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# YEMEN TIMES

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## Emir of Qatar in Sanaa in May

His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Tahni, Emir of Qatar, has decided to visit Yemen during May 1998. According to Yemen Times sources, the Qatari ruler is responding to an invitation from President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The visit by the Qatari Emir is the first ever to Yemen by a Qatari ruler, and the first among the rulers of the Gulf states since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait during August 1990.

The Republic of Yemen and the State of Qatar enjoy very close relations. Qatar has been pushing for the inclusion of Yemen in the Gulf Cooperation Council, or at least for a closer arrangement with Yemen.

## In Spite of Visible Improvements, Yemen's 10,000 Prisoners Endure Hard Conditions:

### CC Human Rights Committee Issues Stunning Document

The Human Rights, Liberties and NGOs Committee of the Consultative Council (CC) embarked on a whirlwind field visits to inspect several of the main prisons of the Republic of Yemen. A delegation headed by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqa, head of the committee, visited the central prisons of Sanaa, Hajjah, Hodeidah, Taiz, and Aden, in addition to some of the smaller jails in the secondary cities of those governorates. The committee filed its initial findings - a document of fifteen pages - which included a lot of data and revealing information. The document also presented many options for action. At the immediate level, many prisoners who were in jail without proper legal basis were released. Some of those who

had near-completed their prison sentences have also been released. The total number of persons released was 112, including half a dozen children, eight women, and three persons who were clearly sane, but had been put in one of the mentally disturbed 'homes'. In the longer term, the document called for restructuring of responsibilities among the three bodies which are responsible for the prisons - the Ministry of Interior, the District Attorneys, and the courts. It also called for changing the persons in charge of the Hajjah and Aden prisons, as well as other changes. Other suggestions include setting up local committees that bring together the official

and community elders in order to address prison needs and conditions. At any one time, there are about 10,000 prisoners in the formal prisons of Yemen, and the total annual prisoner turnover (1997) is around 85,000. Among these some 6% are foreigners, coming especially from East Africa and Arab countries.

### Brooding Time Till Eid Al-Fitr:

## Cabinet Reshuffle in the Works

In spite of persistent and strong disclaimers, there are strong signs of a reshuffle that will send at least four ministers packing. According to sources close to the President, the reshuffle will take place immediately after Eid Al-Fitr (early February). They added saying, "You can

say that the period between now and Eid Al-Fitr is a brooding time, during which consultations are taking place." The Prime Minister is unhappy with the performance of some ministers. Some are corrupt and/or just unproductive, pure and simple. Others will leave because of insubordination.

## An Ominous Twist in the Kidnapping Business

After four days in captivity, a Korean woman and her three-year old child, along with a Korean businessman were released unharmed on Thursday, January 8th. The woman is the wife of the First Secretary at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea (South Korea), while the man is just visiting.

Although it looks like that the kidnapping of a foreign child was an accident, this is the first time that this happens in Yemen. The kidnapping was done by people from Al-Hada tribe, east of Dhamar and was motivated by their demand to implement a court death sentence on 3 men who had raped a boy belonging to the tribe.



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## OUR VIEWPOINT

### Yemen Times: Spectacular Growth

With the last issue, the Yemen Times newspaper moved to its eighth volume (year). The progress and growth of the newspaper has been nothing but spectacular. As a publisher and chief editor, I am fully gratified.

During 1997, circulation has grown by 12%. Actually the hard copy circulation of the newspaper has not kept pace with demand, partly because of rising costs of newsprint-paper and other inputs. But given continued demand pressure, the number of copies printed was increased by 20% starting last week. At the same time, the number of secondary cities in which the newspaper is now available on news-stands has grown to almost twenty. Of course, this is over and above the major cities and the capitals of governorates.

At a third level, the Yemen Times website has been accessed by some 9,000 readers since the 1st of October. We now count over 200 hits per day. This is a happy sign. We have been receiving growing volumes of e-mails regarding the on-line version of the newspaper.

The strong point in the growth of our readership is that we are tapping the cream of society - both in Yemen and abroad. Those who read the Yemen Times are individuals who have high purchasing power and those who wield visible influence in government, business, intellectual, professional, diplomatic and other circles.

At a fourth level, Yemen Times will, in the near future, increase the number of its pages by 25%. This step has become necessary to keep the volume of advertisements in acceptable balance with the news material. So, the newspaper will go to a 20-page format, rising to even higher number of pages every now and then to meet advertisement needs on special occasions.

At a fifth level, Yemen Times will hire several new reporters during 1998. We hope to tap journalist graduates from the local universities. Some of these will be employed on a full time basis serving our head office and the branches. Some of them will be stringers. The expansion will also include reporting on such important fields as arts, music and entertainment. Female reporters will get their place.

Yemen Times is considering going back to reviving some sections which have not been featured regularly over the last few months. We will resume the readers' letters page, and will expand the scope allocated for briefs from the Arabic local press. The newspaper is also toying with the idea of resuming its French page. We ask our readers to kindly let us know their feelings on this matter.

During 1997, the newspaper also bought and completely paid for its new premises. It has also purchased a new generation of high-capacity computers. It also acquired a vast array of software which enable it to do wonders.

As good as 1997 was, we expect to top it in 1998. Yemen Times has become an important part of opinion-forming & decision-making in this country.

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#### US Senator Specter Impressed by Progress in Yemen

On Thursday, January 8th, US Senator Arlen Specter left Yemen following a short visit to Sanaa. The Senator told Yemen Times that he was impressed by the level of tolerance and the progress that has been achieved towards democracy. Mr. Specter and his assistants spent three days in Yemen, the longest stay in any country he has visited. He has passed through Germany, Bosnia, Israel, Palestine, Syria, Jordan, Eritrea and Yemen. He left for Addis Ababa. The Senator's emphasis on his talks with Yemeni officials, including President Ali Abdullah Saleh, has been on human rights, especially minority rights.

#### Sheikh Al-Ahmar Recovering Well

Sheikh Abdullah Bin Hussain Al-Ahmar, Speaker of Parliament and Chairman of the Islah Party, has left hospital and is on his way back to Yemen. He is already in Washington DC on his way to Europe and then Yemen. Sources told the Yemen Times that he will be back in Yemen for Eid Al-Fitr. The Yemen Times takes this occasion to wish the sheikh a speedy recovery.

#### YSP in Aden: Rank and File Mutiny or Call for Change

According to a circular issued by members of the Aden branch of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), calls for immediate change of the branch leadership. 204 leader-members of the party signed a document calling for sacking of the branch leadership and for holding elections immediately. The document also accuses the leadership of the party of self-serving actions without care or interest in the party's welfare. "It is time for change," it said.

#### El-Nino Strikes in Yemen

According to meteorological sources, the eye of a major storm is approaching Yemen from the Arabian Sea. The authorities have been alerted by international meteorological centers of the approaching potential disaster. Some precautionary steps have already been taken. Information indicates that the Abyan-Hadhramaut coast will face most of the danger. This is the first tangible impact on Yemen of the El-Nino global weather phenomenon.

#### وزارة الصحة تصحح خبراً خاطئاً

نشرت صحيفة الجماهير في عددها هذا الأسبوع خبراً مفاده تهريب كميات من الدم من المستشفى السعودي بحجة . وقد أدى الخبر إلى دهشة وزارة الصحة وتكذيبها له ، حيث أكد عدم صحة الخبر الدكتور عبدالله عبد الولي ناشر وزير الصحة ، وكذلك الدكتور عبدالكريم يحي راصع وكيل الوزارة ، وايضا الدكتور عبدالكريم نصار مدير عام مكتب الشؤون الصحية بحجة . وقال الوكيل ان خبرا كهذا قد

#### Illegal Immigrants Pour into Yemen

Yemen Times learned that some 1,000 illegal economic migrants come every month into Yemen from Somalia, Eritrea, and Ethiopia. The majority of these people are males, although, there are few females.

Civil wars and political strife in these countries are to blame for the deteriorating economic standards which drive these people away from their countries.

They cross the narrow sea divide into Yemen with the aid of criminal elements in return for money.

Most of them tell Yemen Times that Yemen is not their final destination. They have their eyes set on Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries, using Yemen as a stepping stone. Whoever among them falls in the hands of the Yemeni authorities, he or she ends up in jail awaiting repatriation. At this moment, there are some 300 Eritrean, Somali, and Ethiopian illegal immigrants in the Hodeidah and Taiz prisons awaiting repatriation to their countries. Given the financial burdens, embassy officials of the countries have not been involved.

#### Zubaidi Clan Appeal to President Saleh

The elders of the Zubaidi clan have contacted the Chairman of the Human Rights and Liberties Committee of the Consultative Council and asked him to present their appeal to President Ali Abdullah Saleh. The group who are in prison for over four months. They are charged with complicity in the Aden bombings of July 1997.

The group deny the charges and say that there is yet one little evidence to be presented against them. "We hope the president will see that justice is being done by ordering our release, if at least for the sake of this blessed month of Ramadhan."

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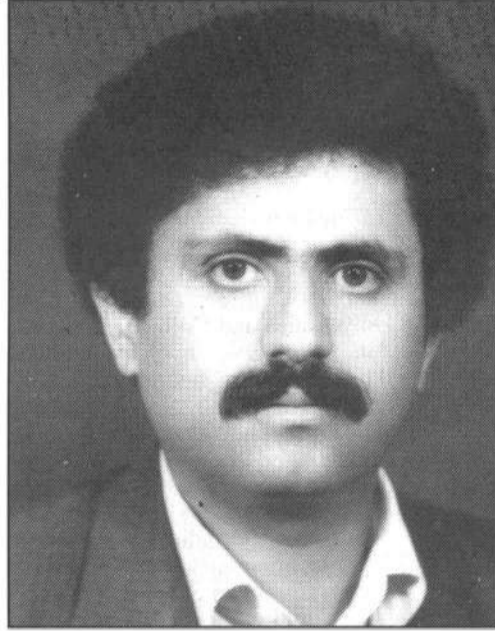
  
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Mohammed Al-Ghashm:

## “Absence of legislation allowed dangerous plant diseases and lethal pesticides to enter the country unchecked.”

Yemeni farmers have been faced with increasingly new and problematic situations. One reason for this is the introduction of new diseases, often imported through either individuals or businessmen. One of the key persons to help Yemeni farmers address this challenge is Dr. Mohammed Yahya Al-Ghashm, Head of the General Directorate of Plant Protection at the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation. With an M.Sc. in the prevalent plant diseases and a Ph.D. in biological sciences, Al-Ghashm, 50, wrote extensively on plant diseases and how to combat them, the use of pesticides, and other important issues of agricultural concern. He is also a member of the General Authority of Agricultural Research and Guidance. Despite lack of publicity, the importance of Dr. Al-Ghashm's work cannot be overemphasized. With its ever growing population, Yemen will increasingly need to produce more food for its people. Producing good-quality, diseases and pesticide-free vegetables, fruits, and cereals is the responsibility of people like Dr. Al-Ghashm. Dr. Al-Ghashm talked to Dr. Salah Haddash, who filed the following interview. Excerpts:



**Q: What are the tasks of the General Directorate of Plant Protection?**

**A:** The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation is entrusted with the major task of protecting crops from diseases. For this purpose, the General Directorate of Plant Protection (GDPP) was established. The GDPP is assigned the task of drawing the necessary plans and suggesting the relevant legislations needed to organize the process of plant protection against diseases. It also has to follow-up and monitor the implementations of such rules and regulations. The ultimate goal is, of course, to increase crop yield, improve its quality, and protect the environment from pesticide-caused pollution.

**Q: What are the activities of the GDPP?**

**A:** On the national level, there are 340 people involved in various activities related to plant protection. Of those people, 118 work in the GDPP's various departments and laboratories. We have three Ph.D., six M.Sc., and 31 B.Sc. holders, 33 technicians, and the rest work in the workshop, the farm, and the administration. The GDPP consists of five departments: pesticides, plant quarantine, integrated disease combating, plant protection services, and the Center to

Monitor and Combat Locusts. The GDPP often conducts national campaigns.

**Q: what are the GDPP achievements and future plans?**

**A:** Through financial support provided by the GTZ of Germany, and the Japanese, the Dutch and the Yemeni governments, the GDPP has been able to establish the following:

- two laboratories to diagnose plant pests and diseases;
- a laboratory to breed bio-predators;
- a laboratory to analyze and control the quality of pesticides;
- a laboratory to detect plant viruses;
- a workshop to produce audio-visuals;
- a library;
- a maintenance workshop; and
- a training center for agricultural guides.

Other GDPP achievements include the following:

- \* a list of 623 pesticides, diseases, and harmful weeds;
- \* a list of 90 natural bio-predators;
- \* a list of 43 licensed pesticides;
- \* a list of 120 prohibited bio-predators;
- \* 23 studies and researches on plant protection;
- \* producing 10,152 explanatory posters, leaflets, and slides;
- \* short and long-term training courses for 40 staff members;

- \* training and instructing up to 1,770 agricultural guides, farmers, and pesticide retailers;
- \* a number of successful national campaigns to combat cotton diseases, desert locusts, black aphids, mildew, and other diseases;
- \* preparing the plant quarantine and use-of-pesticides projects;
- \* integrated disease combating and environmental protection through breeding the natural predator of the black aphid, the *pauesia antennata*;
- \* disposing of 262 tons of expired pesticides, which have accumulated over the last five decades, by transporting them to be incinerated in the UK with the aid of the Dutch government;
- \* signing the international convention on plant protection;
- \* signing the international agreement on pesticides; and
- \* signing the agreement on the transport and handling of dangerous material.

