

Yemen announces arrest of Westerners attacker

Americans on alert

Yemen Times Staff

The US embassy in Sana'a cautioned December 20 all American citizens and its personnel to be on alert following the stabbing of three Westerners in Sana'a last week. In a press statement, the US embassy requested the American citizens to "be particularly alert and to avoid travel on foot around Bab al Yemen, Tahrir Square, the Bounia neighborhood and the areas surrounding the Taj Sheba Hotel, Jamal Street and Suq al Qa'h."

This warning comes after the three stabbing incidents of Westerners were reported on the 15th, 16th and 17th of December. Following these incidents which were condemned nationwide, security alert was raised around the diplomatic areas, embassies and hotels.

"The American Embassy has advised its personnel to travel in groups with security accompaniment if they want to visit these areas. We also recommend that the use of public transportation be limited to known,

reliable operators and conveyances," the warning statement added.

Yemeni government announced Monday that the assailant was arrested red-handed, attempting to stab another foreigner. Yemen Times learnt from security source that investigation with the attacker revealed that the assailant was annoyed by the arrest of the ousted Iraqi president Saddam Hussein and the way that was exposed in the media.

He attacked a Dutch tourist, German businessman and an Austrian student. A diplomat at the Dutch embassy

denied while talking to Yemen Times news reports that the Dutch tourist was stabbed by his Dutch friend. He said that he was attacked by an unidentified person. He also denied that the injured tourist was taken by a special plane to be hospitalized in Oman. He pointed out that "the stabbed tourist is now in good condition and has resumed his tourist trip with the other Dutch group."

But, the German businessman has been reported to be still in the Yemen-German hospital for medical care as his injury was serious.

Heated debate in parliament over Kuwaiti criticism of Saleh

MOHAMMED AL-QADHI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Representative of the opposition at the parliament criticized the silence of the Yemeni government with regards to the harsh criticism of some Kuwaiti parliamentarians against President Ali Abdullah Saleh, accusing him of advising the ousted President Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait. Chairmanship of the parliament decided to ban airing on TV the debate that took place in the parliament debates singled out for discussing the lashing out at President Saleh by some Kuwaiti parliamentarians who accused the political system in Yemen of being "a Ba'athist gang". While the GPC caucus said that the Yemeni leadership can sort out this problem with its Kuwaiti counterpart, the opposition caucus, mainly that of Islah party demanded that the Ministers of foreign affairs and expatriates should be summoned to be questioned towards the Kuwaiti parliamentarians' criticism to Saleh as this, according to them, targets the sovereignty of Yemen at large.

Yemen government dismissed the accusation of Kuwaiti MP Muslim al-Barak and said that Yemen's stand towards the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991 was very clear and that it always works in favor of Arab unity and solidarity.



Efforts to clear the air between Yemen and Kuwait are being exerted after some members of the Kuwaiti parliament (shown) openly accused President Saleh of advising the ousted Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to re-invade Kuwait.



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Commission opens delegation in Yemen

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Last week, External Relations Commissioner, Chris Patten, and the Yemeni Ambassador at the EU, H.E. Mr. Mohammed Jaffer, signed the establishment agreement for opening of a European Commission delegation in Sana'a, Yemen, from January 2004.

The office in Sana'a will support development co-operation activities and implementation of the National Indicative Programme for Yemen, which represents the bulk of EC-Yemen bilateral relations. The establishment of the delegation will also help to strengthen co-operation in key areas of mutual interest such as human rights and democratization.

Commissioner Patten declared: "The opening of a delegation in Sana'a is a clear sign of the Commission's commitment to give a new impetus to EC-Yemen relations, including politi-



cal dialogue. Yemen is undertaking remarkable efforts in the field of democratization and human rights, which deserve to be further encouraged and supported, including through our financial support to the Yemen initiative to hold an International Conference on Human Rights, rule of law and the International Criminal Court next January in Sana'a."

The office in Sana'a will operate as an antenna of the Commission delegation in Amman and should be fully operative in February or March 2004.

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YEMEN TIMES
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المشاركة إقرأ التفاصيل:

على الراغبين في المشاركة في المسابقة تعبئة الكوبون المرفق وكتابة الإجابات الصحيحة للأسئلة المنشورة في كوبون الأسئلة للعدد الماضي ومن ثم فصح الكوبون وإرفاقه مع كوبون الأسئلة وإرسالها إلى مقر الصحيفة في صنعاء (شارع حده - خلف السفارة الفلسطينية) أو إلى مكاتب الصحيفة في عدن أو تعز أو الحديدة. كما يمكن للمشاركين إرسالها إلى بريد الصحيفة في صنعاء على عنوان (ص.ب. ٢٥٧٩، صنعاء). لن يتم قبول المشاركات التي يتقصها أي من الكوبونين أو التي تحوي معلومات شخصية ناقصة أو إجابات خاطئة لأي من الأسئلة المنشورة.

ستستمر المسابقة حتى مارس ٢٠٠٤ ويمكن للمشاركة أن يشارك لأكثر من مرة، وستعلن أسماء الفائزين في الصحيفة في وقت سيحدد لاحقاً كما سيتم توزيع الجوائز في خلال أيام من إعلان النتائج. للاستفسار يمكن للمشاركين الاتصال بالصحيفة على ٢٦٨٦٦١ (٠١) في أوقات الدوام. حظاً موفقاً للجميع...

المصدر: أقية هي شعارنا، وثقتكم هي غايتنا، شاركوا وترقبوا أسماءكم من بين الفائزين.....

Price hike implemented:

Bread prices up by 100%, wheat by 17%

Mohamed bin Sallam
Yemen Times Staff

A sudden price hike was witnessed throughout the country in the last few days following the government's implementation of a new stage of the economic reform program approved many years ago.

However, government sources admitted that the procedure was taken

advantage of by bakeries, merchants and distributors. This step was followed by an increase of 17% in wheat prices and an increase of 100% in bread prices.

Furthermore, this hike was not accompanied by any increase in salaries of governmental employees, and no promises in this respect were given.

The parliament held a session to discuss this sudden price hike and criticized the government for not monitoring the rise in prices of commodities that should not have increased in prices.

The last hike in prices of wheat is the last in a series of hikes that took place in the last two years, which resulted in an increase of more than 50% compared to its price two years ago.

Security incidents disrupt capital

Several security incidents have caused concern to residents of the capital Sanaa last week. Among the most serious incidents was the hijacking of a car loaded with material belonging to one of the prominent companies in Yemen at around 11:00 on Monday. The incident took place in Mujahid Street in Sanaa and targeted a company belonging to a Yemeni investor. The hijackers were said to have been supported by a prominent Yemeni Sheikh.

The vehicle was robbed of its contents in front of pedestrians and eyewitnesses. "How can investors be encouraged to invest in Yemen if such incidents take place in the heart of the capital and in broad daylight?"

This comes after a number of security incidents against foreigners and expatriates took place more than a week ago. Security forces did arrest a few suspects, who are now undergoing criminal investigation.

After signing an agreement with the International Bank of Yemen: American Express credit cards in Yemen



Signing the Cooperation Agreement - YT Photo Mohammed Al-Masani

A cooperation agreement was signed between American Express and the International Bank of Yemen (IBY) last Monday signalling the launch of American Express Credit card services in Yemen.

Mr. Ahmed Thabit, the General manager of IBY signed the agreement on behalf of the Bank and Mr. Rasool Hujair signed it on behalf of American Express. Mr. Omar Alawi, Vice president of American Express - Oman and Yemen attended this event.

In a statement to Yemen Times, Mr. Rasool Hujair said that this agreement is of great importance as it symbolizes the first step towards a long-lasting relationship between IBY and American Express.

He also added that the agreement consists of two parts; the first is to go about the improvement of services offered by American Express in Yemen and the second is to coordinate with

IBY means to promote and issue American Express credit cards for Yemen residents.

In addition, Mr. Hujair mentioned that the decision to associate American Express to IBY was due to the good reputation the bank enjoys in terms of customer service and facilities provided to clients.

According to Mr. Hujair, the agreement will allow American Express customers to contact the bank to enquire about bill payment and other services. "There will be trained employees in the bank offering these services and promoting American Express credit card services in the market," he said.

Mr. Mohammed Al-Qirshi of IBY also added that as this service is available for the first time in Yemen, tourists and businessmen can use their American Express cards to withdraw cash or go shopping using the card's facilities.

Readers' Voice

Yemen Times is reintroducing a popular feature "Readers' Voice" - formerly known as YT Opinion Poll.

This is your opportunity to have a say on world and local affairs.

THIS EDITION'S QUESTION:

What do you think the reaction of Yemen to the Kuwaiti MP accusations of President Saleh be?

- Nothing, because the opinion was not official
- We should send a letter of protest, or do a similar thing
- Relations between the two countries should be reviewed
- I don't know or don't care

Do you think Libya's latest decision of scrapping weapons of mass destruction a wise decision and should other Arab countries follow suit, while Israel possesses the largest weapons arsenal in the region?

- I agree with it 65%
- I don't think it was a wise decision 29%
- I don't care 6%

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

Apology

Yemen Times apologizes to Mr. Hani Gazem As-Silwi for the technical mistake of dropping his name in his article titled "West of Taiz: a land of enchantment, issue No: 684 dated 10 Nov, 2003."

Taiz witnesses new service projects

TAIZ BUREAU
YEMEN TIMES

Citizens in the city of Taiz have expressed delight for the improvement in public services such as electricity, water, sanitation, and telephones in their city. In a recent survey done by Yemen Times, the public indicated optimism in that the city will probably retain its once known image as a clean and beautiful town.

Furthermore, there are also visible improvements in the environmental

aspect of the city. Many projects are being implemented by the General Authority Projects Fund for Cleanliness and Enhancement for the purpose of making Taiz a cleaner and more environment-friendly city.

The fund is headed by Mr. Abulhakeem Seif, who is currently involved in supervising the fund's activities in planting trees along various streets in Taiz, and ensuring cleanliness of the city.

However, many residents complained

that many of the city's roads are being dug once and again by different governmental bodies with the justification of expansion and enhancement of public services. This results in the uprooting of trees, destruction of paved streets, and sometimes causing danger to pedestrians and cars.

Overall, the conditions in Taiz are improving, according to residents of the city, but more attention should be paid to road pavement, lightening of streets, and planting of more trees.

Dual employment and absence cases unveiled in Taiz

Taiz Bureau
Yemen Times

The Civil Service Office of Taiz has unveiled several cases of dual employments in the city. The office's manager Abdullah Farhat Al-Humaidi, along with Mr. Mohamed Salehb bin Saleh, the Manager of the Audit and Inspection

department have declared that employees who worked in multiple jobs will be questioned and possibly prosecuted for abusing the law, which states that dual employment is forbidden for governmental employees.

The office also formulated a complete and comprehensive report about employees who have been absent throughout the

period before or after the eid period. On the first three days, a relatively high absence average was witnessed in governmental offices. The office then issued strong orders to administrative managers in the city to ensure that appropriate punishment against those who were absent is taken, so as to ensure better attendance rates in the future.

The Embassy of United States of America announces for an immediate jobs opening within its organization.

1-"Guard"

The position is located in the local Guard program section, American Embassy, under the general supervision of the regional security officer. Performs guard duties service to safeguard U.S Government property /and or personnel.

Required Qualifications

Education: Completion of elementary school is required.

Prior work experience: previous security training and experience is desirable

Language proficiency: level II (limited Knowledge) of English and fluent in Arabic is required.

Ability: must have the ability to give and follow instructions and be reliable in attendance and performance.

Grade/Salary: EFM/MOH/Non Ordinary Resident: FP-CC (to be confirmed by Washington)

Ordinary Resident: FSN-2

2-"Guard shift Supervisor"

The position is located in the local Guard program section, American Embassy, under the general supervision of the Regional Security officer. Responsible for supervising the U.S Embassy and residential local guard force. Which is assigned to safeguard U.S Government personnel and property.

Required Qualifications

The position is located in the local Guard program section, American Embassy, under the general supervision of the Regional Security officer. Responsible for supervising the U.S Embassy and residential local guard force. Which is assigned to safeguard U.S Government personnel and property.

Grade/Salary. EFM/MOH/Non Ordinary Resident: FP-9 (to be confirmed by Washington)

Ordinary Resident: FSN-5

How to apply: Interested applicants should complete OF-612 or submit a current C.V (With awards, recommendation letters, copies of degree earned) that address the qualification requirements of the position as listed above and contact the Embassy personal office, American Embassy, Dhahr Himyar Street, Sana'a Tel: 303-155, no later than December 31,2003.

NOTE: ALL ORDINARY RESIDENT APPLICANTS MUST BE RESIDING IN COUNTRY AND HAVE THE REQUIRED WORK AND RESIDENCE PERMITS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION.



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Candidate

- should be dynamic and possess good communication skills, have initiative and the ability to perform as a team member
- should have a Degree in Nutrition, Pharmacy or Biology
- must possess a good command of Arabic and be fluent in English
- computer literacy is a definite advantage
- should possess a valid driving license

Experience

- 2-3 years relevant experience is required.
- Consideration will also be given to fresh graduates.

Geographic Mobility

- Candidates should be willing to travel across Yemen.

Candidates meeting all above requirements should send their detailed resume with address, telephone number and a recent photograph to:

Nestlé Product Export Corporation
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P. O. Box 16388
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Fax No. 009671 237233

* All applications will be dealt with strict confidence.

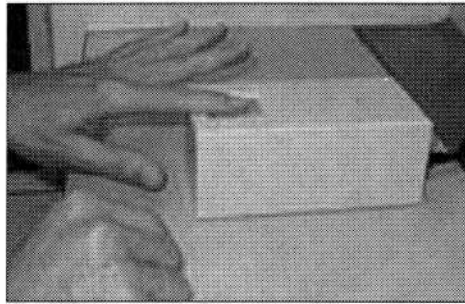
US embassy activates fingerprinting system

The US embassy has announced last week that it is activated the newly installed fingerprinting system at the embassy's premises in Sana'a.

As of December 16, the American Consulate in Sana'a began fingerprinting applicants for non-immigrant visas to the United States.

According to the embassy source, Ambassador Edmund J. Hull was the first individual in Yemen to have his fingerprints taken on the new consular fingerprinting system. The sources said that the ambassador Hull tried out the new system in the consular section at the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a.

Ambassador Edmund J. Hull was recently the first individual in Yemen to have his fingerprints taken on the new consular fingerprinting system. Ambassador Hull tried out the new system in the consular section at the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a. U.S. law required that fingerprints be taken of almost all non-immigrant visa (NIV) applicants throughout the world. The new system is being installed in every NIV issuing center in U.S. embassies and consulates and as of December 16, 2003, the American Consulate in Sana'a began



fingerprinting applicants for non-immigrant visas to the United States.

The U.S. law requires that fingerprints be taken of almost all non-immigrant visa (NIV) applicants worldwide. The new system is being installed in every NIV issuing center in U.S. embassies and consulates.

"The fingerprinting process involves taking two fingerprints from each NIV applicant using an electronic scanner. No ink is used and the process takes only seconds," a press release from the embassy said.

"Although the new fingerprinting process will not add additional processing time to non-immigrant visa requests, it is recommended that all applicants for visitor visas apply at least six weeks prior to travel due to increased processing time for all non-immigrant visas world-wide."

The Embassy of Japan supports the First Japanese Language Speech Contest

The first Japanese Speech Contest was held on Thursday 18 December in Sana'a by the Yemeni-Japanese Friendship Association (YJFA).

Nine students participated in this contest and showed great skills in the Japanese language where they study at the Yemeni-Japanese Friendship Association. Mr. Yuichi Ishii, Ambassador of Japan in Sana'a attended the contest and handed prizes to the participants. The contest was also

attended by Haj Adhban, chairman of the Yemeni-Japanese Friendship Association and members, the Japanese community in Sana'a and students of the Japanese language courses. The second contest will be held in December next year. YJFA has been established to promote friendship between Yemeni and Japanese peoples. Teaching the Japanese language is one of the activities that serve to achieve its goals.

AMIDEAST and US embassy conclude activities

AMIDEAST, through a grant funded by the U.S. Government's Regional English Language Office, recently completed workshops throughout Yemen for the training of English language instructors at four university faculties of education in Yemen. AMIDEAST also used the fund to donate reference book collections for English language teaching. Universities that participated in the workshops and received book donations were Aden, Dhamar, Hodeidah and Hadramout Universities.

Attending the opening of the two-day workshops were various members of the U.S. Embassy staff along with staff from AMIDEAST and Mr. Steve Boeshaar, the AMIDEAST teacher trainer who conducted the workshops.

From the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, Deputy Chief of Mission, Alan Misenheimer attended the opening at Dhamar University, John Balian the Public Affairs Officer attended the opening at Aden University and Robert Lindsey, Regional English Language Officer for the region, opened the workshop at Hadramout University.

The book donations and workshops focused on addressing the quality of English language instruction in Yemen. The books that were donated as a part of this program were critical reference collections. During the workshops, instruction was provided in the use of the materials along with American-oriented input offered to English language demonstrators and instructors at the four universities.

Amnesty International sends Yemen's FM a letter of appeal

Amnesty International Section de Bundesrepublik Deutschland had on 21 December dispatched a letter to Dr Abu Bakr Abdulla al-Qurbi, Yemen's minister of foreign affairs, a copy of which sent to Yemen Times newspaper, expressing fears about the risk of Yemen's decision to forcibly return two Algerian citizens to their country.

The letter says, I am deeply concerned that Abdul Rahman Ameer (m), Kamel Berkane (m), both Algerian nationals, are at risk of being forcibly returned from Yemen to Algeria at the end of their prison sentences this month. Should they be returned, they would be at risk of torture or ill treatment. The two men were sentenced to five years' imprisonment in August 1999 for forming an armed gang and possession of weapons. I have already made public my concern that Abdul Rahman Ameer, Kamel Berhane and at least eight others were sentenced to prison terms on charges related to "terrorist" acts following court proceed-

ings which fell short of international standards for fair trials. The men were reportedly held incommunicado with no access to lawyers, and tortured. Amnesty International's assessment of the risk which the two men would face is based on its recent findings that torture remains widespread in Algeria and is systematically practiced on detainees suspected of crimes categorized as acts terrorism of subversion. This and other human rights issues are described in the report Algeria: Steps towards change or empty promises published on 16 September 2003. I call on Yemen to abide by its international obligations and ensure that Abdul Rahman Ameer and Kamel Berkane are forcibly sent to Algeria or any other country where they might and Kamel of serious human rights abuses, including torture. I call on the authorities to allow Abdul Rahman Ameer and Kamel Berkane the opportunity to challenge any decision on their expulsion.

Using puppet theater for children rights awareness

Yemen Times Taiz Bureau

The French organisation DIA, in cooperation with Taiz Bureau of Education, is organizing a campaign of awareness on children rights among Taiz schools students during the period 20-25 December 2003. Mr Amin al-Da'bie, in charge of social activities at DIA organization mentioned that the campaign would be carried out through a mobile puppet theater shows that would deal with questions of enlightenment in theatrical show presented by the mobile theater group, pointing that

the campaign is taking a new form targeting school students. The objective is to develop their comprehension of children rights and let them acquire information on their educational and humanitarian rights in general, besides dissemination of awareness about human rights among school students.

It is to be recalled that the campaign targets 760 students at seven schools and there would distribution of prizes to students who win in the competition organised by the program of the awareness campaign.



Puppets are used here to raise awareness of Taiz children of human rights

Parliament approves law on Civil Service Fund

ISMAIL AL-GHABIRI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The parliament has approved in its meeting held last Saturday the law that regulates the work of the civil service fund after being discussed thoroughly by the parliament's labor force and social affairs committee.

The law was passed after it received the majority of endorsement votes in the parliamentary session.

Furthermore, the parliament also witnessed the announcement of the complimentary report of the constitutional and legal committee concerning the premier's draft project about amendments to certain laws.



WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS (WFP) VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The WFP is seeking to fill the post of Finance Assistant in Sana'a. Female candidates are encouraged to apply. This post is open for Yemeni Nationals only.

The main responsibilities of the Finance Assistant are:

- Extract and input data from various sources in administrative, finance and procurement related to WFP operations;
- Establish and maintain financial records on expenditures for relevant transactions;
- Review supporting documentation for processing various actions, related to budget, procurement, country activities etc.
- Verify claims for accuracy and confirm availability of funds prior to review by supervisor and prepare payment vouchers;
- Assist in the preparation of budget, accounting, financial reports, and other reports as required;
- Prepare payments, verify invoices/bills for payment, and follow up settlement;
- Prepare financial statement as required;
- Perform other duties assigned.

Qualifications:

- University degree
- Training and/or experience utilising computers, including word processing, spreadsheet and other software packages.
- Very good knowledge of Arabic and English.

Experience: Five years of progressively responsible work, including at least two years, in the field of finance, accounting, audit or administrative services.

Interested applicants should deliver their applications alongwith their detailed CV's in English.

All applications to be submitted to the Representative not later than 31.12.03 in closed envelope clearly marked :

(Application - Finance Assistant at WFP) at the following address: **UN Building, Off 60 Meter Road, Sana'a or P.O. Box 7181 Sana'a, Republic of Yemen.**



WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS (WFP) VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The WFP is seeking to fill the post of National Programme Officer in Sana'a. Qualified Female candidates are encouraged to apply. This post is open for Yemeni Nationals only.

The main responsibilities of the National Programme Officer are:

- Establish and update a functioning data base system to increase and expand the knowledge of WFP Country Staff as well as counterparts and implementing partners on food security and vulnerability issues related to WFP activities in Yemen.
- Establish and update an inventory and maps on local resources and services.
- Process and analyze primary and secondary data as well as information obtained from data base and monitoring reports and prepare evaluation studies assessing the impact of food assistance.
- Develop profiles of national research institutions..
- Prepare reports on disaster prone and risk areas in the country.
- Design and develop a comprehensive system for monitoring and reporting on WFP activities, designing reporting forms and define quantitative and qualitative indicators to ensure proper management and capture lessons learned.
- Train concerned CO staff and counterparts in conducting monitoring activities and the preparation of monitoring/progress reports.
- Prepare thematic studies related to WFP activities (health, education women empowerment) as well as community food security.
- Act as focal point for the preparation of corporate reports.

Qualifications and experience:

- University degree in social sciences, anthropology, statistics and/ or development studies.
- Four to five years post graduate, research progressively responsible experience in data management and socio economic analysis and humanitarian emergency needs assessment.
- Good knowledge of and familiarity with development assistance programs.
- Good computer skills and good knowledge in information management systems
- Very good analytical and writing skills in English and Arabic.

Interested applicants should deliver their applications along with their detailed CV's in English.

All applications to be submitted to the Representative not later than 31.12.03 in closed envelope clearly marked :

(Application - National Programme Officer at WFP) at the following address: **UN Building, Off 60 Meter Road, Sana'a or P.O. Box 7181 Sana'a, Republic of Yemen.**

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Human Rights ministry observes Human Rights World Declaration Day

By MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

On the 55th anniversary of World Human Rights Declaration the Yemeni ministry for human rights had on 22 December held a speech ceremony. The event was coinciding with holding the training course on qualifying local trainers in the field of human rights.

