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More Warming Up of UK-Yemeni Relations

Sir John Cole, Britannia to Visit Yemen Shortly

Sir John Cole, Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, arrives in Sanaa on an official visit on January 30th. According to Yemeni Foreign Ministry sources, the British official will further discuss Yemen's desire to join the Commonwealth. Of course, Mr. Cole and his Yemeni counterpart, Mr. Ghalib Ali Jameel, will also discuss bilateral relations. The British official is also

scheduled to meet other Government officials, parliament members and businessmen. At another level, the Royal Yacht, the *Britannia* will call on the ports of Hodeidah and Aden during 7-9/2/1997. Mr. David Pearce, Deputy Head of Mission at the UK Embassy in Sanaa, told the Yemen Times that corollary to the *Britannia* visit, a seminar will be held in Aden. "Twenty five businessmen from leading UK

companies such as British Bank of the Middle East, Grindlays, GEC/UK, British Air Space, National Power, John Brown, and others have been invited," he said. These company representatives will meet leading Yemeni businessmen to discuss opportunities in Yemen. "Even though the visit falls around the Eid Al-Fitr holiday, Yemen Government interaction has been very encouraging," Pearce said.



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Vanishing Government

The Government of Abdulaziz Abdulghani is not just a lame-duck, it is quickly vanishing. Already several ministers have tendered their resignations in preparation for elections. Information Minister Abdulrahman Al-Akwa, Civil Service Minister Sadeq Ameen Abu Ras, Planning and Development Minister Abdul-Qader Ba-Jammal, Fisheries Minister Dr. Abdulrahman Ba-Fadhle, Local Administration Minister Mohammed Dammaj are among those who will test the waters. The new rule is that ministers in the post-election government will come from parliament. Present ministers who want to be considered for the job will have to run and win. President Saleh correctly decided that cabinet members must be people who enjoy the trust of the public.

At Last, At Long Last: SIGNING OF GAS DEAL

Lawyers from the government side as well as the oil companies, Exxon, Hunt and Yukong are busy hammering away the details of the long-awaited gas deal. Rex W. Tillerson, President of Exxon Yemen Inc. and Exxon Yemen Investments, is in town for the signing of the deal which is imminent. The two sides had signed a memorandum of understanding a year ago, and the Yemeni side had been pushing for better terms, but has now resigned itself to accept the terms being offered. The Exxon/Hunt/Yukong group has 38% of the gas project, while Total of France has 36%. The Yemeni Government had retained 26%, of which it has already sold off 11%.



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YSP Keeps Options Open

The Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) decided to keep its options open for a little while longer. At the end of a four-day joint meeting of the Political Bureau and the Central Committee which ended on Thursday, January 9th, the YSP has opted to wait a while longer before taking any decisive move on elections. The YSP has not decided whether it will participate in the coming parliamentary elections. "We continue to extend our arms to all political forces to interact positively in a free and honest elections on an equal footing," said Ali Saleh Obad, Secretary-General of the YSP in a press conference announcing his party's

position. Presumably, if certain conditions are not met, the YSP will not participate in the elections.

The Central Committee will meet again in February, and Political Bureau will meet twice in March and November. The timing are, again, related to the elections scheduled for April 27th, 1997.

The YSP also called on the authorities (read PGC) to create the conditions called for in the "Guarantees Document" issued by the opposition parties in order to enable all parties to compete positively and on an equal footing in the elections.

A New Draft of the Personal Status Law

HEADING BACKWARDS!

The Lajnat Taqneen Ahkam Al-Shariyah Al-Islamiyyah (Committee to Enact Laws based on Islamic Sharia) has just produced one more controversial product. The committee has presented a draft of a revised version of the existing personal status law (Qanoon Al-Ahwal Al-Shakhsiyyah). If passed, the

new law will mean a real setback to the civil liberties of individuals, and in the status of women in the country. Here are examples:

1. The current law calls for a minimum age of 15 years for marrying off a bride. The new draft removes that minimum age requirement.
2. The current law says that

witnesses accepted in court are two men or one man and two women. The new draft only accepts men.

3. The current law states that if a husband is declared an apostate, a court decision is needed to divorce his wife and break the family. The new draft does not require a court ruling. It is automatic.



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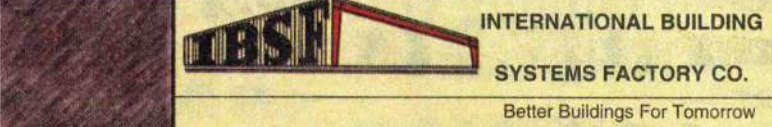
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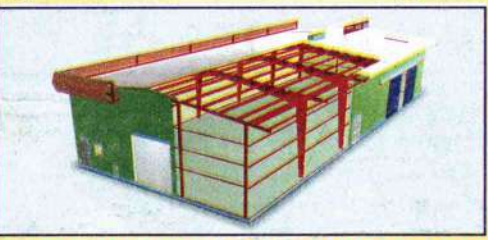

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OUR VIEWPOINT

Planning Our Time: It Is Part of Modern Life

I remember in the early 1990s, one of the newly-arrived Peace Corps volunteers was puzzled as to why Yemenis did not plan their free time, especially the week-ends. Six months after her service in Yemen, I met the PC volunteer again, and asked her if she found an answer to the question. "Yeah. I mean the whole week is a week-end," she said.

The concept of free time is still alien in Yemen, partly because Yemenis have yet to fully accept the concept of work-time. Of course, every body understands both terms, but in Yemen there is no real separation between them. For example, government employees would casually break office hours to carry out personal errands. They would entertain friends at their office to chat and gossip for hours. They would use the facilities at the office (like telephone lines, photo-copying machines, etc.) for personal needs. Basically, what is personal or otherwise - whether time or resources - is merged together.

Life is generally compartmentalized and routine. This fact is probably partly to blame for not planning our time. We do the same things, at almost the same time. The daily routine of a male adult, for example, runs like this:

- Wake-up time, any time between 6-9 a.m.
- The morning is generally devoted to 'work'.
- Afternoons are divided between the siesta and qat chew.
- Evenings are for visits and then family-time.
- Bed-time, any time between 9-12 p.m.

Weekends and holidays are slightly different in that people stay up late, and thus wake-up late. The morning job-time is used for picnics or other similar undertakings.

Planning is an important tool that allows people to maximize return on their efforts. Planning our time would allow us to best use it. More importantly, it will allow us to do exactly with us on our priority list rather than drift along and engage whatever effort is simply facing us. In other words, planning what to do at what time does not only maximize return, it also guides our efforts to address and do the things we want to do.

This concept of planning one's time is a cultural matter. Children start acquiring this quality in schools. They also learn it at home. It is, therefore, a long-term process. But, if our children see adults who do not care about time all around them, then they will end up taking the same attitude. This is why it is important for our intellectuals, community elders, opinion makers and other leaders of society to give good examples to the rest of the public.

The ability to plan one's time is part of modern life. Unless we can acquire this trait, it is hard to believe that we can join the rest of the world and interact positively with it.

The Publisher
عبد العزيز

Formation of the Independent National Social Bloc in Aden

Over meetings that extended over six months, the formation of the Independent National Social Bloc (INSB) was announced in Aden on Saturday, January 11th. According to a circular, an 81-person Preparatory Committee was established. The Group elected a 10-man administrative board headed by Mr. Saleh Ba-Qais, member of parliament. The rapporteur is Mr. Abdul-Rahman Khubara, a well-known journalist.

The Bloc stands for civil liberties but especially respect for human rights, press freedom, the right to form unions and syndicates and the right to organize sit-ins and demonstrations. It also believes in a market-based economic system which is corollary to a pluralist political system. Finally, the Bloc announces its opposition to any kind of extremism and terrorism, and its refusal or power usurpation by violence and take-overs.

More Air Trips Between Yemen and Germany

A memorandum of understanding was signed in Bonn by the Yemeni Civil Aviation Authority and the Federal Republic of Germany to increase the number of air flights between the two countries. Both Yemen Airlines and Lufthansa will be able to increase the frequency of their services, review air routes, introduce new mechanisms to economically support operations and to adopt the best ways to enhance cooperation between them.

At the moment, Yemenia and Lufthansa operate two flights each between Yemen and Germany.

Cooperation Between Aden and WHO

Talks were held at the University of Aden on December 9th to discuss ways of increasing cooperation with the World Health Organization in the health and environmental fields.

More medical activities are being carried out by the University of Aden especially after opening the Cancer Registry and Treatment Center and the Diagnosis and Prevention Health Center.

On the environmental side, the university has opened the Environmental Studies and Research Center. WHO bureau chief in Yemen, Dr. Qinawi, expressed delight at these developments.

President Launches the Ramadhan Night Get-Togethers

President Ali Abdullah Saleh has launched this week the traditional Ramadhan night get-togethers. Over the years, the President has used this holy occasion to reach out to the leading individuals of each sector.

Each night, leaders of one sector in society are invited to a night qat chew with the president. The idea is to fill him in on their affairs and how he can help them. The Ramadhan get-togethers had served in the past as an important feed-back instrument.

Women and Labor Legislation Workshop Concluded

The Ministry of Pensions, Social Affairs and Labor, in collaboration with the Arab Labor organization concluded a 5-day workshop in Sanaa. It focused on women and labor laws in the Arab region.

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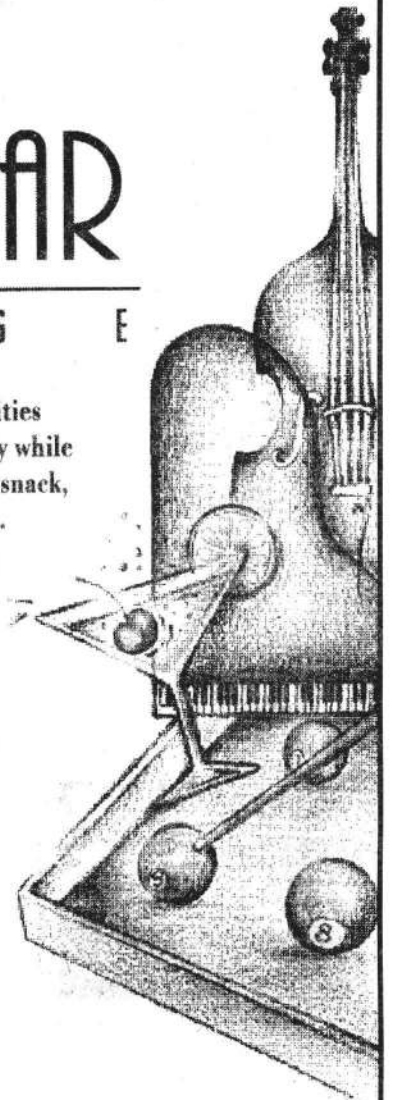
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Dr. Abdul-Elah Al-Harazy:

“The Yemen Red Crescent Society works along universal guidelines.”

The Red Crescent Society (RCS) is probably one of the most successful Non-Governmental Organizations in Yemen. Two of the main reasons for the success of this NGO is its apolitical nature, and the highly decentralized structure of its management. Amazingly, the RCS stayed out of politics, and it has been protected by this factor. Again amazingly, each RCS branch office in any city is treated as an independent entity managing its own affairs, making its own decisions, and planning its activities.

Thus the RCS can be seen as a model NGO that has succeeded in its mandate.

Mr. Adel Moqbil of Yemen Times filed the following interview with Dr. Abdul-Elah Al-Harazi, the Secretary-General of the RCS in Sanaa.

Q: Could you give us a brief background of the Yemen Red Crescent Society?

A: The Yemen Red Crescent Society is a charitable and humanitarian voluntary organization which aims to serve the people under dire circumstances. It also aims to improve the lives of people, and alleviate suffering incurred due to natural and man-made disasters.

This organization works along universal guidelines and principles which form the foundation of the society, such as humanitarianism, neutrality, independence, voluntary work, unity and internationalism.

Therefore, it is totally independent in implementing its programs. The Yemen Red Crescent Society is an active member of the International Association of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Organizations.

The Sana'a branch, established in 1988, is one of many branches spread in all governorates of the

Republic which are supervised by the main center.

Q: What are the main activities of the society?

A: I can only talk about the Sanaa Branch.

The Sana'a branch of the RCS carries out many programs which fall within the overall objectives of our organization. The main categories are as follows:

A health service program is being implemented through the General Secretariat for Humanitarian Affairs at the Sana'a Central Prison. We started with the most under-privileged groups in prison such as women, juveniles and the mentally unstable.

A doctor goes out twice a week to the women's and juveniles' wards. In addition, periodic visits are made by our volunteers who are active in raising health awareness, and in improving conditions of the prisoners' health.

We are also implementing an agricultural program at the prison

compound to put to use the available plots of land, as well as time and energy of the prisoners.

In cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, another program is being implemented. This focusses on the mentally unstable prisoners.

A psychological and mental health sanatorium was opened at the Sanaa Central Prison under the supervision and direction of a highly qualified team of doctors. Thirty of our volunteers are also working alongside this team to help improve the living standards for these insane prisoners.

On another level, the Sana'a branch of the Red Crescent Society contributes greatly to the humanitarian activities of many social care institutions, such as orphanages. Whenever circumstances permit and subject to availability, food is distributed to very poor families.

Volunteers from the branch also participate in giving help and assistance during sports and celebratory activities through ambulance vehicles and paramedics.

The branch also supervises the administration of the Ambulance Center near the Ministry of Information and Culture which operates 24 hours a day. Other health activities include our cooperation with the municipality bureau at the Mayor's Office to supervise the health and hygiene inspection of hotels, restaurants, cafes, school canteens, clubs, barber shops, slaughter houses, and the workers at food factories.

Regular and very thorough medical examinations and health treatment are carried out by our volunteers.

First aid and health and environmental awareness programs and training courses are offered by us in schools, high institutes and university colleges.

Maternity and childhood health courses are also carried out in collaboration with other related bodies to raise the awareness of housewives, and women in general.

Special aid and rescue training courses are organized for the benefit of police staff and some military argans.

The branch actively participated in the rescue and relief campaigns during the recent floodings, and provided medical field service during the war of 1994.

Q: What are your main future plans?

A: Our great hope is to fully realize the aims and goals of our organization in spreading health and environmental awareness, and providing much needed ambulance services. Despite the difficulties, we try our best to implement our programs.

The RCS has short and long-term goals.

Short term goals include providing the most important and essential services such as improving the ambulance center, introduction of new medical units, improvements and developments of public training courses for first aid and raising



health and environmental awareness.

We now are in the process of publishing a first-aid guide book. We also aim to develop and enlarge the humanitarian services program through raising the food share of the Sana'a branch.

In the long term, we aim to add a new building to the ambulance center and an administration building to our branch. We hope to increase the number of ambulances so as to able to cover all the geographic area under the responsibility.

We plan to conduct a field survey in an attempt to better involve society-at-large in our voluntary work. During Ramadhan, for example, we plan to collect and distribute food/clothes to the poor and charities.

Q: How do you finance your activities?

A: Local donations are obtained through the activities of our volunteers, from business establishments, companies and indi-

vidual benefactors. But the total result of this effort is still somewhat week. We sometimes resort to donations of our own volunteers to cover some of the costs of our activities.

External aid comes in the form of medicines, medical appliances and ambulances.