The GDPP future plans include the following:

- implementing the project of integrated plant disease combating, with aid from the Dutch government;
- establishing a laboratory to

determine the effects of the residual pesticides left in various agricultural crops;

- establishing plant quarantine centers at the country's air and seaports and land gateways;
- issuing and implementing laws to regulate plant quarantine and the handling of pesticides; and
- establishing special systems to monitor and predict the onset of plant diseases.

**Q: What are the major sources of GDPP funding?**

**A:** The Ministry of Agriculture receives a lot of aid from the GTZ, which has been with us for more than two decades. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), through its Technical Cooperation Program (TCP), has supported many small, short-term projects in the field of plant quarantines and locusts fighting.

The Islamic Bank had also provided some means to combat locusts during one stage of the process.

**Q: What sort of problems do you face?**

**A:** The climatic diversity in Yemen has made it possible for different kinds of plant diseases and pests to thrive all year round. This, of course, makes our job more demanding.

The absence of relevant legislation to regulate plant and pesticide imports has allowed several dangerous plant diseases and expired or lethal pesticides to enter the country unchecked. Due to limited funds for plant protection schemes, the use of modern plant protection methods is somewhat beyond reach. Also, the agricultural administrative structures in their present state

**Q: To what extent do Yemeni farmers cooperate with your programs?**

**A:** Farmers play a big role in the success of any plant protection scheme. There is no doubt about that. They all fully recognize the danger and the big potential losses if the plant diseases are not combated. They also know the only way out is through the proper administering of pesticides within well-coordinated, scientifically based plant protection programs.

**Q: How do you draw your plans for large-scale plant protection programs?**

**A:** Plant protection programs are drawn according to priorities. The extent of the potential danger of a particular plant disease is taken as a fundamental criterion in implementing our programs.



The Japanese government has provided a lot of equipment, tools, protective clothing, etc. to help with the process of combating plant diseases. The Dutch government also helped combat black aphids in Yemen, so did the ODA of Britain and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development in combating desert

make it difficult to follow a comprehensive, long-term strategy for plant protection. To add insult to injury, the absence of a proper system of health care and insurance makes people work even in hazardous jobs such as dealing with pesticides. This is our fate for the foreseeable future.

We aim to constantly develop plant protection measures and methods in accordance with world progress in this field. Other factors include addressing the requirements of national development, environmental considerations, and living up to the relevant regional/international agreements and conventions.

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- Commitment to return to Yemen after completion of his/her studies in Canada
- Submission of all the "Required documents" that are listed in this announcement.

### Selection:

Selection will be based on fulfilment of all the above requirements, personal interview and performance during the English language training in Yemen. The attainment of a level of 550 (five hundred and fifty) in the TOEFL examination may ultimately be required for certain academic programs.

### Required documents:

- An application form in English
- A medical certificate form (to be completed by a licensed doctor)
- Certified copy of the secondary school certificate
- Certified copy of ID Card or Family Card or Passport
- Six certified passport sized photos.

- 4- The Steering Committee, on behalf of Canadian Oxy and its partners, is committed to give all Yemeni applicants equal, fair and competitive opportunities.

- 5- Application and other forms can be obtained from the following address:

**AMIDEAST. Inc.,**  
Baghdad St, American institute/YALI  
Sana'a - Rep. of Yemen  
Tel: 01-416975  
Contact Person: Ms. Reya Al-Muaed

**AMIDEAST. Inc.,**  
Khoarmaksar, Near Dept of Edu  
Aden, Rep. of Yemen  
Tel: 02-241326  
Contact Person: Mr. Shakeeb  
Abdul Hameed

**Mohammed Ali Othman School**  
Near Roads Constr. Authority  
Taiz, Rep. of Yemen  
Tel: 04-211247/8/9  
Contact Person: Ms. Sultanah A. Sultan

**Hadramaut University:**  
Mukalla, Rep. of Yemen  
Tel: 05-303535 or 05-303520  
Contact Person: Dr. Salem Awadh  
Ramodh

**University of Science & Tech.**  
Hodeidah, Rep. of Yemen  
Tel: 03-234346  
Fax: 03-234348  
Contact Person: Mr. Lutfallah Saad Al-Furasi

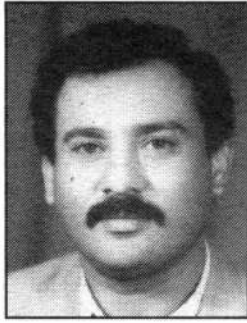
**Steering Committee,**  
P. O. Box No. 2579,  
Sanaa, Yemen  
Telephone: 276-772  
Contact Person: Jamal Al-Awadhi

- 6- Application forms and all required documents must be filled and returned in a file and sealed envelop to any of the addresses above.

- 7- The closing date for accepting application is 10/2/1998.  
**No application will be received after the closing date.**

## Smuggling First... Administrative & Financial Reform Later

By: Sameer Rajeh,  
National Tobacco &  
Matches Company



Smuggling, smuggling and more smuggling, and then administrative and financial reform arise in order to help the economic and social position of the country recover.

### Means of Smuggling:

1. Smuggling includes weapons, drugs and commodities which are not of proper quality through Yemeni boundaries and passage-ways. This occurs with the help of our enemies who aim to shake the safety and stability of the country.

2. Smuggling also includes removing our national wealth by every means possible. Smuggling cultural wealth (antiques and manuscripts), animal wealth (small and female animals), fish wealth (unplanned fishing which leads to the draining of fish out of the Yemeni waters) are all examples.

In order to smuggle our agricultural wealth, they help fruits to ripen early by using some chemical compounds like ethylene. This causes the drying out of plants and so destroys the fertility of our land. In addition, there is a widespread

cat planting over most of our lands. Fruits, vegetables and grains planted in Yemen are being smuggled outside the country. Moreover, smuggling takes precedence over our imports like food and medicines. All this is unfortunately supervised by some traitor officials in the government.

3. Another phase of smuggling is in paving the way for Yemeni talents and qualified people to emigrate and look for a better living in order to ensure their future. This comes after oppressing all the educated people of the country by ill-treating them (treating people who belong to some areas better than others).

The uselessness of the law and worrying about the future helped

to create social and economic problems. Some people helped to create these problems. Many emigrate to find opportunities for work, and others seek refuge abroad in order to establish an opposition against the government.

Lately, the country has witnessed some bomb explosions. These explosions were carried out by some Yemeni people who, being frustrated by their bad economic circumstances, were easy tools in the hands of our enemies.

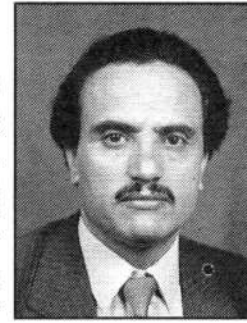
Thus, smuggling becomes an important issue. The whole Yemeni society with its organizations, authorities, unions etc., should raise awareness among people about the prevalent means of smuggling and its aims to destroy the country, socially and economically.

We should all mobilize ourselves and plan to bring smuggling to an end. Let's start by monitoring individuals and authorities inside the country. Let's bring out their virtues and faults in order to correct them.

By ending smuggling, we will move confidently towards our country's development and prosperity. Several countries, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Iran and Cuba, were capable to put an end to smuggling despite the American embargo imposed upon them. If the same goes on here in Yemen, we can be assured that the administrative and financial reform process will continue just the way the government planned it. Otherwise, it will be a useless process which helps deepen the gap between the government and the public.

## Ramadhan and Zakat Al-Fitr

Ismail Al-Ghabiri,  
Yemen Times



As the Islamic world is fasting through the last days of Ramadhan, one important obligation still remains to be performed, which is Zakat Al-Fitr.

The Arabic word Zakat Al-Fitr, is the break-fast charity, that should be given by or on behalf of every member of the Muslim family. It is prescribed by prophet Mohammed (P) to be paid by every fasting person and every member of household who owns one day's food for himself and his family on the eve of Eid Al-Fitr.

God Al-Mightily said on Zakat in the Holy Qura'an "of their goods take alms that the mightiest purify and sanctify them; and pray on their behalf. Verily their prayers are a source of security for them; and God is who heareth and knoweth."

Zakat Al-Fitr is equal to 5 kg of wheat, dates, or rice or the monetary equivalent. It should be paid before performing Eid prayers, otherwise, it will be considered as a regular charity instead.

Zakat Al-Fitr serves as a spiritual purification of fasting Muslim and as a material assistance for the poor and destitute. According to the prophet Mohammed (P), blessings be upon him, Zakat Al-Fitr wipes out wrong doings that may have spoiled the purity of fasting. It is better given on the last day of Ramadhan or any time

before the Eid prayer. The purpose of this timing is that people who receive Zakat Al-Fitr experience the happiness of the Eid, just like rich people do.

Zakat Al-Fitr is an obligation for Muslims in the same way other regular Zakat on funds is. God Al-

Mighty says in the Qura'an, "It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces towards East or West; but it is righteousness to believe in God and the last day, in the Angels, in the Book and the Messengers; to spend of your material wealth, out love for him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which ye have made; and to be firm and patient in pain or suffering and adversity and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing."

During the reign of the Imam in northern Yemen, Zakat was levied in a harsh manner. This was one of the causes of popular uprisings against that defunct regime.

The republican regime later on made the estimation of Zakat a voluntary concern for each individual. Yemeni businessmen are now trying to abolish the obligatory levying of Zakat, and leave it to the discretion of each individual to give directly to the needy.



## تهانينا الحارة

نتقدم بأسعد التهاني وأجمل التبريكات للحاج

علي محمد سعيد

عميد الاسرة، ورئيس مجلس ادارة مجموعة شركات هائل سعيد أنعم  
وإلى كافة أفراد الأسرة  
بمناسبة نجاح العملية التي أجراها رجل البر والاحسان الكبير

الحاج أحمد هائل سعيد

نائب رئيس مجلس الادارة والمدير العام

ندعوا له بالشفاء العاجل ونتمنى له عودة سريعا إلى أرض الوطن بين الأهل والأحبة.  
والحمد لله على السلامة

عن المهنيين  
د/ عبدالعزيز السقاف

This is an *OPINION* page.

Every week, a different intellectual writes a *FOCUS* on a pertinent issue!

## THE YEMENI INTELLECTUAL: What Role in Public Life?



By: Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf\*

large cities of the republic, such as Aden, Taiz, Ibb, Hodeidah, Mukallah, Dhamar, etc.

### 2. Two Inadequate Roles:

Given the experience, so far, one can surmise that Yemeni intellectuals have charted for themselves two general roles. The first role is to be part and parcel of the ruling regime, whatever it stands for. The second role is to simply remain passive and limited within the scope of their 'tasks' and stay out of public life.

The first role is best personified by the intellectuals who hold high offices in government and parastatals. They have a subservient role to play in that they are not real decision-makers, even if they hold such high posts as ministers, and even prime minister. The general public is aware of this subservient role, hence the many jokes about intellectuals who are servants and dupes of less educated decision-makers.

The second role is even more devastating. People who are able to contribute to society are unwilling/unable to do so, primarily because they are not risk-takers. The majority of Yemen's intellectuals would rather stay at home and do/say nothing rather than get involved and then bring upon themselves some heat.

### 3. The Assessment:

The role of the group that decided to join the regime is, in my opinion, better than the second role, though it is not the one I could live with myself. I would rather chart a third course which involves a contribution to the system, without being a mouth-piece to justify its shortcomings or to opportunistically take advantage for self-enrichment because of 'services rendered to the regime.'

The first group contends that by being part of the system, they have played a modernizing and tempering role. This could be partly true, but it does not rise to the level of the responsibility they should shoulder. Most members of this group have become so overwhelmed with taking advantage of their 'positions' for self-enrichment that they have compromised themselves to the extent of not being able to wield any real influence or stand up to the values they portend to represent. They have fallen in the public eye.

The second group is invisible. It is as if they do not exist. For example, did you know that Yemen has today some 1,500 university professors who hold PhDs in various fields. Where are these individuals?

There is a similar number of physicians, engineers, lawyers, economists, etc. Where are these people? Why are they marginal, although among the highest educated in the land?

### 4. A Third Course?

I mentioned earlier that a third course is possible. This means that intellectuals will be involved in leadership roles in the public affairs of Yemen. They will project the values they represent, with dignity. For this to happen, there are three requirements:

#### a- Personal Success:

Personal success is a key criteria for making a meaningful contribution. In other words, a successful engineer, physician, accountant, etc. is like a beam of light which generates optimism and confidence. Success also means financial self-sufficiency. In other words, a professional who is not able to meet his/her financial needs cannot be a leader.

#### b- Strength of Character:

High education and interaction with other cultures and peoples is supposed to lead to character development. Strength of character is probably the most lacking element. A person who does not possess some qualities like patriotism, dignity, decency, fairness, ability to work with others within open and accountable parameters, etc. cannot play a leadership role irrespective of their level of edu-

cation or culture.

#### c- Vision:

In order to be able to lead, the intellectual would need to have a vision of what he/she wants of society and aspires for. I would suppose the appropriate values at this juncture are of a society that sees for itself a fruitful and interactive role with the rest of the world based on human rights, political pluralism and fair play, press freedom, liberal economics,

and good governance.

In the final analysis, the role of the intellectual is up to us. But, being subordinates or shunning public life are not ideal roles.

\* Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf is a ranking professor at Sanaa University, Chief Editor of the Yemen Times and Member of the Consultative Council. He is involved in many voluntary and grass-roots activities.



