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Monday, 29 December 2003 - VOL. XII • Issue No. 698 • Price 30 Yemeni Riyals • Founded in 1991 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

Pictorial review for Year 2003 on page 13

2 Brits released, 2 more to be pardoned

BY MOHAMMED AL-QADHI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemeni authorities announced Wednesday, December 24th that two British citizens detained on charges of terrorism were released while two others are expected to be released on an amnesty by the Yemeni government. Official sources said that Sarmad Ahmad and Shahid Bat were released after they completed five years of imprisonment in a prison in Aden.

The two persons were convicted by al-Tawahi court in 1999 along with other British citizens of Arab and Pakistani origin on charges of setting up an armed gang to plot some terrorist operations. These people were sentenced to 7 months- 7 years in jail. Some already finished imprisonment penalty and went back to England. The son of Abu Al-Hamzza al-Masri, chief of the Ansar al-Sharia' a group in London was released in 2002.

The eight British citizens plus other Arabs were arrested after the kidnapping of some foreign tourists in Abyan in 1998 where four tourists were killed when the government troops were trying to set the 16 tourists free.

Yemen said that other two British citizens would be pardoned and released due to the improvement of the relationship between Sana'a and London. Mohsen Ghailan and Malik Harhara would be released despite the fact they still have two more years to spend in jail.

Continued on page 3



From left to right: Shahad Baht and Sarmad have been released recently from prison in Aden and have returned to the UK. Photo by Rhidwan Al-Saqqaf

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Saudi arrests 4,000, seizes arms near Yemen border

RIYADH, Dec 27 (Reuters) - Saudi Arabia has arrested more than 4,000 people and seized large quantities of weapons and drugs in the south of the country, along the border with Yemen, the official Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said on Saturday.

The agency did not say over what time the arrests and the seizures were made in the Najran province. Both Yemen and Saudi

Arabia are combating Islamic militants believed to be linked to Saudi-born Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda.

The agency said border police had netted dynamite and ammunition as well as hashish and wine with the 4,047 infiltrators. Saudi authorities have in the past reported on arrests and arms hauls in Najran.

Saudi Arabia has recently stepped up securi-

ty along its border with Yemen, a traditional route for drug and arms smuggling. Yemeni and Saudi militants have also crossed the border.

At least 50 people have been killed in suicide car bombings in Saudi Arabia since May. Yemen is bin Laden's ancestral homeland and has also suffered attacks by al Qaeda sympathisers against national and foreign targets.

Biggest dose of its kind expected to raise fuel and foodstuff prices in Yemen next month:

Feared dose coming

BY MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Reliable official sources told Yemen Times that the prime minister has announced the approval of the long-awaited and feared economic dose that would affect all walks of life in the country will be effective next month.

The sources added that the recent hike in

prices of certain goods was relatively insignificant and was intended to measure the public response to a greater hike. The government, according to the sources, wants to see how the public would react to such smaller doses before it puts into implementation the new dose, which is expected to raise the prices of virtually all goods in the country, early next year. The upcoming dose will be the biggest of its kind since the government started its economic reform program in 1996. The dose, which is expected to ignite public outrage, will include an increase of 50% to prices of all oil products including benzene, diesel, kerosene, etc. This hike is expected to affect the prices of all other basic commodities, whose prices may be doubled or tripled.

On the other hand, the government expects to compensate citizens by raising public employees' wages by 100%. The government will also be reducing customs tariffs to a maximum of 5%. Based on this step, the customs tariffs of imported vehicle and computer-related imported material will be exempted.

Parliamentarians protest

But parliamentarians have already sensed this intention before the actual dose is implemented. In sessions held last week, a heated debate was witnessed in the parliament about the recent sudden increase in wheat and bread prices, which was then followed by a wave of price rise in of other commodities.

Parliament members blasted the government's inability to control the rise in prices and hold accountable the merchants who took advantage of this rise. This comes after the parliament canceled the decision to form a com-

mittee specialized in trade and industrial affairs, which will study this sudden increase and propose appropriate actions to be taken by the government to stop it effectively.

Sales tax opposed

Furthermore, the parliament also protested the proposed bill to impose a new tax of 10% on sales. This law received furious opposition from the public and trade community. The opposition forced the government to delay the project until 2004, but this postponement did not prevent the launching of the 'one million signature' project, which aims at collecting the signatures of one million persons opposing this bill.

Economists believe that the sales tax will definitely have a negative impact on 90% of the population, which comprises of 18 million citizens, who live below the poverty line.

Bakeries closed

Meanwhile, the government acted last week in closing down some bakeries that were told to have not followed standard regulations on quality of bread production.

However, bakery owners across the country had requested the government to halt the increase of wheat prices, which as they claim, caused tremendous losses to their businesses and made them raise bread prices one fold. Prices of wheat have steadily went up recently from YR 2,400 to YR 3,000.

Al-Shumou Weekly newspaper said in its last issue that a number of bakery owners said that wheat parcels seen in the market recently were actually part of US aid to Yemen, and the government cannot in any way attempt to sell it or allow others to do so.

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Workshop on National Strategy of technical education

The regional workshop on the national strategy of technical and vocational education was held on Wednesday in the capital secretariat and the governorates of Amran, Mahweet and Mareb.

The workshop aimed at providing participants with knowledge and information related to the national strategy in this regard. It also aimed at evaluation of the ministry of education's ten-year-old strategy in this respect.

The workshop had adopted a number of recommendations and proposals aimed at activation of the role of the national strategy in the field of technical and vocational education in a manner keeping pace with current developments and qualifying well-trained workforce serving the labour market.

Drunk driver knocks down a number of persons

A traffic accident took place Monday 22 December in Al-Kaada district; governorate of Ibb caused the death of four persons and injury of three others.

Traffic authorities in the district confirmed that motorist Sultan Abdeh Ahmed, 45, was speedily drunk driving a car owned by the Yemeni Bank for Reconstruction, al-Kaada branch along the main street of the town running over and causing death of a number of citizens and did not stop but after hitting a small transport vehicle when he was arrested.

Workshop on curbing AIDS concluded

A workshop on curbing AIDS disease organized by the Yemeni Red Crescent Society in Sana'a secretariat, in cooperation with the International Red Cross concluded on Wednesday.

A host of interested persons in this field have taken part in the workshop, confirming the danger of AIDS in threatening the society and humanity. They affirmed that the issue necessitated of dissemination of awareness among the society about danger of the disease that has so far killed millions of people the world over.

"Crystal" supports Aden Women Sport Tournament

The Taiz-based Yemen Company for Ghee and Soap Industry (YCGSI) has supported, through its famous washing soap "Crystal", the Second Aden Women Sport Tournament that will take place during 3-7 January 2004. The tournament will include games between sportswomen representing Aden's districts of Seira, Al-Mualla, Al-Tawahi, Sar Saad, and Sheikh Osman.

Parliament discusses consumer goods high prices

Yemeni parliament on Wednesday entrusted the topic of the rise in prices of consumer goods with the parliament's trade and industry committee to be considered and studied with relevant government authorities.

The committee is demanded to refer early next week a report to the parliament on its work. It is to be mentioned that there is a sudden hike in prices of all foodstuffs in addition to bread prices without observing controls of quality of those goods.

Sabeen square Starting-point of celebrations of Sana'a Arab culture capital 2004

The Ministry of culture and Tourism has last week announced opening of cultural activities marking declaration of Sana'a capital of Arab culture 2004 as starting from al-Sabeen Square in Sana'a.

The opening ceremony would include fireworks and folklore dances in the main squares of Sana'a. The festival would be attended by great number of Yemeni officials, and ambassadors accredited to Yemen and 100 Arab cultural and artistic personalities. Evening of the

opening ceremonies of that day would also witness the enkindling of the torch of Sana'a capital of Arab culture at the Tahrir square in downtown of Sana'a.

Sana'a major cultural activities are to include eight festivals of poetry, theatre, story, cinema, plastic art and four international conferences, four forums, four symposiums, 13 various exhibitions and more than 11 cultural convoys in other governorates in participation in various cultural and other activities.

YR 1.8 million in aid to Taiz flood victims

Taiz Bureau Staff
Yemen Times

The Hikma Welfare Association (Yemen Office) in Taiz has started implementing its second aid campaign worth 1.8 million rials to Taiz flood victims. Among those who would benefit from this campaign are 87 families

in Taiz in the neighborhoods of Sala, Al-Sallal, Al-Hoban, Al-Sahouli, Al-Kamb, Dar Al-Nasr, Jabal Sabir, Al-Jahmalia, Wadi Al-Dammam, Howdh Al-Ashraf, and Al-Tahreer.

The aid package includes quantities of mattresses, blankets, and other material worth around YR 20,000 per family.

WFRT organizes training course for non-governmental organisations

The Women's Forum for Researches and Training (WFRT) is to organize in Sana'a on 30 Dec.2003-1 January 2004 a Democratic workshop for NGOs Leaders training course at the NCC, in cooperation with the Canadian Program for development of self efforts.

The training course is part of a series of courses the WFRT had begun since its establishment out of its realization of the internal and external problems and impediments most of non-governmental organisations are suffering in their course towards development of

the civil society movement in Yemen, said Ms Sua'ad al-Qadasi,

She added that the participants, who represent leading ranks in non-governmental organisations working in areas of human rights, democracy and woman movement, would ideas about interdependency, freedom, team leadership and planning within policies of development in the country. They would also work for consolidating and development of coordination and cooperation process and joint action among their organisations and others at both local and international levels.

Mecca Cola factory in Yemen in May 2004



Prerogative right holder of World Mecca Cola Company Mr. Tawfiq al-Mathlouthi held Wednesday 24 December a press conference in Hadda Hotel in Sana'a, talking about the company, beginning of its establishment and the rapid development it had witnessed. Mr. Tawfiq al-Mathlouthi has also announced that the company would the beginning of May 2004 build a factory for Mecca Cola beverage in Sana'a.

General Manager of the Mecca Cola company in Yemen, Mr. Abdulla Baggash had earlier talked on the company saying it had managed during the past few months, since entering the Yemen market in May 2003, to win satisfaction and appreciation of consumers in our country. He had further said that Mecca Cola beverage is the only company that has allotted 10% of its total profits to be paid for the help of Palestinian children and another 10% for charitable purposes in any country where it works.

Republican guard member killed in Taiz

By TAIZ BUREAU STAFF
YEMEN TIMES

Last Wednesday, a serious violent incident took place near the presidential palace crossroads in Taiz City when Republican Guard members exchanged fires with soldiers belonging to the inspection department of the Public Works Authority.

According to eyewitnesses, the incident started when soldiers from the Public Works Authority were intercepted by Republican Guard members and prevented from carrying out their work, which was to inspect buildings

that were built without prior authorization. After a verbal dispute, both parties began using live ammunition to settle their differences, killing one of the guards, and injuring others. The vehicle of the Public Works team was also damaged in the shootout.

An urgent meeting was held last Saturday to discuss the incident and take appropriate action. The incident has also resulted in a turbulent relationship between the two parties. Senior military and official representatives from both sides tried to bridge the gap in this particular issue and several others, but to no avail.

YSP appeals to Human Rights Minister

The Yemeni Socialist Party on Wednesday sent a letter of appeal to Minister of Human Rights Ms Amat al-Aleem al-Souswa on the anniversary of the World Declaration of Human Rights which Yemen observed last week calling for her to exert her efforts to realize the party's requests.

The YSP demands include the return of thousands of workers, employees and cadres, military and civilian to their jobs after they had been sacked or suspended since 1994 and to pay them back their legal arrears. Other demands include the setting free of three opposition members described as political prisoners in the governorate of Dhamar since 1984, to open investigations in circumstances of death of another prisoner in Dhamar prison in 1993.

The YSP also asked the minister to intervene for changing school curricula implying foment against the YSP, as students are taught that the YSP is tra-

itorous, infidel and secessionist and that it is the cause of all ruin and backwardness the Yemen is experiencing and also to fix an official stand towards the fatwas that are still being issued against the YSP.

The YSP Secretary-General Ali Saleh Abad (Mukbil) who had signed the appeal letter said pursuant to constitution of the Yemeni republic and the government's commitments to international conventions concerning protection of human rights for safeguarding people's right to life and deepening affection and accord inside the society as well as strong internal front in the country, we confirm our party's support for any efforts exerted by the ministry an the government dealing with human rights to dignified life, work, security, stability and all that would lead to building a society free from violence hatred and enhancement of social harmony and peace in the republic of Yemen.

Yemen participates in trio summit in Addis Ababa

By YASSER AL-MAYYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Today, Monday December 29, the trio summit of Yemen, Ethiopia and Sudan is expected to start and will continue until tomorrow. Yemen will be represented by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Sudan will be represented by Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al-Basheer, while Ethiopia will be represented by Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi.

Regional security issues, means to combat terrorism and monitor borders, along with efforts to promote and strengthen security cooperation

will be discussed. Fighting smuggling and protecting water straights will also be targeted in the talks.

The Sudan peace talks and developments in the Somali reconciliation conference will be tackled in the agenda of the two-day summit.

Beside the trio summit, a separate meeting of businessmen from the three countries will be held in an effort to consolidate trade and business relations between them by forming a common company with the national capital of the three countries. Participants will also discuss means of establishing a common free trade market.

Intensive security precautionary measures around European embassies

By MOHAMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemeni authorities have Thursday doubled their security reinforcements around the western embassies buildings, particularly the embassies of the United States of America and Britain in precaution of attack possible attacks by al-Qaeda organization elements during Christmas and the New Year.

Sana's big hotels where festivals of the New Year are usually held and attended by foreigners, are put under unprecedented strict security measures following reports of threats sent by al-Qaeda organisation elements in Yemen in retaliation for the arrest of Mohammed al-Ahdal beginning of last month. Al-Ahdal is thought to be the second leading man of the so-called

organisation led Osama bin Laden.

The United States had asked in a statement last week its diplomats in Yemen and their families to be strictly careful and to travel in guarded groups especially after three western citizen have been stabbed in Sana'a lately. It is believed that the person who stabbed the western citizens and was later arrested by Yemeni authorities that he had committed his act in retaliation of the capture of the Iraqi former president Saddam Hussein.

Informed security sources have made it clear that security elements from the American embassy have for the past six months erected separate barriers around Sheraton Hotel to prevent any operation that may inflict harm on about 40 CIA and FBI elements living in the hotel.

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:

How do you view year 2003?

- A year full of violence and wars
- A year of liberation and freedom for Iraqis
- A year signaling Arab weakness
- A year emphasizing US domination
- Something else

last edition's question:

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

- I don't know or don't care 39%
- Nothing, because the opinion was not official 38%
- Relations between the two countries should be reviewed 19%
- We should send a letter of protest, or do a similar thing 4%

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



Strict security measures guarding Western embassies buildings against any possible terrorist attacks

YJS Council's statement

Yemeni Journalists Syndicate council under chairmanship of Mr Mahboub Ali, chairman of the YJS, issued on Saturday December 27 a statement stipulating a decision on extending the period for receiving challenges memos till Saturday the 3rd of January 2004, requesting the syndicate's branches in the syndicate's branches in the governorates to commit to date and benefit from that opportunity. The statement

said that in the light of publishing a list containing members of the general assembly since last Saturday 20 December and due to not receiving challenges memos to approve the list in its final form the council of the syndicate decided that extension.

The statement also said that the council also decided to add the journalists to the working team to help members of the registration committee at

the YJS council in order to reschedule active membership list in accordance with memos of challenges to be received. The added names are:

Said Thabit, Sami Ghalib, Sadiq Nasher, Ayman Mohammed Nasser, Hamdi al-Bukari, Ahemd al-Jabali, Hamoud Munassar, and Ahmed al-Ramie.

The YJS council announces that it is working hard for the good preparation

for holding the third conference of the Syndicate on its date specified on the 21st of February 2004 according to article of the syndicate's rules of procedure. The statement concluded by appealing to all journalists to receive the event of the conference in the way the journalist profession deserves and the status it occupies in the society and its noble message.

Yemen to receive a \$60-million loan from WB

Yasser al-Mayyasi
Yemen Times staff

The Yemeni government signed an agreement last week in Paris to receive a loan as the general labor project's third phase funding.

The loan period is 40 years and will have an annual interest rate of just 0.25% according to the conditions and regulations of the World Bank. The agreement was signed on behalf of Yemen by Mr. Ahmed Sofan deputy

prime minister and minister of planning and international cooperation and on behalf of the WB by Mr. Amir al-Khafagi.

This funding phase will last from 2004 to 2008 and will focus on providing and supporting infrastructure services for the local communities in order to promote social participation of locals in executing public services in education, health, and water. It will also aim at building capacities of the local councils of Yemeni governorates.

It is worth mentioning that the first and second phases have been concluded successfully and the project has included the social fund for development which continue in the new year 2004 and will last up to 2008 in the framework of the project's participation in the social security network and implementation of the national strategy for poverty reduction.

The loan will also be used in the development of human resources in the framework of social and economic

development and endorsing cooperation with public establishments working in social domains as well as supporting local councils to plan and implement the society-initiated projects as well as caring for gender issues by giving priority to females and involving them in development projects.

Apollo marks achievement & promises more in 2004

Apollo Exhibitions Center in Sanaa has marked its achievement in the last year 2003 by issuing a press release emphasizing the positive role Apollo has played during 2003 and years before in supporting trade exchange with other countries and by informing Yemeni citizens of the latest trends and products in international markets in all fields.

Furthermore, Mr. Omar Al-Nehmi, the Marketing Manager of Apollo said that the center will be distinguished during the activities of "Sanaa: Capital of Arab Culture" by organizing the first

ever Sanaa International Book and Islam in Sicily Fair. This will be along with other international exhibitions for a number of Arab and foreign countries that will be participating for the first time in Yemen including Egypt, Syria, Turkey, and Thailand, besides holding Apollo's most popular exhibitions: JITCOM2004 for Computers and Telecommunications, Medi-Firm 2004 for medicine and medical requirements. The International Vehicle Exhibition along with Expo Yemen for furniture. Alongside, Apollo will also organize exhibitions in Dubai, Cairo,

and countries of the Horn of Africa during 2004.

Mr. Al-Nehmi added that the number of exhibition planned for next year will exceed 20 exhibitions, which is double the number held in 2003. "This is a positive indication that promises even a more successful future, especially with the support and encouragement received by the government for such economic initiatives that assist in enhancing economic development in the country and that enable Yemenis to be aware of what such exhibitions have to offer," he said.

Media workshop concluded

BY ISMAEL AL-GHABIRI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A workshop on media's role in implementing the poverty reduction strategy PRS was concluded last Wednesday the 25th of December.

The workshop was organized by the Media Training and Qualifying Center and was attended by 20 participants working throughout five days on issues relating to the PRS priorities and its relation to the media role and mission. The workshop was co-organized by the follow up and PRS monitoring unit at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and aimed at qualifying the participants and making them aware of and skillful in public communication especially with regards to PRS issues.

Journalists in Taiz discuss social integration

BY ABDULHADI A.
YT TAIZ BUREAU

More than twenty journalists in Taiz participated in a workshop organized during 27-29 December by French organization Dia on social integration of minority groups in Yemen.

Among those who participated in the workshop were Member of Parliament Mr. Shawqi Al-Qadhi and Taiz University Lecturer Dr. Fawzia Hassouna.

Participating journalists discussed the definition, meanings, objectives, and obstacles facing social integration of members of minority groups and how to overcome them.

The workshop handled the problems of delivering health, education, and employment facilities and services to members of such groups and proposed the possible steps to merge them into the community and explore, utilize, and promote their capabilities and talents.

Continued from page 1 Two British citizens released and 2 more to be pardoned

The eight prisoners first admitted their involvement in plots of terrorist attacks to be carried in Yemen but later they denied and said they came to Yemen just to study Quranic teachings.

Yemen refused appeals from their families and the British government to set them free. It was trying to make a deal with London accepting to release them in return of having Abu al-Hamzza turned over to Yemen to be tried on charges of being the mastermind of some terrorist attacks that took place in Yemen. However, London said openly that there is enough evidence against Abu al-Hamzza to appear before court and that there is security agreement between the two countries concerning extradition of criminals. This issue cooled the relationship between the two countries.

However, the relationship is getting better now as Britain is involved in supporting Yemen technically in its fight against terror. A counter terrorism British team visited Sana'a last week. Some British military experts have been reported to be in Yemen for training Yemeni Special Forces prepared for fighting terrorism.

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Announcement for invitation to Tender for Consultancy Services (Second Time)

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Taj Shaba Sana'a welcomes its new Sales & Marketing Manager, Mr. Arif Khan

Prior to this assignment, Mr. Khan was working as the Sales & Marketing Manager of Taj Residency Hotel, Bangalore in India.

He is a management graduated with a specialization in marketing and brings with him vast work experience having worked with the Taj Group of Hotels in different markets.

We wish him a successful tenure at Taj Sheba, Sana'a

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المركز الرئيسي: ص.ب. ٤٤٤٤ هاتف: ٩٦٧-١-٤٠٧٠٠٠ فاكس: ٩٦٧-١-٤٠٧٠٢٠ فرع الزبيدي: ص.ب. ٤٤٤٤ هاتف: ٩٦٧-١-٤٠٧٠٠٠ فاكس: ٩٦٧-١-٤٠٧١٥٥
ويسترن يونيون: هاتف: ٩٦٧-١-٤٠٧١٥٩ فاكس: ٩٦٧-١-٤٠٧١٥٩ البريد الإلكتروني: www.ibyemen.com الموقع على شبكة الإنترنت: info@ibyemen.com

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Department for the gifted and talented at the Education ministry, Boundless ambition!

REPORTED BY NADIA AL-SAKKAF
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

It's a known fact that the youth are the foundation of tomorrow, and it is being said; if one would want to develop any society one must develop its youth, and not just any youth but especially the talented ones. Stemming from this fact the minister of education Dr. Abdulsallam al-Jawfi has issued a decree to establish a new department early last November for the gifted and talented students, which Mr. Walid Qaed Mukred had been appointed to head.

The beginning

The evident progress seen in many Arab countries in education has been an interesting inspiration for Mr. Walid Qaed Mukred the person behind establishing the new department at the ministry, he wanted Yemen to follow this progress.

"The real trigger to this positive step was my experience in both Egypt and Saudi Arabia where I had gone to attend the 5th Forum for the gifted children last year in June and August respectively. I was impressed by the way they cared for their youth and how there was a specified general department at the ministry of education for care for gifted and talented children. When I came back to Yemen, I proposed to have a similar department here at the ministry and my proposal was approved!" - This is what Walid Qaed said when asked about how the issue started.

The new department had a number of objectives behind its establishment:

- Discover and care for talented students and to develop their skills
- Encourage the talented ones to fulfill themselves and work on their individual and group talents, to open new dimensions for them
- Continuous training for teachers working with special talents
- Follow up of the new talents and direct them to constructive lines so as to serve developing the society and improving productivity
- To care for the talented students products and works, whether arts, science, literature, vocational or research
- Develop students abilities to handling problems and problem solving in scientific ways
- Spread a sense of clean competition and good spirits among

Action Plan

Based on the above objectives, the department is planned to have five main sections with efficient and dedicated cadre working hard to achieve those goals, the coordination and follow-up section, the planning and programs section, and 3 sections for the elite and cultural and scientific creativity of students, the technical and social creativity and the physical, sports and scouts creativity of stu-

dents.

Each of those sections has got its own fields and categories through which the various talents of students are discovered and nourished. It is hoped that through this structure the various dimensions of this educational project are covered, especially when the department is seeking excellent staff and trainers for taking care of the young talents.

"The ambition is just too much and we are in a phase in which we have so much we can do yet we are handicapped because of the funding!" Mr. Qaed commented. He added that in reality the department although has an official name and all the official paper completed is not yet activated. "Every passing day without doing something constructive means a wasted talent" - he expressed.

