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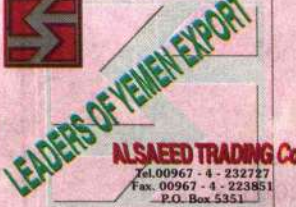


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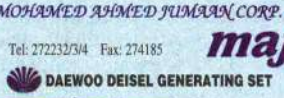
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From the Beginning till Christ The Gods of Yemen

All ancient peoples were pagan till one of God's many messengers came to help guide them to the One True God. History indicates that most nations had a multiple of gods. Yemen had its fair share of gods, says Mr. Mohammed Sa'ad Al-Qahtani, a Ph.D. student at the Archaeology Department of Sanaa University. On Saturday, August 2nd, Mr. Qahtani

successfully defended his Ph.D. thesis, which is entitled "The Gods of Yemen and their Symbols". He listed many heavenly bodies, especially the sun, moon and stars as the key gods of pagan Yemen. There were symbols for these gods, notably the ibex, whose head decorates many of the ancient public buildings. Other symbols include the bull, ostrich, serpent and camel.



Arresting Rabitah Leaders: IS IT GENUINE OR A GOOD EXCUSE?

It started around 3:00 am on Wednesday, July 30th, 1997. Political Security Office (PSO) agents arrested leading members of the League of Sons of Yemen party (Rabitat Abnaa Al-Yaman) in many cities - Aden, Mukallah, Lahej, Seiyoun, Al-Dees Al-Sharqiyah, etc. The second round of arrests came around noon-time, on the same day, this time covering other opposition party members. All in all, some thirty leading opposition politicians were taken in. The authorities say they are cracking down on criminals and instigators of violence. They point to 2 plausible security concerns: the kidnapping of two Italian tourists in Sanaa by a Rabitah leader (Abdulaziz

Bukair) ten days ago, and the three explosions in Aden city which took place around the same time. The authorities add they have proof of plans for more externally-financed violence by the Rabitah people. The opposition parties in general, but Rabitah people in particular, are crying foul. They say if this is a genuine security or criminal investigation, why is it done by the PSO and not by the prosecutor-general's office; and why are the arrests made in the middle of the night. Good questions. Accepting the mistakes in due process of law, and the need to strictly adhere to legal formalities, the PSO has turned over the files to the Ministry of Interior. It is now the

Investigations Bureau of the Ministry of Interior which is said to be handling the cases. Yet, relatives of the prisoners have been unable to visit them, ostensibly either because they are still in PSO jails or that they have been bruised too badly during "interrogation". In other words, the authorities may be waiting for them to shape up before the public can see them. Already, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch - Middle East, and other groups are already involved. Locally, the efforts of the Human Rights, Civil Liberties and NGO Committee of the Consultative Council have yet to find adequate response.

Sanaa Witnesses Grass-Roots Democracy in Action:

Major NGO Conference in December

Yemen Times learned that the National Task Force (NTF) for drafting the NGO law is shooting for a major gathering of Non-Governmental Organizations to meet in Sanaa. "We are looking at a conference in which about 500 national and 100 international NGOs will be represented," explained Professor Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf, Chairman of the NTF. The dates of the conference are set for 9-11/12/1997.

According to sources in the preparatory committee, the conference has two over-riding objectives, as follows:
1. To enable the NGO representatives to make final changes on the draft of the NGO law, which is being formulated through negotiations and feedback between the government and NGO representatives;
2. To establish contact between Yemen and international NGOs interested in working on projects together.

"Of course, the gathering itself is also a major political expression since it symbolizes grass-roots participation in public life," stated Mr. Al-Saqqaf, who chairs the Human Rights, Civil Liberties and NGOs Committee in the Consultative Council. The Republic of Yemen has today about 2,000 NGOs working on the basis of Law Number 11 enacted in 1963. This law is very outdated and does not allow for the changes in the role of NGOs in society.

In a Letter to President Saleh


Eritrean President Says He Wants to Mend Fences with Yemen

President Ali Abdullah Saleh received recently a softly-worded letter from Eritrean President Assaias Afewerqe. The letter was an effort on the part of the Eritrean leader to mend fences and reach out to Yemen. The two countries are at odds regarding ownership of the Hunaish Archipelago. "I regret the events between our two countries. I fully commit to respect the arbitration decision, whatever it is," Eritrea's President wrote.

President Saleh, known very well, by now, for his forgiving nature and ability to let bygones be bygones, received the letter well. "Our reaction is always based on what best serves the national interests of Yemen and regional stability," close sources quoted him as saying. Even as Eritrea got in trouble with other neighbors, especially Djibouti and Sudan, Yemen refrained from exploiting the situation in its favor in order to limit the fall-out.




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OUR VIEWPOINT

Intellectual Elites & the Power Structure: Looking for Ways to Make an Impact

At this moment, one can justifiably say that the intellectual elites of Yemen are out of the top-level decision-making process. Not only that, but the power structure excludes them on the basis that they are adversaries. Why do intellectuals feel left out? Why are they being seen as opponents? What can be done to improve the input of the educated elites of the country? Those were some of the questions which were central to a qat chew discussion a few days ago.

Let me give a few of the reasons that were cited:

1. Leftism:

By and large, intellectuals tend to be leftist-inclined. That is why a much smaller-based Yemen Socialist Party today can claim a lot more intellectuals than say the much larger Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah) party. The power structure led by President Ali Abdullah Saleh definitely has a right-off-center flavor. Therefore, left-inclined thoughts and individuals are out of it.

2. Vanguard Role:

Intellectuals tend to be on the frontline of change. Therefore, their role is often one of pulling the society toward change. This makes them appear critical of the bulk of society and the government. In other words, as they spearhead the evolution, they look back with less than appreciation at the backlog that is lagging behind. The people in charge thus feel the frontline is not sympathetic.

3. Aloof Nature:

Given that most of the leaders and their supporters that have ruled Yemen since the revolution have come from military background, their level of formal education is ordinary. In some cases, the relatively better educated members of the intelligentsia tend to be aloof in their relations with the power structure. This hot air then generates a reaction that is neither friendly nor welcoming.

4. Unproductive Class:

In the eyes of the majority of the Yemeni people, the educated class is not seen to be producing much. Even the professional classes, like medical doctors, engineers, journalists, lawyers, economic consultants, accountants, etc., are seen as people who talk a lot and produce very little. Even when they produce, the product is less than quality, and performed at a highly costly price. The educated class tends to be parasitic.

Those were some of the results to a three-hour soul-searching discussion among people who perceive themselves as belonging to the intellectual class. Finally came the question of how this group of people can affect decisions in this country.

The answer was not unexpected. Frustrated by the selfish role of the leaders of the opposition political parties, many of the intellectuals decided it would be wise to win the confidence and trust of President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his aides. The near-unanimous agreement was that President Saleh holds the key to change and development in Yemen.

The next step is how to work through this man and his aides. I feel that will be the topic of another qat chew discussion.

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Inter-Arab Talk on 2nd Gulf War

Organized by the Kuwait Radio to commemorate the 7th anniversary of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, a group discussion was held on the evening of Saturday 2nd June. The participants included Dr. Salah Haddash, the Yemen Times Managing Editor; Dr. Mohammed Al-Rabi' a Professor at Kuwait University; Mr. Osama Al-Ghazali, the Chief Editor of Al-Siyasa Al-Dowalia in Egypt; and Mr. Ni'mat Salama, a journalist from Jordan.

The participants tried to touch on the best possible means for mending the Arab rift, and re-establishing solidarity among Arab countries. Dr. Haddash has reflected the majority viewpoint in Yemen. This view can be summed up as follows:

Official stance

Yemen did not condone the Iraqi invasion. It was also against foreign intervention in internal Arab affairs. The Yemeni government called for an Arab solution to the crisis. Yemen's position was drawn from pan-Arab nationalist principles and ideals. It was in full agreement with the accord and principles of the Arab League.

Public stance

The unification of Yemen in May of 1990 has led to the democratization of the country. People demonstrated for and against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. It was a sign of the then newly achieved political plurality.

A special committee was formed to support the people of Kuwait. Many people and political parties protested against the Iraqi aggression. On the other hand, political parties loyal to Iraq staged demonstrations supporting the Iraqi regime. This was a justified expression of the newly acquired constitutional rights.

Iraqi regime

All participants were of the view that the current Iraqi regime has not changed its policies. Reconciliation, it seems, is out of the question at this point in time. The Yemeni participant has demanded the normalization of relations between Kuwait and the countries which were identified as "against Kuwait." They can then put pressure on the Iraqi regime to change its attitude. This will also help narrow the gap between the two former camps. It will also repair some of the damage inflicted on the Arab regional order. All participants, however, expressed their sympathy and solidarity with the long-suffering Iraqi people.

Arab solidarity

Dr. Haddash stressed that Arab solidarity must be achieved within a fair equation of joint interests and shared history, language and religion. He also called for the adoption of a new and more effective charter for the Arab League. The rights of all Arab countries should be respected.

Foreign aid

Yemen receives aid and assistance from several countries in the world, one of which was Kuwait. Compared to other contributions, the Kuwaiti assistance was rather modest. Besides, all kinds of foreign

assistance must not be a means for directing foreign policies of recipient countries. The national sovereignty of every state should be respected.

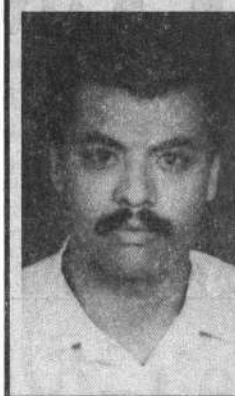
Conclusion

All participants agreed that the Arabs will have to give priority to building their own countries individually. Then they can turn their attention to pan-Arab objectives. They must respect human rights and civil liberties in each Arab country. Dr. Haddash appealed to all Arab intellectuals to pressure their governments in order to adopt an effective Arab human rights convention within the Arab League as guarantee for all Arab citizens.

Poverty Leads to Murder

Five little children were horribly murdered. They were drowned, one by one, in a pond. The killer was not a sadist or a psychopath. It was their own mother. The grisly incident took place on Friday 1st August in Shamsan, Hajja. Fouad, 9, Ashwak, 9, Basheer, 7 Haytham, 4, and Nada, 1 1/2 were killed by their 40-year-old mother. After committing her evil deed, the mother prepared her dead children for burial. She went to her father, and calmly told him of what she had done. She asked to go and bury them.

It later transpired that the children's father is unemployed. He used to work in a neighboring country. With the embargo imposed on Yemeni labor in neighboring countries and the absence of an effective social security system, the family had no source of income whatsoever.



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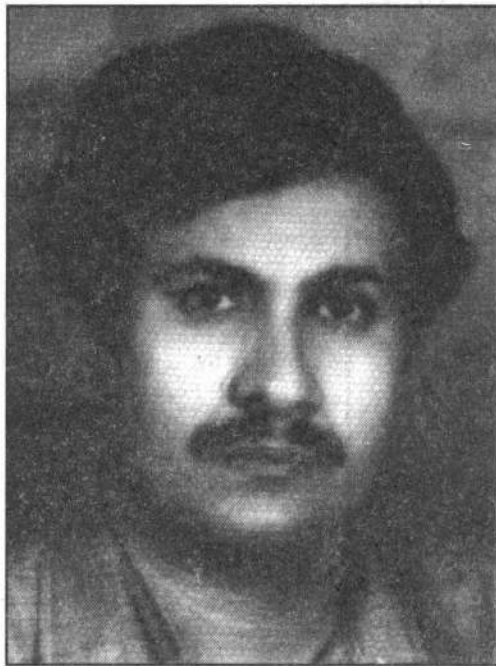
"It is essential to raise public awareness of environmental issues"

Mr. Nabeel Abdulatif Obadi is expert on the wild life in Yemen. He received his B.Sc. in agricultural sciences from the Nasser College in Aden in 1980. After working for a year at the Agricultural Research Center at Al-Kod, Obadi, 41, became one of the founders of the Wild Life Research Department in the Ministry of Agriculture which was the first of its kind in Yemen. In 1986, he received a diploma in managing and protecting vital environmental resources from the University of Dresden in Germany. In addition to participating in several seminars and conferences in many countries of the world, Obadi is the author and co-author of several books on the environment and wild life in Yemen. *The Animals of Yemen*, in its two parts, gives a good description of the Yemeni mammals, amphibians and reptiles along with their estimated numbers, geographical distribution, feeding and mating habits, and other very important characteristics. He also has other books dealing with the general environment and flora and fauna in Yemen.

Dr. Salah Haddash, the Yemen Times Managing Editor, had this rather enlightening interview with Mr. Nabeel Obadi. Excerpts:
Q: When did your interest in the environment begin?

A: It began way back in 1972 when I was still at the Crater Secondary School in Aden. I was entrusted, with a group of fellow students, to organize the biology section of the annual school exhibition. We later formed a science group called the "Grand Children of Ibn Hayyan." Our more mature Science Club was active for almost six years. We organized

lack of public awareness. There is no public participation in environmental protection activities. There are various form and types of legislation for protecting the environment, but they are not enforced. The citizens, in general, are not able to feel or appreciate the importance of abiding by these laws in order to protect the



shortage. About 60 years ago, Aden used to get its water from the Sheikh Othman area, which is within the same governorate. With gradual depletion, the source of water started to move further away from their. Aden now gets its water from a source in another governorate, which is more than 60 km away from Aden. On top of that, the water is quite saline. Accordingly, kidney and gall-bladder stones have become more prevalent among people living in the area. Now this is a real environmental problem.