Yemen Times

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وإلى الحكومة اليمنية الرشيدة برئاسة الدكتور فرج بن غانم، وإلى

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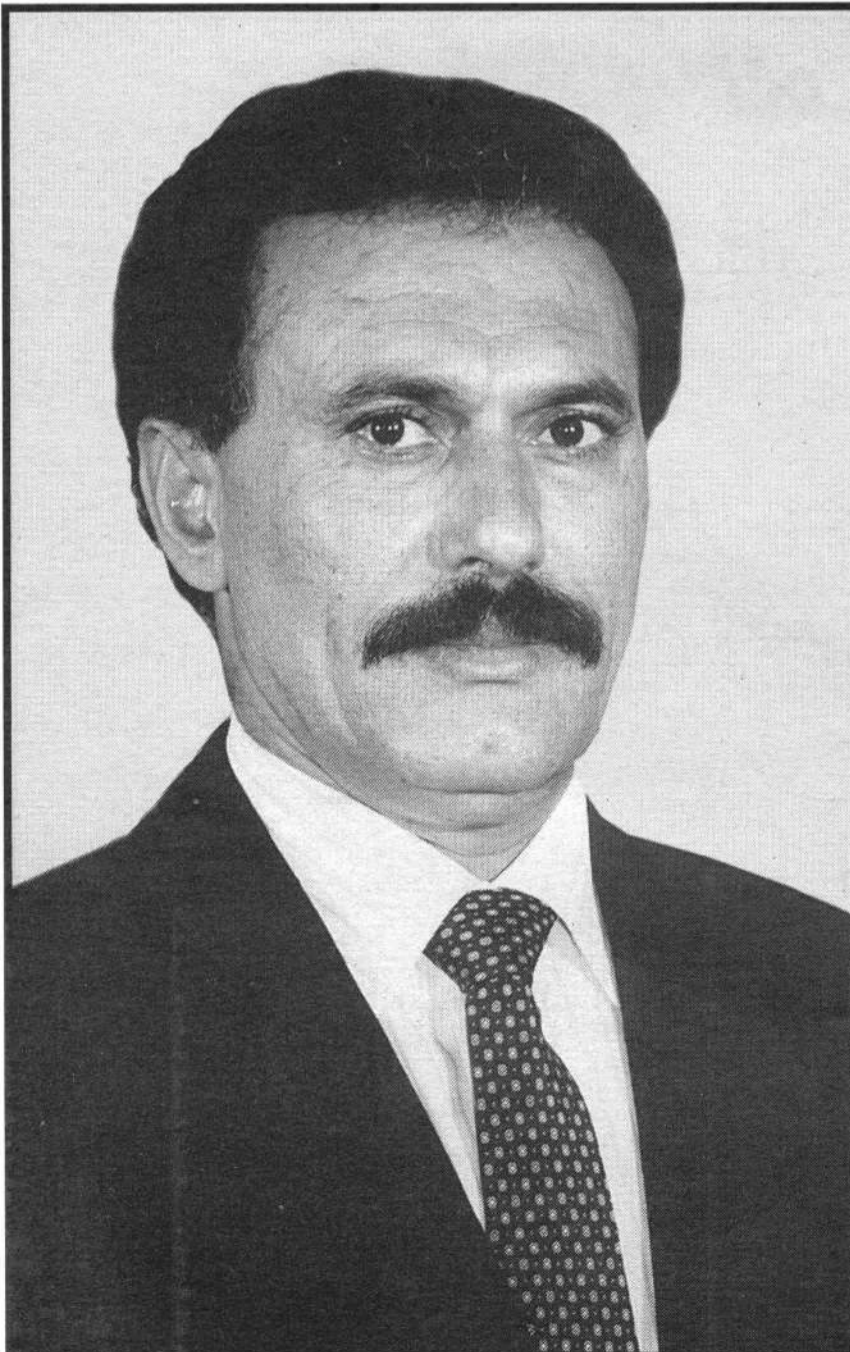
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وكل عام وأنتم بخير

## Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training

Present its sincere wishes and congratulations  
to

**Marshal Ali Abdullah Saleh,**  
Dr. Faraj Bin Ghanim and his Government,  
and the Yemeni People on the occasion of the  
Holy Month of Ramadan.  
Many Happy Returns to All



# Water Crisis in Yemen Towards a Comprehensive Strategy



## The Problem

Water scarcity in Yemen is the most pressing problem facing our people today. Its dark clouds have been gathering for the last two or three decades. Yemen's total annually renewed water resources are estimated at 2.1 billion cubic meter (BCM). With a population of around 14 million, avail-

able resources amount to little more than 150 m<sup>3</sup> per person each year. This compares with the Middle East and North Africa average of 1,250 m<sup>3</sup> and worldwide average of 7,550 m<sup>3</sup>. According to worldwide norms, domestic use alone requires up to 100 m<sup>3</sup> per person per year and food self-sufficiency requires 1,000 m<sup>3</sup>.

In 1994, water use was estimated at about 2.8 BCM. The country thus overdraw its resources of 2.1 BCM by 0.7 BCM. In general, all surface water resources in Yemen are harnessed and exploited, and in most areas groundwater is already being exploited beyond the level of recharge. It is estimated that there are more than 45,000 private wells in the country. The government's sporadic attempts to license and control wells and drilling rigs have not been successful.

In the densely populated highland valleys and plains, the situation is very bad. In the Sana'a basin, where about 10% of the population live, water usage in 1994 was 224 million cubic meters (MCM), recharge was 42 MCM i.e., an overdraft of 400%. If the current trend of water exploitation persists, underground water reserves in Sana'a will be completely depleted with the next ten years.

The only exception is Hadhramaut. Recent assessments have revealed water reserves that could be as much as 280 MCM of annual recharge, together with vast storage, equivalent to several thousand years of supply at the current rates of use in that

area.

Water scarcity is threatening the very existence of rural economy. Agriculture supports 70% of the population and produces 18% of the GDP. Ground water is being mined at such a rate that large parts of the rural economy could disappear within a generation. For example, unregulated usage and sale of underground water has completely depleted the Wadi Bani Khawlan water reserves near Taiz. This has caused a drought, and put an end to agriculture in that area. During the summer of 1995, people in Taiz experienced the worst water shortages for years. Water was piped to consumers once every forty days. Water reserves in Wadi Heima which supplies Taiz are certainly going down.

## The Causes

The rapid population growth has put increasing demands on the already stretched water resources. The overpumping of water is leading to a rapid depletion of Yemen's aquifers. In no country in the world is the rate of exhaustion of aquifers getting out of hand as in Yemen.

From among other countries suffering from water scarcity, Yemen stands out because of the lack of a control structure that would allow anything approaching a real solution to be simply imposed from the top.

The use of modern drilling and water pumping methods has not helped matters either. Cheap diesel - a quarter of international prices, subsidized electricity supply, and international and local funding for farmers to buy water pumps has helped drastically increase overpumping water consumption.

Deforestation, the abandoning of terraces and of traditional water harvesting systems and the consequent degradation have provoked widespread soil erosion. Which increases the risk of floods and the reduced recharge of aquifers.

The government's urban water body - the National Water and Sanitation Authority (NWSA) has not done well. Its internal efficiency indicators are unfavorable. The General Authority for Rural Electricity and Water (GAREW) has not been effective in reaching rural communities. There is a heavy concentration of its activities in a few areas - 80% in

the governorate of Sana'a alone. Schemes were started but ran out of money and the sustainability of completed schemes is poor. Other public institutions have fared no better.

## The Disadvantaged

Nationwide, about 60% of urban households are estimated to be connected to the main supply, which is often inadequate. In Sana'a, NWSA supplies only 365 households with water. The urban poor are faced with higher costs. Although NWSA-supplied water is cheap, poor people usually have to buy their water from private vendors at very high prices. In Sana'a, for example, those buying from the private sector exclusively consume only 28 liters per day, as opposed to 80 liters per day for those connected to the NWSA system. (WHO recommended minimum is 180 liters per day.) The negative impact of inadequate water supplies on the poor is even more marked in rural areas.

## Health Risks

Many people in rural and urban areas, especially those with limited means do not get clean water. About two-thirds of the water consumed in towns and cities around the country come from unsafe sources such as the sewage-contaminated wells. Failing to provide a decent sewage disposal system has resulted in various health and environmental hazards. The increase in infant mortality due to diarrhea and dehydration is largely attributed to sewage-contaminated water.

Public water projects have so far concentrated on urban centers and their surrounding rural areas, seldom in remote villages. Population growth puts an added burden on the already dwindling water resources. Demand on water for both human consumption and irrigation is rapidly increasing. Spiraling qat farming is the major cause of the rapid water depletion in Yemen, further exacerbating the crisis.

## Economic Costs

The economic consequences of the water crisis are likely to be very severe. Supply costs will rise sharply as water must be found further and deeper. In Sana'a, the options now explored for the next source of supply all cost over \$1 per m<sup>3</sup>. The current cost of water is YR7 per m<sup>3</sup> through the public supply system or YR50-200 per m<sup>3</sup> from private vendors.

Drilling for new groundwater sources for Sana'a has taken place to a depth of over 2 km. The ultimate option for the capital is desalination and transport from the coast, which is estimated to cost up to \$6.60 per m<sup>3</sup>.

Already, shortages of water are constraining urban and industrial development. In Sana'a, the NWSA is unable to keep pace with new housing establishment and industrial development, which are obliged to buy water from private sources at high prices.

## Objectives

Yemen has not yet adopted a national water policy. Development objectives, when formulated by the government, are not necessarily coherent or stable. Reforms must take place that will return water towards sustainability, as full sustainability is not achievable.

The challenge is to put the decisions in a rational framework and be capable of dealing with the ultimate consequences of depletion. This will require action to slow down the rate of depletion. The main efforts must be channeled in the most severely affected areas and in areas key to aquifer recharge.

With the growing water shortage, competition has arisen between town and country over water resources. In some cases this has been resolved through the market, but at risk to the resource itself. In other cases, the government had simply appropriated water in a way seen as unfair by rural people. A workable legal and planning framework is needed to allow a sustainable flow of water to cities in a way acceptable to both rural and urban dwellers.

The low water coverage of the population has certain impacts on health and poverty, as mentioned earlier. The government has plans to increase coverage, and the challenge is to ensure that this is done in an affordable and sustainable way. In urban areas, the existence of a lively private sector is an asset to be developed. In rural areas, community involvement is already strong, and this can provide a pointer to a future strategy.

## Macrosolutions

### Efficiency Prices

The government is able to send powerful signals through the pricing system. The challenge is to remove all the distortions and incentives that have

led to overpumping of groundwater. In effect, it is to change relative prices to discourage groundwater use. The agenda might include introducing higher prices for diesel, levying higher tariffs and taxes on pumping equipment, eliminating credit subsidies for pumps, and removing current incentives (such as import controls) to the production of water intensive products, notably qat.

## National Debate

Change in the water sector, particularly in the cost of water or in the amount of water used, would be an intensely difficult and unpopular agenda among many people. Only if there is a nationwide recognition of the nature of the crisis and a significant national commitment to tackling it can there be hope that the needed tough solutions can be adopted and implemented.

## Act on Qat

Qat is the most important crop in Yemen and the country's greatest consumer of water. It cannot be ignored. The government should include qat in its statistics and make it an object of research in order to exploit all water-saving potentials and support a long-term education and public awareness campaign on qat.

## Reorient Public Expenditures

First, adequate resources must be allocated to sector management, to water conservation in agriculture and to participatory approaches to water management.

Second, major investments in improving access to safe water in town and countryside are needed. These resources should also support improved management, e.g. decentralized or privatized management in the NWSA.

Third, the current inequities implicit in public spending should be eliminated. These include credit schemes for well owners, upstream development of dams that take from downstream, and the skew in public water authorities towards certain areas to the detriment of others.

## Delivering the Solutions

- \* A comprehensive strategy is vital.
- \* The challenge is to bring about a major adjustment in the behavior and the economy of the nation.
- \* Consensus building at two levels is needed. One level is a national debate with key stakeholders and decision makers in order to bring about change. The second level of consensus building is amongst the population at large.
- \* The process has to lead to decisions and actions early on.
- \* NGOs and community groups should be encouraged to play a role.
- \* Donor coordination and partnership should be developed.
- \* A top/bottom partnership should be promoted between central or regional agencies and communities in the sustainable management of the resources.
- \* Strategic investments should play a key role both in relieving supply problems and in advancing the policy agenda.
- \* Institutions should be developed with emphasis on resource monitoring and planning, public awareness and participation.

## Conclusion

Of the innovations proposed to address the crisis, four stand out. First, national debate and consensus is like mobilizing a nation for war, which in a sense it is. Second, prioritization which requires a definite rigor in identifying the real problems and the realistic solutions. Third, the reliance on the indigenous private sector and local water markets has to be made in a way so as to improve quality, price, and conserve the resource. Fourth, building on the nation's traditions and common sense to stop the exhaustive mining of water is the most attractive of all solutions.

By: Aneesa Ghanem  
(abridged from World Bank report)

نهى الأخ  
فهد محمد عبدالرحمن السقاف  
بمناسبة ارتزاقه مولودا بكرا أسماه

بكر  
هبة الله وقررة عين والديه.

المهنيون:  
أحمد مرشد الخولاني,  
وجميع موظفي يمن تايمز.

## Ministry of Electricity and Water Hodeidah Emergency Water Supply Project Supply of Pipes, Fittings and Pumps

# Tender Announcement

The Government of the Republic of Yemen has received a credit from the Netherlands Government towards the cost of the Hodeidah Emergency Water Supply project. Funding will be provided through the Netherlands Development Cooperation Programme and the funds will be administered by NIO-Bank (Netherlands Investment Bank for Development Countries) which, on instructions of MEW in the R. O. Y., will act as a paying bank by establishing a Letter of Credit.

It is intended that the proceeds of this grant will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for:

- a) Tender 1a: Supply of UPVC and Ductile iron Pipes complete with couplings, jointing materials and accessories, CIF Yemeni Port (Hodeidah).  
The Supply consists of 12,300 m/ND 500 mm, 600 m/ND 300 mm, 600 m/ND 250 mm UPVC and 50 m/ND 500 mm Ductile iron pipes, complete with couplings, jointing materials and accessories.
- b) Tender 1b: Supply of Pipe and Well Fittings and Appurtenances complete with jointing materials and accessories and two well pumps, CIF Yemeni Port (Hodeidah).