However, there have been steps taken in this line although they too are ink on paper needing to be implemented. A plan for the activation of the department has been devised, there are a number of parallel steps that ought to be taken in order to allow full activation of the department; firstly, technical issues regarding the structure of the department such as the various responsibilities of each sections must be decided and efficient cadre to work in those sections must be hired, as well as funding the equipment and establishment of the department so that it can become operational. Once this issue is cleared a generic plan must be drawn so as to organize the department's activities throughout the year, then data collection must take place through gathering names and information about all the potential talents around the republic. When this database is created, contacts with the related persons must be done and coordination must be done with the affiliated offices around the republic so as to implement the action plan and result the desired outcomes.

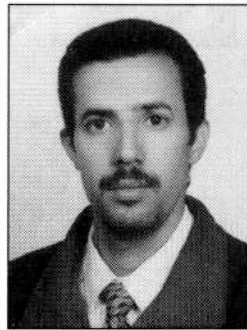
These were the main guidelines that Mr. Qaed had explained about the action plan, "we are still stuck in the first part, and looking into furnishing our department in Sana'a, we need computers and other administrative equipment so that we start working!" he said.

Government's role

About the government's role and why isn't it supporting this project financially, Mr. Hassan Saleh Baom, deputy minister for the education sector indicated that the ministry was quite supportive when the idea was suggested and immediate actions were taken to issue the decree and establish the department. "We are working currently on getting both the operational and activities budgets approved by the ministry by next year



Dr. Abdulsallam al-Jawfi, Minister of Education



Mr. Waleed Qaed Mukred

2004. However, we do realize that unfortunately getting the financial support which would fulfill our ambition would take a much longer time considering the small budget the ministry already struggle to work with and the other more demanding and more priority budget lines." He said. However, Mr. Baom expressed the ministry's interest in supporting this project, and hoped that the department would be successful in availing sponsorship from international organizations and local associations.

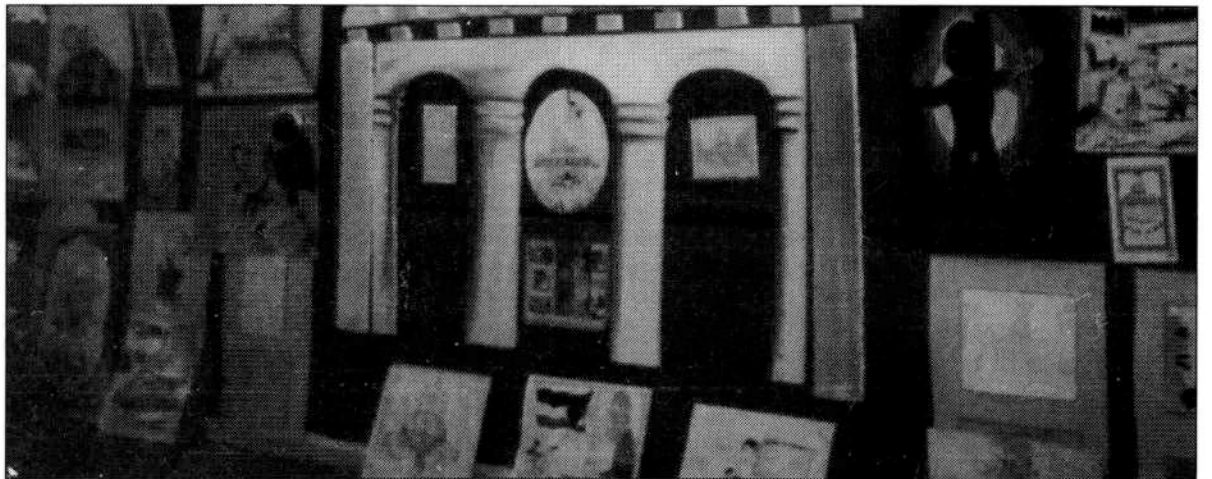
Publications and Work plan

In spite of the fact that the department is in its early stages a number of publications were issued totally based on personally efforts by the department's staff led by Mr. Walid Qaed. Teacher guides and instruction booklets, school activities manual, and a seasonal magazine of which the first issue was published last month. The purpose of these publications is to form the knowledge infrastructure amongst the educational cadre and those working in the education field as well as in the society such as students' parents and citizens. And we are hoping to avail support and funding for our publications so that we are able to produce them in a more professional and academic way and to be able to distribute it among many more people and around the republic.

The department has also set a tentative work-plan that includes much more than issuing publications. A table of the suggested plan with the related information for the coming year is aspired to contain the activities is shown.

S	Activity	Time	Venue	No	Duration	Coordination authority
1	"Talents and creativity" magazine	Once every month		12 issues		Educational Media, al-Thawra Printing house and others
2	Annual Exhibition of the child and puppet theater	January	Cultural Capital Taiz	250 students	10 days	National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital, Ministry of culture and tourism, Taiz local council, ministry of education offices in all governorates
3	Consultative meeting for the related authorities to the programs	February	Capital secretariat			Finance ministry, Planning and international cooperation ministry, ministry of youth and sports, ministry of culture and tourism, ministry of information, national committee for UNESCO, supreme council for motherhood and childhood, education offices in all governorates, other governmental and non-governmental organizations
4	Hosting the family and child group, the play for talented from Syria	April & May	Capital secretariat, Taiz and Aden	40 participants	15 days	National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital, national committee for UNESCO, ministry of external affairs and education offices in all governorates
5	Cultural talents caravan for the republic's students	May	A number of Governorates	7 students with a supervisor, total 147 people	12 days	National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital and education offices in all Governorates
6	First meeting for the Yemeni talented students	June	Capital secretariat	4 students with a supervisor total 105	7 days	National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital, ministry of culture and tourism and education offices in all Governorates
7	Talents Forum for students (arts and culture)	July	Capital secretariat	4 students with a supervisor total 105	7 days	National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital and education offices in all Governorates
8	Annual day for teachers of talented students (honoring ceremony)	August		8 educators (teachers, supervisors, HODs) from all Governorates	4 days	National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital and education offices in all Governorates, other interested GOs and NGOs
9	Summer courses for computer and internet skills	20 August	Techno city - Sana'a			National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital, ministry of communication (Techno - city) and education offices in all Governorates
10	First meeting for scientists of the future	September	Capital secretariat	4 students with a supervisor total 105	5 days	National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital, and the national committee for UNESCO
11	Cultural fair for children games	October	Capital secretariat	7 students with a supervisor, total 147 people	10 days	National committee for Sana'a Arab cultural capital, ministry of youth and sports, and education offices in all Governorates

Table of suggested activities



Samples of the talented works

Workshop on micro-finance inaugurated

REPORTED BY: FAHMIA AL-FOTIH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

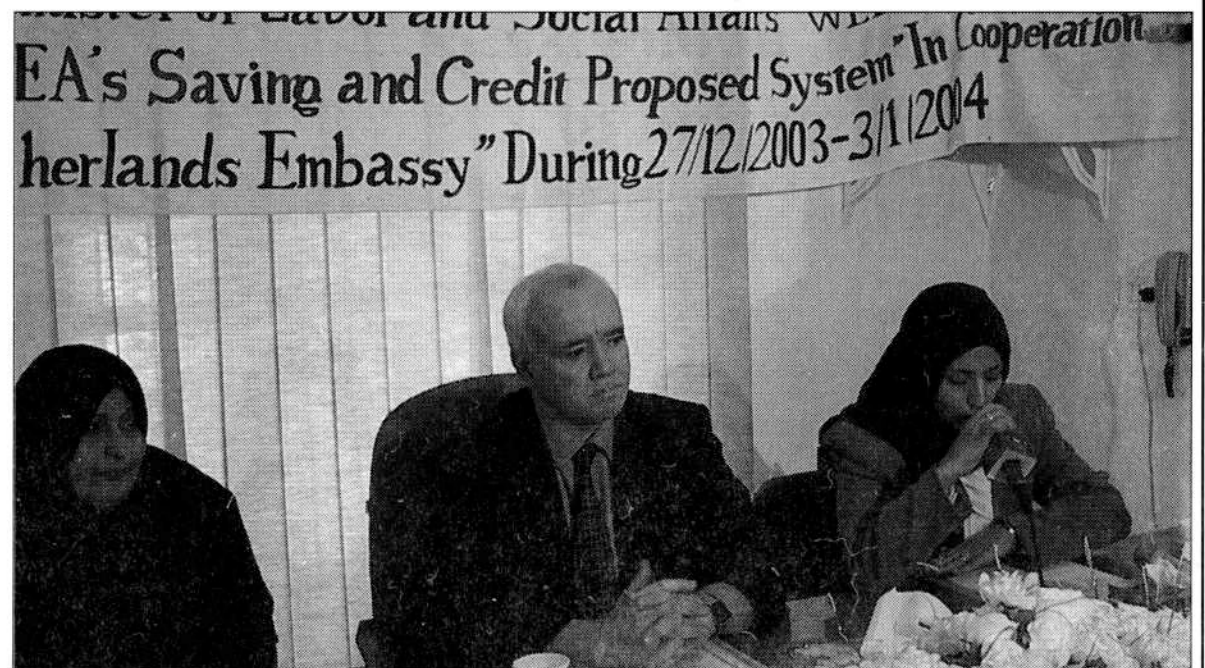
Under auspices of Mr. Abdulkareem Al-Arabhi, the minister of Social Affairs and Labor, Women Economic Empowerment Association (WEEA), in cooperation with Royal Netherlands embassy, is holding a 7-day workshop about lending and savings that started on Saturday 27 December 2003 in its headquarters.

The workshop attended by Mr. Ali Saleh, the Deputy minister of social affairs and labor, who exalted the exerted efforts and activities that WEEA has been doing in developing the woman status in society

The workshop discussed the program of supporting the abilities in financing small businesses and the system of financing in WEEA.

Dr. Fathia Bahrn, the head of WEEA, said in her opening speech "The workshop aims to let the WEEA members and the women in local communities get known with the skills and concepts of micro-finance. The workshop aims to discuss the system of micro-finance and come up with primary agreement on implementing the suggested policies, mechanisms and techniques. This system will be developed later grounding on the local communities' feedback."

Dr. Baharn said further "The asso-



ciation's vision in this workshop is a step in helping to alleviate poverty rate among the targeted groups of the local communities through the activities of the micro-finance for micro projects. Actually the association aims at creating a system between the micro-finance institutions that will be in turn connected with supporting services as skills training, awareness and consultations for civic organizations. WEEA will seek to link the needy to those who offer services as

well as find funding sources. In short we want to create and enlarge women possession and ensure them the bases of self-dependence."

Dr. Bahrn concluded "This workshop comes to confirm the WEEA mission and strategy in economically enabling and empowering women and employing her in development"

It is noteworthy that this workshop comes as a result of field visits to a number of areas in Ibb, Lahj, and Al-Hodeidah governorates within which

the members along with a Sudanese expert Mr. Abdualmajed al-Khuji have visited the communities there and studied women needs and their problems in savings and loans-obtaining.

It is also worthy mentioning that a seminar will follow this workshop in Hada Hotel to discuss the results of the workshop and enrich it with suggestions and participants' points of view on which the recommendation will be released.

Requirements to activate the department and ensure its effectiveness

- Technical support to establishing of rules and regulations that control and organize competitions, programs and other activities for talented children
- Administrative support in the form of office equipment, computers, photocopy machine, video and TV...etc for the head quarters in Sana'a.
- Administrative support in the form of office equipment, computers, photocopy machine, video and TV...etc for each of the branches around the republic.
- Support educational publications such as bulletins, newsletters, leaflets, posters and other educational publications that help raise awareness among and about the talented children and their fami-

- lies.
- A center for the gifted and talented children where they can perform their activities, and get training. Such establishment is necessarily in the capital city and in all the governorates and should be affiliated to the ministry and should be able to accommodate students' activities in all levels.
- Support camps and outdoor activities as well as enriching, cultural, scientific, creative, technical, religious, social, sports and skills activities... etc that aim at discovering talents and nourishing them.
- Establishing special schools for the elite and the talented students or/and dedicating some of the existing ones for such students.

World unites in offering help to Quake-hit Iran

GENEVA, Dec 27 (Reuters) - U.S. President George W. Bush, who once branded Iran part of an "axis of evil", and other world leaders stepped up aid on Saturday to Tehran, struggling to cope with an earthquake disaster that killed 20,000 people.

Washington has no official ties with Tehran, but Bush said in a statement: "We stand ready to help the people of Iran."

"A U.S. official said an aid package would be announced soon.

Washington broke diplomatic relations with the Islamic Republic after militant students stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran in 1979, and held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days.

Bush has accused Iran of trying to develop weapons of mass destruction in secret, but Tehran said assistance was welcome from every corner of the globe other than Israel, its other great political enemy along with the United States.

Iranian officials said some 50,000 people were also injured when Friday's quake struck the ancient Silk Road city of Bam in southeast Iran, devastating 70 percent of its buildings.

The United Nations, European Union countries, Russia, China, Poland, Japan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Australia and others pledged doctors, medical supplies, financial aid and rescuers with sniffer dogs and equipment to help find survivors.

Italy oversees EU aid

Italy, as current president of the European Union, will coordinate EU aid to avoid duplication.

The United Nations said it was releasing an immediate emergency grant of \$90,000 and had sent experts to help assess the damage. Its Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

Affairs (OCHA) said the U.N. team would also work to mobilise and oversee international assistance.

The immediate need was for medicines, tents, mobile hospitals, electricity generators, water purification equipment and blankets, OCHA official Madeleine Moulin-Azevedo said.

The U.N. children's fund UNICEF said it was sending medical supplies and called for \$350,000 in donations.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's office said he had ordered the Emergencies Ministry, which deals with frequent natural and man-made disasters, to send doctors, paramedics and sniffer dog handlers to help find

people buried under rubble.

Planes were due leave for Iran on Saturday with 100 experts for searching collapsed buildings, 10 doctors and search dogs.

Russia has close ties with Iran, and is building a nuclear power station near the southern city of Bushehr on the Gulf.

EU coordination

Agostino Miozzo, the official coordinating EU aid, said France was sending a field hospital and the Czech Republic, one of 10 countries entering the bloc next year, also offered help.

"This is the first time EU coordination is taking place for a disaster," Miozzo said. The EU Commission said it would mobilise 800,000 euros (\$995,100) of initial humanitarian emergency aid.

Part of a 60-strong British rescue team with sniffer dogs, special cameras and listening devices arrived in Bam on Saturday and officials said the rest were expected to join them soon.

A Belgian C-130 military transport plane was due to bring vehicles, water, blankets and food on Saturday and Belgium also offered a field hospital and medical crew.

Italy sent a sniffer dog unit, fire brigade and search teams and Germany offered help in rescuing people who may be trapped in collapsed buildings and to repair damage.

A plane carrying 42 German rescuers arrived in the Iranian capital on Saturday.

Israel condemns snub

Israel offered condolences and government spokesman Avi Pazner said private Israeli societies had offered help. "But Iran prefers to play politics instead of accepting a generous offer by private Israelis. It is their decision," he said.

Turkey, which has plenty of experience in quake relief work, said five military cargo planes carrying search and rescue teams and humanitarian aid and body bags had arrived near Bam on Saturday. Extra aid was due to arrive by road early next week.

Japan, another country with quake expertise, said it was sending a specialist medical team and about \$230,000 of equipment including tents, generators, blankets and water tanks.

China said the first batch of \$600,000 worth of aid would be dispatched



Iranian aid workers use the courtyard of the Imam Khomeini hospita to treat patients fo fear of aftershocks in Bam,1285 kilometers southeast of Tehran, December 27, 2003. International rescue workers were scouring flattened debris for survivors in Iran's shattered ancient Silk Road city of Bam on Saturday, after a violent earthquake killed more than 20,000 people.2003. REUTERS

Saturday along with a 43-member rescue team.

Australia pledged \$1.5 million in emergency help and South Korea offered at least \$200,000-worth. Greece, which pledged more than

\$300,000 in emergency aid, said a 20-strong emergency and rescue team and supplies would fly on Saturday with more doctors and equipment following later.

Austria was due to send 120 rescue

workers on Saturday with sniffer dogs and two water purification machines and Saudi Arabia also planned to send a medical team on Saturday armed with medicine, blood, food and clothing. Jordan was planning to dispatch a mili-

tary field hospital with up to 80 staff and other in-kind assistance by Monday while the Red Crescent in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates also announced they would send supplies and medicine.

Palestinians apologise, invite Egyptian to Ramallah

CAIRO, Dec 27 (Reuters) - A Palestinian delegation offered a formal apology on Saturday to Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher for the hostile reception he received from Palestinians earlier this week at the al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem.

The delegation, led by senior PLO official Farouq Kaddoumi, also invited Maher to address the Palestinian legislature and meet President Yasser Arafat in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

Maher was jostled and harangued by Palestinians on Monday when he went to the mosque during an official visit to Israel, the first by an Egyptian foreign minister since the start of the Palestinian uprising in 2000.

The incident was an embarrassment to the Palestinian Authority, which looks to Egypt as an important Arab ally in its campaign for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath, another prominent member

of the delegation, told reporters: "Palestine needs Egypt and wants Egypt to remain the leader which is able to continue attempts to reach a just peace."

"Other than Egypt, who can lead this region? There is no one else," Shaath added.

Shaath said the invitation to speak to the Palestinian legislature was meant as an honour to Maher because usually such invitations were reserved for heads of state. Maher had accepted the invitation, he added.

The Palestinian delegation also had talks in Cairo with Egyptian intelligence chief Omar Suleiman, the mediator in ceasefire talks with Palestinian militant groups.

Talks with the militants in Cairo collapsed earlier this month when the Islamist factions rejected a comprehensive ceasefire with Israel.

Shaath said Suleiman would go back to the Palestinian territories after the New Year holiday.

Seven Iraqis killed, 80 wounded in Kerbala attacks

KERBALA, Iraq, Dec 27 (Reuters) - At least seven Iraqi civilians and police were killed and 80 wounded when insurgents attacked government buildings and foreign troop bases in the southern city of Kerbala on Saturday, hospital officials said.

Officials had earlier said at least four members of a Polish-led multinational force working in the area were killed in the attacks, which combined car bombs, mortar fire and machine-gun fire.

The commander of the multi-national force in the region, General Andrzej Tyszkiewicz, said the town council building and a university building were also hit.

"This was a planned, coordinated and massed attack," the Polish PAP news agency quoted Tyszkiewicz as saying of the Kerbala raids.

"In all cases, the suicide drivers were shot dead before they could strike their targets."

The attacks, part of a wave of guerrilla raids in Baghdad and deadly bombings to the north, further erode hopes the December 13 capture of former president Saddam Hussein will soon rein in violence against occupation forces.

The Kerbala area, home to several shrines holy to Shi'ite Muslims, is controlled by a multi-national force including Bulgarians under Polish command. Washington is urging allied countries to contribute forces to help counter insurgency ahead of a planned handover of sovereignty to Iraqis in the summer.



An Iraqi mother lies next with her injured son at a hospital in the city of Kerbala, some 110 km south of Baghdad, December 27, 2003. At least six foreign soldiers were killed and 27 injured in a string of attacks on U.S.-allied forces and Iraqi targets in Kerbala, military officials said. Hospital officials in Kerbala said at least seven Iraqi civilians and police were also killed and 80 were wounded. REUTERS

Local, foreign network targeted Musharraf

ISLAMABAD, Dec 27 (Reuters) - A Pakistani minister said on Saturday local and foreign extremists had planned a recent assassination bid on President Pervez Musharraf — the second in a fortnight — and they would soon be arrested.

"We have made big headway in our investigations," Sheikh Rasheed Ahmed, information minister, told Reuters.

"The terror network comprises both foreign and local (extremists)...They will be arrested soon," he added, declining to elaborate.

Two suicide car bombers tried to ram explosives-laden vehicles into Musharraf's limousine on Thursday in the garrison city of Rawalpindi, 20 km (12 miles) from the capital Islamabad.

Fifteen people were killed and 45 wounded in the attack, which authorities say was much more serious than earlier attempts. A bomb attack missed Musharraf's motorcade by minutes on the same Rawalpindi road on December 14.

Musharraf, who appeared on state television hours after Thursday's

attempt, held Muslim extremists responsible. Ahmed said the masterminds would be treated with "iron hands."

"They are trying to destabilise the country. There will be no letup in fight against terrorism."

Islamic hardliners and extremists are infuriated with Musharraf for supporting the U.S.-led war against terrorism in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Pakistan abandoned its one time ally, the Afghan Taliban, to support the U.S.-led war, which ended the hold of the Islamic militia over the war-ravaged Central Asian state.

Interior Ministry sources said they suspect Pakistani sectarian Islamic groups and Afghans were involved in the attack and that around 50 people had been detained for questioning.

High-level information?

Analysts have questioned how the perpetrators could have got details of Musharraf's movements to allow them to carry out two attacks in so short a time in Rawalpindi — the headquarters of the Pakistan army.

"It is clear that those behind the assassination bids have either infiltrated our top security outfits or have somehow gained access to sensitive information," English-language daily Dawn wrote in its editorial on Saturday.

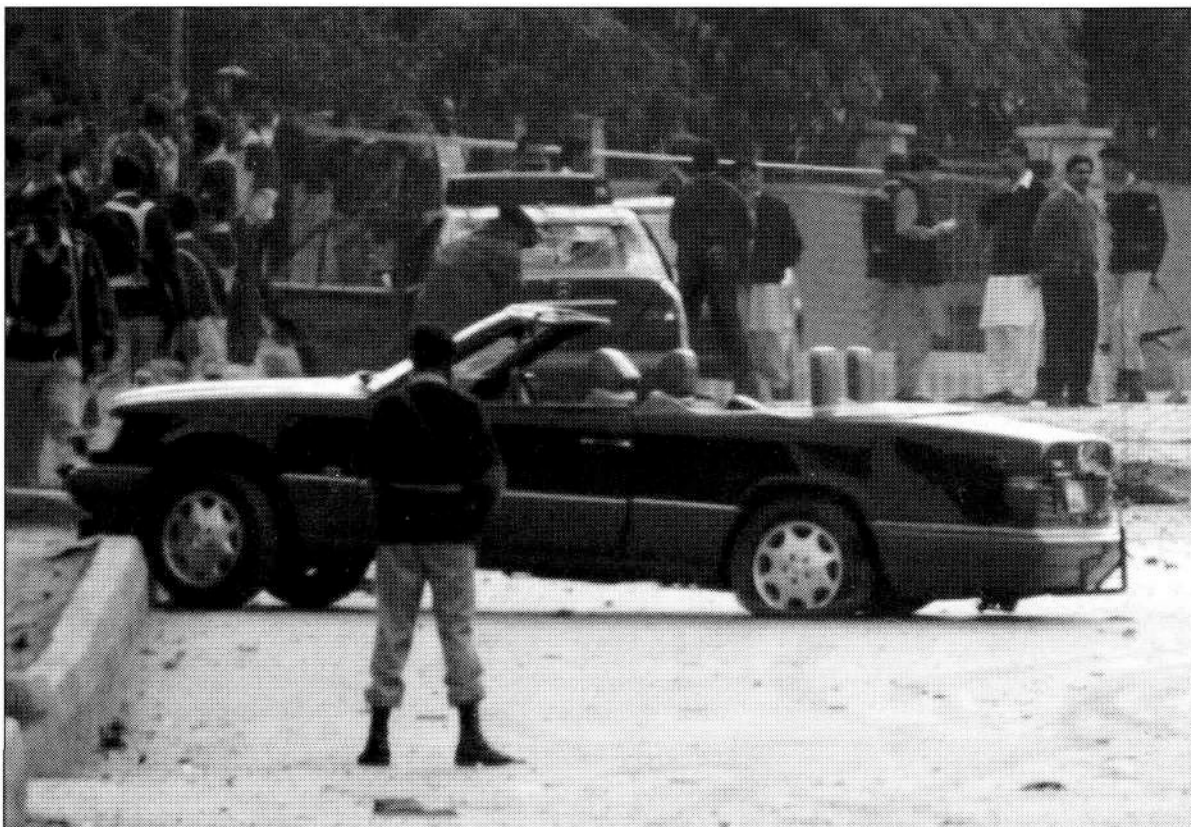
"A thorough overhaul of the country's intelligence services is long overdue," said the paper adding that the country's spy services have long been politicised.