Q: What sort of problems plague our coasts and beaches?

A: I am afraid that Yemen's beaches are not getting their due attention. There are real and inval-

uable wealths on our coasts. Today, most of the coastlines around Khor-maksar, Abyan, and Gold Mohur have become inaccessible for ordinary citizens. Contrary to many local and international laws, building and construction work is done right at the shoreline. The coast is a national wealth. Nobody must be deprived of that wealth. All this will have to be reviewed.

Q: How do you view the annual environmental report by the Environment Protection Council?

A: I think that it is a real great achievement. A lot of efforts went into preparing the report of 1995. In spite of all the printing errors and some of the flaws, the report is a great initiative. The report has ignored the activities of other relevant ministries. It has not reviewed the Yemen's threatened fauna and flora. The Council has also referred to intention to establish protected zones, but has not specified the actual reasons behind that.

I hope that it will be followed by other issues for the subsequent years. This will help specialists compare the changes taking place in the environment over the years.

Q: What conclusions have you reached in your book the

Humans & the Natural Environment in Yemen regarding the environment and its problems in Yemen?

A: The most serious obstacle facing the development and protection of the environment in Yemen is the lack of public awareness. There is no real public participation in environmental issues. When plans for development are drawn, environmental issues are often ignored. Despite the rising concern for the environment, economic issues are given a higher priority. Protecting the environment is an essential part of the development process. When you acquire a resource of some sort, you have to keep and sustain it. We are not asking people to stop exploiting the natural resources. We only want the development to be sustainable. It is important to know how to preserve your natural resources as long as possible.

Q: What is the extent of the problem of desertification in Yemen?

A: Desertification, in its classical meaning i.e. the gradual movement of sand dunes towards fertile areas, is limited in Yemen to the coastal strip and the inner desert regions. Today, desertification means all the deterioration processes that inflict the soil, and reduce its productivity. Applying this definition to Yemen, we find that most of our lands suffer from desertification. The process of desertification happens via the erosion of the top soil due to the removal of its green cover. This is either caused by haphazard farming or by over grazing. Protecting the top soil with a good green cover will also help in absorbing rain water; thereby, replenishing the underground water reserves. Desertification is also closely

associated with water resources through another factor. Silt from eroded soil accumulates over the years behind wall dams. The cost of removing this silt becomes as large as the cost of building the dam itself. So the dam is rendered useless.

Q: What problems face migrating birds going through Yemen?

A: Bird hunting in Yemen is still unregulated. Certain types of birds are more in demand than others. People usually hunt the bustard. The problem is that Yemen is a major migration route for the these birds. It is also believed that these birds mate and reproduce in Yemen as well. So over hunting is quite harmful. Falconry is playing a big role in hunting the bustards. Groups of falconers come from some neighboring countries into Yemen. They are usually licensed by the Yemeni authorities. Falconry is a traditional Arab sport. We don't want to ban this sport altogether, but just to regulate it.

The other type of birds that is seriously threatened with extinction is the Arabian bustard. It is usually found in Tihama and some desert regions. There are only 50 registered Arabian bustards in Yemen. We are keeping their locations secret. Tens of falcons are also caught and smuggled out of Yemen. They are sold for large sums of money to buyers from outside Yemen. A few months ago, a number of falcons were smuggled through Sana'a Airport. Unfortunately, most of these deals are licensed by the Ministry of Interior. The Ministry of Agriculture should be the only organ responsible for granting such licenses.

Continue on page 14



many land and sea wild life exhibitions.

At the Nasser College of Agriculture, I formed with group of students what we called the Environment Society. It is still very active to this day. The College will celebrate the 20th anniversary of its formation this year.

Q: What are the problems and challenges facing the environment in Yemen?

A: The most difficult problem facing us today is how to address the effects of the economic development on the environment. People can get economic rewards without harming their environment.

The other aspect is that private institutes and bodies are now in charge of environmental issues. There are now private consultancy organs overseeing and managing environmental matters. On our part, we have established the Obadi Center for Studies and Publishing. This organization has published several books such as *The Environmental Education, The Medicinal and Perfume Plants in Yemen, The Fresh Water Animals in Yemen*, the first book on Yemen's natural geography, and the first book in Arabic on the geology of Yemen.

Q: What is the most serious problem facing our environment today?

A: I am sorry to say that the most serious environmental problem is

We all celebrate the so-called tree days or feasts by planting thousands of trees all over the country. After a short period, however, you cannot find any traces of these trees. They are not properly looked after.



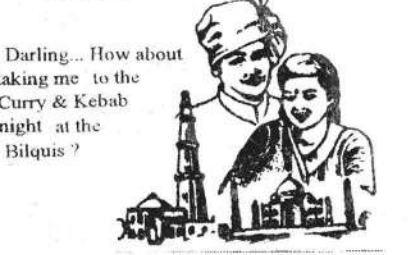


Q: Do you think that the current drive towards industrialization is harming our environment in Yemen?

A: Any human activity, no matter how simple, is liable to alter the environment, in one way or the other. Some changes are small and can be compensated for by the ecosystem. But the big, irreversible changes are the harmful ones. Open quarries in Aden and cement factories elsewhere in Yemen, for instance, create huge amounts of dust in the atmosphere. Lack of an adequate green cover and industrial safety procedures compound the problem. Apart from the extinction of certain species of animals, many other problems such as cutting trees and depleting water reservoirs, all have their negative environmental impacts. Septic tanks pollute underground water. These are all problems we have to face and tackle in Yemen.

Q: How serious is the depletion of water resources?

A: I'll give you an example. Several Yemeni cities such as Aden and Taiz, and even Sana'a, are now suffering from water

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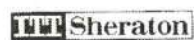
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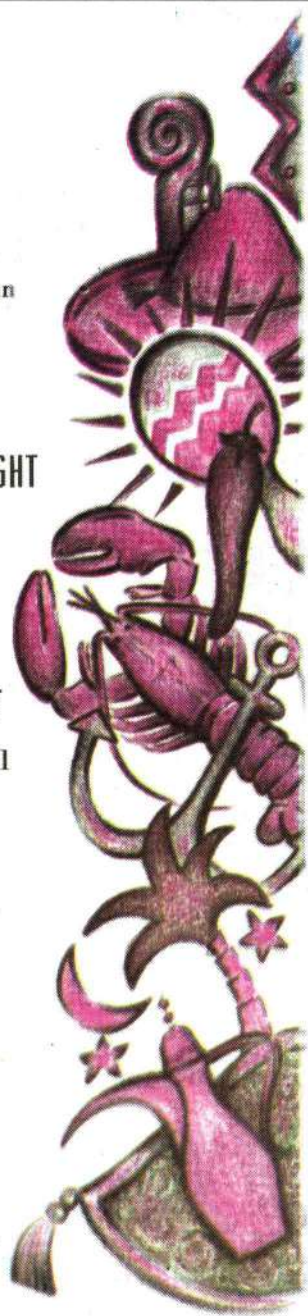


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By: Sakar Pudasaini *

The Atom Bomb, AIDS and the HIV virus and the AK-47 are usually the first things that one thinks of as the greatest agents of sorrow and destruction in last half century. However, most people are ignorant that the tobacco epidemic, especially smoking causes over two and a half million premature deaths annually and will be the reason for over sixty two million deaths by the end of the century.

Though the developed nations still have a greater number of smokers the developing nations, but if the present trend continues the figures could be turned around in a decade or two.

As the number of smokers in developed nations are decreasing by almost 1.4% a year due to tougher legislation and Government control, in the developing world it is increasing by 1.7% per annum due to the lack of legislative restrictions.

In Yemen not only is there a lack of legislative restriction (there is however a bylaw restricting any kind of advertisement which encourages smoking), but also a lack of any published study on the effects, hazards or the extent of smoking. Besides the usual hazards of smoking like cancer, cardiovascular diseases, tuberculosis, bronchitis and emphysema, unique to Yemen are other respiratory conditions resulting from the sharing of the "madha" and smoking during the qat chews which are usually in rooms with little or no ventilation.

The effort to combat the tobacco epidemic in Yemen is almost non-existent. The only action taken to so far to spread anti-tobacco message has been the WHO publications on World no-tobacco

day. On the efficiency and usefulness of the publications I will not speculate but let you make your own judgment. However you should know that the no-tobacco day was celebrated a week late in Yemen.

However, let me not mislead you into thinking that in search for information pertaining smoking I drew a total blank or that the Government has turned a blind eye to the issue, as of recently certain measures have been taken to prevent smoking in medical facilities and other places and Sana'a University has conducted a study on the issue and there is an ongoing case against a tobacco company for violating the only legislation combating the tobacco epidemic, but are isolated and individual actions like these enough?

Judging on the existing conditions the answer can only be "NO". The insignificant and almost unnoticeable warning on cigarette packets needs to be made more prominent and stronger. The need of the hour is a drive to spread public awareness about the health and economic hazards of smoking. Perhaps most important is the need to control teen smoking. The total lack of any age restriction on cigarette sales is responsible for children as young as ten smoking and becoming regular users before they reach their teens.

It is time the major players got out of their slumber and into the act and tried to contain the epidemic or else it is likely to blow out of proportion. For with every moment's delay the Smoke ring closes tighter and tighter around Yemen.

* Sakar is a trainee at YT. He is from Nepal

I will buy a Ford car again!

Ford Motors, one of the 3 Bigs of the US automakers, is the most reliable car manufacturer in the world. The company has remained in the forefront by virtue of the pioneering zeal of its founder, Henry Ford who revolutionized the industry through the innovative assembly-line technology some 90 years ago. Over the years, Ford Motors has bagged several awards for the manufacture of vehicle that are known for their reliability, durability, safety and operating efficiency, on all account of its R&D efforts.

Natco is the sole agent of Ford/Mercury-Lincoln in Yemen since 1990. "The customer response was immediate and overwhelming when we first introduced Ford products into Yemen," said Mr. Saheem Mohammed Abdo, the first Yemeni Natco Service Manager of Natco Automotive Division, "and the trend continues till this day." He added, "the most

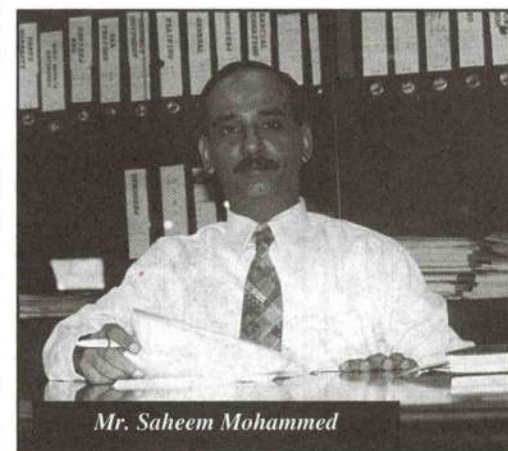
medal at an international car exhibition the US can now be seen in the country.

According to Saheem, the customers in Yemen are eligible for full warranty - three years or 60,000 km whichever occurs first- on all Ford vehicles as per Ford Motors worldwide policy. "Our customers get high standard of service and maintenance, besides original spare parts from us at reasonable prices," added Saheem. Natco's service facility is manned by 17 qualified, well-trained and experienced engineers, and 30 highly skilled technicians. About 95% of employees in the Natco automotive division are Yemenis.

Having achieved notable success, Natco is engaged in the process of expanding its automotive business sector. "We have already opened branches in Taiz and Aden, and plans are underway to set up branches in other cities in the Republic," Saheem announced triumphantly.

The results of a survey conducted by the Yemen Times and Natco show that about 90% of Ford owners in Yemen agree that the vehicles are suitable for all types of terrain. Besides, the performance, reliability, safety, driving comfort, and operating efficiency, of Ford cars are rated as above average when compared with similar classes of cars. The consensus among a majority of respondents (93%) is one of constant availability of spare parts from Natco. There was a unanimous agreement that the spare parts offered by Natco are all original - no imitation whatsoever. Only about 10%, of the respondents opined that Natco should not monopolize the sale of Ford spare parts. "It is in the interest of the customers that such high quality and reliable spare parts from Ford are made available only through us," responded Saheem.

Every Ford car owner surveyed expressed, "given the choice, I will buy a Ford car again!"



Mr. Saheem Mohammed

appropriate models suited to meet the demand of the market were carefully selected and introduced." These included the Topaz, Tempo, Sable, and Taurus in the passenger car range and the tough and robust-built trucks F350 and Ranger. Natco introduced the world famous Explorer, the on/off the road, 4-wheel drive vehicle in Yemen. Expedition, yet another on/off the road, 4-wheel drive and recipient of a prestigious




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صندوق بريد ١٦٩

Arab Parliamentarians to Meet in Sanaa to Discuss the Middle East Peace Process !

Dr. Mohammed Jalal Al-Saeed, is the Speaker of Parliament in Morocco and the current President of Arab Parliamentary Association. He concluded a visit to Yemen at the head of a large Moroccan parliamentary delegation. Ramzy Al-Saqqaf of Yemen Times talked to Mr. Al-Saeed and filed this interview.

Q: What results has your visit to Sanaa achieved?

A: This visit comes to further strengthen the relations between Morocco and Yemen. It reflects the deep fraternal links between the two countries.