A small income is generated through fees and user charges of our services. This income only covers our basic needs. We also hope to improve the income of the ambulance center in order to reduce our budget deficit.

Q: What sort of problems do you face?

A: We face many problems, which is only natural. Most pressing of these problems are the shortages in material and the low level of income.

Another impediment comes from lack of adequate public understanding and awareness of the role, principles and concepts of our organization. Only time will take care of this.

Ramadan Kareem



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Formulating and Activating Human Rights:

Muslim Women Produce Human Rights Manual

By Margot Badran*

Muslim women have been at the center of articulating the universal women's human rights discourse and working for its implementation in their diverse societies. They played key roles in preparations for the United Nations conference and the NGO Forum in Beijing, during these global meetings, and in following-up. Yemeni women who formed the NGO Network for Women, an umbrella organization of thirty-two organizations, were among these global activists. Reconstituting itself after Beijing, the Network continues the promotion of women's human rights in Yemen.

Yemeni women are among the members of the international NGO, the Sisterhood is Global Institute (SIGI), in Washington, DC, which is headed by a Muslim woman, Mahnaz Afkhami from Iran. While SIGI is an international organization with members coming from different countries, cultures, and religions around the world, it has a special interest in Muslim women's efforts to enjoy the practice of their human rights. Among SIGI's preparatory activities for Beijing was the Conference on Religion, Culture, and Women's Human Rights in Washington which numerous women from around the Muslim world attended.

The women articulated a large range of views and various priorities within the context of their religious culture. Afkhami said, "There was a need and an interest on the part of Muslim women activists to reclaim their religion. The conservative backlash which has appeared in the Muslim world, I think, is to a great extent the result of women's activism. Thus [Muslim] women have been co-opted by certain people whose concerns have been to gain and hold political power rather than to address spiritual or religious issues themselves. In thinking in an analytical way, it can be seen that religion -- texts and concepts -- have been defined by certain people according to certain formulas and everyone else, especially women, had better just simply accept the "givens." She stressed, "The idea of many women activists now is to take back the religion for themselves and to declare that it is their right as well as anyone else's to interpret, understand, and analyze the main texts and concepts of the religion." Thus many women are refusing to be forced into opposing and increasingly vague categories of "religious" which lend more legitimacy to one group over the other, causing a pernicious split among Muslims.

The universal versus the particular debate regarding human rights which has been contentious seems to be now subsiding. "Some governmental delegations [to Beijing] from Muslim countries insisted that because our culture or our religion is different we must have a special set of rights to fit that particular culture," Afkhami remarked. "But, many Muslim women pointed to the variety in the Muslim world itself - to divergent lifestyles and practices in different countries, and to differences in the legal codes of countries that call themselves Muslim. There is a lot of diversity. Moreover, this is not true just of the Muslim world, but of the rest of the Third world, as well. But all of this [diversity] has really very little relevance to the fact that each individual, regardless of these differences, is entitled to certain rights which exist simply because a person is a human being -- not because a person is male or female, black, brown, or white, or whatever. We wanted to stress that to say that these rights are universal is actually to respect the variety.

If you have rights simply because you are a human being and an individual, you can interpret, you can strategize, and you can live your life the way you as an individual see fit, as much as possible. In fact, guaranteeing universal individual rights guarantees the greatest possible diversity because you can't restrict, limit, and compartmentalize. If we base the rights of the individual on universal rights then the variety of expressing these rights depends on the will of the group, it depends on their revolving interpretations and allows a huge amount of flexibility in the way they strategize for those rights. So we were trying to put across the concept of the universality of individual rights."

The argument that the UN universal women's human rights discourse in a western construct is dis-



proved by the experience at Beijing where a large comprehensive platform of action was adopted by a large consensus. "Women from the global south, and Muslims being an important part of it, had a huge voice in what actually came out of this conference," said the SIGI executive director. "There were certain areas where there was little distinction between the women in the Muslim world and other parts of the global south. That is to say that there were issues which were not confined to certain regions of the world. For example, the interest in the issue of economic self-sufficiency. It was stressed a great deal, that without economic independence, all the other things that women might have or see become academic. They do not have any impact on our actual living conditions, unless we can be independent financially. So this was something that was universally shared and I think women of the Muslim world played a great part in elaborating this part of the agenda. Another concern was the feminization of poverty. Yemen see more and more a lot of families in the global south headed by women because of migration of men abroad for work, and also to other parts of their own countries.

Also, because men tend to have a shorter life span than women, a lot of widowed or divorce women are living with the burden of responsibilities for themselves and others without the training of the skills, or inheritance rights, that would help them in their struggle to support their families. So this idealized concept of the family in the global south--of men going to work an women staying at home and of the extended family supporting every one, is not a reality for most of the people of the global south. And Muslim women living these realities wanted to put it across that women need education, they need skills, they need ways of controlling the spacing of their children, family planning, and they need skills that would bring them economic independence. They need a legal infrastructure that makes sure that they have rights to inheritance and rights to manage their own business, and the opportunity to get credit to establish their own businesses. These were subjects of great concern to women in the Muslim world. They raised these issues and shared their ideas with other women across national boundaries and regions."

At Beijing there was a commitment to "turn words into action". This included the declared intentions of some sixty-five governments. SIGI and other women's NGOs around the world have been active in urging their governments to implement the UN Platform of Action and have also been directly engaging in forms of human rights activism. A priority is to promote women's human rights education, SIGI has just published a women's human rights do-it-yourself book called **Claiming Our Right: A Manual for Women's Human Rights**

on. The manual is explicit about how to conduct conversations to stimulate increased awareness and to indicate activist strategies. The manual includes examples of relevant verses from the Quran and a list of female exemplars in Islamic history to help contextualize women's human rights in a specifically Muslim environment. Being published in the major languages spoken by Muslims, the Arabic edition has just appeared. **Claiming Our Rights** is already scheduled for use in Bangladesh, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, and Uzbekistan. The manual is a reminder that enjoying one's human rights is a process and that human rights are accessible to all women.

* Margot Badran, currently visiting Yemen, writes on Middle Eastern women's contemporary gender activism and is the author of *Feminists, Islam, and Nation: Gender and the Making of Modern Egypt*. This article is based on an interview with Mahnaz Afkhami, Executive Director of Sisterhood is Global Institute in Washington, on the women's human rights framework created at the UN conference in Beijing which women are now busy implementing. Part of this activist enterprise is - **Claiming Our Rights: A Manual for Women's Human Rights Education in Muslim Societies**, which has just been released and is available in Arabic, English, and in several other languages.

Education in Muslim Societies. While human rights is a universal discourse, human rights are practiced in specific societies and cultures. The Muslim women's human rights manual is especially designed for grassroots use. It consists of exercises--group conversations around specific themes, such as the right to be treated with respect, the right to work, the right to participate in public life, and so

created at the UN conference in Beijing which women are now busy implementing. Part of this activist enterprise is - **Claiming Our Rights: A Manual for Women's Human Rights Education in Muslim Societies**, which has just been released and is available in Arabic, English, and in several other languages.

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فقد تكون من سعادة الحظ

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The Local Administration Law: **NEED FOR DEEP THINKING**

By: Ahmad Salah Al-Fageeh
Taiz.

The draft law of the Local Administration Law was published by Yemen Times in a three part article, issues of May 13th, 20th and 27th 1996. The said draft has already been referred to parliament, and is due for approval.

Examining the proposal carefully, it appears to me out of context, and lacking in any sense of reality.

The reason being the following:

(1) It is a conceptual mishmash which ignores the Yemeni socio-economical structure.

(2) There are some technical errors in the construction of the proposal, taken as it is.

FIRST: THE MISCONCEPTIONS:

I believe that this draft law, if approved as is, shall make us a recipe for a fast approaching disaster. And that is because of the following considerations:

1- Tribalism

The social bonds in Yemen specially in rural areas where the majority of the population lives, are tribal relations. With a very high rate of illiteracy and the lack of civil relations due to the weak and inadequate presence of the central government, one can easily predict that all the persons to be elected to the local councils will be tribal leaders, and so will most district managers and governors.

This prediction is justified by examining the parliaments' members list, where the non tribal members are only those of the Yemeni Socialist Party (This is going to change in the next elections) and those representing urban areas.

Generally speaking, tribal leaders of Yemen have certain characteristics which are in total contradiction with the nature of work expected from the proposed local authorities. And the main problem is their habit of using ready-made fortunes without earning them through work.

So far, they are bleeding the central government's treasury in the form of hefty annual gifts through many channels or bleeding the peasants at the highly cultivated central and western regions.

So, enabling them to control the districts' and governorates' funds will just add insult to injury and increases the on-going corruption manifold. Consequently this will jeopardize any glim of hope as to development of Yemen.

2- Feudalism

The single source of data I came across regarding land ownership in Yemen is a survey conducted by the Arab States Industrial Development Center of the Arab League, published in 1970, and was incorporated in Dr. Abubakar Al-Saqqaf book, *Kitabat* (page 186-187).

This survey which was covered only North Yemen gives the fol-

lowing data:-

- 65-70% of total cultivated land is owned by 20% of population and is leased to peasants.

- 10% of total cultivated land is owned as small plots of land by 80% of population.

- 15% of the land is endowment land and religious property.

- 2-3% of the land is owned by the government.

On the other hand, feudalism was eradicated at South Yemen (Southern and Eastern provinces) during the Socialist Party rule, and land was distributed to the peasants. But nowadays it is being withdrawn from the peasants and is being repossessed by the returning sheikhs and sultans along with some Northern sheikhs and officials.

It is believed that feudalism in the South used to be stronger than in the North.

Looking at the social status of feudal land ownership patterns in Yemen, the observer will quickly find that the majority of the landlords are tribal sheikhs. This fact leads to a simple conclusion. Once these people are elected, they will serve only their own interests and those of their class, rather than the interests of the electorate. The irony is that given the present relations, the electorate will not dare elect any body else.

With a week state, the theoretical truth of making the people elect their local officials becomes a

fallacy. Tribal leaders and local chieftains will force themselves on the people, especially if they enter into an alliance with the corrupt politicians of the central government. Eventually this kind of system will collapse, but by then the price to our nation would be very high.

SECOND: TECHNICAL ERRORS

1- Article (11) requires a university degree and 8 years experience from candidates to chair the local councils. While article (36) says the ability to read and write are sufficient requirements for the candidates to the local council which is the electoral base for the chairmanship. These different conditions represent a contradiction.

2- Article (97) denies the General Assembly's right to discharge the administrative board and its chairman, though actually elected by them, without the president's or prime minister's approval.

3- The proposal through its (117) articles did not give the judicial authority any role in the whole process.

4- It ignored the right of electorate to object to the administration's decisions.

5- It did not allow even for one appointed female to be a member of the administrative board.

SUGGESTIONS

1) It is in the best interest of the state to legally describe the role of tribal leaders within a well defined framework, for instance,

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Republic of Yemen

by creating some sort of an upper house besides the parliament which accommodates all sheikhs without election and that is it!! No government position or parliament membership or local council seats for them.

2) Allow for two elected persons for every 1500 citizens instead of one, under condition that no two persons from any one family may be elected in the same local council.

3) Provide mandatory seats for females in the board of administration in each local council.

4) Amend the qualification condition for local council and chairmanship candidacy to be university degree plus 3 years experience. Give educated people the chance to guide and serve an uneducated population through this executive body, because what is required is more than the ability of talk.

Finally, I have no personal problem with tribal leaders some of whom I respect. My aim is to best serve Yemen and its citizens.

Exxon Yemen Inc. Exxon Yemen Investments Inc.

present their heartfelt felicitations and best wishes to the Yemeni people and political leadership headed by General Ali Abdullah Saleh,

President of the Republic

on the occasion of the Holy Month of Ramadhan and on the approaching occasion of Eid Al-Fitr Al-Mubarak.

Many Happy Returns to all.

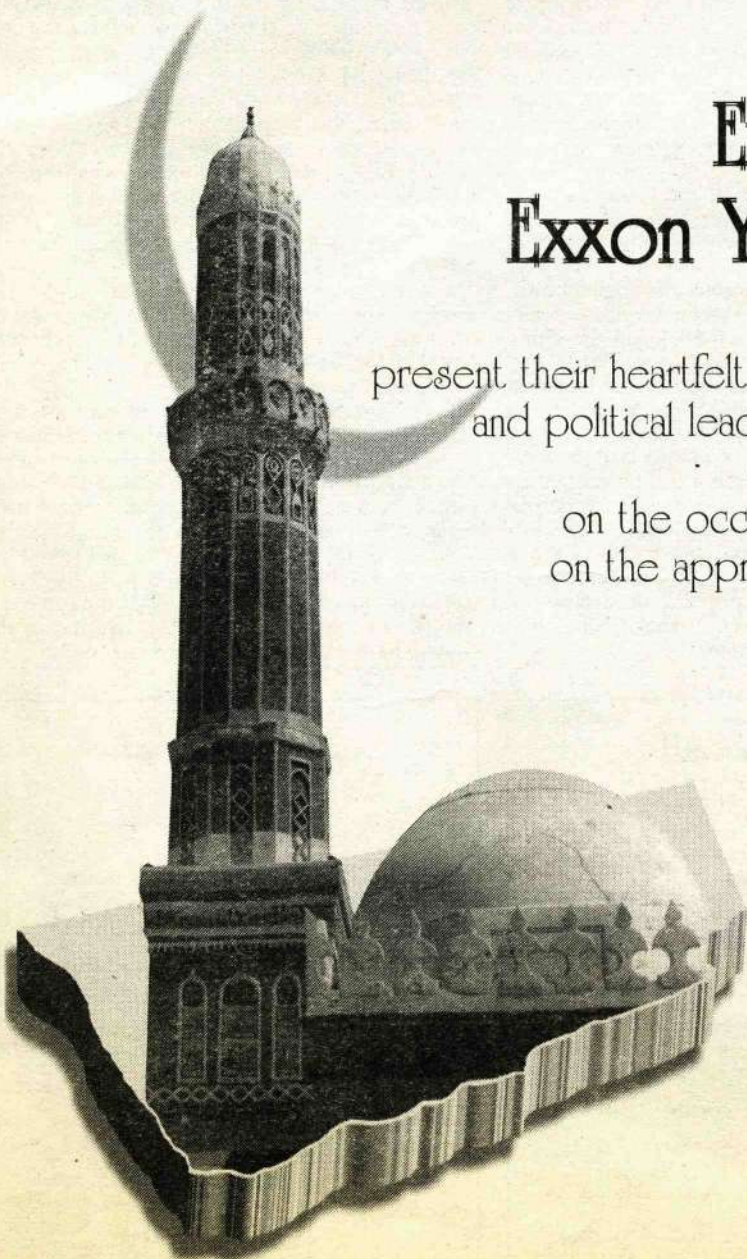
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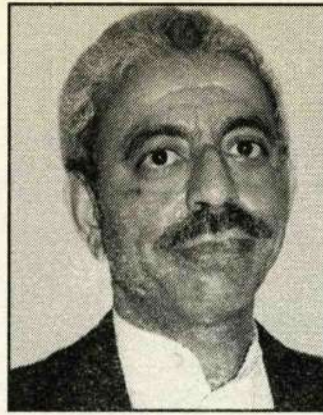
وكل عام والجميع بخير



Common Sense

By: Hassan Al-Haifi

This Land Is My Land. That Land Is My Land!



