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Government appoints men of "fairness"

Saleh moves on judicial reform

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In a move to tackle corruption and continue Yemen's judicial reform, the Higher Judicial Council has appointed new judges and moved a number of others to different positions.

The council, headed by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, made the changes last Wednesday.

It sees 25 new judges were appointed to the Higher Court while 24 were given positions in the Judicial Inspection Commission.

Abdullah Farwan, former Chairman of the Central Organization for

Control and Audit, is now the head of the Judicial Inspection Commission, an organization which monitors the performance of Yemeni judges. Farwan replaced Abdul-Malik Al-Jindari, who was appointed as the head of the Justice Ministry's Technical Bureau.

Saleh was quoted as saying that "judicial authorities should be independent and above any authority and influence."

Two weeks ago, the President and the Higher Judicial Council dismissed 22 judges without any compensation or benefits and ordered 108 other

judges for early retirement.

"Judicial tasks should never be given to those who are not qualified and do not possess the quality of fairness," said Saleh when the judges were fired from their jobs. "They should be able to be fair in settling people's affairs."

A year ago, the Higher Judicial Council, the highest judicial institute, sacked 13 judges after 35 judges were fired in 2002 being charged with corruption.

The changes last week included the fourth and largest reshuffling in the judicial system since the reform pro-

gram, which is supported by The World Bank and donor countries, began in 1997.

In provincial courts of appeal, 159 judges changed posts, while three new judges were appointed to the military court of appeal. Sixty-eight chief judges and 172 session judges of district courts, 124 prosecutors at courts of appeal and 187 prosecutors at district courts exchanged positions. And twenty-three heads of public prosecutions changed places, while 52 judicial officers were appointed at the Attorney General's office.

Continued on page 3

Armed militias still an issue

Afghans face future

BY PETER WILLEMS
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In one his last moves to close 2004, Afghanistan President Hamid Karzai held the first meeting with his new Cabinet, stressing that ministers need to work together to rebuild the war-torn country and carry it into a brighter future.

In the meeting at the Presidential Palace in the capital Kabul, Karzai, the first elected president in Afghanistan, said that the Cabinet must focus on the economy, education and security and that the success of the government should be based on how well it fights against the flourishing drug industry.

He also urged the ministers to turn away from tribal and ethnic loyalty and commit themselves to the people who have been struggling during warfare that lasted for a quarter of a century.

The President said before the meeting that infighting in the Cabinet between political parties must be avoided.

Continued on page 3



Armed supporters of one of many Afghan militias still controlling vast areas of the country (Yemen Times photo by Peter Willems)

Jarallah Omar commemorated

BY MOHAMMED BIN SALAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Two years after the assassination of former Yemen Socialist Party leader Jarallah Omar, opposition parties are demanding a re-investigation into his murder.

The call came during commemoration organized by the YSP at the Center for Research and Studies, in Sana'a, Dec. 30.

A number of opposition leaders, representatives of political organizations and parties, and many of Omar's relatives, friends and colleagues attended the celebration of his life.

During the gathering the Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) and the Yemeni Political Forces asked for the reinvestigation into the death of the Omar, who was also Assistant Secretary General of the YSP.

He was assassinated on Dec. 28 2002 during his participation in the 3rd General Conference of the Islah Party.

The Court of First Instance had earlier sentenced Ali Al-Sa'awani to death on September 14 last year for the assassination.

Ali Saleh Obad, Secretary General of YSP, warned in his speech of the



Jarallah Omar

coming danger threatening the Yemeni society as a whole.

He demanded a reconsideration of the official, economic

and social policies to the extent that they amass money in the hands of corrupt forces.

He pointed out that Yemen's social disorder provides an environment for terrorist groups to thrive and recruit depressed youth who mistakenly think the solution to their troubles lies in terrorism.

Dr. Najeeb Ghanem, Head of Information Department of Islah, said: "The crime (of Omar's assassination) targeted the homeland."

He said how necessary it is to eradicate violence and adopt the free election and the supremacy of discipline, law and justice."

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Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood

Juvenile workers get training

BY FAHMIA AL-FOTIH FOR YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Higher Council for Motherhood & Childhood concluded a four-day training course for workers with juveniles on Dec. 29.

society itself including, family, street, bad friends and the society that hasn't protected them. The results of this training course will reflect on the national plan to develop the children potion in Yemen.

find out their talents and abilities to be efficient people in the society. She also noted that Yemen is participating in an international contest for drawing.

on the juveniles. A number of cases were presented to display the violence practiced against the juveniles as well as the project of modifying the juveniles' law.

Girls World Communication Center

Research students graduate

FOR YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Girls World Communication Center within its unique Youth Leadership Program celebrated the graduation of the first group of research students Dec. 27.

head of GWCC and the research course teacher. "Today we have the oral presentation of a first group of students. Seven students have presented their research orally."

mation director at the USA embassy said the centre has trained a lot of youth and teachers how to do academic research on the internet.

the center and what I know they got better jobs and better chances in the. Some of them actually don't get the English language but they become aware of the problems that our society is facing like the water problems and health problem.

Tribal killings in al-Jawf claim 37

When will tribal clashes end?

By Abduh M. Assabri For the Yemen Times

Brick-built houses riddled with bullet holes, whirls of dusts are towering high, and rubbish smears the alleys and roadways of the city. Bearded but wrinkled faces are brown as berries, with dusty and curly hair come and go with their rifles upwards as a sign of manhood.

younger ones are also carrying different sizes of weapons and ammunition, particularly, the Russian-made Kalashnikovs. While visiting some of the outskirts in the al-Jawf governorate early in the morning, we were surprised when saw a group of students wearing their traditional clothes, jambiyya, (sword-like but short dagger) and dresses.

only thing he desires is to possess adequate ammunitions to get ready for any bloody confrontations," a tribesman said. The only language they speak is the language of weapons and nothing else and that's why prolonged tribal disputes erupt from time to time.

plete arsenal, both heavy and light weapons, anti-aircraft missiles, rockets-propelled grenades (RPGs), field artillery and all ground weaponry with the exception of tanks. Tribes get these weapons from arms dealers and army warehouses to keep fighting each other.

