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YEMEN TIMES

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UK Minister of State: Yemen has the potential to be a very great country

By: Nadia al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Jan. 25 - "There is no real democracy in the world without promoting freedom of press." Dr. Kim Howells, British MP and the Middle East Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, stated in a brief press conference last Tuesday. Dr. Howells, who was an editor and researcher for the South Wales Miner and a television and radio writer and presenter in 1989, emphasised on the important role of media in development of societies. "For a transparent and open society a democratic government must not shackle the press." About the United Kingdom's promotion of freedom of press in Yemen, Dr. Howells said: "In my meetings with the Yemeni government officials, I have made my views very clear regarding freedom of press. There are certain signals that indicate how democratic a country is and the freedom of press is one of those signals."

The British Minister had left Sana'a on Wednesday after a three-day visit to the country in which he met with various government officials as well as activists and media personalities. His discussions with officials included regional as well as local issues such as Yemen's role in the African Horn, war against terrorism, development and freedom of press in Yemen. British



Dr. Howells to the Yemen Times: I have made my views very clear regarding freedom of press.

assistance to Yemen ranges from training of national security and maritime guards in fighting terrorism as well as promoting development programs in literacy, women's health and building government capacity. In this regard Dr. Howells said: "Fighting terrorism is not only done through military and security training, we believe that reducing poverty and enhancing the

living of people in all aspects is vital in fighting terrorism. During my visit I have met with many promising Yemenis who are dedicated to making democracy successful in Yemen. And I believe that Yemen has the potential to be a very great country not only benefiting itself but the whole world as well."

Continued on page 3

As businessmen jailed on pledges go on hunger strike Yemeni Al-Qaeda suspects transferred to court

By: Mohamed Bin Sallam

SANA'A, Jan. 24 - Mohamed Hamdi Al-Ahdal, detained on charges of having links to Al-Qaeda, was referred to the court, along with four other men, while two suspects refused to stand trial, official sources said Tuesday.

Many businessmen, jailed for pledges they wrote to bring back Al-Qaeda suspects to security authorities, are still on hunger strike in Aden Political Security Prison.

Media sources expect Al-Ahdal (also known as Abu Asem) to be transferred to the court soon on charges of having Al-Qaeda connections after being jailed since December 2003.

The September Net, affiliated with the Yemeni Ministry of Defense, reported last Monday that Al-Ahdal confessed to receiving large sums of money from foreign forces, totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars.

According to September Net, Al-Ahdal received money from sources in Kuwait and other Gulf countries to fund Al-Qaeda activities in Yemen. He spent the money, totaling half a million dollars in 2002, purchasing arms and explosives to carry out terrorism and vandalism acts in Yemen, targeting public interests and institutions. Security apparatuses investigated



Judge Hamoud Al-Hitar

many people, arrested over time, and discovered that Al-Ahdal had links with some bombings in Yemen, in addition to botched plots, the same source said. Al-Ahdal was the major funding source for those terrorist acts and the elements launching them.

Al-Ahdal was arrested in a Sana'a home while preparing for his wedding party following intelligence observation and follow-up lasting for months. He eluded capture for several years. He escaped many arrest attempts launched by security apparatuses and is considered one of the most active Al-Qaeda elements. He traveled for Jihad in many countries including Chechnya and

Afghanistan, and after the mutilation of one of his legs, he joined Al-Qaeda to supervise and fund terrorist operations.

The U.S. Administration handed over five suspects detained in Guantanamo Bay to the Yemeni government, which transferred them to penal prosecution and began investigating them based on files submitted by U.S. authorities, September Net added. Ghalib Al-Zaidi also is accused of harboring Al-Ahdal and offering him logistic support.

Sources said the five suspects currently under prosecution investigation are: Walid Shaher Al-Qadasi, Salah Salem Qaru, Mohamed Saleh Abdullah Al-Asad, Mohamed Faraj Ba Shumailah and Karama Sa'eed Khamsan. Investigations proved the first four suspects were not involved in direct terrorist operations; however, they confessed to forging ID cards for those belonging to Al-Qaeda.

Suspect No. 5, Karama Khamsan, 33, was detained in Guantanamo Bay on suspicion of drug trafficking and accused by prosecution of traveling to Pakistan to ensure admittance of two tons of hashish. Prosecution told the court Khamsan confessed to the charges attributed to him during security investigations.

Continued on page 3

Terrorism tops Yemeni-British discussions

By: Mohammed Al-Jabri

SANA'A, Jan. 25 - The press conference carried by the British Ambassador Mr. Michael Gifford for Yemeni media last Tuesday discussed several issues regarding the Yemeni British relations. The conference took place at the British Embassy in Sana'a in honor of Dr. Kim Howells the British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. A strategy for security and counter-terrorism cooperation between Britain and Yemen was one of the main themes of the conference. Britain also assists the

coast guard sector, providing training to improve its ability to protect Yemen's coasts from terrorist acts. Such aid does not include equipment, noted Gifford.

Gifford said coast guard training will enable them to curb illegal entry of Somalis to Yemeni regions and deter illegal fishing in Yemeni waters, thereby enhancing security and the national economy. Yemeni and British officials unanimously agreed that terrorism is an international phenomenon, not confined to one country, but found worldwide.

In the press conference, the ambas-

sador said Howells discussed with Yemeni ministers issues related to press freedom in Yemen. Gifford affirmed that last year was a black year for journalists, noting that the draft press law should meet journalist requirements. "Dr. Howells expressed his belief that a free press is a critical element of democracy," he added. In a meeting with Minister of Interior, Dr. Rashad Al-Alimi, Howells affirmed Britain's commitment to help Yemen fight terrorism. He said terrorist acts in Yemen and the region in general really do influence Britain and Europe.

Continued on page 3



British Ambassador Michael Gifford (left) taking Dr. Howells Minister of State (third from the left) in a tour around the old city of Sana'a.

CPJ's Marash advises Yemen to respect press freedom

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Jan. 25 - Yemeni journalists should have the right to ownership of different media without any restrictions, David Marash, member of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), confirmed in a news conference Wednesday during his visit to Yemen.

He pointed out that the Yemeni government may suffer loss if it continues to harass journalists and hassle journalism and such loss is due to negatively impact the state and Yemeni society.

According to Marash, harassment of Yemeni journalists will be responsible for limiting the size of international donor support aimed at boosting Yemen's ailing economy. Over the past few years, Yemen has suffered a reduction in international support.

Marash emphasized that exterminating the media and preventing media personnel from reporting facts will help increase the number of illiterates in Yemen.

The CPJ will call on the Yemeni government to show more respect for press freedom and allow the press to play a great role in the development process, he said. "We record the arrests, beatings and abuses against journalists in Yemen



David Marash

and convey them to our readership and different governments worldwide," he added.

Marash pointed out that the CPJ has the ability to play a strong role in transmitting facts of Yemen journalist harassment and abuse to other countries in the world, unless Yemeni authorities stop such practices.

He insisted Yemeni journalists continue reporting facts, irrespective of what happens to them, because by doing so, they will serve their country and its people and help restrict the practice of corruption in Yemen. He said he and his companions knew about the different media and the obstacles and barriers hindering their performance.

Marash stated he met a number of Information Ministry officials and social personalities interested in media issues to suggest possible remedies for the current journalism situation in Yemen.

He regretted not meeting Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal, who did not show up for their previously-arranged appointment.

UNDP Human Development Report 2005

More aid, pro-poor trade reform and long-term peace building are vital to ending extreme poverty.

Much has been achieved since the first Human Development Report 15 years ago. On average, people in developing countries are healthier, better educated and less impoverished—and they are more likely to live in a multiparty democracy. Since 1990, life expectancy in developing countries has increased by two years. There are three million fewer child deaths annually and 30 million fewer children out of school. More than 130 million people have escaped extreme poverty. These human development gains should not be underestimated.

Every year, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) issues an international report on human development around the world. The way this annual report is prepared indicates the UN's view of human development.

Human development is about much more than the rise or fall of national incomes. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs and interests. People are the real wealth of nations. Thus, development is about expanding the choices people have to lead lives they value. And it is much more than economic growth, which is only a means—though a very important one—to expand people's choices.

Fundamental to expanding choices is building human capabilities—the range of things people can do or be in life. The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, be knowledgeable, have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living and be able to participate in community life. Without these, many choices simply are not available and

many life opportunities remain inaccessible.

Every hour, more than 1,200 children die, away from the glare of media attention.

The 2005 Human Development Report takes stock of human development, including progress toward Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Looking beyond statistics, it highlights the human costs of missed targets and broken promises.

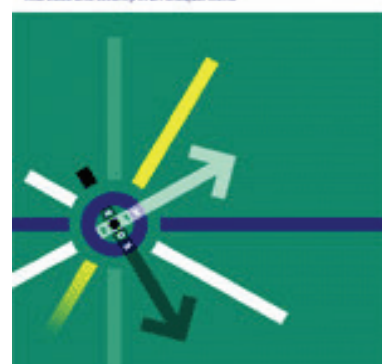
Extreme inequality between countries and within countries is identified as one of the main barriers to human development—and a powerful brake to accelerated progress toward MDGs.

The report is about the scale of the challenge facing the world at the start of the 10-year countdown to 2015. It focuses on what governments in rich countries can do to keep their side of the global partnership bargain. This does not imply that governments in developing countries have no responsibility. On the contrary, they have primary responsibility.

No amount of international cooperation can compensate for the actions of governments that fail to prioritize human development, respect human rights, tackle inequality or root out corruption. But without a renewed commitment to cooperation backed by practical action, MDGs will be missed—and the Millennium Declaration will go down in history as just one more empty promise.

The UNDP report focuses on three pillars of cooperation, each in urgent need of renovation. The first pillar is development assistance. International aid is a key investment in human devel-

Human Development Report 2005



opment. Returns on that investment can be measured in human potential unleashed by averting avoidable sickness and deaths, educating all children, overcoming gender inequalities and creating conditions for sustained economic growth.

Norway is first, Niger is last and Yemen is number 151 among 177 countries.

Development assistance suffers two problems: chronic under financing and poor quality. There have been improvements on both fronts, but much remains to be done to close MDG financing gaps and improve value for money.

The second pillar is international trade. Under the right conditions, trade can be a powerful catalyst for human development. The 2001 Doha 'Development Round' of World Trade Organization (WTO) talks provided rich countries' governments an opportunity to create those conditions.

Four years on, nothing of substance

has been achieved. Rich country trade policies continue denying poor countries and poor people a fair share of global prosperity—flying in the face of the Millennium Declaration. More than aid, trade has the potential to increase the share of the world's poorest countries and people in global prosperity. Limiting that potential through unfair trade policies is inconsistent with a commitment to MDGs. More than that, it is unjust and hypocritical.

The third pillar is security. Violent conflict blights the lives of hundreds of millions of people. It is a source of systematic human rights violation and a barrier to progress toward MDGs.

The nature of conflict has changed and new threats to collective security have emerged. In an increasingly interconnected world, threats posed by failure to prevent conflict or seize opportunities for peace inevitably cross national borders.

More effective international cooperation could help remove the barrier to MDG progress created by violent conflict, creating the conditions for accelerated human development and real security.

Renovation must occur simultaneously on each pillar of international cooperation. Failure in any one area will undermine the foundations for future progress.

More effective international trade rules will count for little in countries where violent conflict blocks opportunities to participate in trade. Increased aid without fairer trade rules will deliver sub-optimal results. And peace without the prospect of improved human welfare and poverty reduction through aid and trade will remain fragile.

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U.S. companies encouraged to invest in Aden free zone

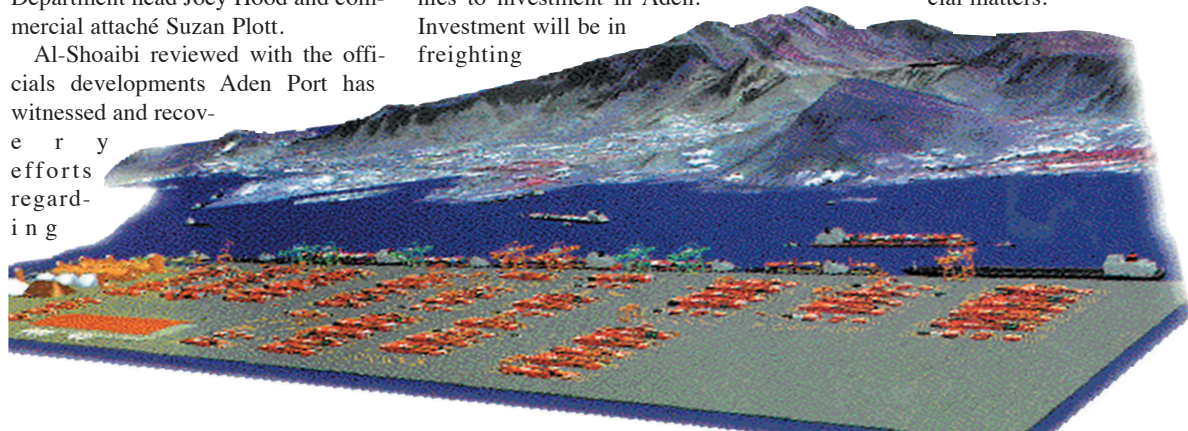
SANA'A, Jan. 24 - At a Jan. 22 meeting with U.S. embassy in Yemen officials, Aden governor Dr. Yahia Al-Shoaibi discussed encouraging U.S. companies to invest in Aden free zone and other trade areas. The governor met with Political and Economic Department head Joey Hood and commercial attaché Suzan Platt.

Al-Shoaibi reviewed with the officials developments Aden Port has witnessed and recovery efforts regarding

its international navigational history. He also reviewed state measures to operate the port with Dubai International Ports Company.

Following his meeting with the governor, Hood stated, "The U.S. embassy in Yemen will encourage U.S. companies to investment in Aden. Investment will be in freighting

and unloading, together with other commercial activities." He noted that Aden has become a peaceful port that promotes investment. Hood added that his meeting with Al-Shoaibi covered a number of issues concerning free zone activities and other bilateral commercial matters.



Al-Nafeesi: Gulf Cooperative Council incomplete without Yemen and Iraq

SANA'A, Jan. 22 - In a maqael (gathering) at Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ahmar's house, famed Arab intellectual and political science lecturer, Dr. Abdullah Al-Nafeesi, stated that the Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) will be incomplete without Yemen and Iraq's full membership.

Al-Nafeesi confirmed that the council's weakness and immobility is attributed to its isolation from Yemen and Iraq. He added that without these two forces, the six Gulf countries will be susceptible to international intervention and local unrest, which already has occurred.

He and Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Noaimi are touring Arabia to promote the international aggression resistance campaign. They also seek to acquaint themselves with international human rights organizations and shed light on threats arising from Iraq's occupation. One such threat is the Israeli pipeline project to carry Iraqi petroleum from Kirkuk to Jaffa, which will pave the way to establishing a water pipeline to carry



Dr: Al-Nafeesi

Euphrates River water to Israel. Al-Nafeesi also mentioned indications that Israeli troops are working with American forces in Iraq.

Al-Nafeesi warned of the danger of minorities in Gulf countries. He noted that minorities are concentrated densely in some areas, posing a danger of demands for independence, as is the case in Singapore and East Timor, Indonesia. He said the ideal solution is to use the Yemeni workforce in place of Indians and other nationalities.

Readers' Voice
Yemen Times features "Readers' Voice" a popular way for our readers to interact with us. This is your opportunity to have a say on world and local affairs.

This edition's question:

Do you think that the Yemeni Qaeda suspect - either those coming from Guantanamo or others in Yemen Jails - win face fair Trial?
Yes
No
I don't know

Last edition's question:

Do you think that the wiretapping on journalists' telephones is done by Yemeni security?

No	16.9%
46%	
I don't know	7.7%
Yes	75.2%

Go to our website at: yementimes.com/#poll and have your voice heard

American Chemical Society donates books to Sana'a University

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Jan. 25 - The American Association of Yemeni Scientists and Professionals (AAAYSP) held a scientific debate Jan. 24 at Sana'a University discussing the role of scientific, academic and non-governmental organizations in building Yemen's research capacities. The event also celebrated delivery of scientific books in various specializations to the university. The American Chemical Society donated the books to support research and higher education.

Sana'a University rector Dr. Saleh Ba-Sora discussed the university's role in scientific research activities. He affirmed the necessity of western care and help to developing countries, which helps resolve their social and educational problems, as well as uproot terrorism. He also highlighted university achievements in recent years, including publishing 25 books and improving university buildings and staff living conditions.

U.S. Ambassador to Yemen Thomas Krajeski affirmed America's commitment to develop scientific research in Yemen, emphasizing the bilateral social relations between Yemenis and Americans. He noted that scientific development often begins in universities, fueled by researchers' minds.

Krajeski said several programs are interested in academic research, such as the Fulbright Program, which sends American professors to teach in Yemen and sends Yemenis to the U.S. for qualification. The program also sends teenagers to study in the U.S., he added, noting that there are now 30 Yemeni teens studying there.

The ambassador mentioned that American institutes also teach Yemeni youth in America. He revealed that the U.S. will establish 24 projects to fight women's computer illiteracy, with businessmen participating in the project.

At the end of the debate, Krajeski delivered 32,000 books donated to the university by the American Chemical Society. The various books and references, worth \$400,000, cover chemistry, medical and computer topics and include copies of periodicals in other subjects.



Prof. Bassurrah (R) with the U.S. Ambassador in the workshop.



A view of some of the books donated to Sana'a University.

Iranian Ambassador lashes out at western media

By: Mohammed Al-Jabri

SANA'A, Jan. 24 - In a press conference Tuesday in Sana'a, Iranian Ambassador to Yemen, Hussein Kamalian, accused Western media of conveying false accounts about Iran's nuclear efforts. He said Western media covers the issue more than other media only to agitate the situation against Iran.

He pointed out that media in Western countries focuses on three points; most notably, that Iran seeks to own nuclear weapons, currently seeks uranium enrichment and does not cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Kamalian denied these allegations, asking media to distinguish between safe scientific nuclear research and uranium production.

Kamalian affirmed Iran's right to

continue safe nuclear research, conducted under IAEA supervision. "The Western media knows full well that Iran cannot produce enriched uranium needed for nuclear fuel in our research laboratories, but despite this, they do not make things clear," he commented.

World nations' recurrent aggressive stance toward Iran is due to Iranian citizens' steadfastness, Kamalian said, adding that threats will not frighten them. "We will not abandon our rights. The threatening language of great states is futile. Referring Iran's nuclear program to the UN Security Council is not the end and their dialog with us should not ignore Iranians' demands," Kamalian stated.

Regarding foreign threats against Iran, Kamalian said Israeli threats toward Iran have become among the



H.E. Hussein Kamalian - Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"tales and myths" Israelis repeat about Iran's nuclear program. Such threats, he stated, come in an American-Israeli scenario. "If they set up a foolish act against Iran, we will respond strongly,"

he added.