Several speeches were delivered at the ceremony, all expressing viewpoints on the occasion. The last address was delivered by Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal under whose auspices the ceremony was held. Mr Bajammal called in his speech to enhance the culture of dialogue and tolerance before calling for dialogue of cultures and civilization, clarifying that the culture of dialogue occupies the essence of human rights. The PM also stressed on integration of the relationship between the government and opposition and that there was no difference between them regarding issues of human rights but in judgments which all are endeavor to develop via dialogue. He had made it clear that the question here is the man responsibility towards his human brother.

The minister for human rights Ms Amat al-Aleem al-Soussawa indicated in her speech to the level at which the issue of human rights had attained and what they represent of importance for development of contemporary societies and that they need for dealing with international conventions and non-contradiction with international references and cultural and religious peculiarities between Arab and Muslim countries that entails practical problems in convincing the public opinion about human rights issues.

Address for political parties was delivered by Mr Mohammed al-Ruba'ie who said that changing con-

cepts "is the right beginning." When the concept prevails that the state has killed or tortured or attacked a citizen because a certain official has violated the law and abused his authority, it is then a wrong concept offends then state and its role and it would be enhanced in official insistence on defending the offender instead of clinging to the law and respecting it, Mr al-Ruba'ie said. He added, in this context comes restriction of freedom, as happened regarding the law in demonstration law which the JMP tied to amend in a manner not contradicting the principle of rights and freedoms. Opposition parties are still calling for reconsidering this law and also for withdrawing the law of press whose discussion has been postponed instead of being withdrawn despite its rejection by journalists. He concluded his address by asking whether it was not injustice and corruption and assailing on human rights when human dignity is offended inside police stations by oppression and beating in addition to the conditions of poverty and firing employees from their jobs?

The UN resident representative Mr James Rawley had also delivered a speech saying:

It is truly an honour for me to address you on this special day that celebrates the 55th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations and its member states. Although promotion and protection of Human Rights have formed the underlying basis of all activities since the inception of the organisation, more recently, they are increasingly recognized as an indispensable part of human development. Indeed, human development and Human Rights go hand with each other. For instance, alleviation of poverty, a core concern of the UN's development strategy, is no longer only a question of 'Human needs' but that of 'rights'. Universal access to education and healthcare, freedom from intolerance, violence and discrimination, and demo-



PM Bajammal handling prizes to local Human Rights trainees

cratic practices are all basic human rights. Respect for these human rights and freedoms, in turn, ensure the vibrancy, productivity and creativity of a community. From this perspective, the second Arab Human Development Report, a report written by Arabs under the sponsorship of UNDP and launched only this month, has been devoted to assessing the 'knowledge deficit' in the Arab world – and asserts that Arab countries will not be able to make much tangible progress in the long term without acquiring the relevant know-how. In other words, the need for free access to and greater production of 'knowledge' is an integral component of developing human capacity and promoting 'freedom' and democratic governance. Put more simply, protection of Human Rights is about valuing and respecting individuals, each different and respected for his or her uniqueness. Too often, and as we continue to witness around the world including in this region, tolerance and

appreciation for this uniqueness have been compromised. Yet, there is no greater source of vitality for any society, and no better way to tap the Human potential, than the shared conviction put into practice, that all members of society are equally valued and respected, regardless of their strengths, weaknesses, values, beliefs, age or gender. Every country's development effort thrives on the energy created by its people, who are treated equally, fairly and justly and according to the rule of law. Thus, the protection and promotion of human rights for all is a country's vehicle for enhancing human development, be it in fighting poverty or accelerating reforms. In Yemen, important progress has been made in the promotion of Human Rights, which in turn is supporting the country's overall efforts in development. Yemen is a signatory to nearly all international human rights treaties. The recent establishment of the Ministry of Human Rights and its Supreme National

Committee for Human Rights, under very capable leadership, is widely acknowledged to be a big step in the right direction and bears testament to the government's commitment to making human rights a priority in Yemen. In partnership with UNDP, and with coming support from the United Kingdom and Canada, the Ministry has launched a comprehensive Human Rights project, whose primary aim is to build the capacity of both the government and the civil society to promote and protect human rights. Also, the presence of active Yemeni NGOs in the field of Human Rights, as well as in women and children's welfare, attests to the responsibility that the Yemeni civil society is prepared to shoulder. An example of activity in this area was the convention of "The National Seminar on the Status of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in International and National Legislation", commemorating the Human Rights Day this month. Also,

on the same day, Yemen served as a venue for a regional seminar by the Human Rights Information and Training Centre in cooperation with Germany's Konrad Adenauer Establishment. Today, we are also celebrating the closing of the two-week Training – of – Trainer Workshop on Human Rights in which representatives of various Ministries participated. The event was co-sponsored by a number of UN agencies – the OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, and WHO – and was organized jointly by the Ministry of Human Rights and the HURIST (Strengthening Human Rights Programme) Technical Team. The event epitomises the growing partnership between the UN agencies and the government of Yemen in the field of human rights. We must not forget, however, that there continue to exist severe challenges around the world in the promotion and protection of Human Rights as we face the beginning of the New Year. Vast portions of humanity labour under severe poverty, epidemics, violence, terrorism, inequalities and injustice, and bad governance, be it in Iraq, Palestine, or elsewhere. In Yemen, also, much work remains in overcoming some of these challenges. One area of particular concern is the large existing gender disparities in economic, social, and political spheres and the differences in rights and privileges where, in spite of efforts, significant gaps exist between men and women. In working to promote human rights for all, the UN is committed to its partnership with the people and the government of Yemen. First and foremost, our emphasis lies in expanding the capacity of the government of Yemen in the Human Rights field. Today is a special day to reflect on both the achievements and challenges in the pursuit for universal respect for human rights, and by extension, winning the battle for human development, both in Yemen and elsewhere in our increasingly interconnected world.

Symposium on Yemen-GCC future relations,

Various viewpoints on advantages of Yemen accession to the GCC



By YASSER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES

Viewpoints were expressed by a number of Yemeni politicians and media men participating in the symposium "Yemen and the GCC" on advantage of Yemen's accession to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) organized in Sana'a on Wednesday by the Yemeni Center for Strategic Studies. While some of them were skeptical about the future importance for the GCC itself, others had called for enhancing the Yemeni-GCC relations and preparing Yemen to be qualified for joining the grouping and overcoming hindrances that intercept that. The symposium organized in cooperation with the German Friedrich Ebert organization had discussed three working papers on future of Yemeni-Gulf relations in the light of regional and international developments. The first working paper, presented by Dr Abduljaleel al-Soufi, professor of political geography at Thamar University, had tackled the strategic dimension of Yemen's accession to the GCC and the strategic benefits that it would be produced by that for both parties, especially the Gulf countries.

The paper had touched on the geopolitical future of the GCC after the

accession of Yemen particularly after the events of 9/11 2001 and the American occupation of Iraq last April. The paper also made it clear that political, economic and military effects of regional and international developments impose a number of various dangers on the Arabian Peninsula a matter making Yemen's accession as an additional power to the GCC and an enhancement of the opportunities of its existence.

The second working paper presented by researcher Mansour al-Basheeri tackled reality of economic partnership between Yemen and the GCC countries and its future. The paper revealed development of the process of exchange of trade between the two parties till the Gulf countries have become representing a significant partner for Yemen in the recent years. As for Yemeni labour the paper had confirmed that the Gulf market was still importing millions of workforce from Asia and other areas and a large proportion of unskilled labour working in areas in need of skills, a matter that makes seeking help of Yemeni labour more important and useful for the Gulf societies, especially under the population, security and social dangers threatening the region.

The paper also dealt with appraisal of the practical steps that had been completed since the declaration of accepting Yemen's membership of some bureaus of the GCC, revealing that the steps taken in this regard were slow and not meeting ambitions of

peoples. Membership of some Gulf bureaus had not been finished but in the last quarter of 2003 although the relations in the field of education had been characterized by taking better steps, most outstanding of which was unification of curricula of mathematics and sciences.

In the areas of exchanged visits the paper explained that topics discussed during mutual visits focused on bilateral relations between Yemen and each individual Gulf state but did not touch on Yemen's relationship with the Council as a regional organization. The topics also were limited to discussion of security and border aspects and ways of cooperation in fighting terror. The working paper had also called for rendering interest and attention for rehabilitation of Yemeni economy by reformulating and amending Yemeni laws so that to achieve economic partnership and benefit from the many and diversified Yemeni and Gulf economic constituents through building joint investment projects, preparation of investment climates, development of Yemeni human capabilities, increasing Gulf support for Yemen in development, strengthening inter-trade through offering favourite priority to Yemeni or Gulf producers inside local markets and removal of administrative hindrances and artificial barriers.

The third working paper dealt with future of the GCC under regional and international variables. The paper was written and presented by Dr Saif al-



View from the panel

Assali. It had reviewed the Gulf security premonition that had led to the establishment of the GCC in the wake of the Islamic revolution and the Iraq-Iran war that constituted the most important motives for the establishment of the Council. The Gulf States have however failed in achieving a genuine security integration protecting the region against dangers. The GCC experiment confirmed that it could not reach a united concept of security and foreign policy and consequently appeared big security and political variations in stands of Gulf States.

The paper pointed out that the region

at this period was passing through acute changes and that the United States has decided to be owner of decision in the region due to its petroleum significance and non-existence of a regional power qualified for the leadership role in its stead.

As for future of the GCC the paper proposed a number of considerations through which to see its future. He most important of these considerations are the expected internal political and economic developments and the extent of the GCC states power in interaction positively with them and develop their political and economic options towards

a broader popular participation and realization of real political stability. The paper had also indicated other effects determining future of the GCC such as anticipated regional and international developments that would have their impact on the Council's future.

The paper had finally tackled future of the relationship of Yemen with the GCC, calling for fulfillment of advanced Yemeni steps in the democratic field and investment in building man and stabilization of the state of law and order in order to qualify Yemen to deserving a real role inside the GCC.

Gulf Arabs agree joint anti-terror measures

KUWAIT, Dec 22 (Reuters) - Gulf Arab leaders said on Monday they had agreed on new measures to combat terrorism, including purging rhetoric from school textbooks that Washington says fuels anti-Christian and anti-Jewish sentiment.

The announcement came at the end of an annual meeting of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — a political and military alliance grouping heavy-weight Saudi Arabia with Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.

"Due to the Council's concern to boost security cooperation and coordination to fight terrorism, it blessed the adoption of a treaty to combat terrorism," said the final communique, read out by Secretary-General Abdul Rahman al-Attiya.

The GCC has come under pressure from Washington since the September 11, 2001 attacks to take stronger steps against violent Islamists and to reform school curricula.

Officials said the treaty called for security coordination, exchange of information, strengthening security networks and drying up sources of terrorism as well as educational changes.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad al-Sabah told a news conference interior ministers will soon sign the treaty, similar to a pact signed by Arab states in 1998.

"It ... defines exactly what is terrorism ... it also deals directly with the sources of

financing and methods of operation we might combat," he added.

The educational reforms include removal from school textbooks of material describing followers of other religions as infidels and enemies of Islam.

Critics say language exercises in Saudi schools have sometimes asked children to complete sentences like "God hates..." — the correct answer being "infidels".

A text used by 13 and 14-year-olds in Saudi Arabia used to enjoin Muslims not to befriend Christians and Jews because "emulation of the infidels leads to loving them". The passage was recently erased.

U.S. officials, pointing out that 15 of the September 11 hijackers were Saudis, have argued such teaching lies behind the anti-Western sentiment that led to attacks like September 11.

The GCC said the educational reforms were based on a document presented by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah, whose country is fighting militant violence linked to Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda.

The GCC, which groups four OPEC members, discussed relations with the new Iraq and welcomed the capture of longtime foe Saddam Hussein "as a boost to security and stability".

The GCC announcement came a day after the United States issued a new terrorism alert, warning there was a high risk of attacks in the United States during Christmas and New Year.

The two-day summit, convened amid



Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Abdullah (C), Bahrain King Hamad Bin Isa al-Khalifa (L) and Kuwait's Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah walk into the final session of the Gulf Cooperation Council Summit on December 22, 2003. U.S. allied Gulf Arab leaders agreed in the meeting on measure to combat terrorism which has plagued the region. REUTERS

tight security, also discussed steps towards economic integration, including a single currency and common market.

After Libya has said it is giving up plans for nuclear and other banned weapons, The GCC renewed its calls for a Middle East free of all weapons of

mass destruction.

It called for Israel to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and subject its nuclear facilities to inspections.

The communique made no mention of U.S. calls for governments to lighten Iraq's enormous debt burden but Gulf

officials said the controversial issue was tackled on the sidelines.

Kuwait's foreign minister said it will be tackled fully once U.S. Presidential envoy James Baker's visits. Kuwait, invaded by Iraq in 1990, opposes cancelling all the money Baghdad owes it.

Sudan foes agree wealth share terms

NAIVASHA, Kenya, Dec 23 (Reuters) - Sudan's Khartoum-based government has agreed in principle with its rebel foes on how to share out the country's wealth when their civil war ends, Kenyan Foreign Minister Kalonzo Musyoka said on Tuesday.

The agreement marks a key advance at peace talks and leaders of the government and the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) were expected to review a draft accord later on Tuesday.

"The two leaders have agreed on wealth sharing... It's an agreement in principle," Musyoka told Reuters, referring to rebel leader John Garang and the government's first vice president Osman Ali Taha.

Such an accord on sharing the wealth of Africa's largest country would dismantle a big hurdle to ending 20 years of civil war that have cost two million lives.

Musyoka said he did not expect the two parties to sign a separate deal on wealth sharing and instead the two sides would work through Christmas to wrap up a more inclusive peace pact covering other issues by the end of December.

"I am extremely optimistic that they will sign an (more inclusive) agreement by December 31," he said.

Some delegates had expected a signing ceremony for a deal on wealth sharing to take place on Wednesday.

War broke out in Sudan in 1983, pitting the Islamic government in the Arab-speaking north against rebels seeking more autonomy for the largely animist or Christian south. Oil, ideology, ethnicity and religion have complicated it.

The sides agreed last year to a waiver on Islamic law in non-Muslim areas and a six-year transitional period from January 2004 after which the south would vote on whether to secede.

Militants tied to Saddam aide arrested, judge killed

BAGHDAD, Dec 23 (Reuters) - American soldiers arrested Muslim militants with ties to an Iraqi fugitive near the top of their most wanted list, but the assassination of a senior Iraqi judge highlighted continuing instability in postwar Iraq.

Youssef Khoshi, a chief investigating judge in the northern city of Mosul, was shot and killed by three men in a car on Monday night.

"He was shot six times from behind in the back. He died immediately," police Major Ali Mohammed said on Tuesday.

The slaying was part of a wave of attacks in recent weeks on officials working under Iraq's U.S. administration, including policemen, oil executives and other judges.

Guerrillas have killed U.S. soldiers and anyone seen cooperating with them. A bomb was found on Monday in the

home of Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, a Shi'ite leader and head of the U.S.-backed Iraqi Governing Council, but was defused, his son said.

Hakim was in Moscow for debt relief talks, but the bomb underscored fears that Iraq's volatile sectarian mix could explode before the country even starts rebuilding.

American soldiers were hopeful they could close in on one of their most wanted fugitives, Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, after capturing three Muslim militants with ties to Saddam Hussein's former deputy.

Valuable intelligence

"We detained three individuals in the extremist religious organisations with ties to...Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri," Lieutenant-Colonel William Adamson, head of a U.S. task force in Baquba, told Reuters.

Adamson said raids after Saddam's capture were yielding valuable intelligence which would make it easier to make further arrests of guerrillas, who have killed 202 U.S. troops since Washington declared major combat over on May 1.

The arrests are also significant because they point to a tangible link between Saddam loyalists and Muslim militants who are suspected of crossing Iraq's borders to wage holy war against the occupying forces.

Adamson said the arrested men had ties to central Iraqi towns that have been hotbeds of anti-American guerrilla activity — Baquba, Falluja and Ramadi.

Douri, who has a \$10 million reward on his head, is number six on a list of 55 Iraqis most wanted by the United States and is suspected of playing a role in directing insurgents.

Israeli raid kills eight in surge of bloodshed



The body of Palestinian youth lies between the damaged houses after he was shot by Israeli troops during an Israeli operation at Rafah refugee camp southern Gaza Strip December 23, 2003. Israeli troops and tanks swept into the Gaza Strip refugee camp, killing five Palestinians in a big raid just hours after a militant ambush cost Israel its first two dead soldiers in a month of relative calm. REUTERS

GAZA, Dec 23 (Reuters) - Israeli troops and tanks swept into a Gaza Strip refugee camp on Tuesday, killing eight Palestinians in the deadliest raid for nearly two months and breaking a spell of relative calm that has spurred peace efforts.

Two Israeli officers were killed in Gaza on Monday in the violent upsurge, which underlined obstacles to negotiations after an Egyptian peace envoy was accosted by Palestinian radicals who branded him a traitor for talking to Israel.

Egypt's Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher, who won a cautious Israeli offer of support for a Palestinian truce that Cairo is trying to broker, played down the incident at Jerusalem's al-Aqsa mosque and said the peace push would go on.

Palestinians said about 20 Israeli tanks rumbled into a refugee camp in Rafah overnight, drawing fire from militants. More tanks, firing machine-guns, moved in during the day.

Israeli soldiers killed a 50-year-old man and two gunmen in the camp, medics said, adding another Palestinian was shot in the stomach and died in hospital.

One militant was brought dead to the hospital still clutching a bomb, witnesses said. Another died of shrapnel wounds. A Palestinian policeman was shot near the border post and an

onlooker was killed as he watched tanks at his window.

The army said Tuesday's raid was not in response to the ambush in central Gaza late on Monday in which two officers died — the first Israelis killed in a month. At least 25 Palestinians died in violence over the same period.

An army spokesman said the Rafah raid was "part of a continuous fight" to destroy tunnels to smuggle arms from Egypt. The army said one tunnel was found in a house. A similar operation in October took a week and left 15 Palestinians dead.

"Blood for blood and killing for killing," chanted thousands of Palestinians at funerals for the dead in Tuesday's raid.

Militants vow reprisals

The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, which lost two dead in the raid and was one of two militant groups behind Monday's ambush, vowed to strike back inside Israel. The group is linked to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's Fatah faction.

The Jewish state has demanded a Palestinian crackdown on militant groups as a commitment to the so-called "road map" and warned of unilateral steps if it failed that would cost the Palestinians some of the land they want for a state.

Foreign Ministry spokesman

Jonathan Peled said the ambush in Gaza showed Palestinians were determined "to try and derail any kind of chance to move forward with the road map."

Palestinians say Israel must meet its own pledges by removing Jewish outposts and freezing settlement-building on occupied land, as well as halting work on a barrier through the West Bank that Israel says it needs to keep out suicide bombers.

Egypt has been trying to bring Israelis and Palestinians together for talks and also broker a ceasefire by militant factions that could give the peace plan fresh impetus.

Sharon signalled to Maher that Israel would welcome any militant truce, but factions dismissed that as empty words.

Maher's landmark visit, the first since the start of the Palestinian uprising in 2000 by such a senior Egyptian official, was marred by a crowd which jeered, jostled and threw shoes at him when he went to pray after meeting Sharon.

Hitting someone with a shoe is a big Arab insult.

Palestinian officials condemned the attack by radicals stirred to anger by Maher's meeting with the Israelis. Egypt signed a peace deal with Israel in 1979. Israeli police arrested seven over the attack. Maher, 68, played down the incident.

Militants attack Egypt envoy after talk with Israel

JERUSALEM, Dec 22 (Reuters) - Radical Palestinian Muslims yelling "traitor" attacked Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher in a Jerusalem mosque on Monday after landmark talks with Israeli leaders to try to revive a stalled peace plan.

Maher, 68, was rushed to hospital for checks after the attack at al-Aqsa mosque, which overshadowed a meeting at which officials said Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had indicated that Israel would welcome any truce by Palestinian militants.

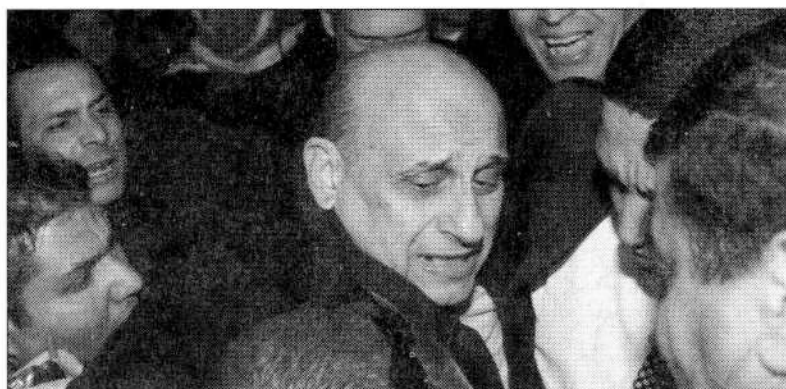
Two of those Palestinian factions claimed responsibility for the killing of two Israeli army officers in an ambush in the Gaza Strip. An Israeli army spokesman said tanks and helicopters swept into the area and one gunman was later shot dead.

Militants have so far rebuffed Egyptian efforts to secure a ceasefire and revive a U.S.-backed peace plan, the "road map".

Witnesses said Maher was accosted, jostled and possibly struck by a mob shouting "Allahu Akbar" (God is greater).

The mob threw shoes they had removed for prayers at his entourage and at Israeli police taking him out of the ancient mosque, Islam's third holiest shrine. Striking someone with a shoe is a traditional Muslim insult.

Television pictures showed Maher, pale and struggling for breath, being led from the melee by police and bodyguards



Bodyguards surround Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher after he was assaulted by Palestinians while praying in Jerusalem's Old City December 22. REUTERS

and rushed to Hadassah Hospital for checks.

Maher later flew back to Cairo, where the government expressed "deep regret" at the assault but said Egypt's commitment to peace in the area was undimmed.

Relations between Israel and Egypt have recently begun to improve after taking a dive over Israel's crackdown on the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation.

Some Palestinians have never forgiven Egypt for signing a peace deal with the Jewish state in 1979.

Maher, the most senior Egyptian minister to visit Israel since the uprising began

in 2000, said before the attack that he hoped a genuine desire for peace on both sides would lead to a resumption of negotiations.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ahmed Qurie said he was "shocked and furious" at the attack and vowed to pursue those behind it.

A senior official of the Islamic Jihad faction also said there was no justification for the assault.

Egypt's presidency expressed "...deep regret at the attempt of an irresponsible minority of Palestinians to assault...Maher while he was on a mission to Israel," a statement carried by the Middle East News Agency said.

Philippines declares calamity after deadly floods

SAN FRANCISCO, Philippines, Dec 23 (Reuters) - The Philippines declared a state of calamity in a southern province after floods and landslides killed up to 209 people, with a ferry disaster compounding the nation's misery just before Christmas.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo surveyed the damage in the worst-hit areas of Southern Leyte province as transport planes flew in food, medicine, rescue equipment and other supplies to thousands of families made homeless by avalanches of mud and torrents of water.

Three areas on a narrow peninsula in the province bore the brunt of the onslaught, blamed on erosion caused by illegal logging. The governor of the province, Rosette Lerias, declared the state of calamity late on Monday.

Four days after the first landslides, rescuers finally reached remote mountainous areas where the mud cut a trail of devastation, sweeping flimsy houses into the sea, burying scores of people alive and cutting supply routes.

"The stench is too much," Rico Maitim, a resident of the town of San Francisco, told Reuters as teams of soldiers and local volunteers pulled twisted bodies from the muck. "We hope they can send us equipment so we can finish this operation."