Throughout man's history, the struggle for land ownership is a major cause for human conflict. Nations have mobilized their entire war machinery, at times for the sake of settling disputes with neighboring nations, just to maintain sovereignty, sometimes, even over a useless strip of land. Land is growing smaller and smaller as time goes on with more and more people striving to get as much of its increasing limited space. Some say that the love for possession of land stems from the contention that man is indeed a product of the soil that sits at the Earth's surface - Mother Earth. In the competition for wealth, glory and power, land holdings are an important symbolic measure of the attainments so far.

Among the earliest legislation and social contracts in human history are those pertaining to the organization of land ownership and property rights. Volumes of laws regarding the protection of property rights of individuals and communities fill up libraries throughout the world. It would not be an exaggeration to consider that of all matters dealt with by law, land and property rights may be the biggest subject which occupied legislators and law makers over the passage of time.

In most advanced societies of our times, land and property rights have become clearly defined by law and little difficulty arises as to determining the legitimate ownership of land and rights of property. In addition, systems have been incorporated to assure the peaceful transfer of ownership of land and real estate property. On the other hand, any movement of property from one hand to another is monitored and kept track of, as well as regulated, by the relevant government authorities - usually at the local level of administrative authority - within clearly defined national guidelines. In fact, most of the formalities are arranged by lawyers, real estate brokers and the relevant local officials. The actual parties involved in title are not in the picture,

except to 'close the deal' or sign the appropriate documents. In any, case property ownership does not become a headache to anyone. Whatever the case, the property owner is sufficiently secure that all his/her rights to title of land are free from being contested as long as they are bound by law and legitimacy.

In the Republic of Yemen, land and property ownership is beginning to become a civil nightmare. This is so, on top of becoming a serious security problem, and one of the major causes of armed conflict, between citizens of the nation. Anyone living, especially in the periphery of a major city would find it unusual that the night can pass without having to hear the shots of rifles - and sometimes even artillery, as disputants to rights of a parcel of land resort to taking the law into their own hands.

The issue of land ownership is a nationwide problem, but the large cities are becoming battlegrounds for those who are unable to arrive at an institutional and civilized form for settling their differences over title and property rights. These shoot-outs have resulted in fatalities at an increasing rate recently, and accordingly, have led to blood feuds compounding an already complicated civil disturbance.

The problem is created primarily due to the inability of the court system to decisively rule on disputes of land ownership and property rights. Even in those cases, when appropriate rulings are arrived at, enforcement of such rulings becomes another matter altogether. The difficulties arising out of an ineffective judicial system stems from the poor institutional functioning that prevails, generally, throughout the government. If the judicial system were to find a way to assert itself and give the laws their proper weight in the society's functions, Yemen can go a long way into becoming a civil society.

It is not difficult, but it requires a lot of courage from all those involved.

With corruption so widespread in government, it is not surprising that the court system should also be plagued with this ugly social disease. With this disease, the courts have become a quagmire for the Yemeni citizen struggling to uphold his/her rights amidst hordes of swindlers, mobsters and armed trespassers who eventually become settlers or speculators, laying claim to land and enforce that claim through armed thugs. Eventually they sell off the land to the best buyer, once they have established their full control over the land, and proceed to grab another piece of land.

While the court system had its shortcomings in the past as well, it nevertheless is undisputed that the quality and decency of judges may have been more evident in the past. Even corrupt judges were far more reluctant to issue decisions that were in disagreement with the prevailing law or that falsely defined the rights of property in any land dispute. It is not uncommon in Yemen's history to find judges who ruled against the rulers when they had disputes with common citizens over land or other differences.

But in these modern times, despite the immense growth in the size of the court system and the appropriate by-laws for conducting judicial procedures, the judicial system's inability to give true meaning to law and order becomes even more reinforced as time goes on. Present day judges are for the most part graduates of a judicial institute, with little practical training and generally an unclear understanding of the responsibilities that lie with sitting on the judge's bench in a court room. It can not be determined if the Institute instills the appropriate ethical and moral considerations that must come with the interpretation and application of law and the protection of citizens' rights.

Like the rest of the civil service, the employees of the judicial system are still remunerated far below the ability of the wages to meet subsistence needs, let alone provide means for comfort and affluence. This has in itself made the judicial system more susceptible to corruption and thus added to the difficulties of resolving differences over property rights.

Because of a generally low level of public awareness on law and legal proceedings, many judges find it easy to convince disputants to assign the judges as arbitrators in a dispute, as a way of avoiding legal proceedings that might drag on for years. In this way, judges become induced to decide in favor of the highest paying party in a particular dispute. The losing party, detecting an unfair judgment in the arbitration of the judge, returns the case to judicial proceedings, or else reverts back to his clan or tribe for assistance in defending his rights. This introduces armed conflict into the dispute and eventually could lead to blood letting. Thus the common citizen is forced to rely on traditional social means of asserting his ownership of disputed land.

The Republic of Yemen is primarily an agricultural country whereby most of the land under dispute is, or was, agricultural land. Agriculture, in Yemen, primarily relies on rain. This brings in the issue of water rights, since a plot of agricultural land may have water rights to lands adjacent to the plot if they help in the irrigation of the cultivated land. Some plots of land may have water rights to land that may even be bigger than the original plot of cultivated land.

For all practical purposes, water rights entail ownership of the land which provides these water rights. As the farmlands, especially in the cities, become become diverted from agricultural use, speculators try to get a head start on the urbanization process. They sometimes buy a small piece of property which soon grows as the new owner starts to claim all the adjacent abandoned land as water rights to the land the speculator had purchased. Of course, it does not matter that there may be real owners of the land which has turned into water rights, especially if these owners are common citizens who are helpless against the machinery that these speculators normally attach themselves to, which includes government officials, tribal dignitaries judges and legal scribes.

In the best of cases, this is done to pressure the real landowners to sell at prices that may be a fraction of the price that the market would dictate. On the other hand, the machinery may involve having armed thugs who take up positions in the disputed land and assure that the real owners are frightened off from their land, while the speculators start to change or remove the existing markings on the land, which may belong to one or several people. Once, the speculators have settled in on the land after having pushed off any disputants to their possession of the land, the land is sold, with any shortfalls in the legal documentation filled in by forged documents.

The problem could be further complicated if the original owners of the land, or some of them, have passed away and the land may have been inherited by women, or has gone through two generations of inheritance. If the heirs to the land are women or young children, they are generally powerless to stand up to the speculators, with their thugs, money and friends everywhere.

Similarly, the several heirs to an estate maybe at the mercy of an estate trustee, who may not be as trustworthy as the former estate owner had thought, or who holds the documents and try to embezzle as much gains as possible from this lucrative opportunity. Thus, if the estate consists of substantial property, the trustee will start to act as a broker and sells off as much as possible of the estate, sometimes making deals with the prospective buyers whereby the heirs of the estate will only obtain a fraction, and the trustee will, in fact, have become the heir. The true heirs may not know this, but in any case they are helpless to do anything about it even if they knew.

In an increasing number of the cases, the litigants are both cheated out of 'their' by the judge, who becomes a new 'owner' to the land.

Another problem is that land could be owned by city dwellers, who either rented or sharecropped the land to farmers in the countryside. The poor landowner, would, in this case, be at the mercy of the sharecropper or the lessee. If the owner wanted to sell the land, the land becomes priced so low because the resident farmers have conspired to 'cheapen' price of land in their area. If the landlord is an absentee landlord, then he is only entitled to a fraction of its real market value. If a local resident sells similar property, he may be getting 10 times what would be given to an absentee landlord.

On the other hand, sharecroppers in many instances have claimed full ownership of the land again depending on the muscle of the absentee landlords. Since most of the absentee landlords are heirs to estates, as their original owners have died, they are either uninformed about the property or helpless against the sharecroppers who have the support of not only fellow villagers, but an entire tribe.

Many of the problems associated with land ownership are related to land presumably purchased by Yemeni immigrants overseas. They have usually been remitting a good portion of their hard earned income to relatives or agents to purchase property for them and handle their business for them at home. The latter have not failed in this task but, in many cases, the property and the business have changed to that of the relative or agent. When the poor immigrant comes back to the country to see where his money went, he may find that his trusted agent or representative has put everything in his name, leaving the homeowner, sometimes with nothing left to be proud of.

The legal hassles and procedures are sought after for justice to be done. But when the poor emigrant finds the system overpowering and the agent well prepared for the battle, the frustration that results can be deadly.

This is just a brief overview of the situation regarding land and property ownership. It must be borne in mind that there are still the problems associated with government owned land and the lands owned by the religious endowments. Those need separate coverage. But it is safe to say that for Yemenis at this time, it is healthier and refreshing not to own any land than to be a part of a jungle that seems to get more dangerous, as time goes on, simply because those in the power structure of the country have a lot at stake in keeping it messy!

YEMEN TIMES

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Meeting the Needs of the Translation Business:

Establishing CBATS in Aden

The Center British and American Translation Service (C-BATS) is to be inaugurated in Aden during next March, as part of Aden University. Yemen Times met three of the people who have been instrumental in bringing that idea to fruition.

1. Prof. Terry Hale is director of the British Center for Literary Translation at the University of East Anglia.

Q: Could you tell us briefly about BCLT?

A: This is an organization funded by the Arts Council of England, which perhaps is the equivalent of the Ministry of Culture here in Yemen. Our brief is to promote literary translation in the UK. Every country has its own translation issues to deal with. In some countries, there is a lot of translation into the language and very little out of it. This is perhaps the situation in Arab countries in general and in Yemen in particular. It is also the same situation in France and Germany. In Britain, it is the other way round. About 60% of the book translated in the world are in English. But there is very little translation into English. I think it is very important that we try to stimulate more translation into English especially from languages such as Arabic where there is an information gap. We know very little about other cultures, and have many misconceptions about them.

Q: How did the idea of establishing CBATS come about?

A: Translation centers in Europe have been around for quite a long time. The first one was established in Stralem, Germany 25 years ago. The Stralem center has been a model for all of us. The idea originally arose out of the great emphasis on preserving the various cultures within the European Union. The idea is that literary translation is the cheapest and most efficient manner of inter-cultural communications. Translating a book costs very little in comparison with just about anything you could think of as a cultural support mechanism. Translation is an individual act, easy to support, relatively cheap and once a book is translated and published, it remains in circulation for a long time. A book can have a large cultural impact even if it is published by a very small press or a university press.

Q: Are you talking about translating poem, novels, etc. or about translating all types of books?

A: There is a vast amount of technical, legal and medical translation that is already in circulation. There are also many institutions which are already offering high level courses in that form of translation study. In a developing country, there is obviously a gap between the amount of instruction in translation, literary, technical, medical or legal, and the level of ability that is here at the moment. You are also involved in the training of an educated work force. So the need for technical as well as literary translation is enormous. I think perhaps in Yemen, we have not yet realized how central translation is to everything we do. Doctors, lawyers, engineers and many other professionals need to keep abreast of all recent developments in their respective fields of work. It is so important to raise standards in translation. A translation error in a legal, medical, or a commercial document can have very serious



consequences. Poor translation of a literary work can lead to less appreciation of that work. The scheme of CBATS in Aden will have a big impact in a country which will require more and more translation services in the very near future.

2. Professor Abdul-Rahman Abdu-Rabo teaches translation at the University of Sana'a, and is advisor to the rector of Aden University on the project. He has been assigned the co-administrator of C-BATS.

Q: When will the center be inaugurated, and how is it funded?

A: The center is expected to be officially inaugurated in March. It has received generous support from the British Embassy, British Council and the USIS office in Sana'a.

Q: Could you tell us more about the centers expected activities?

A: The center will focus on four major academic units: British studies, American studies, translation studies and a unit will be entrusted with disseminating information and contributing to the research of development of all these four academic units.

Q: Who will be the director of the center?

A: Professor Salim Abdulaziz who is an associate professor of English at the University of Aden has been appointed as director of the center. He is accomplished author in his own right and a competent translator. He has published quite extensively in a number of journals. He has been instrumental in getting this project off the ground. Prof. Saleh Basurra, the rector of Aden University has also been quite supportive. The governor of Aden has also provided generous support for establishing CBATS which will be affiliated with the University of Aden.

Q: Why has Yemen been chosen to host this center?

A: We have conducted some sort of survey on Arab countries within the Arabian peninsula. I am in a position to confirm that this is the first one to offer highly specialized courses in translation studies with the objective of creating a forum for cross exchange using translation. This is a very progressive step forward.

Q: What other objective does the center have?

A: We will certainly concentrate on scientific translations because we feel that there is much to be desired in this particular area. So CBATS is not confined to literary translations.

Q: What kind of services will

you provide to the general public?

A: The center will provide professional graduate and post-graduate training in translation.

Q: Is it going to be a degree-awarding institution or a service providing one?

A: It will do both functions. We also aim to provide on-the-job training for professional translators in Yemen and short-term training sessions.

Q: Has an accord been signed for the formation of this body? What is the legal base for it?

A: A resolution was signed by the rector of the University of Aden, which was also approved University Board of Trustees.

Q: How will this center help translation activities in Yemen?

A: The status of translation in Yemen is relatively poor. The center is likely to contribute quite positively in enhancing the status of translation through training and research. We also had a meeting with the rector of the University of Sana'a Mr. Abdulaziz Al-Makalih who expressed a deep interest in supporting this initiative and any possible future collaboration with the University of East Anglia to enhance the status of translation research in this country, and also to contribute to the cross cultural exchange in a more academic manner.

Q: Will this center authorize translation companies or bodies?

A: The translation unit will also assume the function of authenticating and authorizing some sort of certification for translators, either in the University or outside it.

3. Mr. Brendan McSharry is Director of the British Council in Yemen.

Q: What role does the British Council play in this cultural scheme?

A: We are very pleased about the whole idea of the center evolving. We are involved by assisting the embassy in administering their aid program. Part of this program, the Ambassador has generously decided to give some support to this fledgling translation center. We have also helped fund a visit by Dr. Hale both to look at the center, advise on its further development, and also to do some collaborative work with Dr. Abdurabu. We also, in the past, funded Dr. Abdurabu to visit Britain as well. We hope that there would be a continued dialogue between Dr. Hale's center and this new center. It will further inspire two-way traffic, i.e., more translation coming into Britain from Arabic studies.

Implementing Programs to Help the Poor

"The Government fully recognizes its responsibility towards the vulnerable groups in society. That is why we have intensified and expanded projects oriented to the poor," said Mr. Ali Saleh Abdullah, Deputy Minister of Social Affairs. He outlined some of the main projects which are presently being implemented, as follows:

1. The Social Care Fund:
This is a one-billion Riyal fund which aims to provide monthly support to poor families. "At the moment, 40,000 families are on our list, and by the end of the year, we expect the number to rise to 100,000 families," he said. The families receive YR 600-1200 per month.

2. The Public Works Project:
Capitalized at US\$ 28 million from the World Bank, this project aims at creating immediate employment for unskilled and semi-skilled laborers. This is done through the financing of public works projects such as road construction, maintenance/repair of public buildings and other labor-intensive projects.

3. Social Development and Labor Fund:
This fund provides soft-loans which represent seed money to small grass-root level projects to individuals and Non-Governmental Organizations. Its US\$ 70 million capital comes from the World Bank, the European Union, the Dutch and Yemeni Governments.