Musharraf's recent peace overtures with nuclear-armed rival India have also incensed local militant groups fighting Indian rule in the disputed Kashmir region.

These groups have a history of close contacts with Pakistani military establishment.

Daily Times, another English-language daily, said such attacks could not have been made without an "inside track".

"General Musharraf must realise that he has not fallen foul of just some militants outside. He has in fact fallen foul of some militants inside," the paper said.



Pakistani soldiers stand guard near the damaged cars of President Pervez Musharraf's motorcade in Rawalpindi December 25. Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf narrowly survived a second assassination attempt in less than two weeks on Thursday when suicide car bombers attacked his motorcade, killing at least 12 people and wounding 17. REUTERS

U.N. troops in Liberia deploy to rebel zone

KLAY JUNCTION, Liberia, Dec 27 (Reuters) - U.N. troops in Liberia deployed in a zone held by the West African country's biggest rebel faction on Saturday, two days after being blocked by fighters at a bridge crossing.

The deployment is the first by U.N. troops into territory outside the capital held by Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and marks a step forward in bringing peace to a country battered by nearly 14 years of war.

Led by Lieutenant-General Daniel Opande, the U.N.'s top soldier in Liberia, and LURD commanders, Pakistani peacekeepers rumbled forward to set up positions at a key road junction 35 km (22 miles) north of the capital in LURD territory.

Opande then headed on to the LURD stronghold of Tubmanburg, where the Pakistani troops will eventually be based. He saw a military barracks and a hospital in a town which was LURD's base for attacks on the capital

Monrovia this summer.

The Pakistani troops had earlier crossed the Po River bridge where they were blocked on Thursday and headed onto Klay Junction, taking some LURD fighters from checkpoints on the way.

Speaking to LURD fighters at Klay, Opande said the war between two rebel factions and forces loyal to now exiled former President Charles Taylor was over.

"Today's symbolic deployment... begins the long road to reuniting the whole country," said Opande. "It requires the commitment of the people of Liberia to see to it that the peace they have worked so hard for...becomes a reality."

Singing war songs, LURD fighters, most in T-shirts and sneakers, shook hands with the U.N. troops as they deployed.

LURD fighters punched into the capital Monrovia three times during the summer, lobbing mortars into residential areas and hastening Taylor's

departure to exile in Nigeria.

"I am happy for the United Nations to come to this place today. For us the war is over and we are not interested in war," said LURD fighter Lieutenant Deadboyman. "Our main problem was for Taylor to go and now that he has gone, it is over."

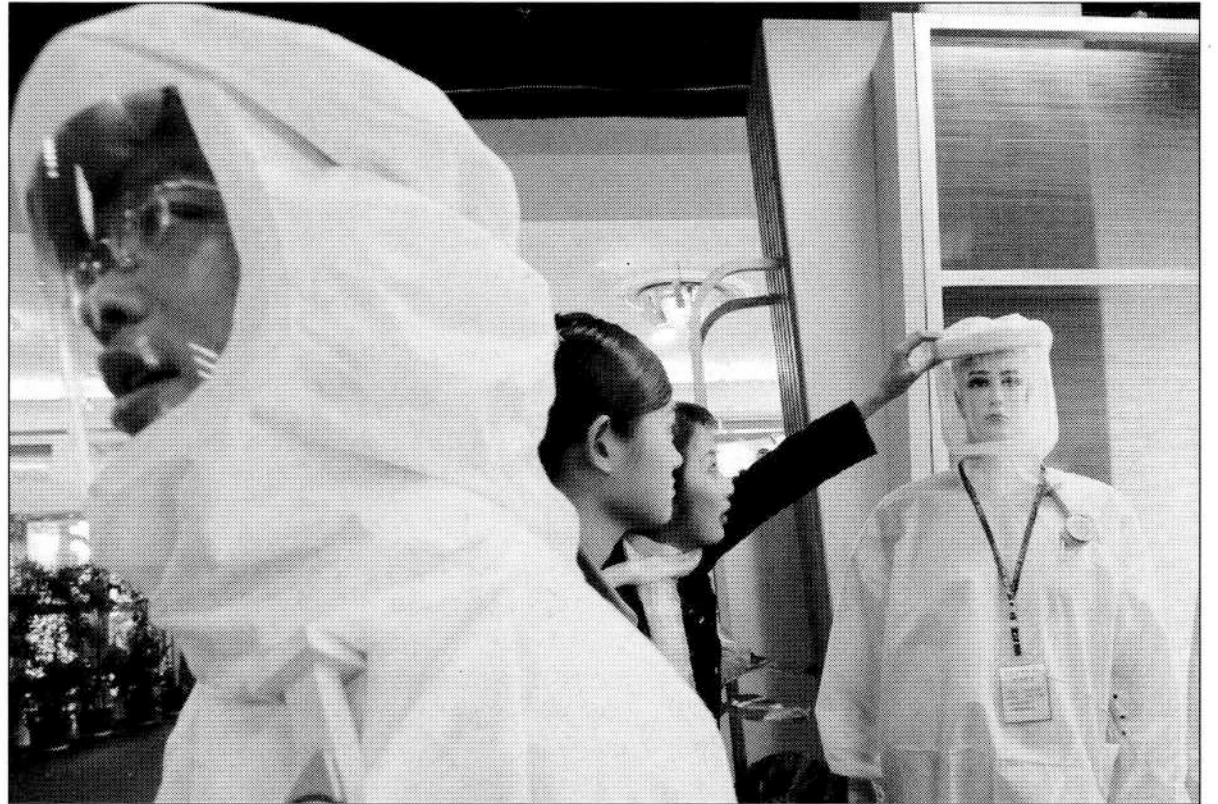
More than 7,000 U.N. soldiers are deployed in the country, founded by freed American slaves more than 150 years ago, as part of a peace deal meant to end more than a decade of fighting.

The deployment is part of the disarmament process. No rebels have handed over guns yet and attempts to wrest guns from fighters loyal to Taylor have been fraught with difficulties.

At least 11 people were killed in three days of violence in the capital Monrovia earlier this month.

Disarming some 40,000 fighters, many of whom have only ever lived by the gun, is seen as key to cementing peace and giving the country a chance of stability.

China reports suspected new SARS case



A Chinese visitor touches a protection suit at an Anti-SARS achievement exhibition in Guangzhou, the capital of China's southern province of Guangdong, December 26. A man suspected of suffering from the deadly SARS virus has been admitted to a hospital in the southern province of Guangdong, a health official said on Saturday. The flu-like virus emerged in southern China late last year, killing about 350 people in the country and infecting more than 5,000. It infected more than 8,000 people worldwide, killing over 800. REUTERS

BEIJING, Dec 27 (Reuters) - Doctors in China tested a man suspected of having SARS on Saturday as neighbouring Hong Kong stepped up checks on travellers to avert another outbreak of the deadly virus ahead of the region's biggest holiday.

China's first suspected Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome patient since the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the world SARS-free in July was in hospital in southern Guangdong province where the disease first emerged in late 2002.

"We have heard from a hospital that there is a suspected SARS patient in Guangdong," a provincial health bureau official told Reuters by telephone.

After appearing in Guangdong late last year, SARS was spread by travellers and went on to infect 8,000 people in nearly 30 countries, killing about 800 and ravaging many Asian economies.

If confirmed, the Guangdong case would be the first one globally not linked to laboratory accidents since the WHO declared the outbreak over.

News of the possible new SARS case comes just weeks before the Chinese Lunar New Year holiday when there is a mass movement of people within China and across East and Southeast Asia.

Hong Kong, a former British colony and hub for global travellers, stepped up checks on visitors from southern China after being told of the suspected case on Friday.

Hong Kong Health Director Lam Ping-yan identified the patient as a "freelance television station worker" from booming Guangzhou, capital of

Guangdong.

"The patient and those who have close contact with him are now being isolated and samples are being tested in the laboratory," China's Xinhua news agency quoted Lam as saying, adding the patient had not travelled outside China recently.

WHO spokesman Peter Cordingley said the U.N. health agency had been informed about the case of a 32-year-old man.

"They told us...they had a suspected SARS case in a hospital in Guangzhou, that he developed classical SARS symptoms like a headache and fever on December 16," Cordingley told Reuters from Manila. "It does not yet match our lab definitions of SARS. We're waiting for the results of further tests."

China Central Television said the patient had had a normal temperature for the last three days and was stable.

Global health officials have been watching for a resurgence of SARS since the start of the northern winter. Two recent cases in Singapore and Taiwan were linked to accidents in medical research laboratories.

Further checks

Xinhua said the patient was first diagnosed with pneumonia and quarantined. It said he was receiving medical checks and authorities were investigating the man's claim he had eaten no wild animals, believed to be a source of the disease, recently.

"All hospitals in Beijing should strengthen monitoring and examinations for fever cases, especially from Guangdong," Xinhua quoted a Beijing Municipal Health Bureau

official as saying.

Guo Jiyong, deputy director of the bureau, had led a team to check the city's airports and railway stations, it said.

"Guo said all municipal entry-exit inspection and quarantine departments should strengthen temperature screening systems and send any travellers with a body temperature over 38 degrees Celsius to government-designated hospitals," Xinhua said.

Most scientists say SARS is likely to have spread from farms in southern China, possibly jumping from animals such as civet cats, ducks, pigs and rats to humans.

China's Health Ministry recently told health workers nationwide they would be punished if they failed to report SARS cases, aimed at avoiding a repeat of a SARS cover-up this year that sparked widespread international criticism.

Taiwan also said it was watching the Guangdong case closely "because people across the Taiwan Strait communicate very frequently," Shih Wen-yi, director of Taiwan's centre for disease control, told Reuters.

On Beijing's sun-lit streets, residents informed of the news did not appear alarmed.

"I don't think it will spread because everybody has learned lessons from this year's outbreak and have attached a lot of importance to this," said Hu Dan, a 50-year-old office worker.

Lin Qiang, a 35-year-old housewife, said she was not surprised. "SARS cannot be eradicated overnight," she said.

Afghan U.S.-led forces kill four al-Qaeda suspects

KABUL, Dec 27 (Reuters) - U.S.-led troops killed four al-Qaeda suspects in Afghanistan's southeastern province of Khost on Saturday after the militants ambushed and killed a senior Afghan intelligence officer, officials said.

The incident occurred to the west of the town of Khost where six al-Qaeda fighters attacked the car of Hayatullah, a top official in the town's intelligence network, they said. Two of Hayatullah's colleagues were wounded.

"At the time of the attack, American patrol forces happened to arrive in the area and they killed four al-Qaeda attackers while the other two managed to escape," Khost's police chief, Saboor Allahyar, told Reuters by telephone.

"Two of the four killed are thought to be Arabs and the other pair are Afghans."

He said Afghan and U.S. troops based in Khost were searching for the

men who fled. The U.S. military in Afghanistan could not be immediately contacted for comment.

Khost was part of the bastion of the Taliban, overthrown by U.S.-led forces in 2001 for sheltering Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaeda network.

About 12,000 troops in the U.S.-led force still in Afghanistan come under repeated, but usually ineffectual, rebel attack.

Afghan officials say the guerrillas organise most of their attacks on U.S.-led forces, Afghan government troops and aid workers from mountainous areas near the border with Pakistan.

Ten days ago, two Afghan soldiers were killed when their car was hit by an explosive device in another area near Khost.

More than 400 people including militants, civilians, Afghan government troops, U.S.-led troops and aid workers have been killed since August, mainly in southern and eastern Afghanistan.

Eighteen die as Indonesian army tank collides with bus

JAKARTA, Dec 27 (Reuters) - At least 18 people were killed when an Indonesian army tank collided with a minibus in Central Java on Saturday, authorities said.

The accident occurred near the city of Magelang when the tank tried to overtake a car but hit the minibus, police official Sudiarto said.

"The tank failed to overtake the car because a passenger minivan was coming from the opposite direction and so they collided," Sudiarto said by telephone from Magelang, about 500 km (300 miles) east of Jakarta.

"Eighteen people died, including all of the 16 passengers in the minibus," Sudiarto said, adding one soldier and a civil servant aboard the tank were also killed.

Military officials were not available for comment.

A nurse from Dr Sudjono hospital in Magelang said three people, including the driver of the tank, were injured.

Italian court declares Parmalat arm insolvent

MILAN/PARMA, Italy, Dec 27 (Reuters) - An Italian bankruptcy court declared Parmalat's main operating arm insolvent on Saturday, and a prosecutor said the company's founder had been summoned for questioning in a fraud probe involving billions of euros missing at the Italian food group.

The bankruptcy court in the northern city of Parma, near Parmalat's headquarters, took the decision after the group's administrator Enrico Bondi outlined the financial situation at the group, judicial sources said.

Parmalat, Italy's eighth largest industrial group, filed for bankruptcy on Wednesday under an emergency government decree. With insolvency status granted, Parmalat SpA will be able to continue to pay dairy farmers and keep operations going, the sources told Reuters.

Parmalat's founder Calisto Tanzi has been called for questioning, Parma's chief prosecutor said on Saturday.

Investigating magistrates in Parma have named about 20 people in the fraud probe, including current and former employees of the group as well as unnamed outside auditors.

Police searched Tanzi's home near Parma on Wednesday, and prosecutors had sought to interrogate Tanzi that day, only to find he had left Italy for an undisclosed foreign country. Judicial sources later said Tanzi, 65, was willing to return when needed.

Parma's chief prosecutor Giovanni Panebianco, asked if Tanzi was expected for questioning on Monday, told reporters on Saturday: "He should show up."

Judicial sources said Bondi met Vittorio Zanichelli, a bankruptcy judge in the northern city of Parma, for less than an hour. Bondi presented documents outlining Parmalat's financial situation, they said.

"We are working, I hope for the best. We will see if it turns out this way," Bondi told reporters after leaving the Parma prosecutor's office.

Magistrates in Milan and Parma, near Parmalat's headquarters, are investigating for fraud, false accounting and market rigging.

Bush: U.S. faces 'time of great challenge'

CRAWFORD, Texas, Dec 27 (Reuters) - President George W. Bush said on Saturday the United States faced a "time of great challenge" amid efforts to quell guerrilla violence in Iraq and keep the peace in Afghanistan. Bush, who is spending the week after Christmas at his Texas ranch with his family, used his weekly radio address to offer a holiday wish for those facing hardships, such as poverty and unemployment. He gave particular emphasis to those serving abroad in the military. "We are grateful for the courage and commitment of our troops, and we are safer because of their skill and sacrifice," Bush said. "This Christmas season comes at a time of great chal-

lenge for our country," he added. Ahead of the November 2004 election, Bush has come under criticism from Democrats for his decision to go to war in Iraq. Although the main reason cited for the war was a charge that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, none have been found in the war's aftermath. Former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean, considered the front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination next year, has made his anti-war stance a major theme in his campaign. While casualties stemming from guerrilla attacks on U.S. troops in Iraq eroded some of Bush's support, the capture earlier this month of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein gave Bush a lift in the polls.

USDA says mad cow animal imported from Canada

WASHINGTON, Dec 27 (Reuters) - The U.S. Agriculture Department said on Saturday it believes a dairy cow infected with mad cow disease was imported from Canada in 2001.

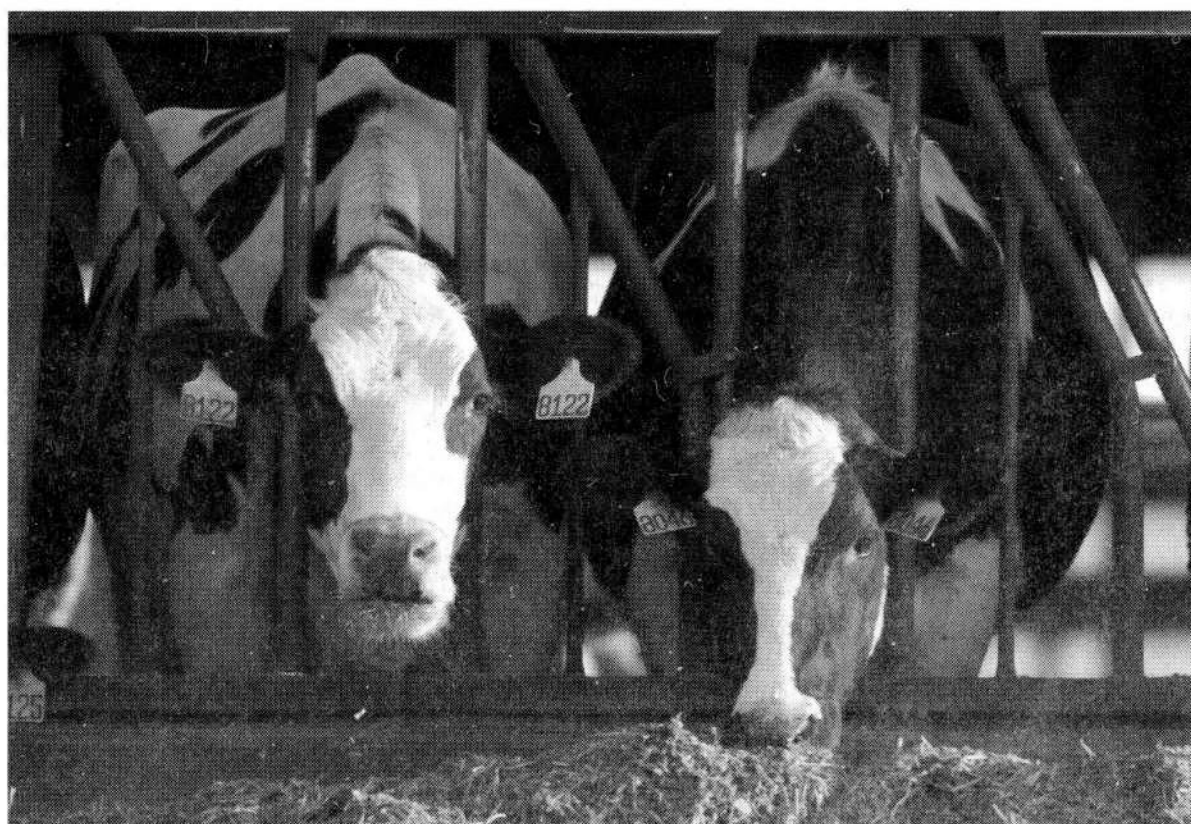
Ron DeHaven, the USDA's chief veterinarian, told reporters the cow was one of 74 cattle imported into Idaho from Alberta, Canada, in August 2001. The cow was born in April 1997.

All 74 went to a dairy operation in Mattawa, Washington, DeHaven said. He said it was too early to speculate where the other 73 dairy cows went from there.

The discovery of the deadly, brain-wasting disease in a six-and-a-half-year-old Holstein dairy cow in Washington state has cut off U.S. exports of beef, sent food company stocks tumbling and shaken consumer confidence.

The Bush administration said the beef supply is safe for consumers. The USDA said meat linked to the infected cow was sold in four western states — Washington, Oregon, California and Nevada.

Safeway Inc. <SWY.N>, Fred Meyer and Albertsons Inc. <ABS.N> have asked customers to return certain cases of beef patties and other products that originated at Vern's of Moses Lake Meats, which slaughtered the infected cow.



Dairy cows feed at the Sunny Dene Ranch near Mabton, Washington December 24, 2003. A dairy cow from the farm was found to be infected with Mad Cow disease after it was tested earlier this month, according to the USDA. REUTERS



A selection meats on display of the counter at Lobel's of New York, a premium butcher shop on Madison Avenue in Manhattan, December 26, 2003. Mark Lobel, who's on the board of the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medical Research, said his mail order business has not suffered in the wake of the Mad Cow disease scare. Lobel said you cannot contract the disease from steaks, chops, and roasts. Lobel's opened in 1840 and has been on Madison Avenue for 50 years. REUTERS

U.N. peacekeepers killed in Benin crash

COTONOU, Benin, Dec 27 (Reuters) - Fifteen U.N. peacekeepers from Bangladesh were among at least 133 people killed last Thursday when an airliner nose-dived into the Benin coast, Bangladesh's Defence Ministry said on Saturday.

Four bodies were pulled from the surf in the poor West African country on Saturday morning by locals and Lebanese divers aiding search efforts as 15 survivors flown to Lebanon were rushed to hospital in Beirut.

Benin's foreign minister said there

had been 151 passengers on the Beirut-bound flight, which crashed moments after take-off from Benin's main city Cotonou, and he told the Arabic Asharq al-Awsat newspaper the death toll had reached 133.

Relatives in Beirut, torn between relief and sadness, gathered at the airport to meet some of the lucky few who survived the disaster.

"We don't know whether to be happy or sad. Those who died were all our children," said a relative of survivor Khodor Farhat. "Even Khodor's

return is not what we wanted. He is back on a stretcher."

Lebanon's Foreign Minister Jean Obeid said at least 110 of the dead were Lebanese nationals, members of long-standing, thriving communities in West Africa who had been heading home for end of year festivities.

The 15 Bangladeshi army officers killed were also heading home for a holiday from U.N. peace missions in Sierra Leone and Liberia, a defence ministry statement said. The two countries are among the toughest spots in a

violent region.

A French plane carrying 140 metal coffins arrived in Cotonou on Saturday to fly bodies home, aviation officials said.

Rushed to hospital

Ambulances rushed the 12 Lebanese survivors, one Syrian and two Palestinians, to hospital on arrival at Beirut airport. At least one Lebanese survivor was in critical condition.

Survivors said they were haunted by screams that rent the air as flight UTA 141 went down, spewing bodies and twisted metal onto the beach.

Some described feeling the plane was struggling to take off before it smashed into a building at the end of the runway and plunged into the shallow coastal waters.

Airport officials in Benin said it had trouble retracting its undercarriage on take-off. Local police have opened an inquiry and efforts to retrieve the plane's two black boxes from the wreckage continued on Saturday.

Obeid said investigations were also underway in Lebanon.

"It seems from preliminary evidence that there was a surplus in the number of passengers and a surplus in the load. A big surplus," he said. "I don't know if there were problems before but the plane was unable to take off."

Guinea's Transport Minister Cellou Dalein Diallo said the plane was first used by the Guinean-registered company Union des Transporteurs Africains (UTA) in September this year. It had previously been used by American Airlines and Afghan Airlines.

Benin has not allowed the Libyan co-pilot, who survived the crash, to leave as they want him to help with their enquiries.



Rescue workers battled high waves to free bodies from the wreckage of an airliner which crashed into the sea off the West African state of Benin, killing at least 111 people December 26. REUTERS

Four Bulgarian troops killed in Iraq attack

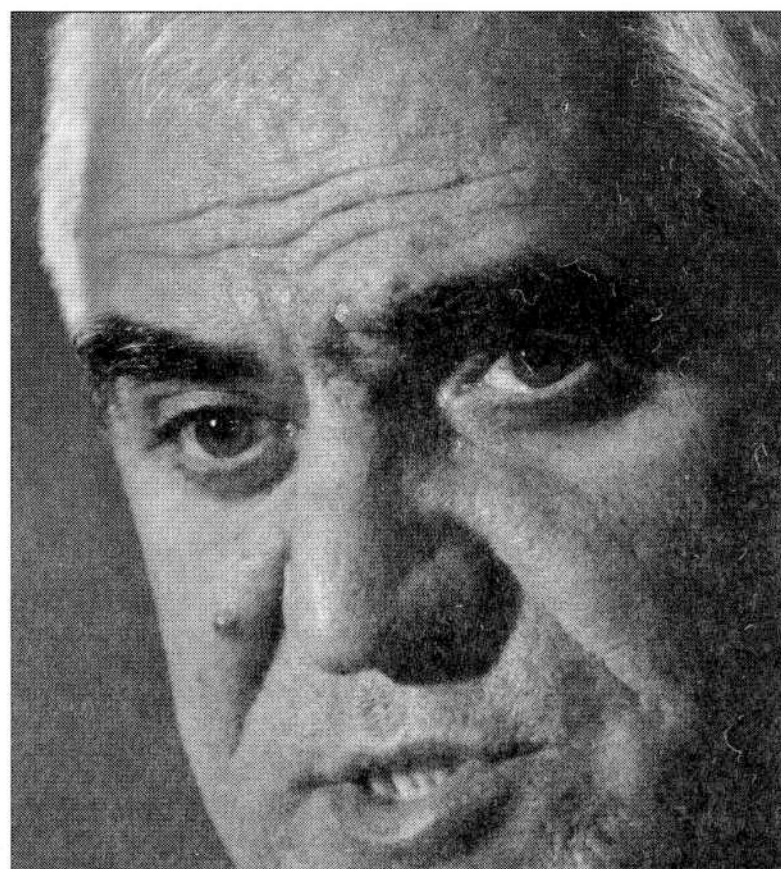
SOFIA, Bulgaria, Dec 27 (Reuters) - Bulgaria's Defence Ministry said four Bulgarian soldiers were killed and another 27 were injured in a car bomb attack on Saturday in the southern Iraqi city of Kerbala.

