have a chance to voice these opinions and debate their different opinion towards the two events. That is a disadvantage for them.

Another point is that the government big guys have been supporting the campaign of the ruling party in terms of conducting field visits to several areas and inaugurating a good number of development projects. The inauguration of these projects in this very time serves the political interests of the ruling party whose officials always shrug their shoulders and feel proud of these "great achievements." However, these projects and achievements are phantoms and exist only in the minds of these officials. To be realistic, most of these projects were inaugurated some years back. And some of the foundation stones that have been laid are of projects that will not see the light of day. I have experienced this in my area. We had a water project that was launched 15 years ago. Pipelines were planned for different villages, but water never ran in these pipes.

I believe that if we count the projects that were inaugurated in the last 15 years, we would conclude that if these projects existed and were of use to the public, Yemen could have become a paradise on earth. The problem is that most of these projects are phantom.

It seems I have gone astray of the main topic I would like to debate which is non-availability competition in the tomorrow election. The examples I have given above make it clear that the competition is unfair. This does not necessarily mean I am against the okay vote to the constitutional amendments or in favor of the opposition which is fragile segments. Rather, I am trying to find out objectively whether fair competitive election is guaranteed or not. This is because the non-existence of such a competition will affect our infant democratic experience which we all are concerned with nursing and developing.

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Crystals
by Mohamed Kadri

Sugared Rice & Bitter Tea

While I was in Scotland, people in a coffee shop began to stare at me as if I was an alien from another planet when I asked for some sugar to put in my tea. After having a few sniffs, I asked what there was for dinner, so the gentle old waitress told me that there would be rice for dinner. I felt like jumping for joy I was dying of hunger and had longed for a good old rice meal, a meal that I hadn't been lucky enough to eat during the months which had passed since my arrival in Edinburgh. However, and to my bad luck, the rice that I thought would be a fine dinner, turned out to be sugared rice served as a dessert. Once again, people stared at me in amazement as I openly expressed my surprise and disappointment.

Recalling my days in Beirut, I used to have an English teacher who had previously taught in Aden. Weekends to him were the time to enjoy cups of tea prepared in the Adeni style; adding fine black tea, sugar and herbs to the water and leaving it to boil for a long time followed by the addition of some milk. To him, this was more like "cooked tea," than the prepared tea usually drank elsewhere!

But this "cooked tea" had been described by another Arab colleague working in Yemen as "soup" and far from the regular tea that he was used to.

To my wonder, I had met a friend in Egypt who always praised a good cup of tea when it was, as he always used to say, "black like a summer night's sky."

And while I used to hear an English saying; "take a cup of tea whenever you are thirsty", I knew an old European man in Aden who considered having tea as irregular and anomalous behavior. Instead, he used to collect rejected qat branches and boil them to satisfy his taste.

In conclusion, it seems that the saying, "on what they love, people are of different sects" is indeed, quite true!

Why Punish Iraq Further?

I have rarely been so ashamed of being British as I have been over their stance toward Iraq, and never more so than last night, when once again this government did the bidding of their American "partners in crime" and joined in the despicable missile attack on Iraq. This is already a country which has lost one and a half million people (mainly children) thanks to the barbaric sanction policy so hotly pursued and so dear in particular, to the US/British Governments hearts.

What you may ask are the reasons for this latest sudden and cowardly attack? Well they appear to be twofold. Firstly, America was becoming more and more alarmed at Iraq's show of support for the beleaguered Palestinians who they were happy to see also being slaughtered by their Israeli comrades, they were also concerned that Iraq was becoming stronger and more popular within the Arab world to the detriment of their barbaric sanctions policy. So this was in effect a flexing of muscle from the Texan cowboy now "leading" America, a message not only to Iraq but also to the rest of the Arab Leaders, to start towing the line or else. Secondly, they were also sending a message to Iraq that when in future US/British pilots illegally fly over their sovereign Country and drop bombs on their civilians they better not have the temerity to respond!

It seems that the American Government are really losing their grip on Iraq if they have to resort to this kind of behavior, and it seems they have also learned nothing in all their years of experience in the Middle East if they think Iraq can be intimidated by their bullying, it hasn't worked in ten years and it certainly won't work now. Look at the Palestinians, 50 years of terror and bullying by the Israelis has made them ever more determined to fight their aggressor.

I sincerely hope that when that "Dads army" recruit, Colin Powell visits the Middle East next week he will learn in no uncertain terms of the displeasure of the Arab people.

The Kuwaiti and Saudi governments should also be ashamed for allowing their airbases to be used and abused time and time again to cause more misery and deaths to the Iraqi people. In fact shame on any country who shows support for this "hit and run" affair which the US are attempting to play down by describing as "a routine exercise". If the world accepts this pathetic justification it will give them, and the British government the green light to continue the illegal bombing and genocide of the Iraqi people. This outrageous terrorist attack must receive unequivocal world-wide condemnation.

It's time for all Arab Nations to band together and kick the US and Britain out of the Middle East once and for all, only when they are free from their unmitigated meddling will there be peace.

Jamil Al-Hadithy
United Kingdom

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Second Titanic HYUNDAI BARON Arrives at ACT

Greeted by agents ADEN MILLENNIUM MARITIME SERVICES

Hundai Baron, second in the series of large capacity container vessels, which belongs to Hyundai merchant Marine Co. Ltd (HMM), Seoul, Korea, arrived at Aden port (ACT) on Thursday 15/02/2001 from Rotterdam port with 4000 TEUs on board. This occasion was



celebrated on board the vessel by the agents AMMS, headed by Mr. Abu Baker Sheibani Vice Chairman, Mr. Omer Sheibani, Director, Mr. A. R. Sheibani, G.M. of AMMS, Mr. Arif Sheibani, Mr. Mua'd Sheibani and Capt. David Mockett, Consultant for AMMS, and Capt. George Pass, Senior Operations Manager (PSA). An exchange of souvenirs took place to mark the occasion.