There is a more immediate goal to my visit. The Moroccan parliament currently occupies the presidency of the Arab Parliamentary Association. Therefore, this visit has a great importance in developing and enhancing the Yemeni-Moroccan relations. We also aim to discuss the best ways to support current Arab issues.

Q: How effective is the role of Arab parliaments in influencing decisions?

A: The second Gulf war has had extremely negative effects on the inter-Arab relations. The rift has extended to Arab parliaments as well. Inter-Arab parliamentary ties became almost paralyzed. The Arab Parliamentary Association were frozen until an agreement was reached to hold a conference in Rabat, Morocco, in May of 1995.

King Hassan of Morocco played a key role in bridging the gaps. He personally received the heads of delegations. The main goal behind the conference was to mend the rift, re-establish Arab solidarity, and heal the wounded Arab dignity.

Arab parliamentary speakers have taken several steps towards increased parliamentary cooperation. If Arab parliaments work together, then that helps increase their effectiveness in general. In terms of direct parliamentary influence, the case varies from one country to another.

Q: To what extent have Arab parliaments homogenized laws and legislations in Arab states?

A: That is exactly one of the objectives of the Arab Parliamentary Association. It seeks to help during enactment of laws in order to make Arab countries governed by nearly the same laws.

The Arab parliamentary Association also organizes seminars and conferences in order to exchange legislative expertise. We aim to turn this organization into a unified Arab parliament that is responsible for promulgating laws for a unified Arab nation.

Q: What is the parliamentarians' position regarding the Middle East peace process?

A: The Israeli intransigence and



aggression makes even sympathetic people stand up against this process. The Israeli government is putting the whole region in a critical and dangerous situation. Israel is trying to completely change the character and identity of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and other Islamic holy places. These crucial issues have taken a great part of our talks in Sana'a with the President, the Speaker of Parliament, and other government and parliamentary figures. In short, I do not think Arab parliamentarians are impressed with the on-going peace process, if we can call it that at all.

Q: So, what can be done?

A: The Yemeni parliament has taken the initiative by calling for an emergency meeting of Arab parliaments in Sana'a. There has already been some positive response.

The meeting is to be devoted to discussing the obstacles facing the Middle East peace process and the Israeli attempts to Judaicize Al-Quds by building settlements and evicting the Palestinians. The meeting will hopefully be instrumental in creating a unified Arab stance towards our just cause, according to international legitimacy.

Synthetic Fuel from Natural Gas

A new cost-effective process has been proposed to convert natural gas into liquid fuels and other products via the Fischer-Tropsch process. The key secret to this is a new catalyst that confirms product and quality yield. Synthetically-produced hydrocarbons are usually high-quality products and are free of sulfur, metals, particulates, and aromatics. This environmentally preferred.

The process is a two step technology. First, natural gas is partially oxidized with air to produce a nitrogen-diluted mixture consisting of carbon monoxide and free hydrogen. This mixture is called the synthesis gas. The old technology for production of synthesis gas uses oxygen. The new technology eliminates the separation of oxygen from air using a cheaper starting material air. The capital investment is much lower in the synthesis gas production step which uses a proprietary, refractory-lined carbon steel vessel with a nickel-based catalyst to produce what is claimed to be "near ideal" hydrogen/carbon monoxide ratio.

Second, the synthesis gas is converted into hydrocarbon chains of varying lengths. Nitrogen gas, which passes through the two steps and rejected to atmosphere, is used to remove reaction-generated heat. By eliminating the recycle-compressor loop, construction is cheaper.

The two steps are exothermic. Heat generated by the process and combustion of the tail gas are easily converted into plant power needs or exported as surplus high pressure steam or electricity.

Yemeni natural gas resources are more than its wealth of oil. A study has been performed by Hunt-Exxon to convert natural gas into synthetic oil using Fischer-Tropsch process.

The proposal was rejected as the project will not be profitable. But by using the new technology, the situation will change.

Selling its natural gas as liquid fuel will be more profitable to Yemen. The tedious export processes of natural gas will be eliminated, starting from the special gas pipelines, cooling units, special export terminals to gas vessels.

The issue is worth a study.

**Dr. Ali El-Shekeil ,
Advisor to Ministry of Oil, and
Professor of Chemistry at Sanaa University.**

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Blood Revenge in Yemen: PROBLEMS & SOLUTIONS



by Dr. Salah Haddash*

is considered an aggression against the whole tribe. The tribe is dishonored until it is avenged. Due to the absence of a neutral and just authority, people are compelled to take justice into their own hands. In other words, tribal communities are ruled by the ancient principle of an "eye for an eye." The law of the jungle rules supreme.

Blood Revenge:

As a result of the tribal structure of Yemeni society, blood revenge crimes are deeply rooted since ancient times. The main reasons behind committing such crimes differ widely. Looting, pillaging, highway robbery, and land disputes are but a few of the troubles that lead to blood revenge crimes. If unavenged, the legacy of blood revenge is handed down the generations. Crimes in general and blood revenge in particular are committed by using the readily available arms in this country. Traditionally, "janbia" (Yemeni dagger) is used to execute blood revenge. Since the introduction of firearms, Yemeni tribes started to use it for collective protection and aggression. Obviously, firearms are used to commit blood revenge crimes. Old tribal customary rules still regulate the carrying and use of "jambia." These rules, however, do not cover firearms.

Socio-cultural Aspects

Blood revenge is one of the values of the tribal society. Men are brought up to regard blood revenge as an integral part of their lives. Any man who fails to comply with this value is branded a coward, and ostracized from his community. Tribal collective consciousness regards blood revenge as an issue that concerns all the community, not only the individual in question. So the killing of one member of a tribe

Customary Rules:

In the tribal mentality, blood revenge is not considered a crime. It is regarded as the right of every individual to avenge himself. It reflects a diversity of rights such as tribal solidarity (Asabiya) and blood relation. There are rules regulating acts of blood revenge:

- 1- The subject of vengeance can only be assaulted thrice (stabbed or shot). If he escapes death, the subject is exonerated.
 - 2- Acts of blood revenge are not to be executed in public places such as markets, public roads, or during major natural disasters. Treachery is forbidden. Blood revenge should be done face to face. Violating this rule is punishable by paying blood money multiplied by 11 or 44.
- Blood revenge can be avoided if the victim's family accepts blood money or pardons the killer. Usually, tribesmen resort to blood revenge because it has a function in the tribal system. Every tribesman has a certain value and role to play within the tribe. Losing one member of the tribe means losing a fighter and an element in the primitive economy of the tribe.

Carrying Arms:

There is a direct relationship between blood revenge and carrying arms. Arms are the means to commit blood revenge.

The attitude of different Yemeni regimes towards the issue of carrying firearms differed. In the southern part of Yemen it was strictly prohibited by law, especially in the territory of the British colony of Aden. In other protectorates in south Yemen, carrying firearms was normal because of the tribal structure of these parts. After the independence of the southern state (30 November, 1967), carrying firearms was also prohibited. In the northern part, there was no legislation to regulate the carrying of firearms. The new unified Yemeni state issued a new law concerning the possession and carrying of firearms (Law # 40 of 1992). Even though, this law only prohibits the carrying of unlicensed firearms in Sana'a city and other governorates' centers. Tribal areas are not mentioned. This implies that carrying weapons, licensed or otherwise, is not banned in tribal and rural areas. These areas represent about 75% of the country. This law is not strictly enforced. Hence, there are no exact statistics regarding the number of pieces of weapons possessed by the people.

Carrying firearms has several negative impacts on the Yemeni society. Weapons have become personal accessories like wrist-watches. Firearms have become fashionable. They even joined the janbia into becoming part of the Yemeni personality. This is despite the fact that janbia is wholly Yemen, while firearms are not. Even children could not escape the death toll of the availability of weapons. Domestic accidents, involving firearms, often happen due to negligence.

The lucrative weapons market in Yemen has encouraged the smuggling of all types of arms. Many men are induced to spend a lot of money to own at least one piece of weaponry.

In addition to all of the above, the most serious consequences of the availability of weapons are the weakening of the central authority of the state, and encouraging inter-tribal wars. It can be seen from the table below that there are no statistics regarding armed tribal conflicts in 10 governorates. Also, there are no statistics on firing incidents in four governorates. This means that information are lacking in some governorates.

Number of REPORTED 1996
Revenge Assault Cases

Governorate	Assault
Sana'a City	8
Sana'a	67
Aden	18
Taiz	62
Hodeidah	65
Lahej	32
Ibb	84
Abyan	9
Dhamar	34
Shabwa	27
Hajja	2
Baidha	180
Hadhramaut	---
Sa'adah	7
Mahweet	25
Mahara	---
Mareb	24
Jawf	16
TOTAL	1257

This table shows that the authorities do not have enough information on the tribal conflicts in many areas of the country. The non-existence of tribal wars should have been indicated by a zero, not a space. This same applies to firing incidents. Moreover, one tribal conflict is

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reported to have taken place in Aden. This is doubtful, considering that Aden is an urban, non-tribal area.

Legal Aspects:

The Islamic Shari'a law specifies death as the punishment for murder. The final word is left to the family of the murdered person. Execution can be waived if the victim's family accepts a "diyya" or blood money instead of the death punishment. Islam fought old tribal values, including blood revenge. It conferred the judgment in such cases to a judge (Qadhi), whose is representing an institution.

In the actual Yemeni penal law there is no article stipulating that blood revenge is a crime. In fact the Yemeni penal law neglected to include blood revenge as a crime in its two categories of murder - premeditated and manslaughter. As result of that, customary law is the only legal reference to deal with blood revenge. In other words, the state is neutral and not involved.

Adopting Islamic principles, the penal law gives the choice to the victim's family between capital punishment for the murderer or blood money. Blood revenge still

widely exists in Yemen, especially in tribal areas. This is attributed to many reasons. First, a powerful state authority does not exist in governorates where the tribal structures and values are still strong. Such governorates include Al-Jawf, Mareb, Saada, Hajja, etc.

Second, long court procedures often frustrate the victim's family. Each party in such cases has the right to go through the First Instance, Appeal and Supreme courts.

Third, a tribesman's mentality views direct revenge as a proof of manhood. The honor of the victim's family and the tribe as a whole is thus restored.

Fourth, arms are readily available in Yemen without a license, which makes it easier for anyone, even in major cities, to commit an act of blood revenge.

Solutions:

The eradication of this phenomenon depends on developing the rural areas where tribal values are still dominant. The impact of economic and social development needs a long time in order to

change these tribal values. For that reason, the initiative should come from the state. It must impose modern values, through legislation, in parallel with the development process.

To solve the problem of blood revenge, I would like to propose the following:

1- an aggressive mass media campaign to raise public awareness of disastrous consequences of blood revenge and carrying firearms.

2- a legislation by the Yemeni government to prohibit tribes or individuals from committing acts of blood revenge;

3- all blood revenge cases should be obligatorily transferred by the victim's family to the official legal courts in the area where the crime was committed. In other words not to encourage the tribal customary courts;

4- new courts, "blood revenge courts" should be formed by the Ministry of Justice as those crimes are different in nature than other crimes. These courts should implement the Yemeni penal law, and be composed of official judges; and

5- imposing strict regulations on buying and carrying arms on the short term, and imposing a total ban on the long term.

Consequences:

The implementation of these measures will have positive results. It will impose the state's authority in all the governorates inhabited by tribes, and change the consciousness of tribesmen vis a vis the state, the modern Yemeni law, and official courts. This will prove that the state is fulfilling two of its main traditional functions: security and justice.

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* Salah Haddash, Ph.D. Law, & Yemen Times Managing Editor

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Dr. Hadhrani on the Role of Private Hospitals

Dr. Ahmed Al-Hadhrani is an aspiring young doctor. His professional reputation transcends the local to the international. Hadhrani, 42, is an associate professor of medicine at Sana'a University and the general manager of the Yemen Specialized Hospital.

He is involved in many organizations, including the National Committee to Combat Cancers, the National Committee for Radiation Safety, the International Surgeons Society, the International Society for Injuries and Intensive Care, and the International Executive Surgeons Committee.

Al-Izzi Al-Silwi of Yemen Times met Dr. Al-Hadhrani, and filed this interview.



Q: Do private hospitals play a constructive role in health services in this country?

A: The private health sector is expanding rapidly in developed and developing countries. The ever increasing cost of modern medical equipment and facilities has made many governments unable to continue providing up-to-date health services.

Due to severe lack of resources and funds, governments in developing countries have become unable to provide basic diagnostic and medical treatment services. The rapid increase in populations puts a further strain on the developing states' resources.

The private sector offers a good solution to this problem. Thus, it is only natural that the private sector gets to play an increasing role in Yemen.

Q: Some people doubt the credibility of private hospitals. They see them as a means for making quick profits?

A: Some people tend to generalize as a result of ignorance or to deliberately mislead the public. I feel that people should investigate before making rash judgments. Many private hospitals provide medical services that are comparable with international standards.

In addition, the cost of health services at private hospitals in Yemen could even be lower than abroad. For example, an operation to remove a gall-bladder stone, using endoscopy, costs about \$500. Compare this with \$3,000 to \$5,000 abroad. Having said that, I do not deny the fact that few

private hospitals do exploit their patients. These few give the whole sector a bad reputation.

Q: In what way do these hospitals exploit their patients?