Deputy Defence Minister Ilko Dimitrov told a news conference in the Bulgarian capital that the car bomb hit the Bulgarian military headquarters in Kerbala at around 1230 Iraqi time (0930 GMT), killing the four Bulgarian soldiers.

"Four Bulgarian families will mourn tonight, and we face an enemy which does not respect any values," Dimitrov said.

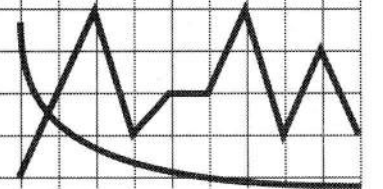
Earlier, the Defence Ministry had said the soldiers were badly wounded but not dead.

The car bomb was part of a coordinated assault by guerrillas on occupying forces in Kerbala on Saturday which killed at least six foreign soldiers, seven Iraqi civilians and injured dozens more.



Bulgarian army Chief of staff, General Nikola Kolev speaks during a press conference in Sofia December 27. Bulgaria's Defence Ministry said four Bulgarian soldiers were killed and another 27 were injured in a car bomb attack on Saturday in the southern Iraqi city of Kerbala. REUTERS

YT Business



Yemeni economy, 2003-2004,

Investment impediments and attempted efforts to remove them

By: Mahyoub al-Kamali
Yemen Times Staff

What has the Yemeni economy achieved in 2003 and did the government efforts to contain negatives resulting from rise in inflation rates succeed? Why the establishment of a stock market was delayed and floundered despite of its importance for investors and the speculation sector and activation of capitals among local and foreign markets?

Economic indicators reveal that the Yemeni government has traversed a long distance on the road of realizing its goals of the economic and financial reforms programs but failed in attaining real growth rates.

According to those indicators the Yemeni economy has in 2003 suffered from investment hindrances that led to:

- slowness in finishing projects meant for the infrastructure of the licensed projects for investment,
- rise in averages of construction materials such as cement and steel that caused the blocking of works movement in the country,
- the rise of insurance premiums on ships calling at Yemeni ports, but the government has later managed to achieve progress in negotiations with

insurance companies for reducing the prices imposed on those ships because of efforts exerted by the ministry of transport,

- a big drop by no less than 35% in influx of Yemeni expatriates capitals because of severity of measures taken for fighting money laundering and suspicions on transferring money as a result of 11 September events of 2001 in the United States of America.

Consequently the living conditions of the people have become more difficult under deteriorated services of public institutions, especially in health, education, and diminishing of hopes in improving the incomes of poor families and control of prices in local markets. It is eye-catching that the Higher Council for Oil, Economic and Investment Affairs did not take any measures, at least outwardly, to tackle the prices crisis but rather the parliament sufficed itself to only listening to a report regarding prices hikes with no avail.

The council of ministers should have to be clearer in the government's economic policy while it claims to be keen on its citizen's interest and securing his living stability. Food security would help the government in realizing both human prosperity and fighting hunger and terror.

Price reforms & currency floating

Caused retreat in the citizen's living conditions

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The wave of high prices and rise of prices rates in general compared to government measures to treat them disclose that the government is indifferent with regard to the citizen's living requirements particularly after it has flooded his life with a set of price doses and kept vainly contending with a failing program for economic and financial reforms. This is confirmed with the numbers of failure cases in all fields in addition to the rise of price rates of food stuffs.

Following around nine lean years of implementing the policy of price reforms and floating value of national currency, economic indicators stress the living conditions of the citizen retreated by 84%.

The government has utilized its potentials and local resources to gain political benefits and to throw dust of reforms in the eyes of the public, according to their description. According results of official field social surveys the proportion of food poverty rose from 9% in 1992 to 18% in 1998 and the proportion of general poverty reached more than 43% in 2003 while the rate of poor employees to 84%.

Workers say that before the government made details in drawing up a strategy for limiting the volume of the victims of its economic policies, it closed and blocked job opportunities before the work force and created a desperate living situation while it distributes income in favour of the rich.

The government policies ignoring of the labour market caused an increase in number of those looking for job oppor-

tunities who reached to 7.7 million persons in 2003 at a percentage of 46.7 of the population that is around 18.9 million people.

Therefore, the deteriorating living conditions resulting from deterioration of national currency prices during the past days came to double the volume of the victims of the policy of price reform and to produce poverty and push the thousands of families to the brink of bankruptcy.

Against this situation the government did not take measures because it did not focus its first attention to living needs of the citizen. The ministry of trade and industry did not put forward any beneficial solutions or the rise in general price rates. The Yemeni government tried to improve circumstances of the economic situations but the measures taken in 2003 focused on finishing projects of local development and efforts were concentrated on reforming financial and administrative bodies.

Investment circles see that the rise accomplished in the proportion of taxes imposed on income and production and consuming caused in delaying of finishing their projects in addition to administrative complications restraining the movement of capitals. These circles say the important thing about the economic, financial and monetary policy should have been the establishment of a stock market which had been delayed in during the year 2003 and that had led to:

- recession of dealings in the financial market that is founded on individual bases and banking shops barring monetary circulation, weakness of investors trust in the present banking situation,

- there is a difficulty in monetary dealings between the present bank market and foreign monetary markets.

Investors also confirm that the establishment of a stock market has become an important matter to adjust the rhythm of funds movement and their circulation which means the importance of joining efforts of the government with the private sector to found the stock market on studied scientific bases.

Although the committee entrusted with the establishment of a stock market has traveled a significant distance other factors are still hindering the accomplishment of the market.

Entrepreneurs and businessmen mention that the investment situation in Yemen is in need of more government support and facilities to attain the aspired for goals from investment in available opportunities for them whether in the free zone in Aden or in other areas.

Throughout the year 2003 the government has not been able to curb the chronic deficit in the state general budget that exceeded YR 63 billion and the overall deficit in the budget of the New Year 2004 has remained more than YR 80 billion. This situation means:

- weakness of developing non-oil exports,
- weakness in administrative efficiency for increasing production,
- an increase in the volume of general expenses,
- depending on the policy of foreign borrowing to implement some floundering projects,
- increase in proportion of loans interests at the expense of the state's

general budget.

Hence, official circles see that there is inevitability for continuing financial and administrative reform and restructuring of floundering establishments by implementing the policy of privatization to get rid of their burdens. During the year 2003 the government has approved the privatization of a number of state establishments and offering them for sale to the private sector and that has caused an increase in rates of unemployment.

Indicators of the New Year

The government during 2004 intends to introduce a new economic dose aimed at increasing taxes and customs duties and increasing prices of some important commodities such as fuels and diesel under pretexts of realizing balances in quantity and prices and wages. Despite that the government has postponed implementation of the general tax law on sales to an indefinite date during the next year, indicators of its financial statement reveal that the fresh dose would include doubling the percentage of taxes imposed according to the law of production, income and consumption and its amendments. The repeated visits of the World Bank to Yemen during the past days confirm that the next dose would be a heavy one on the people and would affect the social situations. It would cause employees, working in state projects and institutions to be put in auction sale pursuant to privatization program, to lose their jobs. Social circles express their fears of the fresh dose that could be killing of their living conditions and what remained with some of them of job opportunities.

Prequalification announcement

Prequalification applications for the installation of fire fighting and cooling systems for the petroleum bulk storage tanks farm in both Hodeidah and Taiz storage terminals.

In order to be able to make a tender offer all interested contractors have to prequalify. There is no cost to prequalify. Prequalification conditions are as follows:

1. Interested parties should have annual revenues exceeding 5 million US dollars.
2. Interested parties should be a contractor of the same field and should prove they possess the required expertise.
3. Interested parties should submit a profile that should contain among other requirements the following:
 - a. Name and address of the company
 - b. Name, title and contact information of the company's contact person responsible for the tender.
 - c. Brief description of the bidder's business operations in relation with the same business.
 - d. Copy of the last annual report, including financial statements or evidence of the company's revenue.
 - e. Letter signed by an authorized executive stating that the bidder is interested in participating in the tender.
 - f. Three set of these documents should be sent to the finance department - purchasing section of

Yemen Petroleum Company
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen
Zubairy Street - P. O. Box 187
Tel No. - 00967-1-215550
Fax No. - 00967-1-209598



شركة النفط اليمنية
صنعا - الجمهورية اليمنية
شارع الزبيرى ص. ب. ١٨٧
هاتف: ٠٠٩٦٧-٠١-٢١٥٥٥٠
فاكس: ٠٠٩٦٧-٠١-٢٠٩٥٩٨

Deadline for receiving bids is Tuesday, 10th February 2004.

Public Relations

العلاقات العامة

إعلان تأهيل

لغرض إنشاء نظام شبكات إطفاء وتبريد لمنشآت تخزين المواد البترولية في كل من الحديدة وتعز

تعلن شركة النفط اليمنية بأن على الشركات المتخصصة الراغبة في دخول المناقصة الخاصة بإنشاء شبكة الإطفاء لمنشآتها في كل من الحديدة وتعز التقدم للتأهيل بدون مقابل وبالشروط التالية:

١. أن يكون الدخل السنوي للمتقدم متجاوز ٢٥ مليون دولار.
٢. على المتقدم أن يكون متخصصا في هذا المجال وأن يثبت امتلاكه للخبرة المطلوبة والخبراء والفنيين المؤهلين لهذا النوع من الأعمال.
٣. على المتقدم تقديم ملف يحتوي ضمن المتطلبات الأخرى ما يلي:
 - أ. اسم وعنوان الشركة.
 - ب. اسم ووظيفة والمعلومات المطلوبة حول الشخص المسؤول في الشركة عن العطاء.
 - ج. نبذة مختصرة عن أعمال المتقدم وعملياته المتعلقة بهذا العمل.
 - د. صورة عن آخر تقرير سنوي مشتمل على الوضع المالي وما يفيد عن دخل الشركة.
 - هـ. رسالة موقعة من أحد المسؤولين التنفيذيين تنص على أن المتقدم راغب في الاشتراك في المناقصة.
 - و. ترسل ثلاث نسخ من هذه الوثائق إلى الدائرة المالية - قسم المشتريات في موعد أقصاه يوم الثلاثاء الموافق ٢٠٠٤/٢/١٠ م في:

Words of Wisdom



many of our senior officials are rather well-educated, but they have mostly ended-up as mere puppets as they are routinely ordered around, many times to do wrong things. Character strength would not allow this phenomenon.
*Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, (1951 - 1999)
 Founder of Yemen Times*



OUR OPINION

2003: A year marked by war and WMD illusions

This is the last issue of Yemen Times published in 2003. The next issue will come out at dawn of January 1st 2004. This is why I would like to bid farewell once and for all to 2003; a year that was full of miseries, violence, and disappointments. The 2003 witnessed the first ever war launched against a sovereign Arab state. It was the year one more Arab country fell into foreign occupation.

2003 was full of war and anti-war slogans. It was a year when determined warlords were able to enforce their views on the world and create a crack between the USA and Europe. It was the year when an Arab leader fell in the hands of the occupying forces.

It is also the year a 35-year-long dictatorship collapsed, and the year when millennia old historical monuments were robbed in the heart of once the capital of Arab pride and literature Baghdad.

This was the year when world citizens felt misled when the American administration emphasized once and again on the importance of ridding the world of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) and limiting the threat of Saddam Hussein's regime to the 'free world'.

This is when Americans were dragged into believing that a war on Iraq is part of a war on terrorism as they were made to believe that there were links between the Iraqi regime in Baghdad and al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan.

This is the year when the world was supposed to be a more secure place, but which witnessed bombings in countries that were once believed not to be targets of terrorist organizations such as Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and others.

This is the year when Arabs felt hopeless in preventing the war that will have consequences for many years to come.

This is the year when the sole superpower of the world, the United States, has succeeded in its attempt to start the first step in changing the Middle East map once and for all.

As if those were not enough, natural disasters struck heavily in this year, adding another dimension to the suffering of human beings on this lonely planet.

Last week's devastating earthquake in Iran was of severe impact that resulted in killing almost a quarter of the historical city of Bam.

The Middle East turmoil continued for another year as violence continued between Palestinians and Israelis with no light seen at the end of the tunnel.

There is no doubt that the year 2003 was full of miseries and sufferings. It was loaded with blood baths and massacres. But nevertheless, an end to this year could signal a beginning, and this beginning could be the emerging beam that would light our path to a brighter and new future.

Let us pray this beginning could be signaled in 2004.

The Editor



Independent Cultural, Economic & Political Weekly
 First English Newspaper in Yemen, founded in 1991
 by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

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 Qatar (Doha): Dar Al-Sharq Printing, Publishing & Distribution, Tel: 4654265, Fax: 4661865, P.O. Box: 3488
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Humility before God Searching for peace?

BY ADAM TAHA
 adam_taha2000@yahoo.com

I have found peace, but the search for it did not come so easily. I travelled on hard road, looking for something to ease the voice that world stir my soul for so many years. It did not come through walking into the light. I had to walk in the dark for years to appreciate the light when it came and one needs to be genuine in its search, in their words and within their hearts and souls.

My fellow man holds a candle and it is in the day. That is how the world is today. Yes, still they become blind no matter how bright the light shines. Peace of mind, that which soothes the heart and soul. Such is that feeling, that the love for God grows so much that you can't help but to forgive man, even in their darkest and mischievous hours, days, weeks, months and years.

I have lost all a man could lose in life to find that I have so much to live for. I have met the darkest faces of my fellow man and woman. I found enemies so close, that they were the faces of those I have so loved so much that, in my home, I would give them everything they see in my home but it was not enough. I have loved like I never loved before to find it being betrayed so many a times.

I have traveled through my life to see the mirror of my fellow man whether it is war, genocide, poverty, theft and most of all, and the one who I thought was my soul mate. All of these in their eyes were but a need, a thirst for something not real, not lasting but for this world.

I have walked in the night with tears and cried to no avail. No help came and yet, how can it be that I so love my fellow man and woman no matter who are they, what they believe in? I have so reflected on death many a times, so scared of it, always rushing to build something in this life, but deep inside I knew I can't take it with me.

Why is it that such peace has now come to even not worry anymore if I would lose my loved one that I found? Not that I am saying I don't love her but why I feel so at peace, relaxed, leaving such affairs in another power and say, 'I shall love and whatever may come, it has been written', why so at peace?

Forgiveness

Why do I not hate my enemies, or those who have let my world crumble before me? It is simple: I learnt to do the hardest thing. I forgave myself. I don't blame myself anymore and I

learned that everything is written, and whatever one does, whatever one takes, I know that God knows.

He will deal with them. I know now, my destinations is not the women in this world, nor in the glory of this world. Nor do I live as a Muslim to strive to enter Paradise or Hell. I do what I do now because I love my Lord. It is to please Him alone now.

There is nothing in the world that means so much to me now than pleasing my Lord. When this suddenly embraced me, I began to think what does He want me to do? To forgive my fellow man. To love my neighbours, to forgive even if it seems so impossible to others to do so because such people take so much, do such harm but they do it only to themselves. And I walk away not angry anymore, but more with sad feeling that my fellow man is hurting him or herself. I wish I could've done something to give so much so they want no more.

I walk now with such a feeling that I know He is watching me and even now, when times are hard, I smile, I laugh and my friends wonder 'how come he is laughing when such a thing has happening to him?' I laugh because such tests for me are like God is saying 'I haven't forgotten you. I am testing you because I love you and I want to show something beautiful about life, and how beautiful it is to be patient, to let go and be at peace again My servant.'

My life is not perfect, there are so many things I need to do. As a matter of fact, I will always need God. I will always need Allah and I would be so lost without Him. And every morning when I wake up, every night before I go to sleep, and between the day and night, five times a day, I speak to Him and say:

"Thank you Allah, I understand now. I do Lord, I understand now. I'm ready Lord."

And I've let go of the world and its like a mountain, a great burden on my shoulders disappeared and I feel light on my feet and I smile a lot. I may not have much to the eyes of the world but if they really could see the treasures God has hidden inside of me they would fight me for it.

Peace? It will not come until we are at Peace with ourselves. How beautiful that feeling of inner peace is. How lucky I am to have found myself at such a stage of my life when I am still young.

The Lord of bounty

How fortunate I am not to fear death no more or anything the world may do.

Letters to the Editor

Saddam deserves no sympathy

Reading the front-page article from Canada about Saddam Hussein, it is hard to understand how Yemen people can feel sorry for the former Iraq leader given how brutal he was to any political decent in his country. I do understand that he stood for Arab nationalism but gee whiz their has to be a balance here between here and from everything I've read and seen the former Iraq leader was anything but 'balanced'. This does not remove the cynical and self serving political and economic support that the USA and other West European countries lent to Saddam when it served their particular interests. I believe in democracy, which includes allowing the citizens to elect and install their own leadership, however flawed this system is.

Gary Juniper
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Saddam's arrest: a warning to other leaders

Now that Saddam is caught it will give the rest of the Arab World leaders a chance to think of how to treat their fellow citizens and not just to collect all the wealth for themselves and their families and forget the rest of the people. Saddam was a hero for large parts of the Iraqi people, but he has

even more people who want to get rid of him because he was unfair to the rest of the population.

Mohammed Saleh
 Mohammed
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Happiness of Saddam's arrest unjustified

It is really strange to find people looking at Saddam's capture as the end of the world. They started accusing him of cowardice and betrayal forgetting that he is only a human being who has been betrayed by the majority of his people and some of the nearest relatives. What can he do? We have no right to blame him for failing in the face of the world's sole superpower. It is really unbelievable the way we change the status of a man from a hero into zero in a moment. He is not the first leader in history who was defeated or captured.

We must remember that Napoleon Bonaparte was also arrested after Waterloo. We also have examples from our own history, including Omar al-Mukhtar who was captured and executed by the Italian occupation in Libya after along struggle.

The American vision of his arrest is meant to kill every last hope in us, to deprive this man of the last thing he has the love and respect of millions of Muslims around the world. I

Letters to the Editor

was shocked by your report that Yemeni intellectuals are happy about this drama, although it is a too generalized statement to say that all of them are happy.

I met an Iranian scholar whose brother was killed in the Iraq-Iran war and has every right to feel overjoyed by Saddam's fate. Yet, I found him deeply offended and sad that this could happen to an Arab and Muslim leader at the hands of the foreign forces. We would have been happy only if the Iraqi people revolted against Saddam themselves and took their destiny in their hands. But it is a kind of self-deception to think that the Americans have done this for the good of the region. Let those who are happy wait and see.

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 Punjab University, India

Why aren't Yemenis happy for Saddam's arrest?

When I heard that the USA "got Saddam" I immediately called my husband (a Yemeni) to tell him the news. It was amazing, he was extremely happy and you could hear the people in the background (also Yemenis) laughing, clapping, singing and who knows what else.

I guess what I'm trying to say is, I know hundreds of

Yemenis in the USA who are very happy that Saddam is out of power. The Iraqi community here was dancing in the streets and very excited also. I don't know exactly why the people in Yemen feel sadness, and disappointment, but those here in the USA are not feeling the same way.

I don't know, maybe some of these people actually lived under Saddam's cruel ways of life and think he got what he deserved, or maybe not. I just don't understand the difference in the reactions.

Michelle Y.
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Looking for Mohammed Y. Al-Habbari

Two years ago, I met someone here in the United States that was from Yemen. We became very good friends and kept in contact even after he left to go back home to Yemen. I loved this person dearly. He was my dear friend and somehow we lost contact with each other. I don't know if you can help me, but Inshallah it is worth a try and I can at least say "I tried." His name is Mohammed Yahya Al-Habbari. If there is any information that you can give me I would appreciate it and be so grateful.

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COMMON SENSE



By Hassan Al-Haifi

Tightening the noose around the poor

"T here she goes again, our government really knows how to keep everyone happy, except its own people!", remarked Alawi as he and his colleagues walked out of the post office after receiving their salaries, from the post office cashier.

"What do you mean happy?" exclaimed Mazen, continuing, "We have not seen happiness coming out of our government's policies since they announced the great Economic Reform Program in 1995. Come to think of it, the last time anyone saw something worthy of happiness was Unification Day, when we actually thought that Yemen's problems were at last over!"

Alawi, stuck to the economic issues: "I am not sure how our Government has the galls to continue throwing all the burdens on an already fatigued citizenry. Just think, announcing price hikes on such essential commodities as wheat and flour - the daily bread that represents the last thread that keeps us tied to merely surviving! As it is, the salaries that we government employees are getting are hardly enough to cover the utility bills: water - if you are lucky to have a connection, electricity - with all the bonus blackout hours, and telephone. If you are living on rented housing, then the tightrope becomes a stainless steel blade!"

This talk paved the way for Salim to open his constantly critical mouth: "he astounding thing to me and most people is that the very same people announcing these great economic measures are living light-years away from the vast majority of the struggling population of Yemen and most of their subordinates in the Government Administrative Structure. They never feel any of the awesome strain that most of us have to go through while trying to balance our monthly household budget."

Alawi cut in: "Do you really go through this high league financial exercise? There is just never any way you can get the numbers to balance even if your abacus was as big as the Kuala Lumpur Towers. By the time anyone of us reaches home today, half the salary would have already been dished out to all the few remaining creditors that are still kind enough to give us credit for the most dear of essentials - such as the drinking water and 'fool mudammas' beans, that manage to just keep your children alive. God help any of us, if we had to meet an emergency situation."

Mazen came back in the discussion: "Since, 1995, we were told that the economic reform policies were geared to set in the appropriate mechanisms that will infuse prosperity for the nation. However, the only prosperity we see is the lavish extravagance portrayed by the selected few who have found their niches in the socio-economic-political establishment that has the upper hand in running the affairs of the country and their henchmen, who never had any consciences to start with, who make it so easy for the heartless elements that make up this establishment. All the resources of the country are accessible to this select club, while the rest of the society struggles to eke out a meager subsistence level."

Back to the outspoken member of the group: "They told us that the economic reforms will eventually set in the channels for everyone to be enabled to live a productive life and to generate the resources for achieving their dreams. It turned out that the reforms were a nightmare for the once thriving middle class that has now entered the world book of extinct species. Moreover, they instilled a deep gorge between the very few, who have achieved undreamed of wealth, without the least bit of difficulty, and the vast majority of the people who are now trying to find out which of the poverty lines they have now reached to see which of the social programs might help in bringing some alleviation to their desperate conditions. So, they removed the subsidies and channeled subsidies for themselves to ensure that for their next five generations of heirs, poverty remains an untouchable stigma."

Alawi, wanted to make the situation generic worldwide: "Look, you guys, you do not realize that Yemen is no more than a bona fide member of good standing in the Third World Bloc of Least Developed countries that have become under the mercy of the 'donor community'. The latter dictate their prescriptions and the governments simply follow the doses through, knowing full well that the top echelon, in these governments will not be touched by these economic strangulation measures. The truth of the matter is that only the countries that manage to squiggle their way out of donor dictated policies, like Malaysia, managed to put their economies on forward gear."

"The fact of the matter is that Malaysia was lucky to get people in the government, who are not easily gulled into falling for the fancy econometric models and advanced communication apparatus that these donors use to draw out our extended economic policies for the next fifty years of heartbreak, which most of the officials of Third World governments lack the ability to digest, let alone find a way out of them.", Mazen wanted to show that this is all a part of the globalization wave that is rampant and he summarized this global trend with simplicity: "Anywhere you go in this world, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer."