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Titanic Hyundai Admiral Moors at ACT

The container vessel Hyundai Admiral arrived at Aden port on Thursday 01/02/2001 from Rotterdam port with 4100 TEUs on board and a reception was organized to mark the occasion. The reception was attended by the agents, AMMS, headed by Mr. Abu Baker Sheibani, Vice Chairman, Mr. Omer Sheibani, Director, Mr. A. R. Sheibani, G.M of AMMS, Mr. Tan Kee Chai, General Manager (PSA), Capt. George Pass, Senior Operations Manager (PSA), Mr. Michael Lee Seng Chong, Operations Manager (PSA), Mr. Adnan Alkaff, Senior Manager (Yeminvest) and others.

During the celebrations, Mr. Abu Baker Sheibani and Capt. Veselin Kojicic, Master of Hyundai Admiral, exchanged souvenirs. Hyundai Merchant Marine Co. Ltd (HMM) was founded in March 28, 1976 as an affiliated company of Hyundai Group. It started with the transportation of crude oil from Middle

mind: Customer First, Customer Satisfaction and Customer Assurance.

Mr. Sheibani said "We have been in contact with HMM for some time to extend their service to ROY by calling at Aden port. Finally in December 2000, a delegation from HMM came to Yemen and visited all the major shipping agencies in order to choose a suitable partner to act as their agent. By the grace of Allah, we were proud to be the party chosen and are now actively promoting the service.

He also explained that today (1/2/2000) is a historic day for both Aden port and his company Aden Millennium Maritime Services. The vessel MV Hyundai Admiral calling at ACT marked the commencement of its service to Yemen, and at the same time it is the largest capacity container ship to call at ACT ever."

He also said, "The commencement of a service by a top global carrier will serve our country by expanding future trade and services between Yemen and the rest of the World. Initially there will be a four (4) call per month schedule and later on this will be extended to eight (8) calls."

He added, "This would not have been possible if it were not for the leadership and guidance of His Excellency President Ali Abdullah Saleh, whose policy has been to promote Aden and revitalize it as a strategic port, bringing it back to the position it deserves. Also the peace and stability that Yemen now enjoys makes it as an attractive center that world class companies in all sectors view with serious interest."

He also said, "One should not forget the importance of the role that Yeminvest plays in promoting the port of Aden and in their development of ACT, which is the corner stone of the Aden Free Zone project. ACT is under the management of PSA Corporation which has vast expertise and resources and is also no doubt an ideal transshipment center for the Middle East, providing customers with fast, efficient and value-added services."

He expressed his personal thanks to Mr. Tan Kee Chai, General Manager of PSA, Yemen, and Capt. George Pass and the rest of their team for their support and for joining him on board MV Hyundai Admiral during the token celebration with the captain of the ship on this special occasion.





Press Scanner

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr

Political controversy among political parties and organisations in Yemen as well as people's circles over the local councils elections and constitutional amendments due to take place on 20 February, is gaining more and more momentum as the date is approaching. Controversy and election campaigns propaganda are capturing the main news headlines and analytical articles of Yemeni press whether party organs or independent

or official newspapers.

News headlines front-paging official press and other media depict full support for both local elections and constitutional amendments, while those of opposition parties and independent papers convey viewpoints quite contrary and rejecting those offered by official media and press. So this week we will also be focusing on displaying the various points of view on both of the two vital topics of elections and referendum on the amendments.

Why We Reject Constitutional Amendments? was the title of an article written by Dr. Aydos Nassr Nasser in **Ath-Thawri weekly, organ of YSP, 12 Feb. 2001.** The author says that the authority has as usual strongly insisted on passing the constitutional amendments and putting them to referendum, refusing to listen to the opinions of political forces and the advice of friends. The authority has been betting on several factors for passing what it wants and backing off from the democratic approach which was established by the constitution of May 22, 1990.

The most important thing the authority is fighting against is the state of frustration and despair from which the masses suffer due to the government's failing economic and social policies, doctoring electorate votes and the use of the policy of carrot and stick with opposition forces.

Rulers have the right to work for staying in power and decision-making positions, but let them do it through ways that showing just the least amount of respect for daily statements praising "democracy" and "freedom of expression and human rights". We ask the rulers to stop their fallacies and to frankly announce their intention of clinging to power indefinitely. On our part we are adherent to the rights, freedoms and democratic climates brought by the May 22 unity. On February 20 the masses will go out to announce their "No" to the amendments that would devour their rights, freedoms and hopes.

Al-Mithaq weekly, organ of the People's General Congress Party, February 12, 2001.

Dr Abdulaziz al-Maqaleh wrote an article titled "Democracy Contrary to Fanaticism" saying nowadays the people are preparing for elections of local councils but we should not forget fanati-

cism, the enemy which breaks up efforts and decreases potential. The writer maintains that democracy takes expression by exterminating fanaticism giving the citizen the right to be an affiliate of the political party he wants and to choose in elections the person who he thinks is able to achieve the goals he believes in. No doubt the people who are now witnessing the candidacy race and the polling race are waiting for a deeper and more comprehensive race in development and production. As democracy opens the doors wide for the citizen to experience his freedom, it does the same thing for exploring capabilities and developing achievements.

Al-Ihya'a Al-Arabi weekly, organ of the Arab Baath Socialist Party, February 12, 2001.

The weekly's editorial theme is devoted to the state of war between the Arabs and Muslims on the one hand and the U.S. and Zionist entity on the other.

The editorial says the Arab nation and Muslim peoples have the right to consider themselves in a state of war with both the U.S. and Zionist entity, in addition to all forces and states supporting them in their continuous crimes against the Arabs and Muslims. For more than 50 years the United States and its entity in Palestine have been waging a real war on the Arabs and Muslims, inflicting heavy damage on the nation and her future generations as well as killing millions of her sons who refuse this hegemony and colonization. This situation makes it imperative to stand up to this American-Zionist war to protect the nation and safeguard her rights to the land and wealth.