Kamalian noted that Iran is now in a good position, which does not assist the U.S. to invade it. "Iranians are in favor of and side with the government, the

economic situation is encouraging and so is the military situation. People inside and outside Iran stand on our side, while our relations with other countries are all the more intensified,"

he added.

Kamalian affirmed that what happened to Iraq will not be repeated in Iran, the latter being in a better, more secure situation. Iraq was ruled by a dictator, whereas Iran is witnessing real democracy. "America thought the Islamic revolution would survive no more than six months, but now Iran is celebrating its 27th anniversary," he noted.

Regarding Iraq, Kamalian said Iran's role is to help Iraqis reach safe situations. "Iraq is not a place to settle accounts with the Americans, but rather it is a holy place for Iraqis," he commented.

Iran is a developing country in need of energy. Generating electricity by petroleum-powered stations cannot suffice cities' demand; therefore, using nuclear power is the alternative.

Kamalian expressed appreciation for the positive stance of Arab states toward Iran's nuclear efforts and thanked Yemen's President for his strong stance.

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الصحيفة.
و نرجو عدم التعامل معهم قطعياً
بعد نشر هذا الاعلان.

Archeological discoveries in Marib

SANA'A, Jan. 25 - The German mission disclosed in a press conference that it has discovered another dam under the old Marib Dam.

Mission researchers confirmed that the newly discovered dam dates to 456 B.C. Irrigation canals in the dam indicate it was an important water source for ancient Marib city.

The mission also discovered many archeological scripts at the dam site

reflecting the distinct irrigation system followed by ancient Yemeni kingdoms. The scripts depict the kingdoms' agricultural systems and products, which provided agricultural self-sufficiency for Yemen and other places.

The mission said eastern streams, now known as Awdiat Al-Sharq, used to flow into the dam, which seemed to have been destroyed several times due to precipitates in its bed.



Marib Dam

Legal amendment appoints dedicated judge as Supreme Court head

SANA'A, Jan.25 – Yemen's cabinet approved amending Article 104 of 1999's Law 11 of the Judiciary and formation of the Supreme Court. The amendment comes amid judiciary reforms to change judiciary leadership.

A judge will be dedicated from among the judiciary and be at least a high court member, possessing judiciary experience and administrative skills.

The cabinet transferred the law to Parliament to complete constitutional procedures.

Supreme Court member, Judge Mahmoud Al-Hitar, said the judiciary law amendment will pave the way to appoint a dedicated judge, fulfilling

Articles 149 and 152, as well as the president's September 25, 1999 electoral commitments. He believes the amendment meets 1996 judiciary forum demands for a judiciary reform project and will secure judiciary's administrative and financial independence.

He hopes the amendment will be referred to Parliament as quickly as possible. This amendment relates to judiciary law. A package of laws will be referred to Parliament within the next two months.

The post of Supreme judiciary head formerly was occupied by the president, a matter widely criticized and considered interference in judiciary affairs.

Five Cuban prisoners discussed in press conference

SANA'A, Jan. 23 – Pedro Estevez, first secretary and second head of mission at the Republic of Cuba's Embassy in Sana'a, held a press conference to discuss the case of five Cubans arrested September 1998 in the United States.

They five are: Gerado Hernandez, Fernando Gonzalez, Antonio Guerrero, Rene Gonzalez and Roman Labanino. All five were convicted of acting as unregistered agents of a foreign country.

The main suspect is Guerrero, who worked as a manual laborer at the U.S. naval base in Boca Chica, Florida, near Key West. Guerrero, Hernandez and Labanino were sentenced to life in prison, while Fernando and Rene Gonzalez received 15 and 19 years respectively.

The five went to the U.S. in the early 1990s in response to the wave of vio-



Five Cuban prisoners

lence aimed at Cuba by mercenary groups from the Cuban exile community in southern Florida. It is claimed the men were sent by the Cuban government without arms and with no plan to inflict harm on the U.S. Their only goal was to infiltrate the network of terrorist groups attacking Cuba since the triumph of the Revolution.

At the time, the prisoners' trial was considered one of the longest in U.S. history because it took place in Miami, considered the most anti-Cuban authority state in the U.S. For that reason, lawyers tried to change of the venue from Miami to another city five times. The judge denied every request.

Estevez stated, "The U.S. doesn't respect human rights even for its own citizens. Three of the prisoners have American nationality. We demand U.S. authorities release them as soon as possible and give them a fair trial."

Continued from page 1

Yemeni Al-Qaeda suspects transferred to court

According to court documents, Khamsan confessed traveling to the southern Pakistani city of Karachi at the beginning of 2001 to surrender himself as a hostage to a Pakistani drug exporter until his Yemeni partner repaid one million Saudi Riyals, the value of previously trafficked drugs.

Pakistani police arrested Khamsan after storming a farm during the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban regime and handed him over to U.S. forces for detention in Guantanamo Bay.

September Net mentioned that Yemeni security apparatuses discovered a cell of 19 people plotting to launch suicide operations and attack places where American citizens exist. It added that penal prosecution is finalizing investigation of the suspects to bring them to court on suspicion of plotting to carry out acts of vandalism and terrorism in Aden.

Some cell members returned to Yemen from Iraq under orders by Abu Mus'ab Al-Zarqawi to launch terrorist operations, assassinate American citizens and bomb Aden Hotel, where foreigners and U.S. officials reside, sources claimed.

Before their capture, cell members bought and prepared arms, explosives and remote-bombing devices and set plans to carry out terrorist operations. They also forged various types of official documents, including ID cards with fake names, and leased houses in which to make their plots.

Two Sana'a cell suspects belonging to

the "Faithful Youth Organization" founded by the slain Hussein Badraddin Al-Houthi described the Preliminary Court, which specializes in terrorism and state security, as unconstitutional under the pretext that Yemeni judiciary never acknowledges exceptional judiciary (a particular type of court established temporarily for certain issues).

Sharp controversy erupted last Monday at the court when two of 36 people, whom authorities accuse of forming armed bands to carry out offensives on capital military and security sites, stood trial. The offensives launched last March claimed the lives of several military and security troops and citizens in various parts of the capital. The two suspects refused to be tried by the court, established in 1998 to try kidnapers of foreigners and look into state security issues.

In the same context, six Yemeni businessmen jailed in Aden Political Security Prison staged a six-day hunger strike to protest their nine-month imprisonment on pledges they made to release detainees accused of belonging to Al-Qaeda in Yemen.

The six prisoners explained that they wrote pledges to bring security authorities those accused of belonging to Al-Qaeda when they are wanted, but only if they remain in Yemen, not after departing the country with authorities' knowledge.

In memoranda to concerned parties and human rights organizations, the jailed businessmen stated that some of the wanted Al-Qaeda suspects traveled

to Iraq, carried out operations there and were killed, while others still are detained in Iraq. They added that Yemeni authorities and Political Security learned of their travel to and operations in Iraq.

The businessmen's families appealed to President Saleh to intervene and release their relatives. In letters to the president, they emphasized that their relatives have been imprisoned for pledges they wrote as a kind of humanitarian deed.

The Yemeni government previously denied reports that nationals officially departed Yemen to Iraq to fight U.S. troops there. A Yemeni security source said reports that there are organized trips of Yemeni Islamists to Iraq are not correct. He added that Yemen opposed tens of youths traveling to Iraq before and after the U.S. occupation, saying, "We forced travelers at the airport to return home since we are not party in the war."

Intellectual Dialogue Committee Chairman, Judge Hamoud Al-Hitar, along with those described as extremists, denied on Jan.7 any involvement by Yemeni nationals in Iraqi fighting. In case the reports prove correct, he pointed out that the committee is not the party responsible for passport issuance and security at the airport and on the borders.

The Yemeni Hood Organization invited the American Constitutional Rights Center for a joint press conference at the Yemen Times next Saturday to discuss issues of Yemeni nationals jailed in Guantanamo Bay and other U.S. detentions worldwide

UK Minister of State: Yemen has the potential to be a very great country

Commenting on the recent Somali refugees' crises in Yemen, Dr. Howells explained that Britain supports Yemen in fighting terrorism and is adamant on training maritime guards on how to fight the terrorist gangs who smuggle refugees across the boarders. Efforts are made to train coastal guards to rescue those refugees and take them back before they are harmed. Dr. Howells explained that Yemen has two concerns in this matter; the first is a humanitarian concern being the destination of a huge influx of refugees coming from the African Horn. And the second is an economic concern because Yemen as such is still a developing country with a fragile economy. However, he added that this

issue is not just limited to Yemen and there are other examples around the world such as the Cuban immigrants to North America, Moroccans to Spain...etc.

When asked whether the UK government is considering sending Abu Hamza for trial in Yemen, he said: "Abu Hamza would rather make use of the British free justice and British commitment to the Human Rights Codes than be sent to other countries for trial." Dr. Howells confirmed that Abu Hamza is receiving a fair trial witnessed and reported by free press. "Although we hate the violent culture preached by this person we must ensure that he is entitled to excellent representation and receives a fair trial as a human being." Dr. Howells con-

cluded.

Dr. Howells is a BA, degree holder from Hornsey College of Art. CAT, Cambridge University. And completed his PhD from Warwick University. Before entering Parliament as MP for Pontypridd following a by-election in 1989, he was Editor and Researcher for the South Wales Miner and a television and radio writer and presenter. In 2004 Dr. Howells was Minister of Higher Education. Before that he was Transport minister 2003-4 and from 2001 to 2003 he was Culture minister 2001-03. Previously Dr. Howells was a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, DTI (1998 - 2001) and DfEE (1997 - 1998). Born in 1946 in Merthyr Tydfil, Dr. Howells is married with three children.

Terrorism tops Yemeni-British discussions

Regarding Yemeni elections, Gifford said Britain lays great stress on the September presidential elections. Therefore, the British government is giving subsidies to the Supreme Committee for Elections so elections will be conducted in a democratic manner. Corruption also figured among topics discussed during Howell's visit to Yemen. Gifford said Howell discussed with Yemeni Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal domestic challenges in the administrative, economic, health and educational sectors. He affirmed that Britain upholds reform programs in Yemen and will help the government fight corruption in these sectors.

The ambassador stated that if Yemen's government seriously responds to fighting corruption, implementing reform programs and respecting human rights, Britain will double its aid to



Mr. Michael Gifford

Yemen. He added that judicial reform should be given significant attention, as it is important for development and respecting human rights alike. "Dr. Howells noted the important decision by President Saleh to stand down as head of the judiciary," Gifford added.

Concerning Iran's nuclear program,

Gifford accused Iran of halting negotiations regarding its nuclear efforts. "Iran has resumed work on its nuclear program, ignoring its obligations toward the International Atomic Energy Agency," he stated, adding that asking Iran to stop its nuclear program is not at all a type of hostility toward Iranians.

While in Sana'a, Howells visited the Old City, which he described as "magnificent," and had the opportunity to meet and talk with workers in the suqs of the Old City. "The visit of Dr. Howells," Gifford stated, "has been an important milestone in British-Yemeni relations, which continue to develop and strengthen. I hope it will lead to even closer cooperation in combating international terrorism, which is a problem of grave significance for both our countries." His visit is the first of its kind by a British Minister of State.

Markets witness skyrocketing prices of foodstuffs

SANA'A, Jan. 25 - The prices of foodstuffs skyrocketed suddenly over the past few days, particularly sugar the price of which rose from 3,800 to 6,000 Yemeni Riyals per sack. The price of yogurt climbed from 25 to 40 Yemeni Riyals and beans from 50 to 65 Riyals per can while the price of

Danish Cheese grew from 5,000 to 7,500 Yemeni Riyals per tin. The prohibitive prices of foodstuffs and other commodities indicate the Yemeni government has carried out unannounced reform dose, having its negative impacts on the tragic living

of suffering Yemenis. The concerned governmental bodies have never taken any procedures or measures against traders who seize the opportunity of the seemingly chaotic situation to monopolize goods and sell them with prices they want.

VACANCIES

Technical Coordinator, Accountant and Administrative Assistant (PHRD Grant for preparation the Girls Secondary Education Project)

The Ministry of Education (MOE) has received a PHRD Grant from the Japanese Government through the World Bank towards the cost of the preparation the Girls Secondary Education Project, and it intends to apply part of this grant to facilitate the grant implementation. The Project Administration Unit of the Basic Education Development Project (PAU BEDP) at the MOE now seeks applicants for the positions of a technical coordinator, an accountant and an administrative assistant. The three personnel will constitute a core administrative unit that will work under the general directions of the PAU BEDP Executive Director and will interact closely with the PAU team, MOE staff and particularly with the Secondary Education Strategy Team (SEST) as with the World Bank team. This unit should ensure an effective implementation of the grant to better serve the preparation of the Project, Specifically;

The Technical Coordinator will:

- Be responsible for the overall technical work.
- Liaise with relevant ministerial departments and World Bank team.
- Attend meetings of the SEST and act as a catalyst between the PAU and SEST.
- Discuss regularly planning, routine implementation responsibilities and scheduling of activities with PAU Director and SEST.
- Prepare a procurement plan according to the grant agreement and the identified activities by the MOE and the agreed plan with the World Bank.
- Ensure to the extent possible the efficient implementation of the procurement plan.
- Prepare terms of references, shortlists and requests for proposals for consulting services in coordination with the SEST and prepare correspondences accordingly.
- Evaluate proposals with help from the accountant and in coordination with the SEST and make recommendations to the PAU Director.
- Prepare correspondences, manage contracts, review reports, comment and give clearances.
- Maintain the grant data base, prepare progress reports and facilitate financiers' supervision visits.

Qualifications:

- Advance degree in education planning or in any relevant field.
- Minimum three years of professional experience in a technical managerial position.
- Familiarity with IDA's procurement procedures is an asset
- Computer literate and good experience in using email and internet.
- Proficiency in both Arabic and English.

The accountants will:

- Ensure that there is a functional financial management system; Establish proper accounting procedures and internal controls.
- Manage all daily financial activities of the grant; prepare the withdrawal applications, claims, and related governmental letters; Record transactions in the computerized accounting system of the financial activities; Make the necessary vouchers and receipts for all deposits and withdrawal to and from the grant, and record them in the predefined chart of accounts in the system.
- Make a monthly replenishment of the S/A and maintain the necessary control registers for all procured goods and technical assistance; Make a monthly reconciliation of the S/A.
- Make sure that all bank statements, withdrawal applications, claims, correspondence are properly filed and easily accessible once required.
- Ensure that consolidated financial management reports for the grant are produced on a timely basis and sufficient in content to enable the management of MOE and IDA to assess the financial position of the grant.
- Act as a focal point for any dialogue on financial management matters relating to the grant may be required by the financiers.
- Ensure that the grant is audited in accordance with IDA's requirements and cooperate fully with the auditor in that respect.

Qualifications:

- A minimum of Bachelor's degree in Accounting with a minimum of 3 years of professional experience in accounting position, preferably in the private sector or in a development project.
- Familiarity with the government's and IDA's financial management requirement.
- Experience in the use of accounting programs and software.
- Proficiency in both Arabic and English.

The Administrative Assistant will:

- Provide secretarial and operational assistance to professional staff
- Ensure quality of outgoing correspondence and other related documents.
- Manage the filing system and record management.
- Manage the leave and attendance system and schedule appointments.
- Handle the logistics of conferences and workshops.

Qualifications:

- A Bachelor's degree with at least 3 years experience in office logistic management.
- Good interpersonal skills and excellent communication skills.
- Computer knowledge and familiarity with MS-Office applications.
- Proficiency in speaking and writing Arabic and English.

All applications along with a detailed resume and copies of supporting documents should be submitted by February 4, 2006 at the following address:

**Basic Education Development Project
60M Southern Road, Bait Meiyad
Tel: 01-619160 Fax 01-619219**

Violent games 'affect behaviour'

Violent computer games may make people more likely to act aggressively.

Previous research has found people who play such games are more likely to be aggressive but some say this just shows violent people gravitate towards them.

But a team from the University of Missouri-Columbia said their study which monitored the brain activity of 39 game players suggests a causal link.

The findings were published on the New Scientist website.

The researchers measured a type of brain activity called the P300 response which reflects the emotional impact of an image.

The truth is there are many factors that can lead to violence, such as being withdrawn and isolated, so it is hard to say it is because of one thing.

Professor David Buckingham, of the Institute of Education

When shown images of real-life violence, people who played violent video games were found to have a diminished response.

However, when the same group were shown other disturbing images such as dead animals or ill children they had a much more natural response.

When the game players were given the opportunity to punish a pretend opponent those with the greatest reduction in P300 meted out the severest punishments.

Psychologist Bruce Bartholow, the lead researcher of the study which will be published in full in the Journal of Experimental Social Psychology later this year, said: "As far as I'm aware, this is the first study to show that exposure to violent games has effects on the brain that predict aggressive behaviour."

"People who play a lot of violent video games didn't see them as much different from neutral.



Previous research has suggested a link between violence and game playing

"They become desensitised. However, their responses are still normal for the non-violent negative scenes."

The findings will back up what many have argued over recent years with the growth in games with scenes of graphic violence.

Killer But some experts still remain unconvinced of a link.

Jonathan Freedman, a psychologist from the University of Toronto in Canada, said: "All we are really getting is desensitisation to images. There's no way to show that this relates to real-life aggression."

And Professor David Buckingham, an expert on the media and children at the Institute of Education, added there was still no consensus on whether violent games caused aggressive behav-


our or were just played by violent people.

"The debate we are seeing is very similar to the one that has raged for years about TV. The truth is there are many factors that can lead to violence, so it is hard to say it is because of one thing.

"In the absence of any proof, I think we have to be agnostic about it. However, I think there is an argument about the morality of some games.


"Some actually encourage amoral behaviour to win the game and I think parents should be talking to their children to make sure they realise this is a joke. Children are generally good at telling fantasy from reality, but parents should be discussing this."

