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Inside:  **12** Syphilis threatens the inmates in Sana'a central prison 

Fugitive walks into court, declares his innocence

By: Amel Al-Ariqi
SANA'A, Feb 24 — Jaber Al-Banna, a Yemeni-American who is among the FBI's most wanted terrorism suspects, showed up in a Yemeni court Saturday and then walked free, surprising the attendees, an eyewitness said.
"During the trial a man approached the judge and introduced himself as Jaber Al-Banna, giving his ID card to the judge, who was completely surprised. The bearded man talked to the judge, saying he was one of twenty three suspects that escaped the political prison in 2006. He added that he had 'done nothing either here in Yemen, nor in the United States... I surrender myself to the Yemeni president' before he left the courtroom on foot. No one prevented him from leaving," said the eyewitness.
Al-Banna's appearance on Saturday was in the appeal court which began to hear the appeals of 36 Yemenis sentenced to jail last year for planning and carrying out attacks for Al-Qaeda, and being connected to a series of attacks on oil facilities.
The men were sentenced last

November to jail terms of between two and 15 years after they were convicted over an abortive twin attack on oil facilities in September 2006, one on an oil refinery at Marib, and the other on petrol storage tanks at a terminal operated by Canadian firm Nexen in the southeastern Hadramout province at the same time. Al-Banna was charged in absentia with masterminding the plot, as were several of the escapees.
The 41 year-old man is a former resident of Lackawanna, N.Y. He left the United States in spring 2001 as part of a larger group that authorities said traveled to Osama bin Laden's al-Farooq training camp in Afghanistan.
In May 2003, U.S. prosecutors charged Al-Banna in absentia with conspiring with a group known as the "Lackawanna Six" to provide material support and resources to a foreign terrorist organization.
The U.S. asked Yemen to hand over Al-Banna, and while he was subsequently arrested by authorities in January 2004, Yemen refused to extradite Al-Banna to the U.S. after his surrender. Al-Banna is wanted by the United States over charges of "provid-



Yemeni-American Jaber Al-Banna, 41, one of the FBI's 26 "most wanted" for terrorism, appears courtroom in Sana'a, Yemen Saturday, Feb. 23.

ing material support to terrorists."
In February 2006 Al-Banna and 22 other prisoners broke out of a Yemeni jail by digging a tunnel to a nearby mosque.
The U.S. is offering up to \$5 million for information leading to his arrest.
In November 2007 Al-Banna was convicted of the terror attacks and sentenced to ten years in absentia.
Speculations mentioned that the Yemeni Government and *jihaddists*, including a number of Al-Qaeda fighters, reached a deal in which the *jihaddists* can be released from jail if they do not carry out any terrorist activities inside Yemen.
Yemen and the United States have previously exchanged accusations over Jamal al-Badawi, an Al-Qaeda fighter convicted of involvement in the October 2000 bombing of the USS Cole off the southern port of Aden, which killed 17 American sailors. He was reported temporarily released by the Yemeni authorities, which caused the U.S. to suspend signing a 20.6 million dollar aid package for Yemen on October 2007.
Yemen in return denied the release of Al-Badawi.

Electronic media censorship halts

By: Yemen Times Staff
SANA'A, Feb. 24 — All websites, whether local or international, were unblocked Sunday, Feb. 24, and residents in Yemen now have full access to all websites.
The unblocked sites include Yemenportal, Al-Umah, Free Yemen, Aden Press, South Voice Forum, and Al-Taif News Network, media sites that had been blocked by Yemeni authorities because they were publishing opposition

news. Some of the sites have been blocked since 2004, while the majority have been created and blocked more recently.
Full access to the web was granted for over a week, yet there is no official explanation as to why this sudden space for electronic media has been granted. Sources at Yemen Net explained that the release of the websites could be attributed to the maintenance the service provider is carrying out.
Some of the recently unblocked web-

site owners could not credit this to the state's provision of better space for media, and claim that the block occurred because of the President's visit to Germany, as he "wants to give a good impression of Yemen's promotion of press freedoms."
Yemen Net is the only technical service provider through which residents in Yemen can access the Internet. It does not hold an authority over what site should be blocked and what should be allowed; however, there is no clear indi-

cation as to which concerned authority controls electronic media. The Ministry of Information told the Yemen Times they have no relation to this issue due to the absence of legislation that controls the operation of electronic media.
International organizations and donor countries advocating press freedom had expressed concern about what they say is a deteriorating level of press freedom in recent years, citing journalist beatings, newspaper closures and more recently, blocking of political websites.

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In brief

HADRAMOUT

Workshops to improve investment environment
Feb. 23 — Four workshops on improving the investment environment by improving investment management, administrative and regulative competence, improving the management of investment lands and improving environmental, judiciary and security infrastructures were launched Saturday.

Discussions also include the reasons for lack of data and information to investors, the weakness of investment propaganda and how to eradicate administrative corruption. The workshops are a part of preparations for the Real Estate and Tourist Investment Conference to be held here late next month.

HODEIDAH

Rescuing a French tourist yacht
After receiving SOS signals from a French yacht sailing in the Red Sea, coast guards in Hodeidah rushed to the rescue of four French tourists — two males and two females — who were on a tourist trip in Yemen. The yacht experienced a technical fault that left the tourists stranded in the middle of the sea. Yemeni technicians fixed the problem thereby allowing the tourists to resume their trip.

SA'ADA

World Physicians Organization supports Yemeni health

The World Physicians Organization currently is implementing a training project to qualify 300 Yemeni physicians in the fields of initial relief in emergencies, initial relief and health care. Additionally, the organization is furnishing seven health units in a number of Sa'ada districts.

Sa'ada's deputy governor and the WPO's representative on Saturday discussed further humanitarian aid and medical services to Yemen, as well as the role of many organizations in the war-torn governorate.

SANA'A

Remembering unidentified Russian soldier in Yemen

Feb. 23 — In honor of the Feb. 23 Russian Army Day, a Yemeni military official, along with Russia's ambassador to Yemen, placed a bouquet of flowers on the Unidentified Russian Soldier Memorial in Sana'a. A number of military personnel and Russian diplomats attended the ceremony. Since the early 1970s, Russia has supported the Yemeni army with training, weapons and technical expertise.

YR 26 million thief nabbed by colleague

Returning to visit his family, a Yemeni thief who stole YR 26 million (more than \$130,000) from his Hadramout firm was identified at the airport by a former colleague who reported the thief to airport security.

The thief, who had changed his name, obtained a fake passport and fled the country two months ago, didn't expect his adventure to be terminated so soon.

U.S. jazz group holds concert

Today at 6 p.m. at the Yemeni Cultural Center in Sana'a, a four-member U.S. jazz group called "Exegesis" will hold a musical concert open to the public.

The event is being organized by the U.S. Embassy in Yemen in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture. Exegesis will perform in several Yemeni cities.

ADEN

Advocacy training for child survival

Thirty participants from print and broadcast media in Aden received training and orientation on the conditions of child survival in the world with focus on Yemen. The training comes within the context of launching the UNICEF's State of the World Children Report 2008. The trainees were informed on factors leading to child mortality under five and infant and the role of media to educate the public to eliminate harmful practices.

By: Nadia Al-Sakkaf

SANA'A, Feb. 24 — Several legal amendments have been approved by the Labor and Social Affairs Committee in Parliament and will be forwarded to Parliament for ratification in order for them to be enacted. The approved amendments include article 20 of the 1991 Insurance and Wages Law 25. The amendment defines a woman's retirement age as 60 years old, the same as men, while giving women the option of an early retirement at 55 provided they have been in service for at least 15 years. "This is an achievement for women because it means their participation in the public sphere could be extended and they won't be forced into retirement once they reach 55 years of age. There are many skilled women over 55 and it would be a waste to prevent them from continuing to be productive," said Hooria Mashoor, deputy chairperson of the Women's National Committee (WNC), the main body concerned with amending discriminatory laws against women. Another amendment stipulated that men



Female physician teaching medical students how to use a petri dish to cultivate a sample. New amendments to the labor law include protecting pregnant women from health risks.

and women can receive the pensions of their deceased spouse, according to article 60 of the same law.

The amendments also added more requirements to be fulfilled by business owners for pregnant employees so as to take required measures to protect them

from radiation, vibrations and noise and air pressure risks. Additionally, a pregnant employee retains the right to compensation and treatment if she or her unborn child are subjected to any kind of risk or health hazard. The amendments come during a national campaign

to eliminate discriminative laws against women in Yemeni legislation, led by the Women's National Committee.

The committee discussed the mentioned amendments with concerned Yemeni authorities, including the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, legal consultants working in the project and members of civil society. The WNC has campaigned for amending 61 discriminative articles against women since 2004. Most of these articles are in the Personal Status Law.

Before the amendments could be forwarded to Parliament for discussion and approval, they have to be endorsed by the Supreme Council for Women and the Cabinet. In July 2007, the Cabinet approved most of the amendments, leaving out requests relating to women's political participation, and forwarded the endorsed list of amendments to Parliament, which promised to give the amendments high priority in its program this year. In 2003 Parliament approved five of fifteen amendments that were advocated by the WNC legal team since 2000. The approved amendments include giving equal treatment

for children of a Yemeni woman from a non-Yemeni father, taking better care of pregnant and nursing female prisoners, giving mothers the right to register the birth of their children and allowing women to ask for divorce if their husbands were discovered to have certain critical diseases.

Since then, however, no amendments to the discriminatory laws have been achieved. Freedom House, an independent organization concerned with human rights, referred the existence of such discriminatory laws to women's limited access and minor participation in judicial institutions, as the majority of legislators and law enforcement agents are men. While the 1994 constitution stipulates that all citizens are equal in rights and duties, a number of Yemeni laws, regulations, and policies discriminate against women, particularly those governing women's rights in the family, created by Yemeni legislators under the pretext of Islamic shari'a. For example, women have fewer rights than men in Yemen's Personal Status Law, which governs matters of marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance.

Three locust swarms invade Al-Mahar'a

By: Hamed Thabet

Al-Mahar'a, Feb. 23 — Three locust swarms invaded the Arabian Sea and entered Yemen near Al-Mahar'a on Friday. The three swarms journeyed from Ethiopia across the Horn of Africa, as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) had previously predicted.

The locust swarms must be controlled and stopped, otherwise farm areas in Shabwa, Al-Mahra'a, and Hadramout will be in real danger, said the FAO.

The locust swarms, which are as large as five square-kilometers (two square miles), may also threaten Kenya, Eritrea, Djibouti and western Yemen, according to the FAO's website. The locusts could inflict destruction on Yemeni farms, said Abdulh Fare' Al-Rumaih, the director of National Center for Desert Locust Control (DLCC). Though Al-Rumaih said that there is no need to be worried at present, the FAO warned the DLCC that the three locust swarms would invade Yemen, making it the worst invasion in 15 years. "The swarms, once inside Yemen, might breed and spread. The locust problem could increase if the swarms change their direction from desert to rural areas, which are suitable places for reproducing and laying eggs," explained Al-Rumaih.

Yemen had suffered economically in the agricultural sector because of locust swarms during the last 20 years. The FAO said that financial losses totaled around \$60 million.

Yemen has a stockpile of about 13 tons of anti-locust chemicals, but it would only last for three to four days, and Yemen desperately needs more anti-locust chemicals in order to fight off the most recent swarms, said a



During the locust season many Yemenis consider locusts a favorite meal.

source in the Ministry of Agriculture.

The locust control center requested FAO aid that would include two insecticide-spraying helicopters in order to help Yemen annihilate the locust threat. "Survey and control operations are difficult because of the mountainous terrain and because the swarms are highly mobile," said the FAO.