After reviewing a good number of the crimes, conspiracies and wars waged by the U.S and the Zionist entity for more than fifty years, the editorial comes to a conclusion by saying that it

is a war declared and begun by the United States. Apart from and away from the regimes that accepted submission to the American ghoul for the purpose of keeping their power and interests, the masses of our Arab nation and Islamic peoples have the right to announce their confrontation with the American aggression. They have the right to confront war with war wherever they are and to render American interests in all fields as their targets. This is a right guaranteed by all human and international agreements and norms as a self-defence right and in defence of rights and existence.

The continued American aggression against the Arabs will not stop unless the United States feels that its policy could damage its interests and the future of its relations with the Arabs and Muslims.



Al-Ayyam weekly, February 14, 2001.

Abdulaziz bin Braik has written an article titled "Elections Platform War". He says that it comes to the mind of the citizen following up the ongoing elections process in our country, that most of the election platforms made by the political parties and the group of independents are programs to be implemented as soon as this party or that has won in the elections. It is a matter creating a dream for the citizen while on his way to the polling stations to cast his vote. The citizen would dream that the candidate he was going to cast his vote for would work for improving his living conditions and building schools, hospitals and health units. He will guarantee free treatment and education, reduced taxes, building roads and low prices for foodstuffs, etc. Such promises put forward by some candidates represent a temporary dose, creating a state of fantasy for the citizen. Though I do not feel pessimistic towards the election platforms of some parties or independent candidates for the local election, exaggeration in drawing up elections programs by some candidates sometimes causes the citizen to feel frustrated and disappointed when he perceives the impossibility of realizing what has been promised.

The supreme committee of the elections should work out legislations organising elections platforms that are practical and possible to implement.



RAY weekly, organ of Sons of Yemen League, Feb. 13, 2001.

An article by Fawzi al-Kahil says that it is really regrettable to deal with the citizen as merely an election vote. This attitude is not confined to the authority but also to the opposition that has confirmed this wrong and unjust concept which caused great harm to the

opposition itself. The citizen has perceived this concept and stood against it by disagreeing with the opposition despite his hatred towards the authority because he has seen in both of them two faces of the same coin. The problem of the simple Yemeni citizen with Yemeni political parties is that he has not found, and will not find, the party that practically meets his ambitions and will be close to him in all times, not only during election seasons: As a result party work in our country appears in its ugliest form, though it could have presented a democratic example worthy to be followed by a number of countries in the region. At the same time party work could have established forums for the citizens, particularly the ordinary ones, to demand their rights and for parties to realize the simplest of their dreams and finally to provide them with services and help as much as possible.

must always be an American. With regard to the Arab world, it constitutes of Yemenis; Saudis; Syrians, etc., along with Egyptians. All of them have the same right to nominate a representative to become the General Secretary of the Arab League.

So, there should be no surprise when Yemen nominates one of its sons for this distinguished post. Yemen has all the right to do so.

Yemen is considered a guard of the Arab Peninsula's southern gate. Yemen was one of the founder states of the Arab League. Yemen introduced an honorable and peaceful model in resolving borders disputes. Yemen has chosen many times with its Arab neighbors, peace and brotherhood over disputes and conflict. Yemen believes that there should be no loser among brotherly Arab countries. Therefore, it gave up all its historical territorial claims when signing border agreements with neighbors.

I would like to praise the Yemeni government's moves in solving its disputes with its neighbors, and its call to coordinate well with all Arab neighbors, particularly Gulf States. I think that our country is mature enough to make its own decision in nominating a Yemeni to become the General Secretary of the Arab League.

I do wish the best of luck to our nominee, no matter who he is. What matters most to me is that he is a Yemeni.

**Abdulrahman Mohamad Alwajih
Cairo, Egypt**

Dear Editor,
Thanks for printing what I sent. You called it "Yemen: The Origin of All

مسابقة «يمن تايمز» الأسبوعية

20,000

ريال

18,000

لك و

2,000

لمكتبتك

أجب عن السؤالين في الأسفل بعين بياناتك الشخصية كاملة مع بيانات المكتبة أو الجهة التي اشتريت منها النسخة. إن كان لديك اشتراك مباشر بالصحيفة، فيمكنك الاكتفاء بتعبئة بياناتك الشخصية وستأكد الصحيفة من صحة اشتراكك قبل أن يتم السحب. وإذا لم تكن مشتركاً فيمكنك الاتصال بقسم الاشتراكات لدينا. إذا لم تكن مشتركاً، وفزت في المسابقة فسيجعل صاحب (المكتبة، البقالة...) التي اشتريت منه النسخة على 10٪ من الجائزة (٢٠٠٠ ريال)، وستحصل أنت على ٩٠٪ (١٨٠٠٠ ريال).

لن تقبل أي استمارات لا تعبأ فيها معلومات المتسابق بخط واضح وعليك أن تعص الكوبون وترسله إلى عنوان الصحيفة الرئيسي: صنعاء (ص.ب. ٢٥٧٩)، أو أحد فرعي الصحيفة في عدن أو تعز، ويمكنك إيصال الكوبون بنفسك إلى الصندوق البريدي عند بوابة الصحيفة في الفرع الرئيسي.

ملاحظة: الإجابات التي تصلنا بالفاكس غير مقبولة، وكذلك التي تصلنا بدون كوبون الصافية. سيتم اختيار الفائز بواسطة القرعة. وحتى يتسنى للقراء من المحافظات الثانية والقرى إرسال الإجابات، فإن باب المشاركة سيبقى مفتوحاً لمدة أسبوعين من يوم الإصدار (أي بعد ١٢ يوماً من الإصدار). بإمكان الشخص إرسال أكثر من كوبون بإسمه للعدد الواحد ليزيد من احتمال فوزه بالمسابقة. سينشر اسم الفائز واسم المكتبة (أو الجهة الباقلة) في العدد بعد القادم لاستلام جوائزهما النقدية. نرجوا كتابة رقم عدد الصحيفة على مطروف الرسالة. من كان مشتركاً في مكتبة لا يعتبر مشتركاً في الصحيفة.