The disaster zones are near where 5,000 people died in 1991 when a typhoon unleashed massive floods around the city of Ormoc.

After the latest deadly landslides, questions were being asked about why authorities apparently failed to stop rampant illegal logging in the surrounding hills.

"A total of 133 persons were confirmed dead and numbers of fatalities are expected to increase as recovery operations continue," said the National Disaster Coordinating Council.

It said 106 people were confirmed dead with 103 missing in southern Leyte. Another 27 were killed on the northern tip of Mindanao island, which is adjacent to Leyte.

Defence Secretary Eduardo Ermita,



Rescue workers uncover bodies after deadly landslides swept through an area near the town of Liloan in the Southern Leyte province in the southern Philippines, late December 20. The death toll in the landslides in San Francisco and Liloan, triggered by six days of heavy rains in the central Philippines, was expected to top 100 after 60 bodies were found on Saturday with scores still missing. REUTERS

who is also chairman of the disaster agency, said he was considering calling off search operations and declaring those missing as dead.

Dozens missing from ship

The foul weather appeared to have claimed more victims when a ferry carrying 68 passengers and seven crew between islands in the southwestern Philippines went missing for more than a day after sending a distress call.

A Panamanian-registered cargo ship plucked at least 20 people from the sea late on Sunday, the navy said on Tuesday. The fate of the others on the wooden-hulled ship was still unknown.

Officials blame overcrowded and obsolete ships, as well as lax safety standards, for large numbers of people killed in boat and ship accidents in the Philippines.

In the world's worst peacetime sea disaster, more than 3,000 people drowned in December 1987 when a

ferry collided with a small tanker in the central Philippines.

In Leyte, about 10,000 people were evacuated to temporary shelters as heavy rains continued to fall.

Melchor Rosales, head of the disaster agency, told Reuters a ship carrying supplies was expected to arrive in southern Leyte on Tuesday but that rescue operations had been painfully slow, partly due to a lack of helicopters able to fly in rain.

Only one of the country's 10 C-130 cargo planes was helping relief efforts because the others were unfit to fly.

The United States has stepped in, promising to send a C-130 with ready-to-eat meals, clothing and medicine. U.S. Ambassador Francis Ricciardone flew with Arroyo to the disaster zone.

"What we are doing is providing the airlift as President Arroyo requested it," Ricciardone said, adding U.S. President George W. Bush had sent American condolences to the Philippines.

Pakistan says its Iran nuke probe hints at greed

ISLAMABAD, Dec 23 (Reuters) - Pakistan admitted on Tuesday that scientists involved in its atom bomb programme may have been driven by "personal ambition or greed" to export technology to Iran, but added the government had no part in any such deals.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Masood Khan said Pakistan was determined to get to the bottom of allegations that nuclear technology may have been transferred to Iran.

He said it began questioning scientists from a state-run laboratory set up by the father of its bomb programme, Abdul Qadeer Khan, five to six weeks ago after approaches by the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and information from the Iranian government that "pointed to certain individuals".

"There are indications that certain individuals might have been motivated by personal ambition or greed. But we have not made a final determination," he said.

He stressed that the government itself had never been involved in nuclear proliferation. "It takes its responsibility as a nuclear weapons state very seriously," he said.

"The government of Pakistan has not authorised or initiated any transfers of sensitive nuclear technology or information to other countries," he said. "This is out of the question."

The spokesman said anyone involved in any nuclear technology transfers would be punished: "Nobody is above the law."

On Monday, Islamabad revealed that A.Q. Khan, revered as a national hero for developing a nuclear bomb tested in 1998 to match that of rival India, was being questioned in connection with "debriefings" of several scientists working at his Khan Research Laboratories, a uranium enrichment plant near Islamabad.

Identical centrifuge designs

The admission came after diplomats said last month that the IAEA was probing a possible link between Iran and Pakistan. This followed Tehran's



Abdul Qadeer Khan, Pakistan's nuclear scientist seen in this file photo in Islamabad January 2003. Khan, the father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, is being questioned about reports of possible links between the Pakistan and Iranian nuclear programmes, the government said on Monday. REUTERS

acknowledgement that it had used centrifuge designs that appeared identical to ones used in Islamabad's quest for the bomb.

Tehran, accused by Washington of seeking to develop nuclear arms, told the IAEA it had obtained the designs from a "middleman", a Western diplomat said at the time.

On Sunday, Islamabad said Yasin Chohan, one of three Pakistani scientists detained earlier in the month, had been allowed home after a "personnel dependability and debriefing session". It said two others, Mohammad Farooq, and another identified only as Saeed, were "still undergoing debriefing".

On Monday, Bush administration officials said Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf had assured Washington

that his government had not — at least "in the present time" — provided any nuclear secrets to countries like Iran and North Korea.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan called Musharraf's personal assurances "important" and added that close cooperation between the United States and Pakistan in the war on terrorism would continue — despite any transfers of nuclear technology and know-how that might have taken place in the past.

Past allegations of Pakistani technology transfers, not only to Iran but also to North Korea, have been an embarrassment for the White House, which relies on Pakistan as a key ally in its battle against al Qaeda and allied Islamic militants.

It was inevitable that the spotlight of the Iran probe should turn to A.Q. Khan, who worked in the 1970s at a uranium enrichment plant run by British-Dutch-German consortium Urenco.

According to diplomats, the centrifuge designs used by Iran were of a machine made by the Dutch enrichment unit of Urenco.

In 1983, after his return to Pakistan, Khan was sentenced in absentia to four years' jail by an Amsterdam court for attempted espionage, a decision later overturned on appeal.

Earlier this year, Washington announced commercial sanctions on Khan Research Laboratories, alleging it had arranged transfer of nuclear-capable missiles from North Korea to Pakistan. Islamabad protested over the decision.

Oil-rich Nigeria hit by Christmas petrol crunch

LAGOS, Dec 23 (Reuters) - Fuel shortages and panic buying have brought much of oil-rich Nigeria to a standstill after President Olusegun Obasanjo announced plans to introduce a petrol tax in January.

Long queues of cars snaked out of petrol stations in the commercial hub Lagos and other major cities as motorists tried to fill their tanks for the Christmas break.

Shoppers, workers and people hoping to travel home for the holiday were stranded at bus stops in Lagos, a city of over 13 million, as most buses were forced off the road by lack of petrol in the world's seventh biggest oil exporter.

The State-run Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) said there was no overall shortage.

"There is no fuel scarcity because we have more than enough products,"

NNPC spokesman Levi Ajuonoma told Reuters.

"The problem is distribution hiccups in some places. A lot of people are travelling for Christmas and there is panic buying. Some people are also thinking that there may soon be a price increase."

Petrol scarcity is a perennial problem in Nigeria as its four technically troubled oil refineries are only able to meet a fraction of the 30 million litres per day the country needs. Nigeria is forced to import billions of dollars worth of oil products annually.

Obasanjo deregulated fuel distribution in October in the hope of ending the shortfalls. Import subsidies estimated at around \$2 billion annually have been ended.

The liberalisation policy triggered a sharp increase in pump prices of gaso-

line, but not sharp enough for petrol dealers. Industry sources said they were reluctant to import because they were not making enough profit with a continuing retail price ceiling of 41 Nigerian naira (\$0.29).

The NNPC imports about 70 percent of Nigeria's fuel needs, while dealers bring in the rest.

Obasanjo said on Thursday he would introduce a 1.50 naira per litre fuel tax next year to raise funds to maintain federal highways across Nigeria.

The proposal has heightened fears of a further increase in retail prices and angered many Nigerians who see cheap petrol as a birthright.

Nigeria's main workers' union orchestrated an eight-day general strike last June after a hefty hike in fuel prices. Several people were killed in violent protests in Lagos and Abuja.

Postpaid Tariff List

(Excluding any sales or other taxes)
Effective January 05th 2004

Getting Connected	Y.R.
Connections Fee	15,950
Basic Monthly Fee	1,070

Air Time Fee	Y.R./Minutes
Spacetel to Spacetel	11
Spacetel to Other Networks	15.50
Receiving Calls	Free

International	Y.R./One Time
International Calls are charged in accordance to with the international tariffs per second.	(Minimum) 8,000
	(Minimum) 16,100
	(Minimum) 40,000

Deposit	Y.R./Month
National	Free
International	Free
Roaming	Free

Free Services	Y.R./Month
Call Barring / Call Conference (up to 5 parties)	Free
Call Waiting / Hold, Call Forward	Free
Emergency (112), Police (199)	Free
IVR System / Customer Service (111)	Free
* Voice Mail Service (VMS)	Free
Short Messages Service (SMS)	Free
** Short Messages (SMS)	7.75 YR each
* Voice Mail Service (VMS) Additional airtime charges are applied	
** The above tariffs apply only on normal text messages, additional charges are applied on certain messages depending on size like picture messages.	

Value Added Services	Y.R./Month
UniMail	800
Super CLIP	200
CLIP (Caller Line Identification Presentation)	80.50
*** Roaming	Free
Detailed Bill	160
Call Barring	250
Fax	800
Data	800
*** Roaming: Airtime charges are applied depending on roaming partner's tariff list.	

Other Services	Y.R.
Change of SIM Card	1,650
Line Reactivation	2,500
Detailed Bill on Request	480
Change of Number	5,000
Transfer of Ownership	3,500

Special Numbers	Y.R.
Silver	16,000
Golden	48,000
Platinum	80,000

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Two killed in strong California earthquake

PASO ROBLES, Calif., Dec 23 (Reuters) - Rescue workers were searching the rubble of a collapsed building in this historic town after a strong earthquake killed two people and rocked California from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

Called the San Simeon earthquake after the coastal town nearest its epicenter, the temblor — with a magnitude of 6.5 — struck at 11:16 a.m. PST (1916 GMT) on Monday, hitting hardest in the town of Paso Robles, known for its sulfur springs and mud baths.

Power was cut to some 75,000 homes and businesses and the quake shook the historic Hearst Castle, a major California tourist attraction, but caused no damage there or at a nuclear power plant in the area.

Two women were crushed in the downpour of rubble when the roof of the landmark 19th century clock tower building collapsed, officials said. The women were identified as Jennifer Myrick, 19, and Marilyn Zafuto, 55.

Beyond this San Luis Obispo County town, about 185 miles (298 kilometres) north of Los Angeles and 30 miles (48 kilometres) from the epicenter, damage from the quake was "modest," officials said.

At least 82 commercial buildings in town were damaged, many of them in

the historic downtown area dating to the 1890s, said Doug Monn, the town's top building official.

'A rumble and a roar'

Nick Sherwin, the owner of Pan Jewelers, one of the stores in the clock tower building, said when the quake struck he heard "a rumble and a roar" and yelled to people in his shop to get out. Everyone did except for an elderly couple. Sherwin said he and his wife threw themselves over the couple "to protect them and when the rumbling stopped we all ran out."

The quake began with a big jolt followed by a long rolling motion, said Paso Robles residents.

First reports said three people were killed but officials said the two women, both believed to be employees of a dress shop in the building, were the only fatalities. More than 45 others in the region were injured, some with broken bones and lacerations.

Rescue workers combed through the rubble looking for other victims. Paso Robles Police Sgt. Bob Adams said on Monday that rescue workers would work through the night if needed. Although police believed that no one else was trapped, officials could not find the owners of three cars buried in the rubble, he said.

The town of Paso Robles smelled of sulfur because a pipe that carries sulfur water from an underground hot spring broke.

The U.S. Geological Survey said initial damage reports could be measured in the millions of dollars. By contrast, the Northridge earthquake of 1994 in the Los Angeles area, which measured 6.7, caused more than \$40 billion in damage and ranks as one of the most expensive natural disasters in U.S. history. In 1999, a 7.1 quake was reported in the southern California desert.

Many without power

The quake cut electric power to more than 74,000 homes and businesses but the state's power grid operator said there were no reports of damage to high-voltage lines and no damage to the Diablo Canyon nuclear power generator where the temblor was felt in the plant's control room.

The epicenter of Monday's quake was located near San Simeon, California, the home of Hearst Castle, the lavish mansion built by newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst, the U.S. Geological Survey said.

The castle was evacuated but it suffered no apparent structural damage, officials said.



A police officer stands in front of a crushed car in Paso Robles, approximately 180 miles north of Los Angeles, December 22. Two people were killed and 46 were injured in the area after a 6.5 magnitude quake hit the small town. REUTERS

The quake's depth along the San Simeon fault, part of the state's San Andreas fault system, was measured at five miles (eight kilometres). It was

followed by dozens of aftershocks.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake would produce hundreds of aftershocks over the next days, weeks

and even years but there was only a five to 10 percent risk that any of the aftershocks would be bigger than the initial quake.



Vacancy Announcement

For the execution of the project **Support of Yemen's Accession to the WTO** funded by the European Commission, GTZ International Service (Deutsche Gesellschaft Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH, International Services) will employ a team of 5 Yemeni experts for a duration of five years. The posts are described as follows:

1. Legal Translator (2 posts)

Qualifications and Skills:

University degree in English, preferably majoring in translation, and excellent command of English language are extremely essential. Must be computer literate with at least 5 years of experience in trade-related translation from Arabic to English and vice versa. Previous experience with an internationally aided project, legal firm, or international company/organisation is a plus. Secretarial skills are also welcomed.

Duties:

- Translation into English of all Accession submissions to WTO Secretariat, including Answers to questions from WTO members;
- Translation of WTO-related materials into Arabic;
- Preparation of draft translations for Yemeni Laws and Legislations;
- Simultaneous interpretation in Project-related events, including Seminars, Workshops, Presentations, etc.;
- Preparation of correspondences and reports in English; and
- Any other duties related to translation/interpretation from English to Arabic or vice versa.

2. Assistant Expert Specialised in International Trade Issues - Intellectual Property Rights

Qualifications and Profile:

- Law graduate, ideally with post-graduate degree;
- Proven specialisation in intellectual property law;
- Proven understanding of Yemen's intellectual property regime (laws, regulations, policy, economics);
- Experience in the administration of IP protection is a plus
- Understanding of TRIPS Agreement and other international IP agreements
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in both Arabic and English
- Proven excellent research skills in both Arabic and English

Description of Work:

The candidate will assist the key experts and short-term international and local experts in all activities related to intellectual property protection (law, economics, policy) covering multiple sub-activities of the project. The work will in particular involve research, analysis and editing activities, as well as low-level communications with government agencies and other stakeholders' representatives, including Private Sector. The candidate will prepare briefs and training materials, assist in and supervise translation activities and liaise with various parties. It will be part of the candidate's role to inject a "local perspective" in the various project implementation activities where needed.

3. Assistant Expert Specialised in International Trade Issues - Trade in Goods

Qualifications and Profile:

- University graduate, ideally with post-graduate degree in MBA, Economics, Foreign Trade, International Law or related field;
- Ideally practical and/or theoretical experience in Yemen's import and/or export trade, relating to more than one commodity, preferably including knowledge of the agricultural and fisheries sectors;
- Proven understanding of Yemen's import/export regime (laws, regulations, policy, economics);
- Understanding of WTO agreements relating to trade in goods (GATT1994);
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in both Arabic and English; and
- Proven excellent research skills in both Arabic and English

Description of Work:

The candidate will assist the key experts and short-term international and local experts in all activities related to trade in goods (law, economics, policy) covering virtually all sub-activities of the project. The work will in particular involve research, analysis and editing activities, as well as low-level communications with government agencies and stakeholders, especially private sector representatives. The candidate will prepare briefs and training materials, assist in and supervise translation activities and liaise with various parties. It will be part of the candidate's role to inject a 'local perspective' in the various project implementation activities where needed.

4. Assistant Expert Specialised in International Trade Issues - Trade in Services

Qualifications and Profile:

- University graduate, ideally with post-graduate degree in MBA, Economics, Foreign Trade, International Law or related field;
- Ideally practical and/or theoretical experience in Yemen's services regulation, preferably relating to more than one service sector (core areas: financial services, telecoms, transportation, professional trade-related services);
- Proven understanding of Yemen's services regimes (laws, regulations, policy, economics);
- Understanding of the GATS;
- Excellent oral and written communication skills in both Arabic and English; and
- Proven excellent research skills in both Arabic and English

Description of Work:

The candidate will assist the key experts and short-term international and local experts in all activities related to trade in services (law, economics, policy) covering virtually all sub-activities of the project. The work will in particular involve research, analysis and editing activities, as well as low-level communications with government agencies and stakeholders, including private sector representatives. The candidate will prepare briefs and training materials, assist in and supervise translation activities and liaise with various parties. It will be part of the candidate's role to inject a "local perspective" in the various project implementation activities where needed.

* Yemeni Nationals of suitable qualification are invited to present their application both in Arabic and in English prior to 5th January, 2004, to

The Deputy Director
GTZ Office Sana'a
P.O. Box 692
Fax: (00 967 1) 412 539

* Short listed applicants will be invited for interviews upon our call.

Russia court hearing on Khodorkovsky fate resumes

MOSCOW, Dec 23 (Reuters) - Prosecutors petitioned a Moscow court for a second day on Tuesday to keep Russia's richest man, Mikhail Khodorkovsky, behind bars for a further three months pending his trial on tax evasion and mass fraud.

Khodorkovsky's lawyers said that in nearly 12 hours of closed-door testimony at the Basmany court on Monday, the prosecution failed to produce documents to justify the continued detention of the former chief executive of Russia's biggest oil firm YUKOS.

Khodorkovsky, arrested at gunpoint on October 25, appeared in public for the first time in handcuffs as the hearing opened on Monday. His lawyers say any attempt to keep him in custody would be illegal.

A second court, meanwhile, denied a request for bail from a close associate of Khodorkovsky also detained in connection with a long series of legal attacks on YUKOS.

The court ruled that Platon Lebedev, held since July in connection with the privatisation of a fertiliser firm, could not go free as he could destroy evidence or pressure witnesses.

"We consider the decision illegal. We have repeatedly said that Lebedev represents no threat to the investigation," said Lebedev's spokesman Yuri Kotler.

As Khodorkovsky awaited a ruling on his detention, his lawyers said proceedings had stalled after they had asked prosecutors to prove the probe was still proceeding.

Prosecutors have in recent weeks said the investigation into alleged crimes by both Khodorkovsky and

Lebedev, linked to chaotic privatisations of the 1990s, had been completed.

The defence argues that if the inquiry is indeed over, then any suggestion that Khodorkovsky could interfere with it is nonsense. Pre-trial detention for him and Lebedev is due to expire on December 30.

"I expect justice to be done...I hope the Basmany court will use its historic chance and take a decision based on law," Anton Drel, one of Khodorkovsky's many lawyers, told NTV television as the hearing opened. "If a decision to extend the detention is taken, it will be totally illegal."

Prosecutors say investigation completed

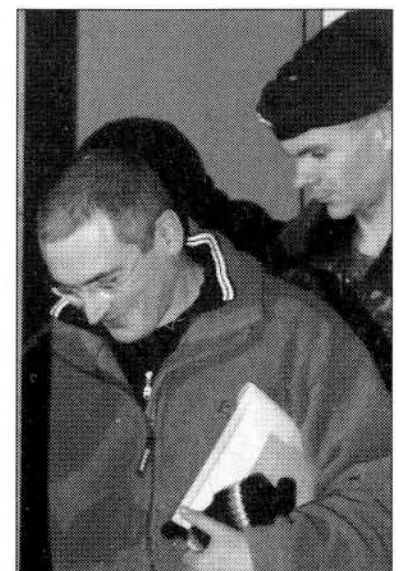
Many observers say the legal assault on YUKOS was inspired by Kremlin hardliners, anxious to contain Khodorkovsky's political ambitions. They expect no decision to release him on bail until at least the March 14 presidential election.

Incumbent Vladimir Putin, easily Russia's most popular politician, is heavily favoured to win the poll.

The president, addressing Russia's Chamber of Commerce, renewed pledges that there would be no "campaign" to reverse decade-old privatisations. But those who broke laws had to answer for their actions.

"I hear from all and sundry that laws were complicated and that it was impossible to abide by them," he said.

"Yes, the laws were complicated and confusing, but you could abide by them, you could. Those who wanted to do did so.



Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Russia's richest man and a key shareholder in oil major YUKOS, leaves a court in Moscow, December 22. A Moscow court on Monday put off for a day a ruling on whether Khodorkovsky could be freed on bail pending trial on tax evasion and fraud charges. REUTERS

"...Those who were fraudulent deliberately created better conditions for themselves than those who behaved properly. The latter may not have earned so much, but they can sleep soundly."

YUKOS shares had inched up 0.50 percent by 1300 GMT to \$10.83 on the RTS bourse. On the MICEX exchange, they were flat at 317.86 roubles.

Croatia's new centre-right cabinet takes office

ZAGREB, Dec 23 (Reuters) - Croatia's new centre-right government headed by Prime Minister Ivo Sanader took office on Tuesday, pledging to improve living standards, gain Western trust and speed progress towards European Union membership.

Eighty-eight deputies in the new 152-seat parliament voted for Sanader's government, run by his conservative Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), which won November general elections and returned to power after four years in opposition.

The HDZ has outlined a reformist pro-Western agenda with respect for law and human rights under the pragmatic technocrat Sanader, but Western mistrust for the party once headed by hard-line nationalist leader Franjo Tudjman still lingers.

"It is time to move on. Citizens want

a safe future and a reliable state able to find its place in global integration. This government is ready and determined to start dealing with all problems now," Sanader told parliament.

He will have to work hard to prove he has truly reformed the party that led Croatia to independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 and then to international isolation because of its defiance of the West and poor human rights.

To underscore this, he has vowed to speed up reforms and catch up with EU candidates Bulgaria and Romania during his mandate in the next four years. Zagreb applied for membership of the bloc in February and expects an answer on its candidacy early next year.

Twelve of 14 ministers — slashed from 19 in the previous centre-left cabinet — will be from the HDZ, one from a small centrist ally and one a non-parti-

san member.

Although technically a minority government — the HDZ won 66 seats in the 152-seat assembly — it will have backing from deputies for ethnic minorities, pensioners and the conservative Peasants' Party, bringing its overall support to a comfortable 90 deputies.

The cabinet will hold its first session on January 5.

Among top economic priorities, Sanader named macroeconomic stability, taming foreign debt, cutting public spending and taxes while boosting Gross Domestic Product, exports and foreign investment.

He also vowed to help the return of Serb war refugees, reform the judiciary and cooperate with the United Nations war crimes tribunal in The Hague — the key political criteria Zagreb has to meet to advance its EU membership bid.

YT Business



YR 6 million spent for buying weapons from citizens

BY MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Official sources in Sana'a disclosed that the state had spent more than YR 6 million for buying light weapons from the citizens in application of a new policy aimed at limiting the spread of weapons and narrowing the dangers resulting from that phenomenon. The sources made clear that the concerned authorities had succeeded in buying large quantities of arms from citizens from markets dealing with light weapons with the purpose of lessening of their dangers and preventing problems resulting from civil wars

that are being fed by issues such as vengeance and disputes over pieces of land.