4. Poverty-Fighting Project:
This is a US\$ 25 million project to be implemented in coordination with the UNDP. "The draft study for the implementation of this project is already ready, and the final version will be ready later in January," the Deputy Minister disclosed.


5. Studying Social Sector:
As a result of the meeting of the Arab Ministers of Social Affairs held in Cairo on 10/12/1996, the Arab League will finance an Institute for Social Service in Yemen. The institute will train unskilled persons, and re-train semi-skilled workers to match market demands. This institute will be coupled with a center for Studies on Social Issues Labor Market Trends to be established at the Ministry shortly.

Vitalizing Yemeni-Turkish Relations

New Turkish Ambassador in Yemen, Mr. Samli Topcuoglu, said that he has a mandate to push ahead with stronger relations and cooperation between the two countries. One of the first steps in this direction is the meeting of the Supreme Joint Committee scheduled for late February, 1997.

The Ambassador also indicated that he will be holding meetings with Yemeni businessmen to discuss trade possibilities. Mr. Topcuoglu then pointed out that he is urging Turkish Airlines (THY) to consider starting a service to Sana'a. "We are also promoting educational and cultural ties," he said.





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Suffering & Death Toll Rise Alarming

The Menace of CANCER

The number of cancer cases reported to the medical profession show that it is one of the rising problems of Yemen. The growth rate is alarming. To combat the situation, 90 doctors and specialists from the Medical Colleges of Sanaa and Aden Universities, the Ministry of Health, the YCS, and the National Cancer Control Program at the World Health Organization office in Yemen met together over a period of three days in the first National Symposium to Control Cancer in Yemen during 7-9/1/1997. Many professional papers based on research, treatment and observation were presented and discussed.

SOME OF THE MAIN OBSERVATIONS:

A: Prevalence of the Disease:

According to a statistics of the Yemen Cancer Society (YCS), the number of cancer cases brought to their attention during 1982-92 was 1609, as the table below indicates.

Malignant Tumours in Yemen (Reported During 1982-1992)		
Cancer type/site	Cases	Percent
Lymphomas	351	12.8%
Skin	331	12.0%
Stomach	293	10.7%
Oesophagus	233	8.5%
Breast	148	5.4%
Soft Tissue	99	3.6%
Colon	76	2.8%
Thyroid	46	1.8%
Bone	32	1.2%
TOTAL	1609	100 %

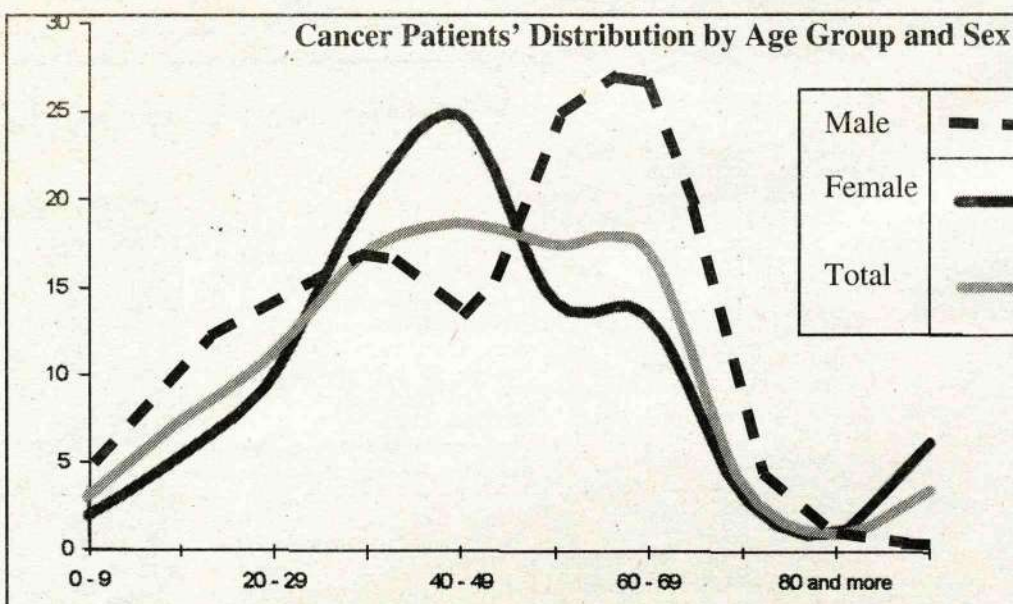
Source: Yemen Cancer Society

Doctors believe this number represents only a small fraction of the prevalence of the disease. "Patients do not seek medical care for many reasons," explains Dr. Ahmed Al-Hadhrani, Chairman of the YCS. The reasons are many, but they include:

- 1- The protruding and bulging nature of the disease makes the patient scared to expose his/her body to others.
- 2- Many patients believe that such a wicked disease is a divine punishment for some wrongdoing by the person or family.
- 3- Costly treatment requires enormous financial capabilities.
- 4- Many patients believe the disease is incurable, and resign themselves to live with it till death does them part.

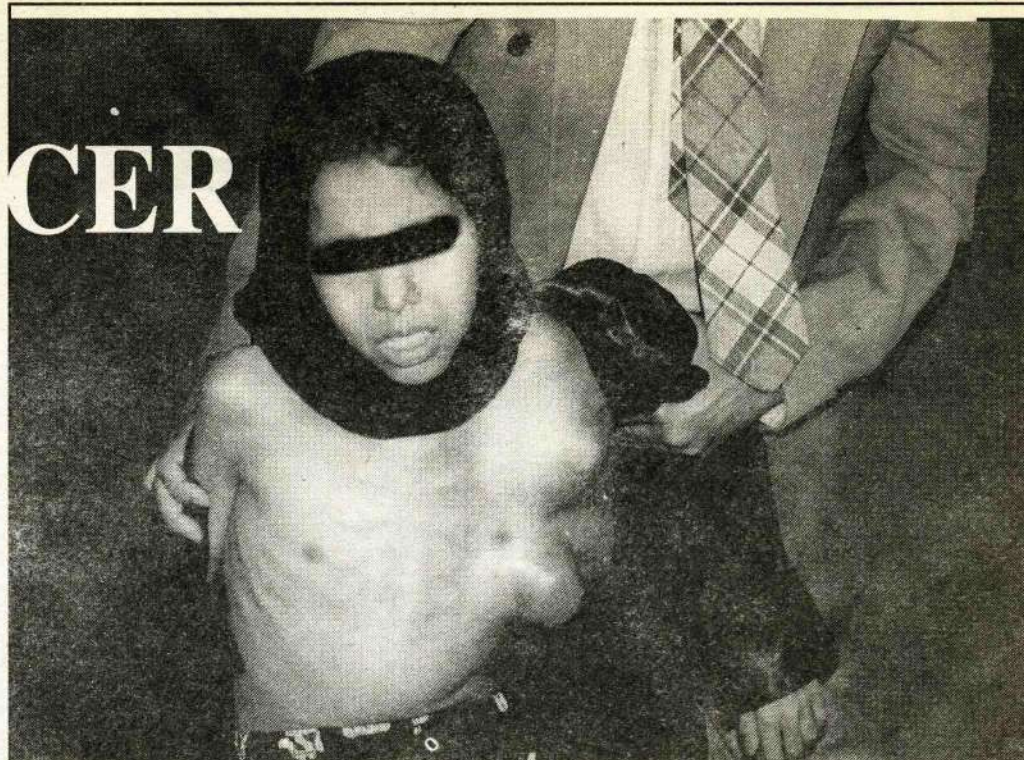
B: Age Distribution of the Patients:

According to statistics compiled by a team of expert doctors, the disease attacks all age groups, but peaks early for female patients than for male patients. In both male and female patients, however, it victimizes people at their prime age of productivity, as the following graph shows.



C: Causes:

The health problem of cancer is increasing in



the public is more informed. Therefore, more effort to educate the public is needed.

1. This can be done through extensive media campaigns, posters, placards, billboards, etc.
2. Social workers can discuss this problem with the public.
3. It can be incorporated in family planning literature and periodic health education.
4. Early detection must be a priority in order to cure the disease.

B: More Help for the Advanced Cases:

A priority issue is introduce program of palliative care to patients with advanced stages of the disease. 1. This can be incorporated in the curriculum in Nursing Schools and Faculty of Medicine.

2. Care for patients with advanced cancer is very important from humanitarian and religious point of view. This means addressing the cost issue. For instance, it is necessary to give cancer patients pain killers to relieve the severe pain. One of these essential drugs is morphine which must be made available to such patients.

C: Better Diagnosis:

The symposium called for improved diagnosis and treatment of tumors. Towards that end, the following steps are necessary:

1. Epidemiological research.
2. Health-care monitoring, especially concerning patient care, survival and prevention.
3. Showing the etiological factors in cancer.
4. Analyzing patterns of cancer in Yemen and the contributing factors.

D: Priorities in Cancer Prevention

To table the most important factors in cancer prevention, including the following:

1. Tobacco control, in order to reduce lung, laryngeal and other cancers.
2. Hepatitis and vaccination.
3. Early detection for cervical cancer.
4. Avoiding animal fats.

The most important event of this symposium was the inauguration of the National Cancer Registry which will great document cancer cases.

Another key achievement was the decision to support the YCS. "Supporting this Non-Governmental Organization will be instrumental in controlling cancer in Yemen," all the participants agreed.

By: Ismail Al-Ghabry,
Yemen Times.

Yemen because of several reasons. The most important of these are:

1. Contamination of the Immediate Environment: This includes preserved foods, vegetables and fruits treated with pesticides without close monitoring, contaminated water, etc.
2. Inadequate Treatment Services: The Yemeni patient with cancer suffers enormously because:
 - a) The majority receive no periodic medical check-ups, thus the disease is often detected at an advanced stage.
 - b) More than 90% of population have no health insurance to cover the high costs of treatment.
 - c) Government hospitals have limited resources.
 In other words, the disease is allowed to spread and claim victims without adequate treatment.

The symposium in my point of view succeeded in giving a rough idea about the size of cancer problem in Yemen. It also raised more awareness among the public.

SOME OF THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS:

A: More Public Awareness Campaign:

The symposium called for the introduction and encouragement of prevention strategies against cancer diseases. Doctors believe that 30% of the cases can be prevented or cured at an early stage if

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المهنؤون : بابا و ماما وكافة الأهل والأحبة

The Second of Five Articles on Ramadhan Food:

In Sa'ada It Is the Grape Nectar at the Top

By: Hassan Al-Haifi,
Yemen Times.

The historic city of Sa'ada, the traditional capital of the Imams for centuries, and an isolated fortress town in the midst of the Northern Highlands, has had little external influence in its cultural and make-up. Perhaps, the Egyptian presence in the city during the Civil War of (1962-1969) was the only foreign presence in the city since anyone has ever recorded the history of the town.

Like all Yemeni cities, at the present time, Sa'ada has also come out of its isolationist streak. It is now expanding with new modern construction (Yemeni style, of course - with a Sa'ada flavor and color all its own). This new construction is beginning to change the typical sturdy distinctive mud building character of the city.

On the other hand, the auto vehicle traffic has transformed the quiet, serene atmosphere of the city which has lasted until the early 1980s. Sa'ada is also taking in some of the food delights enjoyed by other parts of the country, especially succumbing to the palate of Sana'a. It has also been influenced by the entrepreneurial people of Taiz and Ibb who have opened up restaurants in the city. The many restaurants that have opened up in the city, usually by non-Sa'ada residents, offer additional dimensions to the local food recipe. This means that Sa'ada can now

enjoy what satisfies the appetites in other larger cities of the country.

The Ramadhan cuisine in Sa'ada, while now beginning to include much of what is presented in other cities, still retains its own particular additions.

When one from outside Sa'ada goes to the mosque, prior to sunset, he is awe-struck by the parade of foods that enter the mosque. The people of Sa'ada take the breaking the fast seriously. They literally move the entire kitchen to the mosque. They bring in hot meals, rather than the more simplified cold appetizers that the most other Yemenis bring to the mosque to break the fast.

People often break the fast in Sa'ada with the following:

- 1) Hamidha (fenigree with vinegar and sugar) dipped with radishes - root and leaves.
- 2) Ma'asouba - butter cooked bread pieces smothered with honey, usually served hot in stone pottery.
- 3) Shafoot - buttermilk with flavored with a sauce of shredded leeks.
- 4) Hilba (fenigree blend with leek sauce) with gravy and assorted vegetables scooped up by folded pieces of rye or wheat flat bread.
- 5) Coffee

Unlike other Yemenis who rush home after breaking the fast in the mosque to enjoy supper, the Sa'ada people, hold off the main

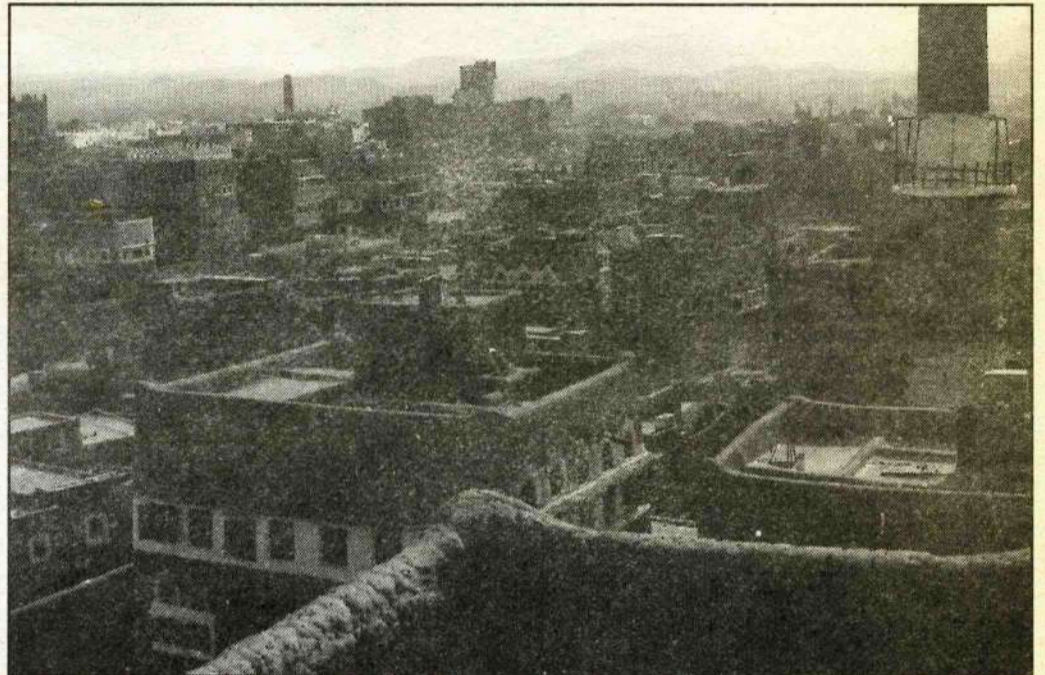
supper meal until after the mid evening prayer, usually 1 to 2 hours after sunset. In this way, there are two different meals - the iftar (with which they break the fast), and the actual dinner at least an hour later.