المسابقة رقم (٢) - العدد (٨) ١٩ فبراير ٢٠٠١

سؤال ١: كم عدد أحزاب مجلس التنسيق الأعلى للمعارضة؟

الإجابة: _____

سؤال ٢: ما هما الشركتان اللتان ستوفران لليمن خدمات الـ GSM للتلفونات النقالة؟

الإجابة: _____

الاسم: _____

رقم البطاقة: _____

التاريخ: _____

وإذا كان الاشتراك مؤسساً أو وزارة يرجى توضيح ذلك.

بيانات إضافية وضرورية لغير المشتركين في الصحيفة

اسم المكتبة أو الجهة التي اشتريت منها النسخة

اسم مسؤول المكتبة: _____

توقيع مسؤول المكتبة: _____

Continued from Page 4:

HRW Prospective

After protracted and heated public debates parliament passed Law 4/2000 on Local Authority in February 2000. This law affirmed the election of local councils, but allowed for the appointment of their chairpersons by the president and did not grant any substantial decision making power to the councils. In Tuesday's election, 26,467 candidates (among them only 145 women) are competing for local councils seats. Some smaller parties have decided to boycott the elections, claiming that voter registration was rigged. An account in the usually reliable independent al-Ayyam showed that in eleven out of twenty provinces the number of registered male voters was as much as forty-six percent higher than the number of eligible voters - i.e. those over eighteen years of age. Since voting registers have not officially been updated since the presidential elections in 1999, all persons who since turned eighteen will not be able to vote. Twenty-two lawyers have filed a suit against the Supreme Elections Committee (SEC) asking for the suspension of the local elections

and claiming that the SEC, nominally an independent body entrusted with voter registration and election monitoring, has failed to review and amend the registers as mandated by Article 11 (1) of the Elections Law. The opposition also claimed the SEC denied them an appropriate share on the committees set up to monitor voting and counting.

According to Yemeni press reports, opposition candidates have been subject to harassment by the authorities and a number of candidates are expected to file suits. The Criminal Investigation Department briefly detained Nasir al-Aulaqi, head of the legal Unionist Nasirist Party, and searched his house for material pertaining to a "forbidden organization". The opposition paper al-Wahdawi claims that the SEC issued a directive advising the monitoring committees to prevent campaigning for a "no" vote in the referendum.

**Tobie Barton
Middle East and North Africa
Associate
Human Rights Watch**

Arabs" That is not totally true. It should be titled "Yemen: The Origin of All Pure Arabs." We are the forefathers of All Pure Arabs but not all Arabs. You can space out the paragraphs.

You put (Luay Ahmed Masood) please change it to Luay Ahmed al-Masoodi

Thanks again brothers and sisters at Yemen Times, you seem so receptive, accepting, diverse and open minded so I will try to send more articles Inshallah.

Luay Ahmed al-Masoodi

Dear Luay,
I also thank you for your contribution. I apologize for the inconvenience in the title change and name. Please be sure that we will be more than glad to publish your future contributions. I wish you all the best of luck.

- The Editor

Dear Editor,
This summer I went to Yemen for the first time with the myth that some Yemeni doctors did not graduate high school. When I went to Yemen.

I met three doctors that I would like to honor as Yemeni men of achievements. These three doctors are Dr. Faidi Saleh Nuralden, Dr. Hammoud

Saleh Nuralden, and last but not least Dr. Yeaha Saleh Quied. These three men do not only perform their jobs as professionals but, go a step further by getting to know each patient on a personal level. Dr. Faidi S Nuralden owns his own clinic and has two Iraqi doctors working for him. Dr. Faidi is a well-educated doctor who always looks out for his patients and not his pocket. Dr. Hammoud S Nuralden, a dentist at Taiz makes sure his patients are always happy. Sometimes, he gives him or her a discount on medicine, sometimes he gives a discount on service but, the best thing he offers each patient is his bright smile. Dr. Yeaha S Quied, also works in Taiz but is different from the other two doctors. See Dr. Yeaha is what we call in America a big kid. Half of the people that visit him daily are not physically sick but come to his clinic to be cured mentally with his outrageous sense of humor.

I would like to thank the Yemen Times for allowing me to tell my fellow Yemenis and Americans about the kindness of these Yemeni doctors who impact the lives of their community with their great services and personalities.

**Ghassan Amin Ahmed Alsaidi
arab666@msn.com**

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I have been receiving your e-mail news for some time now and notice that sport is somewhat overlooked in your country.

I would like to try and rectify this situation.

Did you know that Yemen has a representative in the professional 8 ball pool ranks of the United Kingdom? No? Then you will also be surprised to know that your country's representative finished in the last 32 of the World 8 ball pool championships.

Brian Halcrow is 29 years old and ranked number 6 in the UK. He is at present trying to form a team which will represent Yemen in next years World Championships.

I would be grateful if you would publish my letter so that your readers may contact Brian if they are interested in pool. I must also add that Brian is planning a trip to Yemen sometime this year to scout for new players.

Anyone interested can contact Brian via the above e-mail address.

**Dave Wright
admin@planetentertainments.freer
ve.co.uk**

Who Needs Democracy

This is a response to the 'Devil's Advocate' column by Sharif Akram on issue 7 volume 11 entitled "Why We Need & Why We Should Achieve Democracy in Yemen?"

Because of the ideas of freedom of the individual and freedom 45% of women the UK are not sure who the father of their child is, 25 million homosexuals in the USA claim for equal rights. 52% of Americans voted for Al Gore but Bush was elected.

As Muslims our viewpoint on everything is halal (permitted in Islam) and haraam (forbidden in Islam). Democracy is when the shar'ia (Islamic regulations) is given to other than Allah (SWT). Is this halal or haraam? Does democracy emanate from the Islamic creed or from the secularist creed?

Abdullah Hamdani

Dear Abdullah,

We respect your opinion in this matter. We did submit the attached article entitled 'Democracy in Islam' to columnist Sharif Akram as you requested. Thank you for your feedback and letter. Please keep on sending us your opinions.