Story from BBC NEWS:



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The illiteracy monster

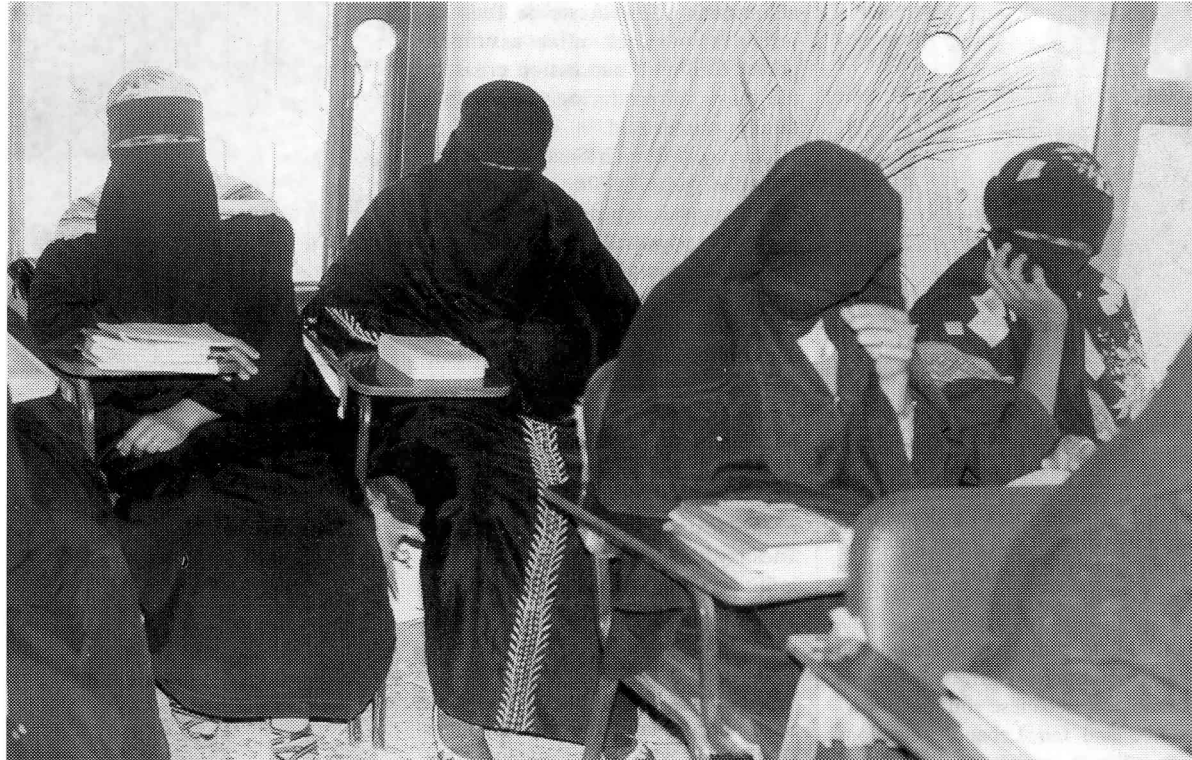
By: Yemen Times Staff
Taiz Office

With all the effort given to improving education in Yemen, a lack of seriousness from citizens and the government still exists. Change was expected after the revolution, but 42 years later, illiteracy is still a monster haunting our country's further development.

Estimates indicate that Yemen has an illiteracy rate of seven million. Women constitute the majority, especially alphabetical illiteracy. Records from the Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Teaching organization estimate an overall illiteracy rate of 49.3 percent. The rate among females is 67.9 percent and 34 percent among males. In urban areas, the rate is 38.3 percent, whereas it is 57.6 percent in rural areas. However, within the productive workforce, the rate drops to 10.45 percent.

What motivates women to join illiteracy classes? Is it a longing for modernization or do they really want to learn?

Samira Al-Ba'dni said she joined illiteracy eradication classes "in order to read and write my letters myself, because I need that. My husband, my son and most of my relatives are expatriates. Now I can read and write in a relatively good manner and it is better than asking the neighbors to do it for me. There are some secrets one does



not want others to know." Who encouraged her? "My husband," she answered.

Killing time

The illiteracy eradication center is close to Um Somia's home. They meet to discuss matters for an hour or two. If students do not come, the teacher telephones them. She said they spend the time simply talking and playing. "Concerning learning, we gain nothing."

Coquetry

Um Mohamed answered laughingly that her motivation for joining illiteracy eradication classes was jealousy of other girls who go to school. She said she does not want to be a kitchen servant, adding that she will continue to university.

When asked if illiteracy students come for the sake of learning, deputy headmistress Maha answered that they do come to learn, but in very limited

numbers, adding that they sometimes do not receive any students. This is because they either want to learn reading or writing only or they are embarrassed. She noted that even those who join general schools rarely continue. The reasons could be intensive subjects and homework. She believes the longer teaching time, compared to illiteracy eradication classes, as well as new subjects that are hard to understand, also are to blame. Concerning the scientific standard, she also believes it is either

weak or medium. There are no distinctive standards among post-illiteracy eradication students.

Illiteracy expected to rise

Miska Al-Junaid of the national organization for fighting illiteracy said illiteracy will never end as long as pupils opt out of school, noting that the rate of girls attending school is only 49 percent. This means the future illiteracy burden will be 51 percent, a problem that can be met by stopping its origin - opting out of school.

Al-Junaid concluded by hoping that there will be serious cooperation between interested parties to free the targeted alphabetical illiterate. Yemen still is fighting alphabetical illiteracy, while the world has left it behind and headed for eradicating computer illiteracy.

A monster we cannot face

Khalid Shamakh, General Manager of Examinations and Assessment in the general administration of Illiteracy Eradication and Adult Education, said illiteracy is a monster threatening our future, noting that it is one side of the triangle humanity is fighting: poverty, disease and illiteracy.

"Illiteracy is a real threat which needs the joint effort of all community sectors. Organizations, authorities and official establishments should play active roles in this respect," he said. Since 1990, the state has demonstrated its concern by forming a technical institute for illiteracy and adult educa-

tion and enacting the 1998 Illiteracy and Adult Education Law, together with a national strategy for illiteracy eradication.

As for achievements the organization seeks to fulfill, Shamakh noted that 55,674 students joined illiteracy classes in 2000. Among these, 48,572 were female, whereas 7,102 were male. Concerning problems faced, he said there are annual tributaries for illiteracy, such as opting out of school in grades 1-4 and abstaining from joining basic education.

As to whether Yemen will be able to eradicate illiteracy, he said, "Referring to the above-mentioned problems, we have great difficulties because of weak abilities. There should be joint efforts from all the community."

Hana'a Al-Adimi prepares and presents an illiteracy program on the educational channel. It aims at eradicating illiteracy in Yemen by direct broadcasting to these sectors. She said the program, called, "Let us learn," is methodological and aims to eradicate illiteracy in all its scientific and behavioral forms. She noted that there are future programs being developed that will contribute to eradicating illiteracy.

Illiteracy is not limited to alphabetical illiteracy. There also is skill and computer illiteracy involving large numbers of people, including intellectuals. The illiteracy rate in Israel is zero. Unfortunately, followers of the message whose first order to their prophet was, "Recite," still have a high illiteracy rate.

Tourist marriage: Families more aware

By Hakim Al-Masmari
hakim_almasmari@hotmail.com

Last year, more than 300 foreign tourists married young Yemeni girls, only to leave them sexually abused and, in some cases, pregnant shortly after the wedding. Innocent young girls were left behind just weeks after the marriage to face a dark future and the loss of honor. Yemeni families are more aware of the problem now, even though authorities have not taken legal action against perpetrators.

Just months ago, tourist marriage was a widespread issue causing serious worry among people due its destruction to society. Many victims of such marriages told tragic stories, some heartbreaking, of suffering through inhuman procedures from their so-called husbands. Lives were destroyed and futures ruined.

Since then, families understand the gravity of the issue and the destruction it brings. Citizens vowed not to let it happen again. Unfortunately, many people fear that not enough effort has been made to combat such a society-destroying phenomenon, as government is not taking the issue seriously. This raises some questions: Will tourist marriage exist next year? Will citizens be aware enough to avoid such a rapidly spreading problem?

According to the country's political analysts, government fears combating such a sensitive issue. Local sources preferring to remain anonymous, mentioned that Yemen fears fighting tourist marriage as it could harm ties with some Gulf countries. Yemeni citizens understand the greatness of the matter and the problems it causes.

"I don't think this issue will rise again. All families are very aware of the tragic outcomes that occur with tourist marriage," said local businessman Mohamed Ali Nagi. "Even very poor families will not take such a risk, due to the shame and problems the family might go through after the marriage," he added.

Many parents now think twice before marrying their daughters to foreigners. They fear a backlash, which in return, could destroy the honor and



structure of the family and the country in general.

"People in Yemen are very honest and sothearted, but such marriages have taught them to be more careful when dealing with non-Yemenis," said local businessman and father of six, Shaddad Abdu. "Our daughters are more important to us than ourselves. This issue will not be repeated," he added.

Meanwhile, authorities desperately try not to break the already sensitive ties with Gulf countries, especially as they want immediate admission to the Gulf Council.

Ironically, no arrest or sentences have been given to any foreigners practicing such a horrific act on Yemeni soil. Such tourists secretly leave the country after fulfilling their sexual desires. They quietly leave, giving no time for involved families or even authorities to react. In rare situations, the ties between husband and wife are strong for more than a year. Those who married with the knowledge and permission of the Ministry of Justice and received documents approving their marriage had other excuses when wanting to divorce their wives. Normal family problems and not getting along with their new mate due to cultural differences are the most common reasons given.

Additionally, no Gulf tourist can be turned away from the border when try-

ing to enter Yemen, as this could cause problems for the country's tourism sector. In early November, Saudi Arabia refused entrance of all-Yemeni products at its borders, while Saudi products flooded Yemen on an hourly basis. This shows the weakness and limited power of Yemeni authorities. No government help has been offered to the women whose lives were destroyed due to tourist marriages. If help does exist, it is tremendously slow and limited.

Over the past three months, the problem of tourist marriage has been nearly forgotten. As with other phenomena in this country, importance dissolves over time. Yemeni people currently live a life of poverty and frustration, giving them bigger issues about which to worry.

"We hope the government takes appropriate steps to limit such criminals and have them stand trial for the destruction they have caused," said worried Yemeni citizen Ali Mazen.

"We will have to wait and see if Yemenis learn a lesson from such marriages," said Ali Abdullah, father of five daughters. "It will definitely occur again, but not to the same extent as this year. People in Yemen forget about problems very fast."

Will government do more to prevent this phenomenon from occurring? We'll have to patiently wait and see.

YEMEN: Water shortages a looming disaster, say experts

SANA, 24 Jan 2006 (IRIN) - Abdulaziz Ahmad Ali stands on a dry hillside next to the water tanks that supply the village of Al-Haima, a small hamlet of 120 people. But the tanks, part of a World Bank project set up five years ago, are empty because the pump is broken again, explained Ali.

"They always break down when the water in the well is low," he said.

At the well below, workmen from the nearby city of Taiz, which shares a well with Al-Haima, repair the municipal pump. But they won't be repairing the village's pump, they say, because it's not their responsibility.

"The problem is money," said Ali. "Parts are very expensive and we don't have the money. So tomorrow, the city's pumps will be working and ours will not." AA

A looming disaster

Yemen is one of the most water scarce countries in the world, where the average per capita share of renewable water resources is 125 cubic metres per year, according to government estimates. This represents one-tenth of the average in most countries of the Middle East and North Africa, and one-fiftieth of the world average.

Further, according to a recent UNICEF report, Yemen has the world's fourth fastest growing population, which will increasingly reduce each person's available share of fresh water.

Experts in the government and from donor nations describe the problem as a looming national disaster.

"Sustainability is no longer attainable in over-exploited areas," states the government's five-year water plan for 2005-2009, adding that such areas represent most of the country.

The government predicts that as the crisis progresses, "increasing numbers of the population will acquire feelings of inequities in access to water," which will lead to "growing social tensions".

Environmental experts agree, warning that Yemen's water crisis could result in increased rural poverty, urban migration and unemployment within the next generation.

In ten to fifteen years, "agriculture will wipe itself out" as farmers on the edges of the country's water basins run out of available water, predicted Ton Negenman, First Secretary for Water and Sanitation at the Netherlands

embassy.

The national plan, announced in 2004, calls for a mix of legal reform, government restructuring, decentralisation, privatisation and investment to combat the problem.

"It's a good plan," said Gerhard Redecker, coordinator of German Development Corporation, a German state-owned development bank working in the water sector. "But it remains to be seen if it can be implemented."

Agricultural consumption

Yemen's agriculture sector is vital to the economy, accounting for more than half of the jobs in a country where the unemployment rate stands at 37 percent, according to World Bank figures. What's more, it is the agriculture industry that has traditionally supported rural economies, averting mass migration to the cities.

It is also the agriculture industry, however, that uses the vast majority of the country's water - some 90 percent.

According to Redecker, it is here that water-saving schemes must be implemented, if a crisis is to be averted. A corrupt political system based on traditional quid pro quos, however, makes this easier said than done, he explained.

"Many influential people are heavily involved in agriculture - especially the farming of qat [a mildly narcotic plant chewed by a majority of the population] - and don't want to be monitored," said Redecker.

The World Bank cut its funding to Yemen by a third in December, and in November the US dropped Yemen as a candidate for its highly publicized development programme, the Millennium Challenge Account. Both cited corruption as major reasons for their decisions.

The price of cash crops

According to analysts, the state's provision of free water is costing the nation's water supply dear. The Sana water basin, for example, is losing 250 million cubic metres of water per year - four times the amount replaced by rainfall each year, according to a 2003 World Bank report.

Given that water is extracted from the country's wells at virtually no cost to the well owner, intensive farming of high-value export crops - such as man-

gos and bananas - end up having a steep price in water terms.

"Exporting one banana is like exporting a litre of water," Ali noted.

By far the most profitable crop in the country is qat, which earns farmers five times the revenue of mangos.

Qat is not a water-intensive crop by nature, but given the crop's high-profit returns farmers often over-irrigate to increase yields, said Naji Abu Hatim, a senior development specialist for the World Bank.

They also frequently cultivate it at lower altitudes, making more irrigation necessary.

As a result, qat was estimated to consume as much as 35 percent of the country's irrigation water, he said.

Many experts have urged the imposition of a fee for water usage, which would cut into the profits of powerful plantation owners.

Often, however, landowners are politically connected.

The rule of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who has been in power since 1978, has been marked by a careful balancing act between these conflicts of interest.

A lack of urgency

Observers in the field, meanwhile, argue that the government is moving far too slowly to solve the problem.

Negenman explained that many of the plans to improve water efficiency that were introduced ten years ago had since run out of steam.

"The sense of urgency that we saw from the government in the 1990s seems to be lost," he said.

Muhammad Saleh Ali, chairman of a parliamentary water committee, which recently toured through eight water-critical governorates, agreed that more needed to be done.

"In my opinion, the problem will need more solutions," he said, adding that none of the committee's proposals had been implemented.

Asked if anyone had come to Al-Haima to teach water-conservation techniques, local farmer Muhammad said his qat crop earned him twenty times more money than his potatoes.

"What could they teach me that could convince me to not grow it?" he asked.

Source: <http://www.irinnews.org>

UN renews pressure on Lebanon to disarm Hizbollah

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - A unanimous U.N. Security Council put fresh pressure on Lebanon on Monday to disarm the Hizbollah guerrilla group, in line with a council resolution adopted 16 months ago.

A council statement also urged Lebanon to conduct free and fair presidential elections without outside interference, and called on Syria to take measures to stem the flow of arms and people across its border into neighboring Lebanon.

Syria last year withdrew its troops from Lebanon, after years of political dominance, as required by the council's Resolution 1559, adopted in September 2004.

But Lebanon has not yet ordered Hizbollah militias to disarm, as the resolution also required, even after the group -- backed by Syria and Iran -- joined the Lebanese government upon winning seats in parliament in 2005 elections.

And arms are still flowing to militias in Lebanon from Syria, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said last October.

Lebanon has also not yet set new presidential elections to choose a successor to Emile Lahoud, its pro-Syrian president, who secured another three years in office beginning in November 2004 when the parliament, under pressure from Syria, amended the Lebanese Constitution to extend his term.

Veteran U.N. Middle East envoy Terje Roed-Larsen told reporters the



Lebanon's Hizbollah guerrillas march during a parade marking Jerusalem Day in Beirut Oct. 28. A unanimous U.N. Security Council put fresh pressure on Lebanon on Monday to disarm the Hizbollah guerrilla group, in line with a council resolution adopted 16 months ago. REUTERS

council statement showed there was "a complete consensus in the council" in favor of implementation of the terms of the 2004 resolution.

He also said it was time for Hizbollah to revisit its refusal to disarm.

But he declined to answer when asked if Lahoud was serving illegally as president. "I am not a lawyer," he said.

U.S. Ambassador John Bolton said he saw the statement in terms of Syrian rather than Lebanese obligations, calling it "a clear unanimous signal from the Security Council on what Syria still

has to do" to comply with Resolution 1559, including disarming militias operating on Lebanese soil and allowing free and fair Lebanese elections without Syrian interference.

While the statement set no deadline for Lebanese or Syrian actions, "I am waiting for the sound of Syrian compliance," Bolton said.

Syrian Ambassador Fayssal Mekdad denied his government played any role in the flow of arms across the Syrian-Lebanese border but said Syria was otherwise in the process of complying with all council demands as set out in Resolution 1559.

Kuwait emir to abdicate, ending succession dispute

KUWAIT (Reuters) - Kuwait's ailing emir will abdicate on Tuesday just over a week after assuming power, ending a succession crisis in the major oil-producing state, ruling family sources said.

They said Sheikh Saad al-Abdulla al-Sabah, who is 76 and in poor health, would step down in favor of Kuwait's powerful Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah.

The government had asked parliament to meet on Tuesday to decide on Sheikh Saad's ability to rule -- hours before the ailing emir was scheduled to take his oath of office -- but mediation efforts led to a settlement, sources said.

The ruling family was expected to release a statement on its decision on Tuesday, they added.

"Everything is finished, thank God. What is important is that the crisis has been resolved," one ruling family source told Reuters.

The poor health of both Sheikh Saad and the late emir, Sheikh Jaber al-Ahmad al-Sabah, meant that Sheikh Sabah had already been running Kuwait's day-to-day affairs for four years.

He has won support from many in the ruling family, especially his own clan, family sources said, but by taking over from Sheikh Saad, who became emir on January 15, he would interrupt a long tradition of alternating power between the two rival branches of Kuwait's al Sabah dynasty.

There are no political differences between the two wings and Sheikh Sabah was expected to maintain Kuwait's oil policy and the pro-Western stance of the country which holds about 10 percent of the world's crude reserves.

OIL DEBATE

But the succession crisis had forced parliament to put off indefinitely regular sessions, including a debate on an \$8.5 billion plan to boost oil output with the help of foreign firms.

The ruling family doyen voiced his support for Sheikh Sabah.

"His Highness Sheikh Saad wishes to rest and he has full confidence in Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad," Sheikh Salem al-Ali al-Sabah, was quoted as saying by leading daily al-Qabas.

Sheikh Sabah and the late emir hail from the family's Jaber branch which holds several key government



Kuwait's ailing emir Sheikh Saad al-Abdulla al-Sabah is seen in Kuwait City in this September 6, 2003 file photo. The emir, Sheikh Saad, will abdicate on January 24, 2006 in favour of Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, ruling family sources said on Jan. 23. REUTERS

ministries, while Sheikh Saad is from the Salem wing, whose only other cabinet post is that of foreign minister.

The cabinet swiftly named Sheikh Saad emir last week to avert family rifts and reassure investors about the country's oil policies and energy sector operations.

Three international consortia led by

BP, ExxonMobil and Chevron are competing for Project Kuwait.