Flies and mosquitoes in Taiz. KABER (big gate), the most crowded part of the city. Residents are angry and blame the Local Office for Water & Health Sanitary, in Taiz.

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Continued from page 1 Saleh moves on judicial reform. "The moves made last week were a good step," said Yemeni attorney Abdul Aziz Al-Samawi. "What is needed is the political will to carry out complete reform of the judicial system, which should be more than just moving judges around." Afghans face future. "I hope all of our ministers in the Cabinet, if they have any link with political parties, they should resign from those parties.

Abbas gets hero's welcome in Gaza

RAFAH, Gaza Strip, Jan 1 (Reuters) - Thousands of Palestinians including armed militants gave presidential election frontrunner Mahmoud Abbas a hero's welcome on Saturday in a Gaza refugee camp shattered by fighting with Israel.

Abbas is running to succeed the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in a Jan. 9 vote.

Abbas has branded violence a mistake but he has won crucial backing from Arafat's militant faithful by vowing no retreat from an agenda including total Israeli withdrawal from occupied lands where Palestinians seek a state.

Palestinians including about 100 masked gunmen crammed into a wedding hall to greet Abbas in the Rafah refugee camp, which has lost more lives and suffered greater destruction than any other place in the four-year-old Middle East conflict.

Abbas almost cancelled the trip

because of an Israeli army raid into the Khan Younis refugee camp just north of Rafah, but went ahead apparently after receiving assurances he would pass through Israeli roadblocks smoothly and safely.

He dropped plans to visit Khan Younis, the second largest city after Gaza City, because of Israel's continuing raid which has killed 12 Palestinians.

"Rafah continues to suffer oppression and the humiliation of occupation but it will not be defeated and not be humiliated," he said in the most fiery speech in his campaign, setting aside talk about laying down arms to help revive peace talks.

"We will not stop until we achieve victory through the establishment of the Palestinian state, the dream that began with your brother, the martyr Yasser Arafat," he said to heavy applause, with some people standing on tables.



A Palestinian boy (L) shakes hand with Palestinian presidential candidate Mahmoud Abbas (R) during a Fatah election campaign rally in Rafah south of Gaza Strip Jan. 1. Tens of thousands of Palestinians pledged support to front-running presidential candidate Mahmoud Abbas on Friday as he made his first visit to Gaza since the start of a campaign to succeed Yasser Arafat. REUTERS

"Neither the occupation nor the incursions nor the assassinations nor the demolitions (by Israeli forces) can prevent us from visiting you, the steadfast of Rafah!"

Israeli raids to root out tunnels dug by Rafah militants to smuggle in arms from nearby Egypt have killed hundreds in the sprawling slum of 80,000 people, both gunmen and civilians.

U.N. refugee agency figures show around 16,000 residents have been made homeless from demolitions of housing, which is said by Israeli forces to have hidden tunnel outlets.

Abbas, repeating campaign themes, said he would work for the release of more than 7,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israel and the return of refugees from wars since Israel's 1948 founding.

A moderate in Arafat's circle, Abbas has parted from him in asking Palestinians to embrace non-violence in the struggle for statehood.

Thirty-four drown as Somali boat sinks

NAIROBI, Jan 1 (Reuters) - Thirty-four people drowned when a boat travelling from northern Somalia to Yemen sank in heavy seas in the latest blow for Somali coastal communities already hit by the Asian tsunami, an official said on Saturday.

"Thirty-seven people were on board

and only three managed to reach shore," Yusuf Ismail Baribari, a spokesman for Somalia's fledgling government, said of the incident on Friday.

The boat was travelling from Bossasso in northern Somalia to Mekelle in southern Yemen carrying 37 people and 1,200 goats and sheep when

it sank off the Somali coast.

Baribari also told a news conference relief agencies were rushing aid to communities in northeastern Somalia devastated by the Asian tsunami on December 26, adding his government believed the death toll had risen to 142.

There was no independent confirmation of that number. Reports from the few aid workers on the ground in the worst-hit Puntland region say 114 were killed when the waves struck.

Most of them were fishermen who had not come home since they set sail on December 26, shortly before the waves triggered by southern Asia's undersea earthquake 6,000 km (3,750 miles) to the east began pounding Africa.

Up to 50,000 in northeast Somalia are in need of emergency aid after the tsunami damaged or destroyed their homes.

German naval vessels attached to a U.S.-led task force based in Djibouti have been visiting affected Somali coastal villages since Thursday to provide emergency relief.



Somalia ships are seen tightened together in the Indian Ocean near the coast line of Hafun District in the north of Somalia, in this picture released by World Food Programme, taken on Dec. 30. REUTERS

In Baghdad

No damage after blast

BAGHDAD, Jan 1 (Reuters) - A loud explosion was heard in central Baghdad on Saturday but the U.S. military said it had no reports of any major attack in the area.

Guerrillas trying to drive out U.S.-led

forces and topple Iraq's American-backed government kept up sporadic mortar fire in and around the capital into New Year's day, which may explain the explosion that occurred at mid-day.

There were no reports of damage or

injuries in the city centre, a U.S. military spokeswoman said.

Earlier on Saturday, a roadside bomb in southern Baghdad killed an Iraqi truck driver and wounded three people, the spokeswoman said.



A U.S. Army soldier, from the 1st Cavalry Division, walks past the covered body of an Iraqi elderly man after he was killed in a roadside bomb explosion on New Year's day in Baghdad, Jan. 1. At least one Iraqi civilian was killed and two others were injured when a roadside bomb exploded on a highway southeast of Baghdad. REUTERS

Darfur casts shadow over Sudan peace pact in south

NAIROBI, Jan 1 (Reuters) - Sudanese hailed a New Year accord ending a north-south civil war, but celebrations were tempered by fear the fledgling pact may unravel under pressure from the separate Darfur conflict in the west.

Amid cries of delight and thanksgiving prayers, government and southern rebels signed the final chapters of a peace deal in neighbouring Kenya on Friday, paving the way for a comprehensive accord ending Africa's longest-running civil war.

Delegates from the government and rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) signed the last two of eight peace protocols that together make up an overall accord ending 21 years of war in the oil-producing south.