Experts participating in the regional conference on the phenomenon of light weapons dissemination held earlier in Sana'a have said poverty and backwardness encourages the use of small arms in Yemen and pushing up demand for them. The experts have been unanimous that there is a difficult problem facing Yemen because of the spread of light weapons and a study prepared by an expert from the higher institute for international studies, the unit of small arms studies, mentioned that estimates of Yemen's possessions of these weapons amount to 7 million and 30 thousand piece of

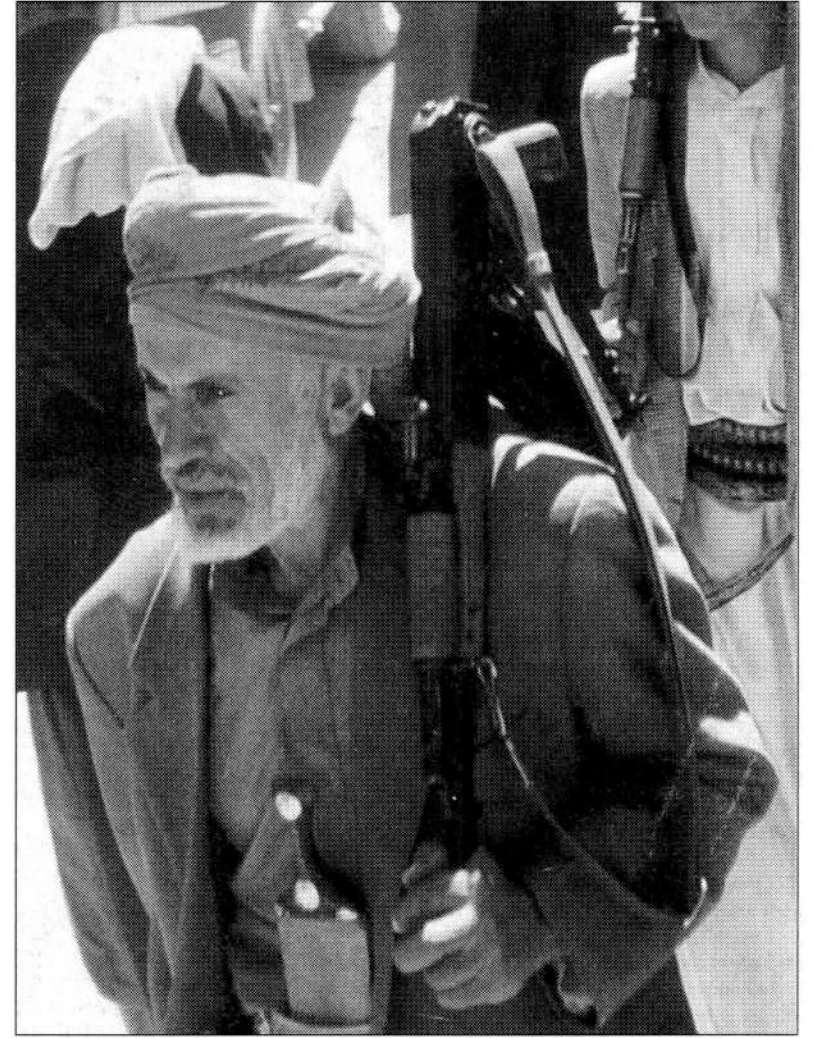
arms, which possessions of tribes, the market and the state are included.

Despite that previous statistics point to the Yemeni citizens' possession of 60 million pieces of arms, the expert said estimates of his institute pointed that the Yemeni republic approaches a position close to the highest level of a short list of countries where light arms are spread, and the United States comes at the highest position.

The study has expected that next year the number of weapons in Yemen would rise to about 6 million pieces of arms in the hands of tribesmen only, in addition to weapons displayed in the markets or those possessed by the state.

The study considered that among the factors supporting the spread of weapons in Yemen are the weapons the state presents to tribal militias, as what had happened during the war of 1994, or as gifts or bartering offered by official bodies to tribes chiefs in return for recovering heavy arms on condition that they are not put for sale in markets.

Studies also recommended the importance of putting an end to the phenomenon of using and selling small arms for keeping security and stability and to prevent carrying arms inside the capital city and that as the studies see would establish the principle of peace and justice inside the Yemeni society.



Government is exerting same efforts to end this phenomenon

Thirty million Yuan grant, 20 million loans,

China raises its assistance for funding development and service projects in Yemen

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Delegation of Chinese businessmen and investors who recently visited Yemen has shown desire for investing in the industrial and warehousing zone in Aden by building a number of industrial projects there and benefiting from investment facilities and advantages and opportunities available in Yemen in various productive and service areas.

The delegation that visited Yemen and attended meetings of the Yemeni-Chinese joint committee, had discussed with Mr. Abdulkjareem Mutair, president of the state authority for investment, the possibility of building a complete hospital in the capital secretariat at an investment cost of \$ 100 million and taking

measures for implementing the project.

Delegation of the Chinese company for Overseas Construction has acquainted itself with international navigation activity of container port in Aden and its relations with various neighbouring and world ports.

In the meetings of the Yemeni-Chinese joint committee in Sana'a the two sides have signed on letters exchanged between the two countries regarding the extension of the period of using a Chinese loan for financing a number of projects in the field of economic and technical cooperation, in addition to signing other letters concerning modernization and development of textile factory in Sana'a. The Chinese side in this regard would prepare the design of the project and the Yemeni side would implement

works of the project's architectural engineering.

The Chinese side at the committee confirmed its country's keenness on supporting projects funded in Yemen and involving the private sectors in both countries in the process of common investment.

The economic aid offered to Yemen by China during the year 2003 amounted to 20 million Yuan and an assistance offered by China in the form of computers amounted to 5 million Yuan and funding expansion of al-Haswa power station project at a cost of \$14.5 million

The Chinese deputy minister of trade announced Chinese decision to raise the Chinese assistance to Yemen to 30 million Yuan and non-interest loans of 20 million Yuan to be used in projects that would be agreed on in the future.

In Yemeni embassies,

Cabinet approves eligibility of Yemeni expatriates to hold local contracts jobs

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Yemeni cabinet has lately approved a plan for employing Yemeni labour from expatriates to work at Yemeni embassies when concluding local contracts, and this comes in context with diplomatic reforms scheduled to be implemented during the coming period.

The council of ministers mentioned in its regular meeting that it had approved an organizational bill on work of cultural, technical, information, military and health attaches affiliate of some ministries, including measures necessary for tackling situations of these attaches.

The cabinet stressed that it would implement directives of the Yemeni president Ali Abdulla Saleh aimed at issuing decisions of canceling some attaches that are no longer needed.

In another step the cabinet has taken decisions for providing protection for environment and safety for citizens and also providing environment protection through being ascertained of different products' conformity to specifications and standardization and accredited

technical conditions and rules.

This step has been taken for mitigating the burden of imported foreign products that are flooding the Yemeni market by smuggling and also negatively compete with national products by cheap prices in return of non-quality of production. To serve this end the council of ministers has set up a committee chaired by deputy premier, the minister of planning and international cooperation Ahmed Soufan for putting an executive program and practical application of those decisions.

The council of ministers has also given its directives to the ministries of oil and minerals and agriculture and irrigation to work out a complete study for the building of a fertilizer factory to which the state would contribute. The project would be put to general contribution. The aim of building this factory is mainly to protect humans and plants from imported poisons.

The cabinet stressed on the necessity of intensifying monitoring and taking strict measures regarding importation of insecticides that pose danger to human and animal health and to the environment. The Yemeni government has also approved confiscation of all quantities

that would be seized of these materials and getting rid of them as well as punishing those who import, market or sell them.

On the other hand the cabinet confirmed the necessity of making sure and thoroughly examine warehoused materials to check if they are not conforming to specifications and standardization and to work for closing all crossings to prevent their entry into the country, provided that the same rules are to be applied to smuggled food, consumer and medical materials just in interest of the Yemeni consumer. Poisons and insecticides and their importation have preoccupied the Yemeni street that has become haunted with fears due to impending dangers against his life especially because of spraying qat plants with such insecticides and their being communicated to qat chewers.

Nevertheless, decisions taken concerning insecticides importation need to have official backing to prevent smuggling. Most of decayed and dangerous materials being marketed come through smuggling inlets and the whole issue needs determination and resolute measures to make such an orientation a success.

The Partners for health Reformplus (PHRplus) Project is recruiting a Deputy Chief of Party/Health Reform advisor

PHRplus is USAID-funded project that focuses on health system strengthening worldwide. In Yemen the Project will provide support at the central level to activities such as National health accounts and Geographic Information systems. PHRplus will also support the five USAID-targeted governorates of al-Jawf, Amran, Marib, Sa'adda, and Shabwa. The Deputy Chief of Party will work closely with the Chief of Party and will provide technical guidance in establishing workplans in consultation with the central and governorate stakeholders and in the implementation of all project activities. S/he will assist in managing the overall activities and providing technical leadership to strengthen the health care system and improve in the quality of health care delivery.

Responsibilities:

1. Technical assistance in support of improved reproductive, maternal and child health services in the target governorates.
2. Work with stakeholders at the governorate and district levels to assess their health priorities and how to improve the decentralized health system and service delivery.
3. Assure collaboration and coordination with other projects and with the central, governorate and district stakeholders.
4. Build on USA investments in the target governorates; assess and build on best practices based on experience of other donors and other projects in and outside of Yemen.
5. Identify gaps in the local skill base required to implement reform activities.
6. Assist in the design of monitoring and evaluation of project activities and the implementation of the M&E plan.

Qualifications:

- Senior-level expert with extensive experience (10 years or more) in health policy in international settings. Additional experience in health system restructuring, service delivery systems, primary health care, health economics, quality of care, or clinical policy.
- Advanced degree (PhD preferred, masters required) in relevant area, such as health policy, public health, health economics, or medicine.
- Experience in interacting with host-country counterparts, modernizing health care systems, designing and implementing health care reform.
- Excellent technical writing skills.
- Yemeni citizen.
- Arabic/English proficiency required.

Please send applications to PHRplus, P.O. Box 22355, Sana'a

Words of Wisdom



One of the key characteristics of working in the media is the concept of deadlines. Everything has a deadline. Everybody is under some kind of time pressure. While this pressure may not be good for one's health, it is a wonderful contributor to efficiency.
Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, (1951-1999)
 Founder of Yemen Times

OUR OPINION

Western values are probably better

We can not and will not accept Western values in our lives. The West always wants to impose its culture and mentality on us. We should never bow.

This is what a friend of mine told me while chatting in a restaurant in Jordan after the subject of 'Western influence' on Arabs in and out of the Arab world.

I tried to argue with my friend that many so-called Western values are in fact human values. Those include respect of human rights and liberties, justice, innovation, etc.. Hence, we need not to ignore or oppose such values.

The response I got was fierce. You want us to adopt Western culture? You say that the West needs to be imitated? You imply that we need to think and live the way Westerners do?

I then gave a few more comments and changed the subject after I felt the dispute could grow further.

I wasn't sorry just because my friend could not tolerate or accept the idea that some Western practices are acceptable, and indeed, favorable. But what I was truly sad about is the fact that his views reflect a popular opinion among Arabs everywhere.

It is in my opinion an obligation to bring our people to understand that as humans, we need to be open-minded to each other. We need to look into the possibilities that we may be the ones who are doing wrong, while others may be right.

It serves us no good to avoid and disagree with every practice we see in the West, for there may be many of those practices are originally inspired from Islam.

I remember a famous saying by prominent Islamic figure Jamaluddin Al-Afghani, who once said, "I visited the West and found Islam without Muslims, and returned to the Arab world to find Muslims without Islam."

I remember the day when Mr. Sameer Khidr, a senior editor of Al-Jazeera Satellite Channel, spoke about the unique feature that made Al-Jazeera so professional and accurate in its reporting, which of course led to greater credibility and more popularity.

"We are an Arabic-speaking channel working with Western mentality" was what Mr. Khidr said, shocking almost all those who came to attend his lecture.

"How can you say you are working with a Western mentality? This is outrageous!" said one of the attendants. Mr. Khidr nicely explained that the West has developed a set of guidelines that regulate how the media should work to maintain a high level of professionalism. This includes never being biased, even for the issues that touch our Arab affairs. He said that reports should never be exaggerated. Only the truth needs to be told, and nothing more, nothing less. He explained that being broadcast from Qatar does not imply that it should not criticize Qatar issues. "On the contrary, we sometimes feel obliged to report on news items that are quite sensitive for Qatar, and we report on them freely and openly."

In other words, what I want to say is that not everything practiced by the West should be forbidden for Arabs. We need to learn from each other. Thinking otherwise would only serve to isolate us further and is considered an act of selfishness and intolerance.

We are all humans, and if Westerners are doing many things much better than we are, then I believe that it is not only possible to learn from them, but it should be compulsory to do so. **The Editor**

YT readers Marwat and Welch And one more thing...

BARKATULLAH MARWAT
 BUMARWAT@HOTMAIL.COM
 KUWAIT

Personally, I am not in favour of falling into meaningless arguments, but if someone tends to drag my leg, then I feel I should not sit cross-legged but react to that logically. So this is in response to David Welch's feedback to my write-up carried by the Yemen Times.

"The Muslim countries supported which ever side profited them most, they sold themselves to the highest bidder just like the rest of the countries in the world."

First, Muslims are not angels but human beings like Christians, Jews, Hindu etc. And second, all the Muslims are not equal in term of having the faith of what Almighty Allah taught them through His last Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Thus the allegation that they (Muslims) sell their honour is not so serious a case.

A saying goes, "A single fish makes a whole water tank dirty." Yes, there would be a handful of Muslim who are bringing bad name to the entire Muslim Umah. In addition, Muslims don't sell their honours but have deposited their huge sum in billions even trillions with the European and Western banks at which US and others have strengthened their economy.

"By this I suppose you mean that Afghans were left to govern themselves in their own country, something that they had been fighting for for over a decade. What would you say if immediately after the Soviets moved out the US had moved in? Would they have been seen in your eyes as being merciful? NO, you would have damned them if they did and now you damn them because they didn't. Where were the Muslim countries during all this, what did they do to help their Afghan brothers in their fight for liberty. Absolutely nothing."

What I had meant to say could not be grasped well by the learned friend, that the US left Afghans on their own mercy, meaning that the US never bothered to look back (to discover how they were living their lives) when her dream (of becoming a sole super power) came true in the wake of USSR disintegration.

The US entered Afghanistan in the wake of October 2001 strikes, resulting in the fall of Taliban regime. But now her motives are totally different from what she was expected to assist the Afghanistan in 80's after the withdrawal of Red Army. Who is Hamid Karzai? Hasn't he been installed as a puppet ruler whose governance is confined only to Kabul? Is he really representing all the groups and factions in Afghanistan?

"I suppose that you would advocate all countries having nuclear weapons? Muslim countries are powerless to put a break on nuclear proliferation, thank God that some countries are willing to take it seriously and do something about it. Imagine if Iraq or Iran or had long range nuclear weapons, would you sleep sound in your bed?"

But here I had referred to the case of only US which has been inventing, piling up deadly arms (amid arms race), even just a couple of weeks back, I happened to read a story that US tested 'mother of nuclear weapon'. So what's that? She is

free to do whatever she wants to but others are restricted. Why? And why her blue-eyed guy (Israel) and India are not being questioned for possessing the WMDs? Why have Muslims been deprived of representation in the Security Council? These are factors based on sheer injustice leading Muslims to nursing grudges against US. North Korea has developed deadly arms but US is hesitant to poke her nose into the former affairs because she knows she may incur tremendous loss even worse than that of Vietnam.

Politically speaking, Mr. Bush used to point his accusing finger at Saddam but he doesn't see himself that four fingers were turned towards him that clearly indicates that he is more supportive of terrorism in the case of Israel's which has become a major threat to the regional security. To be frank, Israel would have crossed all borders if Saddam were not there. And now it's Iran that is being taken as a major threat to Israel, so the homework is going on how to tackle it.

Let me take a liberty to ask Mr. David if it is not a strange practice that a man, who admits to killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people, finally gets a sentence of life imprisonment after the lapse of so many years? The vivid example can be cited of the judgment dispensed by the United Nations war crimes tribunal, the other day, sentencing the Bosnian Serb officer, Momir Nikolic, to 27 years imprisonment for having massacred more than 7,500 Muslim civilians in Srebrenica. What if he has faced this fate now? Is it not so late and so light?

Yes, I believe, it's nothing for what he did? Is it worth relieving to the victims whose tears dried up? I am damn sure that if he were a Muslim officer having killed the Christians, he would get hanged by now. No? Why not? Because if Osama and Saddam carrying head-money, if arrested, wouldn't they be chopped off? Of course, they would be. Evidently, what I concluded from the judgment of the said court is that you wouldn't face a death sentence even if you admit and confess to killing thousands of people, but specially in European countries.

"Sorry, I thought they were being paid for their oil, perhaps you could tell me when a single barrel of oil was stolen."

Sorry, they are not being paid for what they are being plundered like a broad daylight robbery. In fact, some of the rulers of the Muslim countries are accused of acting like 'agents' to US or puppets under the unseen threat & blackmailing on the part of US.

"Sad incident! This is a little bit of an understatement. Saddam invaded Kuwait at the US request! Which planet do you live on?"

I know that it was US behind the whole drama, but WHY?

"Thank God they did, the Arab countries would have had neither the willingness or power to do anything. The Arab countries own a debt of gratitude to the US and its coalition, if Saddam had not been stopped all the bordering states would have been at risk and you would now need an Iraqi visa to visit Mecca."

As we agreed upon just before that the idea of invading Kuwait was put into the mind of Saddam by US herself, by luring

him to meet all losses he had incurred during the long war with Iran. He didn't know that it was something like a 'trap' to get him snared like a mouse; and the only way for her (US) to step into the region (Middle East).

"Poor Iraqi forces, I am sure they were very tired after killing half a million of their neighbours, but they still had enough strength to rape, pillage and murder the Kuwaitis."

The so-called credit again goes to US that provoked Saddam to attack Kuwait. So who is the root cause of the sad episode? Surely, the US. To be frank, to weaken the growing power of both Islamic countries (Iraq and Iran) in the region which were surely a visible threat to the entity of Israel, were pushed into long war by US. Mr. Bush in the name of democracy is trying to get a hold around the world but I believe his such dream would never come true.

"Do you want the US there or don't you want them there?"

I never support Iraqi president Saddam Hussain because his regime was, of course, based on terror and threats to his subject, but unlike US Marines. Most, if not all, Iraqis basically hate US. Why? Because they know that during Saddam's rule, the sanctions (food-for-oil programme) on their country imposed by the UN was due to the very US. They believe it was US, not UN, that subjected them to endless suppression and oppression since 1990-91.

"You say 'What a shame!' I fully agree, but where were the shipments from the Arab countries, shouldn't they feel ashamed for not lifting a finger to help their Muslim brothers or is it just the US."

Muslims in general and Arabs in particular of course helped Iraq, but when the conditions turned unpleasant in the wake of Kuwait invasion, they (Muslims) refrained from helping Saddam. That's why they joined US-led coalition during the First Gulf War. But as I mentioned earlier that everyone, whether a layman or ruler, was well aware of the fact that whatever happened was on the behest of US, but no one was able to pointing finger at US.

Yes, it was only Osama bin Laden who felt it deeply, finally deciding to encounter and combat US growing nefarious designs in the region. Does he know what her designs are. I think I should tell him what her motives are behind attacking Iraq: what has been underway is nothing but tactics to gain the ends either by hook or by crook, such as, 1) to strengthen the Israel's hegemonic designs, 2) to get an access to Iraqi oil reserves, 3) to establish a firm hold and influence in the area, and 4) to bring about certain changes to the geographical location of some states.

Last but not least, let me ask him only two questions due to which the peaceful atmosphere of the entire world was disturbed; 1) Where is Osama bin Laden and why he has not yet been rounded up for which the poor people of Afghanistan were butchered? 2) Where are Iraq WMDs for which thousands of Iraqis were (still being) killed? "Seeing is believing" is a proverb often used by the Westerns. So I used it here in order to get the answers to my questions.

COMMON SENSE



By Hassan Al-Haifi

The anti-secularist secularism of President Chirac

Last Wednesday, December 18, will be remembered as a significant day in France. That is the day when secularism became in fact anti-secularism. It also represents a day that symbolizes a great break from French cultural and social legislative progress. It is really not clear what prompted President Jacques Chirac of France to sign an uncalled for ruling to "ban religious symbolic wear" from public facilities, since France, even with a 5,000,000 strong Moslem constituency, France has not suffered from any unrest attributed to religious affiliation. Yet, on the Eve of Christmas, when all the public and private facilities abound with Christmas decorations, the French President, erstwhile known for his moral lecturing and strong defense of human rights, decided to display a strong religious bias by issuing a ruling that was obviously directed against a single religious constituency among the French citizenry, albeit with some symbolic inclusion of the "large crucifixes and yarmulkes, etc". This unusual decree by the French President reflects a tendency to succumb to strong right wing logic, that is neither French in concept or progressive in thinking. One of the fundamental principles of democracy is to leave religion to the worshippers to practice as they deem fulfilling to their obligations towards their Creator. In fact, the ruling might be deemed as going against the presumed secularism, which Mr. Chirac claims to be upholding by this infamous ruling. In essence Mr. Chirac was really putting into effect dictates by the state on how the French people, especially the Moslems, should go about adhering to their religious norms, by simply telling them that they should not adhere to their religious codes, if they want to enjoy the offerings of public facilities that they also pay for through the taxes they are levied.

Needless to say, there is no comprehensive reasoning behind dictating any dress codes in public areas, unless they are to ensure that excessive immodesty is not the rule of the day. But to insist that people, who wish to keep themselves covered in a chaste manner, are defying the law is clearly a foolish misrepresentation of proper public decorum. On the other hand, there is nothing to suggest that the attire of modestly dressed Moslem women represents any offensive action, nor are the Moslems bringing any damage to the French fashion industry, which is not at all abashed about limiting the attire of women to mere G-strings. The new dress code of Jacques Chirac is bound to create a serious political and social debate for reasons cited above and for the obvious fact that the ruling is principally directed against a particular constituency of the French body politic, whose numbers are quite significant. Moreover, this ruling would be puzzling to all these people, who have abandoned their homelands, hoping to live free from the oppressive regimes their own countries are subjected to and to enjoy the freedom of a democratic system, which France claimed to symbolize the most progressive adaptation thereof.

It is worth citing some historical background to underscore the irrationality of this discriminatory ruling. The search for freedom in the past was initially heralded by the desire of people to obtain religious freedom and eventually the serious search for democratic societies. Moreover, Islam has set very clear and unflinching tolerance in its dealings with other religious communities living in domains where Moslems prevail, or where government was guided by Sharia'ah Law. The existence of sizable non-Moslem minorities in several Moslem countries is testimony to the high degree of tolerance in the way Moslem dealt with people of other religious persuasions. These Moslem minorities were left to set their own guidelines as to their religious practices, and social conduct, as long as it does not conflict with the general social well-being of the society or lead to any civil disorientation. Non-Moslems were even allowed to produce and drink alcoholic beverages, which are banned to Moslems. What Mr. Chirac was saying is that the Crusader mentality of fear of Islam or misrepresentation of Moslem religious practice as simply being anathema to European civil and social conduct is still inherent in the attitude of even the most astute of European social innovators. One might bring to memory that when Islam had earlier been present in a sizable area of France, Charles Martel and his successors had taken great pains to eliminate any Moslem presence after the Battle of Poitiers, when the Moslems were only a few kilometers from Paris in the Eighth Century. This elimination was not void of severe repressive measures including forced conversions to Christianity. But, we really thought that the French have long since overcome such repressive mode of thinking and have truly set up a secular order where religion is left to the citizen to practice as the latter deems fit in fulfilling his spiritual obligations in life.

