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Monday, 26 January 2004 - VOL. XII • Issue No. 706 • Price 30 Yemeni Riyals • Founded in 1991 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

Apology

Due to a last-minute technical fault, the last issue of The Yemen Times was published on this page as Issue 706, rather than the correct 705. Our apologies for this unintended mistake and for any inconvenience it may have caused.

Prince claims Yemen is not GCC material:

GCC snub?

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen's government is in shock over the statement of a top Saudi minister that Yemen be locked out of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz said this week that "We refuse to have Yemen join the Gulf Cooperation Council" because Yemen, in Nayef's view, "is not a Gulf state."

Yemen government sources say officials are all-the-more disappointed and surprised over the comments, since the Saudi prince has also been vocal in promoting the cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Yemen in security.

Yemen has been vying for formal GCC status for several years, and has some partial observer status on some com-

mittees, giving the impression, for a while anyway, that full membership may not be far off.

"Such statements do not serve the relations between the two countries and were unexpected and unacceptable," said an unnamed Yemeni government official.

Even though Prince Nayef credited Yemen for cooperating with its neighboring kingdom in terms of security, he said Saudi Arabia had had to exert tremendous efforts to stop Yemenis from smuggling weapons into Saudi, by equipping Saudi border guards with sophisticated thermal cameras, and by extending long wired fences at the border.

"We have been able to stop the smuggling of 301 RPGs, 431 hand grenades, and 1,010 light weapons at the border in the last three months alone, all coming from the Yemeni territories," he said.

Furthermore, governmental officials have expressed some concern that such statements would support the perspective of some who do not want Yemen to join the GCC, and want to succeed in having Yemen quit its application of joining.



Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz said this week that "We refuse to have Yemen join the Gulf Cooperation Council" because Yemen, in Nayef's view, "is not a Gulf state."

Statements change nothing
A senior official in the Yemeni government told the Yemen Times that such statements are mere opinions that only repre-

sent those who give them, and are not to be considered in any way a reply to Yemen's application to join the GCC.

"We have applied in a formal and official manner, and we can

only deal with an official response. Hence, such statements do not represent much for us in terms of our membership to the GCC," the source said.

Continued on page 3

Yemen justifies 2002 assassinations

By NEWS SERVICES

Yemen has revealed details that it cooperated with Washington in tracking and killing a suspected Al-Qaeda leader after US satellites picked up the vibrations of the man's voice, the Saudi newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat said on Friday.

It quoted Yemeni Vice-President Abed Rabbo Mansour's comments on a missile attack on November 3, 2002 in which six Yemenis, said to be Al-Qaeda members, including one suspected of masterminding an operation against a US warship and a French oil tanker, were killed.

Agents of the US intelligence agency, the CIA, fired the missile by remote control from a Predator pilotless aircraft in east Yemen, destroying the vehicle carrying the six suspects.



A drone, used in the 2002 assassination.

Among those killed was Ali Qaed Sunian Al-Harthi, alias Abu Ali. He was suspected of being one of the ringleaders in the attack on October 12, 2000 against the warship USS Cole in the southern Yemen port of Aden in which 17 crew members died.

"This special operation targeted Abu Ali, an Al-Qaeda leader ... who organised the explosion on the French oil tanker and whom

we have hunted in vain for six months," said Mansour.

The oil tanker Limburg was rammed by a small boat off the Yemeni coast in October 2002, causing an explosion which killed a Bulgarian seaman.

"That is why we coordinated with the Americans ... who were able to detect and pinpoint Harthi thanks to satellites picking up the vibrations of his voice. We had no choice other than to cooperate with Washington because we don't have advanced technology, the vice-president added.

He added that Harthi used several phones and constantly changed them.

Yemen initially acknowledged on November 19, 2002 that it had cooperated in the missile attack with Washington, which views the country as an important partner in its "anti-terrorist war."

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Proposed price hikes still raising alarms**Opposition gearing up for protests**

By MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

SANA'A - Yemen's deputy prime minister and the minister of planning and international cooperation Ahmed Soufan promised that the government will lift subsidies on oil products.

In a meeting last week with donor parties, the minister said the government would continue implementing its program of financial and administrative reform, reviewing what the Yemeni economy had so far realized in this regard in the year 2003 and indicators of 2004.

The Yemeni government has approved in its budget for 2004 to lift YR 6 billion of its subsidy to oil products and that has been endorsed by the ruling party parliamentary majority while opposition and independent blocs at the parliament have rejected it, deeming it a new ruinous dose.

The opposition parties on the other hand are considering the form and way of response to confront the coming price hike.

Al-Sahwa weekly published opinions

of some opposition leaders, quoting Abduladhim al-Omari, head of the executive bureau of the Islah Party in the capital secretariat, as mentioning that his party's stand was clear that "our parliamentary bloc voted against the impoverishment project," confirming the people are no longer able to sustain more high-priced living condition and that the citizen is living a miserable life.

He added that in principle the stand comes from the people, and he could not rule out the occurrence of some protest activities, but the question needed coordination and approval of parties of the JMP.

Head of the information and culture office at the Nasserite Unionist organisation Dr Abdulla al-Dahhan says he shares Dr al-Omari's opinion regarding the death penalty, a demand which the preacher considered came because the woman is a member of the YSP.

He confirmed that the practical stand requests holding a meeting for the JMP and such an initiative must be very soon in order to take measures curbing the rounds of repeated government doses

that do not take into consideration the people's conditions.

He called on the opposition parties to take suitable decisions to protect the people's interests and rights, provided that the decisions are studied in a way that would not express unilateral viewpoint.

The two leading politicians voiced fears from exploiting any demonstrations by the JMP for creating chaos especially under the complications needed for obtaining a license from the interior ministry.

JMP in Aden intends to stage protest demonstrations against the rise in prices and the many violations of human rights in Aden.

Secretary of the Yemen Socialist Party in Aden Ali Munasar stressed the parties intention in this regard, but added that the date was not fixed yet, saying "there are many things that needed to be protested against, in addition to the price rise, such as approving the law of civil service, pensioning many civil servants before due time for political reasons and privatization of state institutions for rendering them as booties in favour of influential individuals."

YR 200 million damage**Fire hits Aden**

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF
ADEN BUREAU

A huge inferno, with damage estimated at YR 200 million, hit Aden recently.

It hit a number of stockrooms housing sponge and plastic materials in Alsailah area, east of Sheikh Othman, Aden Governorate, and led to the destruction of all the contents. Some firefighters were injured, and electricity in the area was lost.

Colonel Mohammed Hassan Al-Shameeri, the manager of Civil Defence in Aden Governorate said electricity contact led to the huge fire, not to mention the unsafe storage of material.

He went on to say that such store-rooms of flammable harmful materials should be kept away out of the city and popular zones, adding that the civil defense management had commis-

sioned a committee who promised to provide safety equipment prior to the incident, taking into consideration that this is counted the second such incident to take place in the area in five years.

The fire revealed the weakness of the competent apparatuses in dealing with such catastrophes and the non-existence of equipment to combat such incidents.

Electricity extensions are being put in place in a rather makeshift manner in that high voltage overhead electricity pylons are still the norm, which eventually leads to such sad incidents in poor-stricken areas.

Also, the lack of reaction by the competent agencies and the ignorance of people and merchants in that necessary precautions are not taken shall lead to further incidents if not dealt with appropriately, according to the leaseholder Ahmed Abdulbaqi.

International Criminal Court**Parliamentarians want ratification**

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Participants in the parliamentary workshop at the conference involving the International Criminal Court Jan. 19 and 20, affirmed the necessity to review Yemeni statutes, to comply with the articles of the court, particularly to determine the penalties for crimes committed against humanity, war crimes and genocide.

The participants urged the government to activate the recommendations of the seminar held by the Arab League in Cairo in 2002, which included the call for an exemplary Arab Law pertaining to the crimes related to the International Criminal Court, the general fundamentals and the procedures according to international standards and the importance of the Arab presence at the International Criminal Court.

Chieftain/ Abdullah Ben Hussein Al-Ahmar, the parliament speaker, announced last week that the Yemeni parliament shall shortly ratify Roma Convention which established the international court, partic-

ularly under the actions perpetrated against the Palestinian and Iraqi people.

This declaration came in his word which he delivered in front of the workshop which was sponsored by the parliament's constitutional and legislative committee in association with the Mission of the Red Cross.

Chieftain Al-Ahmar requested the participants to exert their best by reviewing the Yemeni legislations and constitutional texts, which respect human rights.

He said many countries depend on the ICC and its prospective role under the international developments witnessed worldwide following the collapse of USSR and the single handed hegemony of USA, confirming that the establishment of the ICC shall undoubtedly serve to curtail the supremacy of major on countries towards weaker and smaller nations, so that this court shall stand against warmongers who have enslaved the nations and committed genocide and systematic killings.

Timeline set for judicial reform

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Yemeni Cabinet in its meeting last Tuesday, presided over by premier Bagammal ratified the schedule for the implementation of the government's program concerning the judicial system.

Recent decisions come in response to requests to reform the judicial system in Yemen.

To mention but a few of the negative aspects pointed out by critics, the delay by many judges to attend official working hours, which in turn delays and accumulates cases; the ill-treatment by the soldiers of citizens approaching such courts who are often subjected to the soldiers' rough manners; and the limitation of the right of objection against judgments and verdicts.

Moreover, most judges read out the verdicts without reasons behind them, which leaves the opponents incognizant of the causes.

Another negative aspect being practiced is the prevention of the public to attend open sessions, and the permission of the parties involved, or holding sessions in the judges offices and the prevention of others from entry under the pretext of limited space.

A boost for health training in Mareb**New female student dorm**

FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

A new dormitory for female students at the Health Institute in Mareb was opened last Thursday.

With this inauguration, the Governorate of Mareb now has its own Health Institute, where also students of nursing and midwifery can be trained.

Health experts believe that this indicates that the government has recognized the importance of enabling all governorates to look after themselves and to make female staff available for the health services.

Women and children under 5 years of age constitute about 70% of the Yemeni population. In regions with strong traditions, this population group can only be reached by health services if the peripheral health facilities have female staff.

Only women from the communities in Mareb will be ready and able to work in remote areas of the Governorate and only if the training facility is under their eyes, families in Mareb will allow their daughters to be trained for modern professions.

Therefore the event means a break-

through for the Mareb in many regards.

The construction was financed and guided by the German Development Cooperation for Health. Involving a local firm and local daily manpower was part of the strategy to contribute also to economic development in disadvantaged regions.

The building with 3 floors was completed in 12 months and with a high standard of finishing. The opening ceremony was attended among others by the Deputy Governor, the General Director of Health in Mareb, the Deputy of the German Ambassador, the Directors of the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and the German Development Service (DED), as well as the managers of the Family Health&Family Planning and Health Sector Advisory Projects of GTZ.

The German Development Cooperation supports the health sector in Mareb Governorate since 1998. The Governorate was jointly selected by the Ministry of Health and the German partners because health services seemed to reach not even 20% of the population, and also because development in the social sector would help to

reduce the danger of conflicts in Mareb.

In order to contribute to the achievement of the second objective and assure equity, from the very beginning support was given to all 14 districts of the governorate. The focus of the assistance is on improving family health/family planning as well as curative services and on establishing a solid district health management system.

At the same time capacity building in the Governorate Health Office is supported.

With regard to systematic management and cooperation between sectors and official local authorities the governorate started at zero 5 years ago.

The German side confirms that progress is satisfying, that for example the health centre in Mareb Town has developed to be one of the best ones in all the 10 governorates supported by the German Cooperation, that the technical cooperation with the Health Office and especially its Director General is good, and that they feel strongly supported by the very active Governor.

Readers' Voice

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

This edition's question:

The British are now formally investigating the 1997 death of Princess Diana. One theory, considering she was seeing Arab Emad Mohamed al-Fayed (Dodi), is she was killed so that there would not be an Arab-Muslim line in the British monarchy. Do you think Diana was killed:
1. by accident?
2. by a conspiracy lead by Charles, so he could remarry?
3. by an unknown conspiracy?
4. by a conspiracy to keep a possible Arab line from entering the British monarchy?

last edition's question:

Which of those do you wish would win the upcoming US presidential elections?

George W. Bush again	41%
Another democratic candidate	22%
John Kerry	17%
Howard Dean	13%
John Edwards	7%

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Human Rights discussed

GDF and Women Support Center held a seminar last Sunday about the role of Journalism in human rights, and the creation of public awareness namely with regard to women.

Also mechanisms to develop a serious tripartite relationship amongst the committees of the parliament, the consultative council, the media and NGOs were discussed.

Embassy of United States of America announces for a job opening within its organization.**“Budget Analyst”**

The position is located in the financial Management Section, American Embassy, under the general supervision of the Financial Management Officer (FMO). Employee will be responsible for budget formulation and execution, financial planning, allotment accounting and other management advisory functions to the Financial Management Officer. The incumbent manages and analyze funds for various organizations within the Embassy.

Education: Completion of secondary school is required. College or technical study in accounting, budgeting, analysis and/or management is highly desirable.

Prior work Experience: From 3 to 4 years of progressively responsible experience in accounting and analysis and budget work is required. Two years of experience in budget or accounting work for US Government is desirable.

Language Proficiency: Level IV (fluent) English is required.

Knowledge: Must have a sound working knowledge of pertinent State Department and/or associated agency laws, procedures and regulations relating to budgeting and funds control and the ability to use such knowledge of the organization and functions of the major program areas of the Embassy and/or associated agency served. Must be able to communicate budgets information clearly and completely, both in writing and orally.

Abilities: Good English typing is required. Ability to use calculators and computers. Ability to analyze the interrelationship of accounts that are affected by varied transactions and documents, accounting codes, and accounting structures, and that involves detailed procedures for setting up and liquidating.

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How to apply: Interested applicants should complete OF-612 or submit a current C.V. (with awards, recommendation letters, copies of degrees earned)that addresses the qualification requirements of the position as listed above and contact the Embassy Personnel Office, American Embassy, Dhahr Himyar Street, Sana'a. Tel: 303-155, no later than February 04, 2004.

NOTE: All ordinarily resident applicants must be residing in country and have the required work and residency permits to be eligible for consideration.

Continued from page 1

GCC snub?

The statement of Prince Nayef is the second in a row after that of the Information Minister of the UAE Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan more than a week ago, when he said that Yemen is still "not qualified to join the GCC."

However, Yemeni officials say they believe that, contrary to those two statements, official stances of the UAE and Saudi Arabia have so far been welcoming Yemen as a partner in many activities of the GCC, and have not rejected Yemen's request to join the 'rich countries league'.

Saleh: Football, then basketball

In a sarcastic manner, President Saleh said in an interview to Kuwaiti Rai Al-Aam newspaper that "Gulf States have started accepting Yemen to participate in GCC football tournaments." And when asked about what the next stage would be, he answered, "Perhaps they would allow us to participate in GCC basketball tournaments." He hinted that the process of joining the GCC is not taken seriously and may require a long time.

This comes in harmony to the public opinion that has been growing recently against the idea of joining the GCC and saving Yemen's face from humiliation in the long-run.

Several opposition figures have also urged the government and president to withdraw Yemen's request to join the GCC.

The independent and opposition press has also dedicated many of its columns and articles to this issue calling upon the government to 'stop begging for membership to the GCC' and continue its reforms to enhance

economic and democratic performance.

Enough humiliation!

The overall feeling of the Yemeni public is that authorities in Gulf countries have always looked at Yemen from above, and have never taken Yemen as a country on the same level.

Observers believe that there is almost a constant and permanent feeling of superiority of Gulf States when dealing with Yemen.

They support their claim by noting the embarrassment caused to the Yemeni delegation that was in an official visit to Saudi Arabia recently headed by Yemen's Foreign Minister Dr. Abubakar Al-Qirbi, when the Yemeni minister could not find any high ranking official from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs receiving him at the airport.

In diplomatic terms, the Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs, or a replacement in case of emergency, had to receive the Yemeni Foreign Minister, but none of them did.

Calls to abandon Yemen's request to join the GCC have increased in number and intensity recently for the sake of avoiding more humiliation and continuing life without the dependence on the council.

Yemeni Foreign Minister Abobakar Al-Qirbi, expressed his indignation towards the statements voiced by the Saudi prince.

Al-Qirbi declared that there is no tension in Yemen's relations with the GCC Member states and that, it is impossible for them to ignore Yemen's significance and role in the Arabian Peninsula due to security and strategic aspects.

BY NEWS SERVICES

An alleged terrorist in India is hiding out in Yemen, according to the India Express newspaper.

The paper reports that Mufti Sufiyaan Ahmed Patangia, said to be the prime conspirator in the assassination of Indian official Haren Pandya, and other cases, is now in Yemen according to sources in India's Central

Vaccine tubes filled with water

Top health officials to be tried over Meningitis scandal

By MOHAMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Capital Secretariat Public Property Court held two sessions last week to look into a case filed by the general attorney against 21 top officials at the Ministry of Health, accused of corruption concerning the scandalous case of meningitis vaccine.

Annahar Weekly published a story on Jan. 22 in which a prominent judge told the paper that "accusations of embezzlement of public fund and abuse of power were brought against the defendants."

Among them was the merchant who imported the defective vaccines, which were discovered to be unusable after they were distributed to the public.

Supreme officials in the ministry were not among the accused in the initial trial, but the Central Organization for Audit and Control had indicted a number of those officials including the one of the agents for their role in this case, which was forwarded to the attorney, where it stayed several months.

Upon unveiling the defective vaccines' scandal, public groups expressed outrage and disappointment

and requested the trial of those officials of the ministry who were accomplices with the merchant importing the unusable vaccines.

It was discovered that the merchant had imported empty vaccine glass tubes and filled them with water in an attempt to deceive the public by making them believe that the tubes contained meningitis vaccines, which are used to vaccinate pilgrims before leaving Yemen to go to Saudi Arabia for Hajj.

The government had in the past filed lawsuits against small employees in Aden, Lahj and Sanaa, but the procedure was merely implemented against low-level employees and never reached the top ones in ministries and public authorities.

Reports reveal that the deteriorating health conditions throughout the country have contributed to the spread of various infectious diseases. According to governmental statistics, annually, 30% of the population gets infected by Malaria and 20% by hepatitis while 28% of children get exposed to diarrhea. Apart from that are various other diseases such as influenza, intestines worms, bilharziasis, and an increasing number of positive HIV infections.

waging war against India.

The CBI chargesheets in these cases say that, after the post-Godhra riots, Sufiyaan delivered provocative speeches and, by showing them VCDs of riot victims, instigated Muslim youths to seek revenge.

He is also said to have got in touch with gangster Rasool Pati— who used to be with the Abdul Latif gang of Ahmedabad but now lives in Karachi—to arrange for the youths to be trained in terrorist camps in Pakistan.

Of the 19 named in the assassination case, 15 have been arrested. Sufiyaan and three others are absconding and CBI has sent teams to look for them in Bihar, Hyderabad, Kanpur, Aurangabad, Tonk, Delhi, and other places. Sufiyaan is said to have fled from Ahmedabad to Kolkata, from there to Medina, then to Yemen.

Clash leaves one dead, one injured

In clashes between two individuals belonging to Al-Salm Tribe in Saadah Governorate and the security police, a man named Mahmood Eydah was killed and his brother injured after they injured six of the security police who pursued the two.

Sources have not disclosed the causes behind such clashes between the citizens and the security police.

This governorate adjacent to Saudi Arabia boasts having lots of arms and some of which are smuggled into Saudi Arabia.

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General Post Authority wraps meeting

The 4th consultation meeting of the Management of the General Post and Saving Authority concluded Jan. 23.

The meeting was attended by the managers of postal areas in the different governorates.

Abdulmalik Almalmi, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, said that the meeting

assessed the performance of the General Post and Saving Authority in its different services.

He indicated that progress has been made, that digital comparison has been introduced and procedures have been taken in order to overcome challenges, through training and mechanization across Yemen.