A peace ceremony setting an official seal on the accord is tentatively set for January 9 in Nairobi.

The power-sharing accords are intended to end the conflict in the south that has killed an estimated two million people, mainly through famine and disease, and uprooted four million.

The SPLM of the mainly animist and Christian south have been fighting the government since 1983, when Khartoum tried to impose Islamic law on the entire country. Issues of oil, ethnicity and governance have complicated the conflict.

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan welcomed the accord and said the official signing of the peace deal would "...usher in a new era of peace in Sudan,



Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir (R) sits next to rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement leader John Garang (L) during the signing ceremony of two protocols in Naivasha, 90 km (55 miles) west of Nairobi Dec. 31. Amid singing and whoops of joy, Sudan's government and southern rebels signed the final chapters of a peace deal Friday, paving the way for a comprehensive accord ending Africa's longest-running civil war. REUTERS

in which the United Nations is prepared to play a significant role."

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said Washington would help Khartoum and the southern rebels implement the deal.

The pact does not cover the conflict in Darfur, where more than a year of fighting has created what the United Nations says is one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Darfur crisis

Darfur's deepening crisis has repeatedly complicated the painstaking

negotiations by Khartoum and the SPLM to end the older, bloodier struggle in the oil-exporting south.

"The Darfur cloud is going to cast a dark shadow over the joy of today's agreement," John Prendergast of the influential International Crisis Group think tank.

"The rapid disintegration in Darfur will complicate the implementation of this agreement. The international community will need to be very vigilant on all the issues, especially on revenue and oil and wealth-sharing."

SPLM leader John Garang, set to

become Sudanese Vice President under the peace accords, is eager to enter government to rebuild the south and get a share of oil revenues. But doubts have blossomed among his colleagues, who sympathise with Darfur's rebels, about whether now is the time to share power.

Garang has long expressed sympathy with the African rebels in Darfur, whose demands for a bigger political say in Khartoum and more state resources are similar to the SPLM's own.

Garang has said Khartoum has used the same techniques in Darfur, where tens of thousands of people have been killed as a result of the conflict, that it once used against his forces.

"No man wants to marry an ugly woman," SPLA leader John Garang has said, explaining Khartoum's attractiveness as a partner was sullied by violence Washington calls genocide.

The African Union said security in Darfur had worsened after an attack this week by a previously unknown rebel group, forcing the U.N. to stop food deliveries to 250,000 displaced people.

"Our happiness will not be complete unless we solve the problem of Darfur," Sudan President Hassan Omar al-Bashir told Friday's brief but raucous signing in Kenya's Naivasha town.

A leader of one of Darfur's rebel groups, Sudan Liberation Army chairman Abdel Wahed Mohamed al-Nur, said that only fair deals for all the marginalised people of Sudan would bring a lasting peace in Sudan.

Iran sets crunch presidential election for June 17

TEHRAN, Jan 1 (Reuters) - Iran's legislative watchdog on Saturday set June 17 as the date for presidential elections that are expected to mark the final defeat by conservative clerics of the reform movement led by outgoing President Mohammad Khatami.

"The Guardian Council has approved the 27th of Khordad (June 17) as the date for presidential elections," said the Council's spokesman, Gholam-Hossein Elham, in a statement reported by the official IRNA news agency.

The Guardian Council had already rejected proposed election dates in May, arguing that screening of candidates could not start more than three months before Khatami's second and last term expires on Aug. 1.

The liberal Khatami, elected by a landslide in 1997 and again in 2001, has seen his popularity plummet as Iranians grow disillusioned with his inability to push through reforms against the resistance of the clerical establishment.

Khatami, who cannot stand for a third successive term, came to power promising political, social and economic change, but powerful conservative clerics have frustrated all his efforts.

Conservatives trounced reformists in parliamentary elections last February after the Council banned thousands of reformist candidates, including many parliamentarians, on the ground that they did not meet its moral standards.

Amid heated speculation about who will stand for the presidency, influential former President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani — regarded as a pragmatic conservative — has signalled that he may run if he gets enough high-level backing.

"If the elite of the regime conclude that I should take over this crucial responsibility at this stage, God willing I will run in the elections," Rafsanjani was quoted as saying by the student ISNA news agency on Saturday.

Several political parties are backing a comeback by Rafsanjani, whose 1989-1997 presidency was marked by modest social reform.

Analysts believe a Rafsanjani candidacy might reduce the chances of hardline hopefuls such as former foreign minister Ali Akbar Velayati and Ali Larijani, both advisers to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The Islamic Iran Participation Front, the leading reformist party, this week gave its backing to former higher education minister Mostafa Moin, the first reformist candidate to throw his hat into the ring.

Former parliament speaker Mehdi Karubi, a moderate reformist, is also considering an election bid, though it is not yet clear whether the reform camp will settle on one candidate.

Moin resigned from Khatami's government in 2003 in protest at mass arrests of students who were among the main supporters of Khatami's reform drive.

Hertz Yemen updates its Hyundai Fleet



Mr. Jamal Abul Wasa' Hayel handing over the keys to Mr. Saleem Sheikh in the presence of Mr. Amin Bahamam