Locust swarms in Ethiopia's eastern region devastated grazing lands earlier this year, contributing to continuing humanitarian problems in the region, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA).

Yemen witnessed similar locust invasions in 1986, 1987 and the most serious outbreak in 1993. Other invasions occurred in 2002 and 2004, and while they caused a lot of damage, they were successfully controlled.

"Desert locusts, as evidenced from their name, breed in desert areas and upon reaching maturity, invade other

regions," said Al-Rumaih.

Al-Rumaih added that locust outbreaks in the midlands or western areas could happen if they aren't controlled in their breeding phase.

Yemen has been lauded by the FAO due to improving its fight against locusts. The DLCC used advanced remote sensory technology in to control locust outbreaks in 2002 and 2004.

In Yemen, there are two types of locusts: desert locusts and African migratory locusts. The latter is common in the coastal areas.

The insects, which weigh about two grams, can eat their own weight in vegetation in a day. When breeding conditions are right, they form dense and highly destructive swarms occupying several square kilometers that can strip an area of greenery within hours.

Separate swarms have been reported in eastern Yemen and Oman, where they have bred near the Marmul oil fields.

Educational syndicates call for nationwide sit-in

By: Almigdad Dahesh Mojalli

SANA'A, Feb. 20 — The Yemeni Teachers Syndicate and the Syndicate of Educational Professions released a statement calling for all Yemeni teachers to stage a one day sit-in on Tuesday, February 26, to force the government to raise their salaries.

The call for the sit-in came on Monday, after the extension to the negotiating period ended.

The statement said that the government had not responded to teachers' demands to raise their annual wages within the month. The two syndicates decided to call for nationwide peaceful sit-ins. The statement indicated that while the government procrastinates from meeting the rights of the employees, claiming it is unable to curb the price hikes, it continues to operate as usual. The statement mentioned that the government neither appreciates the nature of teaching nor the significance of the teacher, who is the cornerstone of education. "This negligence has led to the constant decline in the quality of education," said the statement.

The syndicates demanded that the government give teachers a 60 to 110 percent raise in their standing basic salaries, including YR 130,000 (\$600) a month in back pay beginning from the middle of 2007, and release the annual bonuses suspended by a governmental decision in 2005.

The statement also asked the government to provide rural living expenses for the teachers who teach in rural areas, in accordance with the teachers' law.

Moreover, the syndicates requested that local and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other syndicates sit in solidarity with the

teachers. This is not the first sit-in organized by the Yemeni Teachers Syndicate. Last year the syndicate arranged many sit-ins and protests with the same demand of raising salaries. The protests forced the government to adopt a new strategy to deal with the demands, promising to raise teachers' salaries.

"The government has not made radical solutions for the teachers' problems but limited ones. It gives teachers very small salary increases, which are nothing at all in proportion to the price hikes. In addition, the increases are always subject to many fines and taxes," commented Ahmed Al-Rabahi, head of the Teachers' syndicate.

He added that the maximum salary for teachers according to the law is YR 160,000, and they are asking for YR 130,000, which will come to YR 70,000 after taxes and insurance are deducted. In addition, Al-Rabahi believes the numerous strikes last year in many different governorates could oblige the government to pay the teacher bonuses and back pay.

Isamail Zaidan, general manager of information for the Ministry of Education, refused to comment, while personnel manager Faisal Jameel couldn't be reached.

Abdulaziz Murshed, father of a student, supported the teachers in their demands, but at the same time is worried about his son and the other students. "I'm sure that teachers have the right to stage a sit-in because their salaries are too low due to the unbelievable price hikes. Also, every increase they get is preceded by two or three price hikes and followed by another two or three. But though they have the right to protest, students will be affected and I'm worried about that," Murshed said.

With more than 3 million people in Yemen infected,

Health Ministry to launch "Bilharzia Eradication" campaign

By: Mahmoud Assamiee
For The Yemen Times

SANA'A, Feb. 20 — In cooperation with international organizations, Yemen's Ministry of Public Health and Population will conduct a four-year campaign to fight Bilharzia, Phase one of which will launch next month.

"Bilharzia is a forgotten disease that's not a global issue," WHO representative in Yemen Ghulam Rabbani stated Wednesday, indicating that Yemen and Sudan are the only Middle Eastern nations still suffering the disease. For this reason, WHO is conducting this campaign in Yemen.

"Bilharzia leads to incurable liver failure and, effectively, death," Rabbani said, adding that several Middle Eastern countries like Egypt and Afghanistan that suffered from the disease have succeeded in eradicating it completely through such campaigns and distributing anti-Bilharzia medicine to those infected.

"Just like it has succeeded in eradicating smallpox and polio, Yemen also can succeed in eradicating Bilharzia," Rabbani stated.

According to WHO statistics, more than three million people in Yemen are

infected with the disease, which means significant humanitarian and economic losses.

On Wednesday, WHO and the Ministry of Public Health and Population organized a meeting in Sana'a for WHO and World Bank officials to discuss with more than 30 journalists representing various media outlets in Yemen the role of media in health campaigns and the prospects and mechanisms for the Bilharzia eradication campaign, which will launch its first phase March 11 in six governorates.

At the opening session of the meeting entitled, "Media's Role in Carrying out Bilharzia Eradication in Yemen," Rabbani highlighted the dangers of the disease and the media's important role in enlightening citizens about WHO's message in making this campaign — the first of its kind in Yemen — successful.

Ibrahim Al-Karadani, regional advisor for WHO information, noted that the campaign will target children between ages 6 and 18 in 36 districts in six governorates: Mahwit, Al-Dhale', Taiz, Abyan, Dhamar and Lahj. The children will be given anti-Bilharzia tablets at their schools, as well as asked to bring their friends who aren't registered in school to come to take the medicine.

Bilharzia infection occurs in freshwater containing larval forms (cercariae) of schistosomes, which develop in snails. The free-swimming larvae penetrate the skin of those swimming or wading in the water.

Abdullah Osheish, director-general of the National Anti-Bilharzia Program, said phase one of 2008 campaign targets 34 percent of the population between ages 6 and 18 — 68 percent of them in schools and 32 percent outside.

He added that the six million tablets costing \$740,000 will be administered to children at their schools by 7,460 workers, 4,000 of which are teachers.

"It's been proven that attempting to combat Bilharzia via traditional means, such as banning children from swimming in dirty water, yields lesser profit than administering medicine," Al-Karadani noted.

He clarified that while it's difficult to monitor or eradicate all polluted waters and sources of Bilharzia, administering the anti-Bilharzia medicine over four years to the targeted children will be like vaccinating them against the disease. Doing so will cut the disease's life cycle and then it will vanish in Yemen, as happened in Egypt.

Riadh Bin Ismail, advisor to the



During the rainy season most of the streets in Yemen become full of ponds creating a suitable environment for bilharzia.

WHO's Eastern Mediterranean's Regional Office, addressed potential rumors among locals who may doubt the medication's impact, saying, "These anti-Bilharzia tablets are approved internationally under medical observation and with no side effects. They are administered to children between ages 6 and 18, whether they are infected or not."

However, he advised parents in the targeted governorates to "feed their

children before going to those schools distributing the anti-Bilharzia medicine."

Fawzia Hamid, director of the World Bank's Loan Unit, noted that the cost of such medicine is much less than the expense of distributing it to the targeted group. "This process must continue and journalists must enlighten citizens about the necessity of giving their children this medicine in order to save their lives."

WHAT IT MEANS...

The political role of Yemeni tribes (Part 2)

Recent tribal movements in the form of tribal conferences

While tribal conferences are deemed to be a vital mechanism of the tribal system for expressing their claims and needs, they also are used as a trick by tribal oppositionists in Yemen.

Such conferences are a political "phenomenon." During the last century, Yemen witnessed a number of tribal conferences presided over by tribal leaders.

The following list of tribal conferences bears witness to this phenomenon's existence:

- 1- Amran Conference, 1963
- 2- Khamer Conference, 1965
- 3- Raidah Conference, 1968
- 4- Bir Al-Shaif Conference, 1972
- 5- Solidarity Conference of Yemeni tribes, 1990
- 6- National Solidarity Conference, 1991
- 7- Saba Conference, 1992
- 8- Unified Bakeel Conference, 1994
- 9- Dahm Tribes Conference, 1998

These conferences were a peaceful means through which Yemen's tribes sought to serve their economic ends, which included an emphasis on caring for rural areas, establishing a plan for economic development and calling on the government to evenly distribute development projects throughout Yemen.

Yemeni tribes stressed the necessity of achieving their social and political needs, whether those of their tribe or others. These needs include solving intertribal problems and

disputes within each tribe according to agreed conventions and Sharia law, but subject to state laws and regulations; granting the Bakeel tribes a proportional share in Yemen's political representation, whether in Parliament, at influential institutions or abroad, and endeavoring to halt the Yemeni government's policies aimed at impoverishing and starving its citizens.

These necessities are linked inextricably to the entire nation's fundamentals, such as preserving Yemeni unity and promoting an understanding of the indispensability of such national unity.

It appears that most of these tribal conferences contained both patriotic and nationalistic dimensions because while many were "tribally located," they had "national objectives."

Despite the tribal venues of these conferences – as they were held in the strongholds of certain Yemeni tribes such as Amran, Khamer, etc. – they promoted national objectives and claims. For example, they supported Egypt, then led by Gamal Abdul Nasser, and lashed out at foreign conspiracies, although Yemeni political life itself witnessed unbelievable



Prof. Mohamed Al-Dhahiri

political overlapping, as described above.

Nevertheless, one could say that establishing obviously tribal conferences, such as the National Solidarity Council and last year's Khamer meeting, signifies certain points:

- they were held during a political crisis wherein there was some type of political instability, demonstrations here and there, rights campaigns, more paupers, excessively rampant corruption, etc.

- modern institutions, namely NGOs and political parties, have failed to fulfill their duties.

- the ruling elite's ineffectiveness and underperformance.

- Yemeni political practitioners hate institutionalism.

- coming under foreign influence and attempting to emulate the outside world; for example, we're being influenced by it, but we are unable to act upon it for historical, political, social, economic and cultural reasons.

There are the determiners of the tribes' political role in Yemen, including social roles, geopolitical roles, those related to tribal structure – whether cultural, leadership or military – and concluding with the foreign factor, which considerably strengthens or weakens

the tribes' political role.

One is justified in assuming that Yemeni tribes' presence and political role will grow if the ruling elite's legitimacy continues dwindling, with the Yemeni government failing to perform its tasks and exaggerating its abilities; if there's continued personification of political authority and institutional feebleness within Yemen's political system; and if the Yemeni opposition fails to present itself as a viable substitute to the current government and detaches itself from Yemeni citizens' real worries.

In this regard, credit must be given to the Yemeni government – namely the Joint Meeting Parties – for subscribing at least relatively to the struggle of many Yemenis who voiced their sufferings at nationwide rallies and marches in 2007.

It has been noted that traditional institutions, or so-called pre-State institutions, come into play when modern institutions are absent or when the ruling elite's legitimacy is shaken.

A politically abnormal relationship plagues Yemeni political life, i.e., political tribes practicing politics and making and breaking alliances. On the other hand, there are those parties with no political identity, who neither want to form a government nor be involved in a peaceful transfer of power with others.

"Tribal politicism" is encouraged because by definition, tribes firstly are political and secondly, they are led by figures who aren't ambitious to rise to power or overthrow the

existing government.

Therefore, a political ruler may be on the safe side when it comes to tribal leaders because they limit themselves to tribal leadership rather than becoming heads of state. They have a "livelihood" ambition that doesn't seek to usurp statewide authority.