Announcement

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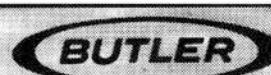
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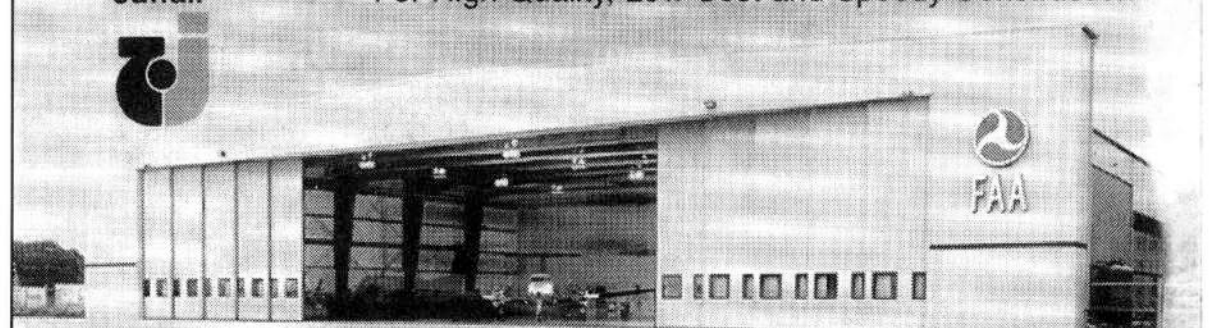
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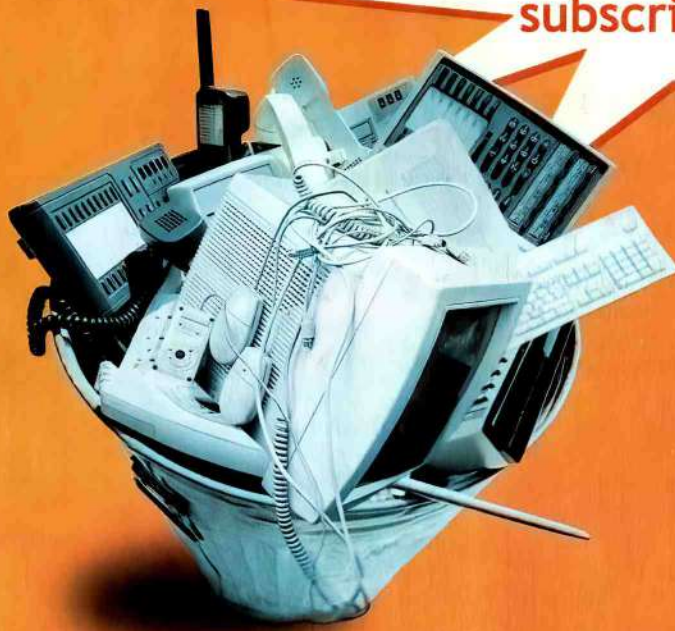
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METCO celebrates 34 years of success

BY EMAD AL SAQQAF
YEMEN TIMES
TAIZ BUREAU CHIEF

Under the motto of "34 years of Giving and Distinguished Success", Middle East Trading Company celebrated its annual get-together celebration on the occasion of the elapse of 34 years in Taiz at the Mohammed Ali Othman School hall.

Considering human resource as the mainstay of production in an appreciation of their strenuous efforts for making the company progressing by leaps and bounds.

The get-together celebration was attended by the general - directors, businessmen, mediamen, social dignitaries, the company employees and workers and a host of others.

Among the chief guests during the celebration were Abdullah Abduh Saeed, the chairman of the Board of the METCO Company, Mr. Abdullah



Mohammed Fakira, the General Manager, Mr. Moner Ahmad Hael, Mr. Wael Abdullah Abduh Saeed, the Deputy General Manager, and Mr. Mohammed Gawad al Aghbary, the Export Section Manager.

On his part, Mr. Abdullah Abduh Saeed, the Chairman of the Board of the METCO Company, spoke of the human resource in this occasion saying that the main mission of his company is to promote the social and living standards of employees and that such get-together celebration is to cooperate and live under the unified umbrella of the Hael Saeed Ana'm Group of Companies.

"We hope to be faithful in our work duties and that all religions in the world pay a special attention to honest work duties. Interrelation at the company is basically based on self-control.

We are absolutely confident of making use of this respect and this can clearly detected through experiences that have been gone though," Mr. Abdullah commented further.

The chairman of the Board of the metco Company attributed most of the great successes achieved by the company to employees and workers' self-control when performing their duties faithfully.

The company in its closing ceremony hoped that the state and media have to pay a special attention to such activities and also disseminating media programs for raising awareness among the publics.

Drama sketches were performed by the well-known drama actor, Fahd Abdulkhaleq centering on the problems faced by employees and workers at the companies.

Workshop on preparation for a biodiversity safety program, concluded

BY ISMAIL AL-GHABIRI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The first workshop on "Preparation of a Biodiversity Safety National Program" was concluded in Sana'a on Tuesday 20 January.

The workshop was attended by many media representatives for government and private establishments and for the T.V. Channels of Sana'a and Aden and domestic radio stations.

The 60 participants in the workshop sponsored by the Environment Protection General Authority, the Ministry of Water and Environment received information on the national effort for biodiversity protection.

Several working papers were presented at the event among which was the biodiversity presented by Dr Mansoor Mohammed Al-Aaqil from



Agricultural Research Authority in Dhamar, another titled Bio-technology and Biological safety presented by Dr A'rif Saeed Aqlan al-Hammadi from the Faculty of Sciences, Sana'a University and another working paper titled Legal Regulations for Biological Safety by Dr. Ja'far

Showaitah.

This workshop was enriched with lots of discussions that highlighted the importance of media in the creation of awareness and the activation of Laws in service of the Yemeni citizen and his environment as well as agricultural and crops.

Union gives its voice in alleviating poverty

BY FAHMIA AL-FOTIH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Under the auspices of Abdulaziz Abdualghani, the head of al-Shura Council, the General Federation of

Workers Trade Unions of Yemen (GFWTUY) along with the International Confederation of Free Trade (ICFT) recently organized in the GFWTUY headquarter a three-day symposium on the role of GFWTUY in alleviating poverty.

Along with Abdualghani, Dr. Khalid AL-Sheik, the minister of industry and commerce, Ahmed Al-kahlani, state minister-Capital general secretary, Yahya Al-kahlani, the head of GFWTUY, Dr. Mohsen Bin Al-Shaibani, ICFT representative, along with a number of republic union members attended and participated in the symposium.

Yahya Al-Kahlani, delivered a welcoming speech specified the aims of the symposium and showed the aspects

of cooperation between GFWTUY and the government and the ICFT on the other side.

He further noted the importance of discussing the topic of poverty and the union's role and interest in fighting it in all society.

Dr. Al-Shaibani greeted all union members for their extensive efforts and displayed the key role of ICFT in tackling and discussing the social and developmental issues for the sake of all works around the world.

He also noted a number of essential structures for appropriately managing the union that was considered the symposium project.

He called to have pressure on the international authorities and institutions to enlist the social dimensions and the aspects of work standards in the international economic policies.

Al-Shaibani further called for a wide participation of GFWTUY in dictate and follows the implementation of the National Strategy in fighting poverty in Yemen.

Mohammed Bamoslem, of the

deputy Labor Affairs office, also delivered a speech in which he stressed on the importance of taking care of poor classes as poverty is one of the reasons that lead to terrorism.

He also said that the ministry adopts a number of projects such as the social insurance and gives a various studies and projects to diagnose the poverty cases and how to face them as well as the relationship between the government, workers and the workowners.

Abdulaziz Abdualghani also noted in his speech that Al-Shura Council has great interest in fighting the poverty.

He called for all citizens to stand together to face this problem as well as the need of cooperation between the government and civic organizations to define poverty' jeopardizes and its kinds and the ways of fighting it as well.

Through the three days of the symposium, seven working papers presented and discussed.

The participants came out with number of important recommendations.



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Bomb blast kills two in volatile Iraqi town

SAMARRA, Jan 24 (Reuters) - A car bomb exploded on Saturday in the heart of the volatile Iraqi town of Samarra, killing at least two Iraqis and wounding at least 33 people, including seven U.S. soldiers, witnesses said. The blast, outside the town council building and close to the main police headquarters, scattered wrecked cars and broken glass across a wide area in central Samarra, which lies in the "Sunni triangle" 100 km (62 miles) north of Baghdad.

Captain Jennifer Knight of the 720th Military Police Battalion told Reuters at the scene that two people had been killed and 33 wounded. She said seven of the wounded were U.S. soldiers working on civil affairs in the town who were hit by flying glass. Their wounds were not serious, she said.

Guerrillas have regularly targeted Iraqi police, often in car bomb strikes on police stations. Other Iraqis seen as cooperating with U.S.-led occupation forces have also been hit.

In Washington, the White House insisted the search would go on for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, despite the fact that the man who was leading the hunt quit his job saying he doubted banned weapons would ever be found.

"I don't think they existed," David Kay told Reuters in a telephone interview on Friday after stepping down.

"What everyone was talking about is stockpiles produced after the end of the

last (1991) Gulf War, and I don't think there was a large-scale production program in the '90s."

Kay's departure had been expected but his comments will put more pressure on President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair over their justification for going to war.

Since the invasion in March, 507 U.S. soldiers have died in Iraq, at least 349 of them killed in action. In the latest fatal incident, a U.S. Kiowa helicopter crashed in northern Iraq on Friday evening, killing the two crew aboard.

A U.S. Army statement said the crash was being investigated. "An initial report from the accompanying second helicopter did not make mention of hostile activity," the statement said.

The U.S. blames Saddam loyalists and Islamic militants for the spate of deadly attacks on occupation forces and Iraqis cooperating with them.

U.S. officials on Friday said Special Forces troops have captured Husam al-Yemeni, a top member of the militant Ansar al-Islam group, which Washington accuses of involvement in attacks on American forces in Iraq.

The hunt goes on

Despite Kay's comments, the U.S. and British governments said they would not give up the hunt for Saddam's alleged arsenal of banned weapons of mass destruction.

"We remain confident that the Iraq

Survey Group will uncover the truth about Saddam Hussein's regime, the regime's weapons of destruction programmes," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said. A spokesman for Blair said: "Our position is unchanged."

Opposition U.S. Democrats seized on Kay's comments as the presidential election campaign warmed up.

"It increasingly appears that our intelligence was wrong about Iraq's weapons, and the administration compounded that mistake by exaggerating the nuclear threat and Iraq's ties to al Qaeda," said Senator John Rockefeller. "As a result, the United States is paying a very heavy price."

Kay will be replaced by former U.N. weapons inspector Charles Duelfer, who has previously expressed doubts that banned weapons would ever be found in Iraq.

Wrangle over political roadmap

The renewed controversy over the reasons for going to war comes as the occupying powers are scrambling to rescue a roadmap for handing sovereignty back to Iraqis in the face of widespread demands across the country for early elections.

Under the original U.S.-backed plan, regional caucuses would select a transitional Iraqi assembly by end-May and this would appoint an interim government that would take over sovereignty by end-June. Full elections would follow in 2005.



Iraqi soldiers and a policeman survey the scene where a car bomb exploded Jan. 24, in the heart of the volatile Iraqi town of Samarra, killing at least two Iraqis and wounding dozens. REUTERS

But Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's most revered Shi'ite cleric, says elections must be held sooner to choose a sovereign Iraqi government, and many Iraqis have backed his call.

After scolding the United Nations for its failure to back the war on Iraq, Washington has now asked U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan to send a

team to Iraq to determine whether early elections are feasible, hoping this will end the controversy.

"We're hoping for a quick response from the United Nations to the request," McClellan said.

U.S. officials were optimistic the United Nations would send a team. Annan, travelling in Europe, is expected

to announce his decision as early as Monday.

The U.N. said a two-member security team had arrived in Iraq to liaise with U.S.-led authorities on any future return of its staff. It pulled international staff out of Iraq last year after two suicide bomb attacks on its headquarters in Baghdad.

Israeli forces kill two Palestinians in Gaza area

GAZA, Jan 24 (Reuters) - Israeli soldiers shot and killed two Palestinians on Saturday near Israel's security fence with the Gaza Strip, the army and Palestinian medics said.

An army spokesman said the Palestinians were shot as they approached the soldiers who suspected the men intended to set off an explosive charge.

The soldiers found binoculars and mobile phones on the bodies of the Palestinians, the spokesman said. The medics said the bodies of two men, shot in the head and legs, were brought to a hospital. They said the men were wearing the combat fatigues of Palestinian militants, but no group claimed the two as members.

The bloodshed was the latest in three years of Israeli-Palestinian violence that has plagued a U.S.-backed peace "road map".

On Thursday, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said the United States was having a "great deal of difficulty" in getting Israel and the Palestinians to implement the plan.



Palestinian mourners carry the bodies of Samer Al Mbaud and Ashraf Al Mbaud during their funeral in Gaza Strip January 24, 2004. Israeli soldiers shot and killed two Palestinians on Saturday near Israel's security fence with the Gaza Strip, the army and Palestinian medics said. REUTERS

DAVOS-IAEA urges Iran to halt more enrichment

DAVOS, Switzerland, Jan 24 (Reuters) - The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) pressed Iran on Saturday to suspend more activities related to enriching uranium, a technology that can be used to make nuclear weapons.

"I am advising them that it would be good to have a very generous, comprehensive suspension," Mohamed ElBaradei told Reuters after talks with Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

"That would create confidence and it would help me and the Europeans to move forward in normalising and expanding cooperation between Iran and the international community."

He said IAEA concerns focused on the discovery by agency inspectors in Iran of equipment contaminated with highly enriched uranium, along with continued enrichment-related activities like production of centrifuges.

Iran has blamed the contamination on parts imported from elsewhere without identifying their origin.

Asked about the IAEA's concerns, Kharrazi said: "It's just a question of spare parts or something, it's minor issues."

"We have very good cooperation with the IAEA," he told Reuters. "I believe the important thing is that we do not have any programme to produce weapons and this is now established."

Washington backs European diplomacy

U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, also in Davos, said his country would support European diplomatic efforts to get the Iranians to agree to a more intrusive inspection regime.

"We'll have to see whether or not that produces the desired result. We believe the Iranians have been actively and aggressively pursuing an effort to develop nuclear weapons," Cheney told the conference of political and business leaders.

"They deny that, but there seems to be a good deal of evidence out there to support the fact that that's exactly what they have been doing," he said.

Kharrazi said Iran's nuclear technology was a source of pride for all Iranians. "At the same time it is totally peaceful and nothing is wrong with having nuclear technology for peaceful purposes," he said.

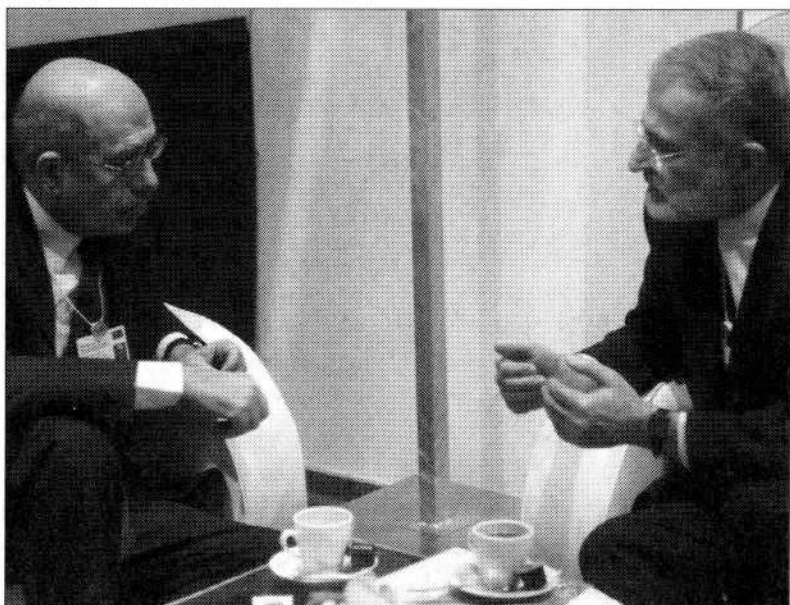
"We have suspended the activities of uranium enrichment, but this does not mean we are going to stop it for ever. This is our right, based on the NPT, to have nuclear activities for peaceful purposes," he said, refer-

ring to the provisions in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty for the sharing of nuclear know-how.

France, Britain and Germany, whose diplomacy encouraged Iran to suspend uranium enrichment and sign the NPT's additional protocol permitting intrusive inspections, worry that Iran is reneging on its November pledge to halt all enrichment-related activities in return for a possible exchange of technology.

Western diplomats say Tehran has been acquiring large amounts of equipment for centrifuges, used to enrich uranium.

On Monday, the foreign ministers of France, Germany and Britain met and discussed Iran's insistence on applying a very limited definition of the term "enrichment-related" to enable Tehran to continue amassing centrifuges.



Iran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi (R) talks to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Mohamed ElBaradei (L) in the coffee shop of the World Economic Forum (WEF) congress center in Davos Jan. 24. REUTERS

مبروك الزفاف

اجمل التهاني والتبريكات مكللة بالفل والورد والياسمين نرفها

زيد طه ابو زيد

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المهنتون، وليد عبدالعزيز السقاف، ريدان عبدالعزيز السقاف،

وكافة سكان عمائر الأوقاف في شارع الستين.

Pakistani scientists involved

IAEA seeks to smash nuclear underground

DAVOS, Switzerland, Jan 24 (Reuters) - The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said on Saturday the agency was working with Pakistan to trace and cripple a sophisticated underground thought to be helping countries with clandestine nuclear weapons programmes.

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf said this week it appeared Pakistani scientists had sold nuclear secrets abroad for personal gain, but with no official involvement.

"We are working with Pakistan...to come to the bottom of this ring of proliferators," Mohamed ElBaradei told Reuters at the World Economic Forum in Davos, in the Swiss Alps.

"I hope we should be able in the next few weeks to come to grips with the extent and nature of that ring and dry it up as soon as possible," he added.

ElBaradei said on Thursday anti-proliferation efforts were under great stress because of what he called a black-market network that was trading in weapons technology.

"What we are seeing is a very sophisticated network of black-market proliferators, people who are selling equipment, material under-

ground...We're still very much in the process of investigating this network."

Pakistan says it began questioning its nuclear scientists, including the father of its atomic bomb, Abdul Qadeer Khan, after the U.N. nuclear agency began investigating possible links between the Pakistani and Iranian nuclear programmes.

"Anti-state elements"

Musharraf said similar allegations had been made against European individuals and countries, adding that any Pakistanis found to be involved would be treated as "anti-state elements".

"The Pakistani government has never, and will never proliferate," he said in Davos.

"As far as Pakistan is concerned, we are carrying out a thorough investigation of any proliferation that may have been done by individuals for their personal financial gain.

Iran, North Korea and Libya have attracted Western concern that one or more of them could join the "nuclear club", although Libya announced late last year it would cooperate with the United States and Britain in dismantling its weapons programmes.

Singapore suspends all Thai chicken imports

SINGAPORE, Jan 24 (Reuters) - Singapore suspended imports of all chicken from Thailand, Asia's biggest poultry exporter, after Bangkok confirmed two cases of bird flu in humans, the government said on Saturday.

Singapore last week suspended the import of live and whole frozen chicken from Thailand, but not poultry cuts and processed parts, which make up 99 percent of the island's annual 15,000 tonnes of Thai chicken imports.

"We suspended imports of all chicken from Thailand, effective from last night," said Goh Shih Yong, a spokesman at the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority.

The ban followed similar moves by the European Union and Japan, the top two importers of Thai chicken. After days of declaring the country free of bird flu which killed five Vietnamese, the Thai government said two boys, aged six and seven, had been infected with the contagious virus.

Goh said the impact on Singapore would be minimal because Thai chicken imports constituted only about seven percent of the city state's total consumption.



Prisoners are used to collect chickens to be destroyed at a farm in Supanburi province, 105 km (65 miles) north of the capital Bangkok on Jan. 24. Thais and tourists in Bangkok are shunning chicken after the government confirmed two Thais have caught bird flu, but visitors said they were not afraid to come to the country. REUTERS

Two Buddhist monks killed in Thailand's Muslim south

BANGKOK, Jan 24 (Reuters) - A machete-wielding attacker killed two Buddhist monks in Thailand's largely Muslim south on Saturday, two days after another monk was killed in the region hit by a recent surge in violence.

The murders followed a series of searches and interrogations of Muslims and their clerics by police looking for those responsible for an attack on an army base and the burning of state schools this month.

The two monks, aged 65 and 13, were attacked by four men on two motorcycles as they left a temple in Yala, about 1,000 km south of Bangkok, to collect food as alms, police said.

A third monk escaped with minor injuries.

On Thursday, a 64-year-old monk was slashed by a sword wielded by one of two men riding on a motorcycle while walking back to a temple in neighbouring Narathiwat province after his morning rounds to collect food.

"It is a ploy to distract police efforts since we are getting closer to the masterminds of the violence," Interior Minister Wan Muhamad Noor Matha, a Muslim, told reporters.

The government imposed martial law on Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala provinces near the Malaysian border following a series of deadly attacks early this month that rattled the government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Community leaders say the security clampdown has fuelled resentment in a region home to most of Thailand's six million Muslims, about 10 percent of the predominantly Buddhist country's population.

Four soldiers were killed and more than 100 guns, most of them M-16s, stolen in a January 4 raid on an army base in Narathiwat. More than 20 schools were torched in what officials believe was a diversionary tactic.

A day later, two policemen were killed trying to defuse a bomb in Pattani and a police station in Yala was raided by a dozen gunmen on January 7. No one was killed.

Don't forget Afghanistan: Karzai

KABUL, Jan 24 (Reuters) - President Hamid Karzai said on Saturday an international conference likely to be held in March would attract more attention to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, which many people complain is happening too slowly.

The United Nations is organising the conference in the Germany city of Bonn to muster support for Afghanistan ahead of elections this year. Aid to Afghanistan and its economic, political and security situation would also be discussed.

"It is a good idea," Karzai told reporters at the doorstep of his presidential palace during a weekly press briefing.

"Afghanistan needs to attract more attention for the reconstruction of the country," he said, adding it also needed more assistance from the international community towards improving security.