Winning & losing

BY PHILIP GOUREVITCH
FOR THE NEW YORKER

One day late last summer, as the tally of bombings, shootings, and acts of sabotage against the American occupation in Iraq took on the unmistakable profile of a war of guerrilla insurgency, the office of Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, at the Pentagon, designed and distributed e-mail flyers with a cautionary headline: "how to win a battle against terrorism and lose the war of ideas." The e-mail invited those involved in the "WOT"—the war on terrorism—to a private screening of the Italian Marxist director Gillo Pontecorvo's 1966 masterpiece, "The Battle of Algiers." The movie, which will be rereleased in theatres next month, is surely the most harrowing, and realistic, political epic ever filmed. It depicts the conflict between Algerian nationalist insurgents and French colonial forces in the late nineteen-fifties, or, as the flyer put it: "Children shoot soldiers at point-blank range. Women plant bombs in cafes. Soon the entire Arab population builds to a mad fervor. Sound familiar?"

For all the differences between France's fight to keep Algeria—a country it had occupied since 1830—and America's current dispensation in Iraq, the parallels between the drama of insurgency and counter-insurgency in "The Battle of Algiers" and our present Iraqi predicament are as clear and as depressing as the Pentagon film programmers promised. The ugly truth that Pontecorvo lays vividly bare, as his camera tacks back and

forth between the Algerian guerrillas and the French paratroopers, is that terrorism works. For, although the film focusses on a chapter in the Algerian struggle when France succeeded in crushing the rebel movement, the final moments of the movie show how within a few years the French were forced to accept defeat and retreat, an outcome that in retrospect appears historically inevitable.

Such is the bind that the Bush Administration has led us into in Iraq. Appalling, intolerable—in all senses, maddening—as the terrorist tactics of the Iraqi insurgents may be, their truck bombs, donkey-cart missile launchers, and sniper rifles are tactical political instruments that have steadily and systematically succeeded in isolating American forces in Iraq. They have effectively driven the United Nations, the international staff of the Red Cross, and other aid groups from the country, and—more disastrously—they have fostered a mutual sense of alienation between the American forces and the Iraqi people they are supposed to be liberating. Triumphant pronouncements from Washington notwithstanding, our occupying forces are now clearly on the defensive. And the more aggressive their defense becomes, the more it serves the insurgents' purposes. When an American adviser in Iraq speaks of a new strategy of "terrorism versus terrorism," as Seymour M. Hersh reported in these pages last week, and an American lieutenant colonel tells the Times, "With a heavy dose of fear and violence, and a lot of money for projects, I think we can convince these people that we are here to help them," one may be forgiven for concluding

that the enemy is defining the terms of the fight to his advantage.

In "The Battle of Algiers," there comes a moment when the commander of the French paratroopers, Lieutenant Colonel Mathieu, realizes that, despite a spate of strategic successes against the insurgency, he is losing the larger battle for public opinion. At a press conference, reporters confront him with allegations that his men have tortured Algerian informants. Mathieu reminds the reporters that the press had originally been unanimous in calling for the suppression of the rebellion. "That's why we were sent here," he says. "And we're neither crazy nor sadistic... We are soldiers. Our duty is to win. Since we're being precise, I'll now ask you a question. Is France to remain in Algeria? If your answer is still yes, you must accept all the necessary consequences."

President Bush has consistently assured us that America will "stay the course" in Iraq, but what he means by that—that that course is—is not clear. Just as the official reasons for the war keep shifting, so does the Administration's proclaimed objective. For now, we are in Iraq because the President and his most influential advisers wanted to go to war there. Having made a misleading case for the war, the Bush team drastically mismanaged the crucial early period of the occupation, and has recently responded to the Iraqi insurgency by scrapping its original plan for political revitalization in favor of a hastier schedule of "Iraqization." With Bush's attention turning ever more urgently to holding on to the White House in next year's election, he is pushing for



the election of an Iraqi transitional government by the middle of next year. "We're going to get out of there as quickly as we can, but not before we finish the mission at hand," Andrew Card, the White House chief of staff, explained the other day.

Unlike the French mission in Algeria, Washington's goal in Iraq is not to prevent the people from governing their own country but to help them to do so. Presumably, the insurgents—about whose politics, allegiances, organization, and objectives shockingly little is known—also want to see Iraqis in power, if not the same ones that Washington might favor.

The question "Is America to remain in Iraq?" would ultimately receive the same negative answer from the occupiers as from the guerrillas. But, as the Bush Administration pushes for speedy elections and a speedy exit, Algeria's example is again worth bearing in mind. In the early nineties, an Islamic fundamentalist party won elections in that country by a solid majority but was prevented from taking power by the secular military, which refused to accept the democratic election of an anti-democratic government. As a result, the country descended into a civil war that is reported to have claimed a hundred thousand lives.

Right now, there is no Iraqi state and, in the absence of an Iraqi leader, President Bush holds power. Of course, Iraqis won't get to vote for him when they do eventually go to the polls, and for that, at least, he can be grateful. His apparent impatience to get out of the country suggests that he recognizes how difficult it will be to maintain the claim that he is that country's liberator even as he serves as Commander-in-Chief of an increasingly relentless counter-insurgency campaign. The President cannot afford to lose Iraq. What is less obvious, with the guerrillas setting the agenda, is what the price would be to win it.

World headlines: Either too sweet or too sour

BY LUC DEBIEUVRE
FOR THE GULF NEWS

At a time when the Bush Administration makes dates bloom in winter, one should be careful about what he reads. Sticking to the last two weeks' headlines, Saddam Hussain's "recent" capture should change the course of the war in Iraq; peace would be within reach in occupied Palestine and the apparent failure of the latest EU summit in Brussels will be a significant drawback for the new 25-member Europe. So what?

Saddam's capture, whenever it took place, will actually change little about the numerous issues that the American occupation army face in Iraq. One may complain that once again the Bush Administration tried to mislead the public, by seizing a haggard Saddam; an American soldier pointing his gun at a hole with a bunch of yellow dates behind his shoulder looked as true as a magnificent roasted turkey.

One may also object to the fact that despite a thorough medical examination and a humiliating-or-not shave, no WMDs were found in Saddam's ears nor was Osama bin Laden's mobile phone number found in his pockets.

What is sure, however, is that besides the many people who went on dying in several attacks the very day Saddam was arrested, he did not look like the one coordinating the resistance.

A dictator being captured is excellent news. "His days are finished", Bush said, adding that Saddam deserved both the death penalty and a "fair" trial. Yet, his arrest did not lead to finding any WMDs.

The manner in which the Saddam issue was handled may have been "a message telling Arab leaders that he who doesn't enter the poultry yard of the Americans will experience the same fate" as the Egyptian writer Sayed Nassar put it.

But still, the main issues remain: who will elect the representatives of the Iraqi people who are supposed to draft a new constitution? How will the US tackle the existing Shiite majority issue? How long will the occupying army be able to pump Iraqi oil, sell it to the markets and make money without any international reaction?

German, French or Russian companies are forbidden from bidding for Iraqi reconstruction contracts. The deputy defence secretary Paul Wolfowitz said: "It was necessary for protecting the essential security interests of the US to limit competition."

The former secretary of state James Baker toured Europe and Russia seeking Iraqi debt write-offs. The US investment in Iraq has started to pay back, if not for the "American tax payers" then at least for those "initial participating firms".

Anyhow, the situation in Iraq has become such a mess that Americans can only look for an exit strategy. The cost of the war and daily casualties are becoming

an embarrassment in an electoral year. Partition proposals of the country are so much favoured by Israel that nobody may even look at them: the only solution, everyone knows, is to bring the international community back into the picture.

In Geneva, there are Palestinians and Israelis who can talk to each other. But any implementation of a peace agreement will have to be imposed by an international power, since every gradual approach has proved unworkable.

Geneva is just another step in a never-ending discussion about stolen lands to be given back by thieves who are more powerful than their victims. Exhausted Palestinians now seem prepared to accept anything, like the shepherds of Jayousgota who just want to take their sheep to their meadows on the other side of the barrier.

But Israeli soldiers forbid them from doing so. The sheep have no permits, they say. When animals are kept away from pastures legally owned by their shepherds, what worse can happen?

A more positive note emerged from the apparent European failure over future voting powers in the Union. One could complain that Poland should not have imposed its own views on a club it was just joining: apart from the US, nobody indeed is forcing Poland to join the European Union.

Belgian, French or German agriculture is better off without Poland. As for Spain, the largest beneficiary of European aid, a direct link with Wall Street Journal's

Europe editor may have temporarily led this country to lose a sense of reality. In spite of the subtle support of Tony Blair, Spain nevertheless tried and failed. This is excellent news as there are now no more hurdles for the "pioneer group" concept to move ahead.

Among the many possible Europes, two are indeed confronting each other: the one favoured by the US which calls for the emergence of a large market where US goods and influence will expand freely; the other which calls for a powerful Europe that will define its own strategy, take the means for it and start teaming up with countries sharing a common vision in fields as different as defence, crime or immigration.

There may still be a long way to go before such a "Confederation of Nation States" takes roots and some countries may have already given up. Others have not and the "two-speed" Europe is an answer because results can be more easily achieved with five than 25.

One should thus be grateful to Spain and Poland to have offered the original founder members of the Union (with or without Italy, who knows?) the historic opportunity to focus on the only true issue: not how Europe should be organised but what it wants to be and do.

Failing to define and develop a strategy for a powerful Europe will indeed offer no other alternative in 10 years than transforming our countries into genuine Disneyland.

The US is not serious about helping Middle East democracy

Majid Mohammadi
For the Daily Star

Despite the stated desire of US President George W. Bush's administration to democratize occupied Iraq and other nations in the Middle East, a long-term commitment to transforming the political perspectives of the region and introducing democracy have never been a pillar of US foreign policy, and it is hard to imagine they will become one.

Aside from the fact that democracy has almost never been imposed from outside, the Bush administration does not seek democracy in the Middle East, but rather agreement with its policies. There is a large gap between the rhetoric of democratization to justify American policies and actual US behavior directed at supporting authoritarian regimes. Washington prefers dealing with ruling figures, families or tribes in the region, and the predictability they represent, to getting involved in the domestic and foreign policy complexities inherent in democratic government. One recalls how the US spluttered when Turkey's Parliament voted to deny American soldiers access to Iraq before the war there.

Supporting democracy requires understanding and dialogue. However, the Bush administration has usually talked the language of power, even with its allies. The establishment of regional democracies must also be linked to fair international trade policies. It is ironic, then, that the most populous Middle Eastern state, Iran, which has made genuine strides toward representative government, is also under the greatest burden of US trade sanctions.

The US has funded projects and programs to enhance economic development, education and civil society. However, can such efforts really be regarded as preconditions for successful democracies in the region? If anything, Arab civil societies that benefit from American funds are often very hostile to the US. In fact, projects funded by the US Agency for International Development or the National Endowment for Democracy, as well as such programs as the Middle East Partnership Initiative and the like, are aimed at achieving objectives different than democratization. While there are many in these organizations or initiatives who would like to push much harder for political change, they are often in no position to go beyond the

limits set by senior policy-makers and top-level bureaucrats.

Doubt is also in order when looking at past US behavior. American administrations have usually undermined democratic movements in the region, for example ousting Iran's prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, in 1953. They have sought the paradox of "democracy without democrats." Washington has long understood that democratic movements in the Middle East would not be pro-American. Consequently, the United States would have never enjoyed under democratic regimes the support it has in the region, with all the ensuing advantages, such as military bases.

The low credibility of the US in the Middle East is a significant obstacle to real engagement for democratization from abroad, if that were possible. Even elites in the region cannot seem to trust American intentions. At the same time, the US is not ready to advance democratization because this might empower Islamist groups. That's why, for example, Washington sided with the Algerian government in 1991, when elections were "canceled" because of the possibility of an Islamist victory.

Developing democracy would be more effective by teaching people in the region real democratic notions. Yet has anyone heard about recent US support for education in the Middle East? The establishment of American universities in Cairo and Beirut belong to a different, earlier, paradigm of US foreign policy. Meanwhile, the US has done nothing about the millions of children with no access to education, or who depend on Muslim madrassas for part of their daily nutritional needs.

Nobody in Washington today talks about constitutional and judicial reforms in the Middle East, or resort to civil society institutions. Yet gradual democratization is impossible without such reform. Nor has America displayed a clear vision of which kind of democracy it would like to see in the region. Would it be direct democracy, "guided democracy," liberal democracy, "religious democracy," or something else?

At the end of the day, the US wants to sell one idea to the American public, namely that Israel is the only democratic state in the Middle East, which justifies American favoritism toward it. This is an essential part of the neo-conservative strategy, which has sought to reshape the region in line with Israel's perceived ideological and material needs.

McGreevy and Gadhafi make announcements

BY JANE NOVAK

Governor Jim McGreevy is the first US Governor to back Howard Dean's candidacy for president of the United States. With New Jersey's primary one of the nation's last, an early endorsement of the front runner enhances the impact of the New Jersey Democratic machine on the national selection process, which will begin in Iowa and New Hampshire within weeks.

The endorsement was surprising in that Governor McGreevy is a centrist who supported the Iraq liberation. Dr. Dean has made his name as a left-leaning anti-war candidate. Connecticut Senator Joe Lieberman, who has been unwavering in his vision of the strategic importance of the war in Iraq, would have seemed a more compatible choice.

McGreevy's team accepts the divergence of views. A McGreevy advisor told the Star Ledger anonymously: "The endorsement is not built around foreign

affairs. It's built around who we think can lead the party to victory." McGreevy, it seems, is pragmatically assigning political effectiveness a higher priority than a congruity of views on national security.

9/11 may have faded for the world into a major event in international history. The event itself remains an immediate and tangible experience for New Jersey voters. Nearly a third of the victims were from the Garden State. New York and New Jersey share sports teams, the Statue of Liberty, and millions of people: now also trauma, death, and orphans. As long as New York is the terrorists' bulls-eye, New Jersey remains on the front line. The anthrax discovered in New Jersey so immediately after 9/11 endowed residents with an appreciation of the lethal potential of the nexus of terrorism and WMD. National security through effective foreign policy may be an especially important requirement in selection of a President for many New Jersey voters in 2004.

Dr. Dean has recently stated that he

would act internationally only with the "permission" of the United Nations. He has continuously and strongly denounced the invasion of Iraq. He wants the boys home. Dr. Dean stated that "the capture of Saddam has not made America safer."

In the "war of ideas" that Rumsfeld ruminates over, the Iraqi reconstruction has concretely reintroduced the idea of self-determination in the Middle East. The capture of Saddam has questioned the immutability and foundation of governments in the region. It has instigated a great discussion and examination of the relationship between the people and their institutions.

The capture of Saddam has indicated the fallacy of terrorism, where the leader encouraging violence against Americans and civilians is immediately ready to negotiate with Americans, where the one distributing the reward checks to the families of suicide bombers values life above loyalty, where the one most callous about the blood of other sons is disturbed by a tooth ache.

Nine months of secret negotiations, much more than the capture of Saddam, has prompted Moammar Gadhafi of Libya to benefit humanity by deciding to unilaterally dismantle Libya's secret nuclear and biological capacity for production of weapons of mass destruction. Libya will assist international inspectors verifying and overseeing the disarmament. As in South Africa, a truly voluntary WMD disarmament process is the orderly taking of an inventory that leads to an orderly destruction requiring a limited number of inspectors.

President Bush made this announcement only hours after McGreevy's: "Opposing proliferation is one of the highest targets of the war on terror." George Bush's stand against terrorism and weapons of mass destruction has reaped some security for the United States. Jim McGreevy, acting with traditional political expediency by endorsing Howard Dean, may not have recognized that for some New Jersey voters "the new normal" may embody nothing traditional or expedient.

The Arab Culture Capital 2004

Sana'a: Glory of the past and future

By IRENA KNEHTL
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FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Sana'a, the capital of the Republic of Yemen, is an oasis amidst the rugged Sarat Mountains along the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula. For centuries the isolated home of Yemeni imams, this ancient city has been reborn. It reinvented itself to respond to developments of modern Republic of Yemen. It has grown into modern metropolis, and is on its way to become an "Southern Arabian Business Meeting Point".

On its busy avenues and quiet shaded lanes Sana'a buys and sells, boils and plays, celebrates life and mourns its passing. As syntheses of dreams it is a bustling oasis in the flow of life events. Sana'a lies sprawled at the foot of Jebel Nugum which may have been a dominant influence on the original choice of the site of the settlement. The capital's perimeter is continually expanding outward. Sana'a is developing expanding city which retains its unique and intriguing blend of old and new.

Nestled on a fertile plateau at an altitude of 2,400 m the city has a perfect climate – long summers of warm, sunny days and cool, clear evenings, and mild winters with brisk nights. Over many generations the farmers of Sana'a have carefully terraced the surface of the plain for cultivation wherever terrain and soils permit. All around Sana'a as far as the eye could see, were ranges of hills ornamented with countless houses in brick and stone. The humidity is very low and, at certain times of the year, a layer of dust hazes the horizon and the wind send twisting swirls of dust across the plain.

Plain is brown, the mountains blue and foothills are tawny and purple. Plain and hills are capable of a hundred shades that with and changing light slip over the face of the land. The light here is a living being, always austere, always grand, never sentimental. The light and the space, and the color that sweep in ways of brown color of the earth, reflecting the color of age. Despite little rainfalls, the fields surrounding Sana'a are green with apricot trees, almond and walnut groves.

It is spring and the near bye valleys are full of Apricot blossoms.

The rains were carrying now cloudy night skies, and other gifts the wind had given it. Like fine rain from a thick cloud. In a while the rains slowed to a drizzle and then stopped. The breeze shock water from the trees in the near bye Wadi Dahr valley, and at Hadda village for a while it rained only under trees.

The oldest living city in Yemen, Sana'a has existed since at least 540 AD. In the years before Islam, it was already the home of kings, who dwelt in the towering Ghamdan Palace. Caravans of spices, incense and balsam journeyed northward from its samsarrah, returning to fill the bustling markets with silk, indigo, brass and silver.

An account from eighteenth century describes

"pillared temples and sumptuous palaces where court from silk dais and domed pavilions, and where gushing fountains watered fruit and flower gardens of every variety".

Luring travelers across the forbidding mountains and unrelenting deserts of Yemen, the remote, mystical city of Sanaa, was eulogized the "Pearl of Arabia".

Yet in sharp contrast to modernization, the city of Sanaa retains an un-spoiled charm, created by a unique architectural design and a way of life. Its inhabitants dwell in atmosphere of mosques, minarets, palaces, ancient walls and bazaars side by side with most recent technological achievements.

Changes in Sana'ani patterns of living have occurred in the last two decades, resulting from expatriates coming into the city and from exposure of men and women, both through travel and television and education, to life in other countries. The older generation admits that customs and mores, especially those involving the role for women, are now changing so rapidly that the lives of their sons and daughters will scarcely resemble their own.

For many centuries, the city of Sana'a was within a walled area which now lies in the eastern sector of the modern capital. Today the city has by far outgrown these walls but, the pulse of social and commercial activity still throbs vibrantly in the Old Town. The tide of inhabitants



Old city of Sana'a. Gate of Al-Yemen.

is swelled by a constant flow of tribesmen from outlying villages, shoppers from the western sector of the city, and tourist both local and foreign. They come to shop, exchange news and information, or simply to experience the beat of Sana'ani life.

It is here, in the labyrinth of markets, houses, samsarrah and mosques, threaded by a network of narrow lanes and open squares, that the contrasts of different eras are most dramatic. The ancient city succumbs to the impudent, haphazard intrusion, and western goods, and the visitor is baffled and amused by and hot-potch of new and old and "the latest".

The approach to the Old Town along Zubairi Street, is one of the most attractive sights in Sana'a. The mud brick walls, built to keep tribal marauder from a medieval trading town, now stretches around a dense, bustling metropolitan quarter. Above it rises an enchanting medley of brown, multi-stored-stored stored building, the plaster tracery on their facades giving them an appearance of fantasy "gingerbread" houses. Crowded together over centuries of reconstruction and expansion, their walls and rooftops rise in amiable irregularity to form meandering staircases in the sky. The white-trimmed, mud brick houses characterize Sana'ani architecture. Sanaa is a place of houses and people not of spaces. Yemen is famous for its architecture, and the houses of Sanaa are imposing monuments to the cities unique expression of traditional Yemeni design, and life style which endured over centuries.

Along the western side of the Old Town is the sailah, the riverbed for seasonal rainfall that flows from the mountains southeast of the city. The sailah has been turned into thoroughfare road, but several times in the past its banks have overflowed, flooding the Old Town.

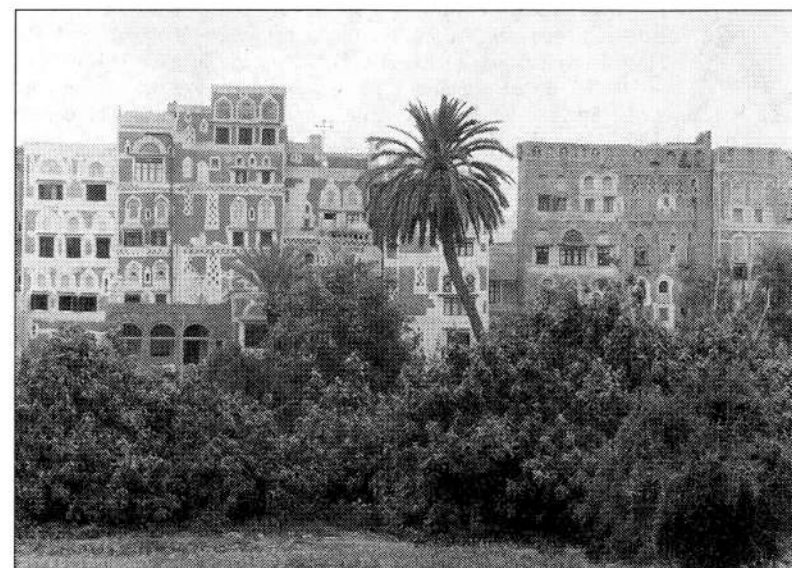
At the end of Zubairi Street is Bab Al-Yemen, the only remaining gate of the original five into the Old Town. A two way-stream of pedestrians, automobiles, motorbikes and donkey carts pour through the wide stone arch, and its two large wooden doors, closed and barred at sunset each evening during the reign of the imams, are now open days and night.

The smell of it, the feel of it:

The Old Town is as much abuzz now as it was a quarter century ago. It smells of spices and orange blossoms, roasting coffee, lamb kebabs, and fragrances of balm and herb spices which are an integral part of Yemeni cuisine, takes on every form, color and tastes. Never before I set foot in a city, never observed the swarming activity of the alley ways, never felt that powerful breath on my face, like the wind from the sea heavy with cries and smells.

But the Old City rises early each morning with more bustle, more color, more voice. The suq, or market, begins just inside Bab Al-Yemen, where traveling salesman auctions coats and jackets and boys push wheelbarrows piled high with striped futahs and brass incense burners. Fruit and vegetables are also sold here. Breads, onions, potatoes, tomatoes and water melons. Jasmin and incense. Raisins with the color of henna. Papayas and mangos from the Tihama. Melons from Sadah, Oranges from Marib. Rose water in bottles. Grapes and dates. Almonds and nuts. Along with candy, jewelry, scissors and flash lights, woven baskets.

The streets soon fork and narrow into Suq-al-Milh, where shops selling similar items are clustered together in quarters. The local residents admire colorful displays of Persian carpets, mafraj mattress-



es, fabrics from the Tihama with pattern of the sun, Metal suitcase from India. Spice and grain merchants dip wheat, sorghum and lentils form woolen sacks, coffee beans and husks from leather bags, and garlic bulbs, chilies, and peppercorn from basket trays.

From its green geometric terraces and valleys

Customers buy quantities of cumin, ginger, cardamom, or plastic bags of raisins, fresh dates and almonds. Rock salt from the coastal area of Salif or the mines near Marib is sold in two-kilo sacks made of plaited palm leaves. From their booths lined with old apothecary cabinets vendors casually produce amber – colored myrrh and brown frankincense, the famous resins of Arabia Felix, crystals of white musk and tinny vials of thick, brown ambergris, which lend their distinctive odors to countless perfumes.