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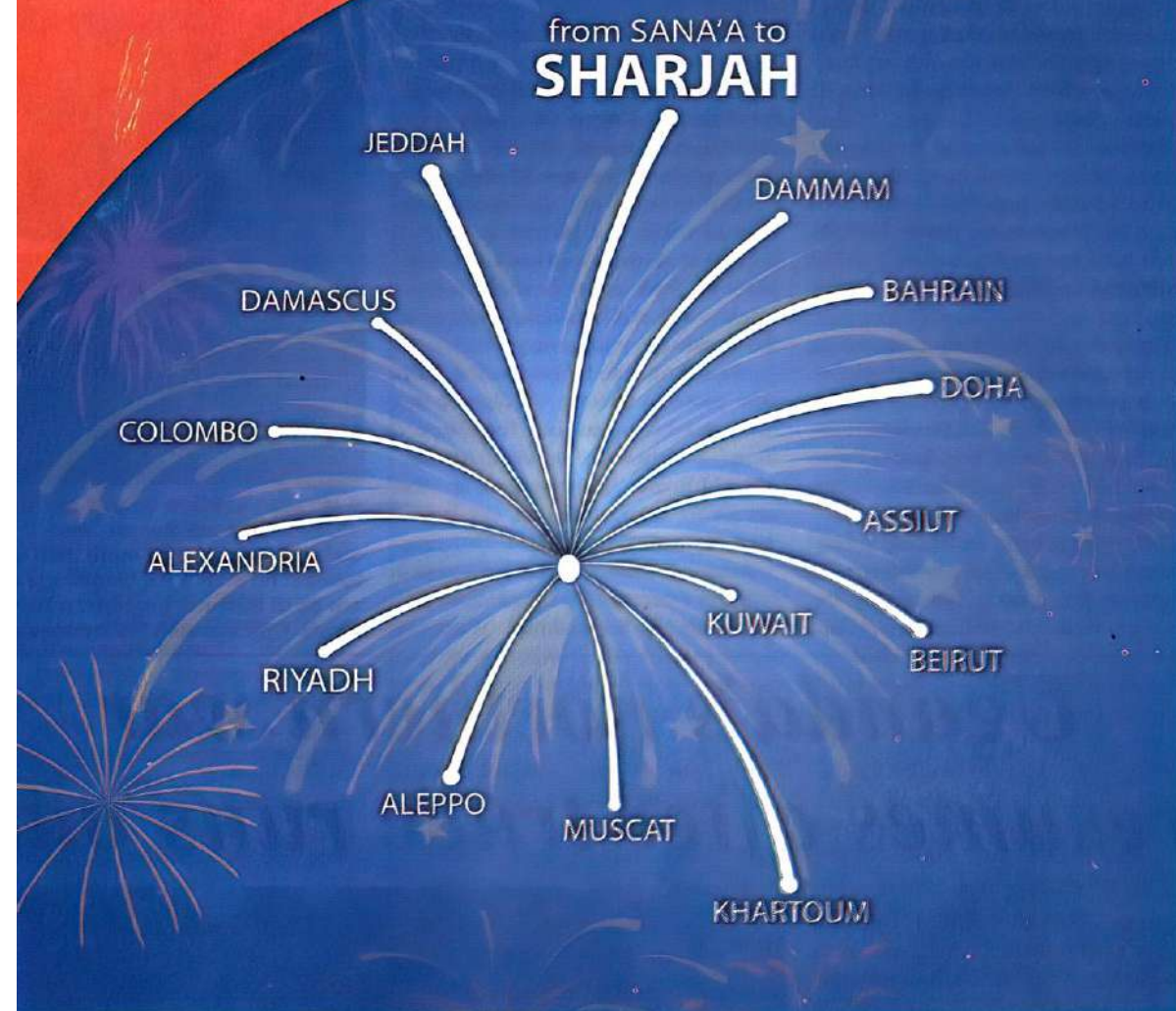
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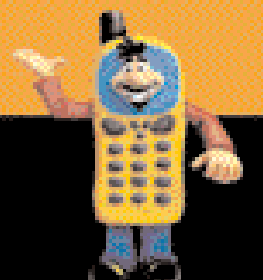
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Changes for 2005

Arab fathers and sons

By Volker Perthes

The deaths of Yasir Arafat and of Sheikh Zayd, the long-standing ruler of the United Arab Emirates, continues the generational change that began in 1999-2000, when the leaders of Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, and Syria died in quick succession. Across the Middle East people are younger, and their political leaders older, than the world average. The gradual replacement of one generation of elites by another may be one of the key factors in determining whether or not effective reform takes place in the Arab world.

At present, four political generations co-exist on the region's socio-political map. The outgoing leadership generation – that of Arafat, King Hussein or Hafiz al-Assad, King Fahd and President Mubarak – was born before 1935 and has determined events in the Middle East since the 1970's.

These leaders came of age and began their careers during the era of decolonization. They were weaned on Gamal Abdel-Nasser's pan-Arab nationalism, and the crucial political event for them was the Arab defeat in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Members of this generation sought a strong Arab leadership that would create a balance of power with Israel. They also believed in – or at least toyed with – forms of socialism and étatism, and did not consider democracy or civil rights to be priori-

ties.

The next generation was born between 1935 and 1955, and in many respects represents a generation "in between." Most benefited from the economic growth and expanded educational opportunities associated with the oil boom of the 1970's. At the same time, political participation remained blocked by the previous generation, which never intended to give up power voluntarily. Unsurprisingly, many in this generation grew dissatisfied, and not a few began to look for Islamic alternatives to the prevailing political systems.

Rather than determining events in the coming two or three decades, this generation is likely to be sidelined by the next cohort, born between 1955 and 1975. This is the generation of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad, Jordan's King Abdullah and Morocco's King Muhammad VI. Some call this the "generation of sons" – sons of leaders who led their states for decades.

This age cohort was not much influenced by the Arab-Israeli wars or the East-West conflict. Instead, their political education included the Gulf War of 1991 and the Arab-Israeli peace process of the 1990's, with its crises and breakdown. Jailed West Bank Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti is as representative of this group as the leaders of Syria and Jordan.

Members of this generation are better acquainted with notions of globalization and economic reform than with socialism and revolution. Except for

the Palestinians, they have never known their countries other than as independent and comparatively stable states. In the Palestinian territories, the *jil al-intifada*, the generation of the (first and second) Palestinian uprising, will likely become the founding generation.

But it is the fourth group that underscores the relevance of generational issues in the Arab world. Even when combined, the first three generations make up barely one-third of the entire Arab population. Almost 60% of all Arabs are younger than 20, with roughly 70% below the age of 30.

This raises a key question: what happens to these Arab "baby boomers" if the generation now coming to power clings to it as tenaciously as the generation of Mubarak, Assad, and Hussein?

The political generation of Bashar al-Assad, King Abdullah, and Gamal Mubarak – son of Egypt's ailing president – forms a less coherent picture than that of the outgoing leadership. In that elder generation, many had pursued military careers, and many of their aides and collaborators were engineers and civil servants.