It has been debated for more than a decade, with some lawmakers opposing the project, arguing foreign energy firms should not be allowed into the lucrative upstream sector.

The project aims to raise output at the four major oilfields to 900,000 barrels per day (bpd).

Two German engineers kidnapped in Iraq: police

TIKRIT, Iraq (Reuters) - Gunmen wearing Iraqi army uniforms kidnapped two German engineers outside their workplace in the Iraqi industrial town of Baiji on Tuesday, police said, the latest abduction of foreigners in Iraq in recent weeks.

At least six gunmen, in two unmarked cars, grabbed the two men just outside where they worked at a detergent plant in an industrial complex around Iraq's biggest oil refinery, police Lieutenant Colonel Kadhem Abbas said.

The German embassy in Baghdad referred calls to the Foreign Ministry in Berlin, where a spokesman said he could neither confirm nor deny the police account.

The two were seized at around 8:30 a.m. (0530 GMT), said Abbas, who speaks for the Joint Coordination Center for Iraqi security forces and the U.S. military in the province. The deputy governor of Salahaddin province, Abdullah Jubara, confirmed the report.

Abbas named the two, transliterating their names from Arabic, as Thomas Wischke and Rebiti Drata. No other details were available.

Baiji lies 180 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad and has seen much insurgent activity in recent months.



A U.S. soldier patrols in front of an oil refinery in Baiji, Iraq in a 2003 file photo. Gunmen kidnapped two German engineers in the Iraqi industrial town of Baiji on Tuesday, police said. Lieutenant Colonel Kadhem Abbas and the region's deputy governor said the two men were seized inside an industrial complex surrounding Baiji's oil refinery, the biggest in Iraq. REUTERS

German archaeologist Susanne Osthoff was kidnapped in Iraq in November and freed the following month.

Thousands of people, including hundreds of foreigners, have been abducted in the anarchy that followed the U.S. overthrow of Saddam Hussein, many for ransom

but others for political goals.

Most foreign hostages have been released but dozens have been killed. At present, kidnapers are holding an American journalist, Jill Carroll, snatched on January 7, and four peace activists -- two Canadians, an American and a Briton.

Bomb blasts kill four in Iran oil city

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Bombs ripped through a bank and government building in Iran's mainly Arab southern city of Ahvaz on Tuesday, killing four people, police said.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad had been due to visit the city on Tuesday, but his office said he had canceled the trip on Monday night because of sandstorms which would have stopped him doing his hallmark walks through the streets.

However, Lebanon's al-Manar television, run by the pro-Iranian Hizbollah group, said the bombs had been intended to kill Ahmadinejad. Its

Tehran correspondent said the president had called off his trip after a security tip-off.

Iranian news agencies said fire had gutted the Saman bank and broken glass littered streets around the blast sites.

"Four people have been killed and 40 injured up to now," police spokesman Mehdi Ahmadi said.

Officials at Ahvaz's Mehr hospital said it had transferred one person to another hospital to have a leg amputated and said another three of the wounded might need similar operations.

Iranian authorities are sensitive about protests and discontent among the Islamic Republic's Arab minority in Ahvaz and the surrounding province of Khuzestan, which sits on most of the country's oil reserves, the second biggest in the world.

Ahvaz has been tense since April, when five people died in protests sparked by rumours the government was considering settling non-Arabs in Khuzestan to dilute Arab influence there.

Seven people were killed in bombings in June and six died in a blast in October.

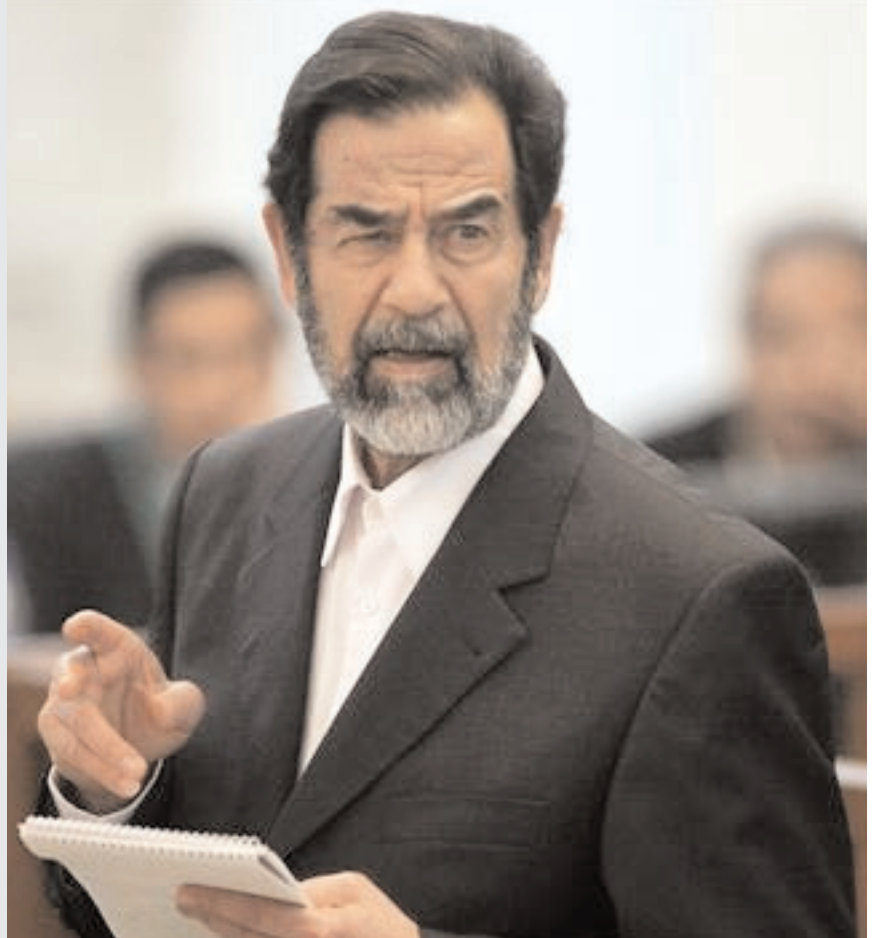
Saddam trial yet to resume, reason unclear

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Open hearings in the trial of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had yet to start by midday (0900 GMT) on Tuesday and there was no official word on reasons for the delay.

Typically previous sessions have started by 10:30 a.m. unless there have been hold-ups for, among other things, closed discussions among the legal teams.

The eighth session since the trial for crimes against humanity began on October 19 will end a turbulent month's recess in which the chief judge resigned, complaining of government interference, and his initial successor was ruled out after accusations he had been a member of Saddam's Baath party.

Raouf Abdel Rahman, from Halabja where 5,000 died in a gas attack during an offensive by Saddam's forces, was appointed on the eve of the resumption of hearings to take over the chair of the five-judge panel from fellow Kurd Rizgar Amin.



Former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein looks at prosecutors as he speaks at his trial in Baghdad Dec. 22. Open hearings in the trial of Saddam had yet to start by midday (0900 GMT) on Tuesday and there was no official word on reasons for the delay. REUTERS

Africa picks Congo as next AU head

KHARTOUM (Reuters) - An African summit on Tuesday picked Congo Republic to head the African Union after strong opposition to Sudan taking over the leadership because of fears its human rights record could hurt African credibility abroad.

Under a compromise deal, Sudan takes over leadership of the pan-African body after Congo Republic steps down next year.

Critics had said Sudan should not get the chair while it was under fire for rights abuses in its western region of Darfur, where 7,000 AU peacekeepers are trying to uphold a tentative ceasefire between the government and rebels.

Some diplomats said the solution was mainly a face-saving measure for Sudan, which had initially been reluctant to withdraw its candidacy. They said Sudan's chairmanship in 2007 could well be challenged later on.

Rebels had threatened to quit AU-



Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso listens to the official opening of the Sixth Ordinary Session of Assembly of the African Union in Sudan's capital Khartoum Jan. 23. REUTERS

sponsored peace talks in Nigeria if Sudan was picked as the next AU head. One Darfur rebel group said they would continue talking after Congo was chosen but would not accept Sudan's presidency in the future if the Darfur conflict was not resolved.

"They are all congratulating the Congolese president now," a delegate told Reuters from inside the hall where heads of state and foreign ministers met on Tuesday and finally broke a deadlock that led to heated exchanges on Monday.

Shortly after the decision was announced in the hall, Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso took the chair from outgoing president, Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo, who has held the post for nearly two years.

Sudanese Foreign Ministry spokesman Jamal Ibrahim said Sudan would take over the leadership of the AU in 2007. An AU official said a draft

resolution on the issue still had to be formally approved. Such resolutions are usually rubber-stamped.

One rights group said this move just postponed the presidency problem and, by promising Sudan the chair, failed to put conditions on Sudan to address rights abuse accusations.

"If Sudan's records of atrocities disqualifies (President Omar Hassan) al-Bashir from the presidency this year, how can we be sure that this doesn't disqualify him next year?" said Reed Brody from New York-based Human Rights Watch.

Sensitive to world opinion

Western diplomats said the AU's decision to delay Sudan's appointment showed the organization, set up in 2002, would not be deflected from its mission to promote democracy, human rights and development and was responsive to world opinion.

"It definitely shows that they are very sensitive about what the world thinks," said one Western diplomat.

The United States had said it was concerned about a Sudanese presidency.

On the first day of the summit in Khartoum, African nations were deeply split about Sudan, which put itself forward for the presidency based on a tradition that the summit host takes over as the AU's head.

Sudan had said it had the backing of North and East Africa, but diplomats said southern, western and central African countries had urged Khartoum to withdraw its nomination.

The summit had discussed the possibility of extending Nigeria's term, but some African nations were wary of breaking a tradition of a rotating presidency.

Obasanjo had helped drive the AU forward on issues such as improving

governance. Diplomats said the influence of the AU president largely depends on the person holding the post and said Congo's Sassou had a good international reputation.

"He is someone who is very well respected by his peers, who knows how to behave with the International Monetary Fund and with donors," said one senior Western diplomat.

Sassou, a French-trained former paratrooper, seized power in Congo Republic with a 1979 coup. He lost the country's first multi-party elections in 1992, but grabbed back the presidency five years later after a brief but bloody civil war.

The debate at the summit has overshadowed the summit's official agenda, which was to focus on culture and education.

Human rights issues, such as setting up the first pan-African human rights court, are also being discussed.

Canadians elect weak Conservative government

OTTAWA (Reuters) - Canadians elected their first Conservative government in 12 years, but gave the party a far-from-decisive mandate to push through its agenda of tax cuts, extra military spending and better ties with Washington.

The Conservatives, led by Stephen Harper, will have 124 seats in the Canadian Parliament, 30 below the 155 needed to form a majority. But they will still be 21 seats ahead of the ruling Liberals, who came across as tired, jaded and out of ideas in a two-month election race.

"Each and every day I will assure you of one thing -- I will dedicate myself to making Canada more united, stronger, more prosperous and a safer country," Harper told an ecstatic crowd in the western Canadian city of Calgary.

The result was a major triumph for Harper, a 46-year-old economist who created the Conservatives in late 2003 by pushing through the merger of two squabbling right-wing parties. He will be the first prime minister from the oil-rich western province of Alberta for 25 years.

Opinion polls had pointed to a Conservative minority. But the number of Conservative seats was somewhat below forecasts, pointing to an unstable government unlikely to last for long.

Minority governments in Canada rarely last longer than 18 months. The outgoing minority Liberal government stayed in power for 17 months before it was defeated in November 2005 over a kickback scandal.

Unlike the Liberals, who governed with the help of the left-leaning New Democrats, the Conservatives have no natural allies in a four-party Canadian Parliament and will need to seek



Conservative Party of Canada leader and Prime Minister-Elect Stephen Harper and his family celebrate in Calgary Jan. 23. REUTERS

Harper pledged to work with other parties to push through his agenda, which includes a cut in consumption taxes and a balanced budget.

The defeat was a humiliating blow for outgoing Prime Minister Paul Martin, who inherited a large majority when he took over in December 2003 only to see support fade as scandals swirled. He said he would not lead the Liberals into the next election.

"I have just called Stephen Harper and I have offered him my congratulations," Martin told supporters. "The people of Canada have chosen him to lead a minority government."

The Liberals, long viewed as Canada's natural governing party,

slumped in the polls after police said in late December they were probing whether someone in the finance minister's office leaked information about proposed tax changes.

"Canadians voted for hope over fear and accountability over corruption," senior Conservative Jason Kenney said.

The Conservatives won 36.3 percent of the popular vote and the Liberals won 30.2 percent, their second worst showing since Canada gained independence in 1867.

Harper also vows to clamp down on crime, cut waiting times for health care and improve strained relations with the United States, with whom Canada has a number of trade disputes.

He says he will allow a free vote in Parliament about whether Canada should repeal laws that allow gay marriage.

The Conservatives also put in a strong showing in Quebec, pushing the separatist Bloc Quebecois below the key 50 percent mark and cutting the odds of a new vote on breaking up Canada.

Quebec voted against separation by just under 51 percent in a 1995 referendum. An earlier referendum, in 1980, also resulted in a victory for the pro-Canada camp.

The New Democrats won 29 seats - their best showing since 1988. There will be one independent, a Quebec talk show host who made a career out of lambasting politicians and railing against what he calls the Ottawa establishment.

China says favors more nuclear diplomacy with Iran

BEIJING (Reuters) - China is "conscientiously studying" a draft EU proposal to threaten Iran with sanctions for its nuclear activities, but favors defusing the dispute through negotiations, a spokesman said on Tuesday.

Britain, Germany and France -- the EU3 -- have circulated a draft proposal to authorize the International Atomic Energy Agency to refer Iran to the U.N. Security Council for possible sanctions.

The IAEA meets on February 2 to discuss Iran's nuclear program, and China is a key player, because it could use its veto power as a permanent member of the Security Council to scuttle any sanctions.

A spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, Kong Quan, said his country has "noted the considerations" of the European countries.

"But on the other hand, we believe that further applying diplomatic efforts, and diplomatic means to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue, remains a relatively suitable and better option," Kong told reporters at a regular briefing.

He called on the countries to "do their utmost to return to the negotiating track".

Chinese officials also planned to discuss Iran with the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick, who arrived in Beijing on Monday for a three-day visit to China. But Kong offered no details of those talks.

ENERGY SECURITY THREAT

In Tokyo on Monday, Zoellick told reporters that Iran's nuclear program threatened China's energy security.

"It poses a threat not only in terms of security terms, but in my view, given the reliance of Japan, China and others on energy from the region, it poses some danger to energy security over time," he said.

About 12 percent of China's oil imports in 2005 came from Iran, and the two countries have signed several oil and gas deals.

Zoellick said in Tokyo that there was a "pretty good posture" for referring the issue to the Security Council given the

composition of the IAEA board.

"If you look at the countries that are members of the IAEA board, I think we are in a pretty good posture about pursuing a referral," he said.

But a Chinese scholar familiar with policymakers said China was likely to quietly resist attempts to impose U.N. sanctions on Iran.

China believes that North Korea, which announced it was leaving the Non-Proliferation Treaty in early 2003 after mounting international pressure over its nuclear program, shows the dangers of sanctions brinkmanship, said the scholar, who asked not to be identified.

Six-party talks between China, the United States, North Korea, South Korea, Japan and Russia have so far failed to end North Korea's nuclear program.

"China's experience with North Korea teaches it not to push," said the scholar. "And Iran is not North Korea. It has something crucial. North Korea is not even exporting shoes," he said, referring to Iran's oil exports.

Pentagon plan seeks increase in special forces: report

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A new Pentagon review of U.S. defense strategy would add thousands of troops skilled in fighting terrorists and insurgents to the ranks of the elite Special Operations Forces, The Washington Post reported on Tuesday.

Citing U.S. officials and military analysts familiar with the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review, or QDR, the report said the plan would increase the number of Special Operations Forces to the highest level since the Vietnam War.

The strategy also would add billions of dollars to the budget of the U.S. Special Operations Command over the next five years, the report said, citing the officials and analysts who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The newspaper said one of the largest gains would be in Army Special Forces, or Green Berets, who operate in 12-member "A-teams."

The officials and analysts were cited as saying that the Special Forces would expand from 15 to 20 active-duty battalions, creating about 90 more A-teams to deploy to regions considered vulnerable to terrorist or extremist influences, the newspaper reported.



A U.S. Green Beret soldier takes cover as he helps secure the perimeter near Isabela, Philippines on Feb. 17. A new Pentagon review of U.S. defense strategy would add thousands of troops skilled in fighting terrorists and insurgents to the ranks of the elite Special Operations Forces, The Washington Post reported on Tuesday. REUTERS

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman declined to discuss details of the review but confirmed that bolstering Special Operations Forces was "a concept the QDR has identified as important," the newspaper said.

The QDR report will be sent to the White House and Congress in February.

Toll in Montenegro train wreck rises to 44

PODGORICA, Serbia and Montenegro (Reuters) - At least 44 people were killed and over 180 injured after the brakes failed on a packed train which derailed and plunged into a ravine in mountainous Montenegro, medical officials said on Tuesday.

Hospital director Miodrag Djorovic gave the latest figures at a morning news conference in the capital, Podgorica, raising the toll of Monday's wreck in the deep Moraca canyon from the last official government figure of 39 dead and 135 injured.

At least five of the dead were children, he said.

Many of the 200 passengers on the train from the interior to the Adriatic port of Bar were returning home from a skiing trip in the mountains. It was Montenegro's most deadly train wreck, the government said.

"The children's hospital admitted 90 children, and 34 of them are still there. Six have undergone surgery," Djorovic added. He said 12 of those injured were in intensive care.

Hundreds of people spent part of the night waiting for news in front of Podgorica hospital and 2,000 donated blood. Hotels in the capital accommodated survivors and relatives.

Zoran Begovic, head of a special police rescue and recovery team,



Swiss politician Dick Marty gestures during a seminar in Bucharest Nov. 25. Marty said on Tuesday there was much evidence of "outsourcing of torture" by the United States but he had not so far uncovered firm evidence the CIA operated secret prisons in Europe. REUTERS

said search operations resumed at 0800 (0700 GMT) as planned. "A very strong northerly wind is hampering the work," he added.

"The accident occurred because of a failure of the train's braking

system," Interior Minister Jusuf Kalamperovic told reporters on Monday. The train driver was detained pending a full investigation.

The train derailed at Biocce, about 10 km (6 miles) outside the capital, Podgorica. Trees arrested the plunge of the front coaches down into the gorge and they came to rest 40 metres (yards) from the river below.

A Reuters photographer at the scene saw corpses lined up on the ground under blankets. "There were mobile phones going off constantly all over the crash site among the bushes and the rocks," he said.

President Filip Vujanovic and Prime Minister Milo Djukanovic rushed to the crash site in the Moraca river gorge, where the searchlights of rescue teams illuminated one coach lying on its side like a child's toy thrown aside.