Interspersed among the single-level stalls and workshops of the market areas are several multi-stored samsarrah, or caravansaries. Most of these samsarrah are very old, one dates from the fourteenth century, and are remnants of the days when caravans of myrrh, frankincense, and spices passed through Sanaa on their way to the Mediterranean. Passing through the swarming alleys, followed by imposing caravans, loaded with all sorts of merchandise. In Sanaa the good were weighed and inspected and the tax paid. Merchandise destined for the City was also lodged in the samsarrah.

It was here that Heavens poured countless riches. The wayfarers would for weeks and months proceeding in the same direction to Sana'a. Then all lands seemed far away even the land one

comes from or the land one is crossing.

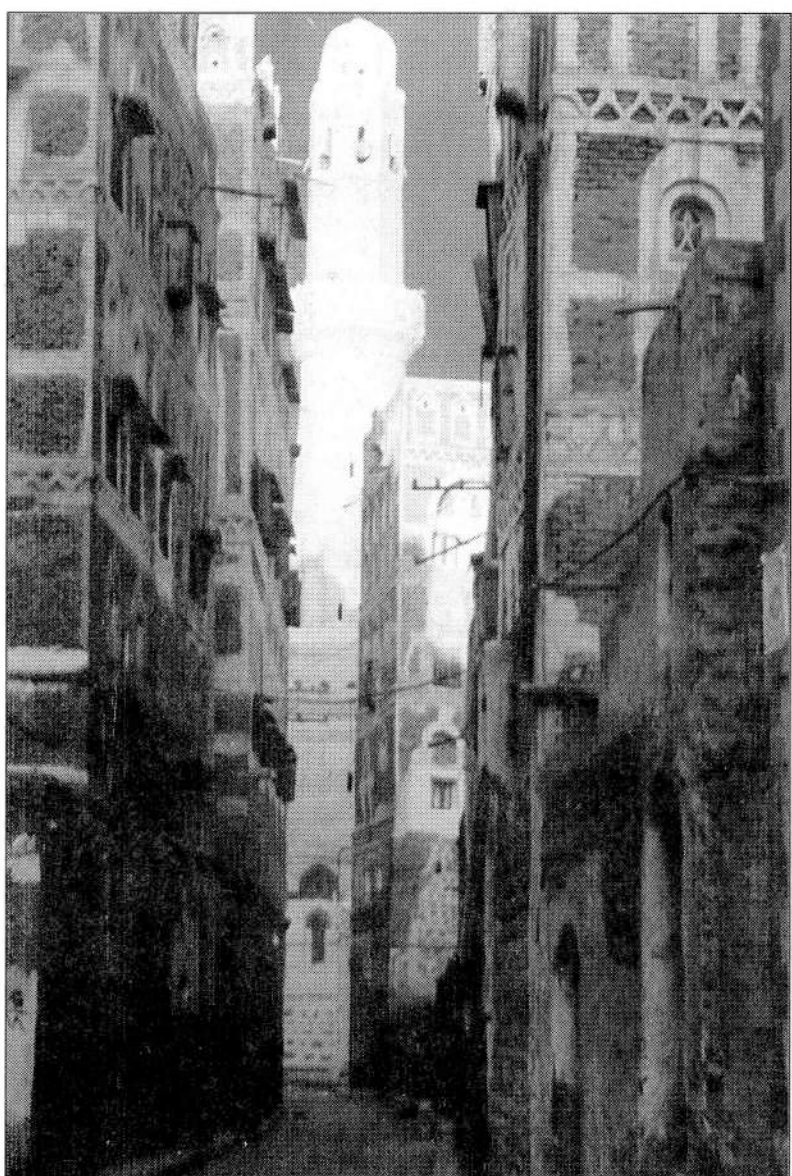
Today caravans come no more.

Samsarrah have been turned into art and craft centers. But smells like music hold memories. To think thoughts and not voice them. Long after the houses and palaces and ourselves have disappeared. A faint smell of incense floated all around.

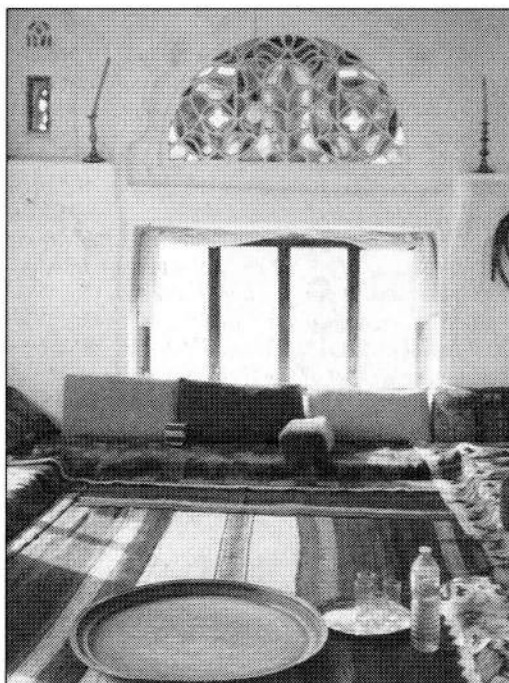
Away from the market of shops and samsarrah, overlooking wider lanes and open squares, are brown mud-brick tower houses of the Old Town. Scattered among the streets and houses, an integral part of life in the Old Town are over forty mosques, the place of prayer, meeting, and mediation. Many of the mosques in the Old Town are simple, walled structures with an open courtyard. Around these are large prayer galleries with flat roofs. The most impressive mosque in the Old Town is al-Jami al-Kbir, the Grand mosque. Its wooden ceilings are carved with floral patterns and inscribed with Koranic verses. Here the perfume vendors in front of the Grand Mosque dispenses a hundred scents some as ancient as the trade routes from the East, others as modern as yesterday Paris fashion.

The night now hid his face and murmur of a number of prayers. Always below street level, are small green oases in a city devoid of any free-growing shrubs and flowers. In the Old Town are at least fifteen Turkish bath houses, their low roofs topped by numerous small domes.

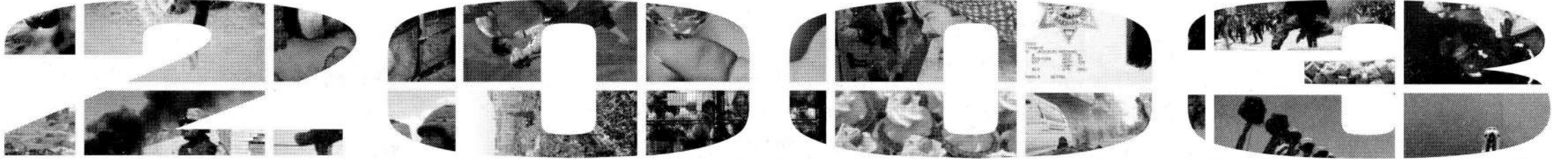
There is a lasting fascinations for all those who come to know Sana'a, a city fast integrating into twenty first century concepts, and customs with a rich and ancient heritage.



Narrow alleis of the old city



Typical sitting room in one of the old several-storied building. Simplicity of furniture is the common feature

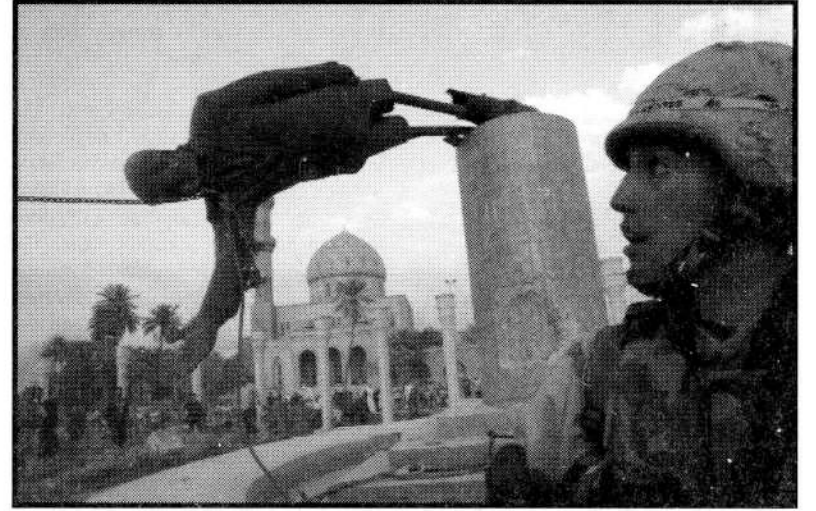


COMPILED BY MOHAMED KHIDR

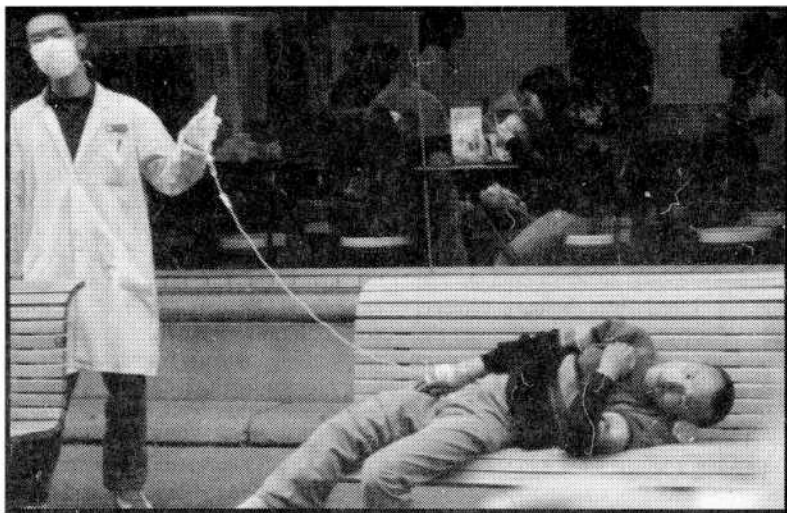
The year 2003 is now over, with its good and bad moments, with its miseries and joy. To mark the end of this fabulous year, we have spent some time collecting and refining photos that will be helpful in providing our readers with an overall view of the main events of year 2003 in pictures. As the say, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Hence, here we present a combination of pictures representing the political, social, cultural, and sport events that formed year 2003. We certainly believe that those pictures speak for themselves, and will serve as a clear indication about how eventful year 2003 was.



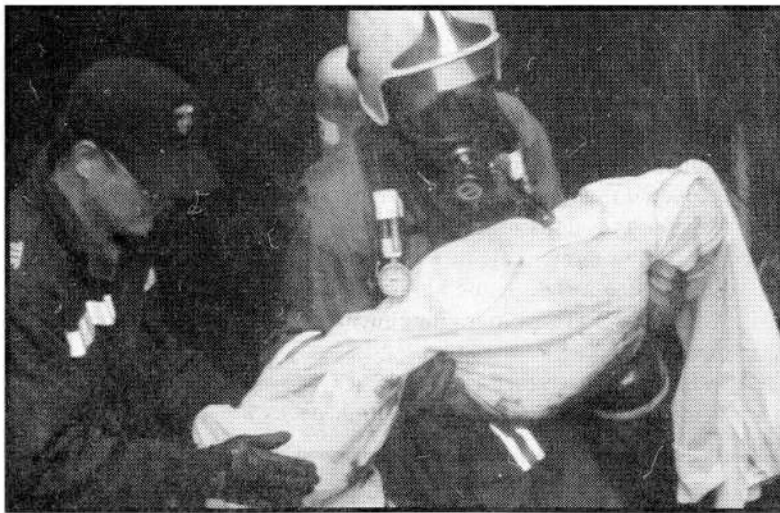
An explosion rocks Baghdad during air strikes March 21, 2003. U.S.-led forces unleashed a devastating blitz on Baghdad, triggering giant fireballs and deafening explosions and sending huge mushroom clouds above the city centre. Reuters



A U.S. soldier watches as a statue of Iraq's President Saddam Hussein falls in central Baghdad April 9, 2003. REUTERS



Chinese paramedics tend to a man suspected of suffering from Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) after he collapsed in public with its symptoms in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province, April 29, 2003. REUTERS



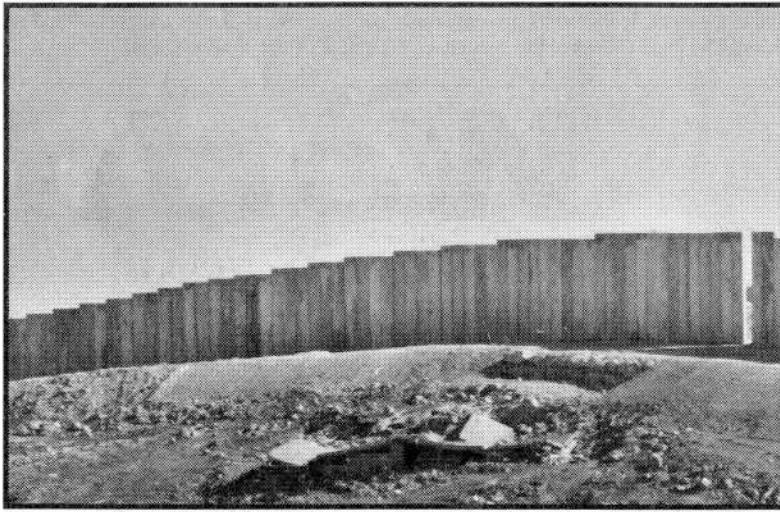
South Korean rescue team carry the body of a victim at a subway station in Taegu, about 320 km (200 miles) southeast of Seoul February 18, 2003. REUTERS



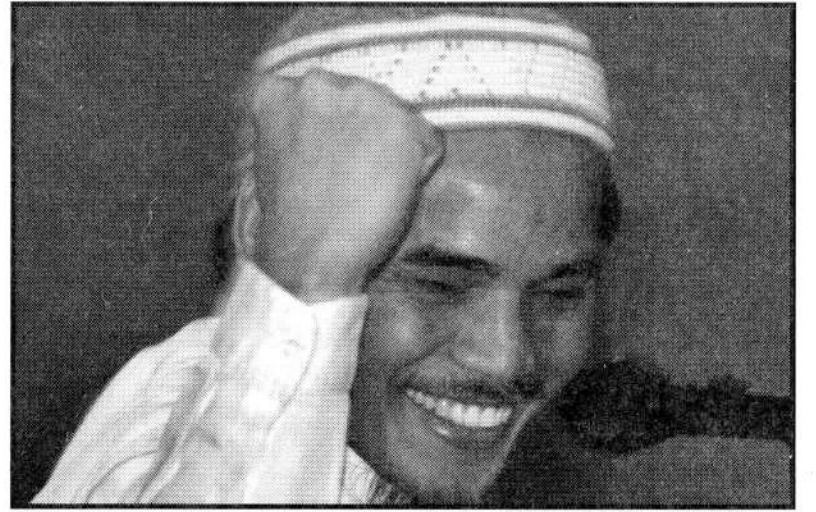
A woman passes the scene of Sunday's explosion at al-Muhaya expatriate housing compound in the WadiLaban suburb west of Riyadh in Saudi Arabia November 11, 2003. REUTERS



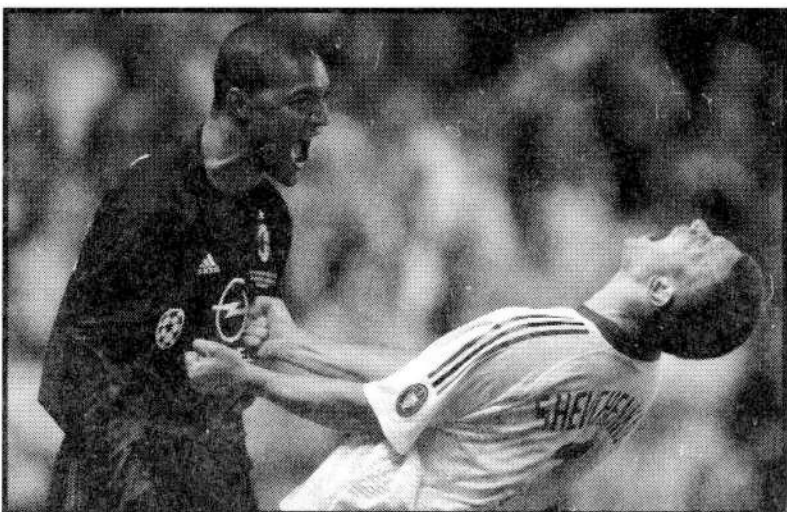
A row of U.S. Army helmets are perched on M-16 rifles during a memorial at Al Asad air base November 6, 2003 for the 15 victims of a Chinook helicopter which was shot down by insurgents on the weekend. REUTERS



A general view of the newly-built concrete wall on the outskirts of east Jerusalem which will separate the West Bank from Jerusalem December 8, 2003. REUTERS



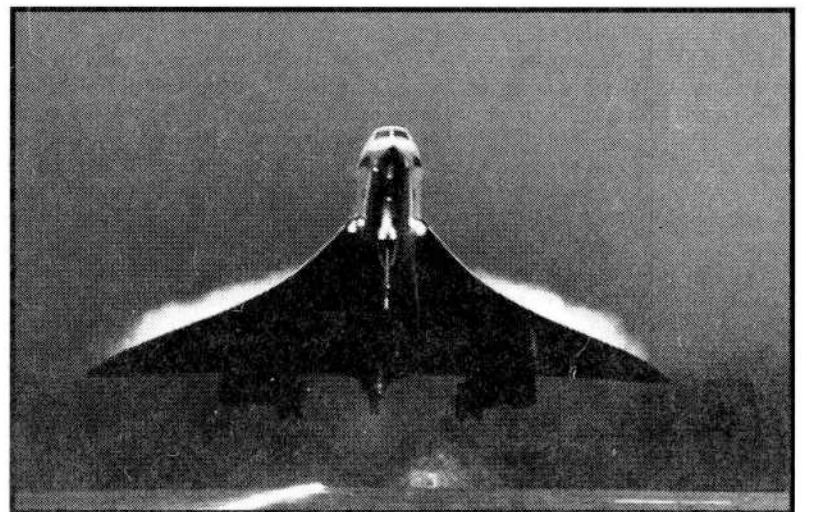
Indonesian Muslim militant Amrozi reacts in a Denpasar courtroom August 7, 2003 after receiving the death penalty for his role in the last October's Bali bombings that killed more than 200 people, mostly foreigners. REUTERS



AC Milan's Ukrainian stiker Andriy Shevchenko (R) celebrates with Brazilian goalkeeper Dida (L) after scoring the winning goal against Juventus in a penalty shoot out in the Champions League final in Manchester May 28, 2003. REUTERS



Injured people wait for medical help on the street in front of Gateway of India monument after a powerful bomb exploded in Bombay, August 25, 2003. Two bombs planted inside taxis exploded in India's financial hub Bombay, killing at least 46 people and injuring more than 137. REUTERS



The final Concorde, Flight 216, takes off from London's Heathrow Airport, en route to its birthplace Filton in western England, November 26, 2003. REUTERS

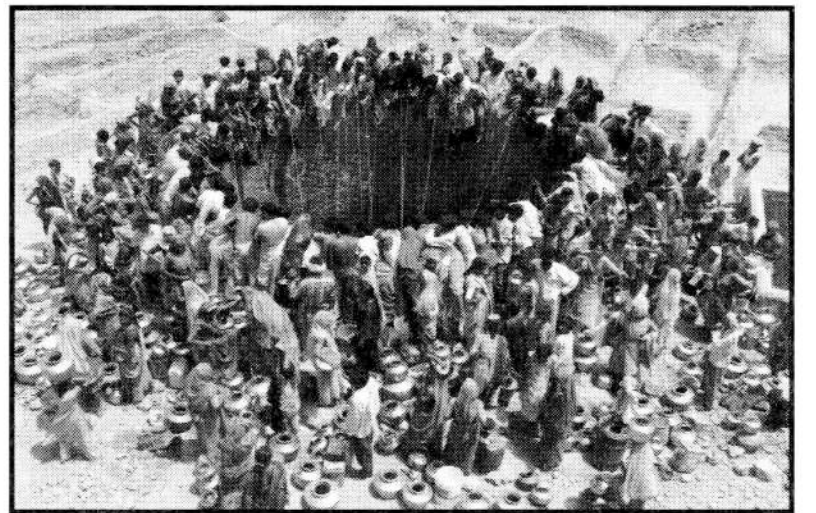


An Iranian man mourns the death of his mother at a graveyard in Bam, southeastern Iran, December 27, 2003. International rescue workers hacked desperately through flattened debris for survivors and cemeteries overflowed in Iran's ancient Silk Road city of Bam after an earthquake that killed more than 20,000 people. REUTERS

Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Dept.

11/20/2003
Photo image of:
NAME: JACKSON, MICHAEL SEX: M
RAC: B AGE: 45
DOB: 8/29/1958 WGT: 120
HGT: 511 EYE: BRO
BLD: BLK
HAIR: BLK
MKS: BRO
BOOKING #: 621785

Pop star Michael Jackson is pictured in this Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department booking mug in Santa Barbara, California, November 20, 2003. REUTERS



People gather to get water from a huge well in the village of Natwarghad in the western Indian state of Gujarat on June 1, 2003. REUTERS

Local Press

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr

Annas weekly,
22 Dec. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Tempestuous debate, "Saif Bin Thiyazan" TV serial stand trial
- Yemenis enter German cinema from the "terror" gate
- YJS, Nomination opened, General conference in February

Columnist Shakir Ahmed Khalid says in his article the arrest of Ali Mohammed Hamdi al-Ahdal, the official sources describe as the most dangerous element of al-Qaeda, came to open opportunity for official media to talk about the big successes by the Yemeni government in fighting terror. This talk is coinciding these days with a relevant subject, i.e. the dialogue with detainees suspected of being affiliate of al-Qaeda. Official sources say the way Yemen has followed with those deceived persons is considered another step towards enhancement of Yemen's successes in issues related to terrorism.

Nevertheless, opposition sources are skeptical of the role the government is playing in this regard, whether concerning fighting of terror or the question of holding dialogue with those detained on such a charge. Sources say that non-transparency and withholding information from opposition by the authority would not provide opportunity for it in order to spell out an objective assessment of these issues. The ruling party representatives give quite a different evaluation, saying the role Yemen has played in this regard is a humanitarian one because Yemenis are characterised by forgiveness and tolerance and dialogue. They accuse the opposition as always looking at things through dark glasses and that it has no clear perception or ideas and suggestions to offer for tackling such issues.

Al-Mithaq weekly, organ of the GPC ruling party
22 Dec. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Attending the symposium on reform of the Arab League, Dr al-Asbahi says the Yemeni delegation represented the major parties, expressing seriousness of the dialogue and its active participation
- HR minister al-Sousswa: We created partnership relationship with civil society organisations, working for modernizing mechanism of the ministry work
- Governors: Formation of ministerial committee to enhance decentralization, a government established credibility and aspirations for developing local authority

Columnist Dr Abdulaziz al-Maqaleh wrote in his article wondering if it is believable after all those American farcical stands the talk continues about hawks and doves running the White House. Maybe the ways of some hawks of the American administration are different but they in the final resultant are not outside the hard line that all members of the present administration have chosen to adopt to be an approach in dealing with the Arabs as terrorist people whose terrorism is manifested in their attempts of self-defence and refusing surrender to the will of the White House that considers Israel the friendly and ally state. No one can deny that some differences might emerge inside the American administration or out side it but all of them are about self interests on which of the parties to win the bigger share of booties. They are therefore differences not in favour of the Arabs and would not change any of the hard-line and declared stands against the Arabs.

Al-Wahdawi weekly, organ of the Nasserite Unionist organisation, 23 Dec. 2003.