The socio-professional profile of the new elite is broader. Economists, bankers, and entrepreneurs as well as of technology or communication experts are common. There are also more traditional politicians: personalities who see themselves as representatives of particular social or economic interests, not as apolitical technocrats.

This new leadership elite is in many



ways more cosmopolitan than its predecessors; their average level of education is higher; a few have foreign degrees. Women also play a somewhat greater role.

Developments in Morocco, Bahrain, and Jordan certainly seem to suggest that this changing of the guard can help soften rigid political structures and allow for broader participation. But generational change need not be accompanied by economic reform and steps towards political liberalization – witness North Korea under Kim II Sung's son, Kim Jong Il.

Indeed, experience gives little reason to presume that a modern way of speaking, willingness to liberalize the economy, and an urge for technological development automatically translates into a democratic opening. It is more realistic to expect that the new Arab elites will make use of their states' authoritarian institutions, both to overcome resistance to their economic agendas and to consolidate their newly acquired power.

This is anything but a risk-free path. Without a significant increase in opportunities for political participation, including genuinely competitive elections, the chasm between a predominantly young population and a ruling elite with a narrow generational

base will widen. Such continuing political inertia leaves an increasingly young Arab population prey to the appeal of extremist ideologies, while driving the best and brightest to seek their fortune elsewhere.

Volker Perthes heads the Middle

East and Africa program at Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, and is author of Arab Elites: Negotiating the Politics of Change.

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Reflections

By Yahya Al-Olfi
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Why are foreigners preferred?

The price for being a Yemeni national

The private Yemeni capital which is supposed to contribute in the economy of the country and reflect a positive improvement in the social conditions of Yemenis, does sometimes employ some Yemenis who ought to be honored with good pay. But unfortunately we find "The Private Yemeni capital" extremely interested in recruiting foreign employees, not in rare specializations, but in normal positions mastered by a multitude of Yemenis.

In fact Yemenis have proven on many occasions that they are more successful because they do hail from the same environment and they will be serving their own people.

The distressing reality shows that our local capital diversifies its humiliation of Yemeni compatriots who exert much effort in the service of this country only to receive very low wages without any other privileges whatsoever.

On the other hand, the foreigner whether he/she be an Indian or from another Arab country, receives his or her salary in US dollars. Ironically such a foreigner in certain cases may receive an amount exceeding or equaling all the wages of the whole Yemeni Staff in such a private institution. So don't be amazed to find some of them smoking cigars instead of normal cigarettes!

Then we dare to ask whether Yemenis are aliens in their own land? After a few days from the arrival of the foreign employee we find him living in luxury having a good accommodation, a nice car and the latest prestigious cellular, all mostly given free. Don't we see that a generation after another is underway? How can we guarantee that their seething anger will not explode one day?

The president and the government should take avail of the Saudi and Omani experience in replacing foreigners with their own people before it is too late. The Private Business Sector should not be left alone to act whimsically.

And what is the use of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs? Don't we have a bit of honest state administration to cease such

disgrace? Or are our responsible people beneficiaries of such infringements of good reason left alone the law?

Labor offices are deep asleep or have no powers, then what is the use of such institutions and their annual budgets if they cannot cease such corruption and perform their assumed duties. Or is it that they do not know their responsibilities?

I still remember how an American wanted to take his Yemeni gardener with him to his new post in another country and how that country refused to give that Yemeni a residence permit because his profession was not that rare and many nationals of that country could do the same job. Such employees find themselves unable to make ends meet and thus decide to leave the country.

I would like to give you a vivid image of this, a Yemeni would receive a monthly salary of YR15,000-YR30,000 i.e \$75 to \$150. The foreigner would receive \$1,000 up to \$6,000. I know cases where a foreigner receives \$10,000 in addition to other privileges. Adding insult to injury the Yemeni pays taxes and the foreigner is exempted.

When it comes to incentives and occasional gratuities a Yemeni gets an amount equaling his basic salary and the foreigner double his full salary. The Yemeni employee is always under attack and continued harassment lest he fails to perform his job assignments while the foreigner always receives broad smiles and incessant compliments. When decisions are taken to raise salaries the Yemeni gets a 10 per cent raise in Yemeni Riyals and the foreigner 10% in US Dollars (see the difference!)

Do you think someone might read this and do something about it? Nope, everyone reads but all have dead consciences. They are in a valley and their compatriots are in another. Simply they are responsible with regard to foreigners. As for their own people, they are mere aliens. In such institutions the hard work is done by Yemenis.

This is urgent and the private sector must be forced by the government to employ Yemeni youth who are jobless roaming the streets aimlessly and likely to commit crimes, even in unwanted radical or terrorist groups.

Election aftermath

Can democracy take hold in Ukraine?

By Alfred Stepan

Although Ukraine's "Orange Revolution" has once again demonstrated the power of people in the streets, two aspects trouble many observers: the perception that there are "two Ukraines," and the pact reached between the old regime and Viktor Yushchenko's democratic forces to reduce the president's constitutional powers. But both comparative democratic theory and historical experience suggest that these factors could be less worrisome than they seem.

Certainly, the diversity of forms of governance used over the centuries by Russia, Poland, Lithuania, and Austria-Hungary when they ruled what is now Ukraine make creating a classic "nation state," with one dominant culture, difficult to imagine. Consider, for example, the robustness of the Russian language and the strength of the Orthodox Church - Moscow Patriarchate - in Donetsk that is in eastern Ukraine and the robustness of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Lviv in the west.

Yet Spain, India, Belgium, and Switzerland are all consolidated democracies that do not fit the classic model of the nation state. Indeed, multiple but complementary identities are the norm in all four countries.

These multiple identities emerged because the democratic state provided a "roof" of equal rights above all citizens, whatever their religion, language, or culture. This helped develop a strong sense of identity with the statewide political community. These profoundly pluralistic countries are not classic "nation states," but rather what I call democratic "state nations."

During the recent presidential election, many suggested that reconciling the "two Ukraines" was impossible. But polarization has not been a constant factor in the history of independent Ukraine. On the contrary, Ukraine is closer to being a "state nation" than many people think. Moreover, its prospects for becoming a consolidated democracy are enhanced by the fact that its political elites – and most ordinary Ukrainians – have eschewed the idea of being a classic "nation state."