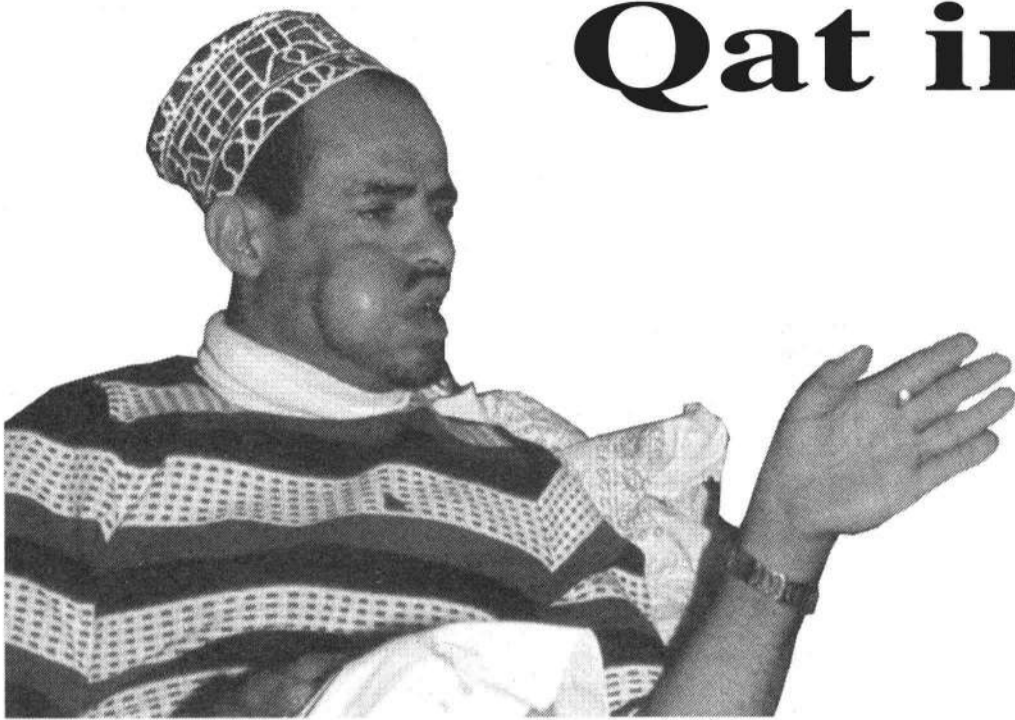
Bids must be delivered to the Ministry of Electricity and Water at the address below on 15 February 1998.

Potential bidders from eligible countries included in the DAC List of Aid Recipients (OECD/DAC, as at January 1997) and the Netherlands may purchase the Bidding Documents in English, upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of US\$100 from the following address:

Ministry of Electricity and Water  
Public Electricity Corporation (PEC) Building, (Seventh Floor),  
Hada Complex,  
Hada Road, P. O. Box: 11422,  
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen.

Fax: 264 119  
Tel: 260 132

# Qat in America



By: Shaker Al-Ashwal  
Vice President of the Yemeni American League\*

The Washington Post reported that a Yemeni was arrested after receiving a package containing 90 pounds of qat. The person was charged with possession with the intent to distribute qat, which is a felony in the U.S. Qat has made it to the U.S. after having been confined in its region of origin for centuries. Qat, known in the scientific literature as (*Catha edulis*), is a plant that originated in Ethiopia and spread to neighboring African countries and south Arabia. It is now believed that qat made it to Yemen before coffee.

The seedless plant which best grows at 3000 to 6000 feet above sea level and reaches a height of 20 feet (5-8ft in Yemen), has become an important part of the social life in the region. The fact that the plant is seedless may explain its limitation to Yemen and nearby African countries. (Luqman, 1976).

Qat is considered a thirsty plant, but during droughts it grows when other crops fail. The leaves of this plant can be harvested throughout the year. These characteristics plus its stimulant- euphoric effect combine to make qat a very popular plant. The international community was introduced to qat in 1935 by two technical reports which were discussed by the league of Nations' Advisory Committee on the Traffic of Drugs. A UN commission later conducted its own investigation in 1971 and analyzed the chemical composition of qat.

#### Qat's Composition

Fluckiger and Geroc were the first to analyze qat in 1987. Subsequent research identified five fractions, namely cathine, cathinine [cathonine] cathidine, edulin, and ephedrine (Luqman, 1976). Qat also contains other ingredients, but the most active

ingredients are cathine and cathonine. The U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency has classified Cathine as schedule IV, while Cathonine was classified as schedule I (the most restrictive category used by the DEA). Cathonine however is only present in freshly picked leaves; after 48 hours cathonine changes to cathine.

#### Qat's effect

The principal features of the qat experience are increases a) in the level of alertness, b) in the ability to concentrate, c) in confidence, friendliness, contentment and flow of ideas (Kennedy, 1987). Consult the bibliography for a more detailed clarification on the effect of qat on the human body and its organs' functions. But for immigrant communities and for the Yemenis in particular qat is a reminder of home.

#### A Social Phenomenon

Qat which is chewed like tobacco is used in company, but may be used by individuals. The habit has a deep rooted social and cultural tradition in Yemen. Yemenis have used qat as a means to enhance their work habits, but more importantly it has become the magnet around which the members of the community gather to discuss their issues, and sometimes conflicts. In Yemen, many would go out of their way to advocate the use of qat citing the benefits which are centered around its social effect. More than 85% of the adults in Yemen use it, and an increasing number of young Yemenis use it too. Chewing qat in Yemen is part of the daily routine, and in the United States, some affluent Yemenis buy enough to chew daily. In the U.S. it is used for similar reasons and for other reasons, that will be discussed below.

#### An Expensive Habit

In both the United States and Yemen qat is an expensive habit. In Aden in 1955, it was estimated that Yemenis spent about 40 million shillings (five million dollars) on qat. The qat was flown to Aden from Ethiopia daily by air. (Luqman, 1976). Today hundreds of millions of Riyals are spent on qat and is causing many social and economical problems. All of the qat is grown in Yemen and much of Yemen's fertile land is used to grow qat, costing the economy a great deal. Today qat is still expensive, and is costing the individual Yemeni and the government a great deal. For Yemenis in the U.S., a bundle of qat sells for \$30-35.

#### Importation and Smuggling of Qat

Though it is currently legal to import qat into great Britain and several other countries, in the U.S. qat is considered illegal, and qat possession is a felony. Qat is smuggled to the U.S. as a recreational drug by the use of couriers. It has entered the U.S. under many names i.e. Abyssinian tea, African salad, Arabian tea, and Molokheya (Egyptian vegetable). Today qat is packaged as part of flower shipments and by other methods.

Because of the long journey Qat is wrapped in banana leaves to retain its moisture and freshness. Water is often sprinkled over it (during transport) to keep the leaves moist.

Generally there are two varieties that come to the U.S. Ethiopian, known as Habashi, and Kenyan, known as Yemeni. These two varieties are sold in Yemeni and African restaurants and some have reported buying them from Jewish flower shops. The bundles of qat which are made of about 20-30 twigs, 12-16 inch in length are sold for \$30 in New York, the price can vary in other states and they can be sold for up to \$40.

New York seems to be the base for the distribution of qat. Though the smuggling operations were dominated by non-Yemenis in the past, more Yemenis are becoming involved in the smuggling of qat to the U.S..

#### A Profitable Enterprise

The selling of qat is proving very profitable and qat sellers make up to a 200% profit. The profitability of this trade can be understood when one considers the amount of qat smuggled into the U.S. and its price. According to sellers of qat in New York, they receive about 1000 bundles of qat on Tuesday and another 1000 arrive on Friday, making the total amount of qat smuggled into the U.S. at least two thousand bundles. It is estimated that 1000 bundles are sold in New York City, and the rest is sent to Buffalo, Detroit, California, and other locations. Since there are 2000 bundles that arrive to the U.S. weekly, our community spends about \$60,000 on qat weekly. A simple calculation would show that the Yemeni American community in the U.S. spends about \$3,120,000 a year on qat. Using the current exchange rate of \$1=130 Riyal, the Yemeni community in the U.S., spends at least half a billion Yemeni Riyals (405,600,000 Riyals).

#### Qat & US Law

Generally, law enforcement efforts directed against qat in the U.S. have been minimal so far. This is due to the fact that many doubt that it will become a popular street drug. In areas where there are a lot of Yemenis, e.g. Buffalo and Detroit, the authorities are very strict and impose up to a 3 months imprisonment term for qat possession or sale. Americans are increasingly using a synthetic form of qat's most active ingredient, cathonine. Growing the plant is still legal in the U.S. and it was reported that in California some Yemenis have managed to grow it in their backyards.

It is unfortunate that a habit we are all struggling to get rid of in the homeland is following us to our communities outside of Yemen. Many immigrants in the past considered migration an escape from qat and its bad effects, and sought in their places of migration to improve their health away from the green leaf. Because leaving the habit doesn't cause withdrawal symptoms, it was easy for people to leave it behind them and lead healthier lives in their new places of residence and work. The ease of importing qat to Britain and smuggling it to the U.S. has led to the widespread use of qat amongst the Yemeni immigrant communities.

#### Why in America?

In Yemen, one can argue in favor of using qat? One of the arguments is that one uses it to meet people, socialize, communicate issues and problems. In the U.S. the Yemeni immigrants are using qat for several reasons. The motive depends on the status of the qat chewer. A business owner who can afford the time, chews qat to socialize with his peers and friends. While a Yemeni worker may use qat hoping that qat will carry him home even for a very short imaginative visit.

Some affluent Yemenis have designed rooms in their houses as diwans (Yemeni style). These rooms have been designed especially for chewing qat. When you enter these "diwans" you immediately forget that you are in America. The water pipes and the Yemeni-furnishing style add to that feeling of being in Yemen. Regardless of the place where a person chews qat, the person's look the following day, reveals it. Sleepless eyes and tired looks usually give away the person who chewed qat the night before. Many of them have to resume work the following day without rest, looking like they are possessed by evil spirits.

With their minds in Yemen, many Yemeni workers deal with a lot of problems and family pressure, in addition to that they also deal with problems related to their migratory experiences.

Many are resistant to acculturation and assimilation and are in a state of depression. For those people, qat is a temporary way out of the U.S., a chance for a short mental visit home, and a reminder of good times in Yemen. The busy schedules of Yemenis also make the qat a social magnet that gathers people to meet around it. Interestingly, many Yemeni celebrations in the U.S. are not complete without qat today.

## Schistosomiasis In Yemen

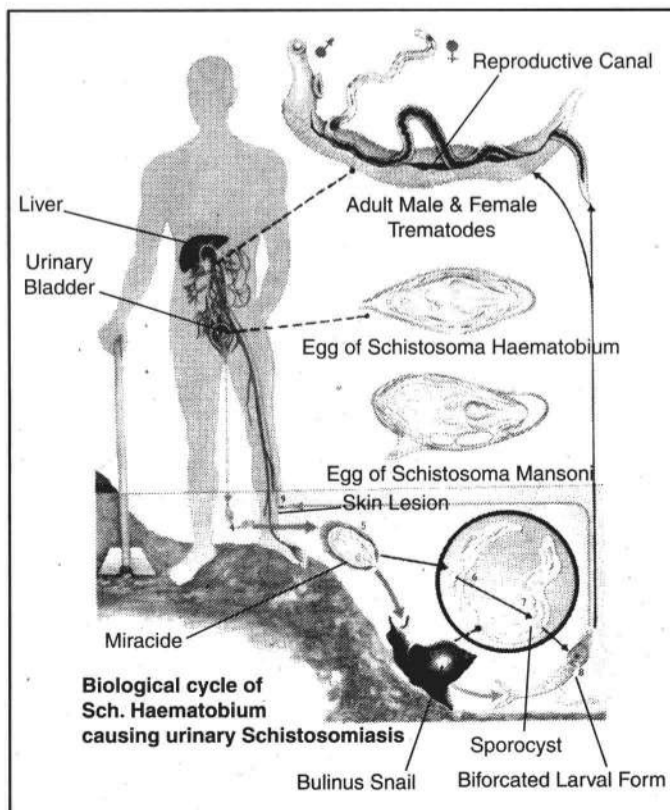
This parasitic disease, also known as bilharziasis, is endemic to much of Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia, the Eastern Mediterranean and South America. Most of the people who would contract this in Yemen would be barefoot agricultural and dam workers and fishermen; the disease is transmitted through a skin lesion via an intermediate snail host found in contaminated waters. Many Egyptians are remembered to have contracted this disease during the construction of the Aswan dam because dam workers having lesions on their feet were exposed to the contaminated Nile waters.

The larval schistosome has also been introduced to peri-urban areas of cities in Africa. In Yemen the disease, which is third only to malaria and enteritis, is common in the capital, at Hodeidah and at Hajjah where 136,000 cases were registered in 1996. Two forms prevalent in Yemen are the intestinal variety or *Schistosoma mansoni* and the urinary one caused by *S. haematobium*. The intestinal form is also prevalent in neighboring Somalia where refugee migration north after the civil war has spread the disease. The urinary one has been linked to a form of bladder cancer. In fact, the occurrence of bilharzia induced bladder cancer is 32 percent higher than simple bladder cancer in the U.S.

The effects are also psychological as school performance drops and growth patterns of infected children are disturbed but 90 percent of the effects are reversible upon treatment. The disease also reduces worker performance by causing weakness. The urinary variety localizes in the veins of the urinary tract, after migrating there through the circulatory system. After two or three days the parasite migrates into the venous system and lays its eggs which then hatch and remain there. The infected individual eliminates the *Sch. haematobium* eggs through the urine or if infected by the intestinal variety, through the feces which then penetrate the antennae of an intermediate snail host. There they turn into the larval form. The miracidie soon dies if it does not reach this host.