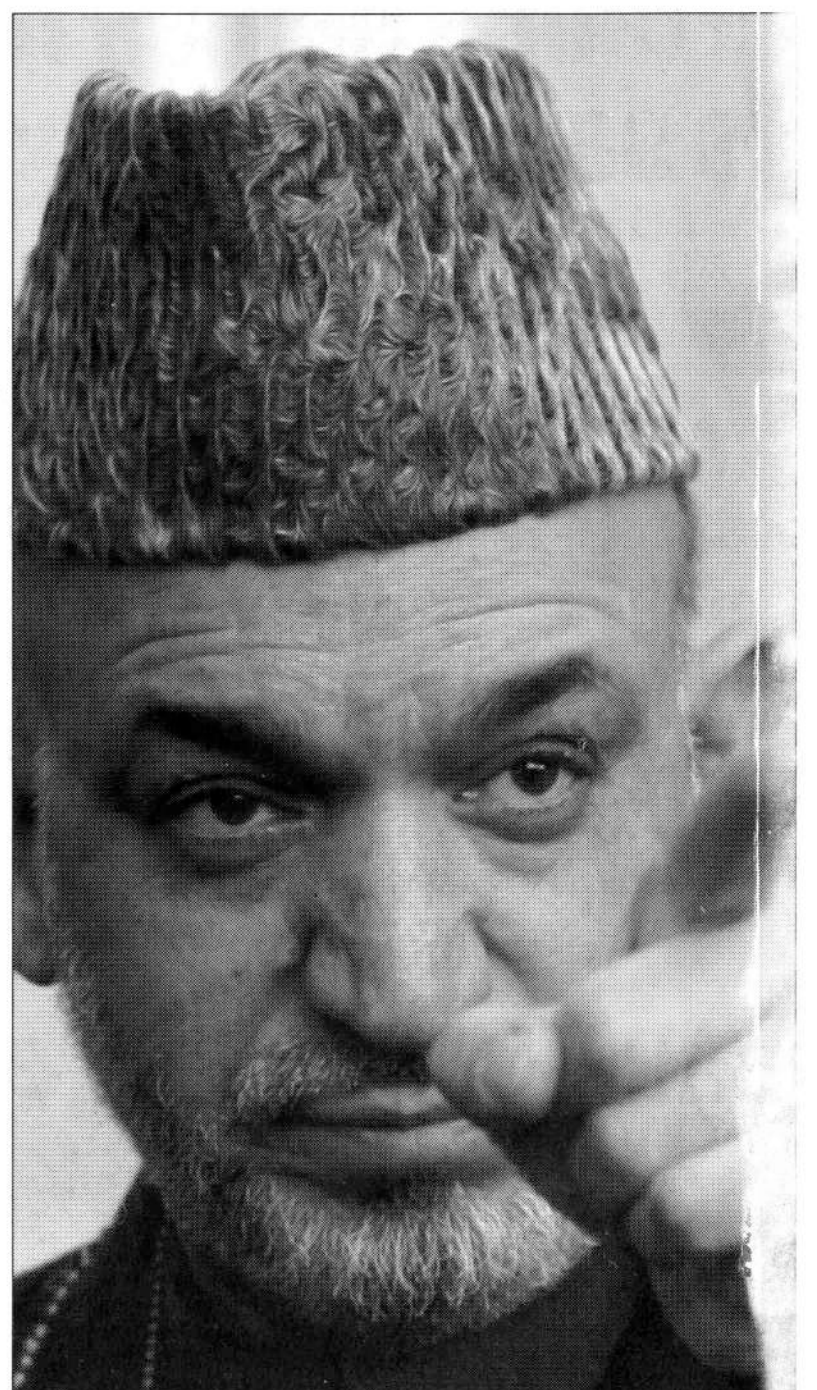
Aid agency Care and the New York-based Center on International Cooperation said in September just 40 percent of the \$5.2 billion in aid pledged in Tokyo two years ago had been released and nearly a quarter of that had been diverted to short-term emergency needs from long-term Afghan reconstruction.

Afghans often complain about the slow pace of reconstruction work and say it is essential to improve security, which the U.S.-led forces and NATO peacekeepers are trying to restore.

The U.N. meeting will be a follow-up to the donors' conference in Tokyo two years ago and a U.N.-backed agreement in Bonn that brought Karzai to power after U.S.-led troops toppled the radical Taliban.

The conference is being held ahead of the first presidential polls due in June, amid high concerns over rising violence, mostly blamed on ousted Taliban.

Only about 370,000 of an estimated 10 million voters have been registered so far because the United Nations and other aid agencies consider vast areas of the country's east and south as dangerous to work.



Afghan President Hamid Karzai responds to a question at a briefing in Kabul Jan. 24. Karzai praised on Saturday the launch of another international conference on Afghanistan. REUTERS

Some 500 people including civilians, militants, aid workers, Afghan troops and over a dozen soldiers from the U.S.-led forces have been killed in eastern and southern Afghanistan since August, the bloodiest violence since the fall of the Taliban's Islamic regime.

Rockets found in Indian Kashmir before national day

SRINAGAR, India, Jan 24 (Reuters) - Indian soldiers recovered rockets and grenades from a rebel hideout in Kashmir's main city on Saturday, which authorities said were aimed at disrupting India's Republic Day celebrations in the troubled region.

Separatist guerrillas, fighting Indian rule in the disputed Himalayan region since 1989, have often targeted the festivities that are held every year on January 26.

"According to intelligence input, this consignment was meant for carrying out attacks in Srinagar city during the Republic Day celebrations," a Border Security Force (BSF) spokesman said.

Srinagar is the summer capital of India's Jammu and Kashmir state.

The BSF spokesman said the rockets and other ammunition were recovered from a hideout of Jaish-e-Mohammad, a Pakistan-based rebel group accused by New Delhi for an attack on the Indian parliament in 2001 that brought the nuclear-armed neighbours on the brink of their fourth war.

Also on Friday, the BSF recovered

45 kg of explosives from a hospital near Srinagar's main stadium where the Republic day celebrations are to be held.

India and Pakistan have agreed to resume bilateral talks in February over a range of disputes, including Kashmir — at the heart of more than five decades of enmity and the cause of two wars.

A hardline faction of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), the main political separatist group, and another prominent outfit, Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front, have called for a strike on Monday to protest against India's Republic Day celebrations.

Hurriyat leaders met with Vajpayee and India's Deputy Prime Minister Lal Krishna Advani this week for unprecedented talks aimed at ending the revolt in Kashmir.

About a dozen Islamic rebel groups have been fighting Indian security forces in the Muslim-majority region where more than 40,000 people have been killed in the revolt so far. Separatists put the toll more than 80,000.

Philippines says 75 fishermen missing in high seas

MANILA, Jan 24 (Reuters) - At least 75 fishermen were reported missing at sea in northern Philippines on Saturday due to strong winds and waves, the coastguard said.

"We don't know if these fishermen, on board several boats, are still at sea or able to return to shore because of the bad weather, probably a squall," coastguard spokesman Rommel Olarte told Reuters.

Olarte said six fishermen from

Bangar, La Union, in northern Philippines were able to return to shore and reported their companions were still missing.

"We are receiving numerous radio messages. It's increasing every minute," Olarte said. "We (coastguards) still cannot go out at sea because of the very strong waves."

The Philippines has 7,100 islands and disasters at sea are common.

New leader vows to restore unity to Georgia

GELATI, Georgia, Jan 24 (Reuters) - President-elect Mikhail Saakashvili vowed on Saturday to restore unity to ethnically divided Georgia, speaking at the tomb of the king whose reign heralded its medieval golden age.

Saakashvili, a 36-year-old U.S.-educated lawyer, won a huge mandate to reform the former Soviet republic in a landslide election victory this month.

He now must stamp out rampant corruption, stabilise relations with neighbour Russia and ensure the security of an international oil pipeline running near separatist regions.

"Some people do not want Georgia to exist on the world's map but they won't achieve their goal," Saakashvili told a crowd of thousands at a monastery 260 km (160 miles) west of the capital Tbilisi. "We should unite, this is my life's goal."

Saakashvili, who led a bloodless people's revolution in November, received the blessing of Georgian church head Patriarch Ilya II in the monastery's Georgian Orthodox church.

The site of the ceremony a day before Saakashvili's official inauguration was chosen for its symbolism. It was built by King David IV in the 12th century, known by Georgians as "The Builder" for unifying the country and constructing cities, roads and bridges.

"Standing at David's tomb we must say Georgia will unite, Georgia will become strong and will restore its integrity," Saakashvili said. "I want to ask for your help in this, I want all of us to do it together and I promise not to become a source of shame for you."

OFFICIALS MUST TIGHTEN BELTS

He has acknowledged that he faces a huge task in a country of 4.5 million



Newly elected Georgian president Mikhail Saakashvili (L) receives an icon from the head of the Georgian Orthodox church Catholicos Ilya II as he visits the Gelati Cathedral in Kutaisi, Jan. 24. Saakashvili will be sworn in as president this weekend in ceremonies his people hope will mark an end to years of post-Soviet upheaval, but with the new leader warning the way ahead will not be easy. **REUTERS**

that has two separatist regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, and a third, Adzhara, that operates autonomously. Under his predecessor Eduard Shevardnadze, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank curtailed their programmes because of widespread corruption.

"Government officials should tighten their belts, just like ordinary people do," Saakashvili said. He has already

said the police will "not spare bullets" pursuing criminals and promised a crackdown on corruption in public life.

Marina Kvitskhvili, a supporter from the nearby city of Kutaisi waving Georgia's newly adopted white and red flag, said: "I like Misha Saakashvili and I think he will be a very good president for us as he's young, clever and he's not corrupted."

Aside from the huge domestic challenge of rebuilding a country where the

infrastructure has deteriorated even further than in other former Soviet states, Saakashvili must repair relations with Russia, which suspects Georgia of harbouring Chechen guerrillas.

Russia is also irked by U.S. involvement in Georgian affairs, which it considers its backyard, and Saakashvili has won U.S. backing in his attempts to get Moscow to agree to withdraw from two military bases inside his country.

Berlusconi celebrates 10 years in politics

ROME, Jan 24 (Reuters) - Rejuvenated by a facelift, Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi staged a razzmatazz rally on Saturday to celebrate the 10th anniversary of his entry into politics.

Hundreds of flag-waving members of his Forza Italia party (Go Italy) poured into a fascist-era suburb of Rome to cheer on their leader, who has redefined the political landscape over the past decade but has struggled to reshape the economy.

"I would do it all again, because despite everything, despite all the suffering, I am convinced that there is nothing more wonderful and noble than to fight for one's own country and for freedom," the untanned Berlusconi told the crowds.

The anniversary has coincided with a difficult moment both for Berlusconi's centre-right coalition, which has fallen prey to in-fighting, and for Italy, which is struggling to come to grips with a multi-billion euro fraud at food group Parmalat.

During his 100-minute address, broadcast live on one of Berlusconi's three private television channels, the prime minister spent much of the time railing against his pet hates — communists and magistrates.

"We are aware that we are the only real chance this country has," he said. "I don't see who else can change Italy."

The media-mogul-turned-politician vanished from public view for more than a month over the Christmas holidays to give him time to recover from cosmetic surgery that ironed out wrinkles on his face and removed bags from under his eyes.

He made oblique reference to the operation on Saturday, saying with a laugh that a "facelift" by leftist parties looking to adopt a more moderate image had failed. "Silvio I love you," an admirer yelled from the balcony.



Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi wipes his eye as he delivers a speech during a rally in Rome Jan. 24. Rejuvenated by a facelift, Berlusconi staged the razzmatazz event to celebrate the 10th anniversary of his entry into politics. **REUTERS**

Party in the shade

Berlusconi has made clear that he wants to boost the profile of Forza Italia, which is the biggest force in parliament but has so far failed to emerge from its leader's shadow.

"In 10 years, Forza Italia has remained an unformed embryo: never a congress or political debate worthy of the name, never an idea, never anything," respected newspaper Corriere della Sera said in a damning comment on its front page on Friday.

Berlusconi shot into politics at the height of corruption scandals that swept away an entire political class, offering a "you can be rich like me" message that Italians bought as readily as the goods advertised on his television channels.

"Silvio is my idol," said 23-year-old Giovanni Coccia on Saturday. "He's a businessman who is working for the good of the country. Sadly, there are very few men like him in Italy."

France denies report it is sending troops to Iraq

BERLIN, Jan 24 (Reuters) - German weekly Der Spiegel reported on Saturday that France was preparing to send troops to Iraq, prompting a swift denial by Paris.

The magazine quoted NATO sources as saying France was considering sending a brigade, or up to 3,000 troops, to Iraq.

This would be a change of position for France which, along with Germany and Russia, opposed the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq.

A French Foreign Ministry spokesman dismissed the report, saying: "We deny this completely."

The magazine also reported NATO was considering moving its rapid reaction force headquarters from Moenchengladbach in Germany to Iraq as part of a deployment there, which could force Germany to commit troops to Iraq.

It said NATO defence ministers

would discuss the plans during a security conference in Munich on February 6 to 8.

German Chancellor Gerhard

Schroeder has recently softened his stance on German participation in rebuilding Iraq, but still rules out military involvement.

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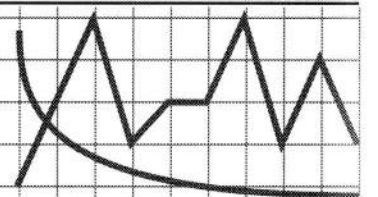
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YT Business



Fighting poverty

Government, workers and chambers need to partner

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) in Yemen has called on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to review articles of the general agreement on services trade for supporting the public sector, along with respect of people travel and essential criteria of work and national legislature pertaining to work and respect of migrating workforce against all forms of discrimination.

The federation has confirmed, in the symposium it has organized in Sana'a with the International Federation of Free Trade Unions (IFFTU), the importance of joining all international efforts for ending poverty and activation of international agreements.

Chairman of the GFTU OF Yemen Yahya al-Kuhlani said the current situation of trade unions in Yemen was that they were facing difficulties in activating the role of the federation in the alleviation of poverty. He stressed the importance of fighting unemployment as well as involving trade unions in drawing up various economic plans.

Working papers presented at the symposium, tackling the discussion of the role of trade unions in fighting poverty, considered the woman as representing an element and a component of the trade union work, that she has to practice her natural right in active participation in the process of development.

Representative of the IFFTU Muhsin al-Shaibani said there's a necessity for involving the Yemeni GFTU in all initiatives, and the government takes on ways of development as it is an active partner and considered one of the prominent components of the society.

But Social Affairs and Labour Undersecretary Mohammed Ali Ba Muslim has stressed the necessity of alliances between the government, the workers and the chambers of commerce for fighting poverty, emphasizing that elimination of illiteracy, back-



A Yemeni poor family receiving donations as part of a bid for fighting poverty

wardness and discrimination between men and women would help move out of the circle of poverty.

The symposium concluded by stressing the importance of effecting advance to the system of social guaran-

tee and insurance on the employees in order to eliminate poverty and its causes.

Joblessness growing

Job training fund needs to do better

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The number of people seeking jobs in Yemen continues to grow despite the official efforts exerted for providing opportunities for the unemployed and the strategic plan on fighting poverty.

When people check the kind of workers for carrying out a technical or professional work, they discover the extent of bad professional services and skills in the market.

A practically-educated workforce offers itself the required experience, testing it and providing work opportunities. One gets surprised that those people are practicing professions that would not live to the wanted level and are not worth the wages they want to gain.

The question is where the failure is, in the society or the market, or the education system or in the absence of skills and standards of technical work? The questions seem to be many but the main question is what kind of relations must be prevalent between the employer and the workers?

We went to a used-goods market at the Hasaba area in the capital secretariat and asked a worker there if he was good at plumbers of water system and drainage, and immediately he had offered us his experience. Along with him came ten other workers wishing to carry out the job.

But all of them appeared to have not used plumbers tools, and they usually practice cheating in free professions.

Asking whether he has heard or known about the Professional and Technical Training Fund, he angrily answered in denial and queried about the fund and whether it is a school of an institute.

No doubt the fund does have a big role in developing skills of the labour

market and in human development for dealing with the latest means of production. The fund also plays an important role in improving production and quality.

The ministry of education and technical training has in this regard founded the fund in cooperation with the International development organisation and a German consultative team, and also engagement of employers from various sectors for funding training and technical qualification.

In 1955, the fund was founded and a law on its establishment was passed in 1997 and employers became contributors in its founding with the aim of supporting the state efforts designed for keeping pace with the development realized in means of production.

The law made the employer obliged to send 15% of his workforce in the fund's training program, and training should be repeated every year in order to the attain the following goals:

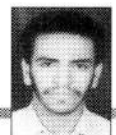
- improvement of production to compete with foreign goods in the market,
- reduction of losses rate of raw material,
- reducing rates of workers incidents,
- not to resort to employing non-Yemeni labour, and,
- reaching the goal with least effort and cost.

During the years 2001-2002 the fund had implemented about 131 training programs for training around 2,445 persons costing more than Y 48 million. Up to the year 2002, the number of companies contributing to the fund was 686 installations.

The problem however lies in training programs that are specialized for labour in installations participating in supporting the fund. Labour in the market would remain far from training and qualification and to suffer from ignorance in knowledge and required skills for developing production.

Underground economy flourishes

Everyone suffers under heavy tax burden



BY ALI ALI SHIBANI
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

The question is, until when are we going to run inside a dark tunnel and narrow alleys? Until when are we going to keep dreaming of a strong economy while we have not yet given event to it?

One would could also ask for how long would we continue moaning due a disease deeply eroding our national economy? Are we to continue holding meetings and preparing academic studies ending with issuing papers and recommendations and future plans quite irrelevant to our reality?

Punitive laws have been passed implying threats of severe accountability to whoever would cause squandering of revenues of the state or against those who would evade paying taxes, whether sale tax or consumer tax or customs duties.

Despite all that the epidemic is still spreading and alive. It's no wonder in

that as some laws and regulations do outdo laws of states having stronger economies.

However unfair the laws are for the merchant, especially that of the sales tax and the consumption tax, the citizen is the one to get harmed because of the weakness of his purchasing power.

The second party to be harmed is the state treasury that would lose much amounts of money because of smuggling operations and the existence of a situation encouraging some of the state employees to play tricks against the law through utilizing some gaps in it for practicing extortion with disregard of the law.

The state complains of smuggling that is extensively spreading and causing the loss of much money that must be entered to the state treasury. Thus the state recruited many people and most of the state financial and security institutions joined forces in this regard and set up plans in the bid to prevent smuggling or mitigate it, but all that was in vain.

This is because the concerned parties are not aware of the main cause which is the high rate of customs duties and

taxes in addition to considering tradesmen as a rival instead of taking them as partners sharing the national interest.

The government institutions got engaged in a war with the merchant and therefore issued unjust laws against him, particularly those related to raising the rate of taxes. I am in this regard quite sure that the only losing parties in this battle are the citizens and the state treasury, because rising taxes duties and customs duties would produce the following regrettable outcomes:

- 1-encouraging smuggling,
- 2-eliminating the remainder of committed merchants, because such merchants would suffer from gross loss under the circumstances of the presence of smuggled goods,
- 3-the state treasury losing very huge revenues, because what is imported across customs crossings is very little in amount compared to the smuggled goods.

Following is a statement of statistics issued by the finance ministry and customs authority of the revenues lost by the state before the application of the sales tax, and in the event of imple-

menting it the loss would be very serious:

Year	Imports via customs inlets	Smuggled imports
1999	312 billion	406 billion
2000	375 billion	488 billion
2001	403 billion	524 billion
2002	438 billion	594 billion
Annual average	282 billion	503 billion

Out of the above statistics it is clear the rise in the dangerous average of smuggling and if this continues in this form, our national economy would be affected with complete paralysis.

So why do not try to benefit from others experiences and take the People's Republic of China as an example? It should be of no wonder for many that China has made strong leaps and developed a strong economy and has gained a world industrial reputation that attracted investments, and all that is ascribed to reducing the average of sales taxes and eliminating them.

In 1990 the domestic investments

amounted to \$3 billion and now after reducing customs duties and the tax by

80% to what they were in 1990 until they dropped to 7%, investments jumped to \$56 billion.

The neighboring countries could be also taken as a second example. They have decreased customs duties to 5% in addition to tax exemption. As for our country the concerned people have become masters in raising the tax that can be amounted to 40% and higher till the percentage of the smuggled reached at 130% compared to the non-smuggled.

Despite many repeated requests by the private sector for cutting the average of the sales and consumption taxes

and the customs duties, they are put on shelves and disregarded.

The merchant is the only side that tangibly feels closely the impact of the law in his commercial life and his dealing with the consumer, therefore all must stand faithfully resolutely to remove all that would damage the interest of the citizen and the country.