Indeed, more than 80% of Ukraine's Russified eastern districts voted for independence in 1991, and the 1999 parliamentary and presidential elections did not split the country nearly as much as the 2004 presidential elections did. A survey in 2001 of the two supposedly most polarized cities, Donetsk and Lviv, showed convergence in their approval of independent Ukraine, with only 1% of respondents in Lviv and 5% in Donetsk preferring that Ukraine be divided into two or more countries.

As in other "state nations," surveys in Ukraine indicate that common symbols have helped build elements of a common identity. Both ethnic Russians and ethnic Ukrainians view the tenth-century feudal state known as "Kyiv Rus" very favorably. Moreover, both groups share the seventeenth-century Cossack warrior Bohdan Khmelnytskyi as their most popular historical figure, and both revile Stalin due to the famines caused by his forced collectivization of agriculture in the 1930's (whereas most ethnic Russians in Russia view Stalin as the heroic state savior of WWII).

These shared attitudes toward Ukrainian symbols and statehood owe much to a recognition that independence will not be well protected by forging a classic nation state, that is, a "Ukrainian Only" state. Thus, the

country's declaration of independence 13 years ago was made in the name of "The people of Ukraine," and citizenship was offered to everyone who was born on the territory of Ukraine, regardless of nationality.

I was invited as an adviser to two constitutional committee meetings in Kyiv in the 1990's. My impression from the discussions was that both Ukrainians and Russians in Ukraine were acutely aware of the need to avoid ethnic conflict. In fact, an informal state-building alliance of convenience emerged between key non-communist Ukrainian nationalists and key pro-sovereignty, ethnic Russian communists.

The perception of "two Ukraines" emerged in the presidential election of 2004 partly due to the charge that Yushchenko would eliminate the constitutional guarantee that ethnic Russians could use Russian as their primary language of instruction in schools. But during his campaign Yushchenko assured Russophones that he would uphold such rights.

Finally, much of what has been described as "secessionism" in the east is in fact regionalism. Greater legally respected decentralization in Ukraine, especially in Crimea, would be a logical and overdue "state nation" policy.

The other major issue raised during the Orange Revolution concerns presidential powers. Many Yushchenko loyalists are unhappy that, in exchange for the government agreeing to fairer election rules, Yushchenko agreed to transfer some presidential powers to the parliament. Notwithstanding the self-serving intentions of outgoing President Leonid Kuchma, this historic pact may in the long run produce positive results for Ukraine's democracy and prospects for joining the European Union.

Alfred Stepan is Professor of Government at Columbia University.
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Special teams win for hurricanes

ATLANTA (Sports Network) - Devin Hester returned a blocked field goal 78 yards for a touchdown and Roscoe Parrish returned a punt for a score, as special teams play lifted 14th-ranked Miami-Florida to a 27-10 win over 20th-ranked Florida in the Peach Bowl at the Georgia Dome.

Hester also had an interception for the Hurricanes (9-3), who scored 14 points on special teams. Parrish's return went for 73 yards and Miami's defense managed to hold off two late rallies for the win. The Hurricanes had five sacks against a Florida offensive line that had allowed only 15 all season.

"Those guys are playmakers," said Miami head coach Larry Coker. "Team speed is one thing, but Roscoe and Devin have the knack to make people miss and score touchdowns."

Miami senior quarterback Brock Berlin, who began his collegiate career at Florida only to later transfer to Miami, ended 13-of-23 for 171 yards with a touchdown and one interception. Frank Gore added 25 carries for 78 yards as the Hurricanes won their sixth straight against their intrastate rival.

Chris Leak ended 19-of-39 for 262 yards with a touchdown and two interceptions for Florida (7-5), which had a three-game win streak halted and is now waiting for its new head coach to take over.

Defensive Coordinator Charlie Strong served as head coach for



Miami wide receiver Roscoe Parrish (1) returns a punt for a touchdown as University of Florida punter Eric Wilbur (10) pursues in the first half of the Peach Bowl in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 31. Reuters

Florida, which named Utah's Urban Meyer to the position earlier this month. Strong took over the Gators' program after the displaced Ron Zook took the head coaching job at Illinois. Meyer opted not to coach Florida in the bowl and stay with the

fifth-ranked Utes for their Fiesta Bowl tilt against 19th-ranked Pittsburgh on New Year's Day.

The game got off to a quick start and just as quickly settled down.

Florida's Jermaine McCollum blocked a Miami punt and recovered

it on the Gators' 39 yard line. However, Florida had trouble mustering any offense. On a 4th-down play, the Gators went for it and got the first down, but had it called back because of a penalty.

Then, on the ensuing field goal try, a Miami lineman got his hand on the kick and Devin Hester picked up the loose ball and returned it for a touchdown and a 7-0 lead.

Florida did manage to get a Matt Leach 34-yard field goal in the second quarter to draw within 7-3, but a 47-yarder by Jon Peattie extended Miami's lead to 10-3. Then, Roscoe Parrish returned an Eric Wilbur punt 73 yards for a score to make it 17-3 going into halftime.

In the second half, Berlin hit Ryan Moore with a 20-yard touchdown pass to extend the lead to 24-3 with 9:39 left in the third quarter.

However, Florida answered with seven points of its own later in the stanza. Leak hit Jemelle Cornelius with a 45-yard bomb late in the stanza to again make it a 14-point contest. Cornelius made a nice diving catch on the play.

In the fourth, Peattie nailed a 32-yarder to extend the advantage to 17 points.

Later, the Miami defense forced a turnover on downs and intercepted Leak in the end zone with under two minutes left to preserve the win.

Ciatrick Fason had 98 rushing yards for the Gators.

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Cole's winner keeps Chelsea bandwagon rolling

LONDON (Reuters) - Chelsea, boosted by a slice of good fortune for substitute Joe Cole's winner, have continued their surge towards a first Premier League title with a battling 1-0 victory at Liverpool.

The England midfielder's low drive from distance deflected in off Jamie Carragher 10 minutes from time to hand Jose Mourinho's side their third win in the hectic holiday programme and a perfect start to their centenary year.