"A terrible tragedy happened at Biocce and everything is being done to reduce the number of casualties as much as possible," Vujanovic told reporters.

The state declared three days of mourning. Transport Minister Andrija Lompar and National Railways chief Ranko Medenica tendered their resignations.

Coping with Catastrophic Risks

By: Richard A. Posner

One year after the Indian Ocean tsunami, what are the lessons? The biggest one is that it was the type of disaster to which policymakers pay too little attention – one that has a very low or unknown probability of occurring, but that creates enormous losses if it does occur. Great as the death toll, physical and emotional suffering of survivors, and property damage caused by the tsunami were, even greater losses could be inflicted by other disasters of low (but not negligible), or unknown, probability.

For example, the asteroid that exploded above Siberia in 1908 with the force of a hydrogen bomb might have killed millions of people had it exploded above a major city. Yet that asteroid was only about 200 feet in diameter. A much larger one (among the thousands of dangerously large asteroids in orbits that intersect the earth's) could strike the earth and cause the total extinction of the human race through a combination of shock waves, fire, tsunamis, and blockage of sunlight, wherever it struck.

Other catastrophic risks include natural epidemics (the 1918-1919 Spanish influenza killed between 20 million and 40 million people), nuclear or bio-

logical attacks by terrorists, certain types of lab accidents, and abrupt global warming. The probability of catastrophes, whether intentional or not, resulting from human activity appears to be increasing because of the rapidity and direction of technological advances.

The fact that a catastrophe is unlikely to occur is not a rational justification for ignoring the risk of its occurrence. Suppose that a tsunami as destructive as the one in the Indian Ocean last year occurs on average once a century and kills 250,000 people. That is an average of 2,500 deaths per year. If such a toll could be substantially reduced at moderate cost, the investment would be worthwhile.

Educating residents of low-lying coastal areas about the warning signs of a tsunami (tremors and a sudden recession in the ocean), establishing a warning system involving emergency broadcasts, telephoned warnings, and air-raid-type sirens, and improving emergency response systems would have saved many who were killed by the Indian Ocean tsunami. At the same time, the cost would have been well below any reasonable estimate of the average losses that can be expected from tsunamis.

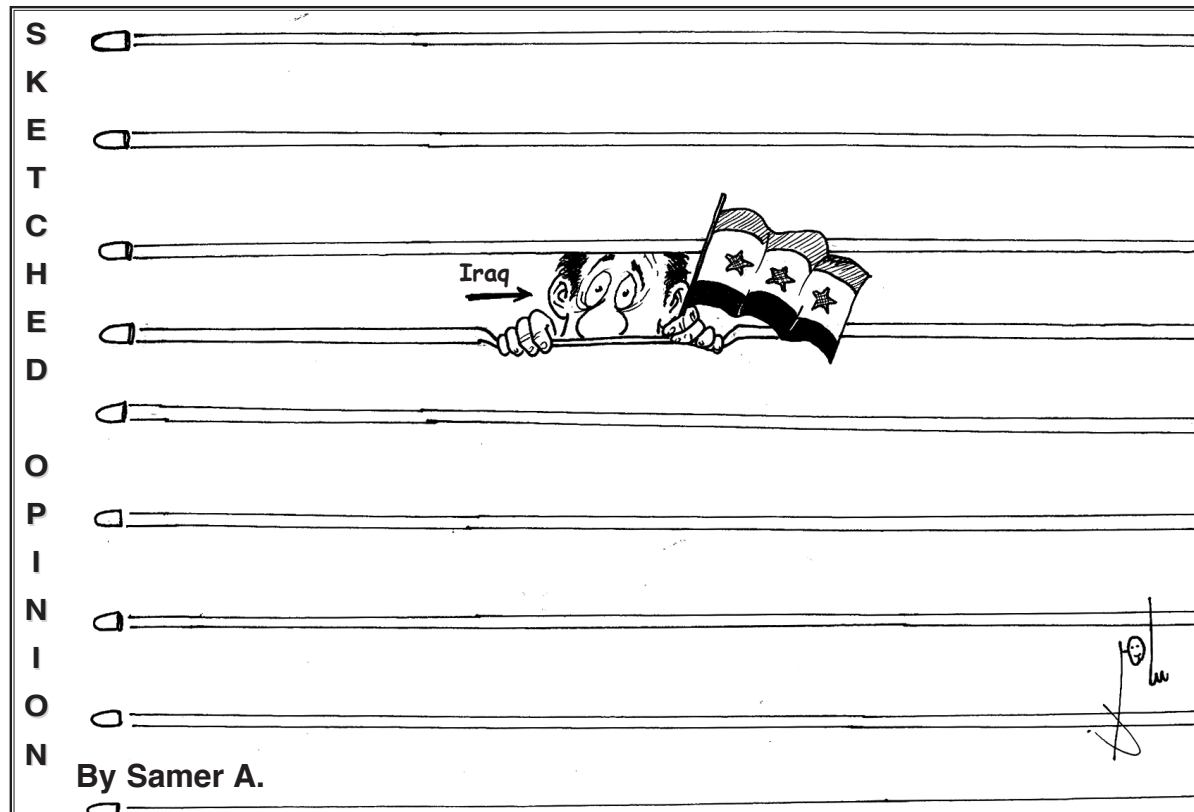
There are several reasons why such measures weren't taken in anticipation of a tsunami on the scale that occurred.

First, although a once-in-a-century event is as likely to occur at the beginning of the century as at any other time, it is much less likely to occur in the first decade of the century than later. Politicians with limited terms of office and thus foreshortened political horizons are likely to discount low-risk disaster possibilities, since the risk of damage to their careers from failing to take precautionary measures is truncated.

Second, to the extent that effective precautions require governmental action, the fact that government is a centralized system of control makes it difficult for officials to respond to the full spectrum of possible risks against which cost-justified measures might be taken. Given the variety of matters to which they must attend, officials are likely to have a high threshold of attention below which risks are ignored.

Third, where risks are regional or global rather than local, many national governments, especially in poorer and smaller countries, may drag their heels in the hope that larger and richer countries will bear the costs of addressing them. Knowing this, larger and richer countries may be reluctant to take precautionary measures, as this would reward and thus encourage "free riding."

Fourth, countries are poor often because of weak, inefficient, or corrupt



By Samer A.

government, characteristics that may disable them from taking cost-justified precautions. And the difficulty people everywhere have in thinking in terms of probabilities – especially low probabilities, which they tend to write off – weakens political support for incurring the costs of taking precautionary measures.

An even more dramatic example of neglect of low-probability/high-cost risks is the danger of an asteroid strike, which is analytically similar to the menace of tsunamis. Indeed, in part because tsunamis are one of the risks of an asteroid collision, the Indian Ocean

disaster has stimulated new interest in asteroid defense.

Deflecting an asteroid from its orbit when it is still hundreds of millions of miles from Earth is a feasible undertaking. Nevertheless, in the United States, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) spends only \$4 million of its annual budget of more than \$10 billion on mapping dangerously close large asteroids. At the current rate, NASA may not complete the task for another decade, even though such mapping is the key to an asteroid defense because it may give us years of warning.

The fact that a disaster of a particular type has not occurred recently or even within human memory (or even ever) is a bad reason to ignore it. The risk may be slight, but if the consequences should it materialize are great enough, the expected cost of disaster may be sufficient to warrant defensive measures.

Richard Posner is a Judge of the US Court of Appeals, a Senior Lecturer at the University of Chicago Law School, and the author of Catastrophe: Risk and Response. Copyright: Project Syndicate.

Fear and Freedom on the Internet

By: Peter Singer

Earlier this month it was reported that, at the request of China's rulers, Microsoft shut down the Web site of a Chinese blogger that was maintained on a Microsoft service called MSN Spaces. The blogger, Zhao Jing, had been reporting on a strike by journalists at *The Beijing News* that followed the dismissal of the newspaper's independent-minded editor.

Microsoft's action raises a key question: can the Internet really be a force for freedom that repressive governments cannot control as easily as newspapers, radio, and television?

Ironically, Microsoft's founder and chairman, Bill Gates, has been an enthusiastic advocate of this view. Just last October, he said: "There's really no way to, in a broad sense, repress information today, and I think that's a

wonderful advance we can all feel good about...[T]his is a medium of total openness and total freedom, and that's what makes it so special."

Despite these sentiments, Microsoft is helping the Chinese authorities to repress information as best they can. A Microsoft spokeswoman was reported as saying that the corporation has blocked "many sites" in China, and it has been known for several months that Microsoft's blog tool in China filters words like "democracy" and "human rights" from blog titles.

Microsoft's defense is that it must "comply with local and global laws." But the MSN Spaces sites are maintained on servers in the United States. The relevant local laws would therefore seem to be those of the US, and Zhao Jing's discussion of the Beijing journalists' strike does not violate any of them.

Nor are there any global laws that prevent Chinese people from dis-

cussing events that their government would prefer them not to discuss. *The New York Times*, for example, is free to publish its report on the strike, even though it operates a Web site that anyone with unfettered Internet access can read. If the Chinese government does not want its citizens to read a foreign newspaper, then it is up to them to figure out how to block access to it. The newspaper is under no obligation to do it for them.

So Microsoft's defense misfires. We can only guess at the company's real reason for taking down the Web site, but fear of repercussions against its commercial interests in China seems likely to have been an important factor.

To be sure, a corporation can and should place limits on the use of its services. The absolutist line – let complete freedom of expression prevail – crumbles in the face of uncomfortable examples. According to Gates, Microsoft might prevent the use of its

services to spread instructions about making nuclear bombs, to send pro-Nazi statements into Germany, where such material is illegal, and to propagate child pornography.

But how relevant are such examples? In his classic defense of freedom of expression, *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill argued that the most important reason for freedom of expression is to promote competition between the widest possible range of ideas, and that unfettered debate is the best way to test them. For the government to protect ideas from criticism is to turn them into a lifeless and rigid dogma, regardless of whether they are true.

If we agree with Mill, then only one of Gates's examples falls into the category of expression that should be protected. Recipes for making nuclear bombs are techniques, not ideas. Nor is child pornography the expression of ideas. We may therefore restrict both of them without running afoul of

Mill's argument. (On the other hand, an essay arguing that there is nothing wrong with adults taking a sexual interest in children, and that such conduct should be permitted, expresses ideas, and thus should not be censored, no matter how poisonous we may consider them.)

The most difficult of Gates's three examples is that of pro-Nazi statements on a Web site aimed at Germany. It is easy to understand why Germany would wish to prohibit such statements. Several countries' laws proscribe incitement of racial hatred, which can be justified, consistently with Mill's defense of liberty, if such laws really focus narrowly on incitement of hatred rather than on suppressing arguments, bad as they may be, that appeal to people's intellectual capacities.

A defender of suppression of Nazi ideas might argue that have already been tried, and have failed – in the

most horrendous manner imaginable – to produce a better society. Nevertheless, the best possible sign that Germany has overcome its Nazi past would be to focus its laws specifically on incitement to racial hatred, rather than on Nazism as such.

In any case, China's crackdown on straightforward reporting and discussion of events taking place in that country is not the suppression of a discredited political ideology, but of open and informed political debate. If Bill Gates really believes that the Internet should be a liberating force, he should ensure that Microsoft does not do the dirty work of China's government.

Peter Singer is Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University. His recent books include Writings on an Ethical Life and One World. He is now completing a book on food and ethics. Copyright: Project Syndicate.

Future Youth

Voices of tomorrow delivered today!!

Some thoughts

I am a Christian or at least I like to think so. However nobody on this planet is perfect or ever will be. In my view all who use violence in the name of their religion to either remove people they don't like or those that do not practice their religion are flawed. Look at the so called Christian leaders of the past who believed they held power over the kings of the middle ages in Europe. In the dark ages people could be burnt at the stake for simply owning a Bible. Even though they believed in Christ and sincerely practiced his views that did not suit the religious leaders of the day and they were consequently murdered as heretics.

Often where ever you find large ancient buildings in a civilisation you will find government by fear. Tall pyramids in South America were often sacrificial sites used by "high priests" (of what I may ask) and rulers to keep the peasants under control. In this respect wherever you have one section of the community paid (often far above their worth) and supported predominantly by the workers to sit in governance and dream up even better ways

to control the populace you will have peace for a while. However slowly those in power become greedy and want more and more wealth and even respect and this ultimately drains the wealth generated by the workers of the nation till they become poor and rebellion finally comes.

We are all here on this planet and we all have a measure of faith and ability which in turn helps to support our neighbors and they us. Why is the garbage collector worth less than the politician?

In New York when the rubbish collectors went on strike the place became a health hazard and it stank. Under those conditions who is worth more. If a democratic country elects a government surely it is for all people not just a select few who by their measure of ability simply make money. Ultimately money is worthless unless it can buy something that has been produced for payment.

If I live in the jungles of New Guinea in a small tribal village hunting for my daily food and weaving baskets or other goods that I can exchange for those with other abilities then am I poor? No.

But if you build a copper mine near my village and pay those who work their and reduce my rights to live according to my customs and force me to buy from the company store then do I become poor? Yes.

Poverty is caused by money. Money was designed to spread wealth easily not keep 10% of the world in luxury at the expense of the rest. Simply put one of the first rules of government is to make those you govern dependent.

It is an evil world where evil and temptation lurks in every corner to tempt the righteous of all faiths.

In my book of faith it says that even after the next coming when I believe the world will be straightened out as it was in Noahs time in the next thousand years after that point we will learn to live together. yet even in that time Satan will be loosed again to go forth throughout the earth to spread his evil ways.

Once again at the end of that time and after further refining of "Gods" people those who follow the evil one will be cast out forever.

When I first came to Australia in 1969 it was in my mind almost heaven with a

fairness and a degree of wealth for all regardless of skill.

However over the years I have seen a minority of people from European countries bring their hatreds with them and implant them in this land. I have seen a minority of immigrants from the middle east do the same. I have seen the money hungry and wealth grabbers strip this country of its fairness its beauty and its wealth and poverty strap the next generation.

Whilst this country is still good when compared to some it has declined unnecessarily and it is no longer heaven.

If I were God and had a place I would not let anyone in who might contaminate my place in any way. Harsh But True.

We are all the same -created by the same God therefore we are all brothers and sisters. Suicide bombers, terrorists, evil governments and dictators who kill their innocent brothers and sisters will never see the paradise they hope for. We are all family. Treat your family well

Dennis Newland
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Eternal Love

By: K P Janardhanan
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To read, to rediscover, to interpret
Life as seen through my own eyes

The dry leaf of an oak tree,
Fell in love with a budding flower,
Murmured in her ear
For a new lease of life!

Waste no time my saver,
Take this cup of filtered wisdom,
Drink, you drink the honey of my
know-how,
I, the intoxicating wine of your
youth

Before the natures long-
Out-stretched hand grabs me,
Take me to your fold,
Give me what I lost.

Go no deep in life's intricacies
Don't concentrate on its bitter part
In the guise of teachings,
Religion, denied us that sweet bowl!
OH! that sweet bowl!!

Foolishness, though my angel, help
me,
To turn back the hands of that big
clock,
The desire to live with you,
Is burning within me

What is life? Nothing but love!
Love, and love alone!
Is it wrong to be loved, being
loved?
Love! Enjoy life to its last drop!

Dear old! You are reading,
The last chapter in the book of life,
Where many a question,
The wise and fool alike failed to
answer.
Wide opened from page one,
That book lies in front of me,

Oozing...the drips of life's honey!
Clicking away the seconds of the
pendulum!
Waste no time my young,
Come! Thrill me by your bubbling
youth!!!

Yemen private sector embarks on oil industry investment

Hayel Saeed Anam group, a private Yemeni firm, will begin a \$450 million oil refinery project in Marib in May. Refinery production capacity is to be 60,000 barrels per day (bpd).

By: Yemen Times Staff

The Hayel Saeed Anam industrial and trading group is to begin work on the first private sector Ras Issa oil refinery in May. Investment in this venture is \$450 million and targeted production capacity is 60,000 barrels per day (bpd).

Oil sources said Hood Oil Company, a subsidiary of Hayel Saeed which owns 50 percent of the project, has completed all economic, environmental and technical studies for building the refinery. Hood Oil is assisted by International Finance Corp (IFC), the World Bank's private sector

lending arm. Sources noted that Hood Oil will offer part of its stakes to local investors. The Hood Oil source affirmed that the company will cover 90 percent of domestic oil product needs, exporting the remainder.

The source said India's Reliance Industries will have a 25 percent stake in the refinery. India's Reliance Industries is one of the largest private sector oil refinery companies in India and operates a refinery with 660,000bpd capacity.

The IFC said the project will help Yemen obtain reasonably-priced refined oil products and reduce oil tanker passage along the Red Sea coast, thereby reducing the danger of oil spills, while at the same time



enhancing Yemeni private investment contributions in the oil sector.

Last September, the Yemeni government signed an agreement with the IFC whereby the latter would open an office in Yemen. The agreement's signing was concluded by Yemeni Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Ahmed Soufan, leader of Yemen's delegation to the Financial and International Corporations annual meeting last September with IFC deputy chairman Assad Jaber. Soufan praised IFC policy of financing huge industrial projects in Yemen, including the \$450 million Ras Issa oil refinery project.

Yemen is a small, non-OPEC oil-producing country whose estimated production capacity is 450,000bpd from its two oil refineries in Aden and Marib.

Easier procedures to tackle investment impediments

In its third five-year plan for development, the government promises to adopt procedures to tackle hindrances impeding the investment process and fight poverty.

By: Yemen Times Staff

Despite numerous investor complaints about impediments to investment, the government says its 2006-2010 five-year plan for development and poverty alleviation will push forward the wheels of development in the industry and trade sector. This goal will be attained through future measures and policies considering this one of the promising sectors for achieving sustainable economic growth and national economy diversification. The aim is to realize the objective of incorporating with the world economy by joining the World Trade Organization.

Poverty is aggravating Yemeni society due to unjust distribution of available local wealth and revenues, in addition to scarcity of resources and dispersion of external grants and aid. Against this, official sources claim the plan's general course aims to fight poverty and provide a convenient industrial investment climate via simplifying measures, tackling industrial investment hindrances, expanding the industrial base and completing the industrial sector's legislative and legal structure. Additionally, there will be a plan to promote industrial zone investment opportunities, prepare industrial maps, as well as adopt measures and policies to develop the industrial and commer-

cial sector. The plan's aim also is to guarantee necessary funding availability for it and encourage the private sector to establish industrial zones.

Pursuant to social studies, labor market unemployment volume continually is increasing due to scarcity of job opportunities. Therefore, the government says its new development plan will work to limit unemployment volume and seek to alleviate poverty by doubling the conversion rate of industries' contribution to the domestic product. It will realize this by increasing growth to around 12 percent during the plan's implementation period, compared to what it was at the end of last year. It will realize this aim through phased industrial zone establishment, providing necessary infrastructure and direction toward building medium and large industrial projects, as well as establishing an industrial development fund and modernizing industrial development strategy.