Dinner will usually comprise of the following:

- 1) Shourba: Soup made of milk (goat or cow) with rice or wheat grains, ungrounded or partially ground and pre-cooked or fried scallion bits (almost until the scallions have burned).
- 2) Kawa'ib - Wheat bread made with wheat (preferably domestic grown) flour batter that is yeast free, usually eaten with lamb gravy soup.
- 3) Vegetables and salad (recent additions)
- 4) Meat (lamb)

The Sa'ada Suhoor or pre-fasting meal has its peculiarities as well:

- 1) Al-Ma'ataf: which consists of high quality wheat flour, the latter which is ground just prior to preparation. The batter is immediately prepared and baked. Again baking soda or yeast are not used. This bread is folded to occupy one side of the stone serving pot, whereas on the other side a pit is left for the placement of butter (locally produced) and honey dip or alternatively, milk and butter.
- 2) Shineen: This is a beverage that is regarded as a Sa'ada specialty and is essentially homemade brew of black grape raisins, from the vineyards of the city and the surrounding area.



The brew is made as follows:

- The raisins of the famous black grapes of Sa'ada is washed and cleaned of twigs and pits. Then it is ground well. The resulting sticky mush is then shaped into cylinders or imperfect spheres by hand. Hot water is then poured on the smudgy shapes. The brew is not cooked, but left for seven or eight hours to blend in slowly. The mixture is then filtered and a healthy grape drink is made, which is said to be very nourishing and invigorating. For

sure, the beverage is refreshing and tasty, as this writer can personally testify.

The Sa'adis are not dessert-minded and only recently have they taken in such things as sweet desserts. They have also added roasted meats, chicken, fish and other foreign delicacies to expand their rather limited menu.

The most important thing to make a note of is that the Sa'ada cuisine is primarily of 'baladi' or

locally produced materials and such things as ghee or processed oils, imported wheat, etc. are not acceptable, especially for the Ramadhan menu.

On another note, Sa'ada and the surrounding areas of Al-Sham and Razih are known for their high quality agricultural soil, which has provided the Yemeni market with some of its most tasty fruits: spherical watermelons, oranges, tangerines, bananas, olives and of course the black grapes of Sa'ada.

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The Aden Marsh: A National Treasure

Across the globe, man seems engaged in a race to squander its assets. By some estimates, an average of up to 20 hectares of tropical rain forest are leveled every minute in the Americas, Africa, and the Far East. It is this unchecked destruction of habitat which accounts for the extinction of up to 100 plant and animal species every day. Many species disappear forever without having been catalogued. In other words, we often don't even know what we are throwing away.

While other countries may lack the wisdom to sensibly manage their resources, Yemen doesn't have to fall into this category. Here, a most precious resource is water. On the Arabian Peninsula as a whole, wetlands are one of the scarcest habitats, and are those which are most in need of our protection. Interestingly, in Yemen, man has actually created many of the country's most important wetland habitats, meeting his own needs in terms of water storage and waste water treatment, while making areas which are attractive to a growing variety of wildlife.

In spite of several perennial streams, Yemen has none which naturally flow to the sea. Aden and Hodeidah, however, are both places where treated effluent from sewage farms flows constantly into the sea. The wetlands created by this vital activity are attractive to resident and migrant birds, and have been internationally designated as Important Bird Areas ("IBAs"). These are regions of global importance for the concentration of threatened species that they harbor.

The Aden Marsh, a green area on the shores of Bandar Tawahi, is a particularly important wetland. Within its confines, up to 100 species of birds feed, roost and/or breed. These include thousands of flamingos and other spectacular species. Each morning,



more than 2,000 Sandgrouse from the parched regions surrounding Aden visit the marsh for their daily drink. More importantly, the marsh is the regular wintering ground for a variety of migrant species which are considered globally threatened. Significant numbers of majestic Imperial and Greater Spotted Eagles, among other threatened species, routinely use the marsh.

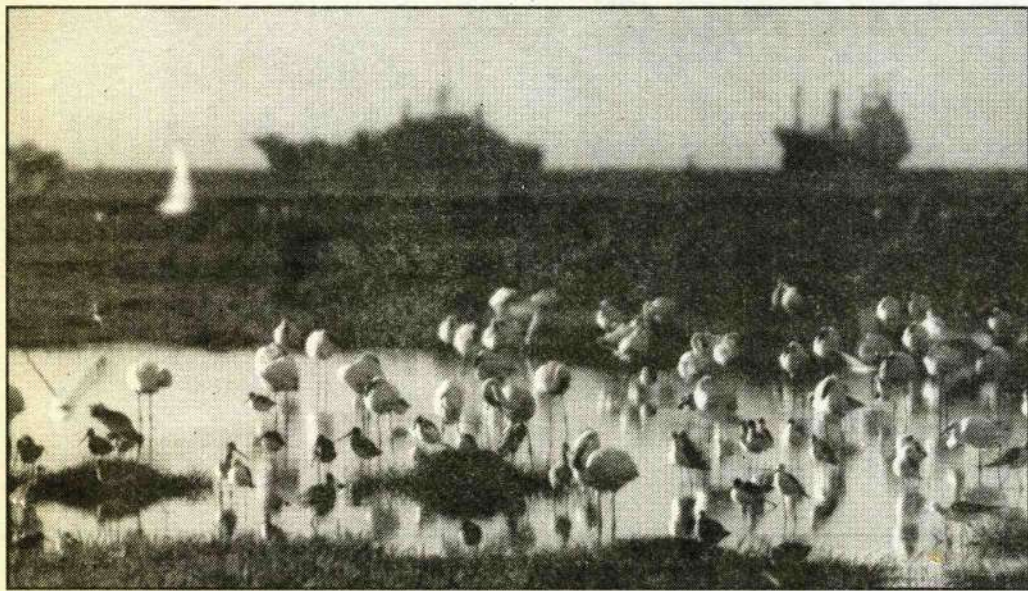
Unfortunately the marsh, and the lagoons by the Aden Causeway (another IBA), are under threat from the proposed development of the Aden Free Zone. While development of the Free Zone is a vital step in the future economic development of Aden and Yemen, it must be brought about in a sustainable way that boosts this country's assets rather than deplete them.

Neither the land of the marsh nor the lagoons are essential for the developments which are slated to alter them. There are wide expanses of derelict land in the

vicinity of Aden which could just as effectively be used for the proposed purposes. On the other hand, while the few hectares that they occupy have some monetary value to the developers who seek to change them, they are priceless from a world-wide conservation perspective. Additionally, these wet areas have the potential to regularly generate sizable income for Yemen.

Already significant numbers of European tourists come to Yemen just to observe its wildlife. The Aden Marsh and lagoons are regular stops on the growing ecotourist circuit. Were they to be managed and promoted sensibly, they could become an even greater draw for tourists. Otherwise, the marsh and lagoons will be just more patches of concrete on an increasingly monotonous planet.

By: David B. Stanton,
YOS Chairman,
Sanaa.



Drew University Students on Academic/Cultural Visit to Yemen

Under the able guidance of Dr. Christopher Taylor, Director of Middle East Studies Program, and Nora Ann Colton, Fulbright Scholar at the American Center of Oriental Research in Amman Jordan, a group of students from Drew University, Madison, New Jersey, are presently visiting the Republic of Yemen.

The orientation program includes field visits to important historic cities such as Sanaa, Saada, Marib, Shibam, Seiyoun, Zabid, etc., academic institutions, and economic enterprises such as the Aden Free Zone, and the Hayel Saeed Industrial Complex in Taiz. The program also includes lectures by prominent scholars and experts.



Shawkat Al-Rubaie Exhibitions in Italy

Arab Artist Charms Italian Audience

Shawkat Al-Rubaie, an Iraqi painter who had taken up residence in Yemen for a long time, has spent most of 1996 in Italy - going from one exhibition to another.

For two weeks starting on 24th June, 1996, he exhibited eighty paintings inside the Villa San Carlo, which is a 16th century palace in Milano. Then the Italian Association of Artists invited him to display his work at the CGIL in Rome during 8-28/11/1996. Here he presented another set of fifty paintings. In ten days, he will exhibit at the Sasseti Cultura in Milano another collection. This will last from 23/1 till 5/2/1997.

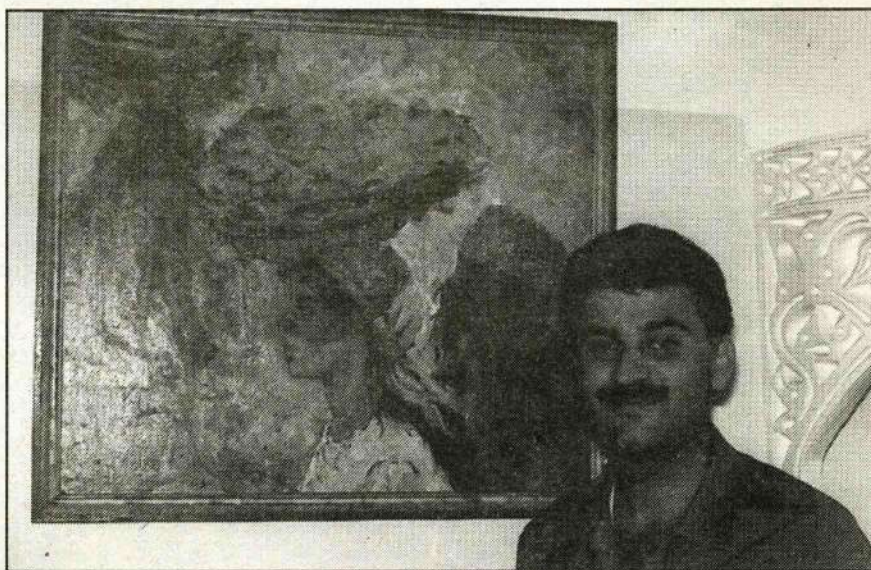
In all these exhibitions, Shawkat donated the income for research to fight AIDS. The Italian medical and research communities have taken this gesture with extreme appreciation and delight. Shawkat almost intimidates his audience with the multiplicity of amazing and charming style. But especially attractive is his subtle sense of colors.

The creative impulse that has been writing within the artist, has now been unleashed, almost

erupting like a volcano in vivid colors of green and blue that visibly dominates his paintings. It is surprising that he cherishes these colors, they are integrally related to his sense of childhood locale. After all, he is the son of the marshes of southern Iraq, a place that is coverswept with water and greenery.

His sense of indignation and fury of the suffering of his people is also clear in the paintings. After all, the theme of his exhibition is 'Joys & Worries of the Reeds'.

is brush-controlled. His abstract paintings, in particular, indicate that Shawkat is very much aware of how to work out the matrix of his paintings so delicately balanced ultimately offering an inter-relationship of colors, ideas, shapes and meaning harmoniously translating the aesthetic values of the artist. Shawkat had held several exhibitions while he was in Yemen. The artistic community and the general public continue to think of him as an accomplished artist.



Shawkat's zest so overflows that no sooner does he stand in front of his easel, than his brush spontaneously guides his hand to translate what goes on in his head. That explains partially why he has been so stunningly productive. People who have seen paint often comes out with the conclusion that this favorite artist

His ability to embrace new ideas and visions have enabled him to steadily make progress in his career. Indeed, Shawkat Al-Rubaie has carved for himself a distinct place in modern art.

By: Anwar Al-Sayyidi,
Yemen Times.

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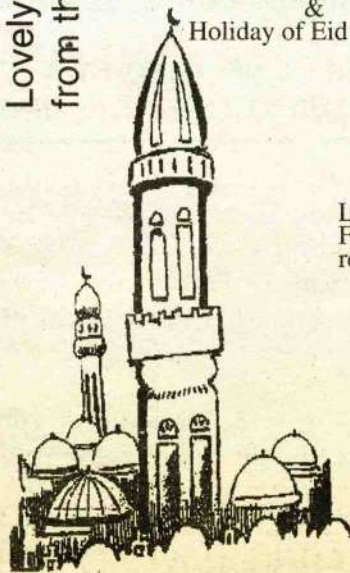
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New Islamic Group Joins Somali Foray

Somalia's Al-Ittihad Al-Islami group is to transform itself into a political organization, a senior member of the movement said last week. Addressing a press conference, Al-Ittihad Al-Islami's executive committee member Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys said his group would turn itself into an Islamic political party.

The Muslim fundamentalist group has come to attention after heavy fighting erupted between them and Ethiopian forces. Ethiopia invaded the adjacent Gedo region of southern Somalia on August 8th to flush out the organization's fighters it alleged were carrying out guerrilla attacks inside Ethiopia.

The fighting culminated in calls here last week for Jihad against Ethiopia, supported by several Muslim groups, but opposed by others who maintain the current unrest has nothing to do with the promotion of Islam.

Sheikh Hassan, who is the group's highest official in Mogadishu, added that the Al-Ittihad Al-Islami group had lost 200 fighters in the clashes. He said Ethiopian forces lost many more of their troops, but did not specify how many.

He charged that since August Ethiopian forces had entered Somalia six times, during which they killed many people, destroyed towns and villages, and abducted people and took them across the border into Ethiopia.

He accused Ethiopia of committing grave human rights violations and breaking international law by illegally entering Somali territory. The Sheikh, who is also responsible for Al-Ittihad Al-Islami's emergency humanitarian operations, demanded an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Ethiopian forces from the Gedo region.

Israeli Settlements Source of Thaw

The Arab League accused Israel last week of plotting to triple the number of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories to half a million by 2000 with a budget of \$4 billion.

Ahmed Ibn Helli, adviser to the League's Secretary General for Arab Affairs, told reporters that the pan-Arab organization had obtained a report proving the existence of a "terrible Israeli plot" to dramatically increase the number of settlers.

"The Israeli government has designated \$4 billion to this plot," Helli said.

He added that the number of Jewish settlers on the Golan Heights, which Israeli seized from Syria in the 1967 Middle East war, will increase from 13,000 to 25,000.

Most of the world, including the United States, is finding trouble with the process of settling of Arab land with Jewish immigrants. The United States has repeatedly indicated that it views settlements as a hindrance to the peace process.

European countries have also spoken strongly against the forceful up-rooting of Arab families and replacing them with Jewish settlers. Arab countries that have established diplomatic relations with Israel, notably Egypt and Jordan, have also said that the Netanyahu government's policies have exacerbated an already difficult situation.

To add insult to injury, Mr. Netanyahu refuses any time-table to withdraw from the hinterland of the West Bank. In fact, he has even resisted evacuating the city of Hebron, in spite of continuous US prodding.

Many observers believe that Israeli-Arab relations are destined to a sad downturn of events.

Delhi Bans Smoking, Tobacco Ads in Public Places

New Delhi, Municipal Administration has banned smoking in public places and tobacco advertising as from January 26, 1997 it was reported last week.

Smoking violators would be fined or jailed under the policy, State Health Minister, Harsh Vardhan, said. The national capital, home to 10 million people, would be the first Indian state to impose such a sweeping ban on smoking. Tobacco advertisements would be banned in public places and vehicles. Public places were defined to encompass a large sector including government offices, courts, hospitals, cinema halls, restaurants, banquet halls, historic monuments and libraries.

"About 400 million people over the age of 10 consume tobacco in one form or the other in India," Vardhan said. "Some 5,500 people are added to the list every day." Experts say rampant smoking is causing increases in lung cancer, chronic bronchitis and coronary diseases.