The disease is widely asymptomatic however gastrointestinal, hepatic and respiratory symptoms may occur. Diagnosis after a simple microscopic examination of the urinary sedimentation can reveal the parasite. Treatment of the disease is through anti-biotics and praziquantel. Re-infection may then reoccur, however the risk of it developing into a severe disease are reduced.

Martin Dansky/ Yemen Times



It seems like we Yemenis are interested in short term solutions or escapes from our problems. Qat is becoming popular in the U.S. amongst Yemenis because it is the familiar way of dealing with our problems. Even social problems these days are only debated and solved in qat sessions. Community organizations have to get involved with law enforcement agencies to try prevent the spread of this disease in our community.

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\* The Yemeni American League (YAL) is an organization for college students and graduates that include professionals and prominent, educated Yemenis in the U.S. It was formed in 1995, and is based in New York. The YAL is a proud sponsor of more than 50 pages on Yemen that are published on the Internet.



# Treating The Handicapped in Taiz

By Yemen Times Managing Editor

Handicap International started its activities in Yemen in 1994 by providing orthopedic assistance to leprosy patients at the Medinat Al-Nour (City of Light) Hospital in Taiz. Since then, they have developed a larger project for the disabled people of Taiz, Ibb and Lahaj. The center has been open to the public since December, 1996. They provide orthopedic appliances for people who suffer from physical disabilities.

Their goal here is to make the center self-sufficient within 5 years. Also their other goal is to train staff that will be able to provide assistance to physically disabled people in all the villages in surrounding areas.

Handicap International has started sixty projects similar to this one in nearly thirty countries. They are also fighting for a total ban on anti-personnel land mines.

**Mr. Laurent Biot is the program director of Handicap International. He has been here in Yemen for 7 months.**



**Q: Why was the center established in Taiz?**

**A:** Our first project, in 1994, was in Taiz. We were working with the National Leprosy Control Program in the City of Light Hospital. We built up a small orthopedic workshop making basic appliances for the leprosy patients, mainly crutches and sandals.

The director of the National Leprosy Control Program asked us if we could come to Taiz to help them on their project, so we came. This project is now autonomous. We are no longer involved in this project. The Ministry of Public Health asked us to provide a wider range of projects in Yemen to treat all types of physical handicaps. It was the ministry in Taiz that contacted us and since we were already here, we decided to stay in Taiz.

Taiz is the center of a highly populated area. Before, there was just one orthopedic workshop in Sanaa. It is a big center, but it is very difficult for people from the southern regions of the country to go to Sanaa to get treatment or to get appliances. So we decided to remain in Taiz.

**Q: What kinds of handicaps do you treat?**

**A:** We have paralyzed, cerebral palsy and polio patients, mostly children. Many little children suffer from clubfoot, totally malformed feet. When it is diagnosed very early, it is possible to treat it with the aid of some appliances. We treat all the post-trauma accidents, or post-trauma injuries like fractures.

**Q: Who are the most affected by these kinds of handicaps?**

**A:** Our statistics show that about 60% of our patients are children, 25% are male and 15% are female. We really try to increase the number of female patients because the number of handicapped women is about the same as handicapped men. Women stay at home more and they are less willing to go to a center to be rehabilitated. Of the 5 physiotherapists we trained, two are women. The women who have come for treatment are very confident and come back many times, which is very important for them.

**Q: How many patients have you treated?**

**A:** Since March/April 1997, there were over 4,500 treatments distributed among 1,500 patients. Patients must come more than once because of physiotherapy, which requires numerous visits. We have delivered 1000 orthopedic appliances.

**Q: What are the main reasons for these kinds of**

**treatments?**

**A:** Polio counts for about 20% of the patients that come to us and there are so many orthopedic deformities, all kinds of congenital leg deformities. Cerebral palsy patients are mentally stable, but they don't have the control of their limbs because their brain is damaged.

**Q: Do you treat any war victims?**

**A:** We have some war victims, but not a lot at the moment. I think the main reason for this is that we don't provide prosthetics - artificial limbs. We'll begin providing artificial limbs this month. I think that many war injuries are due to land mines. I think that when we begin work on amputations, the number of war victims visiting the center will increase.

**Q: Are there any foreign doctors?**

**A:** In our center there is one Belgian physiotherapist and one Belgian orthopedic technician. The task of these two people is to train local Yemeni people from the Ministry of Health in orthopedic techniques and physiotherapy. Until now we have trained assistants and one administrator. We are working with two Yemeni doctors who were educated in physical therapy abroad and they are the only real doctors at the center. They work in the center everyday.

**Q: How many patients come to the center in a day?**

**A:** In one day, we see around 10 or 15 new patients.

**Q: Are they coming from Taiz only?**

**A:** So far publicity has not been a priority for the center. Our first priority is training the staff. Of course, people come when they hear that the center exists.

This month we'll begin advertising to cover a broader area so more people will come from the Taiz periphery and the governorates of Ibb and Lahaj. Right now, people are coming from Taiz city and the villages around it.

**Q: When will your project end?**

**A:** After 3 years there will be no more expatriates working in the center. We will then support them financially and continue supervisory visits for 2 years. And after 5 years, the center should be totally self sufficient in every way.

**Q: How many beds does the center have?**

**A:** We don't have any beds at the moment. Many patients will begin getting prosthetics and they will need a long rehabilitation period. It's difficult for patients coming from the villages to go home everyday, they need to stay at the center. So we plan to enlarge the center this month. In February, we plan to enlarge the current workshop, and we're discussing with the Ministry of Public Health the possibility of adding beds.

**Q: Are there people who got rid of their handicaps? Are there any good results?**

**A:** Yes, for example, children with clubfoot can walk after 2 months of treatment. It will be even more spectacular when we begin prosthetics.

**Q: What is the level of cooperation with other public health organs?**

**A:** I think the autonomy of the center after we are gone is a very crucial. A good cooperation with the Ministry of Health offices in Taiz is also important. They are working to try to get the ministry in Sanaa to help fund our center, which will be helpful for the community.

Also, we're working to find other sources of funding from within the private sector. I think it is very important that the public, private and other civil sectors get involved and work together to better the community.

**Q: What other goals does the program has?**

**A:** Another point of the program is to cover the areas of Ibb, Lahaj and maybe Aden. In December we had a two-week training session in physiotherapy for some people from the CBR program (Community Based Rehabilitation). This program is organized by the Ministry of Insurance and Social Affairs and by Radda Barnen. It is for the villages around Taiz, Lahaj and Aden.

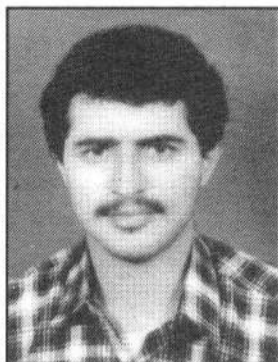
We are training some of the CBR workers in physiotherapy so they can continue the treatment in the villages. I think this training was very successful. I hope we can continue with this kind of work in the future.

**Q: Where do you get your financial assistance from?**

**A:** A proportion of 50% of our five-year project is sponsored by the EU, 30% is sponsored by the Ministry of Health. We must find a local sponsor for the remaining 20%.

Our association, Handicap International, has to find

# Manners of Begging



Begging has begun to acquire disturbing dimensions in the life of our society. Going through the streets of our cities one can not fail to notice this phenomenon. It is actually a very serious problem that needs a prompt address. Wherever you go you will find yourself at the mercy of those beggars who know well enough

how to evoke a sense of pity in you and make you part with some money for charity. Wherever you go, you listen the oft-repeated phrase "Lellah" or "Hak allah" which means money for God. They sometimes even hold your hands firmly and refuse to release you before dispensing with "Hak allah." In return, they start lispng prayers asking God to forgive you and give you much more in return. This is the time-tested model operating on securing your sympathy. What is worse is that those beggars are not bound to the streets as a public place to beg, rather they have begun to go to houses, schools, universities and other institutions. We aren't exaggerating if we say that they even disturb teachers and professors in their classes asking for help. The menace is actually indescribable.

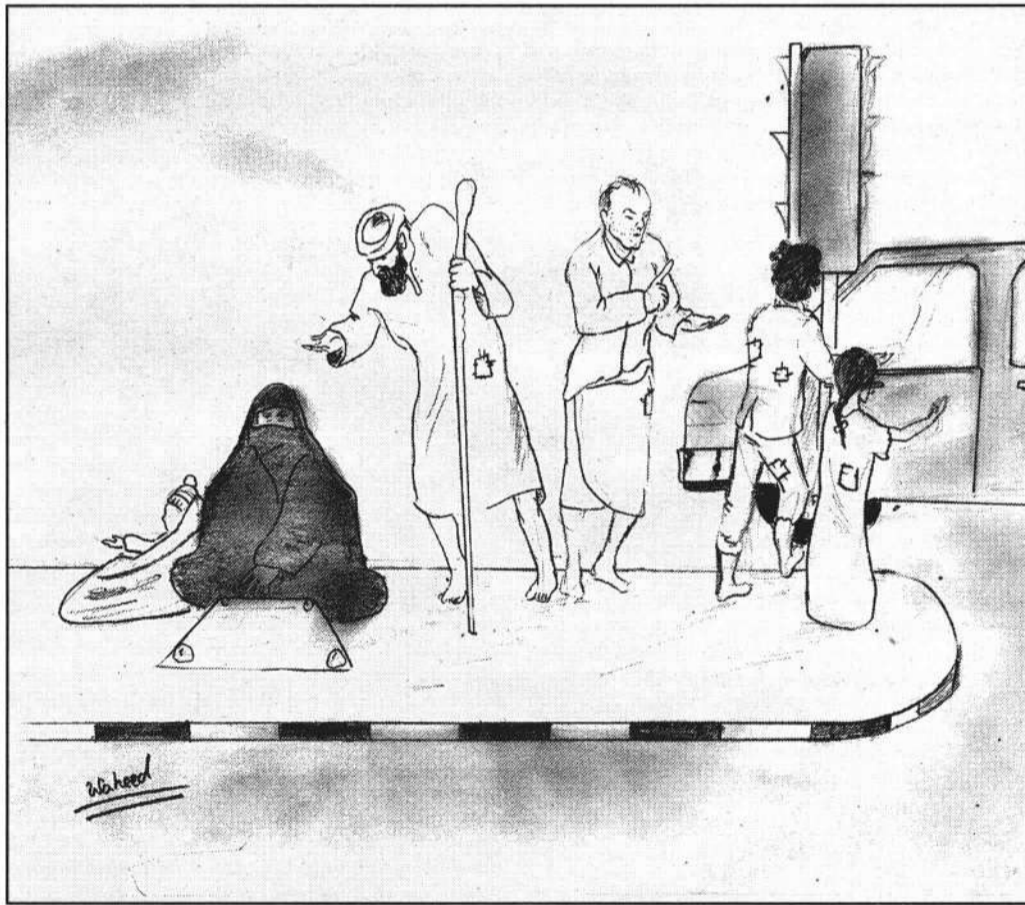
As a matter of fact, many people who are very much concerned with this social problem think that begging has become a profession and a way of life for a good number of people. They have undoubtedly found their salvation in it. In fact, it has

One important point that should be highlighted is that alms-givers play a very vital role in expanding this social disease in society. You might ask how! When we give those beggars money, we push them forward to continue begging. That is, they become very idle and rely on this easy way for gaining money. Therefore the people themselves should stop giving money to those alms-seekers whatever embarrassments they may face. And in this way they will help a lot in tackling this social malaise.

To add insult to injury, it has been noticed that some people go to some houses or hospitals to find some handicapped persons. They take them to the streets to attract the affection of the people so that they give them some money. Out of the daily gain they give a portion to the relatives of the sick persons. One can not believe that the value of human beings can sink to such an abominable depth. It is exploitation of philanthropic values and principles. In this way, begging has become a way of life for such people.

Therefore, many conscientious people think that it has become very urgent to stop or at least check this social malady for the sake of the health of society. Not only that but it plays a very significant role in distorting the civilized image of our society and makes other people astonished to see such a good number of beggars wherever they go.

In this connection, it is worthy to mention that Taiz has started taking some remedial steps to tackle this problem. A committee for this purpose, under the patronage of the governor of Taiz, has been established. The solution suggested by the committee members for this problem is first to find out the number of beggars in the city and then decide who really need some help and aid. The help includes many things like employing some people in some



become a profession that needs some techniques and strategies so that a person can get experienced in it, and accordingly it will be a way to prosperity and comfort. What is actually happening is that some people stay at home, chew qat and send their children to beg for their expenditures. This is not to say that there are no people who genuinely need some help. On the contrary, there are a lot of needy people, but they seldom take to the streets. They prefer to die of hunger than to ask for help. Honor prevents them from seeking alms.

factories and training some of them, especially women, in practicing some handicrafts.

It is actually a laudable proposal and step. But it needs concerted efforts by both the governmental and non-governmental organizations so that it can be implemented. We do really wish the committee all success and hope that the other governorates follow such a plan to tackle the nagging problem of begging before it gets out of hand.

By Mohammed Hatem Al-Qadhi, Taiz

all their financial sources in Europe or in Yemen. In Yemen, the Dutch and British Embassies have already given us some money for the project.

**Q: Any last comment?**

**A:** The last thing I want to mention is that Handicap International is very much involved in the removal of land mines. We participated in the regional conference in Sanaa.

The 1997 Nobel Peace prize was given to the International Campaign to Ban Mines. This campaign was founded in 1992 by six international NGOs and Handicap International.

We are working in many countries like Cambodia,

Mozambique, Angola and Afghanistan, where there are a large number of mines. We are doing mine awareness, mine clearance and orthopedics and prosthetics for mine victims.