-The Editor

Dear Editor,

Firstly I thank the staff of YT for this great job. God bless you all. I am one of many admirers that this deep-rooted newspaper takes all of their time. Because your newspaper is considered like food for the students who learn English language everywhere. Every week all Yemeni students here

and I in Guangzhou, China read the pages of Yemen Times on the World Wide Web. We are absolutely fond of your newspaper, especially me.

**Gobran Alfotih
alfotih_gobran@hotmail.com**

Dear Gobran,

I am glad that Yemen Times has a good readership even in China. Please know that we do all we can to rise to your level of expectation. Good luck in your studies and keep on following the news on Yemen on the WWW.

The Editor

Why Can't the next General Secretary be a Yemeni?

The Arab League, like other international organizations, is constituted of many states, all of them with equal rights and responsibilities, unless the charter draws up some privileges to some members like the VETO in the UN.

I was surprised when I read on Alsharq al-Awsat daily newspaper (2-11-2001) that Egyptian representatives refused this idea of equal rights. They insisted that the Arab league's General Secretary must not be from any other Arab country but Egypt.

I would like to remind them that Butrus Gali, an Egyptian, had once become the General Secretary of United Nations after all Arab countries endorsed him. But according to their statement, the UN's secretary

**In the Symposium Organized by the Future Studies Center, Al-Bayan and Yemen Times:
HEATED DEBATE ON LOCAL ELECTIONS AND
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS RAISE CONTROVERSY (Part II)**

This coverage is a continuation to last week's report about the seminar organized by Yemen Times, Future Studies Center and Al-Bayan Newspaper.

Mr. Mohamed Yahya Shaif, a member of the permanent committee of the PGC responded by saying, "I would like to respond to Mr. Jarallah Omar's statements by saying that first of all, the reasons for the resignation of Dr. Faraj bin Ghanem were not because he demanded local authority. PGC did not demand local authority just today, as the PGC's National Covenant "Al-Mithaq Al-Watani" first demanded local authority when it was published in 1982. The demand for local elections proceeded the multi-party system. As a member of the PGC, unlike Mr. Jarallah Omar, who said what he said as if he were with us in our meetings, I deny that we were against the amendments in our private informal sessions. The local council elections with their present law may have some mistakes, but it is an experiment, a beginning with the potential to be developed and enhanced. We are with the political parties in this perspective."

Mr. Ali Saif Hassan, a member of the central committee for the Unionist Nasserite Movement said, "The issue of the local authorities took more time than it deserves. The local authority law that has been approved is even more backward than the traditional tribal Sheikhism that has been implemented for thousands of years. As for the constitutional amendments, I disagree with the rest of the opposition members, as I believe that there are certain requirements for constitutional amendments. However, I don't believe in these particular amendments, which signal further backwardness in our democracy and a total collapse of the originally drafted 1990 plan for the unified Yemen. I expect that the population will refuse these amendments, along with all the political parties including members of the PGC itself, even though they express their dissatisfaction with the amendments in their hearts only. No matter how the state tries to enforce a general belief in the acceptability of the amendments, the voice of the public and citizens will eventually reach the authorities, which will know the true position of the people no matter how much fraud takes place."

So far, there are no structures or buildings allocated for elected local councils after almost 40 years of revolution. Hence, I propose to Mr. Alawi Al-Salami, Minister of Finance, to take into consideration the example of the American Marshall Law, which presented the project of rebuilding Europe within two years, so as to be able to build the structures for the local councils. Through this, the minister would present the country with a solution to its current economic crisis, provide an economic solution to all the country's troubles and enter the history of the nation."

Prominent Lawyer Jamaladdin Al-Adimi, Director of the Civil Society Forum, raised some important points that had been ignored or neglected during the seminar so far. He talked about the role of the state-run media and its use by the authorities to influence public opinion. "After a comprehensive study by the forum to know exactly why the gap between the ruling party and the rest was so high, we came to the conclusion that this was not because of fraud or multiple voting, etc. during the electoral process. This mainly happened because the public's opinion was deeply influenced by the TV and Radio organs that directly and openly polished the image of the ruling party in front of the public, while rarely mentioning other parties."

Al-Adimi also stated that the decision to hold the local elections in such a short time created more problems as it did not allow equal opportunities and adequate preparations and supervision. "In the report of the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the government was recommended to postpone the elections as it would not be possible to handle them properly without good preparations. However, their recommendation was not taken seriously," he said. He concluded his speech by saying that the forum is working on a project to analyze the broadcasting share of the different parties on TV and radio, by monitoring thousands of hours of broadcasting by the different media organs so as to determine whether there are equal opportunities given or not. He added that his forum would try to reveal the final report to the public just before the elections, but that this would be quite difficult as the short period of time may not allow them to do so.

Mr. Noman Qaid Saif, Al-Shoura Editor-

in-Chief, mouthpiece of the Yemeni Unionist Congregation Party, responded to the PGC representatives' allegations by saying, "It is absolutely not true that the popularity of the PGC is genuine, but by using the public funds and media organs in its favor it is trying to show that it is so. Any party that owns the Central Bank of Yemen's safes and has ultimate control over the media and the state's brutal police forces, will definitely find itself on top. Unless the ruling party does not abuse these facilities, there is no hope for a peaceful transfer of power."

As to what Mr. Jarallah Omar said concerning the government's use of the media to encourage the public to say "YES" to the amendments, I believe that this claim has come too late. The opposition could have presented conditions to be involved in the electoral process, which if not met, would lead to them boycotting the elections. If the opposition was forced to be involved in the elections and participate, then it should ask for another opportunity to organize itself properly and play the game right."

Interestingly, almost four hours after the start of the seminar, Mr. Walid Al-Saqqaf, Editor of Yemen Times raised another question, "Did anyone notice that until this very moment we received no logical justification for the constitutional amendments, particularly for the articles concerning the extensions of the parliamentary and presidential terms?" He pointed out that the question raised by the representative of the Eritrean Embassy about the essence of the constitutional amendments was yet to be answered.