Main headlines:

- Al-Mikhlaflafi denies that Yemeni opposition received invitation for dialogue with the president
- American occupying forces release Yemeni they arrested last week
- Service and education directors in Dhahie stand before court
- Gunmen object distribution of jobs by the civil service in Sana'a
- Opposition calls on the government to reconsider the law of demonstrations
- Local council member killed others wounded in Ibb
- Judiciary issues fine sentence of

YR220 thousand against Social Affairs for the Deaf society in Taiz
 • Indian police arrests Yemeni students in Bombay

Columnist Hamdi al-Bukari says the journalists syndicate council deals with journalists in sarcasm and depreciation and sometimes in unjustifiable haughtiness concerning the question of the draft law and other questions for which the council does not pay any consideration. In a plenary meeting of journalists they agreed to reject the draft law and the demand to withdraw its version for good from the government. The syndicate council then promised to send a letter to the government and the chairman of the journalists syndicate read out the letter before the gathering of journalists. Yesterday came a statement by the prime minister denying the government's receipt of a letter in that regard from the journalists syndicate. The chairman of the journalists syndicate did not confirm or deny the report when the Wahdawi newspaper asked him about it. The conclusion is that we are before a strange combination of a syndicate council but our wonder would disappear when we really know that the syndicate council is a government affiliate and its decisions are dictated from behind the scenes.

Al-Wahda weekly,
24 Dec.2003.

Main headlines:

- Elections commission admits of legal shortcoming, revealed in local councils elections
- Legal Affairs Minister: amending law contradicting local councils law in two years
- New law for the central apparatus for audition and accountancy
- Education Minister: Professional controls for instruction
- Growth of international navigational activity in the Free Zone
- Cleaning campaign of Aden Beaches
- Campaign for elimination of polio

The writer Khalid Hussein Qirman says in his article the High Commission for Human Rights has recently showed its willingness to send a representative to Yemen to hold talks with the officials of democracy and human rights to get acquainted with volume and kind of needs that can be offered that would contribute to raise the level of awareness related to human rights respect and protection of freedoms. This requires from the concerned parties to hasten in preparing a report defining those requirements and material cost to be offered representatives of the commission.

Here I want to focus on Yemen's needs in the media aspect that must be provided for speeding up rates of this strategic achievement in our country and the way how to form a large-scale public opinion and mustering it behind policies aimed at deepening democracy concepts and respect for human rights. I proposed on the organisations concerned with human rights to put into their account that of the priorities of our country's needs for enhancement of democracy is to establish an independent educational TV channel for fighting illiteracy spread in our country by 60% especially that our population would in 2004 reach 22 million people. Democratic practice in our country would not take roots but under an educated society. And since we are tackling the subject of information and its active role in developing and crystallization of masses awareness. We are in need to press towards issuing laws concerning investment in media in general and have them approved by the parliament to come out with legislation allowing all people to entertain the freedom of opinion through various non-governmental media channels within controls of the law and to cancel the ministry information in future.

Attariq weekly,
23 Dec. 2003.

Min headlines:

- Journalists demand sticking to the date of holding their conference on February 21
 - 3 died and tens infected by malaria in Al-Mallah district
 - Mediation to solve dispute between al-Fadhli and al-Awlaqi failed
- Columnist Abdulkareem Abdulla al-Saqaf wrote an article on judiciary reform saying that judiciary has all tasks and authorities that it should undertake

Main headlines:

- Explosives in a trashcan in Aden
- One thousand Jews demand their properties in Yemen
- An Islah leader shot dead in Ibb
- Kuwaiti MPs continue offending Yemen, government maintains silence
- Held at extraordinary circumstances, Yemen and Iraq top the GCC summit agenda
- No political prisoners in Yemen, democracy a national option
- China's deputy trade minister: Keen on developing economic cooperation with Yemen
- PM Bajammal: Journalists Syndicate didn't ask law withdrawal
- Iraqi resistance entrusts al-Douri to lead after the president
- Extremist behind attempted assassination of some tourists
- Skyrocketing prices of bread and food stuffs
- 80% of Yemenis poor
- Addis Ababa summit to witness the birth of "Sana'a Grouping"
- Government endorses the program of "Sana'a Capital of Arab Culture"
- Parliamentary committee stresses on budget role in stability and development
- Industry and Trade Minister denies imposing a new price dose
- Expected meeting to gather the president and opposition
- New amendments on elections law
- Adoption of new scale of wages and salaries related to reforms
- GPC welcomes dialogue among political action factions
- American ambassador inaugurates the new fingerprinting devise
- Indian police arrests 45 Yemenis
- Yemen and GCC, crisis of the poor accession

and it is extremely necessary for it to be away from any failures and weakness. Its prestige should be safeguarded and must entertain trust of individuals and bodies inside and outside. There is a wide gap between what situation the judiciary must be in and its present situation. The main causes of the present sit-

uation of judiciary lie in the general circumstances and conditions around it politically, security and administratively. It lacks the political stability and there are the security failures as well as the deteriorating living conditions. Feature of the judiciary crisis are part of and an image of the general crisis.

The beginning of conducting a general reform of the ruling system from its deteriorated situations is the main basis for not only reforming the judiciary but rather the inlet for reformation of the general conditions surrounding it and influencing it negatively and positively. Beginning for realization of a comprehensive reform is the creation of comprehensive development and receiving investments characterised by security and safety.

RAY weekly, organ of Sons of Yemen League party,
23 Dec.2003.

Main headlines:

- Oxfam representative: The Yemeni government has to bear its responsibility
- Half million orphans, diseases, unemployment, life without parents

Columnist Nabil al-Aseedi says in an article it is expected that a number of talented expatriate Yemenis would take part in activities of Sana'a capital of Arab culture 2004 in various areas of art and creativity. Sources at the ministry of expatriates confirmed that the ministry began in coordination with the ministry culture and tourism to enable the Yemeni expatriates to present their cultural and arts works as participation in activities of Sana'a capital of Arab culture. The ministry is currently holding contacts with Yemeni expatriates all over the world to ensure their participation in these activities. On the other hand the Yemeni authority for tourist development has inaugurated on the first of December a tourist survey in the mountain range in the governorate of Taiz aimed at determining and registering the tourist sites in those areas. It is also expected that during the coming period there would be some studies and designs of a number of sites specified for investment in various parts of Yemen and on shores of the Red Sea.

26 September weekly, organ of Yemen Armed forces, 25 Dec.2003.

Main headlines:

- "Sana'a Grouping" summit convenes in Addis Ababa Monday
- Red Sea security and the Horn of Africa, fighting terror top the summit's agenda
- Two Britons leave Aden after ending sentences
- Investigation committee into incidents of Sana'a incidents
- Law regulating private sector security companies work
- Al-Mouayad and companion trial postponed till February 4, 2004

Columnist Faisal Jalooli writes saying after quarter of a century of its launch the "Arab Rejection Front" has disappeared, last week after president Saddam Hussein was arrested colonel Muamar Gaddafi announced abandonment of his projects of weapons of mass destruction on condition his country joins again the international relations regulated and run by the United States of America. It is known that the Arab Rejection Front emerged in the late of the seventies of last century following the Egyptian-Israeli reconciliation under American auspices. The Front was dependent on the Soviet Union policy and the Islamic republic at the regional level. Despite non-conformity of the front's parties and not working under its banner to the end, they all have been unanimous on refusing reconciliation with Israel and each party has pursued a policy hostile to the United States of America regularly before the end of the Cold War and intermittent after it. The front's parties destinies were different after the end of the cold war. Some of them disappeared, the other some joined the international relations in suitable time and the other some was besieged and subjected to long-term punishment.

World Press

Major news items in leading international newspapers Provided by Xinhua

Egypt

Al Ahram
Egypt has officially banned imports of US beef and beef-related products after the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) revealed the discovery of the first mad cow disease in the country, the Egyptian General Authority for Veterinarian Service said on Friday.

Al Akhbar
Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak receives a message from his Kazakh counterpart Nursultan Nazarbayev on means to boost bilateral relations in all domains.
The message also includes an invitation to Mubarak to visit Kazakhstan to take part in the official inauguration of Nur Mubarak University.

Britain

The Financial Times
The number of borrowers being taken to court for failing to repay loans has risen for the first time in three years in Britain, in a sign that a significant minority of consumers cannot cope with debt.

The Independent
Officials investigating America's first documented case of BSE said on Friday that they had quarantined a second herd of cattle as they sought to contain the health scare.

Pakistan

Dawn
The United States on Friday expressed dismay over the abortive assassination attempt on Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, and warned that terrorists posing as beggars or vendors may now target Americans.

The News
The body of one of the suicide attackers involved in the abortive

Al Gomhuria
Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz on Friday presided over a meeting of high-ranking officials for devising how to react to the guerrilla operation in Tel Aviv on Thursday and avoiding fresh operations by Palestinians inside Israel during the new year festivals.

Egyptian Mail
Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Ebeid will make a keynote statement on Sunday to outline the government's policies and programs for the coming stage.
In his speech, Ebeid will talk about the government's economic development programs, which have been designed to modernize the society and services, improve economic performance and increase exports.

The Times
British rescue experts are due in Iran on Saturday to help the search for survivors buried alive by the devastating earth-quake that is feared to have killed up to 15,000 people.

The Daily Telegraph
A traffic policeman was shot dead and another seriously wounded on Friday by the driver of a stolen car they had approached at a road junction.

assassination attempt on President Pervez Musharraf was identified, Interior Minister Makhdoom Faisal Saleh Hayat told the Senate Friday.

The Nation
President Musharraf is likely to shift to Islamabad following the second abortive attempt on his life near his army residence in Rawalpindi, Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmad said Friday.

India

The Statesman:
India's inflation rate sustained its upward movement for the fifth consecutive week to a 28-week high of 5.57 percent for the week ending on Dec. 13.

The Tribune:
A woman was killed and 10 others were wounded in a blast near a bank at Singpora Pattan in India-controlled

Kashmir Friday. Unidentified militants hurled a hand grenade towards security forces near a local branch of Jammu and Kashmir Bank.

Indian Express:
Intense cold wave continued to sweep North India Friday, claiming four lives in Meerut and one in Kanpur, taking the nationwide death toll to 38.

Nigeria

This Day
With the shortages that surfaced again early this week, the Nigerian federal government has mobilized oil trading companies for emergency fuel imports and rallied some marketers to rush in bail-out stocks.

Weekend Vanguard
Nigeria spent whopping 1.8 billion US dollars in debt servicing in the 2003 fiscal year, Mansur Mukhtar, director-general of Nigeria's Debt Management

Office, said Friday, adding that the nation's current external debt profile now stands at 30.9 billion dollars.

Saturday Punch
Plateau State Governor Joshua Dariye has said that the northern governors elected on the platform of the ruling People's Democratic Party would play a decisive role in picking the successor to President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2007.

Kenya

East African Standard
Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki has warned individuals who looted during the former regime that they will not be spared, stressing that the government will win the war against corruption.

Kenya Times
About 200 families were on Friday

counting losses following a Christmas night fire which razed down over 300 houses in Kenya's capital Nairobi.

The People
Kenya Airways increased its operating capacity by 12 percent in the month of November, the airline has announced.

Japan

Asahi, Yomiuri, Mainichi, Nihon Keizai:
Around 5,000 to 6,000 people were killed in a powerful earthquake on Friday in southeast Iran.

Asahi, Yomiuri, Mainichi, Nihon Keizai:
The National Police Agency announced Friday a draft plan to revise the Road Traffic Law to toughen penalties on cell phone use while driving and on illegal

parking. Those who talk on the phones while driving will be fined up to 50,000 yen (467 US dollars).

Nihon Keizai
The Ministry of Finance said Friday it has agreed with the Bank of Japan on a scheme that would allow the ministry to secure up to 10 trillion yen (93 billion dollars) in funds for foreign exchange interventions by selling US bonds to the central bank on repurchase agreements.

Improve Your English



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I. What to Say

Situations and expressions (59):
Expressing condolence and comfort (II)

Expressing condolence is an act of empathising. It is not merely a good-will gesture. It is much more than that. It is, in fact, part of a humanitarian obligation on our part to lend an emotional anchorage to the one who has suffered an enigmatic and irreparable loss of the dear departed. As such, our words of condolence must reflect our genuine fellow-feeling, a sense of indulgent identification with the bereaved and a sincere projection of our grief at this crucial moment.

- May the memories you cherish bring you strength and comfort in this time of sorrow. Deepest sympathy.
- Thinking of you with compassion. There's a great sadness in parting with someone who's very dear and so close to your heart. May you find comfort in knowing that others sympathise with you and deeply care. May all the warm thoughts that are coming your way console you and help you see through. And may it bring comfort to know there are others who care very much about you.
- I'm really very sorry from the depth of my heart and I mean it.
- Deepest sympathy. There are times when every one has to traverse the path of sorrow... In this hour we're with you, with heart-felt wishes, for a hope-filled TOMORROW.
- An expression of sincere sympathy. memories of the dear departed still cast their gentle glow, to grace our days and light our paths wherever we may go. May your cherished memories of the one, who meant so much to you help you through the days ahead and bring you comfort, too.
- With sympathy and warm thoughts. Memories of one so dear will remain with you throughout the years, providing comfort in your sorrow as you face each new tomorrow.
- May tender thoughts of your loved one live forever within your heart and blossom into the most beautiful of memories. You're in our thoughts.
- God knows your sorrow. And He will always be with you in days ahead. So place your trust in Him, for faith will be your guiding light that Time can never dim, and through His mercy, you'll find that He will lead the way to His own.
- For as long as we remember, for as long as we still care, we'll never really part with those whose love we always shared. So may the cherished memories of the loved one you held dear bring comfort to each one of you and keep your loved one near. Our sincerest sympathies to you and your family.
- A few words I'm sending you in all sincerity to assure you my deep and heartfelt sympathy. When sorrow comes to those we love, we know not what to say. Words are inadequate for our feelings to convey. May God in His tender mercy, lighten the burden of your sorrow and give you comfort, to face with fortitude each new tomorrow.

II. How To Say It Correctly

Correct errors, if any, in the following sentences

1. If he will apologize, he will be excused.
2. I shall be happy, if you will tell me the truth.
3. Much of your success and prosperity in life depend on your sincere efforts.
4. Many a men have fallen a victim to temptation.
5. I who is a teacher lead a simple life.

Suggested answers to last week's questions

1. The question of human cloning is still hanging in fire.

2. You should keep yourself **abreast** of the happenings around you.
3. Learning **by rote** is not real learning.
4. Can you **lay aside** your work for some time.
5. He talks **as if** he were my boss.

III Increase Your Word Power.

A. How to express it in one word

1. That which cannot be conquered.
2. That which cannot be wounded.
3. That which cannot be believed.
4. That which can be easily set on fire.
5. That which cannot be avoided.
6. That which cannot be expressed in words.

Suggested answers to last week's questions

1. That which cannot be reconciled: **irreconcilable** (adj.)
2. That which cannot be recovered: **irrecoverable** (adj.)
3. That which cannot be seen: **invisible** (adj.)
4. That which cannot be read: **illegible** (adj.)
5. That which cannot be heard: **inaudible** (adj.)

B. Foreign phrases and expressions

Give the sources of origin and the meaning of the following.

- 1) etranger 2) et tu, Brute! 3) euge
- 4) eureka 5) excelsior

Suggested answers to last week's questions

- 1) **espose** (Fr.): Wife, bride
- 2) **errare est humanum** (Ltd.): To err is human.
- 3) **ethos** (Gk.): Permanent character
- 4) **etoile** (Fr.): A stranger, a foreigner
- 5) **estancia** (Spanish): A mansion

B. Words commonly confused

Bring out differences in meaning of the following pairs of words

- 1) fair, fare 2) pain, pane 3) soul, sole
- 4) main, mane 5) read, reed

Suggested answers to last week's question

- 1) **canvass** (Vi.) (go from person to person and ask for votes): Despite rigorous canvassing, he was defeated in the election.
canvas (n.) (strong, coarse cloth): Canvas shoes are very light wear.
- 2) **former** (adj.) (of an earlier period): Prof Singh is my former colleague at Mahweet.
farmer (n.) (man who owns or manages a farm): He is a wealthy farmer.
- 3) **mail** (n.) (system of collecting, carrying, and delivering letters): I send letters to India by airmail.
male (adj.) (opposite of female): There is a male toilet in the corner.
- 4) **preposition** (n.) (word used with a noun or pronoun to mark its relation with another word): Mastery of the correct use of prepositions in English is a difficult task.
proposition (n.) (statement, assertion): What you suggest seems to be an interesting proposition.
- 5) **root** (n.) (that part of the plant which is normally in the soil): Roots sustain a plant.
root (Vt.) (to defeat completely and drive away): They routed the enemy.
route (n.) (a way planned or followed): Learners should follow the learning route confidently

(C) Idioms and phrases

Illustrate the meaning of the following phrases in sentences.

- 1) bad blood
- 2) book worm
- 3) a fair weather friend.
- 4) to add fuel to the fire
- 5) to be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth

Suggested answers to last week's questions

1. a **cold reception** (a welcome lacking affection or warmth): He received a cold reception at the party.
2. **black sheep** (bad person): He is the black sheep of our family.
3. a **bird's eye view** (a general view): In the introductory lecture the speaker gave a bird's eye view of the subject.
4. a **burning question** (question keenly discussed): The results of the election are a burning question at present.
5. a **bed of roses** (easy and comfortable): Life is not a bed of roses, it's, indeed, a vale of tears.

IV. Grammar and Composition

A. Grammar

Find the word in each list, which does not belong.

1. dash stroll race hurry
2. vicious cruel violent tender
3. gentle stern harsh severe
4. simple stupid cunning foolish
5. reluctant unwilling hesitant eager
6. ruthless merciful fierce hard-hearted
7. sturdy fragile delicate breakable
8. upset trouble hurt carefree
9. innocent suspicious blameless honest
10. furious surprised mad angry

Suggested answers to last week's questions

1. The boy **asked** the teacher if he could open the window.
2. The driving instructor **asked** me to make sure that I look in the mirror before turning right.
3. Janet **told** her sister not to tell any one about the news because she wanted to keep it a secret.
4. Henry **advised** his wife not to drive so fast.

B. Composition: Paragraph Writing

Expand the central idea contained in the proverb

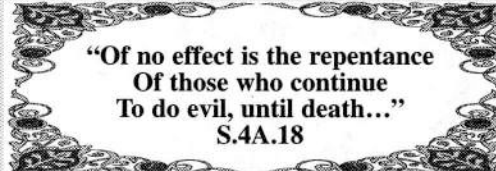
48. BARKING DOGS SELDOM BITE

Last week's topic

47. OLD IS GOLD.

The old people who are at the zenith of their life are mellow in experience and wisdom. They may be physically weak and ailing; yet they are mature enough and represent a rich reservoir of practical outlook on life. They have deep perceptions about all aspects of life which are like a torch in the encircling darkness of gloom. So younger generations should not ignore or disrespect them, but cultivate a proper regard for them because their advice is embedded in their experience that has withstood the acid test of life. Similarly, people of the new generation shouldn't pooh pooh our age-old customs, traditions and practices as dogma or superstition. Each of our traditional beliefs has been timetested and holds out a rich promise for us. Of course, it would be stupid to over-generalize and apply the maxim in inappropriate contexts. Yet, without any fear of exaggeration, it can be said that to respect and honor the old is more precious than gold itself.

V. Pearls From The Holy Quran



VI. WORDS OF WISDOM

"Give me a lever long enough and a place to stand and I will move the earth."

— Archimedes (Ancient Greek mathematician/physicist/287-212 BC)

A letter to the teachers of English: 38

Let our graduates be employable.



DR. M.N.K. BOSE
(BOSE@y.net.ye)
Associate Professor of
English,
Faculty of Arts, Ibb.

Dear Fellow teachers,

In the recently concluded international conference on ELT in Hodeidah University, one of the guest speakers pointed out that unemployability of the graduates is a greater problem than unemployment in his country. What he meant is that the graduates going out of the universities in his country do not have enough proficiency in English. I think we have a message from him for our own situation as well.

Isn't true that employers in well-paid organizations in Yemen expect their prospective employees to be proficient in English? Isn't it our responsibility to see that the graduates passing out of our universities are proficient enough to communicate in English so that their employers find them useful? Isn't it also true that the onus is squarely on us, the teachers of English, both in schools and colleges? Aren't we aware that the graduates, while in employment, realize their inadequacy and spend a lot of money to equip themselves at the 'language institutes' mushrooming in this country?

All these are echo questions with only one answer 'yes'. How do we mend the situation in order to make our graduates employable? The Hodeidah Conference had the answer, though in piecemeal. Almost all the experts were saying the same thing, in their own ways, that the classroom teaching of English should involve the learners and provide them with challenging opportunities for learning. Several suggestions were made in this regard such as using intralingual and inter semiotic translation as teaching techniques, applying the principles of critical discourse analysis as a part of methodology, especially for teaching literature, and improving the testing procedure etc.

Taking the clues from the Conference, let's work out a useful

methodology for teaching English in our classes, keeping in mind the aim that our graduates must be employable when they pass out of the universities. This methodology must incorporate the useful ideas of all the methodologies we have learnt in the Faculties of Education or read in ELT books. I always insist that the best method for a class is the one that the teacher develops through trial and error with his/her students in mind, provided he/she consciously and conscientiously develops it. If the aim is to make our graduates employable, the methodology should be one that enables and empowers the students, enable them to participate in the communicative activities in the classes and empower them to react to the realities of the situation. My tips for developing the reading skills in our learners, using the blackboard in our classes, handling the textbooks, making use of the classroom resources, being aware of the learner differences and so on in my earlier letters, for example, will help you in this task. You can think of more such techniques, if you care for your learners.

I have a special word to my colleagues teaching English in the universities. We'll have to make up the deficiencies, if any, in our students who come from the schools; the teachers in schools teach in difficult circumstances, most of the time with scant resources, within a straight jacketed curriculum, but we are in a better position, with more resources and more freedom to our advantage. Let's not throw up our hands in despair saying our students' competence is not up to the mark; it's our responsibility to enhance it.

Finally, it is time we look at the English curriculum, especially at the university level, closely and carefully, and gear it towards achieving the aim of making our graduates employable; or else all the resources, human as well as economic, spent at the university level will go waste. Let's do some soul searching and act accordingly. Good luck.

Yours fraternally,
Dr. M.N.K. Bose.

Poetry Corner

Al-Mukalla



BY DR. N. RAMACHANDRAN NAIR
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH,
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
HADHRAMOUT
UNIVERSITY
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Though late, they well gauged the key to success,
Wide spread education; modern, basic and higher.
Centers of learning of all sorts are on the rise
With the private rich and the government in a combined effort rare.

Al-Mukalla, the capital of Hadhramout
Reposes on the coast of the quiet Arabian sea.
Mukalla on mid south Yemen could claim a long past.
The hold of Islam on its culture and life is well-writ.

Skirted by the dark blue calm sea,
Enriched with a bounty of fish,
Guarded by blank blazing mountains in glee,
Though humid and hot, Mukalla is on an onward rush.

People say, more than half the population here
Hails from nations like India with a rich past
Most of them embraced Islam generations before
The rich and the poor alike tender a pure life-cast.

The new-found resources of petroleum in Hadhramout
Lend a fresh scenario of buzzing activities.
The rich business men of Hadhramout in Saudi and Dubai put Mukalla on a new roadmap of well-hatched developments.

The sleepy stretches of mere sandy, rocky beaches
In a short span of five years, people say,
Have become packed with multi-storied buildings and business concerns.
Selfless business groups like Bin Ladens and Buksans are showing a new way.
New broad well-built, well-lit roads Link Mukalla with Aden, the big city port
Automobiles – cars, 'dababs' and heavy trucks
Keep Mukalla alive day and night.
Mukalla port with its long curved beach
Lined with tall buildings and mosques lighted
Promises reserves of resources to breach
All myopic calculations of development, limited.
Five star hotels like the Holiday Inn,
Cheap motels on the beach from Mukalla to Fua
Fishing, yachting and shipping can win
Mukalla a place on a par with Dubai, mini Mumbai or Goa.

WONDERWORD

by DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: First read the list of words, then look at the puzzle. The words are in all directions – vertically, horizontally, diagonally, backward. Circle each letter of a word found and strike it off the list. The letters are often used more than once, so do not cross them out. It is best to find the big words first. When you find all the words listed in the clues, you'll have a number of letters left over that spell the Wonderword.