Exchange Rare for the Yemeni Rail

as of January 24

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	184.3000	184.5500
Sterling Pound	338.0700	338.5300
Euro	233.4400	233.7600
Saudi Rial	49.1400	49.2100
Kuwaiti Dinar	625.5900	626.4400
UAE Dirhem	50.1800	50.2400
Egyptian Pound	29.9900	30.0300
Bahraini Dinar	488.8500	489.5100
Qatari Rial	50.6200	50.6900
Jordanian Dinar	259.9400	260.3000
Omani Rial	478.7300	479.3800
Swiss Franc	149.0400	149.2500
Swedish Crown	25.6100	25.6500
Japanese Yen	1.7261	1.7284

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

Words of Wisdom



This fall-out from technology advances, notably globalization, is clearly ahead of us. We need to grapple with this and the sooner we assess the issue and decide on what we need to do, the better prepared we will be. A main component of globalization is liberalization.

*Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, (1951-1999)
Founder of Yemen Times*

OUR
OPINIONBuilding vs
destroying

I was harshly criticized a few days ago by a number of readers and friends for publishing positively about the recent international conference here in Sana'a, "Inter-Governmental Regional Conference on Human Rights, Democracy and the International Criminal Court."

I was told that by publishing reports, I was promoting the government and looking for some gain.

With all due respect to those who think otherwise, the conference did need coverage and support. Looking at the governments efforts in promoting democracy and human rights through such events, one can only express appreciation. I always say that building confidence and encouragement is easier than destruction.

Some newspapers blasted the conference even before it started. They called it "a mere propaganda to help the government hide its violations". Those newspapers may have their secret sources that they rely on in bringing forward such claims. But for us at The Yemen Times, we feel obliged to cover the event assuming good intentions of the government and organizers. This is the way it should be for all similar events governments have.

Furthermore, it is much easier to attack and criticize while it is more difficult to seek means to construct and encourage, especially in a time many newspapers tend to bring sensational news to the forefront on the expense of constructive and professional journalism.

What I mean to say here is that regardless of whether the conference was mere propaganda or not, we must not issue prejudiced conclusions in a time we want the government to continue reform packages for more democracy and human rights.

There are a thousand ways to criticize and attack others, but there are limited ways to build and construct in a proper manner. In other words, I believe that along with constructive criticism in showing certain negativities that may occur here and there, it is important to present constructive and well-schemed ideas that could help improve our lives and values whether in partnership with the government or not.

In fact, we can put our government in the test of we encourage them to do such conferences, and follow them with action. We can serve as a watchdog to see how committed the government is to its pledges and promises by looking into its future actions and steps.

One example was the way we exposed the pledge to liberating the electronic media from governmental control, which was clearly stated in the Sana'a Declaration issued following the conference.

This in itself is a good way to have a more influential role because we will be somewhat more accountable in presenting issues. The press reports the declaration and reminds of pledges of the government to adopt. The press also monitors the government's actions and reports of any progress or unwillingness in implementing the declaration.

Hence, as can be clearly seen, the government will be able to gain if it actually implements the declaration as the press will report their implementation.

On the other hand, if the government fails to deliver its promises, it will be a set-back and a confirmation that the original conference was only propaganda.

This is how the press can also strengthen its credibility and become a real watchdog, feared by the government, more than those newspapers that may have lost their credibility for attacking the government with no justification.

The Editor



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

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EAST AND WEST

By JAMIL ABDUL KARIM
jamil@yementimes.com



Exposing a monster

So, we'll soon see the mother of all trials hit the fan. Forget OJ Simpson or Michael Jackson or second-rate dictator Slobodan Milosevic. The trial of Saddam Hussein promises to be the courtroom event of our time.

CNN. Al Jazeera. BBC. Let's hope everyone is there. And why not? Mussolini was lynched. Hitler shot his own brains out. Mao and Pol Pot and Stalin all died old, without tribunal. In terms of a decent, despot trial, we really got ripped off in the 20th century.

But now, can you see Saddam consulting his lawyers on what to wear that big, first day? It will all be so very surreal.

I've recently been asking Yemenis what they think about the Butcher of Baghdad, recently demoted from mythic evil to shabby figure in need of a major shave, a haircut and a place for his suitcase of American cash.

The hero?

One man's comment stands out. "Like at the end of any good story, the hero should die."

Interesting. Indeed, Saddam likely will seize the global spotlight to go down as the great Arab Superman who could have saved them from the Bushies and Jews. Some Arabs might buy this, while others – the odd cab driver here in Yemen for example – still don't believe it's actually Saddam in custody.

Granted, even otherwise reasonable people can sometimes believe the wildest things. After this one man's view about Saddam's fate, this educated professional suggested – to my dismay – that U.S. Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice is the world's 7th richest woman, thanks to income from the many bomb factories she owns.

Come on.

Then he added, with extra zest, "And she's Jewish."

Oh dear. One wonders if he's noticed Rice's skin-colour lately.

"Well," he relinquished, "she acts like she's Jewish."

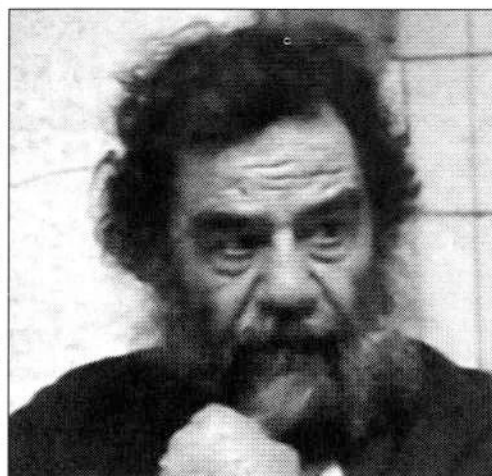
Oh, I see, I thought to myself, as if one can "act" in such a way. But then again, it is true that people groups do have certain characteristics.

Cultural ethos

For example the ethos in this part of the world is one of keeping honour and avoiding shame. Period. And it seems to me that that's what Saddam's trial will be about. Such tradition are the axis on which certain cultures spin, the fig leaves that certain people-groups choose for cover.

This is why, despite no evidence, some Yemenis believe Saddam attacked Kuwait in 1990 because the Americans forced him to. Or that Jews brought down the Twin Towers, and, in fact, 4,000 Jews didn't go to work there on Sept. 11, 2001 because they knew what would hit.

Such dizzy theories are really just one result of the terrible lack of trust that's rooted in some cultures. This, naturally, leads to fear. And a stinging poverty of dignity. As one who has



Saddam Hussein in custody awaiting trial.

lived in both East and West, I can't say enough how important it is for the West in particular to grasp this. In today's war of ideas, and in international relations in general, humiliation is the most underrated force.

Yes, Saddam's trial may be a circus. It will be hard for some not to pull out the popcorn in a front row seat. But international prosecutors simply can't afford to debase Saddam to the extent that will disgrace Arabs who already feel like their face is in the mud.

Lasting dignity

Of course, some Iraqis themselves will want justice at the gallows, especially since Saddam brutally killed and repressed so many of his own people. But swinging him from a rope won't bring anyone lasting dignity either. Revenge is a need of people who feel powerless, a raw emotion that tends to go when their sense of impotence goes.

No, the real needs of Iraqis are much deeper.

Besides, if not collaborators, some western governments were at least benefactors of the ruin that Saddam wrought during parts of his 30-year reign. If it's half-fair, Saddam's trial will also put these sins on the table.

Wherever things go, let's hope that any Saddam-like spirit of hatred isn't left to linger anywhere. Hate won't help Iraqis rebuild on new ground. It will only entrench the dark hero status that some folks already give Saddam.

In the end, dictators are terribly weak and cowardice monsters. To be properly exposed, they need to be tried in a court that rises above such things itself. Let's hope the international community and Iraqis both recognize this.

Jamil Abdul Karim is an editor at the Yemen Times.

British citizen claims miscarriage of justice

By SAKR QUNER SHIHALS
c/o GARIR Shihals@yahoo.com

Almost every citizen in Yemen faces injustice and suffers in loss of their human rights. Justice is unavailable especially to the poor section of Yemeni society.

The rule of law is never implemented the judicial system is corrupt. Court orders issued by Yemeni judges are disobeyed and civil forms are also disobeyed and not implemented by courts.

So how can human beings have a settled life while their basic needs of legal protection are missing, available in the law books of the Yemeni society, but not implemented?

I went to the Yemeni commercial court in Sana'a and I instituted proceedings against my brothers in accordance with the Yemeni company law in accordance with the company law, but to no avail.

Instead judges play with our legal

easier and the wrong doers are left at large to abuse our human rights and the right to live & work in dignity.

I enclose some papers and legal documents as to how courts in Yemen are reluctant to implement their civil commercial laws.

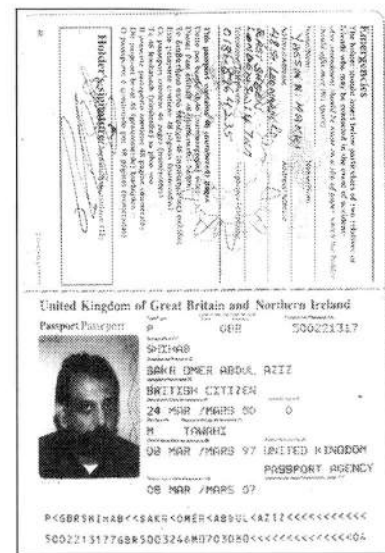
I have enabled the president complaining that court don't implement the law, copy of which I have handed to your good selves.

I have obtained court orders against my partnerships but nothing materialized from them, which shows how bad and corrupt the Yemeni judicial system is.

And without peace of mind and justice them can be no human rights implemented. They may be written in books or laws, but in reality its non-existent in this fund of Arabia.

I am a British citizen born in Aden and I wish your intervention to publicize my case in your well-read newspaper.

I have property, but its all sequenced by my older brothers who has same political influence in the hierarchy of



The government, and you know what political influence means in Yemen.

It means all your human rights are dissolved unless, unless my case is heard through a good newspaper likes yours. I hope you will print my case soonest possible.

Praise to columnist Al-Haifi

Drive Zionist allies from White House

Alan Balboni, PH.D.
University of Nevada, USA
alan_balboni@mail.ccsn.nevada.edu

Three cheers for your columnist Hassan Al-Haifi. He is on target. Yes, whether in the United States or abroad two interests are dominant for the Bush administration: corporate plundering of the wealth of others, whether they be hard working middle class Americans or citizens of Iraq; and subsidizing the

expansionist power of the Zionist state. Sometimes one or the other predominates in relation to a particular issue or particular area of the globe.

Al-Haifi performs a fine service for all readers of the Yemen Times, whether they are in the Moslem world, in the English speaking nations, or indeed in Israel. Too often the media in many areas is owned by corporate plunderers or extreme Zionists affiliated with the Likud Party.

Thus, honest, hard working people across the globe are too often denied

the opportunity to get beyond the rhetoric of "bringing freedom and democracy to all, by force if we so decide" which spews forth from the propagandists of Bush and Sharon.

Haifi will help the readers understand the real motivations of the Bush - Cheney cabal in the White House. We may pray that understanding leads to action so that the American voters will drive the corporate plunderers and their Likud Zionist allies from the White House in the November elections.

COMMON
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

Moslem threat
or Zionist logic

One is bound to wonder how Americans should allow their public opinion to be manipulated by people who have gained a level of respectability for their supposedly perceptive assessments of the political scene in the United States and their unsubstantiated claim to have a vast knowledge of international events. It is no secret to any broad-minded reader of the American press that the Zionist establishment carries out a systematic campaign in the American press to mislead and coax American public opinion to looking at the Middle East and the whole world through Zionist binoculars. This well organized campaign entails the use of so called "prominent" writers and journalists to convey the events in the region in keeping with the image that Zionist advocates, who are well entrenched in the leading public media channels, to one level or another, work diligently to engrain in American minds. The object of this aggressive campaign, which is pursued by all different methods, is to ensure that the Americans, who are paying a substantial contribution to the maintenance and expansion of the Zionist agenda, and now taking part directly in helping to proceed with this agenda at full throttle, would find justifications for their government's extraordinary defense of Israel, militarily, economically and politically.

To illustrate this effort, as subtle as it may appear, one only has to read Thomas Friedman's many articles that are an integrated part of this effort, which are often thrown in between some of his occasionally more meaningful assessments of the domestic and international scene, which ensure that he will continue to hold his prominent status in the press. Needless to say, this writer enjoys an unlimited expense account that supposedly allows him to chase after the truth, wherever it can be found and thus lend credence to his writings as unquestionably being backed by first hand knowledge. This observer, however, was quick to decipher the obvious role that this writer plays in promoting the Zionist cause and it was clear that as liberal-minded and open-minded as Friedman tries to convey himself, the venom of hatred and Zionist sympathy is well manifested in some, if not all of his writings. One wonders how, with the poor quality and baseless reliance on generalizations and innuendos, the writings of Friedman can be deemed to be acceptable, let alone be respectable. In a recent 5-part article in the New York Times, Friedman unabashedly showed his true colors. Using the context of the results of the Iowa Democratic Caucus, Friedman went on to tie the results to some of the clear reflections of Zionist hate mongering that the American Zionist movement spares no efforts in promoting in the United States. The article was meant to convey that the results in Iowa reinforced the belief of Iowa voters that the Bush Administration's drive against what he called the "Moslem threat" is worthy of adoption by the Democrats, even though they may oppose the approach, or criticize Bush's errors in facing up to this menace, that is bugging Friedman and his likes. He persistently went on to make sure that if Islam or Moslems are to be mentioned, he will consistently add an evil association thereto, such as "Islamic totalitarianism threatening open societies" and other evil connotations that Islam must be tied to, as though Islam and evil go hand in hand. On top of this, Friedman insists that he is a broad reader of American public opinion, which he wants us to believe goes along with such hate-filled rhetoric and he states that the American mood in general wants a serious "critique" of the Bush Administration by the Democrats. He defines this "serious critique" as "the one that connects with the gut middle American feeling that the Islamic threat had to be confronted". So no matter what platform a candidate wishes to run under, this gut middle American feeling is the number one guide to ensuring the votes needed to win, otherwise the candidates can just forget about running. This observer is not sure how such a feeling was found by Friedman and is even less sure how much the Iowa Democrats weighed in this feeling as they decided on their preferred candidates, but for Thomas Friedman that was the real deciding factor, and all the other issues that may be of concern to the American voters were thrown out the window.

The obvious reading that one has of such misleading analysis is that indeed the American people are not at all pleased with Mr. George W. Bush's performance as President of the United States and that could result in a search for an alternative that could take the holiday that the Zionists are enjoying with the Bush Administration away. To make sure that this does not happen, "prominent writers", with undisguised sentiments for Israel, are now put to the task of convincing the American people that Mr. Bush had the right idea in mind in his unpretentious war against the "Islamic threat", but the approach may have been wrong or erroneous. It is therefore up to the promising alternatives to simply find a different methodology to keep the "feelings of middle-America" happy. If anyone asks this observer what is meant by "middle Americans", that is an explanation only Thomas Friedman will have to come up with, but will simply not bother to, since its fictitious nature is obvious to all sensible Americans who are beginning to see that the real danger to America is really manifest in the Zionist influence in a sloppy foreign policy with a strategy that borders on chaos.

Human rights, democracy and peace in education

By MU'AYYAD MEHYAR
FOR JORDAN TIMES

Everyone has the right to education, directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights, democracy, peace and fundamental freedoms. Education is a human right and an essential tool towards achieving the goals of sustainable development.

As a result of in-depth analysis of Ministry of Education schools and a comprehensive survey I conducted to see the implementation of human rights, democracy and peace practices at school and home, the learning behaviour and action emerged as the areas in which ideas, attitudes and values acquired should be put in practice.

It must be stressed, however, that action requires its own kind of learning; it does not occur automatically and naturally. It must be developed by creating the conditions for practicing the kind of behaviour that should be associated with human rights, democracy and peace concepts, applications and practices. Obviously such behaviour goes beyond the possibilities of any education process. It must be connected to everyday life and the daily needs of students, families and schools.

The survey put an emphasis on the learning processes where the primary agent of education in the school system is the teacher. Human rights, democracy and peace education must be based on the work he/she does in the classroom. If human rights education in school is to be effective, the teacher must, first, have a profound conviction and, second, be adequately trained. No decree, reform or regulation will work if the teacher is not convinced. Hence, human rights, democracy and peace education must begin by encouraging teachers to take up the task themselves by incorporating it into their usual work, without overloading them.

I recommend that a new phase follow this survey, to design and establish a capacity-building project that aims to empower teachers to know how they relate human rights, democracy and peace concepts to education, and how to develop teaching methods that will enable them to bring human rights, democracy and peace issues into the school. In addition to teachers, students and parents should enrol in the project so that they incorporate human

rights, democracy and peace concepts into their daily practices and into their daily interactions.

It is wrong to believe that change in the curriculum means fulfilling an American agenda. It is a national interest and need. The issues related to freedom and civil society, family environment, health and welfare, education in human rights, democracy and peace, and cultural activities should be addressed by us, Jordanians, and should be scaled up into all form of human development, of knowledge, skill, attitude and interaction with fellow citizens, the government and the country.

A comprehensive analysis of the survey showed that the focus should be on learning, rather than teaching, on the learning person rather than on the teacher and the educational institution. The shift of focus will be well accounted for if we incorporate human rights, democracy and peace concepts, practices and applications into the education processes and socially. Incorporating human rights, democracy and peace in the education process affects several interrelated areas of learning: information and conceptualisation, formation of attitudes and values, behaviour and actions.

There is enormous need for a comprehensive capacity-building and empowerment programme to be designed, implemented and applied in the Ministry of Education's public schools. The beneficiaries of this programme are the students, teachers, schools principals, schools counsellors and parents. This programme should empower students to be more active, less violent, more respectful and understanding of their colleagues, interacting democratically with their peers and within the school's system, more peaceful towards their peers and with the school property, and to democratically engage themselves in extracurricular activities.

The teachers should be empowered to become more participatory, use participatory learning methods, encourage students to reach their fullest potentials, deal with students in a more respectful way, be democratically interactive with their peers and their students and encourage parents to participate in the school's activities. Parents should be empowered to respect their children's needs and interests, support their children's choices, give more time to their children and to

their children's schools, democratically engage themselves in the school system through active participation in the school's activities and in the PTAs.

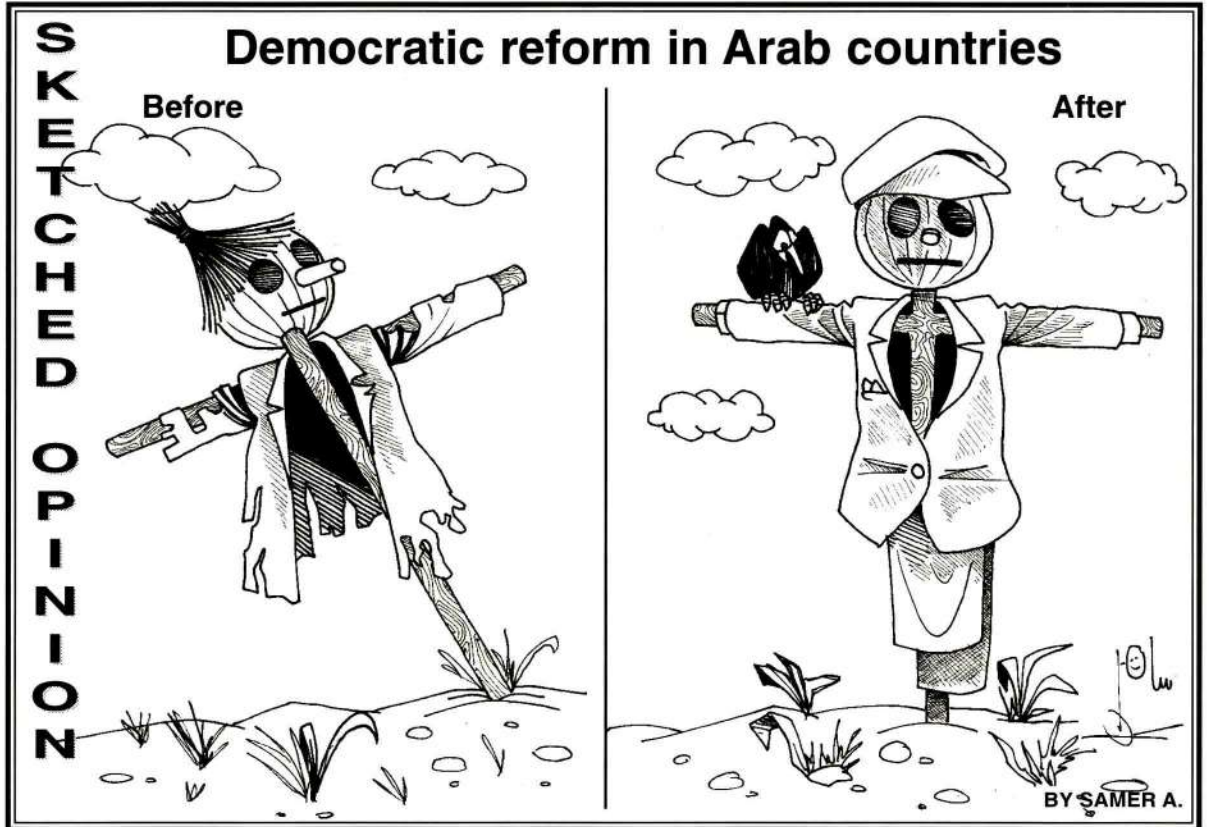
Education in human rights helps students understand and master their role as active citizens in a democratic society.