One worry that stands out is that such a ruling will prompt the increase in extremist Moslem schools in France, to which many French Moslems will be inclined to send their children to, in order to be able to abide by their religious codes of dress, and before long one will see French Moslem women in the overtly excessive dress attire similar to that of the mode enforced by the Taliban in Afghanistan. Then, the succeeding French Presidents will have to worry about more than just the attire of their Moslem constituencies.

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Letters to the Editor

Thanks for your encouragement

On behalf of all the Yemeni students under the Yemeni Students Association Abroad (YSAA), I would love to thank you for your kind words in your latest editorial. You have no idea how encouraging your article was. As you said we all have to hold hands together to make our beloved country a better place for all of us. Thanks a lot!

Ameen Sanad
 sanada1@laroche.edu

Sympathy for Yemen

I am a Pakistani citizen who reads your newspaper regularly. I am shocked to read about the level of activities of terrorists in your country, which I had contemplated to make my home decades ago. Strategic position of your country and ours expose these to risks of sorts.

I am also shocked to read that Yemen's application for membership of the Commonwealth of Nations has been rejected. I sympathize with our brothers and wish them well.

The ultimate triumph belongs to the real peace loving people of this planet. Yemenis are among them. Long live the Pakistan-Yemen friendship.

Ishrat Husain
 eyeopener@cyber.net.pk

Your attitude makes you ineligible to rule

I am replying to one of the letters to the editor published recently by Byron Allen (ballen @ novolink.net), entitled "Are you out of this world?"

I would like to tell Bryon that the Iraqi people will not allow infidels with this kind of attitude like yours to rule their land. Look how you are mocking Islam. Iraqi Muslims will refuse to be dictated by infidels from the US or anywhere else.

Letters to the Editor

Iraqis are Muslims with true religion, and unlike you people, who take your religion as a joke (allowing gay priests, adultery, fornication, taking Jesus as son of God), supporting oppression in Palestine, supporting the Zionist thugs who don't care about how many innocent lives they kill or houses they destroy.

This is why Muslims around the world hate the USA and what it stands for.

Is this what you call a civilization, I call it degradation. How do you find receiving more GI body bags? How many more body bags will it take for the US occupation to end. It looks like history reply (Vietnam) 2.

If you don't stop killing innocent Muslims the wrath of Allah will be on your way.

Abdulaziz A.

About "Another Pathetic Year"

Finally, you have written an editorial ("Another Pathetic Year") with some intellectual soul-searching as to the causes of the Arab plight and not continued on with the shrill cries that everything wrong with your society is because the Jews did it, or their American surrogates did it.

M. Hand USA

All Yemen needs coverage

I am 25 yrs old living in USA. I have one sober comment on the Yemen Times. The paper seems to be discussing subjects based around the capital city Sana'a and sometimes Taiz, and not including other regions and parts of the country. I believe that they have to include all the news from all over Yemen, not only Sana'a and Taiz. There are so many things to be illustrated about pan-Yemen everywhere in the country. I hope you could take this into account.

Yasser Ali
 Yasser88us@yahoo.com

If Libya can do it, why not Israel?

BY PETER PRESTON
FOR THE GUARDIAN

There's a logic to these things. Muammar Gadhafi, growing older, and his isolated Libya, growing poorer, were getting nothing worthwhile from the atomic bomb they hadn't built yet or chemicals they had scant residual use for. Logic - and common sense - meant changing tack. Good for logic. But logic doesn't stop there.

What next? If weapons of mass destruction are a menace in unstable regions such as the Middle East, if their availability must be reduced, then logic begins to move us closer to the confrontation we never seek with the nuclear power we - let alone Messrs Bush and Blair - seldom mention: Israel.

Nobody, including the Knesset, quite knows what happens inside the Dimona complex, but if you put together a composite of usually reliable sources (the Federation of American Scientists, Jane's Intelligence Review, the Stockholm Institute), a tolerably clear picture emerges. Ariel Sharon probably has more than 200 nuclear warheads this morning - more if the 17 years since Mordechai Vanunu's kidnapping have been devoted to building stockpiles.

That makes Israel the world's fifth largest nuclear power, boasting more bangs from Washington's bucks than Blair's Britain. And over in the other WMD basket, nobody much dissents when a report by the office of technology assessment for the US Congress concludes that Israel has "undeclared offensive chemical warfare capabilities" and

is "generally reported as having an undeclared offensive biological warfare programme". Bombs, missiles, delivery systems, gases, germs? Tel Aviv has the lot. We only forget to remember because it's not a suitable subject for polite diplomatic conversation.

Logic, in the old days, didn't trouble too much about that. It saw a state of Israel surrounded by many potential foes who denied its right to exist. It saw such enemies initiate research of their own. It saw too many wars, bitterly fought. It watched the Soviet Union, with warheads to spare, cruising continually in these troubled waters. It was prepared to turn a blind eye and to button its lip.

Come back today for a reality check, though. Saddam's Iraq is a wrecked rat trap. The weapons of mass destruction Gadhafi sought are no more, no threat. Yemen, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt? Nothing to say, nothing to show. You can, if you wish, be concerned about Syria's chemical weapons facilities - and you can reasonably worry about a nuclear Iran, even though Tehran took a decisive step back towards international acceptability last week. But Moscow is out of the action, and the whole dynamic of Middle East danger has changed. Logic comes knocking at Sharon's door.

He faces problems, of course: problems of intractable politics and Palestinian suicide bombers. But he can't nuke Gaza or gas Bethlehem. His WMD are useless in any battle for hearts and minds - as practically useless as Gadhafi has just deemed them to be. So why keep Dimona and the biological research centre at Nes Ziona out of any equation? Why pretend that they don't

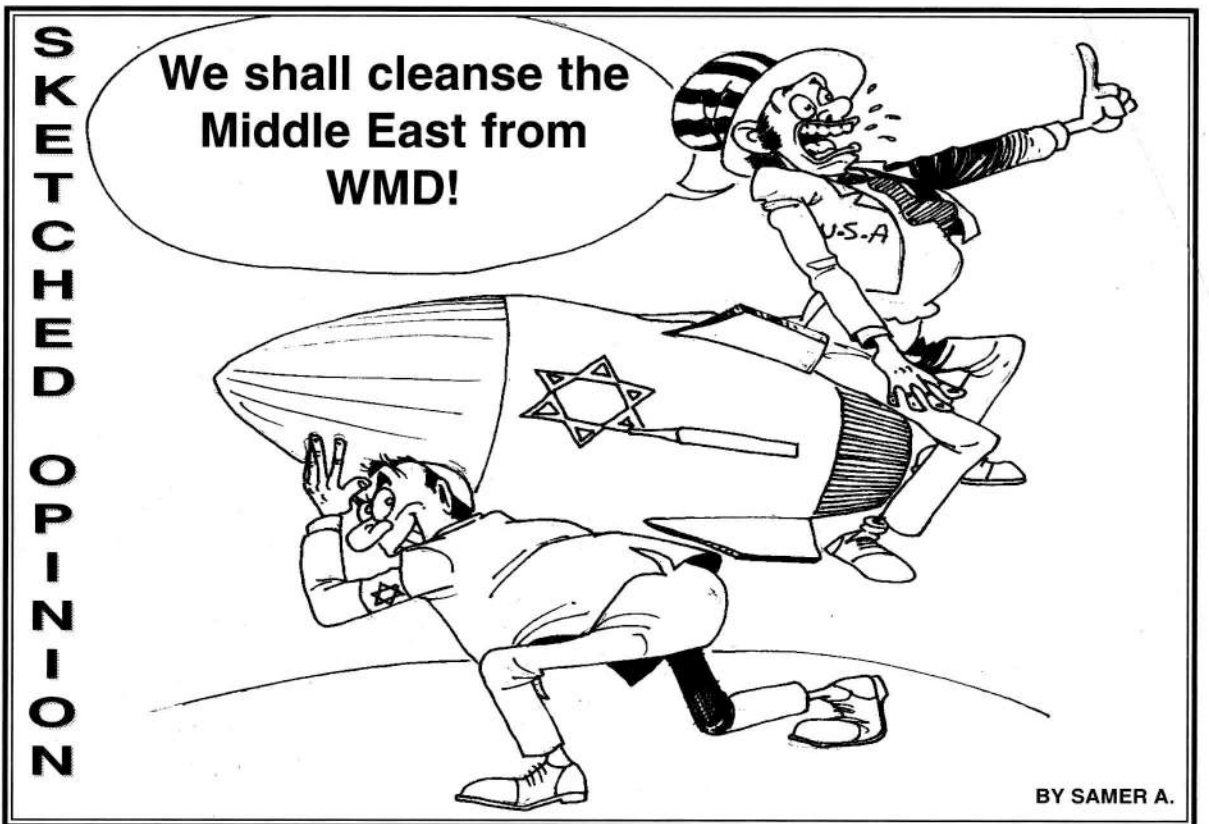
exist?

The formal logic of defence is threat, counter-threat. Sit in Tehran and look east - at China, India and Pakistan, with their bombs; look west, and there sits Israel. It is natural, in logic, that Iran consider its own deterrent. It will require a deal of understanding engagement - and guarantees - to close off that path. But such guarantees are possible in the age of the world's only superpower. There is every reason to talk frankly about Israel's bomb, just as the Syrians could be closely involved in dismantling chemical stockpiles if only we could find the right language to start.

What, after all, is the current western fear? Of terrorism, rogue states, of more 9/11s. That's why Geoff Hoon's latest defence review moves out of heavy tanks and battleships. It adjusts to what it calls the new realities of flexibility and intelligence. Even Gadhafi seems to have noticed. Why not mention them to Sharon?

An Israel bristling with nuclear hardware it cannot talk about and chemical horrors it could negotiate away does not make itself, or the world, any safer. On the contrary, it makes a hypocritical farce of too much Washington bargaining, buries too many initiatives deep down Hypocrisy Gulch and gives rogue groupings in ex-rogue states every reason to carry on developing, stealing or buying the devices that keep Mr Blair awake at night.

Does Tel Aviv see that connection? Does it want to bring a whole region in from the cold? Such things are becoming possible. But first we need the honesty to follow where logic leads; and begin to talk about them.



BY SAMER A.

Lessons from Saddam's arrest

BY MARK WIGNALL
FOR THE JAMAICA OBSERVER

Mere mortals have no pedestals to stand on, no galleries filled with willing fools applauding one's very presence and certainly, the lot of mortal man, that everyday Joe working to feed his wife and children has no grandeur to speak of and therefore no dizzying heights to fall from. The vast majority of us in this world are pretty ordinary people, concerned more with acne, arthritis, paying the bills, having boring sex and catching a good night's sleep.

No more than five per cent of people on this planet aspire to greatness but less than one per cent attain the larger-than-life goals they had set out on. Becoming the leader of a country, heading a transnational organisation, copping a Nobel Prize, making a better mousetrap, penning a bestseller and running the fastest mile are attained only by a handful of people worldwide.

Women should, therefore, not compare themselves too much with the glossy, perfect models in magazines, and sensible men ought to know better than what the Americans refer to as "hunks" are a media creation. Most of us are overweight in places where skinny would better fit, "mawga" in limbs where "hunk" would be desired, our faces could do with reconstructive surgery, our sexual prowess is only "so-so" and we pretty much leave others to lead us, at times even preferring to let them tell us what to think.

Most people ought to be pretty happy but the comparisons with the nebulous few are playing havoc with our psyche. Be happy, anyway, and thank your lucky stars that today you are not Saddam Hussein.

Stripped of his finery and the opulence, if not the mockery of his castellated surroundings, the once self-imposed but now surely deposed Iraqi leader, who in recent times became the tenants of rats and other vermin and must have been humbled by the experience, has shown the world that kings, emperors, prime ministers and presidents are all broth-

ers under the skin, especially the unwashed kind.

Seeing him on CNN and FOX, the gleeful Americans have once again reminded us that international conventions are defined by what the US decrees is fitting. In its selective convention, a dishevelled, bearded, unwashed Saddam was exposed to the world, not just so we could all see but moreso to impress upon us the raw power America possesses.

In truth, Saddam looked like what Jamaicans would refer to as "suck and spit out", that is something no one wants any longer. It has been driven home to us that Saddam's regime has been chewed up, spat out and has become as important as the rat hole which Saddam recently occupied. But there are conventions regarding the treatment of prisoners of war and the Americans have been at pains to stress it especially when their own were shown on Al Jazeera TV.

Only the dead did not know that Saddam Hussein was a mad man. As I gazed at the TV depiction of him as the latest addition to the gallery of clowns this world has thrown up, I could see all over again the cold glare of "psychotic" in his eyes. That did not change, not from the days before the 1991 Gulf War when he allowed himself to be shown with American hostages. Even when he was smiling at that little American boy, the coldness was strong in its freezing stare at the world.

If, however, the US believes that all will now be well, it had better rethink its stance and preparedness. The fact that Saddam was found in such ignominious surroundings with US\$750,000 must have meant that he was in control of nothing and had to be paying his way out just to keep people from reporting him to the authorities and, buying tinned food, cornmeal, matches and, maybe, a smuggled copy of Playboy to occupy his time and fantasies.

If he was in control of nothing, who was it or, to which faction does the killers of the American soldiers belong? It is my view that they were mostly, acting in small, unorganised groups just picking off soldiers as they could. It is something people do

as a natural response and resistance to uninvited guests carrying guns and ammunition.

It is also my belief, and I share this with John Maxwell that the real resistance to the Americans may now begin to take shape as the absence of Saddam will mean that his name will no longer taint any further resistance movements. At the same time there will be a significant percentage of Iraqis who will share the same glee as the Americans but with a caveat attached - set the timetable US for your departure.

The amount which Saddam was said to have been found with, US\$750,000, is about J\$45 million, more than enough for most Jamaicans to retire on. It must have been hard on the deposed dictator, however, and one can only imagine the original amount he had at the start of what had been his constant moving around until he was found in his rat hole.

Were he in Jamaica and he was as hated as Iraqis hated him, some little group of countrymen would have long seized his original stash, hidden it, given him away, then claimed the reward. In the end, I believe, maybe Saddam was even eager to be captured after the dust, the grime, actually making his own tea and the stale air of his new found hell.

The mighty fall much harder than us mere mortals. We have no palace to give up, no harem loads of women to grieve over and we have never slept on silk. We have never been able to pronounce death on an enemy or give life to those convicted to die. We have no armies at our disposal, no men cowering in fright before us and never have we felt the equal of the God whom we worship.

We are, after all, just mortals who bleed when we are stuck, who have to go to the bathroom when nature decrees it and who cry when pain arrives and when love departs.

We take a few dollars, rub them together but they do not make more than what we had before. Still we rub and scrounge and hustle and go off to work the next day and nothing much in the way of newness happens.

Maybe it is not such a bad idea to be ordinary. Just ask Saddam Hussein.

Kick that fear level up a notch

BY JERRY L. GARDNER
FOR RENSE.COM

We are told to go about our affairs (BAU) business as usual. Whatever we do, don't stop that Christmas shopping, and spending all that precious money. They are going to protect us. Keep those airports, train stations and bus stations full, keep those city streets and entertainment venues full to capacity, in other words, provide any potential terrorist a well populated target source, just don't stop spending that money, feed that corporate beast, damn the terrorist, full speed ahead.

Would it not be wiser to instruct the American people to put off massive public gatherings such as loaded department stores, shopping centers and sports arenas until said threat could be verified, or until the alleged danger has passed? Does this government not have any regard for the value of the lives of our citizens at all? Either the "fear factor" alerts are a total fraud to keep the fear element at a high level throughout the coming election process, or our government seems to be willfully placing its citizens in harms way by tell us to, "go about our business as usual." While known terrorist have allegedly made convincing threats to "do even greater harm and damage than the WTC, Pentagon and Pennsylvania crash," we are told that we should place all of our trust in the very people who entirely missed the last "terrorist" visit, namely 9/11. This doesn't instill a great deal of confidence in me, I don't want my head blown off while someone reads a goat story.

We are also told that all law enforcement personnel and other protection resources will be at our disposal. I'm sure this is reassuring to anyone who has ever waited for the police to respond to a crime in progress. Plus, when people become afraid everybody looks suspicious, panic becomes the rule of the day, else why are some innocent souls sitting in jails today accused of 9/11 connections based solely on their skin color?

To suggest that we are yielding to the threats of terrorist by staying home, or practicing our own precautionary measures is a crock. Any sane person is not

going to make themselves a target for disaster simply to show how brave they are, this indicates how stupid they are. Our leaders get to sit in their fully contained bunkers underground and shout to the enemy, "look how brave we American's are," while like so many sitting ducks we listen to them and go shopping. It would be like standing on the observation deck of one of the towers and daring the aircraft to hit you because you are an American and you are brave. Obviously, under normal conditions and considering that the world is indeed a very dangerous place today, we do not shut ourselves in and stop functioning, however, we are talking about supposedly "known and potentially life threatening evidence here," there is a difference.

To most rational people, a warning means to be prepared to take any action(s) necessary to avoid injury or death. It doesn't mean go out on the streets and challenge some idiot with a nuke suitcase. If these "informed" intelligence souls in Washington really had sound data, and if the same "intelligence souls" had American lives as their primary interest, I would think they would devise a plan whereby we might be told how to escape possible death, not how to take our wallets and checkbooks and go out and meet it head on. This is a fools game.

I am not suggesting that the same people (and they know who they are, and they may be more well known than we might be prepared to believe) won't do further damage to our nation as the most opportune time arrives, but, I am aware that since 9/11 there has been any number of opportunities do extensive damage during any number of major events where massive crowds have gathered for traditional American events, yet no "terrorist" have taken advantage of these opportunities, thank God. This alone makes one wonder just who the real terrorist are. Follow the money and follow the power, who really has the most to gain from these continued alerts and threats?

I certainly pray that nothing happens to further harm our people, or our nation, the previous attack has already caused irreversible damage to our constitutional form of government and our rights. One can almost hear the clanging of the

chains from Patriot Acts I & II, plus the development of the Fatherland Security.

I think it is time for the government to stop crying "wolf." Stop frightening the American public unless they have facts, and or proof, something they always seem to come up short on, i.e., Iraq. When people become conditioned to hearing "the sky is falling" time and time again, what happens? They will eventually stop looking up (believing this crap) and then they are exposed to real danger because their guard has been neutralized. At this point they will be ripe for extensive conditioning and subjected to total authoritarian control simply because they have stopped believing in themselves and self governing and now rely on an oppressive form of government which will govern (rule) the people.

This pagan holiday isn't important enough to me to go out and spend much needed money, if indeed we are at a serious risk. I'll let the rich boys in Washington do all the shopping and spending (right) since they are so brave about this.

Washington, give us a break, either prove an immanent terrorist threat, or stop the fear mongering, the people don't need this Orwellian conditioning, at least I don't need it.

I am still at a loss as to how America was able to get along with the civilized world for more than two hundred years, give billions of dollars and aid to poor countries, fight along side oppressed countries to protect sovereignty and freedoms, and all of a sudden just three short years ago, during this administration, the entire world is jealous of our riches and hate us, and want to kill us all, go figure. I am equally puzzled as to how every country we invade lately "just happens" to be rich with oil or other commodities of wealth, whether it be minerals or drugs, yet it isn't about oil. Now we must live with perpetual war for the sake of perpetual war with elusive "faceless" terrorist all over the world, in a war with no winners, this doesn't even make sense to a normal thinking individual. This is contrary to natural human behavior. This would suggest that everybody in the world is at war with everybody in the world. Maybe I'm just getting old and things are moving too fast for me, I can't come up with an answer to these questions.

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Woes and ambitions

BY ASMA'A ABU BAKR AL-SAQQAF
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

In the twenties of the last century, and while Yemen was tumbling in the darkness of illiteracy and backwardness, Turbat-Dhubhan was a source of light and a sprint of knowledge from which rays of civilization, culture and knowledge emitted. And Dhubhan cultural club, as it was known then, was a center of education credited to its founder, the noble teacher Ahmed Noman. Not so far from the club stands the college of education of a capacity of 3000 students in an area of more than one million inhabitants, which clearly indicates the first problem this college faces.

Yemen Times tries here to convey to its readers a picture on this college and its reality by this reportage

Merchants and businessmen's support

In the beginning we met with the Dr. Abdulqawi dean of the college who stressed that the college is going through continuous growth as he said: "A center for training and academic development and a center for continuous education had been opened, also the mathematics and computer science departments had been opened in the science college and computers and laboratory fields in the continuous education section and now new sections of administrative sciences (management and accounting) have also been opened.

There are some obstacles that face us, and the well-off people in the area are not supporting us. We do hope that this changes and they help us improve this college to reach the level qualifies it to be a branch of Taiz University and for this we need to complete the infrastructure and the buildings required. We see the businessmen being involved generously everywhere except where they should and this is their own land and hometown which deserves their attention and support.

Lack of educational cadre and weak academic and technical development mechanism

Dr. Hooria Yaseen Hussain, an Iraqi lecturer and head of the Quran sciences and Islamic Studies sees that the education process in Yemen in general and in this college in particular is improving with the care and attention of the authorities and this is a clear issue that does not need proof. This college is improving and going on the right track under the guidance of its dean and management. However, there are clear obstacles standing in the way such as the scarcity of teaching halls although this has been relatively solved with the new building but the shortage in the educational cadre is still a problem that needs immediate care.

Student's level is generally good especially female students for they are interested and eager to receive education and prepare their lectures and work and attend regularly. These are good and promising indicators and the



level of education is approaching that in other Arab countries, except for a few differences regarding the development mechanism, although generally things are improving.

Shortage in English books and no modern communication means

We met with the head of the English department at the college, Dr. Omish from India who said: "Like every emerging college this college possesses a number of good assets such as an understanding dean who is continuously trying to improve the situation of the college, as well as a good relationship between the teachers and the students. But we suffer from shortage of books in the college library; also the students' background in English is quite weak as they start learning English in a late stage as well as the scarcity of English books in Yemen as well as the modern communication media such as computer and internet.

Teachers' bureaucracy and always the blame on the administration

"Students are suffering from ill-treatment of some teachers who control and dominate over the educational process. If this is the case of teachers who teach our sons and daughters then what do we expect from the coming generations? And how are we to establish a confident educated community? And when we complain they blame it on the management and that the college is not being run in a proper way because it has chosen these teachers in the first place," a student's parent complained to the Yemen Times.

No library, unstable schedule and high expenses

When we asked a number of students in this college they gave us more insight to what is going on, student Wadha Abdulhakim Shamsan, level 3 at the English department said: "The establishment of the college as such is an achievement because this area desperately needed a college and although things are progressing well yet there are many problems such as shortages in teachers which force the existing staff to bear a heavier burden, the schedule is not stable and keeps changing and the library lacks many important reference books and educational references, especially for the English department. Another problem is that students have to spend a lot of money to afford buying the books and book-

lets with no subsidizing from the college.

Unqualified lecturers and halls without chairs

Student A. Adil first level in the English department says: "In spite of exerted efforts to improve our college yet so many negatives exist such as many of our teachers are not holding a qualifying degree some have just bachelor degrees, a few holding masters and much fewer are Ph.D holders. And of the most annoying issues to students is the ever changing timetable and because there are more halls than chairs students keep moving chairs from place to place and we end up having halls with no chairs"

Wicked businessman or an educator, chaos is the problem!