Chelsea, with 52 points from 21 games, extended their lead to eight over Arsenal but the champions can close back to within five if they defeat Charlton Athletic at The Valley in a 3 p.m. kickoff.

Cole, scoring for the second successive game, had hit the winner in Chelsea's 1-0 victory over Liverpool at Stamford Bridge in October.

On as a 76th-minute replacement for Damien Duff, Cole was well positioned to latch on to Glen Johnson's cushioned header from Arjen Robben's corner. The deflection off Carragher wrong-footed Jerzy Dudek and flew in.

Chelsea have lost only once in their 21 league matches and are unbeaten in their last 12.

Manchester United, who have climbed to third on the back of seven wins in their last eight games, play away at fifth-placed Middlesbrough in a 5:30 p.m. kickoff.



Benitez says Gerrard will win key midfield tussle

LIVERPOOL (Reuters) - Steven Gerrard will win the battle between England's two top midfield talents when Liverpool play Chelsea on Saturday, according to his Anfield boss Rafael Benitez.

Gerrard will have to overcome the challenge of his international team mate Frank Lampard if he is to continue his match-winning performances.

"I am sure the midfield will be the most important place on the pitch against Chelsea," Benitez told reporters on Friday.

"We will try and see if Frank Lampard can play against Didi Hamann, Xabi Alonso and Steven Gerrard."

"I know people say Lampard is good but in my opinion Steven is the best player. He is our player and has the spirit we need in our side."

Benitez also confirmed midfielder Harry Kewell will be out for up to five weeks with a groin injury he admits has come at the worst time for the Australian international.

"It is very sad for Harry because he was playing as well as any time since I have been here," Benitez added.

"He was scoring goals and making assists for his team mates and I felt he was improving his level."



2004 tennis belonged to Federer

LONDON (Reuters) - Roger Federer staged a single-handed takeover of men's tennis in 2004. In the women's game the Russians seized control.

Anastasia Myskina fired the first salvo for Russia at Roland Garros in June, becoming the first woman from her country to win a grand slam title.

Four weeks later Siberian-born teenager Maria Sharapova demolished Serena Williams to win Wimbledon and in September Svetlana Kuznetsova powered to victory at the U.S. Open.

As the year drew to a close, Myskina inspired Russia to their first Fed Cup title against France in Moscow.

Federer's emergence to fill the vacuum left by the retirement of Pete Sampras stamped an indelible mark on the year.

The Swiss, who has a steely core to complement an unrivalled arsenal of weapons, captivated fans across the globe as he racked up a 74-6 singles record.

By winning the Australian and U.S. Opens, and retaining his Wimbledon crown in between, he became the first player since Mats Wilander in 1988 to win three grand slam titles in a year.

He was unbeaten against players in the top 10, matched Sampras's 23-match winning streak and set a record of 13 consecutive wins in finals — not bad considering he does not even have a coach.

The year was just weeks old when

Federer dethroned Andy Roddick as world number one by marching to the Australian Open title against Marat Safin.

The 24-year-old then won tournaments in Dubai, Hamburg and Halle before breezing into an eagerly-

awaited final against Roddick at Wimbledon.

On a rain-hit Centre Court defending champion Federer was briefly knocked out of his stride before he delved into his bag of tricks to win in four sets.



New Real coach Luxemburgo gets cautious welcome

MADRID, Dec 31 (Reuters) - Spain's sports media gave a guarded welcome to new Real Madrid coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo on Friday, highlighting the Brazilian's stellar record but bemoaning the merry-go-round of new faces at the club.

Real named former Brazil manager Luxemburgo, who has just led Santos to the Brazilian title, as their third coach of the season on Thursday in a bid to reverse a slump in their fortunes.

"Madrid De Luxe" was the headline in Marca, while AS dubbed the new coach "Iron Vanderlei", in reference to his insistence on the need for discipline during Thursday's presentation news conference.

Luxemburgo's surprise arrival ends the three-month tenure of Mariano Garcia Remon who in turn replaced former Spanish national coach Jose Antonio Camacho after just four months in the job.

"Luxemburgo, yet another whim,"

sighed Mundo Deportivo in a banner headline.

"Today is a bad day for a 'madridista' (Real fan) like me: with every day that passes this Real Madrid becomes less recognisable to me," moaned one of AS's columnists.

Real have accumulated a roster of star players unrivalled in club football that includes Brazilians Ronaldo and Roberto Carlos as well as Zinedine Zidane, Raul, Luis Figo,

David Beckham and Michael Owen.

But despite the line-up of "galacticos", as they are called half-in-jest these days, the club ended last season without a major trophy for the first time in five years.

They have been disappointing so far this season too, slipping to five defeats in the league and stuttering into the knockout stages of the Champions League.

It's a poor show from the most successful club in the history of

European football, with 29 domestic league titles in addition to a record nine European Cups — but there was a small sense of optimism Luxemburgo could recover the Real spark.

"I understand that many madridistas feel disoriented as if they had lost their compass in the middle of the desert," wrote AS columnist Tomas Roncero.

"But I have a good feeling about this. Luxemburgo will know how to

motivate the troupe of galacticos who have lost their way."

As for Luxemburgo himself, who recently told reporters in Brazil "I'm a star", he looked set to make an equally confident start in his new job.

Marca described the dapper Brazilian getting emotional as he strolled through the cavernous Bernabeu on Thursday, and quoted him as declaring: "I am going to triumph in this stadium."

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Poetic images from the desert

Beauty in the barrenness of the Empty Quarter

By IRENA KNEHTL
 IREN_KNEHTL@MAKTOOB.COM
 FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Yemen's eastern and southern governorates, Al Jawf, Marib, Shabwa and Hadramawt surround the sands, the Al Rub Al Khali desert, or Empty Quarter, the great desert of Southern Arabia.

There the Yemeni governorates fade into winds, draught and barren stretches. Inside is more sand, both in surface and volume. And a more daunting landscape featuring high sand dunes.

A barren place, where rare blooming flowers are a sign of hot weather to come. Although here everything still bears the mark of the past, the area stood on an ancient trade route from India. A unique "island civilization" developed in the middle of vast sea of sand and rock.