To the contrary, political parties cherish a replacement ambition, which is unacceptable by the ruling authority. Because, in Yemen, authority means wealth, it's fitting to say that there's a peaceful extension – rather than a peaceful transfer – of power.

Current political circumstances indicate that Yemen's political system has ushered in a phase of political instability, unabated intertribal strife (wars, revenge killings, banditry, etc.), initiatives and election programs failing to solve the crises of Yemeni people and their government, elections (parliamentary, presidential, local) seeking to cure social ailments but coming to no fruition and constitutional amendments failing to lead to political reform.

Hence, those parties concerned should be fully mindful of this new phase and its relevant risks. Not admitting the existence of the political system's crises will open the door to possibilities that aren't necessarily in the interests of the Yemeni people or their government.

Prof. Mohammed M. Al-Thahery is Head of Political Science Dept., Sana'a University.

What it means is an analytical feature of Yemen Times, in which Yemeni topics are discussed and analyzed by Yemeni and international experts. Contributions and comments are welcomed, they could be sent to the feature's coordinator: Dr. Abdullah Al-Faqih (drafaqih@yahoo.com).

ACCESS MENA Project concludes
Three kilometers away from the Yemeni-Saudi borders and with the attendance of the Governor of Hajja Governorate, Eng. Fareed Mujawar, the Child Labor Combat Project (ACCESS MENA) held a ceremony in Al-Khudoor area, Haradh district. This occasion was held to celebrate the conclusion of seven training courses on child centered methodologies program which targeted 189 male and female teachers in five districts of Hajja Governorate. The ceremony also included handing over eight cultural and social centers to the targeted schools by the project. Each center contains four computers with their accessories in addition to an integrated

library with necessary furniture as well as a first aid pharmacy and an electrical generator.

In his speech, Dr. Jamal Al-Haddi, Project manager, emphasized that these activities aim to create an attractive environment for school children and originate friendly schools that respond to the children's scientific, cultural and recreational requirements and limit children being drop out of schools and consequently reduce them being involved in activities related to trafficking.

The Governor of Hajja Governorate Mujawar praised the ACCESS MENA Project and confirmed that its activities contribute in supporting the developmental activities in Hajja Governorate, calling upon the local authorities to

Their News

identify the priorities of the essential requirements.

This activity coincides with the psychosocial training courses currently being held by the Project in the Ibb and Abyan governorates which target 50 school headmasters and psychosocial teachers in the project's working areas. These courses aim to train the trainees on ways of behavior modification and how to make children acquire life skills in addition to introduce the trainees to a number of skills and activities related to the teacher-student relationship man-

agement and the role of the psychosocial specialist in enhancing such relationship to be a daily-basis behavior within the school.

Finance Leaders Conclude meeting
More than 70 heads of Middle Eastern financial institutions, senior public sector officials and, leaders of financial services firms from Europe and the United States, today concluded the 11th annual meeting of Middle Eastern and North African Bank Chief Executives hosted by the Dubai International

Financial Center (DIFC) in association with the Institute of International Finance (IIF). The conference was held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Dubai, and President of the DIFC.

A key theme on the agenda of the meeting was the possible impact on the Middle East's economy of the slow-down in the United States economy. Speaking to the conference on Saturday evening, Dr. Josef Ackermann, Chairman of the Institute of International Finance's Board of Directors and Chairman of the Management Board and the Group

Executive Committee of Deutsche Bank AG, stressed that, "The Gulf Co-operation Council region is in the midst of a boom, underpinned by sustained high oil prices, with the economic drivers going beyond oil as private confidence and investment are now at an all time high. As such, even if the U.S. were to slip into recession, and oil prices were to dip, we believe the impact would be greatly mitigated by the significant number of major infrastructure projects that are already underway or are being pursued throughout the GCC. These will provide momentum for robust development in a number of sectors, including energy and petrochemicals, real estate, trade and finance, and tourism, for several years to come."

الدعوة لتقديم عطاءات

التاريخ: 21 فبراير 2008

دعوة لتقديم العطاءات رقم: 2008/125

١- حصل مشروع دعم إصلاح القطاع الصحي على قرض من البنك الدولي (IDA) لسداد التكاليف المتعلقة بمشروع دعم إصلاح القطاع الصحي وسوف يتم استخدام جزء من هذا القرض لسداد المدفوعات المعتمدة بموجب العقد الموقع استناداً إلى هذه الدعوة

٢- الشروط الواردة في التعليمات للمشاركين في المناقصة وفي الشروط العامة للعقد هي شروط البنك الدولي المتعلقة بمسئوليات طرحة مناقصات: شراء البضائع

٣- يدعو مشروع دعم إصلاح القطاع الصحي المشتركين المعتمدين في المناقصة إلى تقديم عطاءات في مظاريف مغلقة لتوريد وتصميم وطباعة السجلات الخاصة بالمستشفيات والمراكز والوحدات الصحية.

٤- يجب أن تسلم العطاءات إلى المكتب الكائن في وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان - الطابق الرابع قبل الساعة 11:00 صباح الإثنين الموافق 2008/3/24م ويجب أن ترفق بتأمين (ضمان) ابتدائي بواقع (1,500.00 دولار) غير مشروع.

٥- يستطيع راغبو الإشتراك المعتمدين شراء مجموعة كاملة من وثائق المناقصة عند تقديم طلب كتابي إلى الجهة المذكورة أعلاه وسداد رسم قدره \$50، (خمسين دولار) أو ما يعادلها غير قابل للاسترداد.

٦- ينبغي أن تفتح العطاءات في حضور ممثلي المشتركين فيها الذين يرغبون في الحضور في الساعة 11:00 صباح يوم الإثنين الموافق 24 مارس 2008م في مقر مشروع دعم إصلاح القطاع الصحي. وحدة إدارة القرض - وزارة الصحة العامة والسكان - الدور الرابع

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Haddah, Next to Hawaii Club,

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no later than 5th of March 2008



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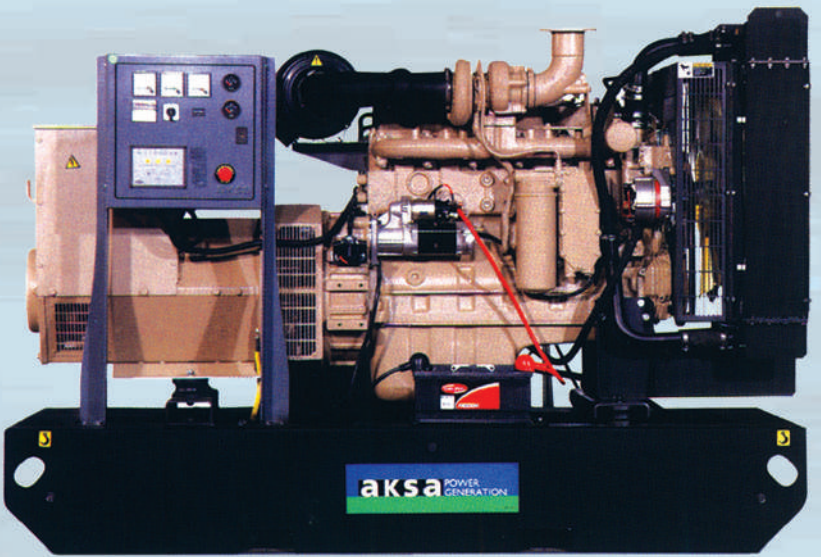
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An ex-American Navy Lieutenant: "It is just a matter of time before the American people get sick of this war and force a pull out."

By: Janie Ferguson
For The Yemen Times

A former U.S. Navy lieutenant has been living in Sana'a for seven months, having resigned in protest from serving in Iraq. Harvey Tharp was a full lieutenant in the U.S. Navy when he was called to serve in Iraq due to his knowledge of the Arabic language. Upon his departure from Yemen, he spoke to *The Yemen Times* about the moral challenges he faced, which led to the ending of his military career, and what he learned from his time spent with Yemeni people.

Why did you join the military?

I was just out of law school and already had been a sergeant in the Air Force while in law school as an Arabic translator. I knew I'd be well paid because of my seniority. As a result, it seemed like a good career move.

So, was it a career move rather than a feeling of moral obligation?

Both. I didn't see any conflict between a U.S. leadership role in the world and my principles when I applied in 2000.

How did you end up in Iraq?

I became a national security lawyer in Hawaii. Since I knew Arabic, I took the language proficiency test and I was shocked to find that the test hadn't changed in 10 years. Because better proficiency meant better pay, I'd been taking the test every six months, so I ended up with the best score possible.

I wasn't against the idea of toppling Saddam Hussein, but I was worried that the country would descend into utter chaos as he opened the jails to release criminals, etc., leaving us with a mess, which turned out to be true.

By the time they called me to Iraq in late September 2003, they were desperate for Arabic speakers, so I was

sent.

I was of a frame of mind that we were going to lose the war. I was against it, but you can't resign because you think you'll lose. The Air Force paid for my college degree, law school and Arabic training and to have said no to going to a combat zone would've been awfully convenient. But I couldn't walk away because I didn't want to be thought of as a coward. Looking back, that wasn't really a man's way of deciding, it was a boy's.

So why did you eventually decide to resign?

I was based in the Iraqi city of Kirkuk for six months, from October 2003 to March 2004. I asked to stay for longer because at the time, the polls were saying that the Iraqis wanted us to stay. I had two dozen Iraqis working underneath me and we were friends. I wanted to finish my work there as part of a diplomatic team, but the military wouldn't let me and sent me back to the U.S. in March.

When the Abu Ghraib Prison photos came out in April 2004, opinion basically began to change over the summer, with 70 or 80 percent of Iraqis wanting us to leave. It also became clear that there were no weapons of mass destruction and that this hadn't been an honest mistake, it had all been lies. To me, the U.S. forces were part of the problem and not doing any good.

I was called to Iraq again, but unlike before, I knew I'd be a combatant this time and the idea of killing someone over a lie really started to weigh on my mind.

I had considered myself lucky when I was last in Iraq because, although I had to display considerable physical courage to drive around the city in a conspicuous vehicle with no radio in a very dangerous situation, I wasn't a combatant. The question which arose was did I have the moral courage to



Former U.S. Navy lieutenant Harvey Tharp.

leave because I had become convinced that it was wrong – an unjust and immoral war?

How did your family and friends react to you going to Iraq and then resigning?

I have a range of friends with very different opinions on the war, but most were just concerned about my personal safety over there.

My friends wouldn't believe that I would act on my doubts in 2004. They didn't think I'd walk away from a great career and a well-paying job. When they found out, they were very surprised and worried that I was walking away with nothing.

How did you go about resigning in protest?

I went into my commander's office and said I wouldn't voluntarily return to Iraq. He said if I refused to go, I'd have to resign from the military entirely. I had a day to think about it, so I called my father and my best friend for advice. They agreed that I should resign, so I handed in a letter saying I felt the war was unjust, immoral and that the Iraqis didn't want us there.

What will you do when you return to the U.S.?

I'm a member of the Iraq Veterans Against the War. As the only officer who has joined, I'm the highest ranked. When I was in military school, I was taught that if you find yourself completely alone in your stance, you're probably wrong. This time, though, I don't think I'm wrong.

I'm going to Washington, D.C. for the winter soldier hearings from March 13-16. Fifty members from the Iraq Veterans Against the War will testify to war crimes they witnessed or even participated in and I'll be there in support.

Did you witness any war crimes?