A: Some of them are not fully equipped to diagnose and treat the diseases in which they claim to specialize. Medical, scientific, and ethical standards are not top priority. I believe such standards must first be set by competent and experienced people.

Q: What sort of advanced medical treatment does your hospital provide?

A: We have been very active in treating some difficult cases that used to be treated abroad. Kidney, bladder, uretric, and gall-bladder stones are diagnosed and treated by endoscopy, of both adults and children. We have performed advanced orthopedic surgery such as bone elongation and partial pelvis correction.

In addition, we invite specialists from UK, France and Germany.

General Assembly of NTMC IS HAPPY WITH PERFORMANCE

Mr. Abdulaziz Nasser Al-Kumaim is the Executive Director of the National Tobacco & Matches Company (NTMC). He was originally seconded by the Ministry of Industry to watch over the government's share in the company in 1993. Al-Kumaim, 43, was later appointed in October, 1993 as Executive Director by the company's board.

Bin Sallam of Yemen Times met Mr. Al-Kumaim at his office and filed this interview.



Q: The latest general assembly meeting of the company was described as crucial?

A: The meeting was held in July, much later than was originally anticipated. We concluded our final accounts for 1996 in February of this year. Work got slowed down during the Holy month of Ramadhan. After that many board members became busy with the parliamentary elections in April. So the final accounts were only discussed and endorsed at the beginning of July. During the first ten days of August, I'll hopefully have the whole financial status of the company, as approved by the board. It is quite an achievement that a mixed sector company submits its financial status, budget, and final accounts so promptly.

The general assembly agreed to double the present capital to YR 400 million. The share holders got a 50% return on their assets. This reflects the huge success of the company. In 1996, we achieved a YR 700 million surplus. We also got a 4% discount, as stipulated by the laws, for submitting our accounts to the Tax Authority during the first month of the following year. All in all, I think it is right to say that the share holders are happy and the company continues to grow from success to another.

Q: Could you tell us who owns the shares in the company?

A: It is a mixed-sector company, formed in the early days of the September Revolution. It has a checkered history.

During the early 1970s, the Tobacco Exporter International (Rothmans) bought 25% of NTMC's shares. Currently, the Yemeni government holds 28.3%, the Yemeni Bank for Construction & Development 34%, and the rest of the shares are held by private citizens. There are about 3000 private share holders.

Q: You mentioned the capital was doubled. How was this financed?

A: Remember the share-holders got 50% profit. So instead of increasing the shares any further, we raised the value of the single share from YR.5 to YR.10. It was self-financed.

Q: There are rumors that there is a dispute between NTMC and Rothmans. Is it true?

A: Personally, I am not aware of such rumors. These rumors are quite unfounded. We have a good working relationship with Rothmans as well as with the other cigarette company in Yemen.

Q: How would you assess NTMC's contributions to the national economy?

A: The company provides about 700 job opportunities all over the republic. Almost all of our staff are highly qualified Yemenis. There are only two British experts working for us - one in

marketing and the other in technology. We provide constant training for our employees. We pay a 60% consumption tax, which is a good source of revenue for the government coffers. During the first half of this year, we paid up about YR.1.2 billion in taxes.

Q: What sort of problems do you face?

A: Our major concern now is smuggling. The local market is saturated with cheap smuggled brands. Some are sold for as cheap as 40 or 50 riyals. Therefore, NTMC's sales during the first six months of 1997 are not as good as they were for the same period in 1996. Sales of our main brand have only increased by 2%. The sales of other brands such as Sabaa, Mareb, and Crater have suffered greatly.

There is also another factor affecting profits in 1997. International tobacco prices have risen sharply during the last two years. With the already high customs duties and taxes, the problem is compounded. The cost of cigarette manufacturing is increasing in Yemen, which makes smuggling a lucrative business.

Q: In some countries, there is state intervention in order to reduce consumption among young people. What such efforts exist in Yemen?

A: This question should be addressed to the government. We are manufacturers and distributors. There are laws to regulate the sale and consumption of cigarettes. We already pay very high taxes.

Q: Since smoking is detrimental to health, how do you contribute to improving general welfare of society?

A: During the 1980s there was a 2-riyal health tax imposed on every cigarette packet sold. This later became a consumption tax of 7 riyals, and in 1995 it was made proportional to the price of the packet. It is now stands at 60% of the price.

I consider paying this tax a major contribution to the national budget. The recently established Sports Fund gets one riyal from each packet of cigarettes sold. The three main tobacco manufacturers in Hodeida, Taiz, and Aden also make big contributions. The total additional amount paid into the government's coffers reaches YR.360 million. I think this fund will bear fruit within the next four years. The bulk of the money into the Sports Fund comes from tobacco manufacturers.

In addition to that, we participate

in supporting several charities. We have donated YR. 90 million for building two schools - one in Sana'a and the other in Ibb. They should be ready for the next academic year.

Q: Do you print health warning on your products?

A: Yes, we do. The final choice is left to the consumer. Each consumer makes his/her own personal choice. For example, I don't smoke.

Q: Are there any intentions to privatize the government's shares?

A: You have to put this question to the state. But as the company stands now, it is a model for other companies. It shows how governmental, private, and foreign investors can co-exist together. Many other companies are closed family ownership stocks.

Q: The state's share of 28.3% does not give it the right to appoint you as the company's director. How do you explain your appointment?

A: I was not appointed by the government. NTMC's board of directors was behind my appointment as an executive director. I don't have a republican decree to my name. I hope that all companies in which the government's share is below 51% would follow the same way. NTMC's board of directors is quite strong and independent. The have cooperated with me after the huge successes of the last four years.

Q: Do you export your products?

A: Yes, we started by exporting limited quantities to Saudi Arabia in 1982. The largest quantity, 40,000 cartons, exported to the Saudi market was in 1989. Due to the Gulf crisis of 1990, NTMC's exports to Saudi Arabia dropped to about 2,000 cartons only. We also export to Ethiopia, Djibouti, and the UAE. We hope to expand into other neighboring markets. Saudi Arabia remains our biggest prospective client.

Q: You mentioned smuggled cigarettes. How serious is this problem?

A: There are some 63 brands of smuggled cigarettes in Yemen. The quality of smuggled cigarettes is bad, because it is usually stored for long periods. More than 2,000 cartons of a particular brand have recently been smuggled into Yemen. The profit margin for such goods is very large. And these smuggled cigarettes give Yemeni companies, which pay taxes and employ local labor, a stiff unfair competition.

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Sana'a, Republic of Yemen (Telephone: 272 983)

ISRAEL: LEGISLATING IMPUNITY

The Draft Law to Halt Palestinian Torture Claims

The New York-based Human Rights Watch (Middle East Section) issued in July 1997 its report Vol. 9, No. 6 (E) on the Israeli abuses of Palestinian human rights. Not only that, the organization said it was appalled at Israeli efforts to legislate impunity for state organs and individuals that torture Palestinians.

It is well known that Israel has more than its fair share of religious fanatics and political extremists who will use any measures to arrive at their goals.

Yemen Times publishes the exact text of the American Human Rights Watch report.

Quote:

INTRODUCTION:

Israel's Ministry of Justice has drafted a law that would exempt the State of Israel and its security forces from torture liability for the wrongful bodily injury and killing of Palestinians during the period of the intifada. Human Rights Watch calls for the withdrawal of the draft because it would drastically curtail the right of victims of human rights abuses committed by state agents to seek and obtain compensation. And by stripping Israeli civil courts of jurisdiction over these complaints, it would weaken one of the few existing mechanisms for accountability for the conduct of Israeli security forces toward Palestinians, and remove a deterrent against the commission of abuses in the future.

The draft Law Concerning Handling of Suits Arising from Security Force Activities in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip (Exemption from Liability and Granting of Payment), 1997 was presented for public comment by the Ministry of Justice in March. The government now intends to submit the draft law for approval by the Knesset, Israel's parliament, before the end of the current session, which ends August 2, according to the June 26 issue of the Israeli daily Haaretz.

This report touches on only some of the problematic areas of the draft legislation. More thorough critiques, on which this report draws heavily, have been prepared by the Israeli human rights organizations B'Tselem/Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories and HaMoked/Center for the Defense of the Individual. The excerpts below of the draft law and the accompanying Ministry of Justice memorandum are taken from the English language translations contained in the critique prepared by B'Tselem.

If the law is adopted, West Bank and Gaza Palestinians would no longer be able to seek in Israeli courts compensation from Israeli security forces or from the State for bodily damage or death that occurred between December 8, 1987, when the intifada broke out, and September 13, 1993, the date of the signing of the Israeli-PLO Declaration of Principles. For incidents during that period, plaintiffs would have to re-direct their search for compensation to a new committee whose members are to be appointed by the Minister of Defense (Article 4.A). The committee would be authorized to grant, "out of humanitarian considerations," monetary payment to an injured party or his/her dependents, or to the survivors of someone wrongfully killed (Article 3). Granting compensation would thus become a largely discretionary form of charity, rather than fulfillment of the state's obligation as specified in international law.

This procedure would apply both to new claimants as well as whose suits are already pending before Israeli courts. In other words, cases currently being heard would be halted (Article 13); it would then be the plaintiff's responsibility to file an application for compensation before the new committee.

Some 1,000 Palestinians were killed, and approximately 18, were injured by Israeli security forces during the intifada, according to Israeli army records cited in the Ministry of Justice memorandum; human rights organizations say that the figures are higher, especially with regard to the number of injuries.

The committee would be entitled to deny compensation to plaintiffs in a wide range of circumstances. When paid, compensation amounts would be predetermined by a table appended to the law. The specifics amounts that are less than the amounts the Israeli courts are currently awarding in settlements, and in some cases, less than the medical bills the victim can be expected to have incurred. For example, and

unmarried twenty-two-year-old with a 50 percent permanent disability would receive a lump sum payment of 111,000 New Israeli Shekels (US \$31,429 at current rates). Compensation for the wrongful death of a married person between the ages of eighteen and forty is to be 153,000 NIS (US \$43,714), with an additional 1,100 NIS (\$314) for each child annually until the child reaches the age of eighteen, "so long as the amount of the addition for children does not exceed 38,000 NIS (\$10,857)".

BROAD IMMUNITY FOR INTIFADA-ERA ABUSES

The proposed bill should be abandoned because it violates international human rights standards in several ways. First, it undermines the basic right of victims of human rights abuses to seek fair compensation, a right that is enshrined in various instruments. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Israel ratified in 1991, required States Parties to ensure that victims of human rights abuses have "an effective remedy" (Article 2.3.a). The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, ratified by Israel in 1991, states in Article 14, that, under all circumstances, each State Party shall ensure in its legal system that the victim of an act of torture obtains redress and has an enforceable right to fair and adequate compensation, including the means for as full rehabilitation as possible. In the event of the death of the victim as a result of an act of torture, his dependents shall be entitled to compensation.

According to the general principles proposed by the UN Special Rapporteur of the sub-Commission of Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities,

1. Under international law, the violation of any right gives rise to a right of reparation for the victim. Particular attention must be paid to gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, which include . . . summary or arbitrary executions; torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. . . .
2. Every State has a duty to make reparation in case of a breach of the obligation under international law to respect and to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. . . .
3. Reparation for human rights-violation has the purpose of relieving

Human Rights Watch believes that the very essence of the draft Law Concerning Handling Suits Arising from Security Force Activities is to deprive victims of human rights abuses their right to seek fair compensation. Even if its more egregious provisions are dropped or revised, this draft cannot serve as the basis for sound law. We urge the government to abandon this proposed law; failing that, we urge the Knesset members to defeat it.

the suffering of and affording justice to victims by removing or redressing to the extent possible the consequences of the wrongful acts and by preventing and deterring violations.

4. Reparation should respond to the needs and wishes of the victims. It shall be proportionate to the gravity of the violations and the resulting harm and shall include: restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition.

The proposed law is blatantly discriminatory in that it applies to Palestinians but not to Israeli citizens or permanent residents or tourists (Article 2.C). Thus, if two bystanders at a demonstration, one a foreign tourist and the other a West Bank Palestinian, were wounded by reckless fire by an Israeli soldier, the foreign tourist could sue for damages in an Israeli court while the Palestinian could, at best, apply for discretionary compensation from the new committee. Such a distinction violates the prohibition on discrimination in international human rights law.

The proposed law disqualifies potential damage claims by Palestinians in several ways. It authorizes the committee to exclude any claimant who was at any time convicted of "terrorist activity" or against whom there exists "evidence" of such activity (Article 5.B.2). The law would thus retroactively add a punishment to those with

prior convictions, stripping them of their right to redress for state abuses. The international Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in Article 15.1, forbids punishment that is retroactive: "Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed that the one that was applicable at the time when the criminal offense was committed." In the case of persons who have not been convicted but against whom "evidence" allegedly exists of "terrorist activity," the proposed law would punish them on the basis of "evidence" that presumably would remain secret and that they would be unable to challenge in court. In either case, the alleged "terrorist activity" need not bear any connection to the incident in which the would-be plaintiff suffered harm and for which he or she should be entitled to seek compensation.

The proposed law would also narrow the range of acts for which compensation may be sought so as to disqualify many victims of wrongful injury from seeking damages. Under its terms, the claimant would be required to prove either (1) that the damage was caused outside of operational activity in fighting or preventing terror, or other activity in which the security forces faced a risk of death or bodily injury; or (2) the damage resulted from an act that was both "in substantial deviation and knowingly" from the instructions applicable to the security forces (Article 5.A.1 and 5.A.2).