Odor of camel dung from lamb fat and sesame oil. Scent of perfumed smoke, cardamom coffee was in the air. Not a bird, not a blade of grass, but great grandeur. A full moon which presides over the starts, and once foretold the destiny of nations. Roads here have particular significance, and in Arabia one of the most important rights is the right to passage.

I went there just in time to write down some oral poetry. And before man lost or gave up his battle with nature. The human strength and weakness, the only elements needed for a powerful and strong being the triumph.

Emotions
 Oh, how my heart is being pulled

because of Dhayjim, Like the rope is pulled over the roller. The emotions, I tried to repress, have burst open. Bitter is my cure. Even bitter herbs do not cure the hearts of those who love. Everything imaginable occurred to me all at once.

While my heart boiled over like a coffee in a pot made in Al Akhsa. Earth and sky I gobbled up. But for me it was not even chicken feed. I drank the oceans in one sip and swallowed the years. As clock of course wool, I threw the day around my shoulders, wrapped myself in the dark night, gathered the stars. A rider of month left since the summer. O God, send us a night where clouds are not dispersed by the wind.

Making good on their promise with floods. I climbed a rock, a lovely rock, where white dark - winged falcons made their abode. O, my heart that is swept by the bowling winds, as foam and dust from the surface of a desert pool left by torrent.

O God, grant us a night with the promise of flashing lightning and heavy clouds that will bring rains from Al-Hazim, from Al-Jawf. Its violent gusts tear into the fine crests of the sand dunes. The joy of cultivators who will toil to irrigate their majestic palms from wells. And refreshing camels, weakened by far from water in the hot season. With necks as graceful as those of gazelles. Well covered with fat, their woolly hair coal-black with some silvery behind their ears.

The legs of camel are long, her color black and her neck slender. Heavy clouds rolling in the wake of other. A vast darkness, its flashes of lightning. The stormy mood and distant



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thunder, the blinding flashes, the lowering clouds. Wind scented with winter rain, pointing to the sand.

What news had they of those sands? She loves the man who is sent to draw the water. And he is fond of her. With the festive, swinging fait, she heads straight to the well. Her lips a mosaic of coral. Her neck like the gazelle of the garden. With her back against the date palm he watched her walk away. He saw her and that was enough. The camel troops were overwhelmed. O, God, he who knows

the souls intentions secrets. For you, I ask a night stretching from the east, he promised. Flashes of lightning and ruling thunder are unmistakable signs. As soon as one cloud drifts away the next one follows in its traces and brings to blossom the wide empty vastness that they lay bare for so long.

Like a prince
 Camels now appear dark like indigo. As slopes washed by the powerful rain. Like a prince who rides at the head of his army. When a host of nomads who view for the water at the well. A messenger, riding a camel from Oman. He winds his way through the rolling stony hills. Seen from a distance his silhouette is as fast moving object. He burns up the miles in the wide empty plains.

His legs paddling like a swimmer, his color is reddish, his ride magnificent. Though he is not flying, neither is he running. Like ships at sea hurling on the waves. His legs rocking. Is front parts curving down as gazelles on the run. Earth and the sky may heavy clouds release their rains.

Seaming curtains of rain are pouring down on the earth. Rains that irrigate the branches of palms and their yellow stalks heavy with burdens of young dates that are enveloped for protection. They irrigate the watering place of her whose curls are sprinkled with perfume.

The gray sheets of rain keep falling, the thunder rumbling in their rain. And the sky water splashes in the gullies of the sand files with pouring rains and lighting ripping through the dark. And flashes like the glittering steel of Indian swords while the clouds dip towards the crests of the sand-hills of

a mountain socked with rain in heavy clouds.

Oh, rider of camel who travels the empty wilderness. Beware of places once inhabited by your beloved one. Like dreams at night, they seem to have never existed at all. When the sea surges - nothing has the power to contain it. Even the clouds above the hilltops are now swept up by the water. Above the clouds the freedom has a thousand faces to show.

Count the grains of sand in the dune. Ours is a journey of Ninety years. Grains are as pearl anointed with grace and beauty that cannot be bought, not even for princely sums. No price, no matter how high can be set for a thing so precious.

For us every grain in its soil is worth a fight. In war we glory once its gate is opened. Once two thousand tents in the desert drew water from our well. One day an enemy tribe took up position in the sand - hills. But the land is ours - not that of anyone else. And the sands seal off the well from which we drew our water.

Did you know ...?

- The Al Rub Al Khali, or the Empty Quarter desert is the world largest sand desert. There is more sand in the Empty Quarter, both in surface areas and volume, than any other place on Earth.
- Although the Sahara is world best - known desert, it is actually only 10 percent sand, with the remainder made up of rock, scrub and mountainous terrain. Here sand temperatures can reach up to 80 Celsius.
- A massive, trackless expanse of

shifting sand dunes, covering an area of more than 250,000 square miles, or 650,000 square kilometers, and extends to 1,200 by 500 kilometers.

• As one of the driest places on earth, most of it consists of massive rolling sand dunes, but to the west there is gravel plains that rise towards the mountains of the Yemen. The sandy and stormy eastern part is the richest in petroleum and minerals.

• It is bordering on Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Sultanate of Oman, and the United Arab Emirates.

• British explorer Sir Wilfred Thesiger, was the first Westerner to navigate eastern section in Empty Quarter in 1945. Read his beautiful account "The Arabian Sands".

• Yemen Governorates that surrounding the Al Rub Al Khali or the Empty Quarter desert are AlJawf, Marib, Shabwa, and Hadramwat. Except for AlJawf, a predominantly agricultural area, oil in commercial quantities has been discovered.

• AlJawf area is also known for ancient salt and mineral mines, such as gold and silver, thought to be an important source of wealth of the ancient Sabeen kingdom.

• The area is home to a number of rare species of wildlife, including the Arab oryx, gazelle, rich variety of birds and animal life. Leopards have been seen in the Asir National Park, there are wolves, jackals, hyenas.

• Explore also the fascinating Arabian Wildlife web site: www.arabianwildlife.com and www.arabianoryx.com

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