Sahar Jameel al-Sakkaf studying in Islamic studies first level complains that chaos is a permanent issue in this college for example lecturers do not stick to their specific halls which causes students to miss lectures. Some teachers don't have any relation or knowledge about the subject they are teaching and the library suffers from the lack of books and important references.

"What's worse, she adds, is the behavior of some teachers who use the students badly in order to gain more money; as they keep on changing the subject text books which always forces students to buy again in addition to setting high prices for them. This is in the case of actually providing any text material at all. All this is happening under the nose of the administration, and people keep wondering about the education's outcomes!"

Finally

We are almost sure that the problems this college is facing are common to all other colleges around the republic, for they all are a result of the same educational system. Chaotic schedules, burdening students with fees and costs, lack of reference books and libraries and non-existent educational support such as internet and computers. And above all this there is the lack of specialties and the space problem. What is critical about the education college in al-Turba is that it is the centre of a huge area "al-Hujaraia" and it has been a pioneering area in education, so it deserves a little more attention and care.

Sana'a gets ready to receive a yearlong Arab culture

BY MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The ministry of expatriates is preparing a program for expatriates participation in activities the capital Sana'a is preparing at the beginning of January for receiving activities of a yearlong Arab culture as it has received the torch of Arab culture from the Moroccan city Rabat that had been selected capital of Arab culture for the year 2003. And now has handed the title over to Sana'a in person of the Yemeni minister of culture Khalid al-Ruwaisan.

While visiting Morocco to launch activities of the Yemeni cultural week the Yemeni delegation presented a

number of various cultural, artistic and literary contributions besides holding an exhibition of photographs and plastic arts and other exhibitions for folkloric costumes and books.

The city of old Sana'a is nowadays an active movement of renovation and maintenance as well as modernization of its tourist and heritage landmarks. Its narrow streets have been rendered to human workshops working for receiving the new coming year with charming attire that is seemly for the Arab occasion. The ministry of expatriate's affairs has begun in coordination with the ministry of culture and tourism the work for enabling Yemeni talented expatriates to have a chance share in carrying out the activities of Sana'a, capital of Arab culture. The minister of expatriates affairs

Abdah Ali Qubati has said what interests his ministry is to give prominence to the culture of expatriation and innovations of Yemen's "ambassadors" abroad. There is a desire for improving the areas of art and literature and culture of our sons through those activities. Mr. Qubati asserted the ministry's intention to offering facilities for encouragement of the Yemeni expatriates' participation in various activities they would like to and to show their contributions in creative fields. The ministry considered that Sana'a as capital of Arab culture means establishment of a link of its expatriate sons and promotion for their activities in order to attain largest possible number of tourists to the capital and other areas of the country.

Adam Leach, Oxfam (GB) Regional Director of MEEECIS Region to the Yemen Times:

"We are helping make a real difference in improving people's lives and thereby tackling poverty."

INTERVIEWED BY NADIA AL-SAQQAF
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Founded in Great Britain for the purpose of providing assistance to people suffering from famine during the Second World War 61 years ago, Oxfam(GB) had committed itself to an ambitious goal that is "alleviating poverty and suffering around the world".

The organization currently works to help poor people in more than 70 countries around the world - through its humanitarian, development, advocacy and campaigning work, and through Oxfam International which is a confederation of 12 Oxfams' working in different countries. Adam Leach, Regional Director for Oxfam (GB) in the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (MEEECIS), in a friendly conversation with the Yemen Times told us about Oxfam, and his visit to Yemen.

Q: Could you tell us about yourself? And what made you join development work?

A: I lived and worked outside the UK for most of my life and overseas, and I have worked in 15 countries in the African and Asian continents before I became the MEEECIS Regional Director in 1999. Throughout my travel around the world I have seen that people's problems and the reasons for them are similar. But it seems that there is no end to people's suffering in many places. I believe that poverty undermines people's dignity and so I have chosen to use my experience and knowledge to help find ways to overcome poverty and suffering.

Q: In a few words, what is Oxfam and what is its mission?

A: Oxfam believes very strongly that poverty must be ended and that we must work together with other people and a wide variety of organizations, including governments, policy makers, civil society and the media to make the changes that are needed.

Q: Why Oxfam - Yemen?

A: Yemen is one of the least developed countries in the Middle East with poor social development indicators and high levels of poverty. Given Oxfam's mandate to address poverty and suffering, it is very legitimate for Oxfam to work in Yemen. We believe that people across the world and especially in the Middle East, should be able to take control of their own lives and to stand up for themselves with confidence and dignity.

Q: What are Oxfam's programs in Yemen?

A: Oxfam's programs in Yemen include improving access, quality and affordability of health care provision through community based primary health care linked to the District Health System in Hadramout; strengthening the role and capacity of civil society in the implementation and monitoring of the Poverty Reduction Strategy; promoting justice between women and men and ending violence against women. Oxfam has also undertaken disaster preparedness work to enable effective and quick response to humanitarian crises.

Q: After 20 years of Oxfam work in Yemen, how do you assess the Yemen Program and the response from the people?

A: Oxfam's support through its partners has led to positive changes in the lives of poor women and men and they have started to take actions and deci-

sions that affect their development needs. Also Oxfam's support has led to affect policies and its implementation in favor of the poor. Oxfam has had a positive influence in bringing about greater awareness on poverty issues and in particular bringing to attention the needs of poor women through engaging with men and women.

Q: To what extent does Oxfam coordinate with the civil society? Is there a base on which you select your partners?

A: Oxfam works mainly through civil society, which includes grassroots organizations, women organizations, human rights agencies, academic and research organizations amongst others. Coordination and networking among them has been promoted and these organizations work at different levels from community to national. Oxfam has criteria of selecting its partners based on the organizations commitment and potential capacity to deliver. I believe that Oxfam has a role to play in bringing about change and by working closely with local partner organizations here in Yemen, we are helping make a real change in tackling poverty and thereby improving people's lives.

Q: You said in your press release last week that you want to work in partnership with the government; but does the government want to work with you?

A: Oxfam works in collaboration with the government at local and national level to promote the needs of poor women and men at policy level and to make interventions sustainable by linking them to public systems and structures. The government has requested for Oxfam support in particular with regard to the work on Poverty Reduction Strategy and in the Health sector.

Q: Do you synchronize your work with other international organizations? How come many feel there is duplication of efforts especially that the targeted areas are the same by all organizations, e.g. Hadramout, Taiz, Aden?

A: Efforts at coordination amongst international and national organizations are ongoing so as to avoid duplication and ensure the optimization in the use of resources and learning. However, this is an area where much more can be done.

Q: What are Oxfam's future plans regarding Yemen? And on what grounds do you decide your programs? Has Oxfam-Yemen made a case for it to stay?

A: Oxfam has a strong commitment to working in Yemen and has built up good work with poor people, partner organizations, other international organizations and the government.

Oxfam's current work continues for three years. Future work also depends upon Oxfam's funding and decisions about where we need to work in the world. At present we want to continue to work here and future plans depend upon careful planning, agreement with the government and other people in Yemen.

Q: At the regional level how does the Oxfam Yemen integrate with the other countries in the Middle East region? Are there any common or joint programs?

A: Oxfam has encouraged partners



Adam Leach

to establish links with other organizations and networks in the Middle East region especially women's organizations, so as to participate in wider issues and debates. The region is characterized by a number of common issues that are of concern to Oxfam such as issues of protection, economic opportunities and resources and about inclusion and representation among others. Moreover, Oxfam is committed to deepen its understanding of the Middle East region to guide our thinking and actions.

Q: How do you compare the Yemen program with the other countries' programs?

A: It is difficult to compare program quality because the circumstances in which we work differ significantly between countries. Our work in Yemen is one of our stronger country programs with real potential.

Q: Not many people know about Oxfam, why do you think that is the case?

A: Oxfam is well known to the people and communities with whom we have worked in several places throughout Yemen and with the government, nationally and at local level. Until recently, it was more important that the work of our partners and the needs of poor communities be better known than us. We now want this to change because we believe that we can help to bring about more change if people know more about our work with other people. We can also help to make their work better known.

Q: Oxfam-Yemen has started to connect with the media recently, why now?

A: Worldwide, we are now looking for ways to tell more people about our work and to raise issues of common concern to millions of people - like the need for better health services, opportunities and protection for women and justice between men and women, and information about the use of public funds for basic services. We believe that the media in Yemen has an important role to play and we want to share our information more clearly and more effectively to increase understanding and support for the kinds of issues that we, and many others, care about.

Q: Is there any thing you would like to add?

A: Oxfam values the relationships that we have with people in Yemen and in places all over the world as one of our strongest assets. It is a real privilege to visit Yemen and to learn how people are taking responsibility for bringing about change. I look forward to seeing Yemen, especially the poorest, becoming more able to change their lives for the better.

Journey from Taliban to democrat

By Scott Baldauf
For The Christian Science Monitor

Before he leaves his village for Kabul, Abdul Hakeem Muneeb is given strict instructions by his constituents.

"The first thing is Islam," they whisper to him. He agrees: "If we follow Islam, all the rest, development and security, will follow naturally."

A delegate to the *loya jirga*, a grand council that will produce Afghanistan's new constitution, Mr. Muneeb makes an unlikely founding father. A former deputy minister in the ousted Taliban government, he still wears the black turban favored by Taliban leaders. Without it, he says, his head feels naked.

While some Afghans consider him a representative of the past, the Karzai government sees former Taliban like Muneeb as windows into the volatile countryside, where the vast majority of Afghanistan's 21 million citizens live. Making men like Muneeb feel like citizens, with rights and responsibilities, may be a crucial first step in undercutting Taliban support and giving disaffected Pashtun tribesmen an option other than the gun.

"There is a difference between the military commanders who use the name of Taliban, and the educated and religious people, the real Taliban," says Muneeb. "These people are not criminals, but they are concerned that the American forces will mistake them for the criminals who are fighting the government."

From Zormat, the road to Kabul is a three-hour, bone-crunching ordeal. Muneeb is crammed in a public minivan, full of shoppers, businessmen, and whole Pashtun families carrying gifts for relatives in the big city. Outside the window, the arid mountains of Paktia Province slowly give way to the fertile farmlands of Logar, recently planted with winter wheat.

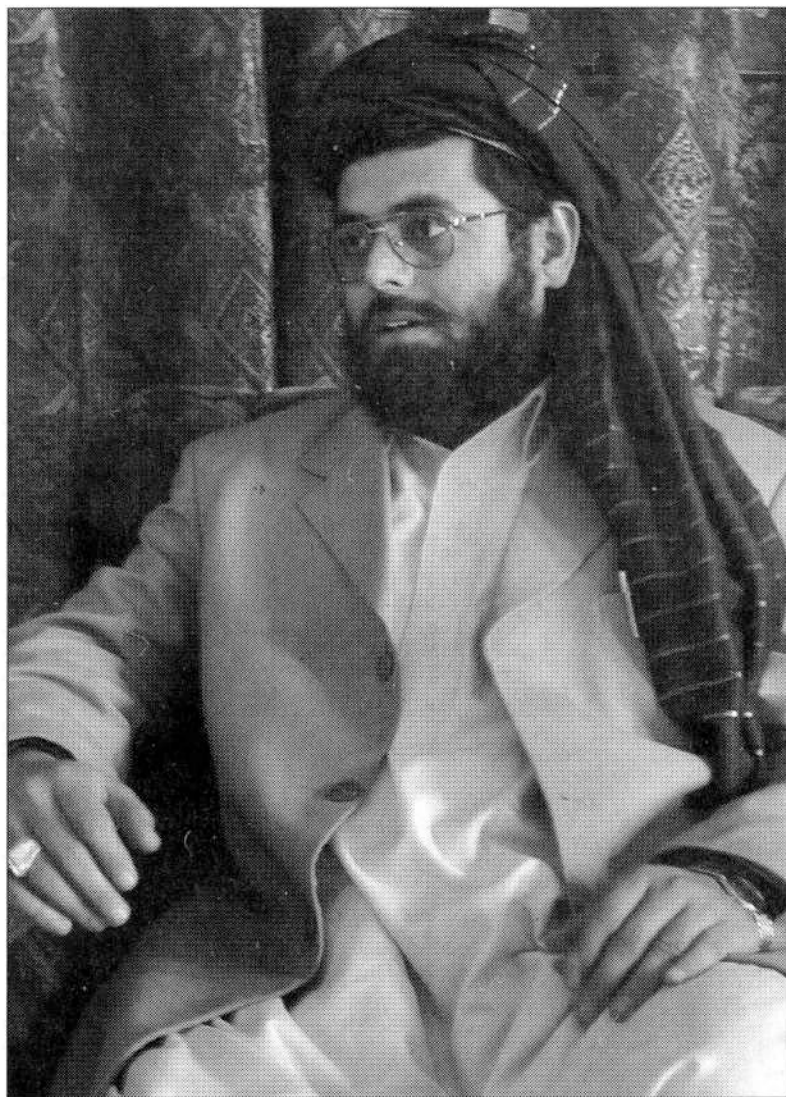
Ever since he left a caravan of supporters - and armed bodyguards - back in the provincial capital of Gardez, Muneeb has felt nervous. He thinks of his wife, two daughters, and infant son in Zormat, who will need the protection of relatives for the next few weeks of the *loya jirga*. Just three months ago, Taliban fighters attacked Muneeb's home with Kalashnikovs. It was the second such attack in a year.

But there are risks in Kabul too. Militiamen for the Northern Alliance, manning the checkpoints to the city, keep their eyes out for bearded Pashtuns. With the Taliban attacking aid workers, UN officials, and road builders all across the South and Southeast, these northern soldiers don't want to let anyone in who might bring violence to Kabul itself.

Cellphones and Chinese food

In Kabul, he meets his brother Mohebullah - a delegate from Ghazni Province - at the bullet-pocked campus of Kabul Polytechnic, the site of the *loya jirga*. Like high-school kids on a field trip, they hire a taxi and see the city of Kabul. Muneeb's first stop is an electronic store; he buys himself a mobile phone. Until recently, he never imagined holding one - even when he was the Taliban's deputy minister for telecommunications six years ago. The phone will be quite useful in the days ahead, to make deals, influence other delegates, play the game.

Driving from the Polytechnic campus to the main bazaar at Pul-e Chishti to the government ministries of Shar-e Naw, Muneeb stares wide-eyed at the changes the city has undergone since he left two years ago. Internet cafés in every city block, Chinese, Thai, and Italian restaurants, tens of thou-



One man builds a future in the new Afghanistan.

sands of cars in a city where bicycles once ruled.

To Muneeb, Kabul is paradise. In Zormat, there is no school, no health clinic, no electricity, no source of jobs except agriculture and nearby brick kilns.

Few government officials or foreign aid workers dare to come to Zormat, Muneeb says. There is good reason for this. The region was the site of the massive six-week long US offensive called Operation Anaconda conducted in the spring of 2002; Taliban elements remain active in Zormat.

Back in October 2001, when American bombs first started taking out Taliban anti-aircraft positions - and the occasional Red Cross warehouse - it was to Zormat that Muneeb fled. There he had family, friends, protection. The first thing he did when he arrived in Zormat was to place a call to the BBC in Pakistan and denounce the Taliban regime for harboring Osama bin Laden.

A week later, he helped organize and command a tribal militia, called an *arbaki*, to protect the city of Gardez against looters. But by mid-November, Muneeb gave the order to retreat. From the hills, they watched the US-backed commander, Badshah Khan Zadran, and his men seize the empty governor's mansion and begin looting the city.

For the next few months, Muneeb laid low. He started a business selling charcoal to the local brick kilns. He and his wife expanded their family, with the birth to a second daughter. In May 2002, six months after the Taliban fell, he made his first return to politics, representing the people of Zormat at the emergency *loya jirga*. He enthusiastically supported Mr. Karzai as president, whom he remembers as an early backer of the Taliban back in the mid-1990s.

On Sunday morning, Muneeb listens to Karzai's introductory speech with mild amusement, but fervent support.

"The terrorists are the enemy of a better life for Afghanistan," Karzai tells the delegates. "But this nation will never give up. This nation will gain the victory against the terrorists, God willing."

The crowd applauds, and Muneeb joins them enthusiastically.

In the pocket of his sport coat, Muneeb carries a copy of the draft constitution - a 160-article document compiled by a handpicked team of intellectuals, religious

scholars, and legal experts. He approves of most of the provisions, but he has qualms about issues of justice. The decision to forgive or punish a murderer, for instance, should belong to the victim's family - as it was during the Prophet's time - and not to the president, he says.

But there will be plenty of time for substance. First comes the symbolism. The former King Zahir Shah gives a short speech urging unity. A blind cleric chants verses from the Koran. Then a group of kindergarten students, dressed in various ethnic garbs, sing songs of Afghan unity.

"This is our great land, this is our beautiful land, this land is our life, this is our Afghanistan."

The nationalist messages are not subtle, and they carry a powerful effect. On a large video screen at the front of the tent, a delegate wipes her eyes with a handkerchief. Muneeb also wipes his eyes. Afghanistan was beautiful once, he recalls, before drought and war and bombs turned the mountains around Kabul to dust.

Muneeb thinks of his children back in Zormat. His oldest daughter is 3; his youngest son is 2 months old. Will they have a school in Zormat? Will they grow up thinking of themselves as Afghans or as Pashtuns? Everything starts here.

Throughout his time as a Taliban official, Muneeb saw himself as a moderate among hard-liners. While commanders pressed for stricter rules on the lives of Afghanistan's urban population, Muneeb looked for ways to retain the true spirit of Islam. Taliban rules - unlike the Koran - specifically forbade women from attending school, for instance, but Muneeb and his moderate colleagues quietly arranged to keep a medical institute open for young women throughout the five-year Taliban regime.

A child's song drowned out

But while the *loya jirga* organizers have worked hard on creating a spirit of unity, it's difficult to undo decades of animosity and suspicion. Within minutes of the children's song, an argument breaks out over procedures. Farsi-speaking candidates from religious parties complain that the system chosen by Karzai is unfair. Muneeb springs to his feet. He is the first speaker to back Karzai's voting system.

"At the last *loya jirga*, Karzai

was elected president, so he has the authority to choose the system he wants," Muneeb says in Pashto. "We all have a big responsibility, to adopt a constitution and to act in accordance with Islam. We must not be distracted from our main task."

Scattered applause, surprised murmurs. In a few minutes, the debate is closed. Karzai's voting procedures are approved. Muneeb and other Karzai supporters are delighted, but they now know that this will be the tone for the rest of the *loya jirga*. There will be no easy victories.

The next day, Monday, Muneeb rises at 5:15 a.m., to perform his ablutions. He scrubs his hands, forearms, feet, face, teeth, beard, nostrils, ears, to make himself fit for an audience with Allah. Today will be his test. He plans to run for deputy chairman of *loya jirga*. He predicts that many delegates from Pashtun-dominated provinces will vote with him.

Inside the tent, Muneeb's candidacy causes a buzz. His cellphone rings constantly. "Are you really going to run?" people ask. One friend, Mirwaiz Yaseni, a member of Karzai's national security council, asks Muneeb to bow out. The two men met the night before to strike a deal.

"I can't tell you not to run, but it would certainly be appreciated if you threw your support behind me," Mr. Yaseni said.

"It's important for me to at least put my name forward, for my constituents," Muneeb replied, "but I don't want to take votes away from you. After all, you and I are both Pashtuns. We must stay together."

A player once more

Before the morning's vote, another Afghan child is invited to sing a song in Farsi: "We are doves, waiting for the peace, we are tired of the fighting." The song is well-sung, but the delegates applaud before the

song is finished. The child is too polite to continue: "Thank you very much for paying attention to me," she says, and leaves the stage.

In the crowd of 20 candidates, Muneeb is preparing his own polite departure. He waits just long enough for his name to be announced, and then submits his resignation for candidacy. Splitting the vote 20 ways would definitely risk everything. Mirwaiz is the stronger candidate, he tells himself, the man who has Karzai's ear. Muneeb returns to his seat and the announcement of his resignation is read out.

What he gets in return for this sacrifice is not clear: development funds for Zormat, government jobs for Zormat citizens. But Muneeb knows this is how allegiances are created, the reward will come later.

The TV cameras turn to Muneeb, briefly. He is smiling. After two years of seclusion, Muneeb the former Talib is a player once more.

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Local Press

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr

Al-Raie al-A'am weekly,
16 Dec.2003.

Main headlines:

- Saddam escalates Iraqi resistance and causes popular wrath
- Arresting Saddam rages the Iraqi people anger
- Britain tries to benefit from the new weapon for fighting terror initiated by Yemen

The newspaper's editorial says by the capture of the former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein and beginning of his interrogation by the Americans the Iraqi issue enters a new turning-point and various unpredicted orbits and the points where to stop at. While the Americans and coalition countries and the US-appointed governing council consider the arrest of president Saddam a significant gain, we think it merely a continuation of a political vengeance began with the fall of Baghdad and maybe ends with the capture of the foe number one and just an event in the course of the developments witnessed under consequences of the war on Iraq.

The struggle against the colonialist and resisting the occupier would remain a standing liberationist value that won't fall with the fall of president Saddam though it would be affected by the incident in one of its aspects due to psychological and moral factors. The war and resistance against the occupier is an Iraqi messages not a Saddam-related one. It is a liberationist duty the Iraqis feel as sacred with or without Saddam. The newspaper's editorial confirms that the Iraqi resistance would not be damaged by the arrest of Saddam but would continue till the achievement of liberation deriving its power the people of Iraq.

26 September weekly,
organ of the Yemeni Armed Forces,
18 September 2003.

Main headlines:

- Parliament speakers, ministers, heads of international organisations confirm their attendance: Large international response to participate in the conference on democracy and human rights
- PM: New group of financial and economic reforms
- Ceremony inaugurating Sana'a capital of Arab culture begins at

Sabeen square

- Yemeni-Saudi doctors take part together in carrying out rare surgical operations

The newspaper's editorial says the United States of America has from an early time worked for toppling the Iraqi regime and despite that entire regime had from the beginning offered cooperation and implemented what had been asked to do concerning the weapons of mass destruction, accepting international inspection teams or even the preparedness to guarantee American interests in future. But the plan for occupation of Iraq was prepared already and beforehand and ready for implementation even without waiting for getting pretexts or a logic justification.

The United States that supported Iraq with other states in the region in its war against Iran and supplied it with great quantities of military weapons and technologies and intelligence backing did not hesitate to work seriously for toppling the Iraqi regime and removing it from its road for goals maybe related to its interests and perhaps to regional and international calculations not far away from what is being implemented of re-arranging it according to the American style and perspective.

The United States has no doubt benefited from mistakes committed by the Iraqi regime regarding non-fully comprehension of the current changeables, not following an open policy with more elasticity and tolerance for establishing democracy and embracing the people of Iraq for strengthening the domestic front and deprives those waiting to act against it of their opportunity. All that and other factors helped in the end occupation of Iraq and domination over its destinies and wealth and also ended in that tragic and humiliating scene of in which the president of Iraq was presented. The aim of showing that scene was surely meant for offending the man and humiliating him. It could not be denied that any Arab or Muslim has not felt that offense while seeing an Arab Muslim president on that disgraceful image.

Al-Wahda weekly,
17 Dec.2003.