The plan's articles point out that the government will increase industrial export share in non-oil exports by focusing on criteria of quality, easing export procedures and paying attention to specifications and standardizations. It will work to benefit domestic input industries and the WTO for least developed countries by providing Arab free zone privileges, in addition to increasing industrial exports from Aden free zone.

According to its plan, the government says it will fight poverty by developing small industries and professions like textiles, handicrafts and food industries that can enter external markets. To do this, the government says it intends to prepare a project to improve small industries, follow up financial aspects and activate the role of the fund to finance small industries. It plans to organize these industries into specialized societies to offer care and encourage them, as well as hold trade markets and encourage women in those fields.

Regarding external trade, the plan endeavors to complete development and modernization of the legal and institutional structure of foreign trade. In this respect, the plan mentions a group of scheduled measures and policies. Among the proposed procedures is issuing a new external trade law, a law organizing internal and external trade fairs, a law protecting national production against effects resulting from harmful international trade practices and an electronic trade law. The plan also includes preparing a mechanism to gradually transfer from traditional to electronic trade and applying the new administrative structure of external trade general management. The plan includes other measures and policies on rehabilitation programs, training, etc.

Nevertheless, the big questions concern the extent of seriousness to achieve what is mentioned in the plan's articles and what they will achieve in tackling the poverty problem and the country's investment impediments.

Embracing Science

By: Jeffrey D. Sachs

Long-term economic progress comes mainly from the invention and spread of improved technologies. The scientific revolution was made possible by the printing press, the industrial revolution by the steam engine, and India's escape from famine by increased farm yields – the so-called "Green Revolution." Today's era of globalization emerged with the spread of computers and the Internet. Thus, when we seek solutions to some of the world's toughest problems, they, too, are likely to be found, at least in part, in new technologies that can resolve old and seemingly intractable problems.

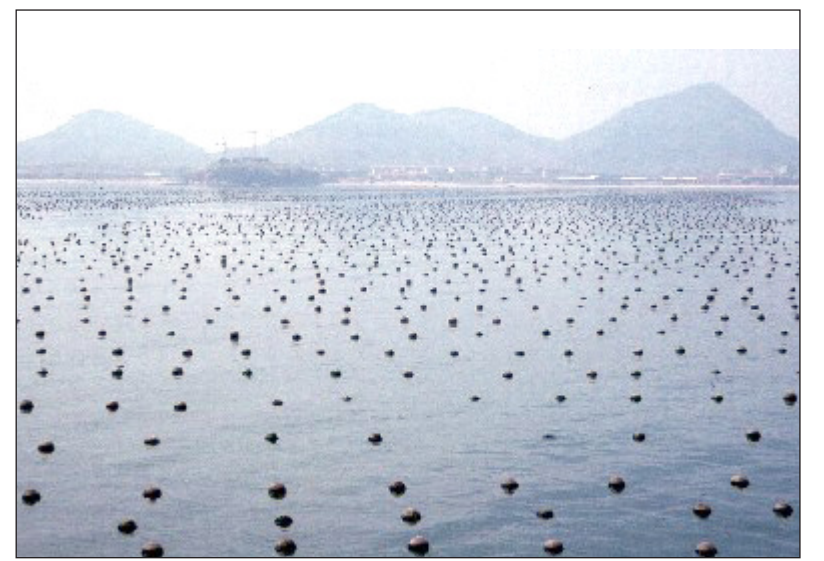
Consider poverty in Africa. Every conceivable explanation has been given, usually focusing on what Africans do wrong. But a visit to Africa's villages makes clear that the problems have more to do with the struggle for survival under difficult physical conditions than with any special problems that are unique to African societies.

Africa's farmers produce roughly one-third or less food per hectare of farmland than their counterparts around the world, resulting in massive hunger, which is exacerbated by a heavy disease burden. Malaria poses a unique challenge, owing in large part to Africa's mosquito species, which are especially adept at transmitting the disease. Other tropical parasitic diseases imply similarly extraordinary burdens in Africa. Add the practical difficulties of broken-down roads and few cars and trucks, and economic isolation follows. So the challenges of survival are enormous.

Yet practical solutions are at hand, because simple and low-cost technologies can address specific problems. Low farm yields can be addressed through improved seed varieties specially adapted for African conditions, combined with technologies for replenishing soil and managing water.

Malaria can be controlled through newly designed long-lasting mosquito nets and a new generation of effective medicines. Other tropical diseases also can be controlled, and practical technologies for safe drinking water can dramatically reduce diarrheal diseases. Mobile phones, local wireless Internet, and more paved roads could do much to break the economic isolation of Africa's villages.

Donor countries incessantly ask Africans to change their trade policies, government institutions, public administration, and more. Some of these changes are important, but the



Improved aquaculture one of the technological methods to improve output of fish wealth

role of the rich countries has been lopsided, focusing on everything except how to finance and introduce practical technologies to solve practical problems. The rich countries' mistakes wouldn't matter if African countries had enough money to adopt the needed technologies on their own, but Africa is so poor that it must get financial help to escape poverty.

The development challenges in Africa are just one example of how tough societal problems can be addressed by the design and spread of improved technologies. The same will be true of how the world best addresses manmade climate change – another of those seemingly intractable global problems.

Right now, rich countries are changing the world's climate by emitting billions of tons of carbon dioxide each year from the use of coal, oil, and natural gas. In future years, China and India also will make massive contributions to increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Yet no country, rich or poor, is keen to cut its energy use, owing to concern that to do so would threaten jobs, incomes, and economic growth.

New technologies will provide a key part of the solution. Already, "hybrid" automobiles, which combine gasoline and battery power, can roughly double fuel efficiency, cutting carbon dioxide emissions by half. Similarly, engineers have developed ways to capture the carbon dioxide that results from burning coal in power plants and store it safely underground. This new technology, called "carbon capture and sequestration," can cut by 80% the carbon dioxide emitted during the production of electricity. The costs appear relatively small.

Consider also the depletion of ocean fisheries through over-fishing. Global demand for fish consumption is growing, and so, too, is the global

capacity to catch fish, driving some species to the point of extinction. Improved aquaculture, in which fish are grown at manmade fishponds and reservoirs is still far from being a perfect technology, mainly for environmental reasons, yet it is enormously promising.

On a recent visit to Africa, a senior agricultural scientist said that in today's world, the scientist is closer than ever before to the farmer, but farther away than ever from the policymakers. Politicians don't understand science, and rarely seek the advice of scientists and engineers in addressing major issues. Everything is viewed as politics and votes, not as technical problems requiring technological expertise, which is why Africa's poverty is so often attributed to corruption rather than to ecological challenges.

It is easy to dismiss the suggestion that technology can save the day. After all, technological advance also requires good governance, market forces, effective universities, and more. Politics will still play its role.

Nevertheless, it's time to recognize that governments are ill-equipped to understand the sophisticated technological challenges and opportunities facing the world, and that new ways are needed to ensure that science and technology are given the prominence needed to address a wide range of increasingly urgent global problems. Now is the time for every major international agency and national government to assume responsibility for gaining the scientific and technological expertise that they will need in the twenty-first century.

Jeffrey Sachs is Professor of Economics and Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University.

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Cinema in Yemen must be fostered

By: Ali Al-Qadhi

As a modern art mode, cinema has earned a place among the arts. It is now considered the seventh art due to its artistic significance and addition to civilization.

Though only emerging at the end of the 19th century, cinema has undergone great changes. It went through many stages during the course of its development, beginning with the silent era and the sound era up until the digital era. Now the world's body of film comprises a tremendous volume.

Yemen and the film industry
Some Yemenis think Yemen is not concerned with film production at all. They don't see Yemeni films onscreen and may not have heard of a Yemeni film at all. Films they view come from Arab and foreign countries, mostly Egypt, Europe and America.

Two Yemeni films recently attracted international attention. "A New Day in Old Sana'a," directed by Yemeni Badr bin Hirsi, tells the story of a young man who shuns the bride chosen by his family and decides to marry a low-class girl. The film won the Cairo International Film Festival's grand prize and received accolades from viewers at the recent Dubai International Film Festival.

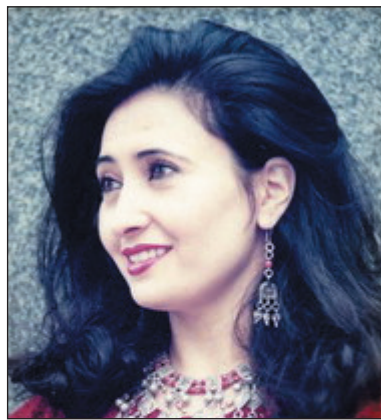
The second film, a documentary directed by Yemeni Khadeeja Al-Salami, follows one day in the life of a little girl wanting to lead a normal life in a society constrained by iron-clad do's and don'ts. It also was highly appreciated and screened in many countries worldwide.

These two films cast doubt on what some might call Yemeni creative infertility in film production. Both, filmed in Sana'a, have been hailed by the community of critics.

Such success begs a quick look at some observations about Yemeni cinema. These two particular films trigger the question, "Why shouldn't we have organized activity, with sustainable and well-studied output, instead of occasional flukes?" Yemen is rich in creative citizens willing to outperform their foreign peers.

A cinema authority
"No country can claim to have any cultural activity whatsoever without cinema," computer specialist Dr. Hamdan Dammaj said. He said cinema is important because it mixes culture with entertainment.

One may be surprised to learn that there actually is a governmental body in charge of cinema affairs. It does double duty, as its title suggests, "The



Khadeeja Al-Salami

Yemeni Theater and Cinema Corp. (YTCC)."

YTCC officer and scenarist Abdu Rabbu Al-Haithami said the problem is "insufficient funds." He claimed the whole organization is allotted 40 million Riyals annually to cover wages of hundreds of employees, rental premises, etc. "If the average single film minute costs \$5,000, how can we possibly produce films with our slim budget?"

Funding seems to be a persistent problem for those wanting to produce films. The director of "A New Day in Old Sana'a" complained of government's unfulfilled promises. "When we began filming, things started to go wrong. The money we were promised by the ministry was cut from \$200,000 to \$80,000 and then to \$40,000," he stated.

YTCC has a cinema lab but using it to produce films requires a larger budget. Al-Haithami suggested the private sector get involved in producing films as they are important to foster national culture and promote tourism.

According to Al-Haithami, the first Yemeni film was, "From Hut to Palace," produced in Aden in the 1970s and directed by Ja'far Mohammed Ali. He noted that some 45 documentaries have been produced throughout Yemeni cinema history. However, he complained that the YTCC has no role in even selecting the good from what should be imported and featured for the public. "We can use good things from abroad. There are nice films that have cultural value and are worth screening, but we have to select carefully," he said.

Yemeni cinema houses
Many people used to regard cinema houses as 'suspicious' places for only revelers and those of 'lax moral fabric.' To the typical Yemeni, cinema was stained with a 'taboo' color due to the fact that many cinemagoers sought X-rated movies, which are unacceptable in a conservative society.

Not many educated people attended the cinema, perhaps because they



Badr Bin Hirsi

already knew it was too meager to feed them intellectually. Some also objected to cinemas from a religious aspect.

"An observer of the situation may think there is some sort of taboo against the cinema. Nobody can confirm nor deny this," Dammaj said. "Yet, there is no feasible reason why Yemen shouldn't have a cinema, while there is more controversial entertainment such as night clubs."

Bin Hirsi confirmed this during filming in Old Sana'a, where he faced harassment by a religious group. After a two-day negotiation, they read the film's script and demanded certain amendments. "We agreed because they were superficial," he said.

Sana'a has only four cinemas: Hadda, Khaleda, Bilqis and Ahlia. Visiting the Hadda Street cinema complex, one would be astounded at the miserably degraded situation of the twin cinema houses. Walking across the front yard, there are broken gates and the place is littered with garbage. One may question the reason for such appalling conditions.

Akram, 25, who keeps an internet cafe on the other side of the yard, still remembers when it vibrated with life and was filled with people shouting and screaming as they queued to see a movie.

He told of ownership disputes over the closed-down cinema houses. "They are sorting out things and settling the row," he noted. However, he recalled the two cinemas closed after customer numbers dropped sharply. "There was nothing of quality and they started screening old films repetitively so people got fed up. Most films were commercial and action-oriented, whereas local movies, of course, were absent."

Dammaj narrated a story about entering a cinema in the small town of Yarim in 1987. "It was a kind of a mess, a primitive cinema. As I entered, I stumbled into a pit. I realized later that it was nothing but a dark, humble coffee shop making use of its wall and serving tea."

He ironically compared the 1987 Yarim cinema and 2006 Sana'a cine-

mas. "It is laughable that in 2006, Sana'a has only one and a half cinemas, as my friend says," Dammaj said, suggesting the cinemas should have been improved by now.

He still remembers going to the cinema a lot before leaving 12 years ago to study in the UK. "Hadda and Khaleda cinemas used to be very good when I was a kid," he reminisced. "They used to show the latest international and Arab movies, but then they followed the system of Bilqis and Ahlia cinemas, showing two old films for one ticket."

Media revolution
Abdul-Nasser Al-Wali, 38, attributed the desertion of Sana'a cinema houses to the proliferation of digital dishes, DVDs, CDs and the internet. "These media have provided audiences an infinite range of choices and entertainment sources. They now can see most recent films and blockbusters soon after production, either on DVD or through any of the numerous space channels, some of which are dedicated solely to movies."

However, he noted that only one capital cinema has survived the fatal inundation. "Al-Ahlia is trying to bring the most recent movies to its limited public and this is why it still is running," he added.

These cinema houses mostly thrived on commercial movies and didn't address artistic considerations of other audiences. They eventually were whacked good. It may not be their fault for not contributing to the national film

The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam 13

Translated by Edward FitzGerald

**Look to the rose that blows
about us—"Lo,
"Laughing" she says, "into the
world I blow:
"At once the silken tassel of my
purse
"Tear, and its treasure on the
garden throw."**

industry or enriching artistic appreciation of worthy productions. Nevertheless, their deterioration is symbolic of the dissatisfactory condition of Yemeni cinema in general.

Of course, Yemen shouldn't dream of competing with Hollywood, but it has the resources to establish a cinema sector that can best represent Yemen and create a national alternative to the below-quality alien materials. External competition may not be possible either. However, Yemen first must hold a footing in this realm and stop being a passive recipient of others' works.

Nowadays, cinema has undergone great developments. There are crystal displays and, thanks to high technology, viewers now can smell gunpowder and perfume. Computers and cutting-edge software have played a role in

establishing a very modern mode of cinema and creating human-like fictional heroes, thereby minimizing production costs considerably and giving birth to jaw dropping movies.

In a paper presented to Al-Afif Cultural Foundation, Al-Haithami set forth his improvement proposals. The package includes establishing cinema industry infrastructure and restructuring the YTCC so it implements projects independently. He also suggested procuring modern programs, training staff to use them, as well as introducing cinema technology and other requirements. Most importantly, the cinema sector should not be government's responsibility alone. The private sector has a duty to create a robust cinema for the good of the entire community.



Cinema Hadda as is found today

German-Yemeni plastic arts gallery opens

By: Yemen Times Staff

A plastic arts gallery opened Thursday, Jan. 19, at Bait Al-Thaqafah (Culture House) in Sana'a. Exhibiting are German artist, Berno Heitmann, and two female Yemeni artists, Amal Abdul-Salam and Entisar Al-Shaibani. Inaugurated by Minister of Culture and Tourism Khaled Al-Rowaishan, the show continues through Jan. 30.

Heitmann, who came to Yemen last August and works for an NGO, stated that he derived his paintings' subjects from the Yemeni environment. His works are characterized by simplicity and plainness, treating philosophical as well as religious issues. "I hope I can repeat this experience," he said. Heitmann has exhibited in Berlin and Hanover, Germany in 2000 and 2003, as well as Amman, Jordan.

Abdul-Salam's works can be described as abstract and tackle different themes.



"How can you describe the features of a magnificent, sweet, tormented voyage?"



Al-Rowaishan rhetorically asked her. She exhibits some 20 colorful paintings with



profound connotations. A psychology major, Abdul-Salam has exhibited locally

and internationally, including Sana'a University in 1992, the Sana'a-based

French Center in 2003 and Cairo.

Al-Shaibani's works are realistic, depicting real facts and observations. Numbering about 18, her paintings cover a wide range of feminist and other subjects. She has exhibited in galleries in Taiz and Sana'a, such as those in the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education in Taiz and Al-Sa'eed Cultural Foundation.

Besides being a move to encourage young talent, the exhibition features works that have artistic depth and value. Its importance lies partly in its providing a chance for more women artists to express themselves and promote their art and in allowing national and foreign artists to exchange experiences enhancing cultural ties.

Culture House director Zaid Al-Faqih said this exhibition is part of its 2006 scheduled activities. "We are trying to bring our artists and creative people into the spotlight," he added, stressing that many other relevant activities will be held throughout the year.

Atomic energy for peaceful purposes

International Atomic Energy Agency delegations arrived to Sana'a to extend more help to Yemen in atomic energy use for peaceful purposes, especially medical, industrial, agricultural, power-generating and water desalination.

By: Mahyoub Al-Kamali

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) team headed by Technical Cooperation Program head K. Jean, visited Sana'a Jan. 20-23 praising the role and activity of Yemen's National Atomic Energy Committee (NAEC). The team pinpointed Yemen's needs in the field of peaceful atomic energy applications and material and technical assistance possibly offered to the NAEC. It also studied Al-Jumhury Hospital's cancer treatment center in Sana'a with the aim of establishing a similar unit at Al-Thawra Hospital in the future.

The delegation acquainted itself with NAEC factories and needs to improve their work in order to meet Yemen's peaceful atomic energy use requirements.

NAEC chairman Dr. Mustafa

Bahran earlier noted that the international delegation would contribute to a document on Yemen's needs for peaceful atomic energy applications between 2006 and 2016. He clarified that the delegation's visit came due to world trends to benefit from peaceful atomic energy applications in industrial, agricultural, medical, hydrological, geological and environmental fields, as well as in power generation and water desalination.

In 1999, President Ali Abdullah Saleh decreed establishing the NAEC to undertake two major tasks: protect Yemenis against radioactive exposure and proliferate and expand peaceful atomic energy uses in various development areas, especially transferring radioactive and atomic technology suitable for serving Yemenis and their environment by benefiting from what humanity has achieved in various development fields. Thus, in this respect comes the



cancer patients are waiting for their treatment inside a cancer center

importance of benefiting from the IAEA.

The NAEC has established a distinguished relationship with the IAEA. This relationship continued to grow from the beginning of simple radioactive protection developing into a larger working relationship including most fields of IAEA work.