Teaching usually concentrates only on developing knowledge. However, education should help create a system of values and personal skills (self understanding, self recognition) and social skills (interactive skills, skills in resolving conflicts and problems). The outcome of such education is a decent and fair environment where human rights are taken for granted and are present in each teaching method and each relationship.

There is enormous need for a conflict-resolution education programme to enhance the schools' climate for human rights, democracy and peace practices and applications. Conflict-resolution education shows and emphasises the importance of the right attitude in dealing with conflicts, because it is not enough for a student, teacher and parent to be equipped with knowledge, neither it is sufficient for them to be equipped with skills (hard work); for them to be winners, they must be equipped with the right attitude.

Too many of our students are caught up in conflicts every day, that they do not know how to manage — teasing, jealousy, physical aggression. The survey showed that 90 per cent of the students resolve their conflicts violently — whether physically, verbally or emotionally — symptom of students' inability to manage conflict in their lives. Educating students how to manage conflicts in a productive way can help reduce incidents of violent behaviour. Conflict-resolution education is a beneficial component of a comprehensive violence prevention and intervention programme in schools and communities.

I believe it is high time to introduce a comprehensive reform process in the Kingdom's education system. The Ministry of Education has worked hard towards this goal, but there is need to involve all the stakeholders, including the Parliament, where a national dialogue must be launched to inform people about the new trends of education reform and to make sure that we plan and work in a participatory inclusive approach.



Going for broke

By PAUL KRUGMAN
For The New York Times

According to advance reports, George Bush will use tonight's State of the Union speech to portray himself as a visionary leader who stands above the political fray. But that act is losing its effectiveness. Mr. Bush's relentless partisanship has depleted much of the immense good will he enjoyed after 9/11. He is still adored by his base, but he is deeply distrusted by much of the nation.

Mr. Bush may not understand this; indeed, he still seems to think that he's another Lincoln or F.D.R. "No president has done more for human rights than I have," he told Ken Auletta.

But his political handlers seem to have decided on a go-for-broke strategy: confuse the middle one last time, energize the base and grab enough power that the consequences don't matter.

What do I mean by confusing the middle? The striking thing about the "visionary" proposals floated in advance of the State of the Union is their transparent cynicism and lack of realism. Mr. Bush has, of course, literally promised us the Moon — and Mars, too. And the ever-deferential media have managed to keep a straight face.

But that's just the most dramatic example of an array of policy proposals that don't withstand even minimal scrutiny. Mr. Bush has already pushed through an expensive new Medicare benefit — without any visible source

of financing. Reports say that tonight he'll propose additional, and even more expensive, new initiatives, like partial Social Security privatization — which all by itself would require at least \$1 trillion in extra funds over the next decade. Where is all this money going to come from?

Judging from the latest CBS/New York Times Poll, these promises of something for nothing aren't likely to convince many people. It's not just that the bounce from Saddam's capture has already gone away. Unfavorable views of Mr. Bush as a person have reached record levels for his presidency. It seems fair to say that many Americans, like most of the rest of the world, simply don't trust him anymore.

But some Americans will respond to upbeat messages, no matter how unrealistic. And that may be enough for Mr. Bush, because while he poses as someone above the fray, he is continuing to solidify his base.

The most sinister example was the recess appointment of Charles Pickering Sr., with his segregationist past and questionable record on voting rights, to the federal appeals court — the day after Martin Luther King's actual birthday. Was this careless timing? Don't be silly: it was a deliberate, if subtle, gesture of sympathy with a part of the Republican coalition that never gets mentioned in public.

A less objectionable but equally calculated gesture will be Mr. Bush's demand that his tax cuts be made permanent. Realistically, this can't make any difference to the economy now, and it makes no sense, given the array

of new spending plans he will simultaneously unveil. But it's a signal to the base that any seeming moderation needn't be taken seriously, and that the administration's hard-right turn will continue.

Meanwhile, the lying has already begun, with the Republican National Committee's willful misrepresentation of Wesley Clark's prewar statements. (Why are news organizations letting them get away with this?)

The question we should ask is, Where is all this leading?

Some cynical pundits think that Mr. Bush's advisers plan to leave the hard work of dealing with the mess he's made to future presidents. But I don't think that's right. I can't see how the budget can continue along its current path through a second Bush term — financial markets won't stand for it.

And what about the growing military crisis? The mess in Iraq has placed our volunteer military, a magnificent but fragile institution, under immense strain. National Guard and Reserve members find themselves effectively drafted as full-time soldiers. More than 40,000 soldiers whose enlistment terms have expired have been kept from leaving under "stop loss" orders. This can't go on for four more years.

Karl Rove and other insiders must know all this. So they must figure that once they have won the election, they will have such a complete lock on power that they can break many of their promises with impunity.

What will they do with that lock on power? Their election strategy — confuse the middle, but feed the base — suggests the answer.

'O'Neill's book and Bush

By FIRAS AL-ATRAQCHI
FOR YELLOWTIMES.ORG (CANADA)

Former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill's book has slapped the Bush administration with an explosive set of embarrassment, not the least of which is the claim that George Bush came to the U.S. presidency with one objective in mind — the removal of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

O'Neill's book, *The Price of Loyalty*, written by Ron Suskind, claims that the first national security meeting of the new Bush administration in January 2001 focused on how to find a way to remove Saddam from Iraq. In a shockingly candid interview with CBS' 60 Minutes last Sunday, O'Neill defended his book: "From the very beginning, there was a conviction that Saddam Hussein is a bad person and that he needed to go. From the very first instance, it was about Iraq. It was about what we can do to change this regime."

In an upcoming issue of *TIME* magazine, O'Neill debunked the weapons of mass destruction claims against Iraq: "In the 23 months I was there, I never saw anything that I would characterize

as evidence of weapons of mass destruction. ... I never saw anything in the intelligence that I would characterize as real evidence."

While at the Monterrey, Mexico 34-nation Summit of the Americas, U.S. President Bush defended his anti-Saddam initiative during his early administration days and claimed it was following in line with policies set forth by the Clinton administration.

"The stated policy of my administration towards Saddam Hussein was very clear. Like the previous administration, we were for regime change," Bush said.

Bush's statements, however, fly in the face of history; while the Clinton administration was seeking a regime change in Iraq, it had not initiated war or invasion planning. Indeed, the Clinton administration believed that U.S.-sponsored U.N. sanctions were effective in "boxing in" Iraq. The concept of "dual containment" was one envisioned by then U.S. Secretary of State Madeline Albright. The U.S. policy on Iraq was so enshrined in sanctions and containment — not invasion — that Albright would endure flak for her "it's all worth it" quote regarding the deaths of Iraqi children in the 1990s.

Quoting a 1995 U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report that 567,000 Iraqi children under the age of five had died as a result of the sanctions, Leslie Stahl of 60 Minutes asked Albright: "We have heard that a half million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?"

Albright answered: "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price — we think the price is worth it."

In 1997, the newly-established Project for the New American Century (PNAC) comprised of Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Jeb Bush, and Elliot Abrams. On January 26, 1998, the PNAC published an open letter to U.S. President Clinton urging him to unilaterally invade Iraq with utter disregard for the U.N.

In September 2000, the PNAC published a blueprint for U.S. foreign policy and strategy. The blueprint, titled *Rebuilding America's Defenses: Strategies, Forces And Resources For A New Century*, went largely unreported in U.S. media, but is available online.

(<http://www.newamericancentury.org/publicationsreports.htm>)

In January 2001, nine of the 18 founding members of the PNAC joined the Bush administration in high-level cabinet positions.

The invasion of Iraq, and control of the Arab Gulf region, is clearly defined as a central strategy in the report:

"The United States has for decades sought to play a more permanent role in Gulf regional security. While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein."

The report pinpoints the U.K. as "the most effective and efficient means of exercising American global leadership"; that this ally play a vital role in the "fight and decisively win multiple, simultaneous major theatre wars"; sees the U.N. as a weak, bureaucratic offset of the U.S.'s political will: peace-keeping missions are "demanding American political leadership rather than that of the United Nations."

The report goes on to indicate that U.S. strategic interests require that "even should Saddam pass from the scene, bases in Saudi Arabia and

Kuwait will remain permanently — despite domestic opposition in the Gulf regimes to the stationing of U.S. troops — as "Iran may well prove as large a threat to U.S. interests as Iraq has."

The report also sees the emerging unity of European markets as a liable threat against U.S. interests and subsequently, all industrial nations must be discouraged from rivaling or challenging the U.S.

The disinformation initiative to fool the U.S. public into believing that Iraq was an imminent threat began well before September 11, 2001, with carefully selected articles making their way into mainstream media. The proponents of this initiative include CNN, MSNBC, CNBC, the Washington Post, the New York Times, the National Review and a bevy of syndicated columnists such as Ann Coulter ("let's invade their countries, kill their leaders, and convert them to Christianity"), Charles Krauthammer and William Safire, and political heavies like Richard Perle, Henry Kissinger, and former CIA chief William Woolsey.

The list also includes various "experts," military personnel, and Iraqi dissidents residing in the U.S. who believe supporting the Bush administra-

tion will make their lives easier in the New World. British Member of Parliament George Galloway has publicly called these Iraqi dissidents as "bought and paid for by the Americans" (BBC - September 24, 2002).

Will the O'Neill revelations spell political trouble for the Bush re-election campaign?

Democratic Presidential hopeful Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts believes the O'Neill revelations "call[s] into question everything that the administration put in front of us." He has called for an inquiry.

Former NATO General and Democratic Presidential hopeful Wesley Clark has also called for a full congressional investigation into the Bush administration's stated goals for going to war in Iraq.

At press time, the U.S. team of inspectors led by David Kay had been pulled out of Iraq and may never return. No weapons of mass destruction were found. The Danish find of shells thought to contain chemical weapons also revealed no WMD-related material.

No links between Iraq and al-Qaeda have been proven.

A person who builds bridges between cultures and believes in the role of intellectuals

Günter Grass: Man with a mission

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF
AND NEWS SERVICES

There is no doubt that German writer and novelist Günter Grass, who is also the winner of the 1999 Nobel Prize for Literature, has become an effective figure in building bridges of understanding and culture between different countries and peoples.

His visits to countries throughout the world, including Yemen, which he visited in 2002, and his contribution to harmony and peace in a global scale have made him a phenomenon and an example to follow suit.

Yemen was lucky again to have Günter Grass back to participate in the recent Inter-governmental conference on human rights, democracy and the International Criminal Court held during 10-12 January in Sana'a. He was an active participant who also participated in consolidating German-Yemen relations further through his active participation in the forum of Arab-German Novel held last week aimed at re-emphasizing the importance of cultural dialogue between different nations.

The presence of Grass has indeed given great importance to the 3-day event, which brought together prominent Arab and foreign think-tanks including Yemen's renowned personality Dr. Abdul-Karim Al-Iryani, the advisor to President Saleh.

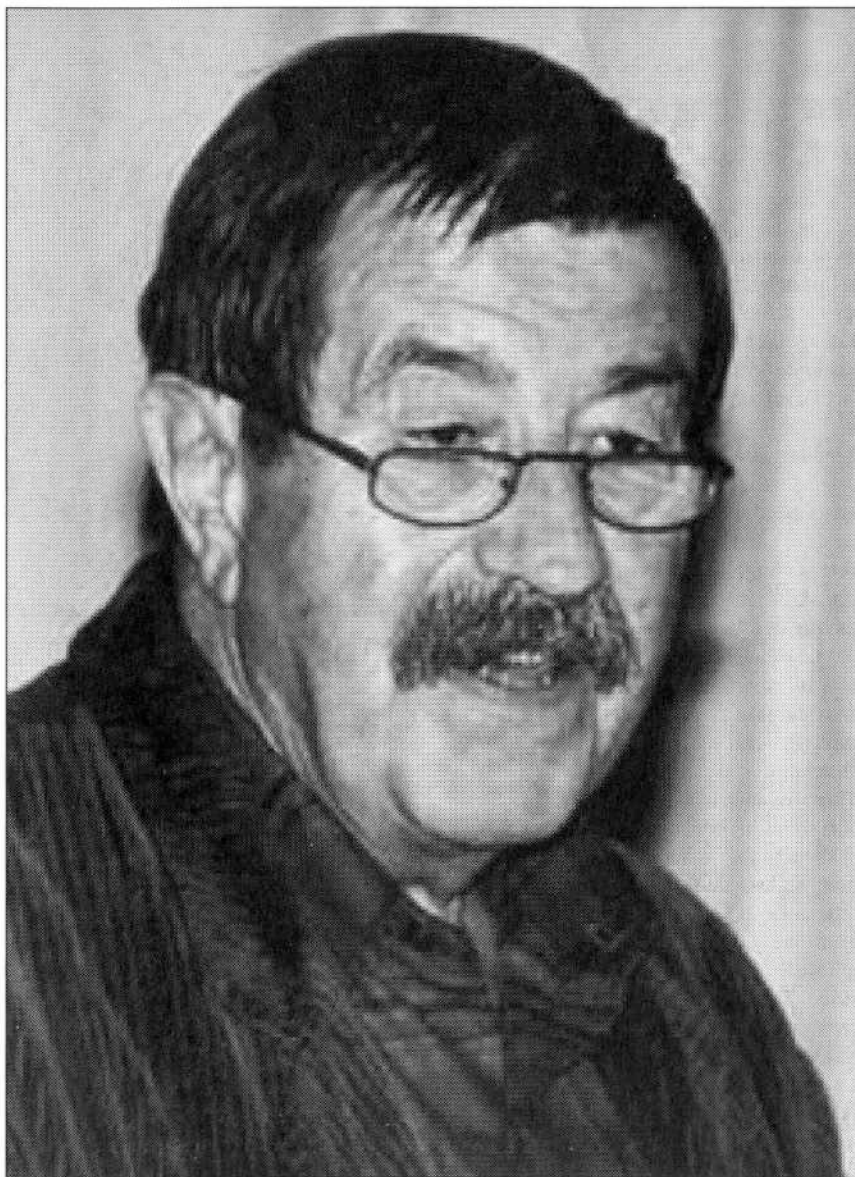
The Arab-German Novel Forum has taken place along with the inauguration of the Arab-German Forum of Creation, and the launching of Günter Grass Center of Mud Buildings.

Meanwhile, the Chairman of YCR, Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh praised Mr. Grass for his active participation and called the event a tremendous success by saying that such "meetings which bring together people of different cultural backgrounds offer the only glimmer of hope for human friendship in a world where pro-peace and pro-war approaches are colliding."

It is worth noting that Mr. Günter Grass received the 1999 Nobel Prize for Literature for his "frolicsome black fables" work, which "portrays the forgotten face of history."

On the occasion of his visit to Yemen, the German House for Culture organized a special gathering to view an impressive documentary movie that was made during the visit of Günter Grass to Yemen in 2002. The documentary was shown in its English and Arabic language versions as many foreign and Yemeni guests were able to get informed on the reasons of the visit of Mr. Grass.

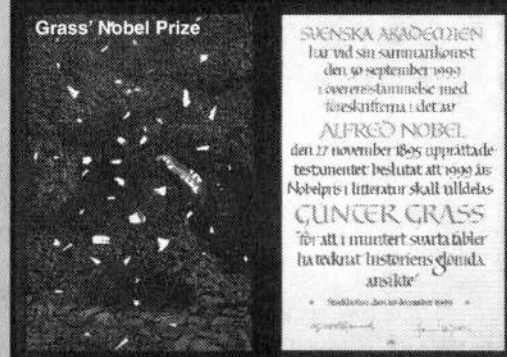
Furthermore, a reception at the German embassy in Sana'a was also organized in honor of Günter Grass and the German delegation that participated in the regional conference.



Günter Grass

Biography of Günter Grass

Günter Grass was born in 1927 in Danzig-Langfuhr of Polish-German parents. After military service and captivity by American forces 1944-46, he worked as a farm labourer and miner and studied art in Düsseldorf and Berlin. 1956-59 he made his living as a sculptor, graphic artist and writer in Paris, and subsequently Berlin. In 1955 Grass became a member of the socially critical Gruppe 47 (later described with great warmth in *The Meeting at Telgte*), his first poetry was published in 1956 and his first play produced in 1957. His major international breakthrough came in 1959 with his allegorical and wide-ranging picaresque novel *The Tin Drum* (filmed by Schlöndorff), a satirical panorama of German reality during the first half of this century, which, with *Cat and Mouse* and *Dog Years*, was to form what is called the Danzig Trilogy. In the 1960s Grass became active in politics, participating in election campaigns on behalf of the Social Democrat party and Willy Brandt. He dealt with the responsibility of intellectuals in *Local Anaesthetic*, *From the Diary of a Snail* and in his "German tragedy" *The Plebeians Rehearse the Uprising*, and published political speeches and essays in which he advocated a Germany free from fanaticism and totalitarian ideologies. His childhood home, Danzig, and his broad and suggestive fabulations were to reappear in two successful novels criticising civilisation, *The Flounder* and *The Rat*, which reflect Grass's commitment to the peace movement and the



environmental movement. Vehement debate and criticism were aroused by his mammoth novel *Ein weites Feld* which is set in the DDR in the years of the collapse of communism and the fall of the Berlin wall. In *My Century* he presents the history of the past century from a personal point of view, year by year. As a graphic artist, Grass has often been responsible for the covers and illustrations for his own work. Grass was President of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin 1983-86, active within the German Authors' Publishing Company and PEN. He has been awarded a large number of prizes, among them Preis der Gruppe 47 1958, "Le meilleur livre étranger" 1962, the Büchner Prize 1965, the Fontane Prize 1968, Premio Internazionale Mondello 1977, the Alexander-Majakowski Medal, Gdansk 1979, the Antonio Feltrinelli Prize 1982, Großer Literaturpreis der Bayerischen Akademie 1994. He has honorary doctorates from Kenyon College and the Universities of Harvard, Poznan and Gdansk.

NOBEL LECTURE

As a means to appreciate the role of Günter Grass in bridging gaps between peoples and countries, here we publish the full text of the novel lecture given after Günter Grass received the Nobel award.

"To Be Continued ..."