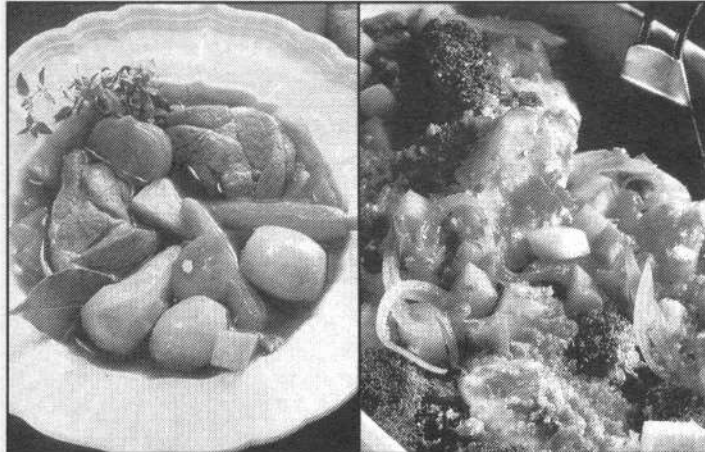
Here in Yemen we are not directly connected with the mines but we'll begin providing prosthetics to landmine victims soon. We are always very aware of all the problems of mines in Yemen and other countries.

We've only been here three years, which is a very short time for an international organization. We are totally open to developments in the field of treating and rehabilitating handicapped people in Yemen because we are specialized in this field.

## A Ramadhan Day in the Life of a Yemeni Woman

By Khairia Al-Shabeebi

Almost everything changes during the Holy month of Ramadhan - from waking to working hours, daily habits (both physical and moral), and many people become more religiously observant. Women



in particular have extra duties during this month. Following the day of four 'typical' professional Yemeni woman and mothers has revealed a few differences and many similarities.

### Umm Salah:

My son Salah wakes me up at 9 AM, asking for his breakfast. I do some cleaning around the house and prepare a few things for iftar (breaking the fast) later on in the day. I perform the noon prayers, and prepare to go to work at 1 PM. On my way to work, I drop Salah at the nursery.

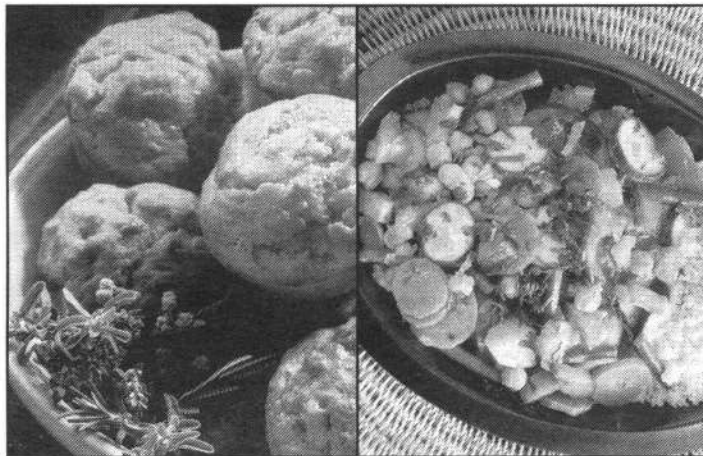
Finishing work at 3.30 PM, I return home, perform the afternoon prayer, and start cooking the iftar meal - shurba (boiled oats with milk and sugar), shafout (pancakes mashed in yoghurt and mixed with spice and herbs), and samboosa (ground meat and herbs in a triangular pastry envelope).

The whole family gathers around the table just before the sunset call for prayer. Following the Prophet's (P) tradition, the fast is broken with a date followed by a simple dish. Then we do the sunset prayers either at home or at the mosque. Eating the other Ramadhan dishes follows after that.

The men of the family stay at home for a while watching TV, while, I do the washing and cleaning. At the evening prayer, men usually go to the mosque and women either pray at home or go to the mosque also.

Then we prepare supper for the men when they come home from the mosque at around 7.30 PM. This meal includes rice or pasta, meat or fish, salad, Zahawiq (crushed tomatoes with ground black pepper), and bread.

I later clean the house and put Salah to sleep. At 10 PM we go out to visit friends and relatives, go shopping or stay at home to watch TV. Following a two-hour sleep, I wake up at 2AM to prepare suhoor (the last meal before sunrise) which usually consists of coffee or tea with pancakes and zahawiq with cheese. Following this meal we read the Holy Quran until the time of the sunrise prayer after which we go to bed and sleep until 9AM.



### Umm Jameel

I wake up at noon, perform the noon prayer, and go to work. On coming home at 4 PM, I perform the afternoon prayers and start preparing for iftar. Our iftar meal consists of bajia (fried balls of tiny crushed horse bean-like legume), qamruldeen (dried apricot drink), rice, shafout, tabeeekh (mixed vegetables with gravy), hilba (phenigree with gravy), and bread.

We break our fast with dates, qamruldeen, hilba, shurba and white radish. Following the sunset prayers, we resume our meal. I do the house work after the evening prayers after which time I chew qat with my husband and watch TV until midnight.

Suhoor usually consists of what is left from iftar with some beans, zahawiq with cheese, and mateet (yoghurt simmered with flour). After suhoor, we read the Holy Quran, perform the sunrise prayers, and go to bed.

### Umm Ahmed

I wake up at noon, do the noon prayers, clean and tidy up the house, and go to work. Returning home around 3 PM, I do the afternoon prayers, and start cooking for iftar. Following iftar, the sunset and evening prayers, and the washing and cleaning up, I settle with the rest of the family in front of the TV. Otherwise, we go out to visit friends and relatives or go shopping, especially on Thursday night. I give our visitors orange juice, qamruldeen, or other soft drinks and cream caramel.

I start preparing suhoor at 1 AM. We have our suhoor, read several verses from the Holy Quran, do the sunrise prayers, and go to bed.

### Jmeela

I stay awake watching TV until 7 or 8 in the morning, and sleep until 12.30 PM. I perform the noon prayers, and go to work at the school where I teach. In between classes, I read the Quran or talk with my colleagues about issues related to our students and other administrative concerns. I return home at 4 PM, and immediately start preparing the iftar food with my mother and the rest of my sisters. My parents go to the mosque for the sunset prayers, then come back to have supper with the rest of the family.

Tidying and cleaning up is followed by the evening prayer, watching some TV programs, or going out visiting. I read the Holy Quran until 1.30 or 2 AM, have suhoor, go to bed, or read a prayer book.

### Some Facts About Observing Ramadhan

\* Fasting during Ramadhan is the duty of every Muslim once he or she reaches puberty - around 15 years old. However, children should be taught to fast for half a day starting at the age of 7 up to 9. Once they are 10 years old, children should be taught to fast for a whole day - not necessarily for the whole month. This is quite helpful for the children so that they will be able to endure fasting the whole month of Ramadhan once they are 15 years old.

\* A sick person is permitted not to fast until cured. He or she can then fast the same number of days after Ramadhan.

\* Old people who are unable to fast can give alms to the poor as a substitute for not fasting.

\* A menstruating or a post-natal does not have to fast, but has to fast the same number of days after Ramadhan. For menstruation, 7 to 10 days are allowed.

\* Zakat, or holy tax, is levied from the rich to be given to the poor during Ramadhan. When the month is over, rich people usually give fitra such as flour, sweets, meat, dates, money, etc.

## Restoring Precious Manuscripts

Mr. Ronald Kon works in Leiden University and teaches Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Netherlands.

### Q: What is the project you are working on in Yemen?

A: It is a project to further develop Al-Ahqaf library in Tareem in the Hadramaut valley. This is a form of a cultural present which has been given by the Dutch government to the Yemeni people to congratulate them on the unification of Yemen. We are trying to develop the library in such a way that the Islamic manuscripts will be preserved for future generations. We are also trying to develop the personnel working there so that they will be well aware of modern preservation techniques, using computers to retrieve information and things like that.

### Q: What work do you perform in this project?

A: I evaluate the collection as it is to see which manuscripts are the most interesting. We do this together with the local library. With Mr. Abdulah Al-Aidros, a key figure, together with the director Abdulrahman Al-Saqqaf, we have been able to work very nicely on the manuscripts.

Within this phase we have been doing a lot of work to manage, to organize, to re-do the infrastructure of the whole collection. We should be able to really start the scientific work in a second phase and to teach the people how to make use of the material which is in the manuscripts.

### Q: How long will this project take?

A: Last year, two of my colleagues spent three months initiating the project. Their work had mainly to do with the pre-infrastructure of the project. This means to try to make the building in which the manuscripts were kept, a place where scientists could work. Now the project is finished and one of the main tasks was to re-formulate the project in order to be able to continue.

### Q: Who funds this project?

A: The Dutch Embassy and the local public authorities have been very helpful until now. We can try to get more funds for this project in the coming years. We cannot exactly see for how long that will be, but we are very optimistic that it will continue.

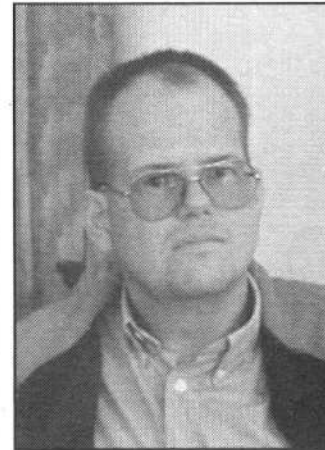
### Q: How important are these manuscripts for researchers?

A: The manuscript tradition is still very much alive. For example, we bought photocopies of a book in a book shop called Al-Jawher al-Shafaf. The original is owned by someone from Jeddah and the same text is also available in the Tareem library. People still want to read other copies of the same texts.

### Q: Are people generally aware of the importance of conserving these manuscripts?

A: People here consider it to be part of the heritage of Tareem. They feel it very much part of themselves. I mean they really are eager to help during the work. They offered all kinds of services which we think are necessary. The people in the library are friendly and eager to help too.

The place is not just a local mosque. People from Egypt, Singapore and Indonesia make their way to Tareem to study these manuscripts. From a conservation point of view, everybody can read manuscripts. But if we can scan



them electronically, it is much easier to have them available from more people locally and worldwide on the Internet.

### Q: Do you think the library as a building should be renovated?

A: The building is not bad. It is a part of the mosque. However, the roofs and infrastructure have been repaired and a generator was installed for a continuous electricity supply. If you work with electronic equipment you can not tolerate power cuts. We try to attract tourists, they are very much interested in Tareem. We want to give them a nice display of the beautiful manuscripts.

### Q: What should be done to help continue the process of preservation?

A: Foreign aid should also concentrate more on cultural aspects. Yemen is so culturally rich, both before and after Islam. So what we would advise is to give a person like Abdulrahman Al-Saqqaf who is working there in his library as much assistance as possible in terms of training of his personnel. More facilities can really be installed to make it a nice center.

### Q: Would you like to add anything?

A: Tareem has always been a very famous center of learning. So what we are trying to do is to develop the Tareem library to put Tareem back on the intellectual map of Yemen.

Mr. Hans Van Der Meulon teaches at the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Leiden University, Holland

### Q: Could you tell us a bit about the Ahqaf library?

A: The library is located on top of the mosque of Tareem. There are about 3300 manuscripts which contain more than 500 texts on different subjects. The most recent one is from about the middle of this century and the oldest, dates back to the fourth century after Hijra.

### Q: What is your main task in this project?

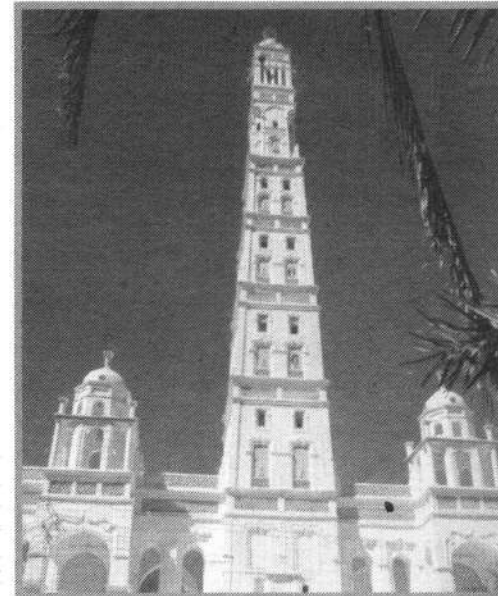
A: Before I studied Arabic, I worked in the Dutch telecom company as a technician and this has helped my main task in installing computers. I also do

book binding and am making a data base for the library. This is very useful because we are also putting this on the Internet for the whole world to see.

### Q: What else does the work involve?

A: We try to describe Arab scripts, identify the author, the man who made a copy, the date it was made, and other essential data. Also, the dimension of the manuscript is very important so as to know the number of lines, what type of handwriting, and what type of paper was used.

There are some medical books and most of the texts are just known by name and author but work still needs to be done to know what the real subjects are



because many scholars are unknown in the world.

### Q: In what conditions are the manuscripts now?

A: Their condition is quite good because it is very dry in Hadramaut.

### Q: Are all manuscripts going to appear on the Internet?

A: The catalogue will be on the Internet. Not all of manuscripts will be on the Internet, just the most important ones.

### Q: Do you think tourists are interested in seeing these manuscripts?

A: In the month we were there, we saw several hundred tourists coming to the place. They are really amazed. We are now preparing a booklet as an introduction to the library and post-cards for the visitors to take home.

### Q: Would you like to add anything?

A: I want just to say I agree with Mr. Ronald Kon and I think it is important that the library get as much support as possible from the government and also our government should inform the local people as well.