No, I didn't personally witness any, but I came to know about certain cases. What shocked me was how the rules about war crimes were far too loose. I knew of a mother and daughter who were shot, killing the daughter to die and causing the mother to lose a leg, because they were running away as soldiers tried to talk to them. I was told that this wasn't illegal because they were evading capture. I didn't witness it, but the rules of engagement seemed unrestricted to me.

Were there any Yemeni foreign fighters there?

I didn't have any experience of that, but I know Yemenis were among the foreign fighters, although most were Saudis. They were really so-called foreign fighters, but as Americans, so were we!

Why did you come to Yemen?

Due to my time in Iraq, I developed post-traumatic stress disorder, so I'm unable to work and I have some spare time. I wanted to improve my Arabic to see if I could get back into translating and I heard that the Yemeni dialect is very close to standard Arabic, as well as that it seemed like a very interesting place to visit.



How do Yemenis react when you tell them about your past?

I understand that the war is enormously unpopular with Yemenis and indeed most people in the Middle East. Personally, I'm not proud at all of having taken part in the war, but it often makes up for it to locals here that I resigned in protest and didn't partake in combat.

How will you describe Yemen when you return to the U.S.?

Although the huge difference in wealth between Yemen and the U.S. is obvious, Yemenis don't feel deprived and they seem happy with their lives. Also, just like when I was in Iraq, I've been very impressed with the positive role of Islam in the people. Islam gives a moral compass to my professors and the people here.

What's your favorite and least favorite thing about Yemen?

My favorite thing has been my professor. He has a degree in Islamic jurisprudence and is very well educated. He has taken me bowling and to play pool.

My least favorite thing is the traffic.

I take the bus most days and they have no seatbelts, even though they swerve all over the road.

Has the U.S. lost the war in Iraq?

I'd like to stress here that I separate the U.S. government from the U.S. people. As far as the U.S. government's aim to control oil in the Middle East more, it's been a failure. Once the U.S. military leaves Iraq, the Iraqi government will collapse because it has no legitimacy – and that's why we've lost the war. It's just a matter of time before the American people get sick of this war and force a pullout. It's a question of when the U.S. government will lose.

Who are you going to vote for in the upcoming U.S. presidential election?

I'm disappointed that Barack Obama – who campaigned against the war from the start – hasn't committed to pulling troops out of Iraq immediately. However, he's the best anti-war candidate, so I'll vote for him.

Hillary Clinton voted for the war and still hasn't admitted that it was a mistake.

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Words of Wisdom



If more meaningful change is to be made in respect for human rights, the daily violations against the rights of ordinary citizens have to be addressed. This means introducing new values through education and re-education. One clear target is to train law-enforcement agencies and officers on the rights of citizens and how to respect them. Another has to do with re-training of prison wardens and personnel.

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

OUR
OPINIONDealing with the
Danish cartoons

Once again, drawings depicting the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) have caused uproar in the Muslim world. This time, the reaction is confused because the issue was thought to be resolved until three angry Muslims in Denmark decided to take matters into their own hands.

Although the plot to kill one of the cartoonists failed because of alert security – or so it was reported – the Danish community, especially the media, was shaken by the news, remembering that when you push the buttons of some fanatics, they resort to violence, regardless of their religion.

Other than plotting the murder of the cartoonist, another reaction is to boycott Danish products. Many Muslims still are protesting everything that upsets them and immediately taking to the streets and burning the flags of those countries where such upsetting events occur.

As a reaction to this, more Danish media – and others will follow – have republished the controversial caricatures.

So, what next? I asked several Yemenis what they thought the solution to this conflict is; some suggested boycotting them forever, while others said to explain how this has hurt the Muslim community and have more dialogue. However, the most ridiculous response was to find something in Danish culture that's significant to them and then ridicule it to hurt them just as they hurt us.

To me, the whole issue is quite sad and somewhat pathetic. If we really loved our prophet and wanted to stand up for him, then we should've studied his actions in similar situations and used it as a reference for self-conduct. He was never a violent man, always displaying compassion and flexibility, even toward his enemies.

Islamic Sharia explains what to do when such insults occur. In this particular situation, where the offense comes from a non-Muslim, the measure stipulated in Sharia law is to ignore and let go.

The idea behind this is that because non-Muslims aren't within Islamic jurisdiction, we shouldn't impose our beliefs on them, which means that what's precious and sacred to us doesn't necessarily hold the same significance for them.

Thus, the most we can do is complain to their heads of state that this has offended us, but since Danish law frees the media from state control, I don't see how much good this will do.

The point here is that Muslims neither understand nor practice their religion, which has created misunderstandings among non-Muslims as to the essence of Islam and its position against violence.

Personally, I like many Danish products, so I'm not interested in boycotting them. Until the Muslim world starts producing products just as good, I'll buy the available better-quality products – from wherever they originate.

There's no point in protesting when our youth are unemployed, when we hardly have any industry and when freedoms are oppressed in our countries.

The way I see it, only by developing ourselves and empowering our youth will we be able to prove to the world that Islam is a religion of logic and peace. Until then, I suggest we work on the problems we already have and not create additional ones by making more enemies.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf

Dear Electricity Minister!

What is the difference between
your ministry and Israel?

By: Awadh Al-Asali

At the very beginning, I have to highlight that I highly respect the Electricity Minister Dr. Mustafa Bahrani although people speak ill of him from time to time, and all that is attributed to a single reason. This reason is that Dr. Bahrani is a man of reason and logic, who knows well that 'one plus one equals two, but not one or three'. Consequently, I expect that he will interact with this article, and then punish wrongdoers and reward do-gooders, or at least give us the logic justifications for what happened.

The story began in the early morning of Sunday, Feb. 10, 2008 when the power was cut off in the Nuzeili building, located near Al-Mesbahi Intersection. The building's occupants believed that the blackout was caused by one of the power network-related problems, which are numerous and common-place in Yemen, but the power remained off until the afternoon of that day. The occupants started to question why the power has been cut off for many hours. Later on, they found out that the Electricity Ministry intentionally cut the power off in the building because some of its occupants have not settled the bills deserved for the ministry.

By God, I feel ashamed writing

this article fearing that people outside the country may read it. When people outside Yemen or non-Yemenis read such an article, what will they say about us?

Dear readers, some Electricity Ministry workers cut the power off in the whole building in order to press those who have not settled the bills to rush to any nearby offices and pay the deserved dues. I expect that such an article may remind the respected readership of Israel's behavior when it cut electricity off in the entire Gaza strip in order to increase its pressure on the Palestinian resistance nationwide. In the meantime, I bear in mind that this simile is absolutely unfair since Israel has many justifications regarding the procedures it has so far taken against the Palestinian people, although we are dissatisfied with it, while Yemen's Electricity Ministry, on the other hand, has no excuse to behave this way. The way the ministry behaves implies that citizens are its real enemies.

In order for these words to be based on logic, I will present to Dr. Bahrani some details in order to know much more about what is happening in the various government offices. When asked about anything, most of the government officials respond that they know nothing about what has happened or is happening. These details come as follows:

The Nuzeili Building is affiliated

with the Fourth District's electricity office, which I contacted at the number 465400. People in the office told me that the Commercial Department is the relevant agency in charge of such matters, and therefore gave me the department's telephone number. No one answer me when I rang the department's number. I then gave another call to the electricity office's emergency department, but the worker on duty answered me angrily saying "you are stupid... office hours are over... you have to contact the department tomorrow morning."

When I furiously reacted to his indecent expressions saying that power is off and that I can not wait until tomorrow morning, he replied, "I can do nothing for you...I have other things to do." Such statements indicate that electricity workers have nothing to do with blackout. While speaking to me, another employ entered the office and he then told me, "the relevant employee has just come but he is refusing to speak with you."

Dr. Bahrani lived for a long time in the U.S. and I think the man knows well the meaning of this statement 'Customer Services' in any firm, be it small or big. So, how shocked one may get when he/she sees that an electricity ministry has a 'customer services department' but never consider customers' complaints.

Source: Nabanews.net

Redlines between reality and illusion

By: Dr. Nasser Mohammed Nasser

Some people hold the view that the purpose of the armed forces is to merely maintain law and order and any talk about their affairs is forbidden even in the countries of mature democracy that preceded Yemen in this regard. They are of the opinion that discussing the situation of armed forces is a violation against their nationality and a charge accusing them of being partial with a particular party. They also believe that following establishment of the National Unity in May 1990, the military institution has since then abandoned partisanship and behaved neutrally. All such allegations raise numerous questions that are highlighted in the coming lines.

Before the armed forces become a power to maintain law and order, they are necessarily supposed to be a force for protecting borders of the homeland. But, I don't know why people confuse between the sovereign and security functions since the latter is an exclusive duty of the Interior Ministry. Despite this, you confront and condemn any writings about the military institution.

The Yemeni people are allocating one-third of the state's general budget to the armed forces, the mishandling of which forced us to abandon one-third of the country's area to bordering Saudi Arabia, including the lands, which the Imam refused to abandon during his rule. Instead, he insisted that other plots of land must be returned to Yemen under the Tayef Treaty in 1934.

As a result of mishandling the military institution, we handed an area more than that of Lebanon's total area over to the bordering

Sultanate of Oman, and therefore, we couldn't regain the Huneish islands until we squander our natural wealth and conceded it to American companies in order for the U.S. Administration to pressure the Eritrean regime to accept arbitration.

The armed forces' sovereign and national role, which is here represented by protecting borders and the national sovereignty, doesn't exist any more. And, the security role, supposed to be the primary job of internal security, is also absent. The repeated catastrophes, casualties and property damage taking place in the restive governorate of Sa'ada on almost a daily basis help degrade status of the regime in the eyes of Houthi supporters, as well as tribal leaders and sheikhs in different parts of the country. The unrest seen nationwide threatens survival of the state and society as well.

The redlines you speak about and try to generalize on the so-far-achieved democracy are responsible for the miserable conditions of the military institution and the state of unrest and turmoil nationwide. Had the military institution welcomed any criticism of its performance in order to rectify its functions away from the so-called 'redlines', status of the government would not have deteriorated and its troops would not have been defeated by Houthis. Had this institution been open to criticism, the national unity would not have been exposed to risk due to increased calls and advocacies for secession and regionalism.

Such 'redlines' are primarily responsible for the plights suffered by the peoples of Iraq and Somalia. Judicious men are those who benefit from others' mistakes, and any lessons learned from war-ravaged countries. If you insist that the so-called redlines are on

the right track, we may not allow you to generalize them to other people who don't believe in them, particularly as you claim that growing democracy retains its military institutions behind those redlines, which you seem to exalt. The entire world has learned about how critical the Israeli press was of their state's military institution following their poor performance in the summer war with Hezbollah in Southern Lebanon. That criticism led to firing the Israeli Defense Minister and Aircraft Weaponry Commander. So, it is time that we apply other lessons and experiences in our territory so that the military institution can play its essential role, as required away from any redlines or the likes.

Source: Al-Wasat Weekly.

SILVER LINING

Yemen pioneers Arabs
in shackling freedom
of expression

Last week, the Yemeni information minister Hassan Allawzi was shrugging his shoulders in pride of proposing to the Arab information ministers a code to govern satellite broadcasting. Well done Mr. Minister! This could be considered an outstanding addition to the great bounds Yemen's regime is making to boost democracy and freedom.



By: Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi

Since his appointment as information minister, he has been inventing tricks to further restrict and shackle press freedom. During his tenure in office, the number of press freedom abuses has increased tremendously. I believe he has thought he should export his genius to Arab states. The outcome has been this shocking charter the Arab information ministers, except Qatari and Lebanese, endorsed last week at the premises of the Arab League. The code allows host countries to annul or suspend the license of any broadcaster found in violation of the rules it sets.