Having made this announcement, nineteenth-century works of fiction would go on and on. Magazines and newspapers gave them all the space they wished: the serialized novel was in its heyday. While the early chapters appeared in quick succession, the core of the work was being written out by hand, and its conclusion was yet to be conceived. Nor was it only trivial horror stories or tear-jerkers that thus held the reader in thrall. Many of Dickens' novels came out in serial form, in installments. Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* was a serialized novel. Balzac's time, a tireless provider of mass-produced serializations, gave the still anonymous writer lessons in the technique of suspense, of building to a climax at the end of a column. And nearly all Fontane's novels appeared first in newspapers and magazines as serializations. Witness the publisher of the *Vossische Zeitung*, where *Trials and Tribulations* first saw print, who exclaimed in a rage, "Will this slutish story never end!" But before I go on spinning these strands of my talk or move on to others, I wish to point out that from a purely literary point of view this hall and the Swedish Academy that invited me here are far from alien to me. My novel *The Rat*, which came out almost fourteen years ago and whose catastrophic course along various oblique levels of narration one or two of my readers may recall, features a eulogy delivered before just such an audience as you, an encomium to the rat or, to be more precise, the laboratory rat. The rat has been awarded a Nobel Prize. At last, one might say. She's been on the list for years, even the short list. Representative of millions of experimental animals – from guinea pig to rhesus monkey – the white-haired, red-eyed laboratory rat is finally getting her due. For she more than anyone – or so claims the narrator of my novel – has made possible all the Nobelized research and discoveries in the field of medicine and, as far as Nobel Laureates Watson and Crick are concerned, on the virtually boundless turf of gene manipulation. Since then maize and other vegetables – to say nothing of all sorts of animals – can be cloned more or less legally, which is why the rat-men, who increasingly take over as the novel comes to a close, that is, during the post-human era, are

called Watsoncricks. They combine the best of both genera. Humans have much of the rat in them and vice versa. The world seems to use the synthesis to regain its health. After the Big Bang, when only rats, cockroaches, flies, and the remains of fish and frog eggs survive and it is time to make order out of the chaos, the Watsoncricks, who miraculously escape, do more than their share. But since this strand of the narrative could as easily have ended with "To Be Continued ..." and the Nobel Prize speech in praise of the laboratory rat is certainly not meant to give the novel a happy end, I can now – as what might be called a matter of principle – turn to narration as a form of survival as well as a form of art. People have always told tales. Long before humanity learned to write and gradually became literate, everybody told tales to everybody else and everybody listened to everybody else's tales. Before long it became clear that some of the still illiterate storytellers told more and better tales than others, that is, they could make more people believe their lies. And there were those among them who found artful ways of stemming the peaceful flow of their tales and diverting it into a tributary, that, far from drying up, turned suddenly and amazingly into a broad bed, though now full of flossam and jetsam, the stuff of sub-plots. And because these primordial storytellers – who were not dependent upon day or lamp light and could carry on perfectly well in the dark, who were in fact adept at exploiting dusk or darkness to add to the suspense – because they stopped at nothing, neither dry stretches nor thundering waterfalls, except perhaps to interrupt the course of action with a "To Be Continued ..." if they sensed their audience's attention flagging, many of their listeners felt moved to start telling tales of their own. What tales were told when no one could yet write and therefore no one wrote them down? From the days of Cain and Abel there were tales of murder and manslaughter. Feuds – blood feuds, in particular – were always good for a story. Genocide entered the picture quite early along with floods and droughts, fat years and lean years. Lengthy lists of cattle and slaves were perfectly acceptable, and no tale could be believable without detailed genealogies of who came before whom and who came after, heroic tales especially. Love triangles, popular even now, and tales of monsters – half man, half beast – who made their way through labyrinths or lay in wait in the bulrushes attracted mass audiences from the outset, to say nothing of legends of gods and idols and accounts of sea journeys, which were then handed

down, polished, enlarged upon, modified, transmogrified into their opposites, and finally written down by a storyteller whose name was supposedly Homer or, in the case of the Bible, by a collective of storytellers. In China and Persia, in India and the Peruvian highlands, wherever writing flourished, storytellers – whether as groups or individuals, anonymously or by name – turned into literati. Writing- fixated as we are, we nonetheless retain the memory of oral storytelling, the spoken origins of literature. And a good thing too, because if we were to forget that all storytelling comes through the lips – now inarticulate, hesitant, now swift, as if driven by fear, now in whisper, to keep the secrets revealed from reaching the wrong ears, now loudly and clearly, all the way from self-serving bluster to sniffing out the very essence of life – if our faith in writing were to make us forget all that, our storytelling would be bookish, dry as dust. Yet how good too that we have so many books available to us and that whether we read them aloud or to ourselves they are permanent. They have been my inspiration. When I was young and malleable, masters like Melville and Döblin or Luther with his Biblical German prompted me to read aloud as I wrote, to mix ink with spit. Nor have things changed much since. Well into my fifth decade of enduring, no, relishing the toil and toils called writing, I chew tough, stringy clauses into manageable mush, babble to myself in blissful isolation, and put pen to paper only when I hear the proper tone and pitch, resonance and reverberation. Yes, I love my calling. It keeps me company, a company whose polyphonic chatter calls for literal transcription into my manuscripts. And there is nothing I like more than to meet books of mine – books that have long since flown the coop and been expropriated by readers – when I read out loud to an audience what now lies peacefully on the page. For both the young, weaned early from language, and the old, grizzled yet still rapacious, the written word becomes spoken, and the magic works again and again. It is the shaman in the author earning a bit on the side, writing against the current of time, lying his way to tenable truths. And everyone believes his tacit promise: To Be Continued ... But how did I become a writer, poet, and artist – all at once and all on frightening white paper? What homemade hubris put a child up to such craziness? After all, I was only twelve when I realized I wanted to be an artist. It coincided with the outbreak of the Second World War, when I was living on the outskirts of Danzig. But my first opportunity for professional development had to wait until the following year, when I found a tempting offer in the Hitler Youth magazine *Hilf mit!* (Lend a Hand). It was a story contest. With prizes. I immediately set to writing my first novel. Influenced by my mother's background, it bore the title

The Kashubians, but the action did not take place in the painful present of that small and dwindling people; it took place in the thirteenth century during a period of interregnum, a grim period when brigands and robber barons ruled the highways and the only recourse a peasant had to justice was a kind of kangaroo court. All I can remember of it is that after a brief outline of the economic conditions in the Kashubian hinterland I started in on pillages and massacres with a vengeance. There was so much throttling, stabbing, and skewering, so many kangaroo-court hangings and executions that by the end of the first chapter all the protagonists and a goodly number of the minor characters were dead and either buried or left to the crows. Since my sense of style did not allow me to turn corpses into spirits and the novel into a ghost story, I had to admit defeat with an abrupt end and no "To Be Continued ...". Not for good, of course, but the neophyte had learned his lesson: next time he would have to be a bit more gentle with his characters. But first I read and read some more. I had my own way of reading: with my fingers in my ears. Let me say by way of explanation that my younger sister and I grew up in straitened circumstances, that is, in a two-room flat and hence without rooms of our own or even so much as a corner to ourselves. In the long run it turned out to be an advantage, though: I learned at an early age to concentrate in the midst of people or surrounded by noise. When I read I might have been under a bell jar; I was so involved in the world of the book that my mother, who liked a practical joke, once demonstrated her son's complete and utter absorption to a neighbour by replacing a roll I had been taking an occasional bite from with a bar of soap – Palmolive, I believe – whereupon the two women – my mother not without a certain pride – watched me reach blindly for the soap, sink my teeth into it, and chew it for a good minute before it tore me away from my adventure on the page. To this day I can concentrate as I did in my early years, but I have never read more obsessively. Our books were kept in a bookcase behind blue-curtained panes of glass. My mother belonged to a book club, and the novels of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy stood side by side and mixed in with novels by Hamsun, Raabe, and Vicky Baum. Selma Lagerlöf's *Gösta Berling* was within easy reach. I later moved on to the Municipal Library, but my mother's collection provided the initial impulse. A punctilious businesswoman forced to sell her wares to unreliable customers on credit, she was also a great lover of beauty: she listened to opera and operetta, melodies on her primitive radio, enjoyed hearing my promising stories, and frequently went to the Municipal Theatre, even taking me along from time to time. The only reason I rehearse here these

anecdotes of a petty bourgeois childhood after painting them with epic strokes decades ago in works peopled by fictitious characters is to help me answer the question "What made you become a writer?" The ability to daydream at length, the job of punning and playing with language in general, the addition to lying for its own sake rather than for mine because sticking to the truth would have been a bore – in short, what is loosely known as talent was certainly a factor, but it was the abrupt intrusion of politics into the family idyll that turned the all too flighty category of talent into a ballast with a certain permanence and depth. My mother's favourite cousin, like her a Kashubian by birth, worked at the Polish post office of the Free City of Danzig. He was a regular at our house and always welcome. When the War broke out the Hevelius Square post office building held out for a time against the SS-Heimwehr, and my uncle was rounded up with those who finally surrendered. They were tried summarily and put before a firing squad. Suddenly he was no more. Suddenly and permanently his name was no longer mentioned. He became a non-person. Yet he must have lived on in me through the years when at fifteen I donned a uniform, at sixteen I learned what fear was, at seventeen I landed in an American POW camp, at eighteen I worked in the black market, studied to be a stone-mason and started sculpting in stone, prepared for admission to art school and wrote and drew, drew and wrote, fleet-footed verse, quizzical one-acts, and on it went until I found the material unwieldy – I seem to have an inborn need for aesthetic pleasure. And beneath the detritus of it all lay my mother's favourite cousin, the Polish postal clerk, shot and buried, only to be found by me (who else?) and exhumed and resuscitated by literary artificial respiration under other names and guises, though this time in a novel whose major and minor characters, full of life and beans as they are, make it through a number of chapters, some even holding out till the end and thus enabling the writer to keep his recurrent promise: To And so on and so forth. The publication of my first two novels, *The Tin Drum* and *Dog Years*, and the novella I stuck between them, *Cat and Mouse*, taught me early on, as a relatively young writer, that books can cause offence, stir up fury, even hatred, that what is undertaken out of love for one's country can be taken as soiling one's nest. From then on I have been controversial. Which means that like writers banished to Siberia or suchlike places I am in good company. So I have no grounds to complain; on the contrary, writers should consider the condition of permanent controversy to be invigorating, part of the risk involved in choosing the profession. It is a fact of life that writers have always and with due consideration and great pleasure spit in the soup of the high and

mighty. That is what makes the history of literature analogous to the development and refinement of censorship. The ill humour of the powers-that-be forced Socrates to drain the cup of hemlock to the dregs, sent Ovid into exile, made Seneca open his veins. For centuries and to the present day the finest fruits of the western garden of literature have graced the index of the Catholic church. How much equivocation did the European Enlightenment learn from the censorship practised by princes with absolute power? How many German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese writers did fascism drive from their lands and languages? How many writers fell victim to the Leninist-Stalinist reign of terror? And what constraints are writers under today in countries like China, Kenya, or Croatia? I come from the land of book-burning. We know that the desire to destroy a hated book is still (or once more) part of the spirit of our times and that when necessary it finds appropriate telegraphic expression and therefore a mass audience. What is much worse, however, is that the persecution of writers, including the threat of murder and murder itself, is on the rise throughout the world, so much so that the world has grown accustomed to the terror of it. True, the part of the world that calls itself free raises a hue and cry when, as in 1995 in Nigeria, a writer like Ken Saro-Wiwa and his supporters are sentenced to death and killed for taking a stand against the contamination of their country, but things immediately go back to normal, because ecological considerations might affect the profits of the world's number one oil colossus Shell. What makes books – and with them writers – so dangerous that church and state, politburos and the mass media feel the need to oppose them? Silencing and worse are seldom the result of direct attacks on the reigning ideology. Often all it takes is a literary allusion to the idea that truth exists only in the plural – that there is no such thing as a single truth but only a multitude of truths – to make the defenders of one or another truth sense danger, mortal danger. Then there is the problem that writers are by definition unable to leave the past in peace: they are quick to open closed wounds, peer behind closed doors, find skeletons in the cupboard, consume sacred cows or, as in the case of Jonathan Swift, offer up Irish children, "stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled", to the kitchens of the English nobility. In other words, nothing is sacred to them, not even capitalism, and that makes them offensive, even criminal. But worst of all they refuse to make common cause with the victors of history: they take pleasure milling about the fringes of the historical process with the losers, who have plenty to say but no platform to say it on. By giving them a voice, they call the victory into question, by associating with them, they join ranks with them.

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مليون مبروك

أجمل التهاني والتبريكات مقرونة بأريج الفل والياسمين نهديا

للأستاذ /

للأستاذة /

خيرالدين محمد النصور

نادية عبدالعزيز السقاف

بزفافهما الميمون متمنين لهما حياة زوجية سعيدة وبالرفاه والبنين

والف الف مبروك

المهنتون: آل السقاف، آل النصور، آل الزلب، آل جرهم

طاقم يمن تايمز وكافة الزملاء والأصدقاء

الف مبروكة لنادية وفير الدين الف مبروكة لنادية وفير الدين الف مبروكة لنادية وفير الدين

Of course the powers-that-be, no matter what period costume they may be wearing, have nothing against literature as such. They enjoy it as an ornament and even promote it. At present its role is to entertain, to serve the fun culture, to de-emphasize the negative side of things and give people hope, a light in the darkness. What is basically called for, though not quite so explicitly as during the Communist years, is a "positive hero". In the jungle of the free market economy he is likely to pave his way to success Rambo-like with corpses and a smile; he is an adventurer who is always up for a quick fuck between battles, a winner who leaves a trail of losers behind him, in short, the perfect role model for our globalized world. And the demand for the hard-boiled he-man who always lands on his feet is unfailingly met by the media: James Bond has spawned any number of Dolly-like children. Good will continue to prevail over evil as long as it assumes his cool-guy pose. Does that make his opposite or enemy a negative hero? Not necessarily. I have my roots, as you will have noticed from your reading, in the Spanish or Moorish school of the picaresque novel. Tilting at windmills has remained a model for that school down through the ages, and the picaresque's very existence derives from the comic nature of defeat. He pees on the pillars of power and saws away at the throne knowing full well he will make no dent in either: once he moves on, the exalted temple may look a bit shabby, the throne may wobble slightly, but that is all. His humour is part and parcel of his despair. While Die Götterdämmerung drones on before an elegant Bayreuth audience, he sits sniggering in the back row, because in his theatre comedy and tragedy go hand in hand. He scorns the fateful march of the victors and sticks his foot out to trip them, yet much as his failure makes us laugh the laughter sticks in our throat: even his wittiest cynicisms have a tragic cast to them. Besides, from the point of view of the philistine, rightist or leftist, he is a formalist – even a mannerist – of the first order: he holds the spyglass the wrong way; he sees time as a train on a siding: he puts mirrors everywhere; you can never tell whose ventriloquist he is; given his perspective, he can even accept dwarfs and giants into his entourage. The reason Rabelais was constantly on the run from the secular police and the Holy Inquisition is that his larger-than-life Gargantua and Pantagruel had turned the world according to scholasticism on its head. The laughter they unleashed was positively infernal. When Gargantua stooped bare-arsed on the towers of Notre-Dame and pissed the length and breadth of Paris under water, everyone who did not drown guffawed. Or to go back to Swift: his modest culinary proposal for relieving the hunger in Ireland could be brought up to date if at the next economic summit the board set for the heads of state were groaning with lusciously prepared

street children from Brazil or southern Sudan. Satire is the name of the art form I have in mind, and in satire everything is permitted, even tickling the funny bone with the grotesque. When Heinrich Böll gave his Nobel Lecture here on 2 May 1973, he brought the seemingly opposing positions of reason and poetry into closer and closer proximity and bemoaned the lack of time to go into another aspect of the issue: "I have had to pass over humour, which, though no class privilege, is ignored in his poetry as a hiding place for resistance." Now Böll knew that Jean Paul, the poet in question, had a place in the German Culture Hall of Fame, little read though he is nowadays; he knew to what extent Thomas Mann's literary oeuvre was suspected – by both the right and the left – of irony at the time (and still is, I might add). Clearly what Böll had in mind was not belly-laugh humour but rather inaudible, between-the-lines humour, the chronic susceptibility to melancholy of his clown, the desperate wit of the man who collected silence, an activity, by the way, that has become quite the thing in the media and – under the guise of "voluntary self-control" on the part of the free West – a benign disguise for censorship. By the early fifties, when I had started writing consciously, Heinrich Böll was a well-known if not always well-received author. With Wolfgang Koeppen, Günter Eich, and Arno Schmidt he stood apart from the culture industry. Post-war German literature, still young, was having a hard time with German, which had been corrupted by the Nazi regime. In addition, Böll's generation – but also the younger writers like myself – were stymied to a certain extent by a prohibition that came from Theodor Adorno: "It is barbaric to write a poem after Auschwitz, and that is why it has become impossible to write poetry today ..."

supple hardness, not to mention the sheen of its dialects, its artlessness and artfulness, its eccentricities, and beauty blossoming from its subjunctions. Having won back this capital, we invested it to make more. Despite Adorno's verdict or spurred on by it. The only way writing after Auschwitz, poetry or prose, could proceed was by becoming memory and preventing the past from coming to an end. Only then could post-war literature in German justify applying the generally valid "To Be Continued ..." to itself and its descendants; only then could the wound be kept open and the much desired and prescribed forgetting be reversed with a steadfast "Once upon a time". How many times when one or another interest group calls for considering what happened a closed chapter – we need to return to normalcy and put our shameful past behind us – how many times has literature resisted. And rightly so! Because it is a position as foolish as it is understandable; because every time the end of the post-war period is proclaimed in Germany – as it was ten years ago, with the Wall down and unity in the offing – the past catches up with us. At that time, in February 1990, I gave a talk to students in Frankfurt entitled "Writing After Auschwitz". I wanted to take stock of my works book by book. In The Diary of a Snail, which came out in 1972 and in which past and present crisscross, but also run parallel or occasionally collide, I am asked by my sons how I define my profession, and I answer, "A writer, children, is someone who writes against the current of time." What I said to the students was: "Such a view presumes that writers are not encapsulated in isolation or the semipiternal, that they see themselves as living in the here and now, and, even more, that they expose themselves to the vicissitudes of time, that they jump in and take sides. The dangers of jumping in and taking sides are well known: The distance a writer is supposed to keep is threatened; his language must live from hand to mouth; the narrowness of current events can make him narrow and curb the imagination he has trained to run free; he runs the danger of running out of breath." The risk I referred to then has remained with me throughout the years. But what would the profession of writer be like without risk? Granted, the writer would have the security of, say, a cultural bureaucrat, but he would be the prisoner of his fears of dirtying his hands with the present. Out of fear of losing his distance he would lose himself in realms where myths reside and lofty thoughts are all. But the present, which the past is constantly turning into, would catch up to

Grass receiving his Nobel Prize



him in the end and put him through the third degree. Because every writer is of his time, no matter how he protests being born too early or late. He does not autonomously choose what he will write about, that choice is made for him. At least I was not free to choose. Left to my own devices, I would have followed the laws of aesthetics and been perfectly happy to seek my place in texts droll and harmless. But that was not to be. There were extenuating circumstances: mountains of rubble and cadavers, fruit of the womb of German history. The more I shovelled, the more it grew. It simply could not be ignored. Besides, I come from a family of refugees, which means that in addition to everything that drives a writer from book to book – common ambition, the fear of boredom, the mechanisms of egocentricity – I had the irreparable loss of my birthplace. If by telling tales I could not recapture a city both lost and destroyed, I could at least re-conjure it. And this obsession kept me going. I wanted to make it clear to myself and my readers, not without a bit of a chip on my shoulder, that what was lost did not need to sink into oblivion, that it could be resuscitated by the art of literature in all its grandeur and pettiness: the churches and cemeteries, the sounds of the shipyards and smells of the faintly lapping Baltic, a language on its way out yet still stable-warm and grumble-rich, sins in need of confession, and crimes tolerated if never exonerated. A similar loss has provided other writers with a hotbed of obsessive topics. In a conversation dating back many years Salman Rushdie and I concurred that my lost Danzig was for me – like his lost Bombay for him – both resource and refuse pit, point of departure and navel of the world. This arrogance, this overkill lies at the very heart of literature. It is the condition for a story that can pull out all the stops. Painstaking detail, sensitive psychologizing, slice-of-life realism – no such techniques can handle our monstrous raw materials. As indebted as we are to the Enlightenment tradition of reason, the absurd course of history spurs all exclusively reasonable explanations. Just as the Nobel Prize – once we divest it of its ceremonial garb – has its roots in the invention of dynamite, which like such other human headbirths as the

splitting of the atom and the likewise Nobelified classification of the gene has wrought both weal and woe in the world, so literature has an explosive quality at its root, though the explosions literature releases have a delayed-action effect and change the world only in the magnifying glass of time, so to speak, it too wreaking cause for both joy and lamentation here below. How long did it take the European Enlightenment from Montaigne to Voltaire, Diderot, Kant, Lessing, and Lichtenberg to introduce a flicker of reason into the dark corners of scholasticism? And even that flicker often died in the process, a process censorship went a long way towards inhibiting. But when the light finally did brighten things up, it turned out to be the light of cold reason, limited to the technically doable, to economic and social progress, a reason that claimed to be enlightened but that merely drummed a reason-based jargon (which amounted to instructions for making progress at all costs) into its offspring, capitalism and socialism (which were at each other's throats from the word go). Today we can see what those brilliant failures who were the Enlightenment's offspring have wrought. We can see what a dangerous position its delayed-action, word-detonated explosion has hurled us into. And if we are trying to repair the damage with Enlightenment tools, it is only because we have no others. We look on in horror as capitalism – now that his brother, socialism, has been declared dead – rages unimpeded, megalomaniacally replaying the errors of the supposedly extinct brother. It has turned the free market into dogma, the only truth, and intoxicated by its all but limitless power, plays the wildest of games, making merger after merger with no goal than to maximize profits. No wonder capitalism is proving as impervious to reform as the communism that managed to strangle itself. Globalization is its motto, a motto it proclaims with the arrogance of infallibility: there is no alternative. Accordingly, history has come to an end. No more "To Be Continued ...", no more suspense. Though perhaps there is hope that if not politics, which has abdicated its decision-making power to economics, then at least literature may come up with something to cause the "new dogmatism" to falter. How can subversive writing be both dynamite and of literary quality? Is there time enough to wait for the delayed action? Is any book capable of supplying a commodity in so short supply as the future? Is it not rather the case that literature is currently retreating from public life and that young writers are using the internet as a playground? A standstill, to which the suspicious word "communication" lends a certain aura, is making headway. Every scrap of time is planned down to the last nervous breakdown. A cultural industry vale of tears is taking over the world. What is to be done?