The burden of proof that these conditions impose on many victims is extremely high. Soldiers can plausibly argue that they were at some degree of risk of bodily injury during most actions they initiated. As B'Tselem has pointed out, an innocent passerby who was injured by indiscriminate gunfire during a demonstration would be ineligible for compensation if the security forces could show that they faced some risk of injury-unless the injured party can prove he or she was injured as a result of an act that was "in substantial deviation and knowingly" from the instructions applicable to the security forces.

The "substantial deviation and knowingly" standard also subtly absolves the government for accountability for authorized abuse by limiting the right to seek compensation to situations in which a soldier substantially and knowingly deviated from his instructions. That is, the law would seem to exclude from compensation acts that were wrongful but not explicitly prohibited, or where instructions were not clear and specific (the deviation must be "substantial"), or where training and discipline of soldiers were inadequate so that instructions were violated but not "knowingly." Thus the proposed legislation would reward the security forces for laxness in the discipline and training of troops, and would remove and incentive not to issue overtly abusive instructions.

If the claimant successfully proves that one of the above conditions were met, the committee may still deny compensation if the victim was injured in the course of conducting "hostile activity" against the security forces or against the civilian population" (Article 5.B.1). "Hostile activity" is not defined in the draft law, but the Ministry of Justice's memorandum suggests that it refers to any action "against the security forces or against a civilian population." The memorandum continues:

The reason for this is that eligibility for compensation can be justified for a person who had no part in the very occurrence of the event of the damage. A person who acted against IDF [Israel Defense Force] forces or against a civilian population and was thereby injured, loses his right, based, as stated, in humanitarian reasons, to eligibility for payment.

Thus, the provision on "hostile activity" in the draft law erases the duty of proportionality in the use of force. The committee may deny compensation to an adolescent who helped to set up a stone barricade on a street and who was wounded by live ammunition, even if his being shot is determined to have been a vastly disproportionate response to his act.

The proposed law defines security forces as "the Israeli Defense Forces, Israel Police, or other State security forces, including anyone who acted on their behalf." This would appear to include the General Security Service, or Shin Bet, the agency most involved in the mistreatment and torture of security suspects under interrogation. However, the draft law, while rendering convicted and suspected "terrorists" ineligible for compensation, makes an exception for persons who at the time of injury, were in legal custody (Article 5.B.2).

However, such persons would still have to prove that the injury meets the conditions stipulated in Article 5.A.1 and 2 (see above). At press time, it was unclear whether the draft law would exclude from tort claims injuries inflicted during interrogation.

Payment will not be granted, under the draft law, unless the injury caused a permanent functional disability of at least 25 percent (Article 5.C). This cutoff violates the principle that all victims of human rights abuses - and not just those injury exceeds a certain level - are entitled to compensation. According to the general principles proposed by the UN Special Rapporteur, "Under international law, the violation of any right gives rise to a right of reparation for the victim . . . Reparation . . . shall be proportionate to the gravity of the violations and the resulting harm . . ."

REDEFINING "COMBATANT ACTIVITY" TO SHIELD SECURITY FORCES FROM LIABILITY

Under the proposed law, claimants would still have recourse to Israeli courts for incidents that occurred after September 13, 1993. However, the law would revise and broaden the definition of "combatant activity" to carve out from tort liability a broad range of incidents in which security forces unlawfully killed or injured Palestinians. Under Article 5 of the Civil Torts Law of 1952, the state is exempt from liability for damages due to "combatant activity of the Israeli Defense Forces."

The draft law proposes to classify as combatant activity, for the purposes of Article 5 of the Civil Torts Law, "any operational activity of fighting against terror, and any other operational activity undertaken by the security forces in circumstances entailing risk of death or bodily injury by the security forces . . . unless a person was convicted at law of causing the injury which is the subject of the suit" (Article 11). In so doing, the law rejects a series of Israeli court decisions that place intifada-related incidents within the paradigm of police law-enforcement activity rather than of armed combat. It also goes against public statements by Israeli officials concerning the applicable paradigm of Israeli security force operations when confronting intifada-like situations. For example, then-deputy IDF Judge Advocate General Col. David Yahav was quoted in The New York Times as saying, "Our open-fire regulations follow the same legal principles that govern the police in Israel and in Western countries where there is no war." In an affidavit submitted to the Israeli Supreme Court, then-Deputy Chief-of-Staff Gen. Ehud Barak stated that the rules of engagement were based on the view that "opening fire shall be justified according the general principles of the Penal Law." Under the orders issued to soldiers patrolling in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, firearms are not to be used except to avert a life-threatening danger to a person or, under restricted circumstances, at the legs of a fleeing suspect who has ignored warnings to halt.

Israel's Supreme Court has ruled that "combatant activity" should be interpreted narrowly for the purpose of exemptions from liability: "Only genuine combatant activity, in its narrow and simple sense, such as engaging forces in battle, military attack, exchange of fire, explosions and the like, in which is manifested the special nature with its risks, and particularly the implications with its results - it is to these that Article 5 refers." Israeli civil courts hearing suits for compensation have affirmed this definition, rejecting arguments that the government was not liable on the grounds that the incident in question was an act of war. For example, in 1992, Judge Gideon Ginat rejected the "act of war" defense when he awarded damages to a Palestinian who was disabled and to the survivors of another man who was killed, when Israeli soldiers shot at them during a chase in 1988 (civil case 273/89 and 334/89). Judge Ginat wrote, "the body of evidence suggests that we are speaking about an act that is akin to a police operation, not an act of war. I am not oblivious to the circumstances, we know to all, under which the security forces operate in Samaria [the northern West Bank] . . . Yet keeping these circumstances in mind, I cannot rule that any attempt by the security forces to arrest suspects in the area [the occupied territories] is an act of war. Even the actions of the security authorities with respect to suspects from the area after they are arrested (i.e., the fact that they are interrogated and then brought to face criminal charges) indicates that my conclusion is in fact the correct one."

The government, if it is successful in legislating a more encompassing definition of combat for the purpose of tort claims, would effectively reverse those court rulings and, both henceforth and retroactively, strip the right of Palestinians to seek compensation for injuries that occurred in a wide range of conflictual situations.



THE GOVERNMENT'S JUSTIFICATIONS FOR CURTAILING TORTURE LIABILITY

The draft law was accompanied an explanatory note from the Ministry of Justice that offers four basic arguments for adopting what it termed "legislation intervention to protect the State from these claims".

- 1) Civil damage suits filed by Palestinians are crowding the court dockets. The Ministry of Justice memorandum notes that more than 4,000 suits have so far been filed against the State, of which 700 are pending before the courts.
- 2) The state is expected to be obligated to be obligated to pay large sums as a result of this type of tort suit. The memorandum notes, "The proposed law will bring about a significant reduction in the compensation sums which the State will be required to pay out in the content of tort claims of Palestinian residents of the areas."
- 3) The courts face difficulty in locating evidence that would enable them to adjudicate the claims. The memorandum states, "In some of the cases, the State does not have even the 'smallest lead' to examine the claims concerning its involvement in the alleged damage." For example, the memorandum continues, "The body-snatching from hospitals of Palestinian killed . . . excluded the possibility of clarifying whether they were injured by IDF soldiers; some of the injuries were unknownst to the soldiers, and were therefore not investigated at all. In local hospitals, only partial records existed, and even those that do, they are not necessarily instructive as to the identity of the perpetrator. Even if the IDF possesses records regarding the even for which claims are brought, in most cases the records are not sufficient to be instructive in a conclusive fashion regarding the character of the event and its results."
- 4) The agreements signed by Israel and the PLO justify "turning over a new leaf" with regard to paying compensation. "During a period of armed struggle between nations, every side must bear its damages and care for its injured," the memorandum states.

The reasons provided in the Ministry of Justice memorandum are well rebutted in the critique prepared by the Israeli organization HaMoked. After showing that the volume of civil suits is actually quite limited in comparison with the number of incidents that might have given rise to damage claims, HaMoked argues that "a financial liability, falling on the State according to the law," cannot provide the basis for retroactively negating fundamental rights.

HaMoked then points out that the paucity of pertinent evidence relating to adjudicating many of the complaints is in large part the result of the State's disregard of its duty to investigate possible human rights abuses promptly after they were committed by its forces. This problem was flagged early in the intifada by various human rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch/Middle East. IDF reg-

ulations required investigations into fatalities, but not generally into incidents in which Palestinians were injured. By requiring the adjudicators to "consider, inter alia, the presence or absence" of official records such as complaints, disciplinary hearings, or lists of the injured (Article 5.D), the draft law would reward the state for negligent record-keeping and its failure to investigate incidents of violence.

The fourth argument, by stating that during a war each side "must bear its damages and care for its wounded," again draws on the combatant paradigm that Israeli courts have rejected thus far. Furthermore, the suggestion to transfer liability to the Palestinian Authority for Palestinians wrongfully injured or killed by Israeli forces has no basis in the agreements reached between Israel and the PLO, but rather is a unilateral move by Israel that would deprive Palestinians of their right to seek compensation.

NO EXPLICIT RIGHT FOR THE CLAIMANT TO TESTIFY, PRODUCE WITNESSES, OR APPEAL THE DECISION

The proposed legislation states that the committee will determine the procedures of its work and hearings, to the extent that they have not been determined in this law or in related regulations (Article 4.D). The law is silent on the question of whether claimants have a right to testify in person before the committee, produce witnesses, or appeal the committee's decision. It does make clear that if the committee appoints an expert witness on its behalf in order to clarify a matter on which a ruling depends, the claimant will then require the committee's approval to present another expert witness on the same subject (Article 7.A).

The rights to testify in person, call witnesses, and appeal a decision, which Palestinians enjoy when they file suits before Israeli civil courts, are essential to obtaining a fair hearing of their claim and thus to having an "effective remedy," as provided by Article 2(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Furthermore, the claimant cannot receive compensation unless he or she signs a statement that he or she "does not and will not have any other claim against the State or against one who acted on its behalf for this act" (Article 9).

Human Rights Watch believes that the very essence of the draft Law Concerning Handling Suits Arising from Security Force Activities is to deprive victims of human rights abuses their right to seek fair compensation. Even if its more egregious provisions are dropped or revised, this draft cannot serve as the basis for sound law. We urge the government to abandon this proposed law; failing that, we urge the Knesset members to defeat it.

Unquote

Nourishing the Soul: Traditional Yemeni Music

Musical traditions are deeply rooted in Yemeni society. Since ancient times, Yemeni kings not only supported musicians, but some of them also played certain instruments. Rulers such as Ibn Al-Yashruh and Ali Bin Zayed were quite versed in music and musical instruments.

Yemeni songs and music vary from one region to another. The lyrics and rhythms of the coast are different from those in the inner mountainous areas. The Bedouins of the desert have their own musical traditions. Yemeni music and singing, especially Hadhrami songs, have influenced musical traditions in the whole Arabian Peninsula, and even affected certain other parts of the Arab World in general.

The first Scientific Seminar on Yemeni Music was held at the Yemeni Cultural Center in Sana'a during 27-29 July. The seminar was sponsored by the UNESCO, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the French Center for Yemeni Studies. It was also supported by the French Embassy in Sana'a, Yemenia Airlines, Consolidated Contractors (International) Co., Total, and Universal Travel & Tourism.



In his study of the "Yemeni Ud," Mohammed Barakat enumerated various aspects of this famous oriental instrument. The famous traditional Sana'ani ud gets a special mention. Its history, manufacture, usage, vocal characteristics, social function, famous players, and much more was presented by Barakat. This study will help in the preservation and revival of this unique musical instrument in Yemen.

A study by Jurgen Elsner of Berlin University focused on the different percussion instruments and styles of percussion in Yemen. "Percussion instruments not only occupy a leading role in the Yemeni musical culture, but also are subject to a subtle sound aesthetic," Elsner wrote in his paper.

In Hadhramaut, for instance, there are three types of cylindrical drums: hajir, mirwas, and merfaa. Drums in the highlands take the shape of a shallow pan or "tassa" as they are colloquially called. In Tihama the two types - cylindrical and tassa - exist together. According to Elsner, there are at least three styles for drumming. These are the compound style practiced in

civilization of both Yemen and France. "The cultural links between the two countries are quite old and strong," he said. The Ambassador cited strong intellectual, professional and financial assistance leading to vibrant cooperation between the two countries. To further stress his point, the Ambassador mentioned the mutual cultural exchange between Yemen and



feature prominently. The researcher classified Hadhrami dancing into three general categories. These are original Yemeni dancing, which is the prevalent type, Afro-Yemeni, and the Yemeni-Asiatic. Yemen's geographical position as the meeting point of two continents has greatly influenced its folklore.

Professor Claude Adcolor is a professor of music at the University of Maryland, USA. He is specialized in Sana'ani singing. "Yemeni songs and dance started to be known in the rest of the world through Yemeni singers and dancers who performed in various countries worldwide," Adcolor said.

The Yemeni Deputy Minister of Culture, Mr. Hisham Bin Ali, speaking on the occasion, expressed his hope that there will

be more Yemeni researchers in music and songs in similar future events. "Although music is high on our agenda, it is not the only concern of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. There will soon be a major gathering to discuss Yemeni novels and short stories," he said.