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# Narjis Obad on Being an Actress in Yemen

Ms. Narjis Hussein Obad is an actress and theater director as well as a TV presenter and producer. She received an M.A. degree in theater direction and another degree with distinction in acting in 1987 from the Belarus Arts Institute in the former Soviet Union.

"I started performing in the theater when I was an elementary level student," said Narjis. The television later invited her to work in a program called "Problem and Solution." This was her starting point.

Narjis played the roles of poor, rich, young, domineering and jealous woman as well as Queen Arwa. "I had the honor to act with famous actors in the Aden Oil Refinery Troupe\*, which enhanced my start, encouraged me to play serious roles, and associated my career with drama education."

What does it take to become an actress?

Narjis explained that acting needs ability, seriousness, accumulation of theatrical traditions, government and theatrical support, good technical capabilities and suitable texts to be adapted to the theater.

Narjis Obad said about her education and her career in the dramatic arts: "My university study is very helpful. My educa-



Ahmed Al-Shamiri."

Narjis also participated in several theater, TV and radio dramas in Syria, Egypt and Iraq. "I did a successful program in Oman called "Poetry is the Domain of Arabs" in 1992.

Narjis presents a weekly variety program at the Yemeni satellite channel called "Tour and See," which is prepared by her sister Ibtihal Obad who is a TV announcer. "Women do not have a sizable

share of the artistic and cultural life of the country. Because of the shortage of actresses, I find myself having to direct and to act as well. I think that it is very important for women to be more involved in the theater and other arts."

"I thank the General Federation of Yemeni Women which gave me the chance to study in Russia."

Last but not least, Narjis is married with 3 daughters. Her sister Fardoos is a doctor and Ibtihal is a TV announcer. Her only brother Hisham is still a university student. Their mother, who is a seamstress, encouraged and supported them. Also, she implanted within them a whole-hearted devotion to hard work.

\* The Aden Oil Refinery Troupe is a group of actors working within the oil refinery in little Aden. It was established at the end of 1950.



tion and knowledge of international drama has largely consolidated my career." She translated her M.A. thesis about the work of the famous Russian author Istrovsky and adapted it for theater. "I also dealt with works of European authors such as Noshta and Hotchiki and Arab authors such Mahfoodh Abdulrahman and many other Yemeni authors including Mohammed



# Al-Hijjra Village

Al-Hijjra village is one of the most important landmarks in Yemen, since it has tourist attractions and an excellent climate. This village dates back to the Al-Saliliya state (1050-1170 A.D). It is built over a big rock and is fortified by a strong wall which has made it invincible until today.

The villagers restored some of the high buildings to good condition. Many visitors are surprised when they visit the village because it is built on a hill and the buildings are prominent. The climate of Al-Hijjra is moderate because it is located between Sana'a and Hodeida. Public services such as electricity, water and a paved road to Manakha are available. The roads of the village itself need to be paved.

Tourists who arrive in Yemen by ship visit Al-Hijjra village because it is near the port of Hodeida. Agriculture is the main activity in the village. The villagers plant wheat, corn, maize, coffee, tomatoes and qat. The

village has a population of 1160. Al-Hijjra Hotel is considered to be one of the most beautiful tourist landmarks in Al-Hijjra. It was built 6 years ago and has become famous for its excellent services.

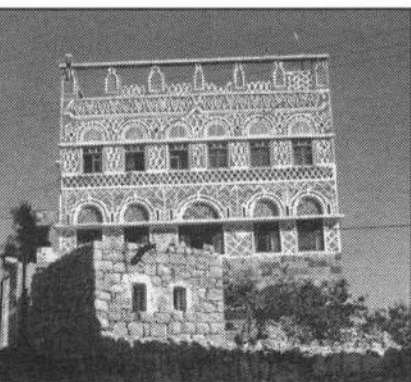
The Hotel offers many services such as delicious meals and can host parties and wedding ceremonies. The prices are competitive and reasonable and it has a capacity for more than 60 persons.

I have written several articles in some local and foreign newspapers such as the French and Spanish publications.

The hotel provides the tourists with guides who speak several languages. The hotel arranges activities such as walking, camping and touring by donkeys to different tourist and archeological areas such as Al-Amir house, Al-Haymi fortress, Al-Kharaba, Al-Sehab, Kahel, Al-Hatib and others.

The hotel conducts walking excursions to Al-Mahweet, Hajja and Yaro mountains.

By: Yousif Al-Sharif, Yemen Times



## TOP 5

1. Coolio [C U when you get there]
2. Back Street Boys [Everybody]
3. Michael Jackson [It's Scary]
4. Spice Girls [Spice Up Your Life]
5. Mariah Carey [Butterfly]

# MUSIC ROCKS

By Waheed Sami

## Song Of The Week

By Barbara & Celine

# Tell Him قولي له

Barbra

I'm scared  
So afraid to show I care  
Will he think me weak  
If I tremble when I speak?  
Ooh, what if  
There's another one he's thinking of?  
Maybe he's in love  
I'd feel like a fool  
Life can be so cruel  
I don't know what to do

Celine

I've been there  
With my heart out in my hand  
But what you must understand  
You can't let the chance  
to love him pass you by  
(Chorus)  
Tell him  
Tell him that the sun and moon  
Rise in his eyes  
Reach out to him  
And whisper  
Tender words so soft and sweet  
I'll hold him close to feel his heartbeat  
Love will be the gift you give yourself

Celine

Touch him (oh)  
With the gentleness you feel  
Inside (I feel)  
Your love can't be denied  
The truth will set you free  
You'll have what's meant to be  
All in time you'll see

Barbara

Ooh, I love him (then show him)  
Of that much I can be sure  
(hold him close to you)  
I don't think I could endure  
If I let him walk away  
When I have so much to say  
(Repeat chorus)

Celine

Love is light that surely glows  
In the hearts of those who know  
It's a steady flame that grows

Barbara

Feed the fire with all the passion you can show  
Tonight love will assume its place  
This memory time cannot erase  
Your faith will lead love where it has to go

Celine

Tell him  
Tell him that the sun and moon  
Rise in his eyes  
Reach out to him  
And whisper  
Whisper words so soft and sweet  
Hold him close to feel his heartbeat  
Love will be the gift you give yourself

Barbara

Ooh ooh ooh ooh  
Never let him go

باربارة

أنا خائفة  
خائفة ان اكشف عن احساسى بانى اهتم به  
هل سيعتقد انى ضعيفة  
لو ارتعشت وأنا اتحدث إليه  
اه ماذا لو...  
هناك انسانة اخرى يفكر فيها؟  
ربما يكون غارقا في الحب  
وسوف اشعر بانى حقا  
الحياة يمكن ان تكون قاسية  
ولا اعلم ما اسطيع ان افعله  
سيليين

لقد كنت هناك  
وقلبي يدق  
ولكن الشئ الواجب ان تفهميه  
هو انه يجب عدم ترك الفرصة تمر  
دون ان تحببه  
(الكورس)

قولي له  
قولي له ان الشمس والقمر  
يظهرون في عينيه  
حاولي الوصول إليه  
ثم اهمسي

بكلمات رقيقة في منتهى النعومة  
التصفي به حتى تسمع دقات قلبه  
الحب سيكون الهدية التي ستقدميتها لنفسك

سيليين  
المسيه... باحساس رقيق  
وبنفس الحنان الذي تشعنين به  
في اعماقك (انا اشعر)  
ان حبك لا يمكن حرمائه  
الحقيقة سوف تجعلك حرة  
ستتألين المكتوب لك  
كل هذا سيحبي من الوقت وسوف ترين ذلك

باربارة  
اه... كم احبه (اذن اجعله يرى ذلك)  
انا واثقة من مقدار حبي  
اجعله قريبا منك

لا اعتقد انى اسطيع ان احمل  
لو سمحت له ان يمضي بذوتي  
عندما يكون لذى الكثير لا قوله له  
(اعادة للكورس)

سيليين  
الحب هو الضوء الذي يلعب  
في قلوب من عرفوه  
انها اشعة الثابتة التي تلعب

باربارة  
تغذي على نار العاطفة التي تكون قادرين على كشفها  
اليوم الحب سيأخذ وضعه  
وهذه الذكرى لا يمكن ان يمحوها الزمن  
إيمانك سوف يقود الحب للمكان الواجب الذهاب إليه

سيليين  
قولي له  
قولي له ان الشمس والقمر  
تظهرون في عينيه  
حاولي الوصول إليه  
واهمسي

بكلمات رقيقة وجميلة  
كوني قريبة منه حتى تسمع دقات قلبه  
الحب سيكون الهدية التي تمنحها لنفسك

باربارة  
اه... اه... اه...  
لا تدعيه يذهب

Words and music by  
David Foster/ Linda Thompson/ Walter Afanasieff

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**AL-WAHDAMI: Sanaa weekly, 6-1-98.**  
(Nasserite Unionist Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1- Yemeni-Saudi relations are at their lowest point, and can escalate to military confrontation
- 2- The Central Bank puts moratorium on giving loans and credit to 102 prominent businessmen for defaulting on their previous loans
- 3- Mutual exchanges of corruption accusations foiled Islah-PGC reconciliation efforts in Ibb
- 4- Yemeni students in Poland staged a sit-in at the Yemeni Embassy in Warsaw demanding their monthly allowances for third quarter of 1997

**Article Summary:**

**Deadly Silence - editorial**

Despite uncovering the Saudi involvement in the recent bombing incidents in Yemen, the tone of media offensives has gone down to a deadly silence. At the same time, however, diplomatic shuttling missions have increased.

Saudi Arabia took advantage of the post Gulf War period, when the balance of power was, and still is, in its favor, to demand more concessions and compromises from Yemen.

The most dangerous aspect of the memorandum of understanding, signed by the two countries two years ago, is that it recognizes the Tayif agreement. Following the 1934 war when Saudi Arabia annexed Yemeni territory, the Tayif agreement recognized the status quo, but was later rejected by the republican regime in Yemen.



**AL-THAWRI: Sanaa weekly, 8-1-98.**  
(Yemeni Socialist Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1- The Yemeni Organization for Defense of Human Rights, Geneva, called on all Arab and Afro-Asian human rights bodies to demand the release of a number of political detainees in Hadhramaut
- 2- Yemeni political parties are to send a Ramadhan gift - a plane-load of medical supplies - to Iraq, as suggested by Al-Haqq Party
- 3- Three bombings took place in different places last week in Ja'ar, Abyan
- 4- A German tourist, 17, was raped in the coastal town of Khokha by the son of an MP - investigations continue

**Article Summary:**

**Teachers Leave Abyan**

Parents in Rassd, Abyan, have expressed their annoyance by the suspension of primary and secondary schooling since the beginning of the current academic year. A number of recently appointed teachers left their schools in Rassd because the Ministry of Finance has failed to allocate them their



# Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Adel J. Moqbil

monthly salaries.

On another level, the Ministry of Education offices in Abyan has deducted YR 3,000 off the monthly salary of each teacher working in the governorate. Their excuse is that they need to counter balance their budget deficit.



**AL-TAJAMMU': Aden weekly, 5-1-98.**  
(Yemeni Unitary Congregation Party)

**Main Headlines:**

- 1- Condolences on the death of Omar Al-Jawi continue to pour in at party headquarters from Yemeni and Arab figures and organizations
- 2- The Aden Refinery spent \$500,000 in 1997 on financing medical treatment for its ill workers abroad
- 3- Malaria & worms are prevalent in Moseimar, Lahaj, because of the widespread of marshes and stagnant ponds

**Article Summary:**

**What sort of privatization is this? by Mohammed Shayadil**

Despite the calls to prepare Aden to become an international port, it seems that all the ailments plaguing the port of Hodeida have been transferred to Aden.

The loading and unloading of ships' cargoes in Aden are being given to private firms operating in Hodeida, which led to the deterioration of similar services in that port. Services in the port of Aden were going very smoothly. There is no need to privatize them.

The container platform cost the port authorities \$40 million, and it is being handed over to incompetent private operators. There is nothing wrong with privatization, except when it is used as a tool to benefit and favor a number certain individuals.



**AL-SAHWA: Sanaa weekly, 8-1-98.**  
[Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah)]

**Main Headlines:**

- 1- Head of Islah bloc in parliament: "Our rejection of the 1998 general budget is a matter of principle."
- 2- Islah Secretary-General: "Our opposition does

not rely on media noises."

3- New appointments of senior officials at the Ministry of Education were based on partisan allegiances

**Article Summary:**

**Hidden Expenditure**

The financial statement of the 1998 general budget showed that there are undocumented expenditures. For example, the financial bulletin issued by the Central Bank regarding public expenditure during the third quarter of 1997 showed that YR 1.173 billion was put under 'miscellaneous.' This sum was not entered under any of the general budget sections, classified or otherwise. Financial violations worth billions of riyals went uninvestigated during the last few years.



**AL-BALAGH: Sanaa weekly, 6-1-98.**  
[Islamic Action Movement (being formed)]

**Main Headlines:**

- 1- The Prime Minister: "All subsidized commodities and services must cover at least their cost by the year 2000."
- 2- Reported obstacles facing investors in the fisheries sector were rejected by the Minister of Fisheries
- 3- Yemen is to mediate to between Qatar and Egypt in order to normalize their bilateral relations

**Article Summary:**

**Counterfeit Cigarettes**

The National Tobacco and Matches Company (NTMC) announced that poor quality, counterfeit Kamaran cigarettes have been introduced into the Yemeni market. The NTMC which produces the original Kamaran indicated that the forged packets have 'Pure Virginia Tobacco' and 'For Export' written on them. The aim of this, said an NTMC source, is to destabilize the national economy and harm the citizens' health. The Yemeni market is flooded with cheap, poor quality cigarettes imported from unknown sources.



**26 SEPTEMBER: Sanaa weekly, 8-1-98.**  
(Yemeni Armed Forces) News Review:

1- The President met US Senator Specter who commended Yemen's democratization process, and stressed the US commitment to develop its ties with Yemen.