CLUES

- | | | | | |
|------------|------------|---------------|----------|----------|
| Apple | Cereal | Gardens | Popcorn | Specials |
| Area | Cloth | Goulash | Prepared | Spill |
| Baby | Cocoa | Grains | Price | Spoil |
| Basics | Coffee | Greens | Priority | Stamps |
| Beans | Condiments | Impulsive | Pumps | Steak |
| Beer | Cook | Individual | Purse | Store |
| Beverage | Cooler | Inventory | Ramps | Tarts |
| Blend | Cupboard | Items | Regular | Tissue |
| Bottle | Deal | Logos | Replace | Tying |
| Bread | Empty | Lox | Roast | Wait |
| Brine | Extras | Marts | Rows | Warm |
| Budget | Fancy | Menus | Salts | Washing |
| Bulk | Floral | Miscellaneous | Sauces | Waste |
| Buys | Flyer | Oranges | Sausage | Water |
| Cakes | Food | Pasta | Savings | Weekly |
| Calculator | Fresh | Pencil | Seeds | |
| Cases | Fridge | Pepper | Separate | |
| Celery | Frozen | Pocket | Shelf | |

GROCERY LISTS

Solution: 7 letters

Y	B	A	B	R	E	A	D	B	P	N	E	Z	O	R	F	B	S	C	N
W	L	A	E	R	E	C	C	R	E	G	U	L	A	R	E	O	U	R	S
A	G	K	O	C	Y	E	D	N	E	L	B	I	V	Y	P	O	L	E	
S	A	S	E	R	E	P	L	A	C	E	R	N	E	O	B	C	E	D	K
H	R	P	T	E	A	G	E	F	I	W	V	R	C	O	P	E	N	C	A
I	D	B	P	R	W	S	R	I	L	E	A	O	A	O	P	S	A	A	C
N	E	U	E	L	A	P	Y	E	N	G	N	R	P	U	O	L	L	N	F
G	N	D	O	S	E	M	S	T	E	D	D	R	M	S	C	L	L	O	S
B	S	G	M	R	B	A	O	E	I	N	I	P	A	U	K	O	E	E	X
A	O	E	O	K	U	R	T	M	L	O	S	V	L	S	E	T	C	R	G
S	T	T	A	C	Y	H	E	S	R	T	I	A	I	F	T	I	S	O	R
I	S	E	E	H	S	N	T	I	A	N	T	A	M	L	D	R	A	I	R
C	T	S	T	E	T	R	T	Y	G	O	F	O	P	P	U	W	M	E	I
S	O	O	R	S	A	Y	T	S	R	E	R	R	B	U	E	A	X	P	N
F	L	F	E	T	A	P	I	A	R	A	U	R	I	G	L	T	L	P	S
C	L	E	F	S	M	W	N	N	L	E	I	S	A	D	R	S	A	E	S
A	D	E	T	E	R	G	C	D	G	N	T	S	S	A	G	S	I	P	U
S	R	L	H	O	E	U	O	E	E	O	U	A	S	I	T	E	I	V	N
E	A	E	W	S	S	E	P	A	R	A	T	E	W	A	T	L	K	I	E
S	H	S	A	L	U	O	G	L	S	P	E	C	I	A	L	S	E	S	M

ANSWER NEXT WEEK

Last Week's Answer: Confide

Chelsea crash as Arsenal and Man Utd march on

BY MARTYN HERMAN

LONDON (Reuters) - Chelsea suffered a Christmas hangover as they suffered a 4-2 battering at London rivals Charlton Athletic.

The defeat was especially costly for Claudio Ranieri's expensively assembled team after title rivals Manchester United and Arsenal both won at home.

United now top the table with 43 points, one more than Arsenal with Chelsea third on 39 points.

Manchester United rested Paul Scholes, Ryan Giggs and leading scorer Ruud van Nistelrooy but still beat Everton 3-2 and Arsenal won 3-0 against bottom club Wolverhampton Wanderers.

"Our attacking play was very, very good. We produced some excellent football and it was good for the players that came in to get an opportunity to express themselves," United boss Alex Ferguson told Sky TV.

Nicky Butt, in for the injured Roy Keane, volleyed United ahead with his first league goal of the season after eight minutes.

Gary Neville's own goal levelled the score before Brazilian Kleberston restored United's lead shortly before halftime, nodding in Neville's pinpoint delivery.

David Bellion scored his first league goal for the champions after 68 minutes before Duncan Ferguson pulled one back



Charlton Athletic's Matt Holland (L) celebrates with team mate Jason Euell after scoring against Chelsea during their premier league match at The Valley, London, on Friday. Charlton won 4-2. REUTERS/Mike Finn-Kelcey

with a last-minute header.

Chelsea, who began the day level with Arsenal, fell behind in the first minute to Hermann Hreidarsson's header. Although

Ranieri's side were soon level through John Terry's header, they never looked comfortable.

Matt Holland restored Charlton's lead with a thumping header from Jonatan Johansson's cross after 35 minutes and Johansson made it 3-1 just after the break, tapping in after some brilliant work by Paolo Di Canio.

Jason Euell stunned Chelsea with a fourth after 53 minutes and Eidur Gudjohnsen's goal was purely academic as Chelsea slid to their third league defeat of the season.

Poor defensively

"The beginning of the second half we switched off and then it was very difficult," said Ranieri.

"We were poor defensively, they had too many chances, they scored four but could have scored more.

"We want to stay at the top with Arsenal and Manchester. We probably can only afford to lose another two games this season."

Unbeaten Arsenal were simply a class above Wolves, with Thierry Henry the chief tormentor.

The Frenchman's corner was turned in

by Wolves defender Jody Craddock after 13 minutes and when he converted a pass from Patrick Vieira seven minutes later the Gunners were threatening to run riot.

Wolves held out until the 89th minute, but Henry struck again with a low shot past Michael Oakes to send Arsenal temporarily top of the league.

Manager Arsene Wenger was pleased with the result after three draws in their last four games. "We were sharp and dominated the game for 90 minutes," he said.

Fulham moved into fourth place after Louis Saha scored both goals in a 2-0 home victory against Southampton while Liverpool returned to form with a much-needed 3-1 victory against Bolton Wanderers at Anfield.

At the bottom, Patrik Berger scored twice to give Portsmouth a 2-0 win against Tottenham Hotspur and lift them out of the drop zone. Markus Babbel grabbed a late equaliser for Blackburn Rovers in a 2-2 home draw with Middlesbrough.

Leicester City slipped into the bottom three after drawing 1-1 at home to Newcastle United for whom Darren Ambrose scored a last-minute equaliser.

Zidane will end career at Real Madrid

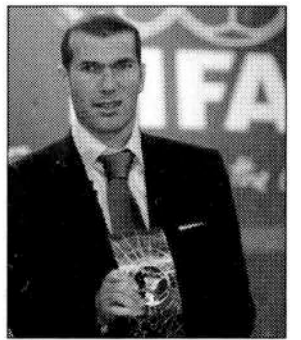
MADRID (Reuters) - France midfielder Zinedine Zidane says he will end his playing days at his Spanish club Real Madrid and is also considering when to quit the national side.

"Today I am sure that I will end my career at Real Madrid. It's the best thing I can do. It's unlikely that I'll play for another team and carry on for more years," Zidane said in an interview with the Spanish sports newspaper Marca on Friday.

Last month Zidane, 31, told France's Onze magazine he was not certain if he would retire when his Real Madrid contract ended in 2005.

"I'm also thinking about when I'm going to retire from the French team," Zidane added. "We'll see what happens in Euro 2004. I'll take a decision after that competition."

Zidane was named this month as FIFA's World Player of the Year, the third time he has won the award in six years.



Zidane says he will end his playing days at his Spanish club Real Madrid and is also considering when to quit the national side. REUTERS/Andreas Meier

Lara and Ridley resurrect West Indies innings

BY TELFORD VICE

DURBAN (Reuters) - Brian Lara and Ridley Jacobs resurrected West Indies' first innings with half-centuries before rain halted play on the first day of the second test against South Africa.

But fast bowler Makhaya Ntini kept the home side on top on Friday as West Indies, who were put into bat on a lively pitch, reached 232 for eight with Vasbert Drakes on 40 and Adam Sanford on 13.

Captain Lara (72) and Jacobs (58) added 98 for the sixth wicket after West Indies had slumped to 57 for five at lunch.

Ntini had figures of four for 56 when rain ended play 25 overs early but felt the visitors had been let off the hook.

"After lunch we didn't bowl well, we didn't do the basics well and Lara and Jacobs took us apart," said the paceman.

He added: "We know Lara is a big wicket and if you miss a chance to get him out he can dominate and make a big score."

South African coach Eric Simons said: "Sometimes you've got to give credit to batsmen, but I think we took our foot off the gas today."

"Maybe we tried to bowl them out rather than stick to the plan that had worked. Maybe we tried to bowl too many glory balls rather than stick to disciplines."

South Africa captain Graeme Smith asked the visitors to bat on a seaming pitch and under overcast skies that aided swing bowling after rain delayed the start of play for 30 minutes.

Wavell Hinds started the slide with-

out a run on the board when he attempted to leave the last ball of the first over from Shaun Pollock and edged it to wicketkeeper Mark Boucher.

Outside edge

In his next over, Pollock found the outside edge of Ramnaresh Sarwan's bat and the catch flew to Jacques Kallis at second slip. Sarwan was dismissed for four.

Ntini first struck in the sixth over when Daren Ganga, on six, prodded outside his off-stump and was caught by Pollock at first slip.

Twelve balls later, West Indies slumped to 17 for four when Ntini had Shivnarine Chanderpaul caught by Andrew Hall at third slip for a duck.

Lara and Carlton Baugh kept the South Africans at bay until 10 balls before lunch, when Baugh's edged drive off pace bowler Andre Nel was caught at second slip by Kallis. Baugh hit four fours in his 21.

The West Indies might have been 58 for six eight balls after lunch when Lara, on 13, edged a delivery from Ntini to Hall at slip but Hall dropped a sharp chance to his left hand.

Lara and Jacobs were eventually separated 13 overs before tea after Lara failed to avoid a short delivery from Ntini and was caught by Pollock at first slip. He had faced 111 balls and hit 12 fours.

Four overs later Jacobs was trapped in front by Nel having faced 69 balls and stroked 11 boundaries.

South Africa lead the four-match series 1-0 after winning the first test by 189 runs.

7-Day Weather Forecast

Sana'a							
Day	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Hi	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Lo	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Aden							
Day	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Hi	29	29	31	28	30	30	30
Lo	21	21	20	20	21	20	19

GARFIELD

YOU KNOW WHAT I LIKE ABOUT BOWLING, BOYS?

IT'S A GREAT WAY TO MEET GIRLS!

KA-BANG

THUMP THUMP OUCH THUMP

OOO! EEK! THUMP

AND THEIR ANGRY BOYFRIENDS

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

BY Eugenia

- Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)**
Take a breather from those who know you too well and concentrate on what you can do to raise your financial potential. An opportunity to make some money is apparent through an investment or unexpected windfall.
- Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)**
Your concern with how to help others will make an impact on everyone who knows you. If you shop, you will find the perfect addition for your home or wardrobe. A romantic partner will play an important role today.
- Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20)**
Put your efforts into doing a creative job and not getting involved in other people's projects. Work alone, don't expect favors and you will make far better progress.
- Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)**
You can get ahead if you listen to what others have to say. A trip that offers a chance to meet with people with a common interest will pay off. Preparation will be essential.
- Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22)**
Lend a helping hand to someone who's in need. Go out on a limb for someone who just can't fend for himself. Money opportunities are evident.
- Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)**
Be very cautious how you handle personal or emotional issues today. Don't exclude someone from your plans. Be fair in all of your dealings; you'll be walking a fine line.
- Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)**
Opportunities to expand an idea will be in the works, so sit down and discuss your intentions with someone you trust. That person can become an important part of your plans.
- Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)**
You can rid yourself of deadweight and move on to spend time with people who inspire you. Social activity will lead to new partnerships and future prospects.
- Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)**
Focus on home and family. Put your energy into improving your surroundings. Take advantage of any free time you get.
- Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)**
Your swift action and easy solutions will put you in demand today. You have plenty to look forward to as new doors open, allowing you to expand your ideas.
- Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)**
Your proactive approach to your financial situation will lead to a higher income. Consider what you like to do the most and make it part of your plan for the upcoming year.
- Pisces (Feb 19-Mar 20)**
Hone your skills and you will be ready to take on a new direction next year. Refrain from letting your emotions get the better of you. Let go of the past.

Still no signal from Mars probe

By PETE HARRISON

A European mission trying to find life on Mars accepted on Saturday its British-built space probe may have crashed, but scientists remained hopeful despite failing for a third day to detect a signal.

The failure to pick up a message from Beagle 2 has raised fears that the probe, no bigger than an open umbrella, may have suffered the same fate as many craft before it and ended up as scrap metal strewn across the bleak Martian landscape.

"There are scenarios where we may have lost Beagle 2 if the landing system didn't work as expected," Professor Alan Wells, one of the project's scientists, told Sky News.

Attempts in the last 24 hours by NASA's Mars Odyssey Orbiter and the Lovell Telescope at Britain's Jodrell Bank Observatory had failed to detect

Beagle 2, scientists said.

Further attempts will be made later on Saturday using the radio telescopes at Jodrell Bank and at California's Stanford University.

The 300 million euro (\$375 million) Beagle 2 probe was part of the first fully European mission to be sent to any planet and had been hailed as a triumph for British ingenuity and for European space exploration.

The European Space Agency's Mars Express blasted off in June from Russia's Baikonur base with the British-made Beagle 2 on board and charged with the task of finding out whether there is, or ever was, life on Mars.

Beagle 2 parted from the Mars Express eight days ago and was due to parachute down to Mars on Christmas morning, but it failed to broadcast a signal to confirm it had landed.

Wells said they had now set up two teams, one to keep trying to communicate with the probe and a "Tiger Team"

to investigate why it had not responded as expected on Christmas Day.

"We're far from giving up. We've only tried five times so far," he said. "What we're doing is looking at any possibility where Beagle 2 is still functioning and we're not able to communicate with it for some reason."

The project's team says the best chance of making contact with the probe will be on January 4 when the Mars Express moves into a polar orbit around the planet.

"At the moment I am frustrated rather than concerned," said Professor David Southwood, ESA's director of science. "With Mars Express we will be using a system that we have fully tested and understand."

Of the previous 11 probes dropped on the red planet's surface, only three have survived and it is estimated that around two in every three Russian and U.S. missions to Mars have been whole or partial failures.

Beagle 2's failure to make contact

soured Christmas for scientists, who had gathered in London on Thursday and Friday, hoping to hear the probe broadcasting its signature tune — composed for the occasion by pop group Blur — across the 100 million km (62 million miles) from Mars.

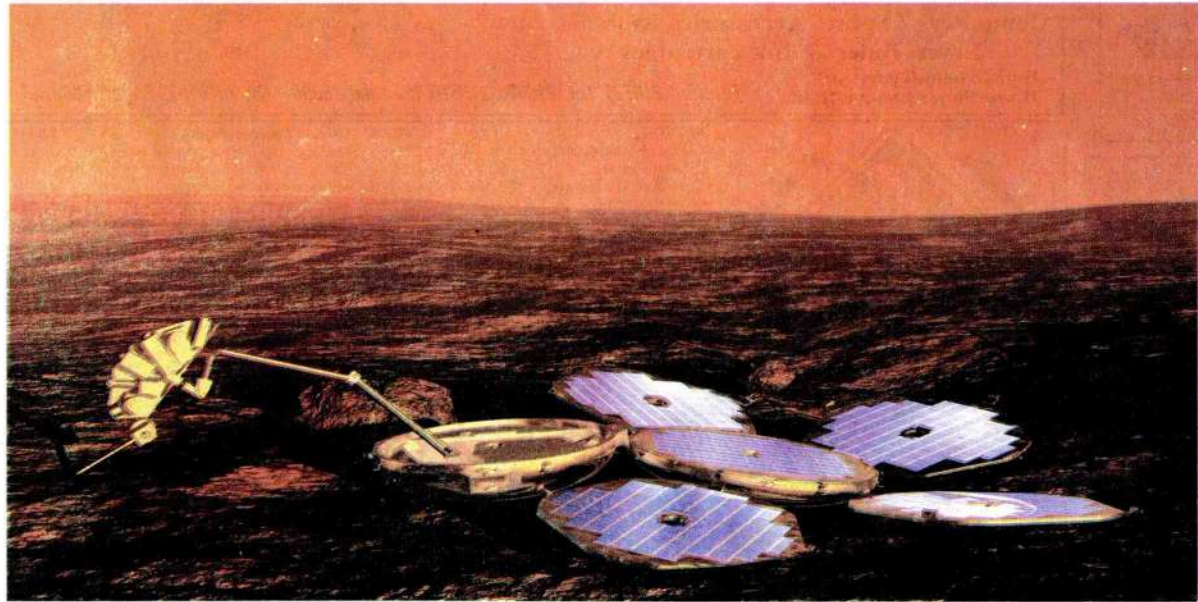
ESA officials said that even if Beagle 2 was not found, the Mars Express that carried the 34 kg (75 pound) probe had successfully been guided on to an orbit around Mars from where it would study the planet for two years.

"For the scientists here the orbiter is the most important part of the mission," said Gerhard Schwehm, an ESA planetary mission official. "The landing probe on Mars is in essence the icing on the cake."

Reuters



A handout of the European Space Agency ESA shows a visualisation of Mars, created from spacecraft imagery. ESA's first mission to the Red Planet is Mars Express. It comprises an orbiter carrying seven scientific instruments to probe the planet's atmosphere, structure and geology, including a search for evidence of hidden water. The main spacecraft will also release the UK's small Beagle 2 lander to gather and test rock and soil samples on the surface. British space probe Beagle 2 failed to broadcast a signal on December 25, to confirm it had landed on Mars, but scientists said they were waiting for a second contact opportunity later on Thursday. REUTERS



Artist's impression shows Beagle 2 lander looking for evidence of life on Isidis Planitia, a large, flat sedimentary basin on Mars straddling the relatively young northern plains and ancient southern highlands, where traces of life could have been preserved. The site is not too rocky to threaten a safe landing (but rocky enough to be interesting for the experiments), has few steep slopes down which the probe may have to bounce as it lands, and is not too dusty. British space probe Beagle 2 failed to broadcast a signal on December 25, 2003, to confirm it had landed on Mars, but scientists said they were waiting for a second contact opportunity later on Thursday. REUTERS



SAILOR




Chinese technology now in Yemen

مبيعات - قطع غيار - صيانه

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YEMEN TIMES

مسابقة الهلايين الكبرى 2004

المشاركة في الرعاية			
71200540		1,000,000	الفائز الأول
رشيد السقاف		500,000	الفائز الثاني
مدير الإعلانات		250,000	الفائز الثالث
	بالإضافة إلى أكثر من 350 فائز	150,000	الفائز الرابع
	بجوائز نقدية وصينية قيمة	100,000	الفائز الخامس












كوبون أسئلة رقم (أ)

الإسم: السن: الجنسية: رقم البطاقة لشخصية / الجواز:

اللقب: المدينة / المحافظة:

1) مؤسسها الكيوس هي الوكيل الوحيد لمكائن التنظيف (بيسيل) (أ) امريكا (ب) المانيا (ج) ايطاليا
 فما هو بلد صنعها؟

2) اذكر ثلاث موديلات للسيارات الحديثة لشركة تهامه للهندسة.
 متى كان اول إصدار لعدد الخميس من صحيفة يمن تايمز؟

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2003: So far, the most devastating year in the new millennium

2003's bloody end

Year 2003's final days were among the most devastating of all. Three extremely horrific incidents occurred in three countries in the last week of the last month of the year. Those were an earthquake in Iran, the gas leakage in China, and a plane crash in Benin. Year 2003 was full of incidents of death and destruction, including the war on Iraq and several natural disasters. Some even say that the incidents that took place in the week of 2003 are a resemblance of how bloody the year 2003 was.

Heavy earthquake toll

A powerful earthquake has struck the Iranian city of Bam in southeastern Iran killing twenty thousand people on Friday.

State television said about 60 per cent of the buildings in Bam, a popular tourist attraction some 600 miles (1,000 km) southeast of the capital Tehran, had collapsed in the earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter scale. The quake also injured more than 30,000 people.

"There is a lot of dead and injured



Search team members (top) find the body of a dead man after a natural gas well erupted in Gaoqiao township, Kaixian County, in southwest China's Chongqing municipality on December 26. Nearly 200 people were killed and hundreds injured when the well burst on Tuesday and toxic fumes shot into the air.

in Bam city and all the cooperation has been done to take them out," said Mohammad Ali Karimi, governor of Kerman province.

The government has mounted a major rescue operation in Bam, famed for its citadel and other cen-

tures-old buildings.

President Mohammad Khatami has admitted Iran cannot cope on its own. The official IRNA news agency quoted Iran's Interior Ministry as saying assistance would be welcome from every corner of the globe other than



Rescue workers and investigators stand near the cockpit of a Beirut-bound Boeing 727 on a beach near the airport at Cotonou December 26, 2003. Rescuers battled high waves to free bodies from the wreckage of the airliner which crashed into the sea off the West African state of Benin on Christmas Day, killing at least 111 people.



An aerial view shows the extent of earthquake damage in Bam, Iran, December 27. International rescue workers hacked desperately through flattened debris for survivors and cemeteries overflowed in Iran's ancient Silk Road city of Bam after an earthquake that killed more than 20,000 people.

REUTERS

Israel.

This is the worst earthquake that ever hit Southern Iran, and is so far just second to the 1990 earthquake that occurred on Jun 21, 1990. More than 35,000 died and 100,000 were injured in the worst recorded disaster in Iran. The quake, which registered 7.7 on the Richter scale, devastated the Caspian regions of Gilan and Zanjan. Some 500,000 were made homeless.

Gas leakage tragedy

At least 198 people, mostly villagers, and large numbers of livestock were killed after the blow-out, which spewed a poisonous gas cloud into the night sky last Tuesday. The toll had risen from the earlier reported 191 but gave no explanation.

More than 40,000 people were evacuated from villages within a radius of five km (three miles) from the remote site of the gas field, operated by state run China National Petroleum Corp, parent of listed oil major Petrochina.

More than 9,000 people poisoned to varying degrees filled local hospitals. Rescue teams scoured surrounding villages, finding corpses strewn on roadsides. Others died as they slept.

State media have been full of photographs of children in hospital, their eyes sealed shut by the gas, and of dead livestock lying on village streets.

Rescue operations, delayed by a lack of protective equipment, ended on Saturday morning ahead of the capping operation.

Plane crash's nightmare

The third most devastating incident last week was the crash of a of a Boeing 727 plane moments after takeoff from the West African nation's main city of Cotonou on last Thursday.

Survivors grappled with horrifying memories and grieving relatives prepared to take the bodies of loved ones home yesterday after an airliner smashed into the sea off Benin, killing at least 119 people.

More were believed missing. Benin's foreign minister said there had been 151 passengers and 10 crew on the Beirut-bound plane.

Twenty-two people, including the pilot, survived and the search for bodies in choppy sea waters continued late last night.

By nightfall, rescuers had managed to pull the plane's wreckage out of the Atlantic Ocean. The airliner smashed into a building at the end of the runway as it struggled to take off, then plunged into the shallow coastal waters.

At a nearby hospital, relatives and friends of the dead climbed one by one into a refrigerated truck to identify bodies.

Survivors from the back of the plane said they were haunted by screams that rent the air around them as flight UTA 141 went down, spewing bodies and debris onto the beach.

"As soon as we took off, I saw the whole plane crumple and people were pushed towards me by the pressure of the crash," said Khodor Farhat, who was seated at the rear of the plane.

"Then I woke up in the water. I

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pushed myself to the surface and swam to the beach where some men pulled me out and took me to hospital," he said from his bed.

Deadly end

Year 2003 had witnessed many vio-

lent incidents and happenings leading to tens of thousands of deaths throughout the world. The three incidents above are a mere symbol of what last year was. This deadly end will also have its implications on the year to come.

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ZTCO **شركة زيبين للتجارة والصناعة** **FAGOR**
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