One of the sessions of the seminar focussed on the role played by Aden Radio in promoting Yemeni folk songs and music. Established in 1954, Aden Radio was instrumental in recording many traditional Yemeni songs, and in preserving them. These recordings represent a treasure for the future generations. Music and songs took almost half of the daily broadcasting time of Aden Radio.

The seminar concluded with a number of recommendations, which include:

* to establish a center for Yemeni heritage to collect and document Yemeni musical heritage;

* to form a musical band attached to the Yemeni radio and TV;

* to form a musical band specializing in traditional Yemeni musical instruments;

* to publish a periodical specializing in music, dance and arts in general;

* to organize musical festivals;

* to revive and preserve extinct musical instruments such as the rabab, simsimia, etc.; and

* to create a special workshop for making and renovating such instruments.

The multi-million dollar recommendations have not specified how they will be financed.

By: Ahlam Al-Mutawakkil,
and Anwar Al-Sayyadi,
Yemen Times.



More than 20 studies and research papers were presented at the seminar. These include *Musical Traditions & Musicology in Yemen* by Dr. Philip Skyler, *Songs of Al-Shihr Fishermen* by Abdul-Rahman Al-Malahi, *Folklore Dancing in Yemen* by Dr. Ahmed Al-Koshab, *Rhythm in Sana'ani Songs* by Dr. Jean Lampier, and many other studies dealing with Yemeni songs, dances and musical instruments.

The new French Ambassador to Yemen, Mr. Andre Janier, referred to the ancient culture and

France. He specifically referred to the Yemeni archeological and cultural exposition to be opened on October 20th at the Arab World Institute in Paris.

"The aim of this seminar is to gather specialists in Yemeni music from all over the world to collectively work on the best possible means for preserving the Yemeni musical heritage," said Mr. Frank Mermier, director of the French Center for Yemeni Studies in Sana'a. He further warned that "this musical heritage is in danger of extinction, and must be preserved for the future generations."

Hadhramaut, the accumulative in Tihama, and the old simple style in the highlands.

Folklore dancing in Yemen, according to Dr. Ahmed Al-Koshab differs with geography. Coastal areas such as Aden, Mukalla and Tihama have dances influenced by the environment and nature of fishermen labor. Dances associated with agriculture and toiling in the land are mainly found in the middle and eastern parts of the country. The mountainous regions, however, are more known for their chivalry dances, where swords and janbias

Olla Amigos!

"The scenic and diverse topography of Yemen captivates. It leaves a lasting impression on all those who have the good fortune of seeing it." Those are the words of the Spanish tour group.

Yet the tourism industry in Yemen remains underdeveloped, attracting but a few visitors.

In an effort to boost this industry Yemen Airways, Universal Travel and Tourism and the Taj Sheba Hotel hosted a special group of fourteen guests from Spain. The guests included Spanish television and movie stars, journalists, photographers, a tour operator and the Director of an archaeological magazine.

"I like Yemen. The people are warm and helpful," said Lola Marcelli, an actress on Channel 5 (Spanish television). She says she



was enchanted by the deserts and the unique topography, Sandra Cuenca, a well-known Spanish photographer, said, "Yemen is a country which contrasts in color." The photographs Sandra has taken will be published in a variety of magazines in Spain. Accompanying it

will be articles on Yemen's history and tourist attractions. The sponsors are confident that it will be a success and hope to see an increase in tourists from Spain in the near future. Marco Livadiotti expects the number of Spanish tourists to double to 5000 in the near future."

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EGYPT: A PUBLIC SECTOR OFFICIAL GUILTY OF GRAFT

A state security court sentenced businessman, Abdul-Wahab Al-Habbak, 61, to 10 years in jail and ordered him to return the \$26.7 million he reportedly embezzled and to pay a fine equal to that amount. If he does not pay the \$50 million, he will spend one extra day in jail for each unpaid \$0.15, the verdict said.

While reading the verdict, the judge said, "The case has political dimensions, as other officials are implicated. Habbak is the only one who knows their names." The court said that Habbak used the influence of his position to amass personal wealth, with foreign holdings alone estimated at \$50 million.

He retired last year.

Habbak was in charge of a government company, Electronics Holding Company. He was also a former parliament member and a member of the Egyptian delegation that attended the signing of the 1979 peace Treaty with Israel. His conviction came amid several corruption scandals in Egypt. In April and May alone, 32 people went on trial for financial irregularities that led to bank losses of \$332 million in one of Egypt's biggest scandals.

Newspapers seized on the Habbak case as evidence of widespread government corruption. Additional corruption allegations are made in the government effort to sell off state-run companies as part of its effort to privatize the economy.

INDIA'S INVESTMENT NEEDS

Indian officials took a series of decisions to attract billions of dollars of foreign investments to finance infrastructure facilities. Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral and Finance Minister Chidambaram brainstormed with government officials and industrialists at a recent meeting meant to back up policy measures with specific decisions. "The main concern was how the government and industry would not only remove the bottlenecks, but also improve the performance and speedily implement the projects," a government spokesman said.

India, which launched an economic liberalization program in 1991, estimates it needs some US\$150 billion of investments over five years to build infrastructure facilities like power plants, ports, roads and telecommunications. The Finance Minister announced that he was making an open offer that if there are viable projects by state companies in the power sector, money will not be a constraint.

The power ministry is working on approvals for various agencies to create an additional generation capacity of between 3,000 to 5,000 megawatts.

NETANYAHU LEADS ISRAEL TO A DEAD END

Israel's intellectuals and high brass in the armed forces are asking, "Now what?" in a clear expression of frustration at the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu, who has been in power for about 15 months, has succeeded in destroying the good will and enthusiasm that had been created by the peace agreements. Not only that, but the Israeli Prime Minister made it his policy to corner and embarrass Israel's peace partners.

Last week's suicide explosions in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) - leading to some 15 dead and over a hundred injured - have given him the pretext to shut off the Palestinian people, suspend payment of dues to the Palestinian Authority, and sanction maneuvers for the re-capture of self-rule territories.

The Israeli armed forces have conducted a planning exercise involving the re-conquest of autonomous Palestinian towns on the West Bank and Gaza strip. The war game was conducted secretly in June, even before the Al-Quds bombs.

The officers concluded that recapture of the self-rule Palestinian areas would only worsen the crisis with the Palestinians and the Arab World.

Netanyahu authorized the building of settlements in the eastern part of Al-Quds East Jerusalem. An American Jew is putting up the money for the Ras Al-Amood settlement project, while the Jabal Abu Ghneim project is financed by the Israeli government. Both projects are in Al-Quds,

FROM WHERE IS THE MANDATE OF THE TURKISH GENERALS?

Many European and American circles are increasingly asking, "Where do the Turkish generals get their mandate from?"

The question comes following the pressure of the top brass to impose a system to mould the Turkish people and 'secularize' them by force. As the Yilmaz Government works to please the generals, the two sides are pushing to close down Quranic schools. Even the Western countries are troubled by the dictatorial role of the generals.

The basic question is, in a democracy, how are decisions made? The generals are pushing Turkey to a fate similar to that of Algeria.

Already, massive demonstrations are flooding the streets of Turkish cities. Some bombs have started exploding. Even the Westerners who the generals are trying to please, are already unhappy about the development and prospects.

SOME SECRETS OF GULF WAR AS REVEALED

Saturday, August 2nd, marked yet another anniversary of Iraq's ill-fated 1991 invasion of Kuwait. On this occasion, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussain wrote an article revealing some new secrets.

"The war was envisaged as a huge infantry battle in which Iraq would overwhelm the United States superiority in weapons and military technology," Saddam Hussein wrote in an article published in all Iraqi newspaper. The Iraqi leader said his plans were keyed on inflicting what he called serious losses on the Americans. "If we are able to prevail over their weapons and their technical superiority, then we should be superior in our mentality and through our Jihad (Holy War)," Saddam had told Iraqi commanders before the Gulf War broke out. But instead, the US-led coalition fought from distance employing intensive air campaigns, Saddam wrote in the article.

The Iraqi troops, according to Saddam Hussein, had to use camels to supply troops on the front lines in the war. "We figured that the enemy could stop our motorized supply vehicles," Saddam said, adding "that is why we authorized the southern command to buy 5000 camels."

Saddam's troops invaded Kuwait on August 2nd, 1990. In January, the war started with massive air strikes and ended six weeks later in one of the most lopsided defeats in history. Of the 541,000 Americans deployed, 146 were killed. Iraq put its losses at 75,000 to 100,000 killed in action and 35,000 to 45,000 civilians killed in the bombing. But US officials acknowledge the actual numbers might be a lot higher.

Saddam, who serves as commander-in-chief of the Iraqi military, declared that he had taken active command during the war. He has repeatedly claimed that Iraq was victorious in the fighting, which he famously described as the "Mother of Battles"

He said it took American bombers more than 11 days and 46 raids to hit Iraq's main nuclear installations near Baghdad because of powerful defenses Iraq had installed in the area. "This was an example of superiority of mind in the face of their materialistic superiority," he said.

Iraq today, suffering from UN sanctions is nearly crippled as its children suffer from malnutrition and shortages of all kinds of medical supplies.

Kuwait, on the other hand, continues to demand the release of some 600 prisoners of war taken away by the retreating Iraqi forces. This, Kuwait says, is one of its basic conditions for normalization.

PAKISTANI GOVT ANNOUNCES NEW AUSTERITY MEASURES

The government of Pakistan imposed a complete ban on fresh employment and announced wide-ranging cuts in official expenditures as part of its austerity drive to streamline the country's deteriorating economy. New employment has been banned except those required for development projects and approved by the competent authority in the Finance Division. New personnel requirement may be drawn from the surplus pools. There will be appointments on fixed contract basis for the period of the project. All supplementary grants to various government departments have been banned during the current financial year (1997-1998) commencing from July 1st, 1997.

Participation in all types of workshops/seminars are also banned. Official travels and other expenditures may be curtailed to levels absolutely essential to keep the expenditure with the sanctioned budget grant for traveling allowance. To exercise economy in the expenditure on stationery, both sides of the paper should be used, except in the case of summaries for the prime minister/cabinet/Economic Coordination Committee. All letters and notes should be typed in single space, except in the mentioned cases. Use of photocopier should also be restricted up to 10 copies and duplicating machines should be used to get extra copies. Unnecessary purchase of computer stationery may be avoided. Expenditure on hospitality for foreign guests should be curtailed.

SAUDI ARABIA KICKS OUT ILLEGAL ALIENS

The authorities in Saudi Arabia launched a nationwide campaign to drive out more than 100,000 illegal aliens from the country. The Ministry of Labor granted an amnesty to foreigners who had entered the country on visit or pilgrimage visas but stayed longer than their papers permitted. The amnesty would also cover expatriate workers who had run away from their sponsors. The crackdown will help to deport at least 100,000 illegal overstayers, mainly to Asian countries.

The campaign was also designed to help solve current labor problems, in line with the country's commitments to provide jobs for an extra 659,900 Saudis by the year 2000.

There are no official Saudi unemployment statistics, but it is estimated that there are 6 million foreigners in Saudi Arabia. The drive to flush out foreigners will end by the middle of October this year.

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A Field Investigation Commissioned by Yemen Times:

Child Labor in Yemen

By: Fatima Mutahhar,
Senior Student at College of Journalism,
Doing Summer Internship at Yemen Times.

The light just turned red. You are waiting for the traffic cycle to take its course in order for you to resume driving. All of a sudden, half a dozen kids surround you.

One boy flashes the week's newspapers and magazines. Another one shouts, "Here Sir. Buy this hair clip." A little girl tries to interest you in one of the many chocolate bars she is holding. One boy shows his stock of cigarettes brands. Without waiting for your consent, a little girl climbs by your side and starts wiping off the dust from your windshield. Welcome to a booming business.

At traffic lights and just about anywhere on the street, the plethora of goods and services offered for sale is mind-boggling. Day after day, the number of children wandering in the streets and trying to earn a living is increasing. These children would perform about any job you can think off - selling on the street, or simply begging. And mind you, this last job is a real business.

There are many children who sell on the footpaths or those who push wheelbarrows loaded with stuff. Others work in shops, grocery stores, restaurants, coffee-shops, etc.

Who are these children? Why do they work? How have they began? What are their problems?

In this survey, I will discuss the case of those kids who work around traffic lights.

Let me first start with statistics.

1. A 1993 report prepared by Yemeni organizations concerned the Child Right Agreement indicated that field data collected in Yemeni cities showed the number of children (ages 10-14 years) engaged in work were 79,085 boys, and 35,629 girls. Thus the total is 114,714 children.

2. Based on its survey in 1994, by the Ministry of Labor revealed that the number of working children (ages 10-14 years) is estimated at 231,655.

3. Today (1997), the number is believed to be even higher, although no hard data is available to show the magnitude of this problem. Compiling this information could be a good project.

Why is this phenomenon growing? The main reason is economics. The nation does not have a working social security, pension, insurance, etc., system that would meet the needs of these children. Often, social problems exacerbate the situation. Broken homes is a case in point. But there are also other reasons.

Some of these children have become spend-thrifts, having gotten used to chewing qat, smoking, etc. They find taking on odd jobs and begging at street corners a good source of easy money.

I spoke to some of these children:

a) He is named Nagi, from Wisab Al-Aali. He is 14. His face was reddish showing the impact of the heat of the sun. His clothes looked neat. He is rather short for his age. He said he studied till the 7th grade. My father sent me along with my uncle to work. It started as a summer job, but I stayed on.