Main headlines:

- Local Administration minister: Decentralization committee would

Main headlines

- Yemen takes part in America's war on terror
- Plans against foreign interests and government institutions, undermined
- Employment, a legitimate right to the disabled
- Environmental disaster threatens citizens of poor residential quarters in Aden
- Occupying forces use banned gases before capturing Saddam Hussein
- Amnesty International: What happens in Iraq considered evident violation of international humane law
- 30 Arab lawyers getting ready to defend Saddam
- JMP calls the national press to support the people of Iraq
- U.S. occupation arrests Yemenis on charge of cooperation with Iraqi resistance
- YJS general conference postponed till the end of February
- Germany angry for stabbing a businessman in Sana'a
- Kuwait summit faces heated files
- Ambassador Hull postpones his visit to al-Jawf in response to advices by Yemeni personalities
- Al-Ahdal: Saudi and Yemeni personalities financed al-Qaeda operations in Yemen
- Politicians and academicians: Yemen has to found stable political system to be stability factor in the region
- Capture Saddam Hussein a surprise Yemenis did not expect
- Hassan al-Udaini: The world won't be better after Saddam
- Journalists discuss establishment of a preparatory committee parallel to the Syndicate conference, and sue its leadership
- International supervision on Sadism's trial, interim governing considers his execution least punishment
- Antiquities authority establishes branches at border crossings
- Al-Awqaf undersecretary: Building mosques under license beforehand
- Yemeni-Chinese committee concludes meetings,
- 50 million Yuan for financing economic and technical projects
- New Sudanese ambassador to Sana'a
- International satisfaction over government measures regarding securing safety of ports and regional waters

study difficulties of implementing local authority

- Confiscation of poisons and insecticides and getting rid of them
- Property prosecutions concede their authorities
- Agricultural researches warn against spread of highly poisonous insecticides
- Graduation of the first batch of Yemeni trainers in human rights
- Symposium on Yemeni-American

relations
• Franctelecom runs Teleyemen

The writer Hatim Ali al-Mahdi says in his article what makes the Yemen and its leadership entertain respect of the world is its firm stands regarding all complicated issues, especially in the Middle East that the hostile powers did not stop threatening it out of their power and away from the logic of reason that should arbitrated to avoid the

happening of the declared war by America against Iraq. Yemenis role in al international forums was always warning and appealing to all parties of the conflict to keep the voice of reason and returning usurped rights to their owners in Palestine. Without returning the usurped rights to their owners there would only surface the feeling of hatred and terror that America has visualized the Arabs and Muslims as associated. The making of a new world according to the American vision appears through exploiting peoples destinies economically and gagging any voice hostile to that imposed theory. The Yemeni attitude remains representing the voice of reason for staving of the dangers the region is fraught with. Under the unilateral superpower all cries for peace would be of n use.

Al-Isbpuu weekly,
18 Dec.2003.

Main headlines:

- YJS conference to be postponed
- At last Islah with abandonment of Wahabi fanaticism
- Three clowns at a Kuwaiti wise parliament

Columnist Hamdi Ahmed says in an article it is noted that the Iraqi resistance has nothing to do with Saddam Hussein or the Iraqi regime or the Special Forces but it is rather a people's resistance emerging from the national depth and defence of freedom and independence. Even if the people of Iraq hated Saddam and his dictatorial regime but they would not accept the American occupation as an alternative to what they have suffered in the past at the hands of the former Iraqi regime. What proves that the Iraqi resistance is a popular one is its continuation even after the capture of Saddam Hussein. Out of a logical viewpoint that America, after it has got itself involved in street war with the Iraqi resistance and lost many of its soldiers there, not finding weapons of mass destruction in the Iraqi territories, does not mainly want to get rid of Saddam and what remained of his regime but to capture Saddam alive to stand trial and confesses under pressures and falsification that there are weapons of mass destruction he was hiding in his territories, especially after America has brought weapons of mass destruction from its territories or from other land and put the in the hid-

ing place that Saddam has "disclosed" during the trial just to give itself before the world the legitimacy of invading Iraq and its success in disclosing weapons of mass destruction in the Iraqi territories.

Thus popularity of President Bush would rise in the American elections and enters a second presidential term to realize more successes.

Al-Shoura weekly, organ of the Union of People's Forces of Yemen,
21 Dec.2003.

Main headlines:

- YSP: Prisoners in Dhamar, members of the national front
- A child wounded with a gunshot inside the Grand Mosque
- Fresh impoverishing dose by increasing taxes
- Den refinery trade unionists implement a sit-in
- Lading and unloading workers in Aden demand change of administration

Mr Ali Hassan al-Dailami says in an article that the grand mosque in Sana'a is nowadays coming under a suppressive campaign whether from persons having no relationship with mosques and from the authority. Political security organisation has now begun working openly in the mosque, whether through its secret elements or security elements who would call names against those who chant slogans against America and Israel after Friday prayers.

Inspection at the doors of the grand mosque is something violating the constitution and the law and a flagrant measure depicting a situation similar to an emergency state. And attacking the youth who chant slogans is something clearly meant for preventing people from interacting with them. The political security is violating the law as those youth are expressing their opinions in peaceful ways without committing any attack on people or against the law or the authority. The other thing is that arresting children is an act also violating the law. Regardless of conviction about the ways of those youth my aim is defending the rights of equal citizenship and expressing my annoyance towards the shameful silence of the JMP parties. I wonder where are the civil society organisations? Aren't those people who are arrested part of those organisations' priorities?

World Press

Major news items in leading international newspapers *Provided by Xinhua*

Egypt

Al Ahram

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak expressed deep regret over the attack on Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher by an "irresponsible" Palestinian group later on Monday.

Mubarak said in a statement that such an incident will never affect Egypt's complete commitment to exert every possible effort to reach a comprehensive and peaceful settlement to the Palestinian cause through negotiations between the two parties, as well as the active participation of all international peace-loving powers.

Al Akhbar

The 24th summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council wrapped up on Monday by issuing a final communique calling for putting ousted Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on trail for crimes he committed against the Iraqi and Gulf people.

The two-day summit, hosted by Kuwait, welcomed the Iraqi interim Governing Council's decision to form a tribunal to try the former regime figures for their crimes.

Al Gomhuria

President Mubarak will meet with his Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad over the volatile Mideast situation on Wednesday in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh.

The Egyptian Gazette

President Mubarak on Monday met with Mark Otte, the special European Union peace envoy for the Middle east, and his accompanying delegation, who are currently on an official visit to Cairo.

Otte told reporters after the meeting that he had fruitful talks with Mubarak which covered a host of regional issues, as well as Egyptian-EU ties.

Japan

Asahi, Mainichi, Yomiuri, Nihon Keizai:

Two members of an advisory panel under Japanese government on road construction reform said they will quit the panel for being ignored when finalizing a plan to privatize road-related public corporations.

Yomiuri

Japanese Emperor Akihito turned 70

years old on Tuesday.

Mainichi

Japan may scrap practice of recognizing imported cows as domestic ones after keeping them three months.

Nihon Keizai

Japan's Matsushita Electric Industrial Inc. is to invest 130 billion yen (1.2 billion US dollars) to build system chip plant.

Germany

Die Welt

Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder is named by most Germans as the Reformer of Year, according to an opinion poll conducted by Emnid institute.

Berliner Zeitung

There will be no room for

Nigeria

This Day

The Bureau of Public Enterprises will early next month start negotiations with leadership of oil workers' unions on new plans for the privatization of the nation's four refineries.

Vanguard

Long queues of vehicles have returned to filling stations in many parts of Lagos since Monday, just 96 hours after Nigerian

sweeping tax reduction in the foreseeable future, according to government estimates.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

The International Atomic Energy Agency will begin next week its control over Libyan nuclear programs.

The Punch

The Nigerian federal government on Monday ordered 31 indigenous firms awarded marginal fields in the 2000 bidding round to produce the first oil within the next 24 months or risk revocation of the rights.

Philippines

Philippine Daily Inquirer

Pope John Paul II has asked Philippine rescue workers and all those giving assistance to the victims of the landslides and floods in Southern Leyte Province and northeastern Mindanao to "persevere in their efforts to bring relief and support," saying Monday he was "deeply saddened" by the tragedy that has claimed the lives of close to 200 people.

The Philippine Star

Seventy-five people, six of them

children, were reported missing after a 63-ton motorized ferry sank in the sea between Palawan and Tawi-Tawi in the southern Philippines on Sunday.

The Manila Times

The actor Fernando Poe Jr. on Monday accepted the call of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino to run as the opposition's candidate for president. The coalition of opposition parties had drafted Poe on Dec. 10, in his absence, in a big gathering in a hotel in the Makati business district in Manila.

India

The Hindu:

Normal life in the northern parts of the country was badly affected Monday as thick fog enveloped the region, disrupting air, rail and road traffic.

Indian Express:

Frequent assaults against women highlighted by the ghastly rape of a Swedish diplomat and some sensational crimes put question marks on the

efficiency of the Delhi Police in the outgoing year even as it scored significant successes in preventing possible terrorist attacks by killing and apprehending several militants.

The Statesman

Only high-tech investments and better infrastructure can help strengthen Jammu and Kashmir's dismal economy, an Indian Planning Commission's development report said.

Kenya

Kenya Times

Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki on Monday released 11,546 prisoners in line with a recent recommendation aimed at easing congestion in all prisons across the country.

Daily Nation

Americans who say they plan to travel to Kenya are having their applications for life insurance reject-

ed by some of the biggest US insurance companies following the travel warnings from the US State Department.

East African Standard

Kenya Medical Association on Monday launched investigations into the use of people in Nyanza Province as guinea pigs by research institutions in medical studies.

Pakistan

Dawn

The United States said on Monday that Pakistan's decision to investigate some scientists for their possible link to Iran's nuclear program was reassuring.

The News

President Pervez Musharraf said Monday that no one could coerce Pakistan into giving up Kashmir and

reiterated Islamabad's firm and unwavering commitment to this cause.

The Nation

Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali Monday said there was a breakthrough in negotiations between the government and Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal and the National Assembly session will be convened soon once the agreement was finalized.

Indian Poetry in English:

Turn-of-the-Century Signposts (PART 3)



BY DR. MURARI PRASAD SANA'S UNIVERSITY

In poem after poem, Kashmir's syncretic traditions and plural, tolerant ethos are contrasted with the current communal frenzy and strife. Notably in addition, Shahid has rich stylistic repertoire to inflect his poems with indigenous determinations, for instance the Urdu *ghazal* penetrating American argot and a *canzone* (the traditional Italian poetic form) adopted to articulate the pain of Kashmir's devastation. As Suvir Kaul says, Agha Shahid Ali sought to 'Urduise' English in his strife, by using the model of Urdu as an amalgam of diverse tongues from the northern regions of India.

Amitava Kumar, a Third World immigrant (he comes from Ara in Bihar) and US based academic, has been described by Manthia Diawara as "the most grounded of the postcolonial writers today". He has engaged with the issue of 'immigrity' in a clear-headed and lucid manner in his prose works, such as *Passport Photos* (2000) and *Bombay London New York: A Literary Journey* (2002). In his collection of poems *No Tears for the NRI* (1996) Kumar mirrors the soul of his intimately acquainted diasporic community by articulating the complex contradictions that shape the details of diverse immigrant lives. He is sensitive to the emergence of new subjectivities as a result of immigration/globalization and maps out, what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri note in their book *Empire*, a counter-Empire—an alternative but nonetheless autonomous organization—"on the imperial terrain itself". With admirable sureness of touch he has put his finger on where the narrativisation of South Asian immigrant lives is.

Kumar's compatriot Tabish Khair is an expatriate now settled in Denmark. The sense of migration and loss haunts Khair's poems too. Khair has published a number of collections including *My World* (1991), *A Reporter's Diary* (1993) and *Where Parallel Lines Meet* (2000). He reminisces about the small town of Gaya in Bihar, the ancient Indian heritage, local politics and religious ethos with deft touch and in sharply etched images. The crisp language and neat structure of his verse as well as its sensuous intensity and palpable evocation of colour, contour and context of his native land attract reader's attention.

The 'Epilogue' encapsulates Khair's cosmopolitanism:

"I who am not of the East
Nor of the West, un-Christian,
Nor Muslim or Jew, neither
Born of Adam nor Eve, What can I love
but the world itself
What can I kiss but flesh?"

Besides, he has talent for light verse too. *The Book of Heroes* (1995) contains many poems in which vagrant quirks are enshrined with a fine medley of wit and humour. The sharp and energizing details of his perception soaked in immigrant consciousness have the suggestiveness of postcolonial aesthetic expression.

Prominent among other poets with purchase on expatriate experience are Sudeep sen, Sujata Bhatt, Debjani Chatterjee and Meena Alexander. Leela

Gandhi's *Measures of Home* (2000) shows her a late blossomer in this genre. Sen has been quite prolific throughout the 90s with collections such as *The Lunar Visitations* (1990), *New York Times* (1993), *Dali's Twisted Hands* (1995), and *Postmarked India* (1997). He is fresh, accessible, easy and fluent. In addition to his facility for formal structure, he has brio and range of voices which augur well for his future output.

Carcanet press has added Sujata Bhatt's *Augatora* (Published in India with the title *My Mother's way of Wearing a Sari*, 2000) and *A Colour of Solitude* (2002) to its fine series of Collected poems, giving a timely boost to her fine poems. Like her earlier verse in *Point No Point: Selected Poems* (1997), her recent poems are characterized by fecund rhythms, quiet tone and perfectly satisfying articulation. In his review of the book in *Biblio*, Sudeep Sen notes:

"Augatora" itself is an intriguing word—not a new one-one lost from language a millennium ago. In Old High German it meant, more or less, 'eye gate' ('windows' with an inbuilt etymology). And it is this metaphor-of a window, of a frame that captures various landscapes, of a tunnel focused on specific places—that defines some of the themes of this new volume.

Her characteristic strengths—supple, well-weighted and lucid language, capacious imagination, the use of Gujarati language and script, sustained suggestiveness of tone—are evident here too. Gujarati phrases are missing in *A Colour of Solitude*. The sequence of poems comes to us in the voice of the poet addressing Paula Modersohn-Becker, the German painter who died at the age of 31 in 1907 and in the voice of Paula Becker, as well as in the voices of those around her. Notably, Sujata's German connection is preponderant in these poems. She is arguably one of the finest poets in the Indian diaspora.

The sense of dislocation implicit in cultural juxtapositions informs Debjani Chatterjee's poetry too. She draws on her wealth of experience of different cultures as she was born in India and grew up in Japan, Bangladesh, India, Hong Kong, Egypt and the UK, where she has been living for the last three decades. Like Sujata Bhatt, she constantly refers to the dislocations of living in several languages, and to the poignant angst of immigrant unhomeliness. Also, in some of her poems such as 'I Was That Woman' and 'I Remembered Cinderella', she voices her feminist commitment with rare nerve and verve, but she has not been as prolific as her peers to consolidate her strength.

Among the recent collections of verse from the Indian diaspora dotted with the sense of unhomeliness and the attendant disjunctions is Meena Alexander's *Illiterate Heart* (2002). In Alexander's earlier collections, too, particularly in *The Shock of Arrival* (1996), her diasporic sensibility is manifest. She lives in New York and teaches English and Creative Writing both at Hunter College and the Graduate Centre of the City University of New York. She has produced considerable volume of poetry emanating from her immigrant experience. With her exploration of the world of personal loss and ruptures, she connects India and America, and 'deftly weaves together contradictory geography, thoughts and feelings'.

While a rich vein of anglophone post-colonial poetry is flourishing in the Indian diaspora, the front runner on the terrain of Indian poetry in English at the turn of the century is no less a poet than Rukmini Bhaya Nair, whose *The Ayodhya Cantos: Poems* (1999) is a solid 'poetic landmark'. Nair's *The Hyoid Bone* (1992) was an impressive debut, and she came in for attention as a quirky but touching individuality; "The Cantos" have made her the strongest voice of the 90s. In the last section, "Gargi's Silence", we savour splendid verse. There is assured handling of an incredibly rich range of experience with pluck and control. It ends on a gender note with Gargi asking all the questions. Gargi, pupil of the sage Yajnavalkya, is a woman with intellectual urge in the *Upanishads*. In Nair's narrative she has the last word:

"What is the warp and the weft of the world?
What lies in the taut weaver's frame?
Who turns the crankshaft in my brain?
Answer, Yajnavalkya! How many oceans deep
Is desire? When you touch me am I Sane?
Can a bee taste honey? Why does it sting?
In the mean streets, in the slushy yards of pain
Gargi whispers in Yajnavalkya's ticklish ear
Your metaphysics is shaky! We're not chained
Brahman. He is a prisoner of our senses.

There are well-conceived, fresh and suggestive images, for instance, a Mongol centaur, suggesting the likeness between the Mongols on horseback for most of the time and the mythical creature with a man's head, arms and upper body on a horse's body and legs, and Meera's "untethered clothes", considering her free-ranging style. However, some critics have found the Cantos abstruse, and replete with recondite allusions.

To be sure, some parts of the book leave one uneasy and the poet flounders here and there in a variegated assortment of perspectives, but eventually she redeems her quest and carries it off very well. The book is conceptually grandiose in that it embraces a huge canvas to interpret and illuminate a part of India's contemporary political scene. It is a cerebrally challenging work, and, quite legitimately, has been hailed as 'the first significant volume of post-modern poetry written by an Indian.'

Apart from Nair's spectacular achievement, there is a strong contingent of poets with extremely accomplished record in the 90s, as well as with the potential to move forward in the current decade. Some of the leading lights like Kamala Das and Shiv K. Kumar became somewhat muted by the end of the last decade while many new voices appeared. Among the poets influenced by Nissim Ezekiel making splashes are Eunice de Souza, Kavita Ezekiel, Intiaz Dharker, Mukta Sambrani and Ranjit Hoskote. Hoskote's *The Cartographer's Apprentice* (2000) and *The Sleepwalker's Archive* (2001) have several common poems. Hoskote is indeed a pod of poetic talent, a flamboyant new poet, but he tends to get carried away with verbal exuberance. Equally, Kavita Ezekiel is not the current custodian of her father's ironic muse—at least as yet.

TO BE CONTINUED

Strategies of a Good Translator

BY PROF. LEILA RAZMJOU, IRAN

Besides being a member of our country, we are a member of the world community and this gives us a global identity. Therefore, it is quite natural for us to think about world affairs and cooperate in solving its problems. To do so, the first and most important tool is "language" and language is a socially-determined process. Our beliefs and ideologies are always reflected in our way of talking though the connections are hidden and it is "critical language study" which reveals these hidden connections in discourse.

Furthermore, we all know that a culture flourishes through relations with other cultures; otherwise, it would have no way to improvement. Human rights finds its way through cultural variety and cultural variety is not recognized but through discussions and once again we get to the major tool for discussion which is "language".

The role of language in the developing world is materialized through "translating" and since critical language study is concerned with the processes of producing and interpreting texts and with how these cognitive processes are socially shaped, it can be considered as an alternative orientation to translation studies.

The world gets smaller and smaller as the systems of communication and information are developing and getting more and more sophisticated. In the process of such a rapid exchange of information and for the purpose of improving cultural contacts, one thing is inevitable and that is "translating". Therefore, there is a need for competent translators and interpreters.

As mentioned earlier, the whole world is undergoing complicated developments in different aspects such as technology and education. Consequently, these changes should have important bearing on systems of higher education, translator training programs included.

According to Shahvali (1997), theoretical knowledge and practical knowledge alone, are not adequate to prepare students to face the developments in the field and there is a need for knowledge of adaptation so as to focus on self-actualization of students and cover different mental, communicative, and planning skills needed in this regard.

Training translators is an important task which should be given enough credit. The services that translators do to enhance cultures and flourish languages have been quite significant within history and translators are the means of transferring messages from one language to another while preserving cultural and discursive specifications and values of both languages (Azabdafary, 1996).

The translator's task is to create conditions under which the source language author and the target language reader can interact with one another (Lotfi-pour, 1997). The translator uses the core of meaning present in the source text to create a new whole, namely, the target text. Translating therefore, creates a new whole from the substance of a former one (Farahzad, 1998).

Bearing these in mind, the question is what skills are needed to promote translating ability? And how can one be a good translator?

The first step is an extensive reading of different translations of different kinds of texts since translating requires an active knowledge while analyzing and evaluating different translations requires a passive knowledge. Therefore, working on receptive skills should precede the productive ones; i.e. through reinforcing their passive knowledge, students can improve their active knowledge. Receptive skills improve the students' language intuition and make them ready for translating practically.

A good translator is someone who has a comprehensive knowledge of both source and target languages. Students should read different kinds of genres in both source and target languages including modern literature, contemporary prose, newspapers, magazines, advertisements, announcements, instructions, etc. All these kinds of genres are important to be familiar

with since they implicitly transfer culture-specific aspects of a language. Specialized readings are also suggested: reading recently published articles and journals on theoretical and practical aspects of translation. The articles will not only improve the students' reading skill in general, but also give them insights which will subconsciously be applied when translating practically.

"Writing" skill is also important; i.e. the ability to write smoothly and correctly in both source and target languages. Writing is in fact the main job of a translator. Students should become familiar with different styles of writing and techniques and principles of editing and punctuation in both source and target languages. Editing and punctuation improve the quality of translation and make it more tangible (Razmjou, 2002).

Moreover, translation trainees should have a good ear for both source and target languages; i.e. they should be alert to pick up various expressions, idioms, and specific vocabulary and their uses and store them in their mind to be used later. This is in fact what we call improving one's "intuition". Intuition is not something to be developed in a vacuum; rather, it needs enough practice and a good background. It needs both theoretical back up and practical experience. Language intuition is a must for a competent translator.

One of the most important points to consider in the act of translating, is the specification of the value of the source text within the boundary of discourse. To do so, an awareness of cultural differences and various discursive strategies in both source and target languages is needed on the part of the translator. Therefore, the hidden arrangements of the source text should be discovered by translators through implementing various discursive strategies.

A good translator should be familiar with culture, customs, and social settings of the source and target languages. She should also be familiar with different registers, styles of speaking, and social classification of both languages. This socio-cultural awareness, can improve the quality of the students' translations to a great extent. According to Hatim and Mason (1990), the social context of translating is probably a more important variable than the textual genre. The act of translating takes place in the socio-cultural context. Consequently, it is important to judge translating activity only within a social context.

After developing a good competence in both source and target languages, it will be time to start translating practically. But there is a middle stage between the competence-developing stage and practical translating; and that is an awareness of various information-providing sources and the ability to use them. The sources include: different monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, encyclopedias, and internet.

Using dictionaries is a technical skill for itself. Not all students know how to use dictionaries appropriately. Words have different meanings in different contexts and usually, monolingual dictionaries are of utmost value in this regard. Students need a lot of practice on finding the intended meaning of words in monolingual dictionaries based on the particular context in which the words are used.

Translation trainees also need to be familiar with indirect speech acts and various figures of speech in the source language such as hyperbole, irony, meiosis, and implicatures. An awareness of these figures of speech will reinforce students' creativity and change their passive knowledge into an

active one.

While there is a strong emphasis on developing source and target language competencies, the ways in which students can develop them should not be neglected. Group work and cooperation with peers can always lead translating process into better results. If translation practices are done with peers, students will be able to solve their problems more easily and will also develop self-confidence and decision-making techniques (Razmjou, 2002). Although there is a possibility of making mistakes in group works, the experience of making mistakes will make students' mind open and alert.