It also stipulates that satellite channels "should not damage social harmony, national unity, public order or traditional values". The document, which heralds a tendency to further more restrictions on broadcasters, says that programming should also "conform with the religious and ethical values of Arab society and take account of its family structure".

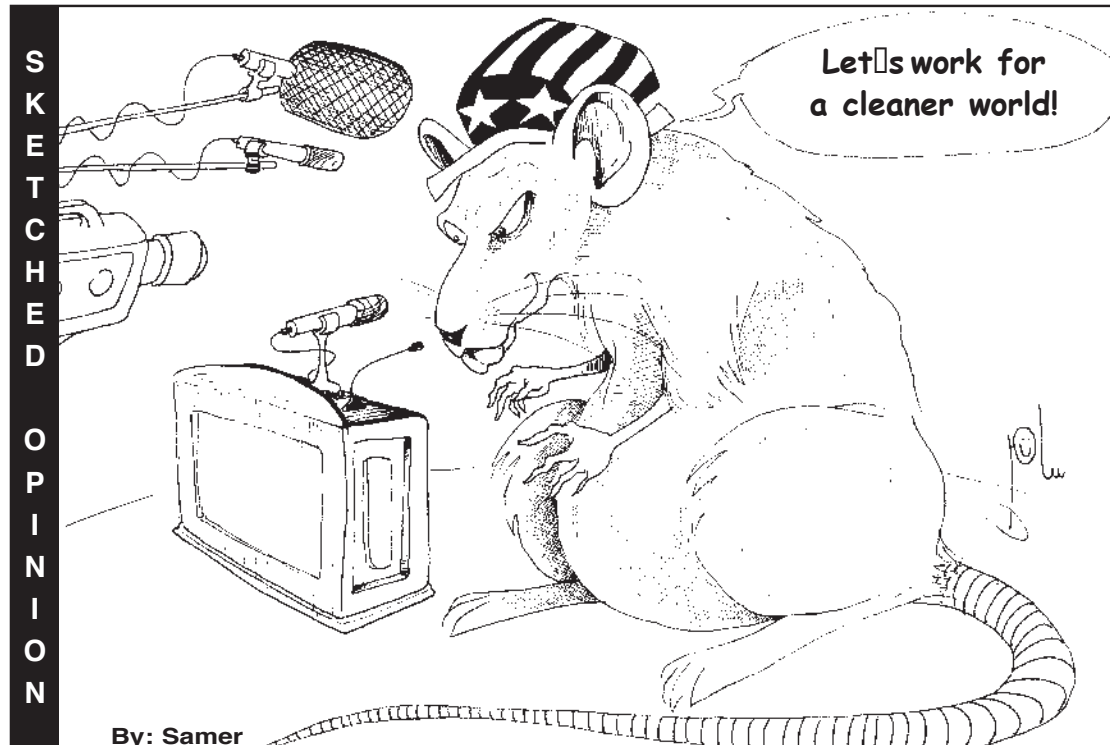
These guidelines are so ambiguous and could be interpreted to hamper independent reporting from the region; they impose censorship over access to information. The experience of al-Jazeera, which has created ripples in the mindset of the Arab people and rulers by opening a free room for expression and debate, is a fundamental reason behind such kind of guidelines the Arab regimes tend to force. Such regimes do not care about what the charter claims to "protect Arab identity from the harmful effects of globalization". It is exactly what Anas al-Fiqi, the Egyptian information minister, said: "some satellite channels have strayed from the correct path." I do not know what "path" the man is talking about. Is it the "path" of the state-owned satellite TVs which the public have abandoned as they have nothing to report except the rulers activities and never voice the concerns of the people? Yes, the code has been clear in taboos the criticism of the rulers.

The irony is that the Arab officials have found something to agree on. They never agree on issues that concern their peoples and their meetings at the Arab League and elsewhere always end up with disagreements. They have done it this time. This is a great achievement for the Arab people.

It might be justified for some Arab states which never pride in pioneering the region's states in democratization to adopt such a code. But, it is truly paradoxical that Yemen which has always claimed of being the bacon of democracy in the region feels proud the Arab states have endorsed such a document which means nothing but launching the next stage of censorship which is to try to prevent millions of people in the region to access information. In fact, these restrictions fall into conflict with some legislations concerning freedom of expression and these countries commitments to respect of human rights, including the right to know.

I understand the international community should not keep silent and accept such totalitarian and repressive documents that violate human rights principles and encourage the Arab regimes to pose further restrictions on broadcast media.

Dr. Mohammed Al-Qadhi (mhalqadhi@hotmail.com) is a Yemeni journalist and columnist.



By: Samer

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Tel: +967 (1) 268-661
Fax: +967 (1) 268-276
P.O. Box 2579, Sana'a, Yemen
E-mail: yteditor@gmail.com
Letters: yteditor@gmail.com
Advertisement: ads@yementimes.com

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief
Nadia Abdulaziz Al-Sakkaf

Managing Editor
Amel Al-Ariqi

Feature Editor
Mohammed Al-Jabri

Copy Editor Sub-Editor
Dana Patterson Sarah Wolff

Head of News Dept.
Mohamed bin Sallam

Senior Reporter
Ismail Al-Ghabri

Head of Design Dept.
Ramzy Alawi Al-Saqqaf

Editorial Staff
Al-Sharif, Amira Thabet, Hamed
Mojalli, Almgidat

Offices

Aden Bureau:
Ridhwan Alawi Ahmed
Tel: +967 (2) 347-057, 346596
Fax: +967 (2) 347056
Email: ytaden@y.net.ye

Taiz Bureau:
Imad Ahmed Abdullah
Tel: +967 (4) 217-156,
Telefax: +967 (4) 217157
P.O.Box: 5086, Taiz
Email: yttaiz@y.net.ye

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Yemen Press Review



Al-Thawry Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Yemeni Socialist Party
Thursday, February 21

Top Stories

- Hashid, an independent MP, elected Chairman for Change Organization
- JMP leader: Doha Agreement should not have included secret terms, those speaking of it want the war to continue
- Relief Organization: Sa'ada children suffers from depression as a result of ongoing war
- JMP leaders review Doha Agreement, welcome efforts to end war
- Yemen protests against Sarkuzi's statement on refusal to shake hands with leaders not recognizing Israel
- Islah Party: There is no workable solutions to Yemen's problems except for parliamentary system, local governance and proportional list

Chairman of Islah Party's Judicial Board Sheikh Hassan Al-Ahdal said there are no workable solutions to Yemen's persisting problem except for adopting a parliamentary system, local governance with broader powers and the proportional list in elections since this list ensures real and equal representation for the different social groups in the elected councils, the weekly reported in a front page story.

Al-Ahdal pointed out that the parliamentary system, which his party needs to be applied in Yemen, is currently applied in Germany where two different systems merged like what happened in Yemen in 1990 when the then both different systems of

governance merged, thanks to the Reunification. "Having an independent judiciary in Yemen like that in Europe is another possible solution to resolving the Yemeni problem," he was quoted as saying. Al-Ahdal claimed that the JMP members give top priority to the country's political issue in their peaceful struggle, indicating that issues, once identified by the 1948 Revolution, have not been addressed until the moment.

According to Al-Ahdal, local governance and popular partnership in power were among the main objectives of Yemen's consecutive revolutions in 1948, 1955, 1962 and 1962. He criticized the authority for not taking a real initiative toward achieving these objectives and lashed out at opposition leaders for being indifferent toward what is happening in their homeland, urging them to join the continuant peaceful struggle until the country's issues are resolved.



Al-Sahwa Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Islah Party
Thursday, February 21

Top Stories

- Aden Islah Charitable Society warns of human catastrophe over increased exodus of African refugees
- Ruling party's majority passes oil agreement that is not in favor of Yemen
- Al-Dhale' electricity workers hang red signs, prepare for mass strike
- Taiz JMP office launches million-signature campaign that rejects a potential price dose
- Locust swarms infest two Mahra

districts

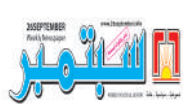
- Saleh's regime exposed to danger, South Yemen's problem reflect Saleh's failure to fulfill electoral promises, says report

An international report, released by Middle East Studies Institute, warned Yemen of the escalating political crisis in the Southern governorates, considering the repeated protests over the recent days and their causes as an immense threat that may expose President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his regime to danger, the major opposition party's mouthpiece reported in the lead story.

Focusing on the most recent events and protests against the regime in the southern governorates, the report attributed public rage in these governorates to the unfulfilled promises, which the veteran President made prior to reelecting him for another mandate in September 2006.

According to the international report, rampant corruption in the various government offices, soaring foodstuff prices, injustice and oppression are some of the reasons behind the increased outrage in South Yemen. Regarding the political turmoil in the southern governorates, the report explained that such events may have a negative impact on Yemen's future, particularly as they are projected to extend to the northern governorates.

"Saleh's regime is put at risk, notably when the regime loses one of its achievements (the unity and stability), which Saleh always prides," the report went on to say. The Middle East Studies Institute listed several demands claimed by protesters in South Yemen, thereby including equality in government jobs and services and establishing a state of law and order, plus a good management to help Yemen's ailing economy recover.



26 September Weekly, Organ of the Yemeni Army
Thursday, February 21

Top Stories

- President Saleh to visit Turkey and Germany next week upon invitations from both states' leaders
- President Saleh praises performance of Yemeni poet, directs encouraging poetic talents
- Presidential directions to government to understand 70-Day Battle Symposium's recommendations
- Health Minister: human cases infected with myiasis are limited, nor do they constitute risk
- Yemen offers financial assistance to Yemen to curb spread of locusts
- GPC General Committee discusses constitutional amendments and local governance
- Bahraini PM praises Yemen's economic development

The Army's organ reported that Bahraini Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa has praised the positive developments taking place in Yemen's economic environment, attributing that to the successful policies and visions so far adopted by President Saleh. This came during a symposium on "Yemen's investment opportunities". He also commended the Bahraini-Yemeni relations saying "We are all proud of Yemen and the people of Yemen," directing his government to create a suitable investment environment between Yemen and Bahrain and remove any relevant constraints.

During his meeting with Chairman of the General Authority for

Investment (GIA) Salah Al-Attar on the sidelines of the seminar on tariff advantages and investment opportunities in Yemen, the Bahraini official highlighted the level of bilateral relations between both Arab states, which are, according to him, characterized by evolution and development.

Khalifa expressed his satisfaction with such symposiums that brief businessmen in the Gulf States on how to explore new investment opportunities in Yemen, a country having its doors open for investors, and therefore encourage them to take the opportunities of economic cooperation and trade.



Al-Wahdawi Weekly, Mouthpiece of the Nasserite Unionist Popular Organization (NUPO)
Tuesday, February 19

Top Stories

- International court fines Yemen more than YR 3.5 million
- UAE's authorities prevent Yemeni President's Advisor to return home
- Yemeni court accuses Saudi Arabia of training terrorists
- JMP discusses Sa'ada turmoil with Prime Minister
- JMP threatens to boycott upcoming parliamentary elections
- Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) threaten to boycott the upcoming parliamentary elections, and any other polls, over what the opposition parties described as 'the authority's insistence to keep the election system unreformed', the weekly reported. The opposition parties demand the government should eliminate the millions of violations in

Holding charities accountable

By: Peter Singer

Suppose you are concerned about children in Africa dying from preventable diseases. You want to donate money to a charity that is working to reduce the toll. But there are many charities doing that. How do you choose?