New Delhi also suffers from one of the highest pollution levels, especially during the summer. Smoke from industries around the capital, and a large fleet of transportation are blamed.

The minister indicated that 1997 will witness the closing down or relocation of many pollutant industries. In addition, new regulations will be introduced with the intention of removing vehicles from the roads unless they satisfy certain environmental requirements.

Enforcement of those laws, however, will take some doing given the public attitude.



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- 5- Osan Biscuits and organization and sweets + Al Mansoorah Automatic Bakery
- 6- Agriculture and Metal Products Factory
- 7- Dairy Public Organization
- 8- The Vegetable oil - Seed Factory

Those interested (companies, enterprises, authorities and individuals) are requested to:

- 1) Submit their bids on tender forms which can be obtained upon payment of a **non-refundable fees 15,000 Yemeni rials for each form starting Saturday 4th of January 1997 at:**

**The Financial Department (fifth floor)
Ministry of industry - Aden Branch**

- 2) All bids must be accompanied by a bank Guarantee (Bid Bond) valid for 90 days from the below specific date in accordance with the conditions in the tender documents.
- 3) Last date to handover bids in a closed red-waxed sealed envelope addressed: **General Director, Aden Branch, Ministry of Industry, is 10.00 am Thursday, 3rd, April 1997.**

إعلان مزاد علني بشأن تصفية بعض المؤسسات الصناعية العامة المتعثرة

تنفيذا لقرار مجلس الوزراء رقم (٢٩٥) بشأن تصفية المؤسسات الصناعية بحسب قواعد وأحكام القانون رقم (٣٥) لعام ١٩٩١ بشأن المؤسسات والشركات والهيئات العامة، تعلن وزارة الصناعة عن توفر الوثائق الخاصة ببيع وتصفية المرافق الصناعية التالية:

- ١) مصنع الثورة للمنتجات الحديدية
- ٢) مصنع الأحذية الجلدية
- ٣) الخبز الشعبي
- ٤) مصنع الشهداء للملابس
- ٥) مؤسسة أوسان للبيسكويت والحلويات + الخبز الآلي بالمنصورة
- ٦) مصنع الأدوات الزراعية والمعدنية
- ٧) المؤسسة العامة للألبان
- ٨) مصنع الزيوت النباتية بالمنصورة

فعلى الراغبين (من الشركات والمؤسسات والهيئات والأفراد) المشاركة في المزاد العلني المذكور أعلاه تقديم عطاءاتهم على كراسة العطاءات المتوفرة والممكن شراؤها اعتبارا من يوم السبت الموافق ٤ يناير ١٩٩٧ من الدائرة المالية - الدور الخامس - بمبنى وزارة الصناعة، فرع محافظة عدن مقابل مبلغ لا يرد قدره (١٥,٠٠٠) ريال يمني، آخذين بعين الاعتبار مايلي:

- ١) ارفاق ضمان بنكي وفقا للشروط الواردة في كراسة العطاء ساري مفعول لمدة تسعون يوما اعتبارا من التاريخ المدون أدناه.
- ٢) آخر موعد لاستلام العطاءات في ظروف مغلقة ومختومة بالشمع الأحمر بإسم مدير عام مكتب وزارة الصناعة - محافظة عدن الساعة العاشرة صباحا من يوم الخميس الموافق ٣ ابريل ١٩٩٧ م.



Yemen's Modest Expectations

By: Fred Halliday*

Yemen is aiming to improve relations with the Arab world, and the West, in order to improve its security and economic positions. The bid to join the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is part of this, but one may doubt if it will succeed. The GCC is a club of rich monarchies, and has, so far as I know, no procedure for application. Relations with one GCC member, Kuwait, remain bad, and tensions with Saudi Arabia continue.

As far as the West is concerned, Yemen has come under pressure from the US to cut its links with Iraq and Sudan and to expel foreign nationals suspected of involvement with Islamist terrorism in Saudi Arabia and Egypt and this has produced some changes in Yemeni policy.

Yemen has also been able to improve its relations with the IMF and the World Bank and to reschedule its debt: the latter at \$10 billion or 200 per cent of GNP, is very high, and owed mainly to the former Soviet bloc.

But Yemen remains under pressure in a variety of spheres. Relations with Saudi Arabia have improved somewhat, but suspicions remain. Its relations with Eritrea took a dramatic turn for the worse in December 1995 when Eritrea occupied disputed islands in the Red Sea: the matter is now under arbitration, but far from being resolved. Above all, however, there is no strong desire of the international business community to invest in Yemen. Great emphasis has been laid on plans to develop Aden port as a regional hub for container traffic, and as a free zone, but these activities are at a very early stage.

ALI NASSER MOHAMMED:

The return of President Ali Nasser Mohammed to Yemen is part of the pre-electoral maneuvering in Yemen, but it would be surprising if it marked any substantial reorganization of the regime.

"Ali Nasser's followers are to be found in both the ruling People's General Congress (PGC) and other parties, and some are high government officials. In that sense he acts as a support for the regime, as indeed some of his military units did in the 1994 war. But President Saleh has been careful to refer to him as a 'citizen' (*muwatin*) and this implies a limit to what Ali Nasser will be allowed to do.

He has a research institute, based in Damascus, and this may be allowed to operate. Were Ali Nasser, however, to develop serious political ambitions of an independent kind, then the president might seek to discourage them. Moreover, as a southerner, Ali Nasser would have limited appeal to the power structures and population of the north.

NORTH AND SOUTH:

The origins of the politics of both Yemens lie in the fraught division of Yemen into two parts. The modern movement of Yemeni nationalism, and the Yemeni unity, is an attempt to overcome that division.

The division of Yemen was not a product of colonialism: the historical division of the country under way since the eighteenth century, was compounded by the rival colonial regimes. After World War II, the division was reinforced by the politics of the Cold War. At first it was the south, under the British, which sided with the West, while the north,

under a tactically nationalist Imam, turned to the Soviet bloc. After the 1962 revolution it appeared that a real Arab nationalist regime had been created in the north, with the aid of Egyptian forces. But after 1967 the Egyptians left, and the north became part of the conservative Arab bloc. The south, on the other hand, after the British withdrawal in 1967, formed an alliance with the Soviet bloc.

But, side-by-side with the Cold War, there was always a strong drive for Yemeni unity, a result both of the Arab nationalist drive for unity, and of the way local parties responded to particular Yemeni conditions. Yemeni unity was a widely-supported goal, even though different political forces gave it different meaning and sought to use it for their own purposes.

Thus when two independent Yemeni states had come into existence, after 1967, both supported unity though they meant by this support their own interpretations of it, and for their own states' interest. This explains why both states could, on one hand, espouse Yemeni unity, while on the other back opposition forces within each other's state, or even go to war as they did in 1972 and 1979. Though unity was popular it was always a means of prosecuting interstate rivalry.

The politics of the north falls into three phases. From the nationalist revolution of 1962 until 1970 North Yemen was gripped by civil war, pitting republicans against royalists. A compromise was reached in 1970 whereby a coalition regime was established, with the exclusion of the more partisan elements on both sides. From 1970 to 1978 Yemen was ruled by a series of presidents who tried to reconcile the army, the tribes, and the left-wing republican forces, and to reach some accommodation with the south. In 1978 an officer in the artillery forces, Ali Abdullah Saleh, took power, and has remained president ever since.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh's regime has been based on military power, but has been supported by, on the one hand, careful alliances with tribal forces, and, on the other, by the building up of a political party, the People's General Congress.

The PGC is a loose organization, with an ideology of mild Arab nationalism. Numerous other parties exist, most notably the Islah Party, a coalition of tribal and Islamist elements, and, since the 1990 unification, the Yemeni Socialist Party. Over (20) other parties exist. The main parties other than the PGC are permitted a legal existence, and some freedom of expression, but are not in a position to challenge the overall power structure or the distribution of state revenues. Much of the latter remain what is termed 'off budget.'

After the independence of South Yemen in 1967, the Yemeni Socialist Party, originally left Nasserist, became a Marxist ruling party, modeled on the Soviet bloc. Radical social and economic reforms were introduced. But there were repeated leadership clashes within the regime. In 1986, President Ali Nasser Mohammed fled the country with tens of thousands of his supporters after a failed attempt (on his part to get rid of his rivals) led to a 2-week civil war that cost several thousand lives. These conflicts weakened the leadership and the state as a whole and contributed to the decision to forge unity with the north in 1990.

The end of the Cold War was also a major factor, though not the only one in the November 1989 decision of the two Yemeni states to merge in May 1990. On the southern side, they could see that Soviet aid was ending and that their ideology, of constructing socialism, had to be modified. On the northern side, they faced problems with state control of society, and hoped to use southern resources to strengthen that control. At the same time, the allies of the north, Washington and Riyadh, were no longer opposed to Yemeni unity on the grounds that it might be exploited by the USSR. Unity came about both because of an opportunity, the end of the Cold War, and because of a crisis, facing both regimes internally."

THE SAUDI SHADOW:

Saudi Arabia and the Yemens have never had easy relations, and it is doubtful if they will for a long time to come. The Saudis defeated the north in the 1934 war and there have been disputes along both northern and southern frontiers ever since, partly resolved in an agreement, signed in February 1995, that covers some of the border with the north.

The Saudis feel exposed to Yemeni immigration and possible political opposition, the Yemens feel resentful at Saudi use of their wealth and pressure on the frontiers. Saudi Arabia has also been able in the past to use its influence with northern tribes to exert pressure on Sana'a. So while there has been diplomatic improvement, problems continue.

Now, for example, the Yemens still feel their migrant workers, expelled in 1990, should be allowed to return to Saudi Arabia, while the Saudis would like to negotiate the construction of a pipeline through eastern Yemen, near the Omani frontier, to the Indian Ocean. The Yemens also

criticize Saudi support for Yemeni opposition elements resident in the kingdom.

THE COST OF UNIFICATION:

The unification of the two Yemens in May 1990 was greeted with great enthusiasm at the popular level, and led to the formation of a coalition government, involving the ruling parties in the north and south. But there seemed to be no plan for an effective merger of the administrations or armed forces, and, in effect, two states remained in existence. Popular enthusiasm also waned after the onset of the economic crisis provoked by the Gulf War of 1990-1991. Yemen did not support the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, but did want to see the crisis solved by diplomatic means. Economic ties with the Gulf states were cut and around 800,000 workers expelled by Saudi Arabia. The cost to Yemen was around a third of its GNP - between \$1 and \$2 billion.

The two partners to the coalition also began to become suspicious of each other. Starting from late in 1991, there was a series of assassinations, mainly of southern, Yemeni Socialist Party, civilian and military, personnel. The elections of April 1993 did little to resolve this dispute. A new, third coalition party, the Islah, joined the government, and the southerners began to fear a northern takeover.

In 1994, north and south descended into a civil war, which ended, on 7 July, with the entry of northern forces into Aden. For the south, this amounts to a northern conquest, especially as the defeat in the war had been accompanied by the growth of lawlessness in the south and the return to tribal leaders, and some newly created 'sheikhs', keen to repossess property and land. The commonest saying in the south now in '*mafi nizam*' - there is no order.

LIMITS TO DEMOCRATISATION:

Yemen is not a totalitarian state of the kind found in, say, Syria or Iraq, and there is greater freedom of expression than in many other regional states. There are political prisoners in Yemen and abuses of human rights, but not on the systematic scale found elsewhere. In part because the central state is so weak, there is a pluralism of centers of power - tribes have armed forces of their own, for example. But this multiplicity of centers does not amount to democracy in any proper sense. The rule of law is weak, security forces take arbitrary action against opponents.

Elections will be held in April 1997 and this is to be welcomed. But this process has its limits, for three main reasons.

In the first place, serious doubts have been raised about the validity of the voter registration process.

Secondly, while parties will run in the election, they will not, on past performance, have anything like equal access to the media or resources.

Thirdly, elections are for a parliament that is itself weak, and little more than a showcase. Parliament cannot take decisions that affect the real distribution of power, or money, in the country.

One may hope that the Yemeni elections will achieve the best possible for Yemen, but few believe they will provide a means of addressing the deep problems Yemen faces. Against a background of inflation, unemployment, personalized power and corruption, and with the lowest living standards in the Arab world, an election of this kind can achieve only a limited amount.

* Fred Halliday is professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics and has a special interest in Yemen. His books include *Arabia without Sultans* (1974) and *Revolution and Foreign Policy: the Case of South Yemen* (1990).

Article put together by Yasmine Allam and published in Al-Ahram International, No. ... of

Launching Membership Card Program "The Club Card"

YEMEN CLUB FOR TOURING & AUTOMOBILE

The Yemen Club for Touring & Automobile (YCTA) with a knit band of management team and club facilities, committed to provide full club services to its members in the new year 1997 in order to eliminate their motoring/touring problems on/off the road.

YCTA is a subsidiary of the Universal Group of Companies which undertakes variety of businesses, owning and operating 5 star hotels, information technology, engineering consultancy and so on.

Ever since the Club was formed in 1990 and affiliated to the International Motoring Organization - the Alliance Internationale de tourisme (AIT), Geneva in 1993, the club's functions were limited due to various political and economic reasons.

Recently the club is affiliated to the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) Paris, and recognized by them as the only sporting authority to organize motor sports and all related activities in Yemen, which is indeed an added honor to the Club's reputation.

The main objectives of the YCTA are to promote inbound and outbound tourism and leisure activities and to streamline the activities of motorist and travelers by standardization of the service programs of the region.

The YCTA is promoting the issue of International Driving Licenses and the Carnet de Passages en Douane (Trip Tyque). This is a document with which one is able to temporarily export his/her vehicles from Yemen to most of the countries in the world without paying customs duties, and vice versa.

It is worthwhile to mention that an agreement with the Saudi Automobile & Touring Association had enabled many of our citizens in Saudi Arabia to bring their Saudi Arabian vehicles to Yemen to enjoy their holidays with family cheerfully.

In an effort to build membership strength and promote tourism in Yemen, the YCTA in 1997 introduced a membership card namely, "The Club Card" - with its exquisite design - is provided to members and will serve as "The Show and Save" card. The slogan of this club card will be "Your Best Traveling Friend".

The YCTA is chaired by Mr. Alwan Saeed Al-Shaibani, the chairman of the Board of Universal Group of Companies and managed by Mr. Ebrahim Shaher Al-Shaibani under the directorship of Mr. Omar Mohammad Omar.

Mr. Alwan says that, "This is the first of its kind in membership/discount card in Yemen which will be the best traveling friend that every traveler must possess."

He adds, "Anyone, regardless of nationality or sex can become a member of the Yemen Club for Touring & Automobile by paying a nominal subscription fee which makes him/her eligible to get the Club Card free. With this Club Card, apart from the discounts offered by the YCTA on International Driving License and Trip Tyque, all the sister companies participating in this scheme will offer considerable discount facilities. In addition, our Marketing Team will approach leading hotels, reputed restaurants, airlines, auto workshops, dealers of electronics, perfumes, sports-wears, private companies and recreational concerns to sponsor our card and provide our members with discount and/or assistance facilities."

Mr. Salai Sheikh Saleem, who newly joined the Club as Business Development Executive, is quite confident of the success of this membership card scheme. He says that, "All Club Card holders will be entitled to get assistance and reciprocity services offered by AIT/FIA affiliated clubs that no other worldwide organization can provide."