Another important point is that successful translators usually choose specific kinds of texts for translating and continue their work only in that regard; for example one translator might translate only literary works, or scientific books, or journalistic texts, and so on. Even in translating literary works, some translators might only choose to translate poetry, or short stories, or novels. Even more specific than that, some translators choose a particular author and translate only her or his works. The reason is that the more they translate the works of a particular author, the more they will become familiar with her or his mind, way of thinking, and style of writing. And the more familiar with the style of a writer, the better the translation will be.

Translation practices need to be done in academic environments in which trainees work on both practical tasks under the supervision of their teachers and theoretical aspects to enhance their view scientifically.

In an academic environment, recently published articles, journals and books on translation are available for the trainees and they get familiar with good translators and their works by reading them and then comparing and contrasting them with their original texts. In this way, trainees will develop their power of observation, deep thinking, and decision-making which in turn will lead them to enhance their motivation and improve their translating skills.

It is crucial to know that translation studies is an important discipline and has become an independent major in universities. And it is not the case that anybody who knows a foreign language can be a translator—as it is commonly and mistakenly believed. Translation is the key to international understanding. So in this vast world of communication and information overload, we need competent translators who know their job well both theoretically and practically. The importance of an awareness of theoretical knowledge lies in the fact that it helps translators get an understanding of how linguistic choices in texts reflect other relationships between senders and receivers such as power and how texts are used to maintain or create social inequalities (Fairclough, 1989).

Finally, it is important to know that it takes much more than a dictionary to be a good translator and it can never happen overnight. To be a good translator requires tremendous investment in both source and target languages. It is one of the most challenging tasks to switch safely and faithfully between two universes of discourse. Only a sophisticated and systematic treatment of translation pedagogy can lead to the development of successful translators. In fact, the journey starts when translation trainees leave universities.

An earlier version of the paper was presented at the Second International Conference on "Critical Discourse Analysis: the message of the medium" in Yemen, Hodeidah University, Oct. 2003

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YOUTH FORUM

Frankness
Frankness means to be honest with others, to say the truth, no more no less. It means to be confident while you protect your own behavior.

The majority of people suppose that frankness may put you in a shameful or disgraceful situation, but this is anything but true.

In my opinion, the essence of behavior in life is frankness. In the beginning practice it with yourself, then with your close friends and family. After that, your relatives and with your boss. At the end you will find the frank person in front of you while you stand in front of the mirror. That day you can respect yourself and others certainly will do.

Honest, candor, and frankness make you relax, happy and with a clean conscience.

In fact, the difference between the honest people and the dubious ones is that between the sky and the earth.

A liar cannot believe himself. You can choose clearly now between frankness or deception. So are you ready?
BY IMAN AL-SIFANI, SANA'A

The path to success
Human beings get success if they have a strong will for it. In order to achieve success, one needs to know the factors leading to achieve one's success, and how he must make it possible. Also, he needs to know the cause of one's failure, and how he must avoid it. In addition, he should know the things that enable him to get confidence from success. Even he should know that, he should deeply think about himself, before he decides to take these steps, some of which are as follows:

- First, you should mind your health, because a healthy mind is the result of a healthy body.
- Second, you should be clear about your resolution; the strength of resolution will help you achieve your aim.
- Third, you should have plenty of self-confidence to know your strengths and abilities.
- Forth, develop a positive personality and the willingness to take risks.
- Fifth, cultivate an open mind to be able to understand the problems, that face your life and solve it.
- Finally, you should develop your ability to gain noble friends. Friendliness is the most unfailing weapon, that will help you in your life. These steps will help you reach the goal of happy life and success.

BY HIND ALI LEVEL 3 COLLEGE OF EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, SANA'A

Nedved voted top European Footballer

PARIS (Reuters) - Juventus midfielder Pavel Nedved has been named European Footballer of the Year, France Football magazine has confirmed.

Czech international Nedved was rewarded with the Golden Ball on Monday after a series of outstanding performances for Juventus as they retained the Italian league title and reached the Champions League final in May.

The 31-year-old was named ahead of Arsenal striker Thierry Henry and AC Milan defender Paolo Maldini in a poll of European soccer journalists from 52 countries published by France Football magazine.

"I did not even dream of winning such an award. I'm very happy to receive such an important, such an extraordinary honour," Nedved said.

"I heard about the nominees and being among them. But I did not believe in my chances too much.

"A lot of players had good results like Paolo Maldini, Raul, Zidane. All



Czech soccer player Pavel Nedved of Italy's Juventus Turin kisses the Golden Ball he won after being named European Footballer of the Year by France Football magazine on Monday. Nedved won ahead of Arsenal striker Thierry Henry and AC Milan defender Paolo Maldini. REUTERS/Charles Platiau

of them deserved to win," he added.

Nedved missed the Champions League final through suspension after being booked in the semi-final, when his spectacular performance was a major factor in the defeat of competition favourites Real Madrid.

Juventus lost the final on penalties to AC Milan.

Nedved, who was also voted player of the year by the magazine World Soccer, is the second Czech to win the prestigious Golden Ball after Josef Masopust in 1962.

It is the eighth time a Juventus player has been crowned.

The Czech earned 190 points. France's Henry was second with 128 points and Maldini third on 123 points.

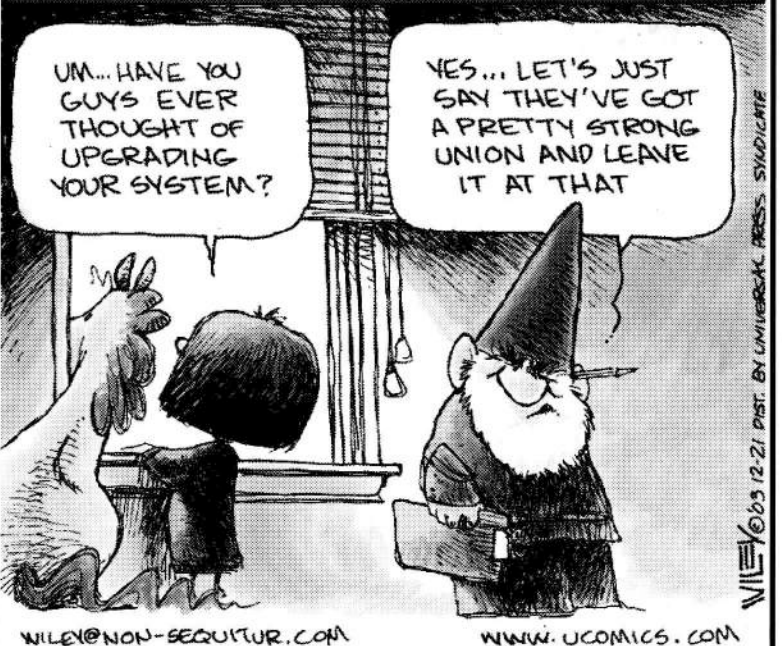
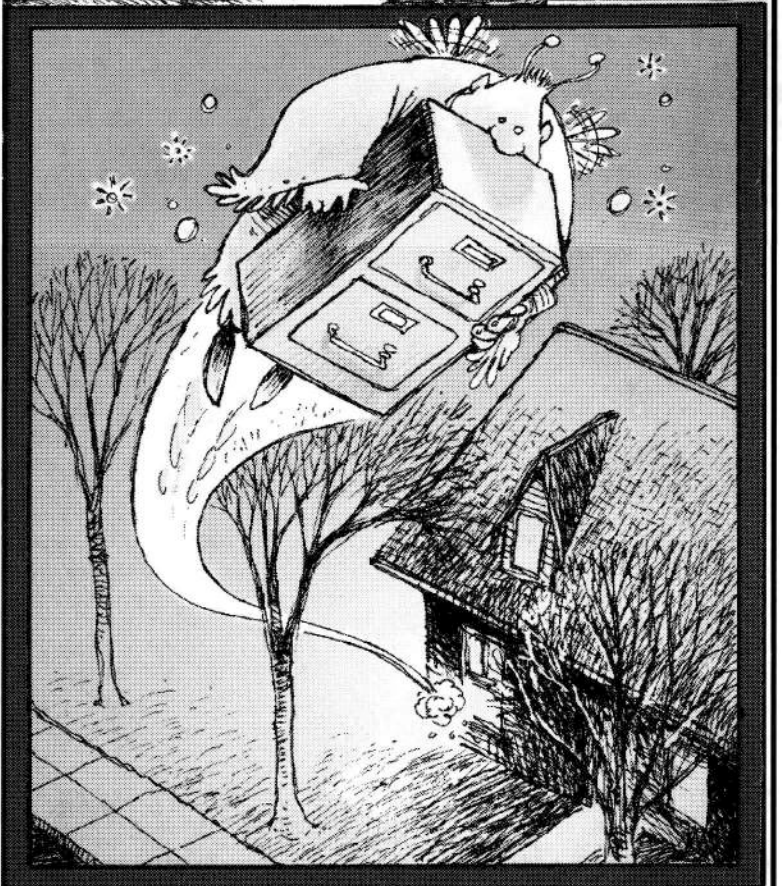
Milan's Ukrainian striker Andrei Shevchenko was fourth on 67 points with FIFA's player of the year Zinedine Zidane of Real Madrid and France fifth on 64 points.

"It was definitely my best year. I had lots of luck as well. Luck is part of a player's career," Nedved added.

7-Day Weather Forecast

Sana'a	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
Hi	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Lo	3	3	2	2	2	2	2
Aden	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
Hi	30	31	31	31	31	31	29
Lo	21	19	19	21	20	20	19

NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY



Duff out for up to six weeks

LONDON (Reuters) - Chelsea midfielder Damien Duff could be out for six weeks after dislocating his shoulder during last Saturday's south west London derby against Fulham, the club says.

The 24-year-old Ireland winger had his shoulder put back in place in the dressing room at Loftus Road by club doctor Neil Frazer and later x-rays showed no bone damage.

Chelsea Clubcall said on Tuesday scans, to be taken when the injury had rested a few days, would show how bad ligament damage was and the length of Duff's layoff would depend on these. It could be up to six weeks, it said.

The midfielder, transferred from Blackburn Rovers for about 17 million pounds after Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich bought Chelsea last July, might undergo arthroscopic surgery to clean the joint, Clubcall said.



Chelsea midfielder Damien Duff (shown in a file photo) could be out for six weeks after dislocating his shoulder during last Saturday's south west London derby against Fulham, the club says. The 24-year-old Ireland winger had his shoulder put back in place in the dressing room at Loftus Road by club doctor Neil Frazer and later x-rays showed no bone damage. REUTERS/Mike Finn-Kelcey

Australia have learnt their lesson

By Greg Buckle

MELBOURNE, Dec 23 (Reuters) - Australia have learnt their lesson from their shock defeat by India in last week's second test, vice-captain Ricky Ponting said on Tuesday.

"I think we've learnt from it. We have to be a bit tougher this week," Ponting told reporters at Melbourne airport before for the third test which starts on Friday.

India lead the four-test series 1-0. Ponting made a majestic 242 in Australia's first innings of 556 in the second test in Adelaide. The dashing right-hander was out for a duck in the second innings with Australia collapsing to 196 all out.

India were set 230 to win after what Australia coach John Buchanan said was an "immature" and "soulless" bat-

ting performance by the home side.

Rahul Dravid, who made 233 and 72 not out in the match, hit the winning runs for a four-wicket victory.

"If we had batted for one more session, things could have been a lot different," said Ponting, who has hit 19 centuries in 73 tests. "I think you'll see a lot more determined team this week."

Melbourne Cricket Ground's capacity has been reduced to 70,000 as part of renovations for the 2006 Commonwealth Games. However, Ponting said the Melbourne test had lost none of its excitement.

"This is my favourite cricket ground in the world and Boxing Day (December 26) is traditionally a big test match," Ponting said.

"It would be nice to have a big game, to carry on from Adelaide."

Rodman bid for NBA return

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - Dennis Rodman, the retired basketball great known for his off-court antics just as much as his on-court skills, has returned to the game with the Long Beach Jam of the fringe American Basketball Association (ABA).

Rodman, who announced in July that he wanted to return to professional basketball at the age of 42, is bidding to get into shape for a National Basketball Association comeback, his agent says.

"Our ultimate goal is to be signed by an NBA team by the All-Star break in mid-February, if not sooner," Darren Prince said in a statement on Monday.

Rodman, who won five NBA championships in his career with the Detroit Pistons and the Chicago Bulls, left the league on a low note in March 2000 when he was released by the Dallas Mavericks after being with the team for less than a month.

During his tenure with the Mavericks,

he was suspended once, ejected twice and also fined by the league.

Rodman, who became a media icon in his playing days with his blue hair and rings through his ears, nose and bottom lip, will begin practising and playing with the Long Beach Jam next month.

He is best known for his aggressive rebounding and rarely takes a shot. He led the NBA in rebounding for seven consecutive years despite measuring

only 6 feet 8 inches (178 cm). Many of the NBA's top rebounders are more than 7 feet (213 cm) tall.

The ABA, styled as a successor to the original ABA that featured colourful players and eventually merged with the NBA, has seven teams, including two in Mexico.

After playing two seasons from 2000-2002, the ABA took a year off before restructuring and starting again this year.



THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

BY Eugenia



Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)
Everyone around you may be in the festive mood, but you will be more concerned with reflecting on the past. So much has taken place and by remembering it all, you can ensure that the year ahead will be better.



Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)
This will be a great day for you. Your way of viewing the family dynamics will help make things much clearer for those lacking your vision. Positive thought and thankful blessings will be the theme.



Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20)
As a gracious host, you will make many people realize how nice it is to have someone like you in their lives. Your attitude will be inspirational. Raise your head high.



Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)
If you have taken on too much, don't hesitate to accept the help being offered. You don't have to be a super person who does everything for everyone. Let your family do for you.



Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22)
Take care of your health. You may be caught up in the moment, but don't overindulge. Problems will surface if you haven't done what you promised. Being reserved will help you get through this day.



Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)
Sit back and enjoy the ones you love. Take part in the youngsters' activities. Your concern for others will shine through.



Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)
Keep your true thoughts to yourself. You may not be happy with all your relatives, but put your differences aside and rejoice in all you have. Extend an invitation to the people you don't get to see often.



Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)
Listening to what some family members have experienced and what they are trying to get into will open up all sorts of new ideas for you. You will be thankful for what you have.



Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
You can meet new friends and potential mates through close friends and relatives you visit today. Your colorful approach to festivities will enhance your popularity.



Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
Your hard work and continuous struggle to help everyone around you has bought you the right to be catered to just this once. Just dreaming of it should help to brighten your day.



Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)
Do not divulge family secrets. Make a special effort to please the person you love the most. Express your gratitude for the support and love he or she has given you.



Pisces (Feb 19-Mar 20)
Drop off a gift for a needy child. Your greatest rewards will come from helping those less fortunate. New relationships will develop through your selfless actions.

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In Asia, pollution spreads as economies boom

BY JASON SZEP

Every two years, Indonesia loses about four million hectares (15,500 square miles) of forest, an area roughly the size of Switzerland, to rapacious logging.

Skies in northern China glow orange in sandstorms that cross the Pacific and lay dust on the western United States. In Hong Kong, raw sewage bobs in its pearl-blue harbour.

From inner Mongolia to the Indian sub-continent and tropical Southeast Asia, says one senior United Nations environmental official, the region's ecology and environment is deteriorating as its factories and economies boom.

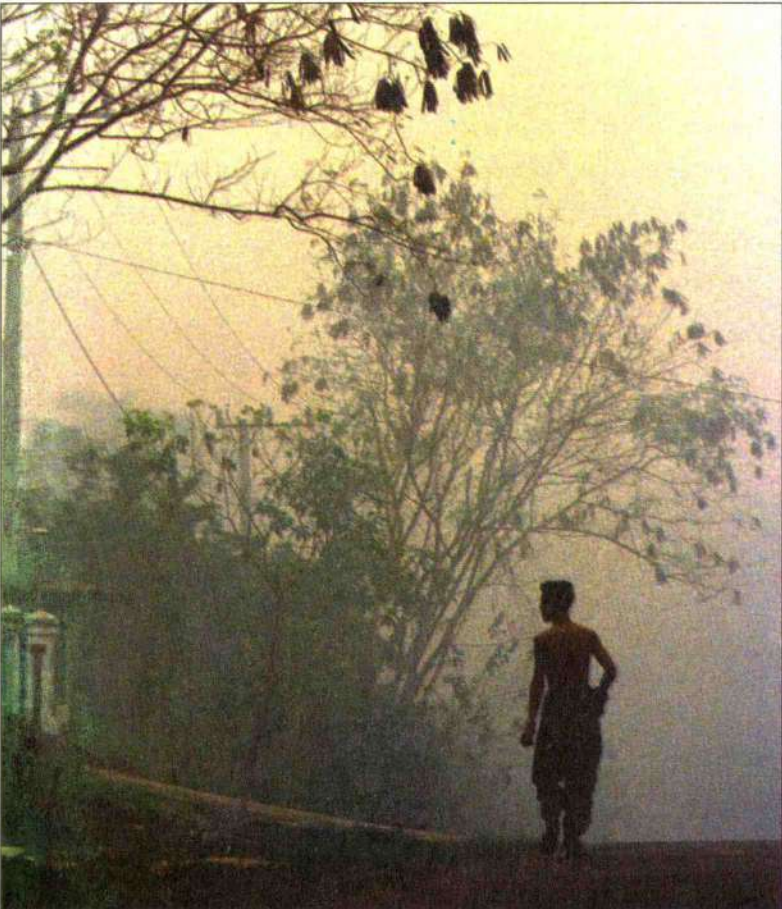
Although governments are rolling out unprecedented initiatives to tackle Asian pollution — underscored by a meeting of Southeast Asian environment ministers in mid-December in Myanmar — the policies are often badly enforced, the official adds.

"Things could get worse before they get better," Ravi Sawhney, director of the environment and sustainable development division of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia-Pacific, or UNESCAP, told Reuters in an interview.

Sawhney is studying Asia's environment for the UN "State of the Environment Report" released every five years. Although the next report is not due until 2005, Sawhney said indications point to a broad-based worsening in environmental conditions.



Indonesian workers clear logs that were washed down during deadly floods in the North Sumatra resort village of Bukit Lawang, in this November 10, 2003 file photo. REUTERS



An Indonesian boy is silhouetted against smog from forest fires near Jambi on Indonesia's island of Sumatra in this file photo taken June 18, 1998. REUTERS

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Festering issues
Other environmental problems, however, are festering.

In Indonesia, home to the world's third-largest tropical forests after Brazil and the Congo, forests have disappeared at a rate three to four times faster than those in Brazil since 1990, mostly because of logging and burning, says international environmental group Global Forest Watch.

"Every year the country is losing nearly two million hectares of forest. If this rate continues then by 2010 most forest in Sumatra and Kalimantan will disappear," Longgana Ginting, head of local environmental group Walhi, told Reuters, referring to two of Indonesia's biggest islands.

Much of this feeds huge demand for timber in economically booming China where logging was banned after excessive tree-felling contributed to floods that killed around 4,000 people in 1998.

Chee Yoke Ling of the Third World Network, a Malaysian lobby group, said countries such as Malaysia had nice-sounding environmental laws but fell down on implementation, as damage to tropical forests in Borneo's Sarawak and Sabah states continues.

"We have it but we don't enforce it," she said.

Chinese sandstorms are widely attributed to over-grazing, over-ploughing and over-use of water resources.

ASEAN's "Framework on Environmentally Sustainable Cities" uses some European cities as a model and is partly funded with German taxpayer money through the Hanns Seidel Foundation.

"We had the same problems in Europe years ago, starting 30 years ago with completely poisoned lakes, rivers, in Germany, poisoned air," said Waldemar Mathews, managing director of the Bavarian Institute of Applied Environmental Research and Technology. "And we started with the same discussions."

ASEAN groups Brunei, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam, Singapore, Laos, Cambodia, the Philippines, Myanmar and Thailand. **Reuter**

"There are policy initiatives that have been taken and laws enacted and so on. But the problem is the actual implementation," he said.

As if to highlight what he says, landslides and mudslides as recently as November and mid-December in corners of Indonesia and the Philippines plagued by illegal logging swept away or buried alive whole families.

Winds of change

Six of the world's 15 most polluted cities are in Asia, and the region generates a third of the world's carbon dioxide emissions. In Asia's developing regions, around 785 million people lack regular access to safe water, UN statistics show.

But there are pockets of improvement. The air quality in notoriously polluted Bangkok, Dhaka, New Delhi and several Chinese cities is healthier after most of Asia, except for Indonesia, phased out lead from gasoline, said Cornie Huizenga of the Asian Development Bank's Clean Air Initiative.

Bangladesh, which is spending \$30 million over two years to bring natural gas to 100 petrol stations, is replacing high-polluting two-stroke engines in its rickshaw taxis in the capital Dhaka with cleaner-burning natural gas power.

"It's an unequal picture. There are cities where the situation is getting better," said Huizenga, adding that a growing number of cities have put up air monitoring systems.

Thailand's "tuk tuk" taxis now run on liquefied petroleum gas, while buses and taxis in New Delhi and Bombay are phasing out diesel and running instead on compressed natural gas. "This is very much the story of the future," he added.

Environmental investments

Huizenga and other environmental experts helped the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) draw up an anti-pollution plan as rising wealth brings demands for better urban conditions after decades of squalor in some countries.

Southeast Asian Environment Ministers meeting in Myanmar approved a non-binding "framework" which calls on ASEAN to develop stronger urban anti-polluting strategies beginning with a series of workshops next year.

"Due to rapid growth, you're getting overlapping problems — water, air, land — on top of each other, making a very complex situation," said Peter Marcotullio, a researcher in the Institute of Advanced Studies at the United Nations University in Tokyo.

"So part of what is being done here is to tease out some of these problems so that city managers can deal with them one at a time, as opposed to what seems to be happening is that they are all coming at them at the same time."

Fixing Asia's environmental mess — from stifling sandstorms and rapid soil erosion in China to treating sewage in Indian rivers and Southeast Asian air pollution — is turning into a billion-dollar business.

U.S. Department of Commerce is sending an "Environmental Technologies" trade mission to Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam next March to scout for opportunities for U.S. companies, citing "significant" potential for U.S. expansion.

It estimates that Malaysia's "environmental" market is worth around \$800 million, mostly for safe water supply and sewage treatment, and says Thailand needs to spend around \$1.2-\$1.5 billion on clean water and sanitation by 2020.

In Vietnam, a pollution control equipment and services market was worth US\$450 million in 2003 alone, it said.

من اجل بشرة اكثر جمالا

كومارك صابون للوجه

صنع في ألمانيا

- فريد لجمال الوجه
- يزيل الندب والبثور
- أفضل صابون لشوائب الجسم
- مثالي لتبييض الوجه الغامق
- يحافظ على جمال الوجه مساويا للون الجسم

كومارك الكريم الليلي

صنع في ألمانيا

- يزيل الندب والبثور خلال الليل
- يزيل الشمس في ثلاثة أسابيع
- يزيل الدوائر الغامقة تحت العين في ثلاثة أسابيع
- يزيل شوائب جلد الوجه في ليال قليلة
- سر جمال الوجه الذي لا يضيأه

مأيلسن كريم طبيعي للتجميل

- يزيل ندبات الجراحة
- يزيل جميع آثار الحروق
- يزيل آثار عمليات التجميل
- يزيل جميع آثار حب الشباب
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- عناوين وتصالات ممتدة.
- GPRS/EDGE على WAP 2.0
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