The first thing that many people ask about charities is, "How much of my donation is spent on administration?" In the United States, that figure is readily available from Charity Navigator, a Web site that has five million users. But the information is taken from forms that the charities themselves complete and send to the tax authorities. No one checks the forms, and the proportions allocated to administration and program expenses are easily massaged with a little creative accounting.

Worse still, that figure, even if accurate, tells you nothing about the charity's impact. The pressure to keep administrative expenses low can make

an organization less effective. If, for example, an agency working to reduce poverty in Africa cuts staff with expert knowledge, it is more likely to end up funding projects that fail. It may not even know which of its projects fail, because evaluating them, and learning from mistakes, requires staff – and that adds to administrative costs.

In 2006, Holden Karnofsky and Elie Hassenfeld faced the question of which charity would make the best use of their money. They were in their mid-twenties, earning six-figure incomes at an investment company – more than they needed – and were thinking about donating money to help make the world a better place. As investment advisers, they would never recommend investing in a company without detailed information about how well it was achieving its goals. They wanted to make similarly well-informed choices about the charities to which they contributed.

So Karnofsky and Hassenfeld got together with six friends who also

worked in finance and divided up the field to find out which charities could be shown to be effective. They contacted organizations and received lots of attractive marketing material, but nothing that answered basic questions: what do the charities do with their money, and what evidence do they have that their activities help? They called many charities, but eventually realized something that seemed extraordinary: the information was just not there.

Some foundations said that information on their work's effectiveness was confidential. This, Karnofsky and Hassenfeld thought, is not a good way to go about charitable work. Why should information about how to help people be secret? The fact that charities were unprepared for such questions indicated to Karnofsky and Hassenfeld that other donors and foundations give more or less blindly, without the information needed to make sound decisions about whom to support.

Karnofsky and Hassenfeld now had

a new goal: to obtain and publicize the information. To that end, they founded an organization called GiveWell so that other donors would not have as hard a time extracting it as they had had.

However, it soon became apparent that the task required more than part-time attention, and the following year, after raising \$300,000 from their colleagues, Karnofsky and Hassenfeld left their jobs and began working full-time for GiveWell and its associated grant-making body, The Clear Fund. They invited charities to apply for grants of \$25,000 in five broad humanitarian categories, with the application process demanding the kind of information that they had been seeking. In this way, a substantial part of the money they had raised would go to the most effective charity in each category, while simultaneously encouraging transparency and rigorous evaluation.

The first report on which organizations are most effective at saving or transforming lives in Africa is now available on GiveWell's Web site,

www.givewell.net. Population Services International, which promotes and sells items like condoms, to prevent HIV infection, and bed nets, to prevent malaria, came out on top, followed by Partners in Health, an organization that provides health care to poor rural populations. The third-ranked organization was Interplast, which is more narrowly focused on correcting deformities like cleft palate.

Evaluating charities can be more difficult than making investment decisions. Investors are interested in financial returns, so there is no problem about measuring distinct values – in the end it all comes down to money. It is more difficult to compare the reduction of suffering brought about by correcting a facial deformity with saving a life. There is no single unit of value.

In other ways, too, evaluating charities takes time, and can be expensive. Perhaps for this reason, many organizations, including some of the best-known anti-poverty organizations working in Africa, did not respond to

GiveWell's request for information. No doubt they calculated that a chance to get a \$25,000 grant wasn't worth it. But if donors start to follow GiveWell's recommendations, then a high ranking from GiveWell could be worth far more than the value of the grant.

This is why the potential of GiveWell is revolutionary. In the US, individual donors give about \$200 billion to charities each year. No one knows how effective that vast sum is in achieving the goals that donors intend to support. By giving charities an incentive to become more transparent and more focused on being demonstrably effective, GiveWell could make our charitable donations do much more good than ever before.

Peter Singer is professor of bioethics at Princeton University and the author of, among other books, Animal Liberation, Practical Ethics, One World, and, with Jim Mason, The Ethics of What We Eat. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2008.

Yemen seen sliding towards breakdown

Yemen's painful struggle to build a modern state may be overwhelmed by rampant population growth, dwindling resources, corruption and internal conflicts.

"I don't believe there is another nation in the world...that is this close to a population-cum-resources catastrophe," said Ramon Scoble, a water expert from New Zealand working in Yemen.

The Middle East's poorest country wins few headlines, except when tourists are abducted by unruly tribesmen or killed by al Qaeda-inspired militants, but any slide into chaos here would pose huge risks for next-door Saudi Arabia and the wider world.

Yemen perches on the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, vital oil transport routes from the Gulf to Europe. Thousands of refugees from Somalia and Ethiopia wash up on its shores

every year.

The ancestral home of Osama bin Laden is the focus of intense U.S. concern in Washington's "war on terrorism".

President Ali Abdullah Saleh, in power for 30 years, has faced increasing challenges to his authority since he was re-elected for another seven-year term in September 2006.

His military has yet to crush a four-year-old "Houthi" revolt by Zaidi Shi'ite tribes in the northwest region of Saada, although another fragile truce took hold earlier this month.

In the south, anger over perceived northern depredations is imperiling Saleh's main achievement – the 1990 accord that united traditionalist north Yemen and the Marxist south.

Many tribal regions still escape or challenge government control in a land reputed to have more guns than people.

Exploding population

Looming over these conflicts is an

economic crisis already fostering unrest and threatening to propel Yemen backwards.

"Unless there is an economic reprieve for Yemen during the next three years or so, the challenge is much bigger than the Houthis or so-called (southern) secessionists," Abdul-Karim al-Iryani, a veteran politician and Saleh adviser, told Reuters.

"Yemen has very meagre resources, a very high population growth rate of over three percent, and difficult terrain so that development requires huge resources. That's our hard luck."

The population has doubled to 22 million since Saleh took power in the former north Yemen in 1978. It could gallop to 40 million in the next 20 years unless aggressively reined in.

"The catastrophe is looming faster than anyone can imagine," said Scoble, consultant to Germany's GTZ development agency. He said Yemen had enough rainfall for only about 2 million people.

According to the government, 19 of Yemen's 21 aquifers are in negative balance, with more water extracted than replenished. Most goes to irrigate qat, a mild narcotic widely used in Yemen.

Oil, the economy's mainstay, is depleting fast despite exploration to reverse the trend. Output is officially projected at 300,000 barrels per day this year, from 320,000 in 2007.

The decline makes it harder for the government to sustain costly fuel subsidies that soak up \$1 billion a year, or about a third of oil revenue. But their removal could spark violent unrest among Yemenis already hard hit by rising food prices.

Worsening security

Insecurity has affected international companies developing the oil and gas sectors, while attacks on foreigners may prove fatal for the nascent tourism industry, Western diplomats say.

"Yemen is positioning itself for

irrelevance because of its inability to get a grip on the security situation," a European diplomat said. "It's the worst I've seen in three years."

Foreign donors, aware of Yemen's strategic and security importance, have pumped billions of development dollars into the country in recent decades, despite qualms about corruption.

"Corruption affects every other goal that we or the Yemenis have, whether democracy building or security," outgoing U.S. deputy ambassador Nabeel Khoury told the Yemen Observer last year, singling out the military as one of the worst offenders.

Yemen joined Washington's fight against al Qaeda after the Sept. 11 attacks on U.S. cities, but prison escapes by militants have upset the Americans, who are also dubious about Sanaa's policy of reintegrating Yemenis who once fought in Afghanistan.

Iryani described the programme as

"very useful", but said al Qaeda had been able to recruit replacements and acknowledged that the United States was dissatisfied with the outcome.

"The reason is that some of those who committed not to commit any terrorist acts in Yemen sneaked over to Iraq, so the Americans said 'you didn't really brainwash them, you only got their commitment not to attack in Yemen'," Iryani said.

The government tends to minimise the impact of southern unrest, terrorism and tribal insecurity, citing the potential of tourism and foreign investment to turn Yemen's fortunes around.

Such views are echoed by Faris Sanabani, editor of the Yemen Today monthly, who argued that regional prosperity was at stake.

"Yemen shouldn't be a failing state and it won't be," he said. "If Yemen goes down, Saudi Arabia will go down with it."

Source: Reuters

Syphilis threatens the inmates in Sana'a central prison

By: Amira Al-Sharif
msmn82@yahoo.com

Sana'a University's Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences tested 200 random subjects from among more than 3,000 inmates living at the Central Prison in Sana'a. The study found that four of the inmates tested positive for the *Treponema pallidum* bac-

terium that causes syphilis.

Maha Rowhan Abdu Al-Maqtari, a researcher for the project, says that if the study found four cases of syphilis in only 200 people, this bodes poorly for the other 2,800 or so prisoners that haven't yet been tested for the disease.

"If we do this test on 1,000, we might have more cases because these [200] are the only ones who agreed to be tested," Al-Maqtari observed.

Syphilis is transmitted three main ways: through sexual contact, blood transfusions and in-utero transmission from mother to child.

Besides the prisoners, the Sana'a University study observed 102 recipients of blood transfusions and 98 pregnant women between August 2005 and August 2006; however, no cases of syphilis were found among these other two groups.

The transfusion recipients and pregnant women tested in the study were recruited from local hospitals and health centers.

Only antibodies, not personal histories, studied

Rather than relying on first-person accounts, Al-Maqtari collected blood samples from the test group of prisoners and then examined the blood to see if it contained any of the antibodies indicating syphilis.

"Most individuals refused to answer or misled us about the sexually transmitted symptoms," Al-Maqtari noted, "being embarrassed to talk about the disease's symptoms, as well as living in an Islamic country where these subjects are barred."

Al-Maqtari says that testing inmates will prevent them from spreading the disease, both while incarcerated and once they return to society.

"The obstacle I faced was that there was no information about sexually transmitted diseases in Arab countries, but especially in Yemen," Al-Maqtari stated.

Symptoms and effects of syphilis

The *Treponema pallidum* bacteria first affects the genital area, then spreads through the blood to organs such as the liver and kidneys, and in the final stages, to the heart and brain, eventually causing death.

The first symptoms for syphilis sufferers are usually painless circular, purplish ulcers appearing on the genital area between two and 10 weeks after infection.

Stage two of the disease includes fever, headache and skin rashes or sores, while the third stage, or advanced syphilis, causes organ malfunction and insanity.

Congenital, untreated syphilis can affect pregnancy, leading to miscarriage, stillbirth or prenatal death.

Syphilis worldwide

First diagnosed in 1905, syphilis can cause death and remains a very real public health problem, with an estimated 12 million cases annually worldwide. More than 3,000 infants are born with congenital syphilis annually in the United States. Infection rates among pregnant women in the Islamic nations of



Yemeni prisoners are in their cell.

Djibouti, Sudan, Iran, Qatar, Bahrain, Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia average 0.85 percent.

Prevention and control

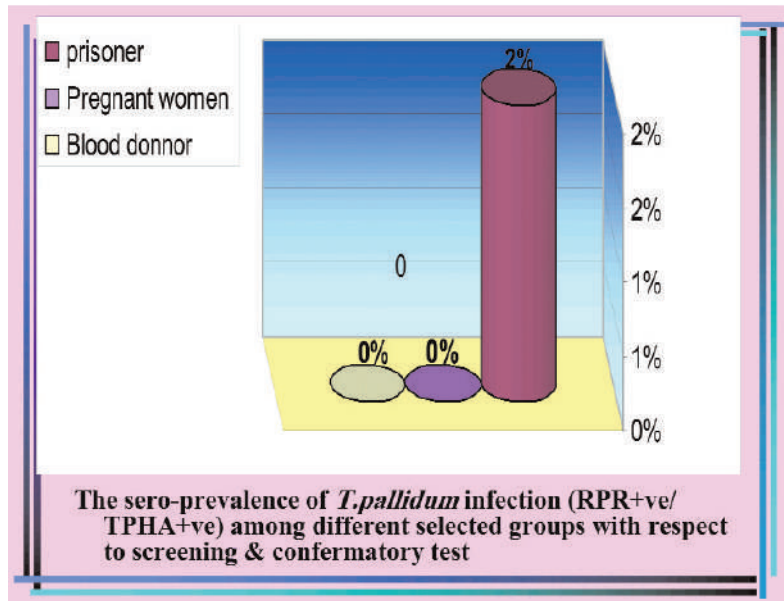
While the common antibiotic penicillin is the mainstay of treatment for all stages of syphilis, those patients who are allergic to penicillin can be treated with other anti-treponemal antibiotics. Continuous use of antibiotics can reduce the risk of transmission between sexual partners,

pregnant women, blood donors and recipients.