I searched in a coffee shop, but was soon fired as the owner replaced me with one of his relatives. My uncle took me to a nearby grocery not far from where he works. He convinced him to give me some bottles of mineral water on credit, with the understanding that settle accounts daily. Now, I can sell water, pay the shop-keeper his credit and save some money from the profit I make to send back to my parents in the village. The father works as a day-wage earner. Nagi has 5 sisters and 1 brother - all of them younger than him.

And how is the water selling business? The business is good, especially during the hot summer days. "I sell daily around 30 bottles, and I YR 5 on each bottle. Once I spare a thousand riyals, I send it off to my father," he said.

The little boy indulges himself with some chocolate bars (the purchase is made from the next kid selling the stuff), if his daily sale exceed beyond a certain point.

"My work starts from 8:00 am till 13:00 noon and from 15:00 till 18:00 pm. Sometimes I face problems from other vendors because I am new in their area. They either insult me or force me to pay them money to stay on the spot."

Nagi does not want to give up as this spot, first because the business is good, and second, it is near where his uncle works, and close enough for his creditor - the grocery supplying him with the water.

Regarding his food, accommodation, etc., Nagi pointed out that he eats and stays in a room rented by his uncle. He takes his shower and washes his clothes - once a week - in the neighboring mosque where water is freely available.

Concerning his health conditions, he says that he had been infected with a disease, a month after his arrival. "I stay in the room whenever I feel sick. But I never stay more than two days. Otherwise, I will consume my capital and savings."

b) Bandar, 15, a Sana'ani, sells strawberries. He looks thin and sick. "I get embarrassed when my relatives find me here selling on the streets, though they encourage me."

His eyes are swollen. "Are you sick?" I asked. "No, not really. But I have a headache all the time," he replied. Bandar disclosed that it was a friend who first advised him to sell strawberries.

"I first took a supply of (2) kilos. He then nicely packs them in small packets. Bandar starts around 10:00 am and continues till



2:00 pm afternoon. He then goes for lunch and to the club with his friends as they are members in the team of wrestlers. He returns home in the evening.

Bandar added that any quantity not sold are eaten by him and his relatives at home. When Bandar was asked about problems facing him, he pointed to the insults from the drivers when crossing the street. Also, he has to be careful to get out of the way of reckless drivers. Yes, there is another thing. Three times, mini bus (dabbab) drivers take packets of strawberry and drive off without paying.

About his social circumstances, Bandar says that his father works as a watchman at the Ministry of Agriculture. He has seven 7 sisters and brothers. "I help my parents by paying them a hundred riyal a day and I keep the remaining which I save for school and other requirements." He plans to purchase a bicycle.

Bandar lives with his parents; he showers once a week - on Fridays and changes his clothes whenever needed. He, also, stated that he has a sport uniform, too.

c) Muhammed is a sixth grader. He comes from Hubaish area and works in Sanaa during the summer vacation. His half-brother who owns a small shop, has offered him accommodation and a small amount to begin business.

Muhammed sells cigarettes. His work starts from 9:00 till 13:00 and from 15:00 till 19:00. He takes his lunch at his brother's house. "My brother's wife refuses to wash my clothes." Muhammed, 12, does not know how to wash them, so he takes them to the laundry.

Muhammed's father is a farmer. He has 4 brothers and 4 sisters aside from the eldest half-brother and another half-sister.

Concerning problems, he said that once a driver snatched a pack of cigarettes and flew away without paying. "One time I was selling briskly, and it was already dark, before I knew it. A driver approached and invited me inside his car. When the man touched me, I got scared and ran away. I didn't tell anybody."

Mohammed search for many jobs. "I tried to work in a cafeteria but was not successful. I sold medals and chains for keys but gave up because the profit was too low.

Muhammad plans to return to his village. With his savings, he will purchase the school needs, and will give the remainder to his father.

From my discussions with the children who work around traffic lights by selling different items, I can summarize that the main reason behind their work is economic hardship. That is why these children in decide to share responsibility at an early age.

One of the main reasons for this hardship is the large number of children in each family. Much work needs to be done to convince parents not to have too many kids. To achieve this goal, the needed prerequisites for family control need to be in place, which is not the case at the moment.

Another main reason is, of course, the economic stagnation.

Responsible and relevant authorities are invited to look at the situation of these children.

What can be done for these children?

The legal consultant at the Yemen Times who participated in some of the discussions commented that because of the economic reform measures the number of poor families has increased. This is one of the reasons behind child labor. But this phenomenon has ramifications for the country. It contradicts the agreement of the Child's International Rights issued in November 1991 and to which the Republic of Yemen has acceded on January 26th, 1991 as per law No. (3).

Article No. 32 of the Child's International Rights states that child work affects the health, growth, mental and spirit of the child. It called for the prohibition of child work below the age of (16) years old.

The legal consultant of Yemen Times provided the following facts and information:

Q: How does Yemeni law view child labor?

A: Article 30 of the Constitution of Yemen states that the government protects and cares babies, children and youth, as well.

Law No. 24 of 1992, entitled "Law Caring for Juveniles", para 1 of article 3, states that if a child performs redundant work, he/she is then exposed to deviant behavior. Therefore, the relevant authorities either at the Ministry of Social Affairs or the court of jurisdiction should take the necessary measures to stop the child from working and must take him/her back to his family, an orphanage or a rehabilitation center in accordance with article (36) of the same law.

Law No. 5 of 1995 entitled "Labor Law" allows child labor, without giving a minimum age, but puts certain restrictions. These are, as follows:

1. Working Hours for children should not exceed 7 hours a day and six days per week to give a total of 42 hours, excluding Fridays and official holidays. After every three hours of work, there is a one-hour break.
2. Over-time for children is forbidden and so are night shifts. A juvenile must not be assigned to work in remote areas, outside the city or in difficult jobs or harmful industries.
3. Contract of employment with a juvenile cannot be concluded without the consent of his/her guardian.
4. Medical Examination must be performed when a child is first hired and periodically, thereafter.
5. The Wages paid to a child worker should be fair and according to his/her performance, and in any case, it cannot be less than two thirds of the rate paid to an adult laborer of the same category.
6. Children working for their families under the direct supervision of the guardians are exempted from the provisions stated above, provided that a suitable health and social work atmosphere exists.

This report was prepared and written under the supervision of Dr. Salah Haddash, Managing Editor of the Yemen Times.



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AL-WAHDAMI: Sana'a (Weekly) 29-7-97.

(Nasserite Unionist Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Three Big Explosion Rock Aden - No Casualties
- 2) Saudi Offer to Resolve Border Issues Demands Big Compromises from Yemen
- 3) Committee to Investigate Death of Patient at Al-Thawra Hospital
- 4) Land Usurping in Mukalla Continues

Article Summary:
Epidemics at Central Prison

A special medical committee has reported the spread of several epidemics at the Sana'a Central Prison. Diarrhea, amebic dysentery, malaria, scabies, and leprosy are prevalent at the prison. The committee found 20 inmates with leprosy mingling freely with the rest of the prisoners. Other serious dermatological ailments were also discovered. Investigating doctors have attributed the prevalence of infectious diseases to lack of hygiene, lack of basic health care, overcrowding and the non-existence of quarantine. More than 60 prisoners were found in each ward. The kitchens are in a pitiful state.

AL-AYYAM: Aden (Bi-Weekly) 30-7-97.

(Independent)

Main Headlines:

- 1) League of Sons of Yemen Condemns Aden Explosions
- 2) Intensive Efforts to Yemenize Jobs at Yemen Hunt Oil Co.
- 3) Mareb & Shabwa Tribes Demand Implementation of Death Sentence on Killer Brigands
- 4) South African Stow-away Escapes at Aden Port

Article Summary:
Lands in Aden

Government officials have stressed, on several occasions, the need to distribute plots of lands to government employees in Aden. Housing societies in the governorate boast a membership of about 30,000. Those members represent with their families a total number of beneficiaries of about 150,000.

Lists of would-be land recipients were issued before the parliamentary elections last April. Three months have passed, and no one has received anything. The Ministry of Housing, however, has

Continued from page 3

"It is essential to raise public awareness of environmental issues"

Q: What other rare species of animals are smuggled out of the country?

A: The list is long. Little gazelles are caught by shepherds, and smuggled out of the country. Ibexes are also caught in Hadhramaut for the same reason. A few years ago a tiger was caught in Wadi'a. This has attracted the attention of several international organizations. There is a special program being implemented in the UAE to protect the Arabian tiger. They sent a representative who bought the tiger for a high price. This has opened the door for more huntings and more sales to other countries.

Q: What is the government's position towards the smuggling of animals?

A: The government has not taken a firm stance regarding this issue. The international Bio-Diversity Convention, to which Yemen is a signatory, stresses this point.

The other aspect that is neglected in Yemen is genetic engineering. Many people come from abroad, collect some biological specimens, and take them back with them. This is a genetic resource. The Bio-Diversity Convention also covers this area. Countries are given the right to benefit from their genetic resources. This matter should be regulated and organized through a governmental body. A lot of income will be generated

this way.

Q: What are your future plans regarding the environment?

A: We have applied to the Ministry of Culture for a license to publish a magazine dealing with environmental and developmental issues. The magazine's major aim is to convince the officials, and subsequently the public, that the environment is an essential part of their lives. It must be made clear that economic issues are closely

related to the environment. A relatively cheap monthly periodical is ideal for this purpose.

Q: Any last comment?

A: Environmental awareness must be incorporated within the general education of our children. It is an issue that greatly concerns the future generations. I also hope that coordination, not competition, is adopted by the government organs for the sake of protecting our environment.

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Yemeni Press in a Week

by: Adel J. Moqbil

recently announced that it is going back on its commitment to the housing societies. The lands will be sold for housing-compound projects, which the government might fund.

AL-SAHWA: Sana'a (Weekly) 31-7-97.

[Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah)]

Main Headlines:

- 1) Yemen Invites Emergency Arab Parliamentary Meeting to Discuss Al-Quds (Jerusalem)
- 2) Yemeni Parliament Continues to Debate its Internal Charter
- 3) Due to Impounding Motorcycles, Transportation is Deficient in Hodeida
- 4) British Ambassador to Inspect Old Churches in Aden

Article Summary:
Struggle at the Port

Al-Bareeqa oil refinery has recently asked the port authorities in Aden to revoke the nationalization law of 1969. Maritime agencies, for fueling and loading oil tankers, should be put up for free competition in the open market, the refinery officials demanded.

The Aden oil refineries had their own maritime agency up until nationalization in '69. The Ministry of Transportation had in 1994 granted a complete monopoly of the agency to a particular private sector company.

AL-TAJAMU': Aden (Weekly) 28-7-97.

(Yemeni Unitary Congregation Party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Law Expert Criticizes Trial of 16 Secessionist Leaders
- 2) Returnee Sultan in Abyan Imposes 20% Tax on Farmers After Forcing them to Sign Over their Lands

- 3) Opposition Parties Condemn Authority-Instigated Raid on Rabita (League of Sons of Yemen) Offices in Hadhramaut
- 4) Liberation Front Party Suggests Solutions for Nationalized Houses Problems in Aden

Article Summary:
The Only Playground

Police in Aden arrested a number of residents at the Bou Madian neighborhood of Khormaksar. They were protesting over construction work being done on the only playground in their area. Bricks and other building materials were already dumped on the site.

No less than 100 children with their mothers staged a sit-in outside the police station where their men folk were being held. Upon receiving their petition, the governor of Aden had immediately instructed the police to release the men. He also instructed the land and construction authorities to cancel all work planned to be carried out in parks or playgrounds.

AL-BALAGH (Weekly) 29-7-97.

[Islamic Action Movement (being formed)]

Main Headlines:

- 1) Yemen Expects to Get Rid of Budget Deficit by End of 1997
- 2) Canadian Oxy Discovers New Oil Reserves
- 3) \$36 Million Loans from World Bank and UN
- 4) Ministry of Civil Service Conducts Comprehensive Survey on Jobs and Unemployment
- 5) Five-Year-Old Girl Raped in Taiz
- 6) Qatari and Kuwaiti Delegations to Discuss Banking Cooperation with Yemen

Article Summary:
Eritrean Navy Violations

Eritrean navy boats had attacked on 17th and 18th July Yemeni fishermen within the Yemeni regional waters opposite Mokha. The fishermen were fired at, had their boats and equipment seized, and 29 of them were captured. This is not the first time. The

Eritrean navy had previously seized about 65 Yemeni fishing boats earlier this year. When informed of the incidents, the Yemeni navy did absolutely nothing.

AL-THAWRI: Sana'a (Weekly) 31-7-97.

(Yemeni Socialist party)

Main Headlines:

- 1) Large-Scale Arrests Among Opposition Parties
- 2) Amnesty International: Yemeni Government has not Taken Any Measures to Curb Human Rights Violations
- 3) Assaults Fire at House of Minister of Industry in Hajja - One Person Injured
- 4) Tribal Fight Near Sana'a Over Spoils of 1994 Civil War

Article Summary:
Who Set Up the Explosions?

Aden awoke on the dawn of Monday 28th July on the sound of three big explosions. Immediately afterwards, the security forces conducted a massive campaign of arrests among the opposition. If they think that they can dupe the Yemeni people, then they are insulting their intelligence.