And as planned, efforts will be undertaken to launch this project during March, 1997. Upon finalising of the preliminary arrangements, YCTA is planning to go for an extensive advertisement campaign.

Application forms to join membership of this club will be made available in all Universal sister Companies all over Yemen. Members will receive a list of benefits that they will enjoy once becoming members of YCTA.


Potential members are assured of quality services.

The Club Card family of members and the Yemen Club for Touring & Automobile would like to wish every one a happy and prosperous 1997.




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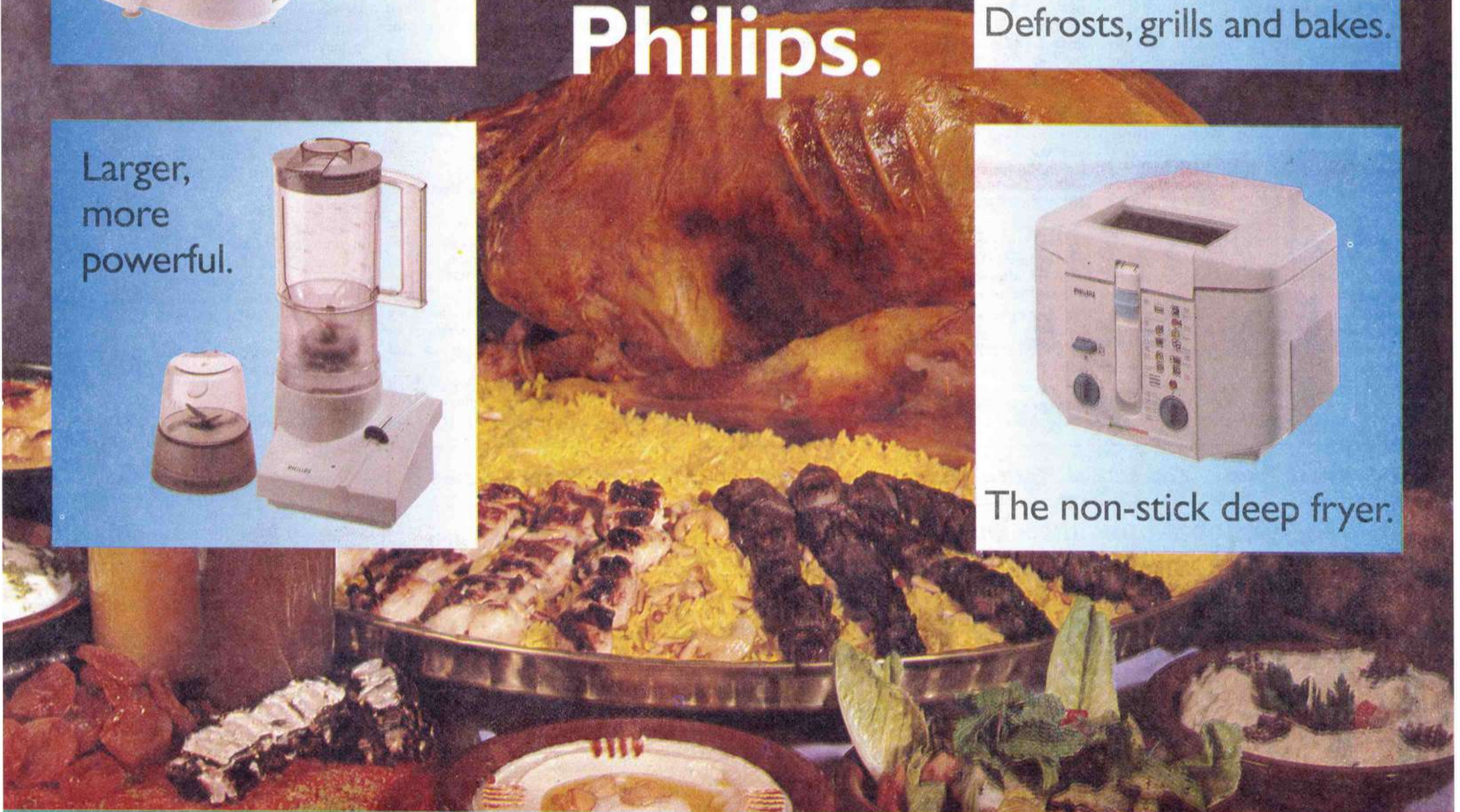


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AL-SHOURAH: Sana'a, (Weekly), 5-1-96
(Federation of Popular Forces Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) A Horrific Accident in Ibb Stadium.
- 2) A Cautious Tranquility Precedes Escalation of Dispute Between Coalition Partners.
- 3) Operating Theater in Al-Thawra Hospital, Taiz is Closed Due to AIDS Contamination.
- 4) One House is Usurped and 10 Others are Under Siege in Aden.

Article Summary:

"A Sit-In at the Teachers' High Institute."

The Teachers' High Institute has suspended mid-term exams, and its students are organizing a sit-in as a protest against an attack by a group of College of Education students at Sana'a University. Under the abhorrent pretext of preventing a group of children from performing at the Teachers' Institute graduation party, the attacking group broke into the hall, destroyed musical instruments, and seriously injured six people including two children less than 11 years old. The assailants shouted out Islamic slogans completely unrelated to their evil deed. A number of students' and educational bodies issued strong condemnations of this act. The University's security apparatus is currently questioning members of that suspicious group.

AL-WAHDAWI: Sana'a, (Weekly), 7-1-96
(Nasserite Unionist Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) A Parliamentary Report: Hodeidah Security Personnel Pull Out Prisoners' Fingernails, and Stuff Their Mouth with Shoes.
- 2) Armed Military Groups Break into the University of Aden to End Students' Strike.
- 3) Armed Conflicts in Ja'ar, Abyan between Afghanistan Veterans and a Group of Citizens.
- 4) Nasserite Party Holds Talks with Islah for Better Coordination Between the 2 Parties.

Article Summary:

"Rotten Flour Floods Markets."

Bakers have been complaining of being forced to receive rotten flour. Many people are treated for food poisoning after consuming bread made with expired flour. In such cases, the authorities resort to jailing and fining the bakers for alleged lack of hygiene at their bakeries. Affected bakers are not compensated, and importers go on with their business unchallenged. One baker has unwittingly received bad flour from the Government Employees' Consumer Association, and people

Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Adel J. Moqbil

have been consuming it unaware of that fact. Despite the massive amounts of rotten flour that are flooding Yemeni markets, the authorities seem completely unconcerned.

AL-TAJAMMU'U: Aden, (Weekly), 6-1-96
(Yemeni Unionist Congregation Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) A Number of Executions and a Daring Escape of a Man Accused of Murder.
- 2) 505 Corruption Cases Referred to Courts up to Last October.
- 3) 21 Local Food Products Are Bad for Health, and Display Incorrect Lists of Contents.

Article Summary:

"The Normalization of Terror." [Editorial]

A startling terror campaign is being waged through the media to silence the opposition. The opposition is targeted because of its call for normalizing the political life, and ending the acts of violence being perpetrated since July, '94. A call for boycotting the upcoming elections is considered an act of treason. The opposition is treated as if it were the instigator of the fraud, trickery and terror plaguing the Yemeni nation. People do not feel safe any more. The country has become a jungle filled with lions, not an oasis of democracy as they would have us believe. The fraud that took place is only a small part of the general dysfunctioning of the country's institutions. This fraud is a land mine planted by the coalition to disrupt the elections.

AL-MITHAQ: Sana'a, (Weekly), 6-1-96
(The People's General Congress)

Main Headlines:

- 1) The President Continues His Field Visits to the Governorates and Directorates of the Republic
- 2) PGC General Secretariat Discusses Organizational and National Issues.
- 3) PGC Secretary-General: "Yemeni-Egyptian Fraternal Society is a Popular Framework for Establishing More Effective Relationships."

Article Summary:

"News Merchants,"

by Abdulmalik Al-Faqeeh

It is doubtful that the general concept of journalism has quite crystallized in the minds of many journalists. This fact can be gleaned from the context and importance of what is being published by the Yemeni press. It is well known that only about 30% of Yemeni journalists have actual qualifications in the press and journalism fields.

The talents of some people have good effects in enhancing their literary personality. But many editors working for Yemeni publications do not have solid foundations to rely on. This led to the prevalence of administrative anarchy in most of our news establishments.

AL-AYYAM: Aden, (Bi-Weekly), 8-1-97
(Independent)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Saudi Minister of Interior: "The story about the handing by Yemen of persons involved in the al-Khubar explosion is a big lie."
- 2) Four New Governorates Created: Hadramaut Al-Wadi, Al-Dhalie, Amran and Zabeed.
- 3) A Tribal Armed Conflict in Shabwa.
- 4) 70 Long Serving Ministers and Ambassadors Will be Retired.

Article Summary:

"An Explosion at the Home of the Rector of Aden University"

Police in Aden have arrested members of the Students Council at the College of Law, Aden University on Monday 6-1-97 in connection with an explosion at the home of Dr. Saleh Basurra, the rector of Aden University. Students at the College of Law have been on strike since last Saturday demanding academic reforms wholly unrelated to politics. The explosion damaged the rector's car, but did not cause any injuries.

The Opposition Coordination Council, the teaching staff at Aden University and many individuals and student bodies have all condemned the attack on

Basurra's home, and demanded the immediate release of the jailed students.

AL-WAHDAH: Sana'a, (Weekly), 8-1-97
(Official)

Main Headlines:

- 1) The President Returns to Sana'a After a Number of Successful Field Visits
- 2) The Minister for Planning: "Aden's Free Zone is a main item in the next Five-Year Plan."
- 3) New One-Million-Ton Production Line at Amran Cement Factory.

Article Summary:

"The President's Initiative,"
by Abdulfattah Al-Hakeemi.

The obstinacy of opposition parties has reached a peak. The President is presenting them with authority on a silver platter. But the President's initiative to settle differences with the "Joint Meeting" parties headed by Islah, was received with suspicion by the opposition. It almost guarantees the preservation of the opposition's good status in parliament. The Yemen Socialist Party gained 56 seats only in the last elections despite its powerful position then. What will its position be, now that 10 of its parliamentary representatives have joined the PGC? Islah, on the other hand, claims to be wanting to participate in the elections, but doesn't want to be in government!

All opposition parties realize they cannot save themselves from their frightful internal conditions, so they try to blame their failure on others. The President knows that he is responsible for protecting and encouraging democracy. Hence his initiative to help save the opposition parties from complete annihilation.

AL-THAWRY: Sana'a, (Weekly), 9-1-96
(Yemeni Socialist Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) YSP Secretary-General: "Rehabilitation of democracy is the only way out of the war's dilemma."
- 2) Courts Rule that Confiscated YSP Property and Funds Must be Returned.
- 3) 4400 Sheep Infected with a Mysterious Disease Enter Yemen After being Rejected by Saudi Arabia.
- 4) US\$ 13.4 Provided by UNDP, Netherlands and the World Bank to Implement Water Policy in Yemen.

Article Summary:

"A Minister Raises the Status of Fish."

Several documents have come to the attention of Al-Thawry indicating the extent of corruption prevalent in the Ministry of Fisheries. Many instances of mismanagement and misappropriation of public funds are irrefutably proven by these documents. According to one such document, the Minister for Fisheries, who was appointed according to a coalition quota, orders the payment of YR 100,000 to himself and others as a reimbursement for inspection activities!

Another document indicates the payment of US \$53,676 to a Yemeni merchant as a compensation for losses incurred due to the fluctuation of the rial's exchange rate against the dollar. Other documents highlight other devious means of diverting public funds to private coffers. The appointment of ministers as dictated by pure inter-partisan politics is directly hitting the citizens in their daily sustenance.

Al-Sahwah: Sana'a (Weekly) 9-1-97
[Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah)]

Main Headlines:

- 1- A Parliamentary Report Condemns Human Rights Violations in Hodeidah
- 2- Unrest After Islah Students Won Elections at Sana'a University.
- 3- Islah Holds Separate Talks Socialist Party and PGC Delegates in Mahweet.

Article Summary:

Late Nights and Office Laxness in Ramadhan
by Abdulrahman Al-Shumeiri.

Wrong understanding of the meaning of Ramadhan is leading to the phenomenon of staying late into the night, sleeping for long hours in the day and consuming large amounts of food. The idea behind this month has become quite the reverse of what it was intended in Islam. During Ramadhan, Muslims fought many decisive battles such as Badr Battle. Popular misconceptions about this holy month have impeded productivity in society. Instead of religious worship, people spend their time in watching immoral satellite programs, shows and doing other frivolous activities.

This has created confusion in many people's minds. Due to staying up late, government employees usually become tired and irritable during working hours. The government and individuals alike have moral responsibility for changing these erroneous views regarding the holy month of Ramadhan.

Letters to the Editor, Letters to the Editor, Letters to the Editor, Letters to the Editor, Letters to

A Job Applicant's Diary with the Personnel Department of YHOC

I would like to praise the drive of the administration of Yemen Hunt Oil Company (YHOC) towards Yemenization of jobs. Clearly, YHOC has become a major source of job opportunities for aspiring young Yemenis as well as for unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

But as one of many applicants at YHOC, I was shocked at the level of corruption and favoritism exercised in this modern company. I feel sorry for the behavior I have personally witnessed in the Personnel Department of a company like YHOC. Let me share details of my personal experience.

On February 3rd, 1996, I embarked on my experience. I filled up the application form to the personnel department, managed by Hussein Al-Jibri, in response to a vacancy announcement. My qualifications were suitable.

Since that day, I visited this department over thirty two times. Each time, unfortunately, the only answer I got was, "No vacancy at the moment. Come back another time".

Five months passed. In June, some friends who work for this company informed me that some persons were appointed during the same period I shuttled back and forth.

I confronted Al-Jibri with the information I got, but he ignored me. In a play-like comical game, he said he never saw me before and asked his secretary if I had ever applied or if I had present my papers. After a few minutes of 'searching', she told him that there was no application and no papers under my name. He then casually asked me to file another application. Since there was no nothing else I could do, I quietly obliged.

The process was a simple re-run of the first four months. I continuously contacted him by phone, and now and then by visiting his office; and all I heard from him was the old tune.

Again, some YHOC employees told me that some persons less experienced than myself were recently employed. When I asked them to explain how such things happen, they laughed and said, "If you want to be appointed, you have to pay a bribe like every one of us had done." When I told them that I couldn't pay because I was unemployed, they said, "In this case you have to look for big connections."

After that conversation, I went to confront Mr. Hussein Al-Jibri. He told me that he doesn't have a hand in the matter. "Nobody knows how, why, and by whom the new appointments were made." Imagine the audacity.

Even worse, he informed me that there were some department managers within YHOC who intervened on behalf of certain applicants and that Al-Jibri had to obey their orders. And when I asked him about my papers, he simply said that I had to wait and pray.

Then I applied to Jannah-Hunt, which promptly called me for an interview. I received a telephone call from Al-Jibri's secretary who asked me to come for an interview. I went to meet him with overflowing feelings. I saw Al-Jibri standing at the gate. I went over to shake his hand. But he was rough with me. In his habitual boastful way, he said, "Why have you come here?" I told him that I came on the basis of a telephone call from his secretary. He said, "Nobody called you" and left me. I followed him inside to meet his secretary who told me that Roy Young of Jannah-Hunt ordered her to call me, and arrange for my testing. But, she sadly informed me that Mr. Young died two days earlier. In shock, I abandoned the YHOC premises.