Yemen is fifth in the world for volume of assistance received from the Technical Cooperation Fund for national projects and first in the Arab world, followed by Morocco and Egypt in second and third place. The IAEA granted Yemen 104 fellowships in eight atomic energy field between January 2001 and September 2005. In

the same period, other opportunities such as training courses, scientific visits and workshops exceeded 300, in addition to a number of higher scholarships. The NAEC continuously receives apparatus and equipment free of charge, particularly for national or regional projects by the ministries of health, agriculture and other service establishments. Such equipment amounted to more than \$500,000 in 2004.

The NAEC, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Population, plans and implements programs and projects aimed at fighting cancer as part of a comprehensive strategy not simply confined to treating existing cancer cases, but rather endeavoring earlier discovery of the disease by studying its causes and practices leading to it, as well as enlightening the public about those results.

In 1997, the Yemeni National Committee cooperated with the IAEA on a cancer treatment center building plan consisting of three major elements: building design, providing specialized radioactive treatment equipment and apparatus and training medical and technical personnel to use such technology efficiently and safely.

The committee also played a large

role in animal health by developing the central veterinary laboratory to diagnose mostly bacterial and viral animal diseases. This is part of a special project currently implemented in the laboratory which also aims to upgrade its abilities to watch animal products and their content for remaining hormones and medicines given to them. This is considered an urgent matter, especially since anyone exporting Yemeni animal products is required to provide a certificate indicating the products are free of hormones and medicines.

Yemen is a valuable participant in IAEA conferences discussing atomic issues and it has been elected a member of the agency's Governors Council for 2005-2006. The council discusses world atomic issues or problems and meets five times a year to adopt relevant resolutions and recommendations, as it represents the highest IAEA authority, after the general conference held twice a year. Yemen also was elected deputy chairman of the general conference at its 48th ordinary session September 2004. Such participation illustrates that NAEC cooperation with the IAEA is not only restricted to receiving assistance.

Combating violence against women

By: Dr. Saleh Al-Habshi
Master in Public Health

Violence is a major obstacle to development. In particular, violence against women currently is considered a priority social, economic and health problem hindering progress in achieving development. Violence against women occurs in all social and economic classes, but women living in poverty are more likely to experience violence.

Global estimates indicate that one in every five women faces some form of violence during her lifetime, in some cases leading to serious injury or death. Violence against women takes many forms, from the overt to the subtle. It can be physical, sexual, emotional or intimate partner violence.

Most violence experienced by women is perpetrated by someone they know – most often, their husband or partner. A 2005 review of nearly 50 population-based surveys worldwide found that between 10 and 50 percent of women reported being hit or physically abused by an intimate male partner at some point in their lives. However, a significant amount of violence is perpetrated by strangers, as well as authority figures such as police or government officials, and by combatants during armed conflict.

Poverty and hunger force many women to migrate as a survival strategy. In many countries, unemployed women migrants or those working in domestic service or factories are at high risk for employer abuse, including confinement.

Violence against women increasingly is documented in crises associated with armed conflicts. Women and girls often bear the brunt of such conflicts. It is estimated that at least 65 percent of the millions of people displaced worldwide by conflict are women and girls who face daily deprivation and insecurity. Displaced persons and women living in conflict situations or refugee camps already are very vulnerable to extreme poverty, hunger and illness. Their situation frequently is made even worse by high exploitation and abuse rates.

Despite the growing recognition of violence against women as a public health and human rights concern and the obstacle it poses to development, this type of violence continues to have an unjustifiably low priority on the international development agenda and in planning, programming and budgeting. Until recently, most governments considered violence against women, particularly domestic violence by a husband or other intimate partner, to be a relatively minor social problem. Today, due in large part to efforts of women's organizations and research evidence from WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA, violence against women is recognized as a global concern.

Violence against women is a major

threat to social and economic development. This was recognized in the September 2000 Millennium Declaration, in which the United Nations General Assembly resolved "to combat all forms of violence against women and implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women." The declaration explicitly recognized that equal rights and opportunities for women and men must be assured.

Such violence is intimately associated with complex social conditions such as poverty, lack of education, gender inequality, child mortality, maternal ill-health and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

Efforts to reduce poverty and hunger may help prevent violence against women and thus should be supported.

Although more research is needed to fully understand the connection between poverty and violence against women, it is clear that poverty and its associated stressors are important contributors. A number of theories as to why this is so have been explored. Men in difficult economic circumstances (e.g. unemployment, little job autonomy, low socioeconomic status or blocked advancement due to lack of education) may resort to violence out of frustration and a sense of hopelessness. At the same time, poor women who experience violence may have fewer resources to escape violence in the home.

Alarmingly, 65 percent of the world's children who do not attend school are girls, and two-thirds of the world's illiterate are women. There is a diverse relationship between education and violence. Increasing women's educational status and economic independence does not guarantee elimination of violence. In some cases, this actually may increase women's chances of experiencing violence – at least initially.

Improved economic conditions may provide more opportunities to escape and avoid violence, but they are only part of completely eradicating violence against women. More education empowers women by giving them greater self-confidence, wider social networks and greater ability to use information and resources and attain economic independence. There is evidence that less-educated women generally are more likely to experience violence than those with higher education levels. Enrolling in and completing secondary education is also a critical area of concern, as it clearly is associated with employment opportunities and women's empowerment.

The relationship between educational attainment and its protective effect is complex. Some men may react violently to women's empowerment through education, particularly if educated women then challenge traditional gender roles. Thus, in some societies, there actually is increased risk of violence for

some women until a sufficient number of them reach a high enough educational level and gender norms shift to allow its protective effects to operate.

Girls face many barriers to education, some of which involve violence or make them more vulnerable to it. For example, many families place little value on educating girls, preferring to keep them working at home or elsewhere for wages. Some poor families can afford to send only one child to school and the selected child usually is a boy. Poor girls who want to attend school but whose families cannot afford tuition fees or supplies can be exploited and abused for school fees, uniforms, books and lunches. For some girls, lack of safety in or around schools is the chief obstacle to getting an education, while early marriage also can cut short a girl's education.

Violence against women and gender inequality result from a complex array of interwoven factors. These include harmful gender norms and traditions and social acceptance of violence as a means of conflict resolution. Violence against women often is embedded in social customs allowing it to be perpetrated with impunity – in many cases, without even being considered as violence. In many parts of the world, women have no social or legal recourse against violence by their husband or partner.

Since violence against women so seriously impacts their lives, health, productivity and well-being, it must be addressed adequately. While the past two or three decades produced many lessons about violence against women, more research and data are needed to better: (a) understand its root causes, magnitude and consequences, (b) identify solutions and (c) galvanize social, legal and political change.

Combating violence against women is central to achieving Millennium Development Goals. A variety of tools and strategies are required to overcome deeply embedded gender norms and systemic discrimination against women. These include visible and sustained leadership by politicians and other key society figures; communication campaigns aimed at changing norms and attitudes; legal reform on issues such as divorce, property rights and political participation; and credit- and skills-building programs to increase women's economic independence.

Greater equality and empowerment will help many women avoid violence. But violence will never disappear unless men also change their attitudes and reject violence against women as acceptable behavior in any context, including the home.

A mix of comprehensive interventions specifically aimed at reducing violence and protecting women is required. These interventions should involve health, social and economic aspects of women's lives, including enacting and

enforcing sanctions against men perpetrating violence against women; training judiciary, police and health care workers to recognize and deal appropriately with violence against women; and services for women experiencing violence such as shelters, telephone hotlines, support networks and psychological and legal advice. It is important to continuously monitor such initiatives. Humanitarian relief programs should be designed to protect women and girls in war and displacement situations and ensure that their basic needs are met.

The benefits of increasing women's security not only include reducing violence-based injury and death, but also give women independence to pursue economic and social activities. Environmental improvements, such as good lighting and designing streets and buildings to eliminate areas where assaults can occur without being seen or heard, also are relevant.

Various women's organizations (e.g. social, cultural and service-oriented) have played important parts in many development aspects, particularly those

related to health, human rights and social justice. However, female leaders and groups representing women are relatively rare in most countries' national politics, resulting in few laws and policies challenging prevailing gender-related attitudes and practices.

Combating violence against women will succeed only if women's empowerment efforts address current norms and traditional social customs legitimizing violence against them, as well as legislation and enforcing laws discriminating against them.

((وبشر الصابرين الذين اذا اصابتهم مصيبة قالوا انا لله وانا اليه راجعون))
صدق الله العظيم

بقلوب مؤمنة بقضاء الله وقدره نتقدم بخالص العزاء
وصادق المواساة إلى:

اللواء الركن المهندس / عبد الله حسين البشير
وزير الدولة - أمين عام رئاسة الجمهورية

في وفاة المغفور له بإذن الله تعالى نجله الشاب المهندس /

بشير عبد الله حسين البشير

سائلين الله العلي القدير أن يتغمد الفقيد بواسع رحمته

وأن يسكنه فسيح جناته وأن يلهم أهله وذويه الصبر والسلوان ..

ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بالله العلي العظيم

المعزون:

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رئيس مجلس الإدارة ورئيس التحرير

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نائب رئيس مجلس الإدارة

د / همدان زيد مطيع دماج
مستشار التحرير

وكافة طاقم ومنتسبي مؤسسة يمن تايمز للصحافة والطباعة والنشر

Kofi Annan backs Olympic truce

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (Reuters) - United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan has called on warring parties throughout the world to observe the Olympic truce during next month's Winter Games in Turin.

Speaking after a meeting with International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Jacques Rogge at the organization's headquarters in Lausanne, Annan said the truce offered a chance for combatants to re-assess their motives.

"The period of the Olympic Games is obviously not long enough for us to believe that we can use it to establish lasting peace," Annan told reporters afterwards.

"It is however a chance for protagonists to look around, see how they are destroying their communities and take the chance to explore other options."

Introduced into the modern Olympics in 1991, the truce calls for the suspension of fighting for the duration of the Games.

Shortly after its adoption, the truce was used to allow athletes from the former Yugoslavia to take part in the 1992 Barcelona Games without having to declare any national allegiance.

The truce was also credited with a decrease in violence around the besieged city of Sarajevo during the 1994 Lillehammer Games -- although a total ceasefire was not achieved.

More recently, it has been invoked to allow representatives from East Timor to attend the Sydney Olympics in 2000 with a joint appearance by North and South Korea also taking place during the opening ceremony.

Less encouragingly, the truce has failed to stop atrocities occurring at the Games themselves -- most notably in 1972 at Munich when 11 Israeli athletes were killed and the 1996 Atlanta bombing in which one woman died.



A couple stroll in front of the 2006 Winter Olympics store in Turin, Italy, in this December 1, 2005 file photo. United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan called on January 24, 2006 for warring parties throughout the world to observe the Olympic truce during next month's Winter Games. REUTERS

On three occasions -- in 1916, 1940 and 1944 -- the Games were canceled due to war.

The U.N.'s General Assembly has already adopted seven resolutions in support of the truce -- most recently in November last year.

Rogge and Annan said they had also discussed ongoing collaboration between the U.N. and IOC in the fields of education, health care and the environment.

"Wherever U.N. agencies have

offices, we can work with national Olympic committees to ensure that sports is incorporated more and more into the educational curriculum," Annan added.

Later in the day, after a meeting with Sepp Blatter, head of world soccer's ruling body FIFA in Zurich, Annan told reporters that soccer could unite nations.

"I cannot think of a second sport that has the capacity of getting so many people together and getting them for 90

minutes to forget their worries," said Annan, who is thinking about attending the 2006 World Cup in Germany this year.

"I have seen some societies that have been divided that for that brief moment forget their divisions and become one nation, one people."

Annan, Rogge and Blatter are also set to take part in a seminar on the global impact of sport at the World Economic Forum in Davos on Wednesday.

Ferrari present new car to launch F1 fightback

MUGELLO, Italy (Reuters) - Ferrari launched their 2006 Formula One car without fanfare on Tuesday but with plenty of determination to put a dismal season behind them and recapture the title.

"We will go into this season with a great motivation, great humility and also a great determination to get back to the top," team boss Jean Todt told a news conference at the Mugello circuit.

"We have the team, we have the means and we have the drivers so there is no excuse not to return to where we were and this will be our aim."

Formula One's glamour team finished last season a distant third overall, behind champions Renault and McLaren, ending their run of six successive constructors' titles and Schumacher's five drivers crowns in a row.

The arrival of a new Ferrari is usually as much a highlight of the Italian social calendar as sporting, but there was little glamour on Tuesday as the team left their Maranello factory for the wintry test track.

After ending 2005 with just one hollow win, at the six-car U.S. Grand Prix, Ferrari got straight down to business by unveiling the new 248 as part of a regular working day at the Mugello circuit.

Seven-times world champion Michael Schumacher, who has yet to decide whether to make this his final season at the age of 37, did the opening stint with new Brazilian team mate Felipe Massa also present on a bitterly cold morning.

The car was then parked on the start line for a team photograph during the lunch break, with fans watching behind a wire fence.

"How nice it is to do a launch with the new car running outside, a very pleasant background," technical



Michael Schumacher of Germany drives the new Ferrari Formula One race car 248 F1 during a test drive at the Mugello racetrack in Scarperia, central Italy, Jan. 24. REUTERS

director Ross Brawn told a news conference punctuated by the occasional wails of a V8 engine.

Looking good

Ferrari and FIAT president Luca di Montezemolo said Schumacher had already indicated things were looking good.

"He took me on one side and said 'the first feeling is promising'," he said.

Massa, the 24-year-old who has yet to stand on the Formula One podium after three seasons with

Sauber, also sounded positive after trying out the car earlier at Fiorano.

"The car was quick straight away and reliable," he told reporters. "We have, for sure, good expectations for this year but we will see when all the cars are together and we can compare properly."

The new rules, with V8s replacing V10s, have forced Ferrari to introduce their new car earlier than in recent seasons.

"We are running the car earlier than we have before. The V8 presents quite a lot of new problems,

vibration in particular, and we were keen to get a car out early," added Brawn.

"We will have an update on the aerodynamic package before the first race.

"Last year wasn't successful and we hope to have identified the reasons why ... probably overall we were reasonably happy with the (2005) car but we didn't make as much progress as other teams did on the tires, the car, the engine.

"We will try to make more progress this year."

YFF Presidency elections postponed

SANA'A, Jan.24- Elections for the Yemeni Football Federation Presidency were postponed by a month after they were approved to be held on February 26, Yemeni sport officials said.

The elections were delayed upon the request of the temporary committee of the Yemeni Football Federation (YFF) for unclear reasons.

The Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) and the Asian Football Federation (AFF) approved the postponing of the elections in a letter from Mr. Japrum

Shampan, Representative of the FIFA President, to the YFF.

The letter confirmed the FIFA's approval of the postponement, but rejected the condition that a nominee for the YFF Presidency must be a university certificate holder.

The letter stated a racer for the YFF Presidency must have a high school certificate plus former experience in football administration.

Sport officials clarified the FIFA letter emphasized the need for conducting elections at the level of governorates before staging the YFF Presidency vote.

Pele Expects Saudi Team to Do Well in World Cup



Football legend Pele, center, with NCB's Abdulkareem Abu Al-Nasr, right, and MasterCard's Deniz Lawson at the Jeddah Hilton on Tuesday night.

JEDDAH, 25 January 2006 - World football legend Pele last night expressed hope that the Saudi national team would fare better in the World Cup in Germany this year than in the previous events.

"It's my expectation that Brazil will meet Saudi Arabia in the World Cup final," Pele told a press conference on the sidelines of the launch of the National Commercial Bank's (NCB) new campaign in cooperation with MasterCard International (MCI).

The campaign offers the users of the NCB-MasterCard, especially designed for the World Cup a chance to win seats for the World Cup. The promotion is valid for two months from February. "This is a special campaign to promote the FIFA World Cup," Al-Nasr said. "We wish well for our national team and hope to celebrate their success," he added. "This is the largest promotion of its kind in the Middle East aimed to promote the World Cup, as football is the most popular sport in the world and here," said Deniz Lawson, senior vice president and general manager of MasterCard International

for Middle East & Africa.

Brazil is currently the best national team internationally. "In fact, Brazil has maintained its consistency due to the manner in which it plays the game and professionalism," Pele said. Asked about the prospects of other international team, he mentioned that Germany had performed badly in the Euro Cup and Holland could not win the World Cup despite reaching the final stages.

"I came to be known as a world player after I played for several years for Brazil. I came to be known internationally after I played for years. Those were the days when satellite TV channels were non-existent. Today, a player playing just one game is noticed worldwide thanks to the electronic media," said Pele who recently told a German newspaper that he is heartily sick of his nickname and would really rather be known by his full name, Edson Arantes do Nascimento.

The player picked up his nickname from a teammate of his father, Joao Ramos do Nascimento - or Dondinho - who played for a local club.

عبدالعالم اللشعربي
مخبرون الصحافير وطيران البلاط
فرحاً وابتهاجاً وعلى الأعداء
والاصقاء الرقيب
بمناصبه الرفاق المصينون
فأنت أتك مبروك
طاقم بعه ناهم وجميع الأعداء والاصقاء
... وكه المحييه

Hall of Famer Lemieux decides to quit at 40

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Mario Lemieux, one of the greatest players in the history of the NHL, announced his retirement on Tuesday.

The 40-year-old Pittsburgh Penguins center and team owner, who was inducted to the Hall of Fame in 1997 after retiring for the first time because of cancer and problems with his back, cited health and age concerns as the chief reasons for quitting.

"I'm here today to announce my retirement from hockey," Lemieux told a packed news conference at Mellon Arena in Pittsburgh.

"It's always a difficult decision to make for any athlete but the time has come. It's in the best interests of myself, my family and the Penguins."

Lemieux will remain as team owner.

"I can no longer play at the level I was accustomed to in the past," he added. "That has been very frustrating for me throughout this past year."

Lemieux has not played since December 16 because of problems caused by an irregular heartbeat.

"My health, along with my family, is the most important thing in the world," he said. "I also realized the new NHL is really for the young guys."

He is the seventh highest scorer in history, with 690 goals and 1,033



Pittsburgh Penguins' Mario Lemieux announces his retirement at a news conference at Mellon Arena in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, January 24, 2006.

assists.

Lemieux, who was born in Montreal, took over the ownership of the Penguins after they emerged from bankruptcy protection in 1999. He then returned to the ice on December 27, 2000.

The 6-foot-4, 230-pound center does not foresee another comeback to

hockey.

Decent level

"If I could play this game at a decent level, I would come back and play," he said.

"I've not been able to do that thus far this year. I don't see it getting any better as time goes on."

"This is really the new NHL. It's built on speed. Young guys."

"You can see how many young guys are dominating now and I think it's great to see. It hasn't happened in a lot of years."

Lemieux joined the Penguins in 1984 and made an immediate impact. Despite a career riddled with injuries, he led the Penguins to Stanley Cup titles in 1991 and 1992.

"I have a lot of great memories from the past 20 years or so," he said. "The highlight would have to be winning the Stanley Cup in the early 90s here in Pittsburgh."

"Of course, winning the (Olympic) gold medal in 2002, the World Cup in 2004 and the Canada Cup, way back in 1987."