Dr. Faris AL-Saqqaf answered by saying that the PGC representatives have tried their best in justifying and openly stated what they saw as legitimate reasons for the amendments, including the protection of the environment from pollution and cleanliness, etc., but he added that anyone from the PGC would be welcome to try to justify the amendments more logically.

Then Mr. Mohamed Abdulrahman Al-Ruba'i, Director of the Constitution Protecting Committee and General Secretary of the Popular Forces Union Party presented his viewpoint regarding the two focal points of the seminar by saying, "There seems to be a point of

dispute about the fact that there is no article or statement in the current law with the name 'local administration or authority'. This means that there is no such thing in the constitution because authority means independence, which is not available in this format in the local authority law. Hence, it is obvious that the authorities have stripped the law of any sensible meaning."

If the elected parliamentarians are not able today to vote on a no-confidence motion against the government, how on earth will the elected local council members be able to vote on no-confidence motions against the governor, who is to be appointed by the president of the republic? It is impossible, thus the whole issue is no more than a political flimflam."

Even though the constitution clearly and decisively says that the people have the authority and are its source, it is no more than ink on paper because the people cannot elect their governors, or even heads of provinces."

Mr. Mohamed Al-Maqaleh, an independent political author and analyst said, "I believe that the main objective of these amendments is the article concerning the extension of the president's term to 7 years. It is well known that in 1995, an

amended article stated that the presidential period is only 5 years and that no president can stay in power for more than two periods. But the current president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, was elected immediately after the 1995 amendment, and according to the transitional manuscript, the first period started once the house of parliament elected the president in 1995. Five years after that, his first period ended in 1999, and the second period started on September 23 1999 after the direct presidential elections. In other words, the president's actual period should end in 2004, but with the amendments it will be extended by four more years."

Mohamed Yahya Al-Sabiri, a Master student in the Department of Political Science of Sanaa University's College of Economy and Commerce said, "There is a dangerous dimension to the constitutional amendments and local council elections. The US Ambassador to Yemen, Mr. Barbara Bodine stated that the local elections are a blessing and that the US supports them fully. I have the sense that foreign interference is evident in the two issues, and that there seems to be external pressure on the authorities, which do not seem to be fully convinced to introduce and approve these amend-

ments that do not serve our nation well." Finally, in a concluding statement, Dr. Mohamed Abdulmalik Al-Mutawakkil, former PGC member and a well-known and respected intellectual said, "Mr. Walid Al-Saqqaf asked about the justifications of the amendments, and everyone is asking about the justifications. Frankly speaking, I believe that the PGC has many interests in the amendments. First of all, it is in the interest of the PGC to get more authority and power. It can secure its future by dominating all authorities at the local and government level. With the amendments, the authorities will be in the hands of the president, in the hands of the PGC, and in the hands of the current administration. The main justification that is so clear is that the PGC wants to go back to the totalitarian regime under the single-party system. It wants to control the political scene and get rid of the little opposition parties that bother it from time to time. It wants to dominate all aspects of political life. The amendments also give the president unlimited power to control the constitution forever. Aren't these enough to explain why the PGC wants the amendments?"

The seminar ended with an address by Dr. Faris Al-Saqqaf who stated that above all, it was an opportunity for all to express their diverse and different viewpoints. The PGC was given the chance to respond, the opposition was also given the chance to voice their viewpoints, and all the guests were quite satisfied with the democratic atmosphere of the seminar.

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**Initial Report of Media Coverage Reveals
PGC Campaigning Dominated Official Media**

The Forum For Civil Society (FFCS) issued on 16 February a press statement containing a preliminary report on results of the program monitoring Electoral Information concerning the elections of local councils and referendum on the constitution on Feb. 20, 2001. The statement says that FFCS, a non-governmental, non-profitable organization, has been monitoring official information media (Television and Broadcasting stations) since the beginning of February 2001 and will continue to do so until the end of the official period specified for the election campaign for the local elections and the referendum. FFCS sees that the preliminary results of its monitoring program on electoral information by official media, show that official and electronic information media have not taken a neutral stand regarding election campaigns pertaining to local council elections and the referendum. They also see that they have not secured equal opportunities for politicians competing in the local elections and constitutional amendments referendum. The official media has not provided opportunities for reviewing various viewpoints on the constitutional amendments in addition to not allotting enough time for electoral awareness in general, and awareness related to the amendments in particular. All this violates justice of the local elections and referendum process as

well as the soundness of the measures of each. This constitutes a violation of the principle of equality in providing opportunities for all political competitors and points to the using of the official media in favor of the ruling party the General People's Congress (PGC) with one viewpoint that represents an encroachment upon the citizens rights to obtain the required various information about their candidates for both elections and referendum, a matter that would weaken outcomes and the legitimacy of both activities. FFCS, therefore calls upon official media to be aware of that and rectify what they can during the remaining time until polling day. It also urges the elections supreme committee to carry out its legally stipulated tasks and to supervise official media in a manner realizing equal opportunities and equality among all politicians running for local elections and in the referendum. Though the forum will prepare its final report to be supported with figures and graphs and analyzes after the end of elections and referendum on constitutional amendments, the primary results of the monitoring process on electoral information have revealed the following facts: 1- During the period extending from beginning of February till the 9th, 2001 it has been evident that out of the total general transmission time of official television and broadcasting stations of all governorates, only 12% was devoted to covering local elec-

tions and referendum. 2- Propaganda campaigns for the referendum have had only 5% of the total available time, indirect propaganda for local elections 17%, while electoral awareness for the referendum was 15% and electoral awareness got 63% of the total time provided by official media for covering activities of local elections and referendum. 3- Opportunity have not been made available to all political parties and independents to use official media for direct electoral campaigns for local elections. The decision issued by the elections supreme committee on banning the use of official media for electoral campaign by the political parties and independent candidates did not succeed. The official media has been used for indirect electoral propaganda in favor of one party (PGC) while the share of other political parties and independent candidates of the available time has been zero. Neutral news on local elections has been 11% of the time specified for electoral campaign for local elections. 4- Out of the total time given to programs on the electoral campaign for constitutional referendum 86% of it was in favor of voting "Yes." 14% was the share for news, information and neutral propaganda on the amendments. The opposition viewpoint against the amendments had zero percent of the total time allocated for propaganda for the referendum.