My godlessness notwithstanding, all I can do is bend my knee to a saint who has never failed me and cracked some of the hardest nuts. "O Holy and (through the grace of Camus) Nobelified Sisyphus! May thy stone not remain at the top of the hill, may we roll it down again and like thee continue to rejoice in it, and may the story told of the drudgery of our existence have no end. Amen." But will my prayer be heard? Or are the rumours true? Is the new breed of cloned creature destined to assure the continuation of human history? Which brings me back to the beginning of my talk. Once more I open The Rat to the fifth chapter, in which the laboratory rat, representing millions of other laboratory animals in the cause of research, wins the Nobel Prize, and I am reminded how few prizes have been awarded to projects that would rid the world of the scourge of mankind: hunger. Anyone who can pay the price can get a new pair of kidneys. Hearts can be transplanted. We can phone anywhere in the world wire-free. Satellites and space stations orbit us solicitously. The latest weapon systems, conceived and developed, they too, on the basis of award-winning research, can help their masters to keep death at bay. Anything the human mind comes up with finds astonishing applications. Only hunger seems to resist. It is even increasing. Poverty deeply rooted shades into misery. Refugees are flocking all over the world accompanied by hunger. It takes political will paired with scientific know-how to root out misery of such magnitude, and no one seems resolved to undertake it. In 1973, just when terror – with the active support of the United States – was beginning to strike in Chile, Willy Brandt spoke before the United Nations General Assembly, the first German chancellor to do so. He brought up the issue of worldwide poverty. The applause following his exclamation "Hunger too is war!" was stunning. I was present when he gave the speech. I was working on my novel The Flounder at the time. It deals with the very foundations of human existence including food, the lack and superabundance thereof, great gluttons and untold starvings, the joys of the palate and crusts from the rich man's table. The issue is still with us. The poor counter growing riches with growing birth rates. The affluent north and west can try to screen themselves off in security-mad fortresses, but the flocks of refugees will catch up with them: no gate can withstand the crush of the hungry. The future will have something to say about all this. Our common novel must be continued. And even if one day people stop or are forced to stop writing and publishing, if books are no longer available, there will still be storytellers giving us mouth-to-ear artificial respiration, spinning old stories in new ways: loud and soft, heckling and halting, now close to laughter, now on the brink of tears.

Local Press

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr



26 September weekly, organ of Yemen Armed Forces, 22 Jan 2004.

Main headlines:

- President Saleh reiterates his welcome of German investors in Yemen
- President Saleh and Emir of Qatar discuss cooperation relations between the two countries
- German investments in energy and ship engines in the industrial zone in Aden
- Foreign ministry source denies killing of Yemenis in Iraq, there are no Yemenis among those arrested by Pakistan
- FM Qirbi: extraordinary meeting of Arab foreign ministers on 10 February

The newspaper editorial says the wise vision stemming from profound political thinking surpassing the past in its presence and looking forward to the future in Yemen's relations with its brethren in the Arabian peninsula and the Gulf is the main thing that should determine the extent of importance of Yemen's joining the GCC and not the rigmarole that some newspapers and media publish every now and then. As much as Yemen has an interest in joining the GCC there is also an interest for the Gulf countries in that and that is a joint interest having multilateral aspects. The Emirates information statements early last week confirms that vision and means that it is understood by the GCC leaders. The changes and variables of events in region dictate exerting more efforts that would accelerate Yemen's steps to take its position among its sisterly countries in the council so that it would be the realistic expression of the bonds of kinship enhanced with the common geographical and historical situation.



Al-Thawri weekly, organ of the YSP 22 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Islah Shoura denounces hampering the case of martyr Jarallah Omer
- Youth minister tenders his resignation upon Yemen's football team defeat
- A political prisoner family demands investigation into his death
- In Taiz and Wisab, tens of prisoners are without charges
- Interrogation with Sana'a University students continues

Columnist Yousif Khalid Saeed

describes in an article the American example of democracy as a savage, saying the talk about the American example of democracy was entertaining a distinguished brilliance and some attraction and interest especially during the period of the cold war. But the gloss of this talk has begun fainting and shrinking. This democratic example began to retreat and to be exposed and the live evidence the United States has offered and accumulated during the last years proved that the present American democratic example has become more foggy and ambiguous and more over arousing large amount of dubiousness, suspicion and non-credibility. The use of military power in the Balkan and waging the war on Iraq and occupying it by force in a way violating international laws, legitimacy and conventions have demonstrated the American democracy as just a placard to cover it the American policy based on the use of force and consolidation of colonialist occupation and hegemony, the interference in internal affairs of independent states, violation of international laws, legitimacy and conventions. It is also used for covering up wars, destruction and killing as well as creating chaos and crises and seminars of tension. The American democracy is also a cover for controlling other peoples lands and wealth and dictation of its policies on them without observance or respect of their countries' sovereignty and their historical and civilization characteristics.

In this image the American democracy seems in reality as beastly and bloody possessing aspects of ugliness and lacking of credibility.



Al-Sahwa weekly, 2 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Zindani: As long as we hold dialogue we are alright
- Coordination council does not run relations
- Five ministers to deal with problem of Sana'a employment positions
- Yemeni woman organisations express solidarity with French Muslim women
- Teachers of Ja'fariya district in Sana'a complain of halting their salaries

Writer Nabeela Saeed wonders in an article if the women rights in Islam have become a riddle and if we have the right to say that the level of under-

Main headlines

- Intensive security deployment preceding the price dose
- Strict hush-hush about the blast in the war academy
- 15 killed in tribal clashes
- Yemeni committee to secure residence for Iraqis
- Pakistan arrests Yemenis on charges of links to al-Qaeda
- Yemeni-European dialogue begins this year
- Yemeni-Egyptian summit, expected
- Saudi businessmen visit Yemen
- Real Estates Establishment to be part of Justice Ministry
- Two extremists set fire to a recording shop in Aden arrested
- Trial of 21 health officials on charges of corruption started
- Aden Refinery fire brigade extinguishes great fire in Sheikh Othman
- In preparation for raising prices, security alert and prevention entrance of oil tankards from entering Sana'a before midnight
- Opposition parties, would there be protest demonstrations encountering coming prices dose?
- Al-A'nsi: Palestine & Iraq, first test for International criminal Court
- Twelve killed in Amran clashes
- New rise in prices of wheat and fuel
- Unofficial candidates for journalists chairman post
- Mosque preacher accuses YSP of infidelity
- Vice president: local councils represent essence of democracy
- Official source: hosting some Iraqi families out of humanitarian and national principle
- Minister of industry and trade: measures for curbing rise in prices

standing of the intelligentsia and this dealing with human rights and the woman rights in particular is almost shallow? Is it too shallow that we are

not able to understand Islam as we should? We are actually in need to reconsider our calculations regarding our vision of ourselves at least to per-

ceive what are the rights and duties that God instructed us with in Islam. The enthusiasm that has been shown at the meeting of the program of women rights in Islam which was concerned with training some activists in human rights confirms it is a step forward gathering all various orientations in one forum. We are drowned in what the west has come to us with but the wisdom is to take from it what is the best for running our life.



Al-Wahdawi weekly, organ of the Nasserite Unionist organisation 20 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- New scandal, the government grants Teleyemen to a French bankrupt company
- Al-Wahdawi editor in chief before the south-west capital secretariat court
- Zionists buy the biggest hotel in the capital
- YR 6 billion outcome of financial corruption in the ministries of agriculture and fish wealth in three months
- 9 million people the victim of impoverishment

The political editor of the newspaper wrote a front page article saying it is logical and sure that the people support development and advancement in the country in all its fields. This advancement needs scientists and skilled people in all fields and specialties. The correct inlet to achieve all that is the upgrading the level of education and teaching staff and the basics and policies. What urged for touching this subject is that the government is talking about development that would involve educational curricula but this development has disclosed only two cases; one is the entering of the English language subject in some stages of primary education, which is a return to what was there before, and the second aspect is the use of computers in the secondary education stage, and this is a development. The government wants by this development to attain at accomplishment of the electronic government project. Therefore the government is trying to mobilize for it a foreign support and what the government has so far got of such support are ten million dollars from the donors conference and fifty million dollars as a first down payment from the UN development program in Yemen and the ESCWA organisation. We have to ask in order to

know is the country qualified and prepared in its educational situation for such a technical development.

The UNICEF asks the government to abolish the schooling duties and integration of primary education in the national plan for fighting poverty. This is another testimony on the educational situation in our country. Another thing is that there is a great shortage in the number of schools and also in the education text books and colleges without halls and laboratories unfurnished with tools and equipment and many other shortages. Aren't these entirely essential for the country to enter in and receive he technological development?



Al-Umma weekly, organ of al-Haq party, 22 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Customs authority complains the finance ministry and bureaucracy
- Destruction of a dome of a Muslim holy man tomb in Arhab
- Before the journalists syndicate elections, court passes verdict against al-Wahdawi newspaper to apologize and a money fine
- Islah shoura and YSP criticize the impoverishing policy

The religious leader of Iraq Sistani has brought down the present interim governing council and any similar body the occupying authorities would think of creating in future when he put forward holding general elections as a condition for the legitimacy of the transfer of power to the hands of the Iraqis. This condition has forced the American governor of Iraq Paul Bremer to had for Washington for consultation about the crisis. It has become clear that the American plan of post-war and occupation of Iraq is facing a dangerous dilemma as the equation is now between occupation and independence and nothing else.

The general elections would deprive the occupation authority of outflanking the issue of independence and regaining of national sovereignty by the Iraqis and implicitly dictates the restoration of international legitimacy through the return of the United Nations to the Iraqi affair by playing a role too difficult for the United States to play here. The U.S. administration playing the card of sectarianism and ethnicism to partition Iraq did not succeed in reaching its goals because the civilization heritage in Iraq does not permit the passage of such games.

World Press

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

Egypt

Al Ahram

Egyptian ambassador to Libya Hani Khallaf stressed that the Egyptian leadership is keen on boosting cooperation with Libya and fostering trade and service ties between the two countries.

Al Akhbar

Egyptian Prime Minister Atef Obeid will fly to Jordan on Sunday to sign with his Jordanian, Syrian and Lebanese counterparts an agreement to start construction of the 390-km-long second phase of the Arab gas network at a cost of 300 million

dollars.

Al Gomhuria

Qatari Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Jassem discussed Friday with Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom conditions in the Palestinian territories and means to resume the Israeli-Syrian negotiations.

The Egyptian Gazette

The Suez Canal was reopened for international navigation after a six-hour closure Friday due to bad weather conditions that hit the nation, officials said.

Britain

The Times

British ministers were discussing on Friday night the details of a confidence motion in British Prime Minister Tony Blair's leadership amid growing signs that rebel MPs are set to inflict a devastating defeat over university tuition fees.

The Guardian

Worldwide fears of a bird flu epidemic mutating into a disease that could be spread by humans sparked a ban on Thai chicken and eggs in Europe Friday, while supermarkets were ordered to remove from sale

chicken from Thailand which arrived after Jan. 1.

Financial Times

David Kay, the top US weapons inspector in Iraq, resigned Friday saying he did not believe there were any large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons.

The Independent

Jenny Tonge was sacked from the British second largest opposition Liberal Democratic Party front bench Friday for suggesting that she could have considered becoming a suicide bomber.

India

The Times of India

Continuing the feel-good season on Kashmir, the Hurriyat leaders met Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee on Friday, thanked him for sparing time and praised his leadership for carving out a vision to solve the 56-year-old problem.

The Hindustan Times

Officials investigating the Burail jailbreak said on Friday that the allotment of an "exclusive cell" to the

three Babbar Khalsa International militants several months ago might have facilitated their escape as it brought them right next to the jail's inner boundary wall.

The Hindu

Forty-nine persons were killed and about 50 injured in a devastating fire during a wedding at a marriage hall at Srirangam in Tiruchi district of Tamil Nadu on Friday.

Kenya

Kenya Times

Kenyan and Ethiopian governments signed an agreement Friday in Nairobi to revitalize the Joint Ministerial Committee, calling both countries and their nationals to strengthen the bilateral ties of the two neighbors.

Daily Nation

The owners of the aircraft that crashed in west Kenya early last year, when a cabinet minister was killed

and several others injured, are demanding 1.3 billion shillings (over 17 million US dollars) in compensation from the government.

People Daily

A meeting convened by Kenyan Speaker Francis Kaparo for members of parliament to chart the way forward on the constitution review process failed to reach a consensus Friday.

Japan

Asahi, Mainichi, Yomiuri

Main unit of Japan's Air Self-Defense Forces arrived in Kuwait for Iraq reconstruction mission.

Mainichi, Asahi, Yomiuri, Nihon Keizai

Japanese high school students had poor scores in national math and science exams.

Germany

Die Welt

With its spacecraft orbiting around Mars, the European Space Agency has discovered for the first time exact location and volume of frozen water on the planet.

Sueddeutsche Zeitung

Despite an emergent appeal by EU

Parliament President Pat Cox, the German government is steadfast on its refusal to the salary reform asked by European legislators.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

Toward the end of a trip to Africa, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder gave a positive review of his visit.

Philippines

The Philippine Star

A Chinese-Filipino businesswoman kidnapped in Manila earlier this week was rescued Friday without paying ransom.

Philippine Daily Inquirer

The First Division of the Commission on Elections Friday cleared the way for opposition candidate Fernando Poe Jr. to run for president after dismissing a disqualification

case against him for "lack of merit."

Manila Bulletin

The Senate approved Friday on third and final reading the proposed 862.8-billion-peso (15.52 billion US dollars) national budget for the year 2004, finishing its floor deliberations on the measure in five marathon session days during which senators worked double time for its swift passage.

Pakistan

Dawn

President Pervez Musharraf Friday in Davos, Switzerland, told reporters that talks with India over the long-disputed Kashmir region will progress only if both sides show sincerity and resolve and take bold steps.

The Nation

In an exclusive interview with CNN, President Pervez Musharraf said on Friday that Pakistan, as a responsible nuclear power, would take action against any of its nuclear experts who passed on their knowledge to other countries.

Improve Your English



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I. What to Say

Situations and Expressions (61):
Expression of love

Love is strong affection or deep, tender feeling for someone. To John Sheffield, "Love is salt of life". The poet Cowper says "Society Friendship and Love / Divinely ordained on man." Benjamin Disraeli says, "We are all born for love; it is the principle of existence and its only end." Love is the bridge between two young hearts. It is the elixir of life that gives to life its true meaning and significance. Two young hearts locked in the warmth of emotion naturally and spontaneously express their intensity of feeling for each other. In the west Valentine's day marks the celebration of the sanctity of love. We present below a selection of expressions capturing the essence of the elemental emotion that lurks in two young hearts.

- Your love is special to me. I can tell you anything, knowing you'll listen to me and try to understand and the way you open up to me, letting me inside, sharing with me your innermost thoughts and feelings. I love you and like you the most.
- Dearest... Love is an ethereal experience, as it makes every moment spent in the arms of your beloved, blissful and a memory to be cherished for ever. You have made my life a blessing. With happiness is each hour spent together because you are so lovely with your caring ways. Your love makes every day so special.
- I love you, dearest! You've changed my life with your special ways, and made me believe in miracles, now and forever. Dearest! Your smile makes my day brighter, and adds a special touch to life. I believe in being with you forever.
- A life full of passion, affections, love, humanity, cares, celebrations, and strength. Sometimes, I need you to hold me; I need to feel your arms around me, strong and loving and warm to know that I am safe from the hurry and the hassles of the world for just a little while. Sometimes I just need to know you care, to know you're there, always loving me.
- Darling you're all I ever need. Emotions, a silken road of life, a huge balance, a great satisfaction, a desire for being a loved one.
- I want to walk with you hand in hand across the years to come, through all the hours a single life time could make... I want to grow with you freely and experience life to its fullest and truest measure... Look into my heart and find that I'm more in love with you than ever before.
- Valentine, I think you've got something that belongs to me. My heart! Have a very happy Valentine's day.
- Something tells me you already knew—on Valentine's day I'd be thinking of you.
- When I look at you all I see is love!

II. How to Say it Correctly

Correct errors, if any, in the following sentences

- I saw the tigress was weak and was badly wounded, but still she runs very fast.
- Unless you don't work hard, you will not pass.
- She is more beautiful but not so intelligent as her sister.
- What to speak of English, he cannot read even Arabic.
- She is so proudly that she will not admit her mistake.

Suggested answers to last week's questions

- There are one hundred and eight students in Level Four.
- Bassam's and Ramzi's computer skills are praiseworthy.
- This news was broadcast from BBC yesterday.
- Both Radi and Abdu are intelligent.
Or: Radi as well as Abdu is intelligent.
- All members of my family are in India.

III. Increase Your Word Power

(A) How to express it in one word

- A great lover of books.
- A man with a narrow, prejudicial views specially

- about politics and religion.
- The act of speaking disrespectfully about sacred things.
- A man of free and easy habits, one who is socially unconventional.
- Something that denotes a fall from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Suggested answers to last week's questions

- The other side of the globe: **antipodes** (n)
- A person guilty of the criminal act of setting fire to property: **arsonist** (n)
- Science of cultivation of trees or shrubs: **arboriculture** (n)
- Study of antiquities, especially of prehistoric period: **archaeology** (n)
- The mistake of placing something in the wrong period of time: **anachronism** (n)

(B) Foreign phrases and idioms

Give the source of origin and the meanings of the following:

- modus operandi
- mon ami
- Ominia Vinist Labor
- par excellence
- par exemple

Suggested answers to last week's questions

- inter alia** (Lat.): among other things.
- lingua franca** (Italian): common language.
- locus standi** (Lat.): the right to interfere.
- magnum opus** (Lat.): the greatest work.
- marriage the convenience**: marriage from convenience.

(C) Words Commonly Confused

Bring out differences in meaning of the following pairs of words

- silent, silenced
- small, short
- inability, disability
- like, likes
- ward, word

Suggested answers to last week's questions

- fist** (n) (hand when firmly closed): He struck me with his fist.
- feast** (n) (splendid meal): I was invited to a grand marriage feast.
- foist** (vt) (trick some one or something into being accepted): They didn't invite him to go out with them, but he foisted himself on them.
- hoist** (vt) (to raise up using ropes): The President hoisted the national flag on the Unification Day.
- kill** (n) (animal killed in hunting): The predator is feasting on its kill.
- keel** (n) (a wooden structure on which the framework of a ship is built up): The ship is on an even keel.
- mist** (n) (water vapor in the area, at or near earth's surface, less thick fog and not so light as haze): The distant hills are hidden in mist.
- fog** (n) (thicker than mist): Fog is a sailor's worst enemy.
- flagging** (adj) (weakening): His long absence from the lectures shows his flagging interest in studies.
- flogging** (n) (beating or whipping): The miscreant was punished with severe flogging.

(C) Idioms and Phrases

Illustrate the meanings of the following in sentences

- to live from hand to mouth
- to lose heart
- to make up one's mind
- to make both ends meet
- to move heaven and earth

Suggested answers to last week's questions

- to hang in the balance** (to be undecided): The fate of the accused is hanging in the balance.
- to hit the nail on the head** (to do the right thing at the right moment): By exposing his real intention you have hit the nail on the head.
- to have the upper hand** (to have more say or influence): The Chairperson always has an upper hand in strategic decision making.
- to hold water** (sound logical): Your arguments do

- not hold water in the present context.
- to have no stones unturned** (to try one's level best): He left no stones unturned to get to the top.

IV. Grammar and Composition

(A) Grammar

Finish each of the following sentences in such a way that it means exactly the same as the sentence printed before it.

- 'Don't drive so fast', said the passenger to the taxi driver
The passenger asked the taxi driver ———
- 'Could I bring a friend along to the party?' Aisha asked Eiman.
Aisha asked Eiman ———
- He gave up cigarettes obeying the advice of the doctor. He stopped ———
- Few people in Yemen use English in general social contexts.
There aren't ———
- My eldest sister doesn't speak English, nor does my other sister.
Neither of ———

Suggested answers to last week's questions

- It was difficult to **avoid** catching smallpox during an epidemic.
- Most doctors agree that it is better to **prevent** a disease than to cure it.
- People with infectious diseases should try and **avoid** contact with other people.
- She was so frightened of injections that she kept **avoiding** going to see the doctor.
- The vaccination will **prevent** you from catching cholera.
- The government is trying very hard to **prevent** Chickenpox from spreading.
Remember: 'avoid' means to get away from or escape on purpose
'prevent' means to stop something from happening.

(B) Composition: Paragraph writing

Expand the central idea embedded in the saying

52. COURTESY COSTS NOTHING

Last week's topic

51. CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

A child imbibes all noble qualities and virtues in his childhood from his home environment. His highly impressionable mind captures the ideals and values that his parents and others set before him as living examples to emulate. These sterling qualities take roots in the child's mind and blossom in course of time. Therefore, home is rightly called the first school for the child where he learns the first lessons of his life in terms of love, fellow feeling, cooperation, self-sacrifice and so forth. The child practices these virtues with his parents, brothers and sisters and gets trained how to cultivate these virtues in dealing with others. A child's home environment thus turns out to be a veritable training ground for the child and wields a tremendous influence on him during the formative years of his life shaping up his character. Lives of great men are luminous examples of how their budding qualities were nurtured in their childhood at home. So we must enrich our personal lives as parents and provide a congenial atmosphere at home conducive to the proper growth of our children's personality enabling them to prove themselves as worthy citizens of tomorrow.



V. Pearls from the Holy Quran

VI. Words of Wisdom

"All I know of love is that love is all there is"

A letter to the teachers of English: 40

Translation as a useful strategy to teach English (2)



Dr. M.N.K. BOSE
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Associate Professor of
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Dear fellow teachers,

Talking about translation, there are a number of exercises in the Crescent English Course books that involve intralingual and inter semiotic translations. For intralingual translation exercises look at pages 21, 32, 79, 109 in Workbook 3, for example. These exercises involve note making and summarizing. Similar exercises are found in Workbook 5, pages 42, 62, 87, for example. Students are expected to read the texts and make notes extracting the main points or summarize the texts. As the students use various skills using the same language, English, these exercises are called intralingual translation exercises.