2- The Supreme Judicial Council is to discuss the judicial reform plan during Ramadhan, it aims to modernize the Supreme Court and the judicial inspection organ.

3- A law to regulate tenant-landlord relations will be issued and several civil works projects will be implemented during 1998.

4- Foreign Minister Al-Iryani: "Yemen is very serious in resolving the border problem with Saudi Arabia, and the kidnapping of foreigners is part of a grand scheme."

5- US Embassy spokesperson denied issuing any new warning by US State Department to US citizens in Yemen, as published by Al-Thawari weekly.

6- The Syrian prime suspect in the Aden bombings, Nabeel Qoseibati, entered Yemen as a student at the Science & Technology University.

7- Starting from January, public employees, and army and security personnel are to receive 10% salary increase.

8- Yemen is to sign security agreements to combat terrorism with Oman, the UAE, Qatar, and Syria.

9- The Canadian Calgary oil company signed a PSA to drill for oil in Block 43 in Hadhramaut.



**AL-HAQQ: Aden weekly, 4-1-98.**  
(Independent) Main Headlines:

- 1- 16 cars were sold through a 'show' public auctions at very low prices in Aden
- 2- Tribal sheikh gives refuge to a murderer in Taiz, and fails to hand him over to the police
- 3- Teachers in Ibb went on strike in protest over delay in their salary payments
- 4- Engineering cooperation agreement is signed by the Ahqaf University in Hadhramaut and the Iraq

**Article Summary:**

**Three Appointments in a Month**

A new director of irrigation was appointed with the approval of the People's General Congress (PGC), the governor of Abyan, the director of Ahwar, and the Irrigation Department there. A few days later, another person was appointed for the post with the approval of all the above organs, except the PGC. The PGC contacted the governor who rescinded the second appointment and re-instated the first director.

Work at the Directorate of Irrigation in Ahwar is now chaotic. The director of Ahwar wants the second appointee, while, the PGC wants the first one.

## Letters to the Editor

## Letters to the Editor

## Letters to the Editor

### The Plight of Akhdam in Yemen

"We are treated like strangers, like animals. We are deprived of our civil rights. As we get out of our small society, we get hurt by people's eyes and tongues. We just need money and we don't mind any doing job. They wish to drive us out of Sanaa for we are nothing in their eyes!" This is an honest statement by a class of people who, being widely insulted and ill-treated, ask for their right to live equally like others.

They are called "Al-Khadam," descendants of the Ethiopian Army that was defeated by King Dhu-Yazan. King Dhu-Yazan told them to go home or stay in Yemen as servants. That is why people find the name "Khadam" a historical truth. On the other hand, this class of people reject the name and stress that they are descendants of Yemenis from villages of Yemen, especially the coastal areas.

"We need money and will take any job. We are not allowed to build houses unless it is with zinc or metal scraps. When we dress up, we are always mocked, therefore we got used to being unclean. We get married within the tribe. We share our occasions together. In wedding ceremonies, we dance and have fun. We are there for one another when it is

needed." Polygamy is in their society for economic and social reasons. When a husband is not able to afford his family's needs, his wives go out and work as servants to help him. If a woman loses her husband, another tribe member would marry her. Solidarity is always in their society.

"Suppression causes explosion!" They are poor, persecuted and insulted. They are Yemeni Muslims who have to live poor due to bad circumstances. They are not educated because they don't have time to study. They have to work to eat. A hand-to-mouth life is what they live. Their women are rarely educated. The old ones are beggars in the streets, who eat food scraps and wear whatever people give them. Why do we want to get rid of them? Why do we expect them to be clean when they have never been taught to be clean?

We should stop persecuting them and calling them primitive. We should help them to improve themselves, to give them a chance to feel better about themselves and be more self-confident. We have gotten used to criticizing and not guiding, even though Islam is a law of advice.

Rowaida Al-Saqqaf, Sanaa

### A Briton Returns

I was one of the British veterans from the Royal British Legion who came back to Aden after thirty years.

At first I was not quite sure what I would find upon my return. I knew there would be moments of sadness when we remembered our mates who did not return and on our visits to the cemeteries at Mu'alla and Silent Valley. A few tears did indeed flow. I did not expect the warm welcome from the people of Aden and also the help we received from the Yemen Army soldiers at their camp at Dhali.

I was also very Lucky to meet Mohamed Surhan Al-Kuhally when I called into his plastics factory for help to find my old camp at the Seedaseer lines in Khormaksar. Not only did he help but he gave me a lift to my hotel and before departing he asked if I and a friend would like to have a Yemeni lunch at his home with his family, which we duly did. I was left with happy memories of my short stay and knew that the graves of our lads are in good hands.

The only disappointing thing was the lack of good postcards of Aden and the surrounding area, so I have sent you a few photographs that you may use to turn into postcards.

T. Evans, Surrey, U.K.

### Shakespeare, dead? No.

I have to admit that Shakespeare is not my favorite subject. Yet my interest in drama and poetry, as well as a foreboding test in January on Macbeth prompted me to sign up for the Shakespeare Workshop the British Council had agreed to let some students from Sanaa International School attend.

Tom comically illustrated the life of Shakespeare to the narration of "The Ring Master," Becky. It wasn't long before everyone was in a make-believe courtroom trying two gamblers for brawling in the streets. I grinned as I (the police officer) took the witness stand.

We did everything from putting on an impromptu version of 'As You Like It', to playing a game of power control (two people use a stick balanced between their two forefingers).

Boundaries in Shakespeare's works and the three levels of Shakespearean theater were only some of the subjects of discussion. We also had to apply what we were learning about illustrating images in drama in the form of small performances or still pictures.

One of the moments that stands out in my mind was when, on the second day, Tom took the men to one room while the women went to another to discuss boundaries

and other aspects of 'As you Like It'. This segregation gave the Yemeni women a chance to unveil and for us to talk face to face about how the boundaries in Yemeni culture relate to Shakespeare.

The second instant that really affected me was in the last half hour of the workshop. Everyone worked together to create one

picture, a tableau, to illustrate the entire play 'Macbeth'. We had to use everything learned in the three days and what we came up with was, in my opinion, quite good. We included symbolism and images found in the play, as well as some that we created. The best part was that we used only the limited props that were available: people, some pepper branches, a stick, a plastic crown, some juggling balls, and a chair on some tables.

The workshop was far more exciting and stimulating than I had ever anticipated. For many of us, it was a great three days of meeting new people and learning-by-doing. Thanks so much to the British Council for hosting it, and thank you "In Transit," for teaching us how to 'play' and to better understand Shakespeare.

Elizabeth A. Scott, Sanaa International School

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# Sports in Ramadhan

During the holy month of Ramadhan, many clubs in the governorates host various cultural and sports activities. The youth and club members are directed to do charitable deeds. Yemen Times observed a few of these activities in some of the governorates:



**Sanaa**  
One can witness many cultural and sport activities at the Ahli Club of Sanaa during Ramadhan. The club hosted a football championship for Sanaa city in addition to a special football tournament between the club youths.

The Martyrs Chess Championship is now being held at the Military Sport Association as well as the late Al-Hemi Championship which is held annually at the Ahli Club. The club is also organizing basketball and table tennis championships.

The Hawaii Tourist Club is organizing the first body building championship on 18th of Ramadhan on the stage of the Yemeni Center for Studies and Research. This championship is sponsored by Mr. Zeid Al Qasbi, vice-president of the Yemeni Body Building Association.

Al-Shaab Club is also organizing its annual wrestling championship on January 13th. Some players from Sanaa will participate under the auspices of the Wrestling Association. The club managements have formed committees for identifying poor families and supporting them. The managements also urge the wealthy men of the clubs to support the poor.

#### Aden:

The Yemeni Football Association branch in Aden is organizing the Al-Mareesi Annual Championship which is sponsored the Youth and Sports Office in Aden. Shamsan, Al-Wahda, Al-Shu'la, and Al-Tilal clubs are participating in this championship.

#### Taiz:

The Ahli Club of Taiz is holding its annual cultural contest in which the governorate's schools are participating. These cultural activities confirm the ties between

culture and sports. The members are encouraged to prepare periodical publications through lectures

being held at the club.

#### Hodeida:

The clubs of Hodeida are interested in holding sports activities as well as cultural contests among sportsmen in the field of general knowledge. These



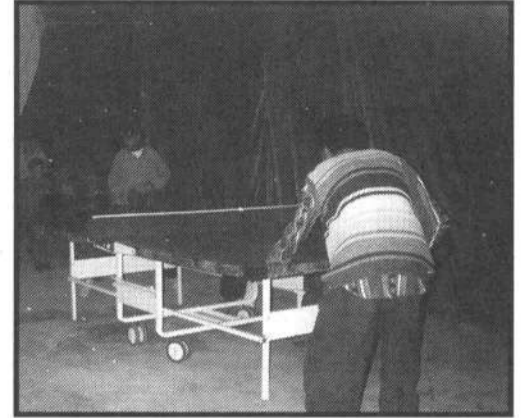
contests will last from the 5th to the 22nd of Ramadhan and the Hilal, Al-Jeel, Ahli, Nasr al-Qotej' and Bajel clubs are participating.

#### Hajja:

Sports and cultural activities started with football and volleyball as well as cultural contests. It is worth mentioning that these sports activities in the Hajja governorate are in great demand. Some clubs such as Al-Farooq, Al-Zubeiri and Al-Fat'h are participating in these activities which will last until January 20, 1998.

#### Ibb:

There are various activities in the Ibb governorate in the field of sports, culture and charity. Some symposiums and lectures are being held with emphasis on the religious and social aspects. Football,



volleyball and basketball games are scheduled. The Ibb governor directed the formation of a social committee for the honest identification of poverty stricken families. He allocated YR 500,000 for the purpose of helping these families. The Ibb governor suggested holding an open cross-country championship.

#### Amran:

Sports tournament and activities which are under the auspices of the Amran Cement Factory are continuing. Many teams are participating, such as Al-Majd, Al-Sharara, Al-Qadisiya and Al-Wahda and those involved in football, volleyball, table tennis and chess. Last Thursday, there were cultural contests between the teams of Al-Quds, Al-Zubeiri and the Amran Cement Factory. Similarly, many cultural and sports activities have continued in Dhamar, Hadramaut, Bajel etc.



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# Al-Qahira Castle in Hajja

**This is the third of a five-part series on the main fortresses in Yemen.**

Al-Qahira castle in Hajja is one of the Yemeni fortresses whose establishment was associated with the existence of towns and cities. These castles became part of the defense and daily life of these towns.

### Checked History

The role of Hajja castle was not only in defending the town from foreign attackers, but also to keep the internal security of the place.

Dating back to the 17th century AD, Al-Qahira castle played a considerable role in protecting the town of Hajja. Situated on top of AL-Qahira mountain (2,000 ft. above sea level), Al-Qahira along with the Noman and Al-Dhafeer castles and Al-Jahili fort form a defense line protecting the whole region as well.

Al-Qahira overlooks the roads leading to various little towns and villages in the area such as Bani Al-Awam, Walaa, Shagh-adira, Najra, Bani Qais, Miswar, Kahlan Taj, Bani Jadeela, etc.

Lying in the heartland of Hashid tribe, the town of Hajja was founded by Hajja Bin Zaid. It was the seat of government for many Imams, and a bastion in the face of many revolts and political storms.

The castle and the town acquired an added importance when they became the center of the Qasemid state towards the end of the 17th century AD.

During the late forties and up to the early sixties, Al-Qahira castle was the scene of several revolts and counter-revolts. The 1955 uprising against Imam Ahmed was launched from there.

It was also the place where the uprising of 1961 was started by Sheikh Hameed bin Hussein

### Al-Ahmar.

Several revolutionaries were imprisoned by the Imam in Al-Qahira of Hajja such as lieutenant Abdullah Al-Luqayya and the father figure of Yemeni revolutionary fervor, Ahmed Mohamed Noman.

However, Al-Qahira's more decisive role was during the revolutionary years of '62, '65, and '68. Once the castle fell into their hands, the republicans were able to launch successful counter-attacks against the royalists' strongholds in the surrounding areas.

### Description

The total area of the castle and its walls at the top of the mountain is around 1,100 sq. m. The castle's main building consists of three levels. A small door at the top level leads to the castle's roof with its three defense towers, which overlook the town of Hajja from the east, west, north, and part of the south.

The castle was built in a modified old Yemeni architectural style. The entrances, exits, window sizes, shape of the stairs, and wall basis are all done according to the original Yemeni style. The structure of the inner building, however, is influenced by the Turkish style of architecture. It is open and capacious to allow plenty of daylight to stream in.

### Main Features

Defense-wise, Al-Qahira's main feature is that, along with its walls and other fortifications, it

forms one solid body.

The castle's wall completely surrounds the mountain's top, preventing people and armies from crossing to the other side. The only way is through the castle's main gate. The only negative aspect is that the road leading up to the castle is completely defenseless. The castle became an ordinary habitat for the Hajja townsfolk. Realizing the vulnerability of the road leading to it, the castle's designer chose a circular shape for better safety and security of the people living within the castle's confines. The top of the castle, however, is rather exposed. The mosque, the water tanks, the baths, and the living quarters all look like those in any ordinary residence, except for being heavily fortified from the outside.

### Tourism Potential

Despite its great tourist attraction, the castle still remains beyond reach. It is also completely neglected. There are no recreational or other services. More attention must be given by the authorities in Yemen to make visiting this historical place a more worthwhile prospect for the foreign tourists.



By Mohammed Al-Shoabi,  
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 Department at the Yemeni  
 Center for Studies and  
 Research, Sanaa.

Note: The photographs of this  
 castle and others featured in  
 this series were taken from a  
 distance because these places  
 are off limits.



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