**Continued from Page 1:
Opinion Poll Says "NO!"**

The people surveyed were from various sectors of the community including politicians, intellectuals, students, newspaper sellers, businessmen, government employees, small business owners (supermarkets, stationaries) and even some shepherds. Of the ones who agreed to participate, around 20% saw the elections as a waste of time and money. One newspaper seller said, "I will not leave my profitable work at the elections day because I would do better for myself when I sell newspapers on that day rather than go to the election as newspaper sales will probably

increase on that day." Most of the 80% were not quite happy with the preparations and crazy campaigns taking place, but all were willing to participate in the elections. Almost all of the ones we surveyed said that the PGC will take most of the seats easily, as it has all the means to do so. Two major conclusions were observed in the process regarding constitutional amendments: 1- The illiterate and uneducated people admitted that they had no clue what the constitutional amendments were all about, but they will vote "YES" to them

as they watch on TV and hear from Radio many slogans and songs in favor of the amendments. This is a significant indication of the official media's great influence on the common simple man of the less educated sectors of the community. 2- Educated figures, including politicians, intellectuals, and students said that the amendments were not demanded by the public but are rather in the interest of some individuals, particularly regarding the extensions of the periods of the president and parliament members. They openly said that they will reject the amendments and say "NO" as they see them as a step backwards in the democratic process.

**Continued from Page 1
Yemen Condemns Bombing on Iraq**

Up to date statistics say that 2 Iraqis were killed as a result of the attack, while tens others were injured. US President George Bush replied to a question about the attack on Saturday while in a visit to Mexico by saying that the attack was based on routine missions carried out by the US forces to secure their planes flying in the no-fly zone, south and north of Iraq. Several countries condemned the attack, including Russia, France, and China. A few Arab leaders expressed their concern and worries regarding the attack, while others strongly condemned it. It is worth mentioning that the attack comes 10 days before an Iraqi delegation was about to start talks with UN officials regarding the possibility of the return of UN inspectors to Iraq and also regarding the food for oil program.

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The Indian Embassy School Holds Second Annual inter-House Music Contest, 2001

What a wonderful evening was Feb. 15, 2001 at the Indian Embassy School, it was sponsored by the Universal Group of Companies through the good offices of the General Manager of "Hertz" Mr. Saleem S. Salai who himself was so overwhelmed by the spectacular performances and the keen spirit of the budding artists-pupil-contenders of all the four Houses that in his speech he announced that the Universal Group of Companies would continue sponsoring this Musical Contest in the next academic session 2001-2002 with more attractive prizes so as to promote music and raise the cultural talents of the young artists. All the presentations put up by the House, Nehru House, Radhakrishnan House and Tagore House in Vocal, instrument and dance were so scintillating that each time the audience used to join in sync/rhythm with the clapping, in chorus. Especially captivating were the Dances whether the gyrations on the tune of "Piya-Piya" of the Gandhi house, "Dhol-Baaji" of the Nehru House, "Bhoom-Ro-Bhoom-Ro" of Radhakrishnan house or "Daga La Lagi" of the Tagor House. Overall Best Individual Performances Prize was bagged by Master Timothy of the Tagor House, while First Prizes in Vocal and Group Dance were shared respectively by Dona of Nehru House and Timothy of Tagor house, Remy, Zaryan, Swathy, Fitsum, Wajeh and Prasanna of Nehru House and Niharika, Apoorva, Swapnil, Shruthi, Manvi, and Sanu of Tagor House. Master Timothy of Tagore House won the First Prize in 'Instrument' and Remy of Nehru in Solo Dance, whereas Tabytha of Radhakrishnan House secured Third Prize in Vocal, Ruby of Gandhi house in 'Instrument', Ashwathy of Radhakrishnan in Solo Dance and Shalakha, Hana, Vijith, Noornisha and Tabytha of Radhakrishnan House in Group Dance. The contest was adjudged by the Honorable Judge Mr. A. Thakur, Mr. Joseph Faris and Miss Bin-du. Guests-in-Chief Mrs. and Mr. Saleem S. Salai, and the Guests -of-honor Mrs. & Mr. K.K. Vijayan, Mrs. & Mr. P.V. Ranganathan. Mrs. & Mr. K.B. Gupta all graciously distributed the prizes, 28 in all, to the winners. Mr. Joseph Faris, one of the Judges shared his feelings with the audience towards the fag-end, all humorously! Mr. S. Dhavamoorthy was the Master of Ceremony. While totting-up of credits was in the process, Mr. A.K. Jha conducted a friendly Inter-House "Antakshree" contest, whereby, kept the audience all enthralled in a stop-gap arrangement. Herts Rent A Car is a sister company of Universal Group of Companies renting fleet of vehicles with and without drivers throughout Yemen.



Tabytha, Shalakha, and Noornisha in a group dance



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Mr. Saleem S. Salai shaking hands with Master Timothy while handing over the overall best Individual Performance Prize

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تغز شارع جمال جوار شركة النفط اليمنية. ت: ٢٢٢-٢٤٠، ص ب: ٥٥٩٢٥

مدارس الزهراء

التربوية الحديثة

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ت: ٦٠٠٣٠١

أبو سلمان للتجارة

أدوات كهربائية ضغط عالي ومنخفض

الدائري - جوار الجامعة القديمة. ت: ٤٠٠٦٣، فاكس: ٢٠٤٢٥٩
سبان: ٧٩١٩٣٢٠، بيجر: ٥٨١٨٢٧٠، ص ب: ١٥٠٤٩

أدوية ومستلزمات طبية

مؤسسة الميتمى

للأدوية

صنعاء شارع ١٢ متفرع من شارع سيف، ص ب: ١٠٥٥٠، تليفون: ٢٧٥٥١١/٢٧٥٥١٢
فاكس: ٢٧٥٥١١/٢٧٥٥١٢
تعز: ٢٥١٠٤٠
إب: ٤٠١٤٧١
عبد: ٣٧٧٧٨
الحديبية: ٢٠٢١١٦