Let's look at one of these exercises, the exercise on page 21, WB 3, closely. Students are expected to read the text on page 7 of Pupil's Book 3, extract the main points about the appearance, character and likes of each person and write them in the appropriate places in the table in the Workbook. The skills involved in this activity are reading and understanding, especially scanning for the details, reducing the sentences into words or phrases carrying the main points, and transferring the points to the table in the WB. The process is called intralingual translation by the translation experts.

Intersemiotic translation activities are commonly known as information transfer activities and are found in plenty in the Crescent English Books; for example, in Workbook 3 look at pages 14, 22, 24-25, 43, 60, 95, 106, 122-123; in Workbook 5 look at pages 5, 11, 35, 45, 66. These exercises involve transferring the information from one form to another; hence they are called intersemiotic translation. We

very often engage ourselves in these activities in our daily lives. For instance, when we look at an advertisement, we look at the pictures and get the message; when we look at a signal (say, a picture of a petrol pump) on the road while driving, we translate the signal into the right message (that there is petrol pump nearby); when we see a picture of a nurse with her index finger on her lips on the door of the doctor's room, we understand the message that we should be silent (whether we are silent or not is a different question!). All these are instances of intersemiotic translation and now you understand how much of it is useful to us in our teaching. Some of these signs can be reproduced in the classes and the learners are asked to translate them into texts; the reversal of this activity will also be useful, learners may be asked to draw signs for the messages (think of some funny messages!).

If we look at the exercises I have quoted as examples from the Workbooks, all of them involve transferring information from one form (either picture or table) to another form (text). Such activities involve a lot of cognitive as well as linguistic skills and the learners who engage themselves in such activities develop both cognitive and linguistic skills. Take the activity on page 66 of WB 5. When they read the text in the PB 5 in order to order the pictures in the WB, they read the text and understand the sequence of the events in the text using cohesive and coherence markers in the passage, then they attempt to arrange the pictures in the right order. This activity develops higher order reading skills, making the students efficient readers.

Using intralingual and intersemiotic translation activities does develop reading skills, writing skills and cognitive skills in our learners. Try them in your classes. Good luck.

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

Poetry Corner

Life



DR. M. SNEHAPRABHA
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OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY

What is life?
It is not a drama of strife
We are not mere performers
Karma (action), meaning to it imparts.

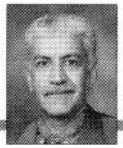
Time is the great Master
Who leads us through mysteries faster
Conscience is the lighthouse
That dispels darkness from our path.

Life is a blessing, rare
Though mixed with cheer and tear
We should conduct ourselves
As Dharma (duty) demands
Expecting naught in return
Though tough to practice.

One should dare to meet
Life as a real test
Swim across the current
Never losing hope, persistent.

All is well that ends well
Though in fret and fume we swell
The end is bright and peaceful
Let the path be smooth and truthful.

English for specific purposes



BY DR. BASHAR
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English is a language used all over the world as a common means of communication. General English is concerned with the variety of the language used for different purposes such as introducing people, discussing various ideas, exchanging views, corresponding with others and so forth. English for specific or special purposes, on the other hand, focuses on developing communicative competence in specific or specialized fields such as physics, business, medicine and so on. English for specific purposes resulted in the expansion of one particular aspect of English language teaching to non-native speakers of English. The clientele of English for special purpose are groups of learners whose needs are more than the kind of general English taught in pre-university education. In fact they need the register-based English, which would help them in their

higher studies as well as in their occupations. Those working in business or commerce need such type of English as is used for business. English for science and technology is an important aspect of English for specific purposes. It is especially meant for scientists who need to learn English related to their specialized fields. This type of English involves the specialized use of vocabulary items, grammatical forms and language functions, which are common to the study of science and technology. English for occupational or professional purposes is intended to help students use English after graduation in their future careers. For example, many jobs in the Arab World require a specialized type of English to carry out such jobs or careers successfully. Secretarial works, banking, accountancy and other related careers require a knowledge of a special kind of English in addition to general English. Doctors, engineers and businessmen need a specialized knowledge of English related to their respective fields to read relevant books, journals as well as to attend conferences or communicate or receive ideas at a global level.

WONDERWORD

by DAVID OUELLET

BUY THE BOOTS

Solution: 6 letters

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

Arches	Denver	Guards	Platform	Solid
Army	Derrick	Hats	Pointed	Step
Baby	Design	Heavy	Polished	Stitches
Black	Dress	Heel	Purchase	Studs
Bleach	Durable	Hide	Rounded	Style
Bows	Dust	Hiking	Rubber	Suede
Branded	Elevated	Hunt	Safety	Supple
Builder	Embroidered	Insulate	Salute	Tall
Calf	Enclosure	Ladder	Shape	Thick
Carry	Entrance	Legs	Shelf	Traction
Cleats	Environment	Metal	Shine	Travel
Clothing	Exercise	Military	Size	Umpire
Corrective	Fancy	Moon	Skid	Velcro
Cowboy	Field	Overshoes	Slide	Waterproof
Crawl	Fireman	Padded	Snow	Wooden
Crimp	Flat	Pairs	Soldier	Workman
Decorate	Glossy	Plain	Sole	

ANSWER NEXT WEEK

Last Week's Answer: Ranking

Venus crashes out of Australian Open

BY OSSIAN SHINE

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Venus Williams' comeback from injury has come to a shuddering halt after she was hustled out of the Australian Open by doubles specialist Lisa Raymond in the third round.

Belgium's Kim Clijsters suffered no such mishap, routing Russian teenager Dinara Safina 6-2 6-1 and home crowd favourite Mark Philippoussis thrilled Melbourne Park with a barnstorming win over Mario Ancic of Croatia.

Third seed Venus had been a heavy favourite going into the match, despite this being her first tournament since the Wimbledon final last July, but she was caught cold by 30-year-old compatriot Raymond and went down 6-4 7-6.

"I am pretty much in shock," Venus said. "I still can't believe it, but that's the way I feel after every loss."

"It is definitely going to settle in this evening. It will be like 'No!', but that's the way it is, you win some, you lose some."

Venus was playing her first tournament for six months after a stomach muscle injury and looked flat from the start.

She committed 44 unforced errors in a mistake-riddled performance on Rod Laver Arena and struggled for accuracy throughout.

"She played good, she had a lot of shots rockin' and rollin' today. It was nice for her," said Venus, runner-up to younger sister Serena here last year.

"She had a lot of good things going for her. I am pretty much in shock," she said.



Third seed Venus Williams reacts during her third round match against compatriot Lisa Raymond, the number 25 seed, at the Australian Open tennis championship in Melbourne on Saturday. Raymond won the match 6-4 7-6. REUTERS/David Gray

Raymond thrilled

Raymond had never been beyond the third round of the Australian Open singles in 10 previous visits and was thrilled.

"I knew I had to come into today's match and really step up to the plate," she said. "I didn't let myself down."

Clijsters, who had been an injury doubt coming into the tournament, has been in fantastic form through the first three rounds of the year's first grand slam and is yet to drop a set.

On Saturday she knocked Safina off in 57 minutes and will next play 20th-seeded Italian Silvia Farina Elia.

"I didn't have any expectations about getting into the tournament because of my injury so being in the second week is nice," Clijsters said. "I never really thought I would participate in the tournament so it's definitely a bonus."

In the men's field, local wildcard Todd Reid's heroics were very much a thing of the past when he was outclassed 6-3 6-0 6-1 by second seed Roger Federer.

"I felt good, hit freely nothing to

complain about," Federer said.

Reid, who overcame vomiting and cramps to beat Armenia's Sargis Sargsian in the second round, never came close to matching the Wimbledon champion, at one point losing 14 games in a row. Federer won in a snappy 74 minutes.

Taught lesson

"There's definitely a long way to go," Reid said. "He really taught me a lesson out there. Definitely a learning experience."

Federer, the bookies' pre-tournament favourite, has dropped just 20 games so far in Melbourne. He will likely face former world number one Lleyton Hewitt in the fourth round.

Philippoussis gave the Australians a boost, though, swatting Ancic 6-4 7-6 6-2. "I kept the pressure on...I am happy about that," he said.

Eighth seed David Nalbandian continued to look strong. He outmuscled South Africa's Wayne Ferreira 6-2 6-4 7-5. Next up for him could be Tim Henman. The British number one plays Argentine Guillermo Canas later on Saturday.

Minister resigns over Cup flop

SANAA, Jan 21 (Reuters) - Yemen's sports minister has tendered his resignation in support of demands for reform of the soccer federation after the country's poor display in the Gulf Cup earlier this month, his aide said on Wednesday.

It was not immediately clear if Youth and Sports Minister Abdurahman al-Akawaa's resignation would be accepted.

Yemen finished last in their first appearance at the Gulf Cup in Kuwait, with no wins and one draw from their six matches.

"Minister Akawaa handed in his resignation this afternoon to Prime Minister Abdul-Qader Bagammal," the head of Akawaa's office, Ramzi al-Aghbari, said in remarks posted on the website of Yemen's ruling General People's Congress party.

Other sources at the sports ministry confirmed that Akawaa had asked to be relieved of his post, but did not elaborate.

Aghbari said the minister wanted an investigation into the team's weak performance despite the money spent to prepare them.

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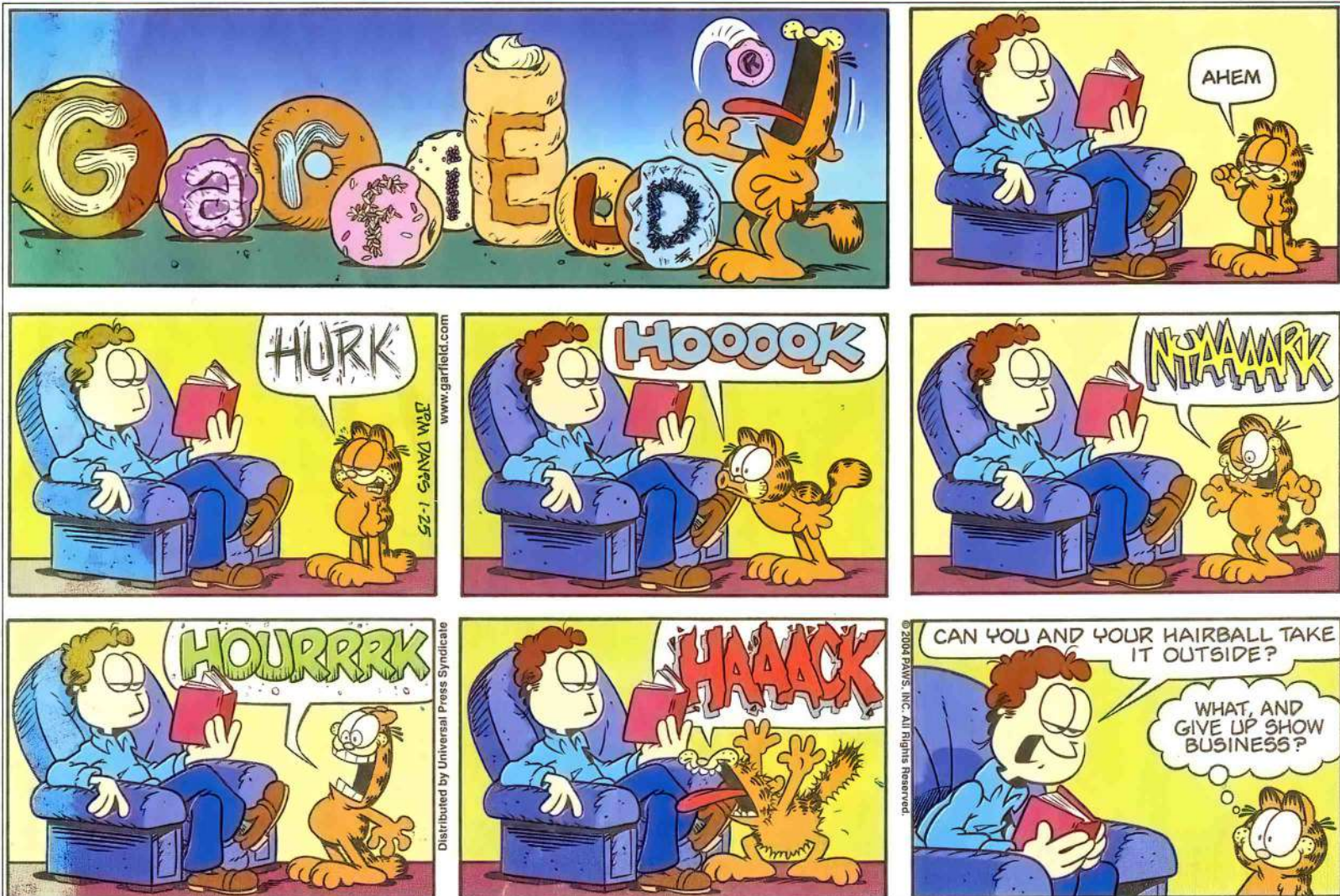
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Hi	24	24	24	26	26	26	26	Hi	32	29	30	30	31	31	31
Lo	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	Lo	21	21	22	22	19	19	19



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)
Emotional matters will escalate if you are involved in a partnership. Today it will be impossible to steer clear of emotional issues, so face facts and accept change.

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.

YEMEN TIMES

2004

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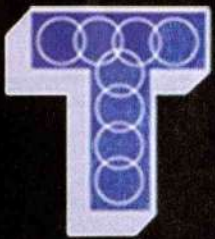
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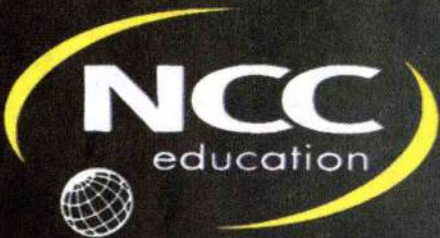
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التلفون : العنوان : المدينة / المحافظة :

- ١/ مشروب الطاقة والحيوية باورهورس يحتوي ٢/ من الأفضل أن يقدم مشروب الطاقة باورهورس ٤/ ماذا كانت تسمى مدينة زبيد قديماً؟
على طاقة بنسبة (٤٥ سعرات حرارية) أم قبل الأكل أم بعد الأكل أم باردا ؟ ٥/ لماذا سميت صنعاء بهذا الاسم؟
(٣٠ سعرات حرارية) أم (٥٠ سعرات حرارية)؟ ٣/ أين تقام نهائيات كأس أمم أفريقيا القادمة؟

للمشاركة إقرأ التفاصيل:

على الراغبين في المشاركة في مسابقة الملايين الكبرى ٢٠٠٤ تعبئة المعلومات الشخصية في الكوبون المرفق وقص الكوبون ومن ثم عليهم ترقيع عدد الخميس القادم للإجابة عن الأسئلة التي وردت في هذا العدد ثم جمع الكوبونين معا وإرسالهما إلى مقر الصحيفة في صنعاء (شارع حده - خلف السفارة الفلسطينية) أو إلى مكاتب الصحيفة في عدن أو تعز أو الحديدة. كما يمكن للمشاركين إرسالها إلى بريد الصحيفة في صنعاء على عنوان (ص.ب. ٢٥٧٩ ، صنعاء).

ستستمر المسابقة لعدة أشهر ويمكن للمشاركة أن يشارك باكثر من كوبون، وستعلن أسماء الفائزين في الصحيفة في وقت سيحدد لاحقا، كما سيتم توزيع الجوائز في خلال أيام من إعلان النتائج. للاستفسار يمكن للمشاركين الاتصال بالصحيفة على ٢٦٨٦٦١ (٠١) في أوقات الدوام. حظاً موفقاً للجميع.....

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Mars rover status called "critical"

PASADENA, Calif., Jan 23 (Reuters) - NASA engineers on Friday declared the crippled martian rover Spirit to be in "critical" condition and said the vehicle would likely remain idle for several days, even weeks.

Meanwhile, the scientists geared up for the landing of a second robotic explorer, Opportunity, on Mars this weekend on the other side of the planet from the troubled Spirit.

Spirit, which had operated virtually problem free for its first 18 days on the red planet, has been out of commission since an abrupt, unexplained communications breakdown on Wednesday, less than a week after successfully rolling off its landing platform to begin searching for geologic signs of life-sustaining water.

Three brief transmissions received from the six-wheeled craft on Friday consisted mostly of error messages and limited engineering data, said mission controllers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory who manage the Mars project for NASA.

For now, NASA engineers and scientists will be playing a sort of interplanetary game of 20 questions with the rover, as they attempt to send commands to the vehicle and gradually tease out electronic clues to what ails it.

"We should expect we will not be restoring functionality to Spirit for a significant amount of time, many days, perhaps two weeks, even in the best of circumstances," Mars Exploration Rover Project Manager Pete Theisinger told reporters at a JPL briefing.

He described the rover's condition as "critical," adding, "We do not know to what extent we can restore



Pete Theisinger, project manager for the Mars Rover mission uses a model of the NASA Mars Spirit Rover while briefing reporters the its status Jan. 23, at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. The Mars rover Spirit resumed sending data to Earth on Friday after the robot suffered from garbled communications and periods of intermittent silence, JPL managers said Friday. The six-wheeled craft landed on the red planet on Jan. 3 for a planned three-month mission. Officials had described the loss of communications as a "very serious anomaly." REUTERS

functionality to the system because we don't know what's broke... We have a long way to go with the patient in intensive care."

Theisinger said that while the mission's flight software was malfunctioning — plunging the rover into a continual "processor reset loop" — he suspected that the root cause of the problem was some kind of hardware

issue, such as a mechanical glitch or sensor flaw.

The problems began when the craft failed to finish carrying out a sequence of instructions to manipulate an instrument on the craft called the mini-thermal emission spectrometer, or "mini-TES," which is used measure the infrared emissions given off by rocks and soil to determine their mineral composition.

"We were doing a motor operation that did not run to completion when this thing started," he said. Since then, the craft appears to have rebooted its own onboard computer more than 60 times.

The good news, Theisinger said, was that Spirit was now responding to commands and sending some limited data back to Earth, an improvement over the mere beeps and random radio garble received earlier, giving engineers something to go on as they puzzle through the difficulty.

He said mission controllers should be able to "sustain the current state of the spacecraft from a health standpoint for an indefinite period of time."

He said he viewed the chances of restoring Spirit to perfect working order as "low," but likewise said it was unlikely that the rover would remain completely incapacitated.

Theisinger also said he thought that whatever the problem turned out to be, it was probably a "one-off" malfunction that should not necessarily stymie Spirit's identical twin,

Opportunity, once it arrives.

JPL project managers said they were moving ahead as scheduled with plans for Opportunity, which is due to land late Saturday night PST on the opposite side of Mars in a region

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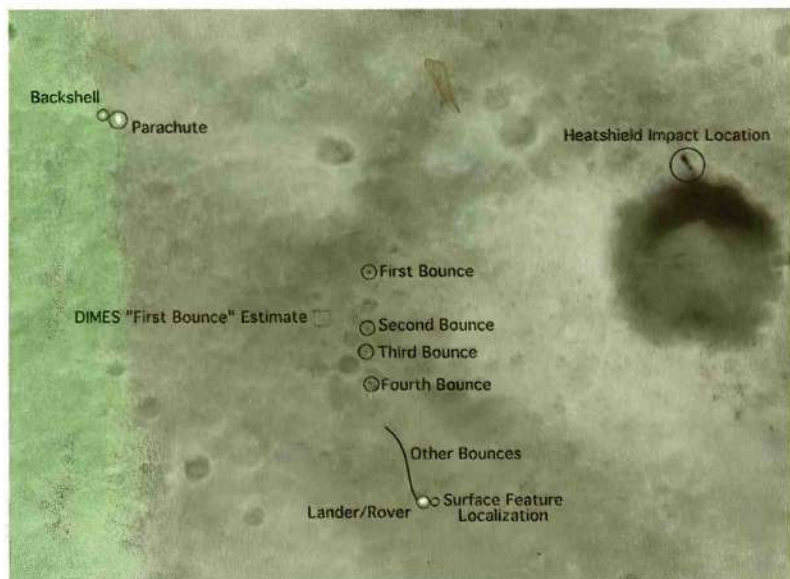
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called the Meridiani Planum, a smooth plain near Mars' equator. In that region, NASA scientists have detected an abundance of gray hematite, a mineral that on Earth usually forms in association with liquid water.

One change controllers plan to make from the landing routine of Spirit will be to deploy the parachute on Opportunity's entry vehicle sooner, 4,500 feet higher up, in part to account for the higher altitude of its landing site.



This image released Jan. 23, is a composite of images taken by the camera on Mars Global Surveyor and Spirit's descent image motion estimation system camera. As the Mars Rover lander containing the Spirit rover descended onto Mars' surface on Jan. 3, 2004, it performed a series of entry, descent and landing actions, leaving visible marks on the surface of Mars. This "path" of Spirit's descent can be seen labeled in this image released by NASA and JPL Jan. 23. REUTERS

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