I feel sorry that a person like Al-Jibri manages the personnel department of YHOC. He is so much entangled in corruption and irresponsibility, of which I have no doubt the top management of the company is not fully aware of. But I would urge them to undertake an investigation which will unearth lots of despicable behavior.

All I can say is that it is time for YHOC to look for a more suitable person to manage this department with humanity and good conduct, becoming of the name and image of Hunt.

By: Ibrahim Al-Morghani

Editor's Notes:

1. Needless to say that the letter represents its writer's views.
2. Yemen Times will happily publish a response from the Personnel Department of YHOC or from Mr. Al-Jibri personally.

Letter to President Saleh

H.E. General Ali Abdullah Saleh,
President,
Sanaa.

Your Excellency:

Please allow me to introduce myself to you. I am a Dutch bank-employee interested in your country. Moreover, I am a member of Amnesty International, which, as you may know, is a worldwide independent non-political organization that stands for freedom of opinion for everybody regardless of race, religion, etc.

As I subscribe to Amnesty's views highly, I was really excited to hear that Yemen has a free and independent press. In your country, it is possible for newspapers like Al-Ayyam and Yemen Times to write articles, which don't share your views or those of your government.

Allow me to compliment you for that.

However, I can imagine that sometimes it is hard for you to agree these newspapers. But, I was shocked to hear that you said in your speech of 7th July, 1996, that you will take appropriate measures at the appropriate time against the editors and staff of Al-Ayyam and Yemen Times for writing and publishing these kind of articles.

As I am convinced that you subscribe to freedom of the press, I think this statement was a slip of the tongue. Therefore, I request you to take the necessary measures to remove the threat against both papers.

Finally, I hope you will do everything within your powers to ensure the safety of the staff and editors of the Yemen Times and Al-Ayyam.

Yours respectfully,

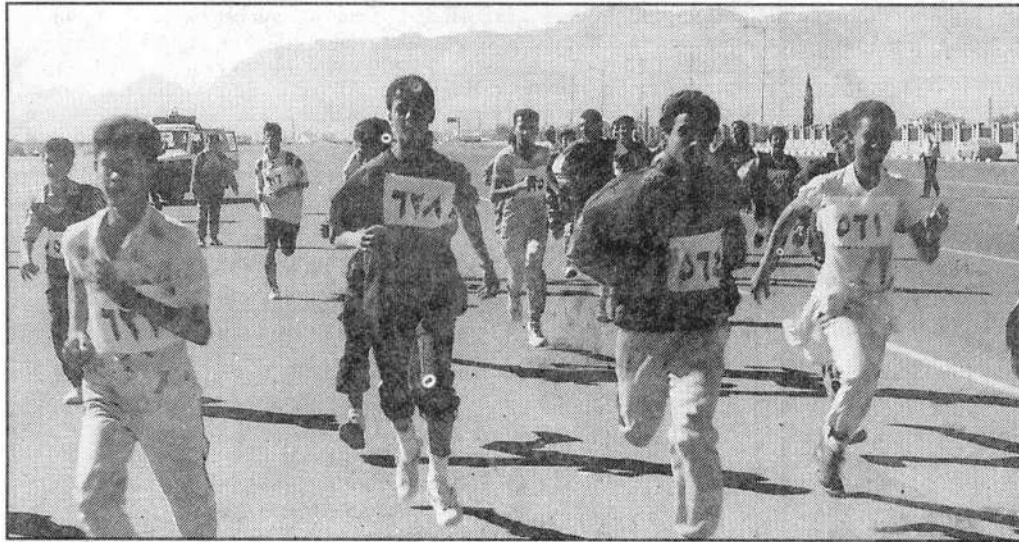
E.B. Nederlof,
Zeist, The Netherlands.
23-12-1996

Athletics Training Course Concluded at Olympic Center

Launched by the International Olympic Solidarity in cooperation with the Yemeni and International unions of athletics, an international training course for coaches of athletics games was launched on 28th December 1996. The course lasted until 9 January with the participation of more than 20 coaches from various sports clubs in Yemen. All participants have expressed

their commendations for the intensified theoretical and practical instruction provide in the course. Extensive lectures in athletics coaching were given by two international instructors, Mr. Muwaffak Juma'a from Egypt and Mr. Hamdi Abdurraheem from Syria. It is immensely hoped that this course will effectively contribute to developing the status of athletics games in Yemen.

"The participant coaches exhibited exemplary discipline and great commitment to receive information enabling them to lead the way in this area of sports games in Yemen," said the two instructors. Mr. Jama'a and Abdurraheem have also praised the efforts made by the Yemeni Olympic Committee in organizing and developing such courses.



End of 18th Week of Rothmans Football Tour-

The strangest phenomenon that prevails in this tournament is that the outcomes of matches are wholly unpredictable. It is quite difficult to foresee the result of particular match from judging the experience, strength and past performance of the competing teams. An uncanny leap from 10th to 7th position was made by Al-Ahli of Sana'a during the 16th and 17th weeks of the tournament. While Al-Tilal has lost a match and ended an other with a draw. The same applies to Al-Wahda of Sana'a, the title holder, which continued during the last two weeks to perform according to the defensive tact of playing to get a draw, not to win a game. This has opened the way for other less competent teams to gain higher positions.

The 18th round of the tournament started on Tuesday 7 January by a highly charged match in which Al-Ahli of Sana'a scored two goals in return for its hometown team, Al-Shaab's lonely goal scored during the first half of the game.

The top team, Al-Tilal, has faced a stiff challenge from Shamsan which occupies 11th position. A beautiful goal was scored by Shamsan's famous scorer Jameel Al-Maktari during the ninth minute of the match. This quickest goal of the tournament was received with angry boos and jeers from Al-Tilal's fans whose favorite team could barely score a tie goal during the second half of the game. Another powerful match ended with a one-goal draw between the two Sanaanis al-Wahda and



Gameel Maqtari

Al-Zuhra. Thus, the way is now wide open for bottom-of-the league teams to advance upwards. By the end of the 18th week, the tournament activities will cease during Ramadhan which will provide a breather for all teams to take stock of their past performances. Matches will, God willing, be resumed after Ramadhan.

Learn about a New Sport!

What Is Taekwondo?

BY:- ABDUL RAHIM S. MOHAMMAD
AN INTERNATIONAL COACH & REFEREE

The adoption to an old game:- Although Taekwondo is regarded as one of the oldest games among the olympic games table, it is the most recent sport which has been scheduled as an official game for the 2000 Sydney Olympics. This representation is due to the efforts of Dr. Un Young Kim the president of the Taekwondo Federation who played an essential role to insert it successfully as a ceremonial sport in the upcoming Olympics.

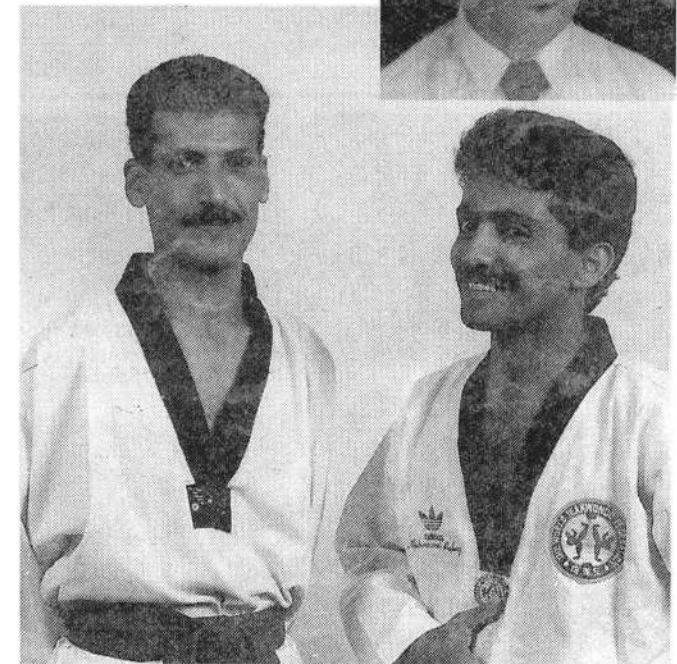
What is Taekwondo?

Taekwondo is the name of the martial art which has been developed over the last twenty years in Korea. The main feature of the game is a free-fighting (combating) sport using bare hands and feet to repel an opponent. It is in a sense can be called a self-defense against an enemy.

All of its activities are based on defensive spirit against any kind of attacks which faces man. In the old days, people lived a simple life and lacked physical body fitness and the bodies of the old men curved with the approach of old age and no sport could save those old folk except by this sort of harsh practice on self-defense to defend/protect them against any confrontation. Taekwondo also served to improve health, physical fitness and poise of the people practicing it.

In my point of view, Taekwondo-trained men are self-confident not only in physical aspects but also in their mental discipline, because they have developed superior techniques for personal defense by using their entire bodies. For a Taekwondo man, his entire body is a weapon and he is easily able to attack and beat off an aggressor with his hands, fists, elbows, feet, or any other part of his body.

The most important fact about



Taekwondo as martial art sport is that it is not only a superior art of self-defense but it adds remarkable sense of manhood to its practitioners. Self-confidence makes people generous in their attitudes towards weaker people. They can stand equally against any attacker or opponent but their conduct avoids unfair assaults or unnecessary use of force. The practice of Taekwondo gives the individual a mental attitude of modesty, virtue, generosity and manhood which are all based on self-confidence. It's obvious that healthy bodies make men active and powerful. Such mental and physical self-confidence are beneficial to the mental life of individuals as well as to their families, neighbours and their nation.

Taekwondo training is composed of basic training, Poomse which means (basic form) and Kyoroki (sparing), Kyukpa (breaking) which is for demonstration and for the test of power. Taekwondo requires great mental concentra-

tion and it produces almost incredible power. We must realize that anyone can become proficient in this sport because in Taekwondo anyone can properly develop and control his latent power. No special place is needed to practice Taekwondo. During any free time individuals can practice and develop their techniques. In recent years, Taekwondo has become a modern amateur sport. It has become a modern world sport with traditions and spirit of martial science maintained. It was incorporated into regular curriculum of primary schools. It has become an integral part of training in the military.

Taekwondo competitions are conducted in three rounds of three minutes each with 60 seconds recess between rounds. There are eight weight classes ranging from fin to heavy weight. The match is decided by scoring point system with superiority principles under supervision of two jury, one referee and four corner judges.

Team	Points	Goals	Games Played			
Team	Points	For	Against	Won	Tie	Lost
Tilal	35	33	16	10	5	3
Wahdah of Sana'a	30	27	15	8	5	4
Shullah	28	34	19	9	1	7
Zohra	26	22	23	8	2	8
Hassan of Abyan	25	23	18	6	7	4
Ahli of Sana'a	24	19	21	6	6	6
Ahli of Hodeidah	24	20	26	7	3	7
Ithad Ibb	22	31	30	6	4	7
Shaab of Sana'a	20	19	29	5	5	8
Shaab of mukallah	19	14	18	5	4	8
Shamsan	19	25	45	4	7	7
Wahdah	16	24	30	4	4	9

Olympic Committee Presents Table Tennis Equipment to Rural Clubs

As part of the continuous support provided by the Yemeni Olympic Committee to clubs in the countryside throughout the Republic, three table tennis tables were presented to various clubs last week. The gifts went to Al-Ittihad club in Ibb, Khanfar Club in Abyan and Al-Mansouria Club in Hodeidah.

All three clubs have shown visible interest in this game, and their players hold great potential in local and national competitions. Sources at the Olympic Committee said that these clubs were chosen because they are far better than many older and well established clubs which have neglected this game. Table tennis is growing in popularity as both male and female athletes have been enjoying the game. Yemeni athletes have participated in regional and international games in the past, and they have done well. It is believed that if table tennis players get the necessary support and encouragement, they can compete favorably.

TV Program Grips the Nation and Jams Republic's Phone Lines

A daily phone-in television program entitled "Questions and Prizes" has hooked up the populace. The program offers YR 10,000 for every correct answer to any one of ten questions presented by the announcer, Mr. Abdul-Malik Al-Samawi. Viewers can phone in their answers, and individuals can participate in more than one answer.

The first correct answer gets the prize. The program, which boasts an extraordinary success, has gripped the nation. Starting at 4 pm and going on for an hour, the program presents ten different questions every day. At this time of day, people sit at home awaiting the sunset call for prayers to break their fast. They also are eager to make a fast buck by answering the questions. This led to jamming the country's 'phone lines'. The number of the program is 332067. So if you want to contribute, have a go at it. You may earn YR 10,000 in one telephone call.

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CAUTIONARY NOTICE
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Elizabeth Helen

العبوة الأصلية

يتم وضع علامة الجودة (إم اس MS) على منتجات التجميل اليزابيث هيلين Elizabeth Helen والتي يتم تصنيعها بإشراف نخبة متميزة من الكفاءات العالمية في مجال مستحضرات التجميل الراقية.

ونحذر محبي الذوق الرفيع من وجود عبوات مقلدة عليها علامة (MB) يتم تداولها في السوق المحلي (اليمن) ومصدر تصنيعها مجهول.

لذلك فإننا نحلي مسؤوليتنا من أي ضرر يحدث للمستهلك نتيجة استخدام هذه الأنواع المقلدة والتي عليها علامة (MB).

ونؤكد بأن المصنع السعودي للعطور ومستحضرات التجميل (محمود سعيد) هو المالك الوحيد وصاحب العلامة التجارية Elizabeth Helen ويحتفظ لنفسه بكامل الحقوق التي تكفلها الحماية للعلامة التجارية، مع حجز جميع الكميات المقلدة في الأسواق.

وسوف يتم اتخاذ كافة الإجراءات النظامية ضد كل من يتعدى على مثل هذه الحقوق. وقد تم نشر هذا الإعلان بقصد حماية حقوق المصنع السعودي للعطور ومستحضرات التجميل (محمود سعيد) لمنتجاته المتميزة بالجودة والنوعية وعلامته التجارية، وحفاظاً على صحة وسلامة محبي الذوق الرفيع الذين يعترفون بمنتجات Elizabeth Helen.

وعليه لزم التنويه وتحذير العملاء الكرام (إحذروا التقليد)

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PGC Sets Up Dialogue Team to Allay Fears of Other Parties

The People's General Congress (PGC) - visibly disturbed at the prospect of some opposition parties boycotting the elections - plans to set up a dialogue team. The PGC dialogue team will discuss with the other parties their demands and what it would take to avoid a boycott. Towards that end, the committee has the authority to negotiate arrangements that include full rehabilitation of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) by allowing it to re-open its branch offices and regain part of its resources. It is also going to discuss possible ceding of constituencies to certain small parties to make sure they will be represented in the next parliament.

The PGC dialogue team will also negotiate with the Islah coordination and cooperation, with an eye to the post-elections situation. The way things stand today, the PGC has been able to employ state resources to bull-doze all the other parties and push them aside. "If we want to compete, how can we do it without being able to even open our branch offices? How can we compete when our representatives are harassed and victimized? How can we compete when the ground is not levelled in a fair way?" asked a senior YSP person. All parties have similar reservations. Will the PGC dialogue team succeed in its mission?



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