مطعم فلفلة

للأغذية الشرقية والغربية

تتمناه

تغز شارع جمال جوار شركة النفط اليمنية. ت: ٢٢٢-٢٤٠، ص ب: ٥٥٩٢٥

مراكز طبية / علاجية

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مستوصف بغداد الطبي التخصصي: جراحة عامة جراحة تجميل - جراحة مسالك بولية - عظام - مفاصل - أنف وأذن وحنجرة - سنا، وولادة - أطفال - باطنية - أسنان - مخبريات وكشف بالموجات الصوتية والسينية - د. طاهر يحيى عبيدة، استشاري مسالك بولية/ المدير العام، العنوان: صنعاء - ش. تغز، أمام وكالة توتوتا، ت: ١١٧٧٥٨، فاكس: ١١٧٧٥٩، بيجر: ٥٨٠٦٠٢، ص ب: ١٥١٧١

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للجميع أنواع الفقه الإسلامي والمكتبة والمكتبة والمكتبة

شارع عمان - جوار مجمع الصفا، ص ب: ١١٥٤٠٠

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مفروقات

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مستلزمات أطفال

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الوكلاء اليرموك في الجمهورية اليمنية، محلات السوراني للاندوات الصحية - صنعاء - ش. جاهد، ت: ٢٤٠٤٤٤، فرع عدن - الشيخ عثمان - السليبة، ت: ٢٨٤٥٢٢

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A leading company is looking a bilingual Secretary to have the following: Excellent Spoken, written, reading and typing English. Ability to keep an efficient filing and documentation system. Excellent computer skills. Spoken and typing both in English and Arabic. Must be willing to work extra hours from time to time and also ability to work under pressure. Please contact Mr. Saeed, Tel: 243309.

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Contact: 203827.

Abdullah A. Hassan Sawma'ah: computer course network window Nt. course V. Basic course oracle 8 Data Base & Developer 2000. Tel: 270975.

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Abdulla Salem Al-Fadhli: F/S Advisor/ Rural Projects Manger/ C.D. Coordinator/ Sales Marketing, Procurement Manager/ Translator. Aden Mansoorah block 50 lg/flat 12. Phone: 341844.

Abdrabu Al-Baradony, a university student with good experience in (web page designing, e-mail, commercial correspondence, computer...etc)+English. Contact: A.ALBARADONY@HOTMAIL.COM

Khalid Moh'd Saleh, holder of B.A in Business plus Diplomas in English and Computer, looks for a job in any managing or marketing company. Sana'a Tel: 344464.

Teachers of English and Science. Call: Mohammad. Mobile: 7904230

Hassan Al-Zubaidi, a highly qualified accountant and auditor with experience at international firms looks for a job. 12 years as an accountant and finance manager, 8 years as an auditor. Tel: 205201.

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Al-Eryani S. Hospital for Obst. & Gynaecology 204476,402191/2
Al-Raboie Hospital 618087
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The American School 417119-414640
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Pakistani School 417288/247830
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UNIVERSITIES

University of Applied Science and Social Sana'a 400587/254492
Aden 234533/234966
Sana'a University 250553/4/5

ACROSS:

1- Rubbish, twaddle (6)
8- Disturbance, Discontent (6)
10- Responded (7)
11- US state, capital Augusta (5)
12- Lounge about (4)
13- Intended (5)
17- Slightly mad (5)
18- Trim (4)
22- Piece of a barrel (5)
23- Eruptive mountain (7)
24- In foreign parts (6)
25- Movable (6)

DOWN:

1- Gleam (7)
2- Polite and friendly (7)
3- Woven with large flowers (7)
4- Plant with large flowers (7)
5- Actress, ... imrie (5)
6- Speak (5)
14- Describing word (9)
14- Jotting block (7)
16- Regain (7)
19- Film academy award (5)
20- Heap of stones (5)
21- Distant (5)

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يمن تايمز

خدمات عامة - ١٩ فبراير ٢٠٠١

GITEX

مركز جايكتكس

خدمات الكمبيوتر - بيع - صيانة - تدريب

ش. حدة جوار حوليات الدبيعي
ت: ٢١٨٥٠٢، فاكس: ٥٨٧٦٠٤٥
س. ٧٩٦١٢٥

ARISTON

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Salim Mohamed Shamakh's group of Companies.

صناعات - الحديدية - معدن - تعدين
٢٢٨٨٦٦ ٢٢٤٨٠ ٢٢٧٨٦٦ ٢٢٥٥١٩/٢٢٥٦٦٦

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الفرع: الجديدة - شارع الميناء جوار البيت العربي، تليفون: ٢٢٦٢٤٥

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تقديم استشارات وحلول متكاملة في مجال الكمبيوتر

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الفرع: الجديدة - شارع الميناء جوار البيت العربي، تليفون: ٢٢٦٢٤٥

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Al-Faisal Decoration & Furniture

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صناعات - ش. القصر أمام عمارة هائل (تاكوك) ت: ٢٧٢٤٨٢

اعلانات تميز

بسر مناسب تلفون ٢٥٧٠٢٨
ت: ٢٢٢٢٢٢
ت: ٢٨٠٠٠٠
ت: ٢٢٢٢٢٢
ت: ٢٢٢٢٢٢

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٢٢٤٤٤، فاكس: ٢٢٦٦٨٨، عبد السلام احمد السوراني

سيارات للبيع

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

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اقصاف تجارية

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

شراء/بيع اثاث منزلي وتجهيزات مكتبية

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

شراء عقارات

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

استأجر عقارات

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

عقارات

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

سيارات

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

تأجير عقارات

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

ياحئون عن وظيفة

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

تسهيلات

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

مقودات

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

كمبيوتر

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

السادة القراء

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

ميكروكس

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

الأديهي المتجارة

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

أجهزة وأدوات طب الأسنان

ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

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ت: ٢٢٦٦٨٨

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