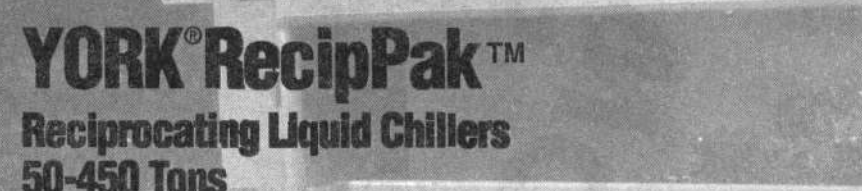
The arrests were done in a suspiciously swift manner, compared to other incidents. Some of the arrested figures were hundreds of kilometers away from Aden when the explosions happened. The parties whose members were arrested have always refrained from acts of violence. It also seems that the lists of those to be arrested were prepared some time before the actual explosions took place.

26 SEPTEMBER: Sana'a (Weekly) 31-7-97.

(Yemeni Armed Forces)

Main Headlines:


- 1) Meeting the Egyptian Minister of Trade, the President: "There are plenty of opportunities for Egyptian investors in Yemen."
- 2) Council of Ministers Stresses Need to Develop Fisheries
- 3) Preparations Underway to Install 82,000 New Telephone Lines in Different Governorates
- 4) 10% Rise in Salaries of Government Employees to be Paid Retroactively - Starting at Date of Issuing Decision



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Prince Naseem Hamed Who Can Stop Him? Will NAZ Be Crowned In The US Rings?

Has the British/Yemeni boxer Naseem Hamed, Naz, become a terrifying nightmare for his opponents, who are uttering threats outside the boxing rings? Once they stand to fight Naz, they stick to cover their faces and bodies with their hands to avoid the non-stop blows because they believe it is no longer useful to attack a wind, or to face a current. Thus .. feather weight boxers are thinking several times before they challenge the Wild Beast who was throned in 1995. No boxer could save himself from the teal fists of Naz who became a disturbing element to those who dream to challenge the world featherweight boxing champion.



Knockout last year in London. These Organizers to-date have not succeeded to find a boxer who can be a real challenger to Naseem. This situation encouraged the British Journals to tease US Organizers particularly when Naz defeated the Argentinean Juan Cabrera in the second round.

Argentinean Juan Cabrera in the second round.

WHAT BRITISH PAPERS WROTE ABOUT NAZ?

"Western Mail" wrote in its issue of July 21st., 1997, in a broad title "Who Can We Find To Give Hamed A Real Fight?", ask the Americans. The article contained an inquiry carried by numerous sport reporters and analysts such as: Is it possible the hero be defeated?, or, even organizing a strong and thrilling match in place of fast failure to those opponents?

Bob Yalem, Boxing Producer for

American TV Network-ABC has answered, "Naz is the true package". It will be tough to find somebody who can truly match up to him.

The "Independent on Sunday" wrote in its issue of July 20th, 1997, confirming the increasing capabilities of Naz each day. Champions who meet him at any time became dizzy and fall down at any time decided by his determination. The most trilling heading reflecting the entire description for Naz efficiencies was solely edited by "The Sun" in its issue of July 21st., 1997, as "Simply the Beast" and "Hamed

Looks Unstoppable." It spoke about his latest match and commented the following: = The Respected Commentator Alex Wallau from ABV TV was greatly impressed. He said, "having seen all the featherweights out there, I don't think one of them would live with Hamed's power." Other headings from other British papers stated: "This hero will remain the only champion of featherweight for a long period." Nothing can change this fact

except a miracle.

Next Fight .. Against Who?

It is expected that Naseem's next match challenging a featherweight champion carrying World Boxing Council - WBC title as the Argentinean Luisito Espinoza or the other candidate Wilfredo Fasques who holds World Boxing Association- WBA title.

These two champions are distinguished for their long experience gained in the international boxing rings and for their continued victories.

So, are they capable to put an end?, or at least to halt the Prince?



Will they match up to Naz and continue with him the whole rounds?

Naseem never allowed us except few minutes sometimes only seconds

FIFA Refuses Postponement of Yemen vs. Uzbekistan Match

The International Association of Football and Asian Association have refused the request of The Yemeni Association to postpone the match with Uzbekistan till the 10th August. The date specified by the Uzbekistan Union of August 24th was accepted.

The Secretary General of the Football Association, Mr. Mujahed Alsaraha has confirmed that the Yemeni National Team will depart to Uzbekistan on August 20th, 1997. He added that footballers were called to the internal camp next Sunday to prepare for the match.

Though the qualifying matches have ended, but Uzbekistan has moved to the second group. The Yemeni National Team is after winning or get a draw to improve its classification among the teams of Asia. Sixteen footballers will attend the camp instead of eighteen as determined earlier.

Al Hadhrani, CHESS Champion of the Republic

Last Sunday, August 3, 1997 the chess championship held in Sana'a was ended when Hatem Al-Hadhrani won the first grade of championship and to leave to Tehran, the Capital of the Islamic Republic of Iran same day to represent Yemen in the international games which will start today and will end on the 16th of August 1997. The second position was acquired by Yahya Farag and Khalil Al-Subaihi won the third. Zandan Al-Zindani won the Youth's championship. These games revealed the advanced level of the players in the match of Chess.



Tennis National Juniors' Team Asia Championship

In the Stadium of Youth's Home in Sana'a, the members of the Juniors' National Team of tennis are continuing their training. They are preparing to participate in the Sixth Asian Championship, which is going to be held for those below the age of 17 years in the City of New Delhi during 1-7 September, 1997. A training camp will be organized under the supervision of the Asian Association. Trainers from China and Korea will participate in these training camps from 20th till 31st of August, 1997. Yemen will attend the training with three players led by the Chinese Coach Fuja Min.

Few days later, new players from some governorates will be called to enter the internal camp. Final qualifying among players is finalized by selecting the best group to represent Yemen in the Juniors' Championship.

Formation of Kung Fu Committee

The Minister of Youth and Sport, Dr. Abdulwahab Raweh has issued a ministerial decree No. 66 for the year 1997. It concerns the formation of a committee for the Kung-Fu game. This game began to be more wide spread among the Yemeni youths.

Ali Al-Sanabani was nominated as Chairman of the Committee and Khaled Al-Gaifi as Vice Chairman. Nabil was also nominated as Secretary General plus two members named Faris Al-

Ahlah and Abdulkarim Al-Razi.

This Committee is regarded as temporary until the game is widely spread in the governorates, after which a sport association will be constituted.

A Set Of Yemeni Referees For An Asian Game

The Asian Football Association has selected a set of referees from Yemen for the football game between the Omani Sour and the Iraqi Zawra to be held on 29 August, 1997, within the games of the first group for the Championship of Asian Clubs.

Abdulwahid Khamis, the Yemeni International Referee, will lead the match assisted by two Line-referees named Abdullah Salem and Abdullah Al-Rahoumi. The fourth Referee is Abdullah is Sanhoub.

Training Camp for Ahli of Hudeida In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Yemen Times has understood that Ahli of Hudeidah will conduct a training camp in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia before it's trip to the United Arab Emirates to participate in the Asian Cup Championship. The Emirate Football Association has expressed it's willingness to host the Al- Ahli team during the first qualifying group of Asian Cups. Request of the Emirate Shabaab Team was accepted. The match will be performed between Ahli of Hudeidah and Shabaab of the UAE on 5th September, 1997.

TRAINING CAMP for a YEMENI GYMNAST in CHINA

The Yemeni Olympic Committee is adopting the new approach of taking care of the distinguished athletes by sending them abroad to learn more about their specialization.

Recently, it has adopted the policy of pay all the costs including the travel costs of the distinguished gymnastics player Nashwan Al Harazi to take his chance in training in China. He will stay for a six-month training period in a camp there. It is to be noted that the Chinese trainer Leo Chao Chia has played a role in all the arrangement and coordination to make things possible for Nashwan to join this specialized center in China to learn/train more about this sort of sports. Nashwan, who is only 12 years of age, has won the championship of gymnastics in Yemen. Undoubtedly, all the pointers indicate that he will be an international champion one day.

TAJ SHEBA HAS A NEW RESIDENT MANAGER



Mr. Albert Rebello has recently taken over as Resident manager Taj Sheba Hotel, Sana'a. Prior to his recent appointment he was Front Office manager of the Taj Residency Hotel, Bangalore, India.

Mr. Rebello was nominated as one of the top five Front Office Managers in India for the year 1995. He brings with him a decade and half of varied

experience in hotel operations which will no doubt add to the efforts of the present team in providing a high degree of personalized service to the patrons using the services of the hotel.



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Emirates Cricket Tournament 97 PCC won against ACC

On Friday 1 August, '97, Pakistan Cricket Club played its 3rd match with Arabian Cricket Club.

ACC won the toss and decided to bat first. Ruben and Fasih starts the inning from ACC, but in the very first over Fasih was run out and sent back to pavilion. Imran joined Ruben, but was smartly caught by Wasi on the fiery spell of Sheraz and the total of ACC was zero for 2. Then Tahir and Ruben confidently faced PCC bowlers, but again Wasi brought the change and stumped Ruben bowled by Taimori. ACC captain Nadeem came in but caught and bowled by Taimori. After Nadeem, Jafery came in and played some nice strokes including one boundary, and on 24 runs he was caught by Wasi bowled by Shiraz. After that, none of ACC players stood on the wickets and in 25 overs the total of ACC was 119 runs for 7 wickets. Tahir and Razi were not out.

From PCC Taimori, Shiraz and Adil took 2-2 wickets respectively.

PCC inning opened by Wasi and Aqil, both players played good strokes around the ground, and at the score of 53 runs PCC lost Wasi individual score 34 having 4 boundaries. Mustafa shook hand with Aqil but soon went back and scored 10 runs.

Taimori was bowled by Razi when his score was 7 runs. Then Aqil was caught by Ruben and bowled by Fasih with a individual score of 41 runs including 6 boundaries and one mighty six. Shiraz and Adil were not out batsmen. Shiraz scored 24 and Adil 6 runs. From ACC Razi took 2 and Nadeem and Fasih took 1-1 wicket each. PCC scored 120 runs in 17 overs by losing 4 wickets. Joshi and Sirinawasan were the umpires.

By: Masroor A. Siddiqui

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EMBASSY OF INDIA, SANA'A

All Indian citizens and their family members resident in the Republic of Yemen are cordially invited to attend the Flag Hoisting Ceremony at 8.30 a.m. (sharp) on Friday, 15th August, 1997 on the auspicious occasion of the 50th anniversary of India's Independence. The Flag Hoisting Ceremony will be held at the new Embassy premises at 12, Djibouti Street, Sana'a (opposite Chinese Ambassador's residence). The programme is scheduled to be over by 9.30 a.m.

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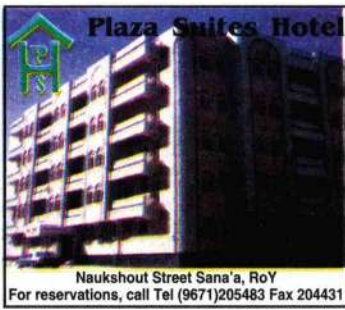
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Yemen Needs Environmental Awareness Campaigns

legal consultants, collects information related to the environment, and then make suggestions.

The current environmental laws in Yemen are almost complete in various aspects. The only thing that is still missing is to specify an organ that will be responsible for assessing the improvement or damage done to the environment. Will this assessment be done by the EPC or by special experts in various sectors? This issue needs to be resolved.

Q: What is the most important aspect in environmental protection?

A: There must be a basic law that incorporates all sectors, and be above all other structures. Like many other laws in other parts of the world, the Yemeni law contains some general articles. These are open to interpretations that may differ from one sector to another. Clarification comes with assigning the law to an executive charter.

Q: Has Yemen signed all international agreements?

A: Yemen has acceded to many relevant international laws and conventions. It is natural that countries should accede to treaties applicable to their actual situations. A landlocked country, for example, need not sign an agreement on the sea environment. At another level, care must be taken that the local law does not contradict international conventions. International agreements or conventions usually have a higher status than local laws. In the event of any

conflict between the two, priority is given to the international law.

Q: Is introducing new legislation enough for environmental protection?

A: I think the most important thing in Third World countries is to raise public awareness regarding environmental issues. People must be educated to become environmentally friendly. This is one of the responsibilities of the EPC in Yemen

Q: What is the environmental situation in Yemen?

A: Fortunately for Yemen, industrialization is still at its beginning. With the right legislation and approach, the problem of pollution can be avoided. The process of rapid industrialization in other countries during the early 1960s was conducted at the expense of the environment. So the cost of rectifying the damage in those countries will now exceed the benefits from industrialization.

Q: What are the most pressing environmental issues in Yemen?

A: There is pollution and lack of public hygiene. These problems need a lot of efforts on two levels - personal and official. Every individual must be fully aware of the necessity for protecting his or her immediate environment. The state will have to provide the proper legislation, facilities and public awareness programs. In case of lack of funds or experience, international environmental organizations can help.

They are providing financial and technical assistance to help in overcoming pollution problems.

Q: What else can be done in the field of environmental protection?

A: I believe that the subject should be introduced in the school curricula. Universities can award post-graduate degrees in environmental topics such as biology, fisheries, agriculture, etc.

Q: Any last comment?

A: As far as natural resources and climatic diversity are concerned, Yemen is quite promising. The basic legislations are in place. The people of Yemen are slowly gaining a lot of awareness regarding environmental issues.

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