Although several vaccines are under investigation in clinical trials, no effective vaccine currently is available.

Sexual abstinence is recommended for syphilis patients, as condoms don't always protect against the disease.

Routine screenings and awareness campaigns about the symptoms and dangers of syphilis are another way to reduce the number of cases in Yemen.



The tuberculosis-malnutrition link in Yemen

By: Mahmoud Assamiee
For the Yemen Times

Tuberculosis, commonly called TB, is a contagious bacterial disease usually affecting the lungs; however, it also may affect other parts of the body, such as the brain, lymph nodes and kidneys.

TB is spread by tiny germs floating in the air spread via coughing or sneezing. Those nearby then breathe these TB germs into their lungs and become infected. However, those with latent TB infection – not the active form of the disease – can't infect others.

Studies by the World Health Organization have found that one-third of the world population currently is infected with the TB bacillus, with between five and 10 percent of those carrying latent TB infection, or LTBI, becoming sick sometime during their lifetime.

Those with active TB typically experience symptoms such as a persistent cough or chest pain and, in some cases, cough up blood from the lungs. Those with these types of symptoms are capable of transmitting the infection to others. "The main causes of TB are smoking, especially shisha – the water pipe, dirty and crowded places and bad or malnutrition," notes Dr. Adel Mahyoub, director of information management at Yemen's Ministry of Public Health and Population.

TB cases increase in Yemen

The increase of TB cases in Yemen has many sources. Besides the smoking of shisha and cigarettes, there's the popular Yemeni trend of using shamma, whereby a small amount of tobacco powder is

placed under the tongue or between the lip and gums.

"TB is increasing in Yemen nowadays," observes Dr. Nashwan Al-Attab, who works in the emergency unit at Al-Thawra Public Hospital. He attributes this increase of TB to the incursion of dirty, crowded areas and the type of lifestyle forced upon Yemenis due to poverty, such as eight or 10 people sleeping in one room.

Al-Attab noted that a primary study by the Health Ministry on the increase of TB in Yemen found 1,700 cases in 2006, whereas the figure increased to 2,300 in 2007. He expects that this figure is even more than what's been recorded, as he's found more than three cases in one unit alone at just one hospital.

"TB is one of Yemen's major problems," states Dr. Ali Al-Mudhwah, director-general of family health at the Ministry of Public Health and Population.

"In the past, the Yemeni government gave free monthly portions of foodstuffs such as flour, wheat and sugar to TB patients while they received their daily medication at the TB units," Mahyoub noted.

Nutrition and TB

Nutrition means eating a diversity of food containing numerous types of vitamins and sufficient proteins, which the body needs for energy. As Al-Mudhwah says, "Yes, there's a relation between nutrition and TB."

"Those who are poorly nourished are more vulnerable to TB and other diseases than those who are well-nourished with sufficient immunity to face diseases," he explained.

Likewise, a 2004 study by WHO reaffirmed the relation between malnutrition

and TB. In combination, malnutrition and TB present a dangerous menace, as malnourishment makes individuals vulnerable to TB, which aggravates malnutrition. This downward cycle leads to severe physical deterioration and possibly death. One of the poorest countries in the region, Yemen's poverty is exacerbated by near-constant price hikes for even the most basic staples such as wheat and sugar. Nowadays, a major concern is how to get enough food to the poor in order to prevent the spread of diseases like TB.

"TB is the disease of the poor," notes Al-Attab, who expects daily TB cases in other hospital units such as delivery and exterior clinics.

"Doctors are more vulnerable to TB infection due to direct contact with patients," he pointed out, citing the case of a colleague so severely infected with TB that the disease paralyzed him.

Tuberculosis is curable

If given enough anti-TB medicines or special antibiotics quickly, TB patients often can get rid of the disease completely. Medicine must be administered to the patient regularly without interruption for six to eight months under a physician's supervision.

However, medicines like these are very expensive for the average rural-dwelling patient. They are available at pharmacies, but ordinary citizens can't afford them.

Although the government sometimes provides TB patients free medicine, the process is sporadic because, as some doctors allege, this medication secretly is sold to those working at public centers that distribute these medicines.

"Patients sometimes go to public centers where free medicine is handed out only to find that there's no more medi-

cine," Al-Attab stated, noting that this interruption of treatment is dangerous because TB medicine must be given to patients regularly.

Fatima Saleh, 67, came to Sana'a for treatment after obtaining an inaccurate diagnosis in Taiz. "I've suffered with this disease for more than 10 years. My son went with me to several clinics in Taiz, but I found no remedy," Saleh recounted, "I then was advised to go to Sana'a,

where doctors diagnosed me with chronic TB."

Saleh was given medicine and advised to rest at home. Her son, Abdu Thabit, points out that his mother used to smoke a meda'a, or water pipe, but gave up smoking 15 years ago.

Doctors who treated her at private clinics said smoking was the reason she became infected with the disease. Because Saleh is old and was slow in

seeking treatment for her TB, managing her illness will be difficult.

Yemen began combating TB in 1970 through vaccinations, free medicine and awareness campaigns, Al-Mudhwah noted.

With no independent TB treatment centers, the Yemeni government combats the disease through early vaccination for children and providing free medicine to infected TB patients.

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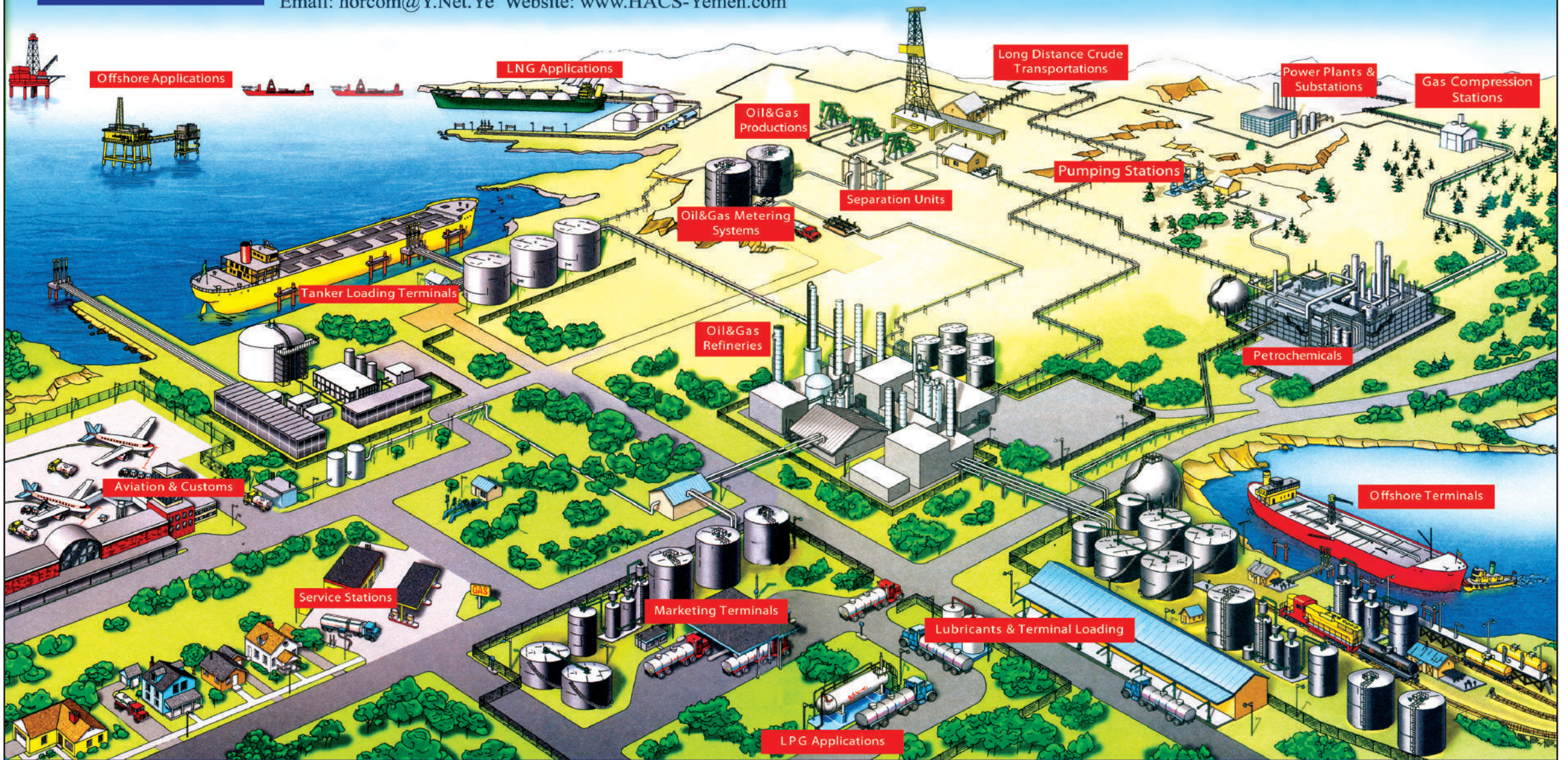


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Eight Yemeni handcrafts are extinct (Part 4)

By: Nisreen Shadad
For Yemen Times

Many traditional Yemeni handcrafts are in great demand due to their elegant style and the high quality of raw materials used. However, many more have disappeared completely or are in danger of losing their identity because each craft demands a set of specialized skills and raw materials of high quality. Because Yemen's raw materials are exported outside the country, their prices have increased.

A December 2007 field study attempting to catalog and document traditional handcrafts in the Old City of Sana'a found that while 28 percent the area's residents are craftsmen, most have discontin-



An Al-Ghathaimi iron lock made in Hijra year 1282 (1862).

crafts in the Old City of Sana'a, which are an important part of the nation's cultural heritage created by various civilizations throughout centuries of history. Thus, they are experiences handed down from generation to generation.

The seven-member research team consisted of: Amat Al-Bari Al-Adi, Amat Al-Razzaq Jahaf, Abdulqadir Al-Shaibani, Zaid Al-Faqih, Ibrahim Al-Hadid and Abdulaziz Ibrahim.

Team leader Al-Adi believes that imported handcrafts affect Yemeni handcrafts. According to initial team estimates, Jahaf says only 35 percent of such handcrafts exist today in the Old City, which threatens artisans with losing their livelihoods.

Further, because raw materials have become rare, many artisans depend on exported raw materials, which affects the quality of the handcrafts.

Al-Adi explained that in order to reach those outcomes, the team conducted its research in four stages, the first of which was a survey to determine the number of handcrafts, artisans and handcraft shops. The survey involved the type of handcraft, the number of shops selling it and the name of the street where it's located. The team leader continued, "Next, we analyzed the results and used them to apply stage two," which was collecting the historical background of the 27 Yemeni handcrafts.