"Those are some great memories that I'll cherish for the rest of my life."

Lemieux decided to call it a day with the Penguins on a 10-game losing streak and bottom of the Atlantic Division with an 11-29-9 record.

Twice a winner of the Art Ross Trophy as the league's leading scorer, Lemieux had seven goals and 15 assists in 26 games this season.

"All I can say for the young players is enjoy every moment of it," said Lemieux, fighting back tears.

"Your career goes by very quickly. It's a great game

Nalbandian looking to bring Baghdatis back to earth

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - David Nalbandian hopes the magic carpet that has carried Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis to the Australian Open semi-finals is about to crash land.

While the unseeded Baghdatis has captured the imagination of tennis fans around the world with his flamboyant shotmaking, the Argentine will have no room for sentiment as he looks to seal a place in the final of the year's first grand slam.

Seen as one of the few players capable of challenging world number one Roger Federer, Nalbandian has now reached the semi-finals of all four grand slam events but has yet to claim his first major title.

The fourth seed made the Wimbledon final in 2002 and says he is feeling good about his semi-final on Thursday after floating through to the last four virtually unnoticed.

"I feel that I can keep going, so I have to keep working, keep playing,

keep focus," Nalbandian said.

"The goals that I chose to do, to win some grand slams, I'm ready to do."

His only remaining obstacle is the unseeded Baghdatis, a flamboyant shotmaker who has developed a cult following at Melbourne Park.

The former junior world number one, currently ranked 54th in the world, arrived in Australia a virtual unknown outside his native Cyprus but has become the tournament's brightest star.

The 20 year old, who has been adopted by Melbourne's large Greek community as one of their own, hit the headlines by stunning world number two Andy Roddick in the fourth round.

He then reached his first grand slam quarter-final with a pulsating five-set win over seventh-seed Ivan Ljubicic of Croatia.

PRESSURE COOKER

Baghdatis has managed to keep a lid on his emotions so far but admits he's starting to feel the pressure.

"I don't want to believe it and I don't want to think about it," he said. "I just want to take the match like it's a first round and just fight my way through."

"Everybody's scared, everybody's human, but I have to deal with it."

"All my career I've had pressure. I left home when I was 14, so that helped me take responsibility."

"I'm calm. I feel that I control the game and control my life."

Nalbandian and Baghdatis have played each other twice before, each winning once. The Argentine won in four sets in the opening round of last year's French Open while Baghdatis took revenge with a straight-sets win at Basle on carpet.

"We're one-all so I don't know (who will win)," Baghdatis said.

"I just go in the match and play my own tennis and try not to give easy

points and try to be smart and take my chances. I think if I do that, I have a big chance of winning."

"After beating Roddick, I didn't know what to expect. I was a bit lost."

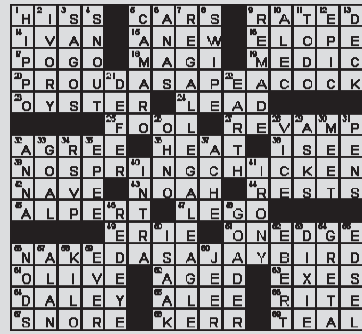
"But now I feel better and I got more experience by beating Roddick and Ivan. So I hope it will go well."

Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

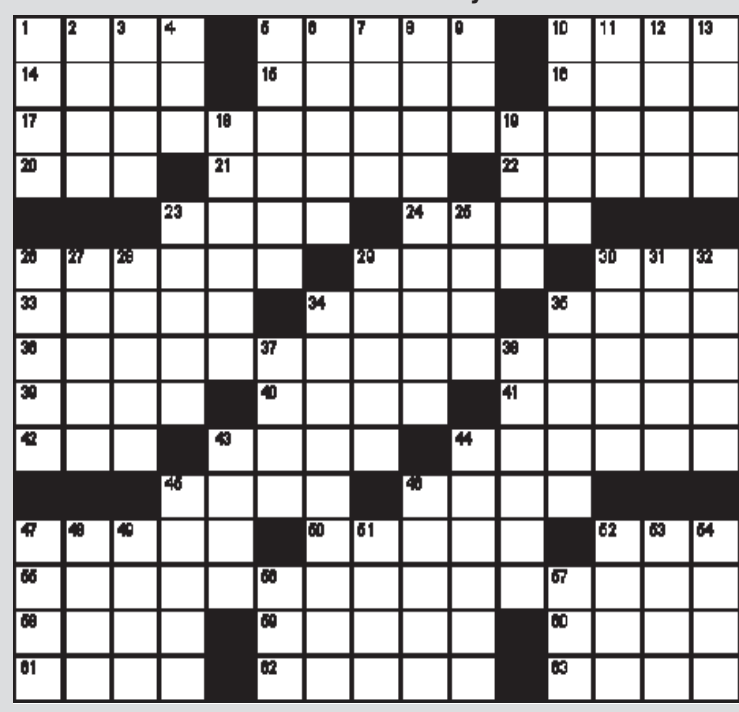
- | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ACROSS | 46 "Gorillas in the Mist" author | Henri Fossy | 37 Hydroxyl-carbon compound |
| 1 Butte relative | 47 Advances gradually | 18 Grand in scope | 38 Book slips? |
| 5 Game of chance | 50 Out in the open | 19 Tube gas | 43 It's home to Castro |
| 10 Alliance est. in 1949 | 52 Word in the Three Musketeers' motto | 23 Range rovers | 44 Use the clothesline, e.g. |
| 14 Without any warranty | 55 On the pathway of futility | 25 It may be taken with a Bible | 45 Wound-up |
| 15 Shaq's surname | 58 Day of March madness? | 26 Highest stages | 46 Star in Cygnus |
| 16 Table spread | 59 Generic dog name | 27 Move like | 47 Prepare for publication |
| 17 On the pathway of enticement | 60 From a considerable distance | 28 Type of wagon | 48 Blockhead |
| 20 Caustic substance | 61 "Don't use that with me!" | 29 Elevated | 49 "Alice" actress |
| 21 Stuffed carnival prize, perhaps | 62 "The Sheik of ..." | 30 Timely blessings | 51 Start of a cheer |
| 22 Relieves | 63 "Give that a cigar!" | 31 Opposite of deject | 52 Romeo lead-in |
| 23 What this gun's for? | DOWN | 32 Teased, in a way | 53 Mean partner |
| 24 Churlish one | 1 Heavy hammer | 34 Hot pink, e.g. | 54 Northern constellation |
| 25 Distinct feature | 2 See at a distance | 35 You'll find one on ice in Boston | 56 Lifting device? |
| 29 Word with bank or student | 3 Planned setting | | 57 Rapid escape |
| 30 ...canto | 4 Hearth bit | | |
| 33 Barton or Bow | 5 "The Big Sleep" star | | |
| 34 Boorish sort | 6 Nonsensical | | |
| 35 Trunk of a tree | 7 Uncool fellow | | |
| 36 Pathway of the politically moderate | 8 Movers, not shakers | | |
| | 9 Flamenco exclamation | | |
| | 10 Stock designation | | |
| | 11 "Poor me!" | | |
| | 12 The head of | | |

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER



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"PATHWAY TO FUN" by Isaiah Burke



Fresh look for Dubai Sports Channel

DUBAI, Jan. 15 — Dubai Media Incorporated announced the re-launch of Dubai Sports Channel in a new identity as part of a series of developments including setting up new studios and attracting leading experts from the sports media in order to meet the viewer's preferences and strengthen the position of the channel to be at par with the leading sports channels in the world.

The announcement was made during a Press Conference held at the new studios of the channel in Oud Metha in the presence Ahmad Al Sheikh, Chairman, Dubai Sports channel, and a number of officials from Dubai Media Inc.

Ahmed Al Sheikh announced the dates of the new launch of Dubai Sports Channel which has started its broadcast at 2pm on Sunday, January 1, 2006. He said, "Dubai Sports Channel appears to its viewers in the Arab world, from the Gulf to the Ocean, in a fresh new look. This is a vital step for us to stay on target with the policies we operate under."

He added, "Dubai Media Inc. was established by the Dubai Government to be one of the many bridges linking minds in a respectful and modern manner between the UAE and the Arab World. But the world of satellite channels is very competitive."

Al Sheikh said, "Those who come to Dubai will recognise from the first minute that excellence is the common theme and the best work is the one

that no one has accomplished before." He said, "So we started with one team spirit in building this channel for a good future - to make it a distinguished channel both in content and packaging. As for the presentation, we have designed a new logo for the channel that reflects a spirit of modernity and development."

"Also, there will be huge studios which have been built in a very short period of time and which will include sets for more than ten programmes with latest sound and visual technology and digital equipments that are used in leading TV channels in the world," the Chairman of the Dubai Sports Channel added.

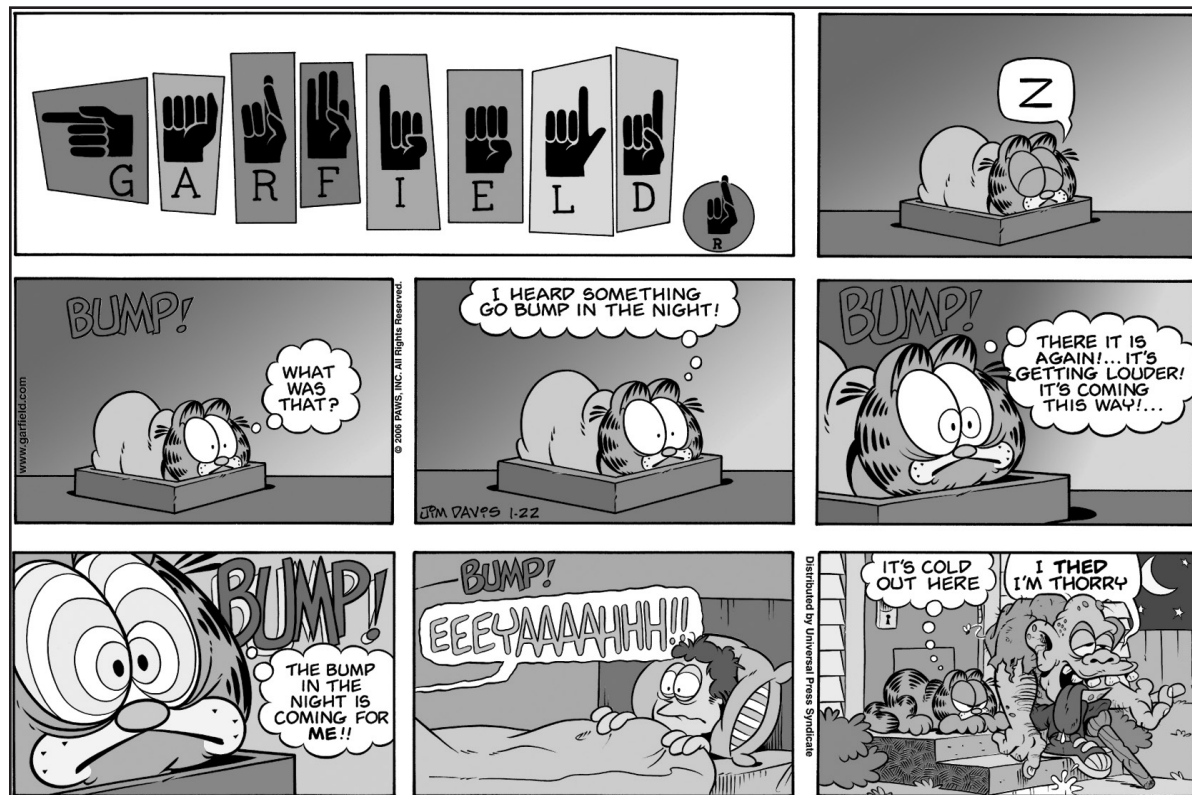
Ahmed Al Sheikh talked about the future and the new look channel, and how it will address its viewers and what is the language and ideas that it will apply. He said: "We have the great benefit from our experiences and achievements of the past in preparing our new and comprehensive programmes that will concentrate on all sports and individual competitions that were neglected by the media so far."

"We will concentrate on local and Gulf events, and provide a balanced coverage of the sports events in each Arab country, without neglecting the international sports." Al Sheikh thanked all those who participated in making the re-launch possible and said: "I want to begin the new

channel with sincerely thanking the leading officials in Dubai Government, who established and supported this media organisation; the head and members of the Dubai Executive Office and my friends the Chairman and members of Dubai Media Inc. board and all the team members from the smallest employee to the Deputy Director." Talking about the message of Dubai Sports Channel he said, "Lastly, I would like to emphasise the message that Dubai Sports Channel has carried since its launch in 1998 till this date, which concentrated on promoting Local, Gulf and Arab sports. "We have built an honest image about the achievement and development of the Arab sports."

He added: "We have also participated in building a new Emirati media generation to join the Arab generation and coordinate with them in exchanging ideas and experiences. Also the broadcasts concentrate on local productions instead of buying the programmes from various sources."

Ahmad Al Sheikh took the journalists on a tour of the new studios, control rooms and sets of the different programmes and said that the channel that was launched in 1998 will always keep its promises to put Arab viewers as its priority and offering them objective programmes that are at par with the international channels.



Runaway bride

By: Fatma Al-Ajel

Arwa lives in a small poor neighborhood with her large family. At age 15, she is the eldest of five girls and five boys. After her mother died, Arwa became responsible for her siblings. Because of the family's low financial status and the cruelty of her father, she was forced to leave school and care for her brothers and sisters. Arwa always looked for a change in her life and dreams of having her own kingdom, creating her own family with a kind, well-off husband. She always used to say, "I'll educate my children in excellent schools."

"I have the right to marry four wives," is a phrase we hear every day from Yemeni men. They marry today and divorce tomorrow, causing injustice to women and their children. Today's men do not understand what it takes to have more than one wife, nor does society as a whole comprehend the consequences of allowing men to unleash their desires and how this reflects on society. What follows about Arwa is a true story that happened in Yemeni society.

One day, a 50-year-old man came to Arwa's father and asked to marry her. The potential groom offered the family a lot of money, explaining that he was



divorced with one child and would take care of the 15-year-old bride and attend to her needs. Lured by greed, the father agreed and it was not until a week before the wedding that he informed her of the decision. Not knowing anything about her future husband nor having much of a choice, Arwa yielded to her father's decision, although she was not given a chance to even meet her husband. All she knew was that she

wanted to escape her miserable life. However, she was in for an unpleasant surprise. It also surprised the neighborhood when it learned Arwa ran away from her husband's house the first night. The husband awoke the next morning to find his new wife gone.

Why did she run away? What happened to her? These were some of the questions that spread like wildfire in the neighborhood. Arwa's friend Raja'a revealed the mystery. Apparently, the husband looked really old and previously had married 11 wives. Arwa was number 12. He had 14 children, the eldest of whom was age 23 with two children of her own. "My family convinced me to marry him because he had money and would give me whatever I wanted. I never imagined this would be the life I was promised," Arwa said, regretting her fate.

The groom had hidden this information from Arwa's family and in turn, Arwa's father, so blinded by greed, did not tell Arwa about her husband nor question the groom's allegations. Arwa described her wedding night experience, "The moment I entered my husband's house, I saw an old man standing with 14 children around him. I was

shocked, especially when I realized this old man was my husband and these were his children with whom I was supposed to live. I was in a horrible situation. I couldn't imagine how I could live with this family. I had to run away."

That night while her husband was fast asleep, she called her family and told them to come urgently and take her home. She told them of her discovery and it surprised her father as well. He came for his daughter and the old man awoke the next day to find his new bride gone. To his surprise, Arwa's family soon brought a religious judge authorized to approve marriages and

The Father



The Groom

Sayings of great people

- Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction. — **John F. Kennedy**
- Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail. — **George Bernard Shaw**
- There are no traffic jams along the extra mile. — **Roger Staubach**
- The man who does not work for the love of work but only for money is not likely to make money nor find much fun in life. — **Charles M. Schwab**
- Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly. — **Robert F. Kennedy**
- Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow. — **Ronald E. Osborn**
- Hard work spotlights the character of people: some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don't turn up at all. — **Sam Ewig**
- There are two kinds of people, those who do the work and those who take the credit. Try to be in the first group; there is less competition there. — **Indira Gandhi**
- If you believe in what you are doing, then let nothing hold you up in your work. Much of the best work of the world has been done against seeming impossibilities. The thing is to get the work done. — **Dale Carnegie**
- The highest reward for a man's toil

- is not what he gets for it but what he becomes by it. — **John Ruskin**
- It is better to wear out than to rust out. — **Richard Cumberland**
- The great difference between those who succeed and those who fail does not consist in the amount of work done by each but in the amount of intelligent work. Many of those who fail most ignominiously do enough to achieve grand success but they labor haphazardly at whatever they are assigned, building up with one hand to tear down with the other. They do not grasp circumstances and change them into opportunities. They have no faculty for turning honest defeats into telling victories. With ability enough and ample time, the major ingredients of success, they are forever throwing back and forth an empty shuttle and the real web of their life is never woven. — **Og Mandino**
- One's philosophy is not best expressed in words; it is expressed in the choices one makes. In the long run, we shape our lives and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And, the choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility. — **Eleanor Roosevelt**
- As you tell stories, people will remember those stories versus all the facts in the world. Facts tell, but stories sell. They will get involved in your business and/or purchase

- your product, because of all of the success stories that you told. People will love to be part of a winning team. Storytelling keeps people tied into you and your presentation.
- Each failure is a stepping stone to Success, which in turn will become a very long and lovely stone walkway into the castle of your DREAMS! — **John Di Lemmi**
- One who gains strength by overcoming obstacles possesses the only strength, which can overcome adversity. — **Albert Schweitzer**
- Thomas Edison is famous for the 10,000 ways that a person couldn't produce electricity as a result of his numerous attempts to reach his goal - producing electricity! As we all know, he eventually succeeded. Rather than seeing his previous attempts as a negative force, he utilized all that he had learned through the many failures to produce the positive result of finally achieving his goal!
- A relatively unsuccessful marketer of restaurant equipment, he didn't sell his first hamburger until age 52. At a time when many people prepare for retirement, Ray Kroc built McDonald's from a handful of hamburger stands into the world's largest food chain.
- Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper for lacking ideas. He also went bankrupt several times before he built Disneyland.



divorces, along with security to force the husband to sign divorce papers releasing Arwa.

Arwa's story was the talk of the neighborhood for a long time. People debated the issue and whose fault it was. Who is the criminal and who is the victim? How can such a tragic story not be repeated in the future?

The husband's neighbor, Mr. Mohammed, said, "When the girl's father came to ask me about the husband, I told him the truth, that he has married more than twice, that he marries a girl for two or three years, then divorces her without reason and marries another one. But the father didn't believe me."

How Arwa will go on with her life is yet to be seen. But more importantly, why did such a thing happen in the first place? What do you think? E-mail comments under the subject, "Runaway bride."

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