"Stage three was preparing a meeting of specialists in this field to study what we did and to continue our work of cataloging the handcrafts," Al-Adi noted. The final stage was a comprehensive field study wherein the team surveyed and documented Old City handcrafts by photographing and recording everything, even the songs the artisans sing while they work.

Totally extinct handcrafts

Eight of 27 Yemeni handcrafts now have vanished completely. They are: the meda'a (a charcoal smoking pipe), dalow (a leather bucket), al-salb (a rope made of leather), spun cotton and wool, fabric/textile making, al-duro'a al-nuhasiya (worn atop maghamaq) and Al-Ghathaimi iron locks.

Meda'a

This handcraft industry now is completely extinct. Yemenis use the meda'a to smoke tobacco. Due to its beautiful shape,

it's also used for decoration.

Today's madyee (plural of meda'a) are imported from India, with Yemeni crafters only interested in welding and repairing them.

Dalow (a leather bucket)

This is a traditional bucket made of



A piece of textile indicating that Yemen was an industrial nation in the past



Al-salb, a rope made of leather.



Al-duro'a al-nuhasiya made of copper wires or threads and woven into a triangular shape.

leather. Due to the large quantity of locally dyed leather, many industries emerged using it.

However, as Jahaf pointed out, "Using this type of traditional bucket has become completely extinct due to today's more advanced machines used to fetch water."

Al-salb (a rope made of leather)

These ropes are made of cow leather, which first is cut into between six and 10 long thin pieces, which then are placed in water to become soft and flexible. Afterward, they are braided together and then rubbed with al-terter or al-jiljelan oil. However, today's citizens prefer using ropes made of plastic rather than leather.

Spun cotton and wool

These two handcrafts prove that Yemen once was a significant industrial nation, "But today, we import everything we need from outside Yemen, despite the fact that the local industries were high quality and exhibited a high degree of accuracy," according to Jahaf.

Fabric/textile making

The Old City of Sana'a now has lost all of its crafters making al-farid, a type of cloth made of woolen thread or al-masawen textile, al-abah (the traditional abaya) and al-masawen textiles, according to Al-Adi. All of those places in the Old City mak-

ing traditional abayas, cotton shawls and al-masawen textiles now have closed completely, with most crafters having abandoned it to weave ma'awiz (sarongs). However, according to Jahaf, this too is quite obscure today despite significant changes occurring in the traditional features regarding making them.

"We don't know the exact time period of this handcraft or when Yemenis began using natural resources to produce textiles," Jahaf noted. "However, according to our research, it was around 2,500 B.C. Yemeni textiles flourished more globally during the 13th and 14th centuries."

Al-duro'a al-nuhasiya

Al-duro'a al-nuhasiya is made of copper wires or threads and then worn atop a woman's maghamaq, a traditional face covering made of pure silk and called ghanami or, if made of cotton, it's called baqari. Maghamaq textile initially is white and then dyed with red and black.

There are two types of maghamaq – mudara'a and musadaf. The first type is called al-mudara'a because it looks like traditional chain mail armor, while the second type is called musadaf because it looks like shells (sadafa means shell in

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Amal Dunqul, poet of the marginalized, oppressed and poor

Prepared by: Eyad N. Al-Samman

Mohammed Amal Faheem Dunqul, known as Amal Dunqul, was an Egyptian poet and intellectual. He was born in 1940 in Al-Qala'a village, Qift district, located in Egypt's Qina governorate.

Dunqul's father named his first male child Amal, which means hope in Arabic, in the same year he received his teaching licensure from Egypt's Al-Azhar University. Also a writer of classical poetry, he possessed a library filled with books – of which his son took advantage – in the various Islamic disciplines. He died when Dunqul was 10 years old and at such a young age, the son became responsible for his mother and two younger brothers.

Completing his primary education in Cairo University's Faculty of Arts. However, he dropped out before the end of his first year, quit his job and returned to Qina to work for his living.

Dunqul found work at the Qina Justice Court in 1959, followed by working at the Suez and Alexandria branches of the Customs Authority, as well as the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organization.

He returned to Cairo and settled in the early 1960s. Abla Al-Ruwaini, a journalist for Egypt's Al-Akhbar (The News) newspaper, interviewed him in October 1975, subsequently becoming his wife two years later.

Dunqul began writing poetry in high school, with some of his poetry published at Qina High School in 1956. He continued his classical style of poetry until 1962 when he turned to free verse.

He was known for his politically colored poetry, however throughout the 1950s, Western mythology, especially Greek mythology, dominated his writings. He later relied more on pre-Islamic and Islamic imagery to modernize and revolutionize Arabic poetry.

In the literary scene at that time, Dunqul was dubbed "the prince of political rejection poets," "the pauper's poet" and "the café poet." He suffered poverty and marginalization due to his patriotic and nationally defiant attitudes.

The left-wing poet who wrote in classical Arabic was renowned for his poetry, which represented a milestone in modern Arabic poetry. Additionally, his poetic works fought against those voices calling for normalized relations with Israel.

Dunqul's first poems were published in 1961 in Egypt's Al-Ahram (The Pyramids) newspaper. Throughout his 22 years of writing poetry, Dunqul issued eight poetic divans, the first of which was 1969's "Al-Buka'a bayn Yadi Zarqa'a Al-Yamama" ("Crying in the Presence of Zarqa'a Al-Yamama"), in which the poet embodied Arab feel-



ings regarding the aftermath of the Six-Day War of 1967 between Israel and Egypt, Jordan and Syria.

His second divan, 1971's "A Commentary on What has Happened," depicted Dunqul's strong rejection of all types of political corruption, dualism and disagreements within Arab societies.

Following the partial Arab victory in the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, Dunqul wrote no poem glorifying this victory. Instead, he issued his third divan, 1974's "Death of the Moon," which likewise contained no poem regarding that war.

His other poetic works include the 1975 divan, "The Forthcoming Epoch." Published posthumously, 1983's "New Statements About Al-Basooos War" contained Dunqul's rejection of the prospective reconciliation between Egypt and Israel in the late 1970s.

Dunqul's wife collected and posthumously published his final divan, "Papers of Room No. 8," in 1983. Containing Dunqul's last poems penned during his three-year stay in room number 8 at the National Tumor Center, the collection included poems tackling humane and sensitive meanings in life, such as flowers, birds and horses.

Nearly 20 years after his death, the Egyptian government honored Dunqul in May 2003 by organizing a four-day seminar in Cairo entitled, "Amal Dunqul, the Achievement and the Value."

That same year, the National Center for Children's Education, in cooperation with Egypt's Supreme Council for Culture, issued the book, "For Boys and Girls," containing selected poems by Dunqul. Additionally, his June 1967 poem, "Crying in the Presence of Zarqa'a Al-Yamama," was included in Kuwait's high school curricula.

Among Dunqul's most political and influential poems are 1962's "Last Words of Spartacus," 1970's "No Time for Crying" and 1976's "Kulaib's Death: Ten Commandments," also known as "No Reconciliation."

The poem, "The Song of the Stony Cake," was penned in 1972 after several Cairo University students were arrested for striking, calling for the Egyptian government's resignation and demanding a more robust foreign policy.

Published posthumously in 1985,

"Amal Dunqul, the Complete Works," contained the poet's six divans, in addition to other poems published for the first time. Dunqul's widow collected and published several books about her late husband, including 1985's "Amal Dunqul: The Southerner" and 2003's "Amal Dunqul's Bibliography."

Dunqul began suffering from lung cancer in 1979. Following a more than three-year battle, he died May 21, 1983 in Cairo at age 43. Although Dunqul physically has vanished forever, he remains present in contemporary Arabic literary life through his exquisite and national poetic works.

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Odd News

Baseball team looking for a few fat men
MIAMI (AP) - The Florida Marlins are looking for some footloose fat men. The National League team is creating an all-male, plus-size cheerleading squad to be dubbed the Manatees. Tryouts were scheduled for Sunday.

The team hopes to recruit seven to 10 tubby men to dance, cheer and jiggle during Friday and Saturday home games this season.

Real manatees, 1,200-pound mammals sometimes referred to as "sea cows," are not considered the most agile of creatures and often get caught in boat propellers.

The Marlins want their Manatees to have the same dimensions, but to be decidedly more agile. Men will be judged on how well they dance a choreographed routine.

The Marlins already have a cheerleading squad, the considerably more svelte Mermaids.

Men selected for the Manatees won't be paid. They'll get tickets to games they perform at, and the honor of dancing in front of crowds that have been smallest in major league baseball for the last two seasons.

The Marlins aren't the only pro sports team capitalizing on Americans' expanding waistlines. The Chicago Bulls basketball team have the Matadors, a big-man dance troupe that's entertained fans at home games since 2003.

And although cheerleaders might be an unfamiliar site in baseball, big men aren't, as fans have long cheered on the likes of Babe Ruth and Kirby Puckett.

'Stolen truck' taken by dog in Calif.
AZUSA, Calif. (AP) - Doggone it, my truck's gone! Police said Charles McCowan parked his pickup in front of a mini-mart Wednesday, leaving his 80-pound Boxer named Max in the passenger seat. When he came out, the truck and Max were gone.

McCowan called police, assuming the truck had been stolen. When officers arrived, they found the pickup across the street in a fast-food parking lot but had no idea how it got there.

In security video shown Thursday on KCAL-TV, the truck can be seen rolling backward out of the store lot and across the street, threading its way through traffic and out of view.

Police said that after McCowan left the truck, Max knocked the vehicle out of gear and sent it rolling backward.

Both Max and the truck emerged without a scratch.

Noah's Ark started its voyage from Hadramout

By: Aref Saleh Al-Tawi
For the Yemen Times

In 1948, Noah's ark was discovered in a mountain range in Turkey bordering Armenia, precisely on Mt. Ararat. However, the discovery of this mountain dates back hundreds of years. According to the majority of circulated tales, it has been less than 9,000 years since the events surrounding the ark occurred, while archeological teams are still searching for the ark.

When western scholars discovered a program named "Google Earth", they looked continuously for Noah's Ark on every mountain and hill across the sphere. Their efforts culminated with footage of a mountain containing the boat's shape. This enhanced my understanding that Noah's Ark has not been found yet.

I conducted a similar experience in the search and reached no result, except for consulting the Qur'an, which tells the truth about historical facts. I found two *surahs*, *Al-Ankabout* and *Al-Qamar*, which included accurate information about the story. *Al-Ankabout* 15 reads "We rescued him (Noah) and the other passengers aboard the Ark and made it a miracle for mankind," while *Al-Qamar* 15 reads, "We [Allah] left it as a miracle for people to contemplate on."

What caught our attention here is that both verses, having the same digit, focused on Noah's Ark, and each is made up of six words. Having examined both *surahs*, I found that *Al-Ankabout* - 'the spider' - discusses how this insect's web is built, as well as how the male spider fertilizes the female, and after the process is over, the female kills the male and leaves its



body for the babies to eat when they are born. This depiction shows us how life is likened to the spider's web, and that everything in this short life will expire. But the key question here is, how is Noah's ship related with this subject?

A glance at the spider's web, finds that it resembles the latitudes and longitudes of Earth, and such an eye-catching simile led us to the idea of how Noah's ark was discovered. I was surprised by the above-mentioned Qur'anic verses that indicated the venue of the occurrence in central Yemen at a latitude near an ancient water course where the flooding, left behind during Noah's days, took place. This course has a total area estimated at hundreds of square kilometers, and it is on this course where Noah's ark anchored.

A cursory look at the Hadramout Mountains tells us that these mountains have a distinctive shape. They are

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