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AMERICANS ON WAY TO HELP

SANAA, (Reuters) - Yemen officials confirmed on Friday up to 100 U.S. military advisors are going to the Arab state to train Yemeni forces hunting remnants of Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network. "Up to 100 American military advisors and trainers are coming to Yemen. Besides training, they are going to advise our military and security forces," a senior Yemeni government official told Reuters.

The Wall Street Journal reported earlier on Friday that the White House had approved a mission to send hundreds of troops to train and advise Yemeni forces.

The Yemeni official did not say when the U.S. troops would arrive in Yemen.

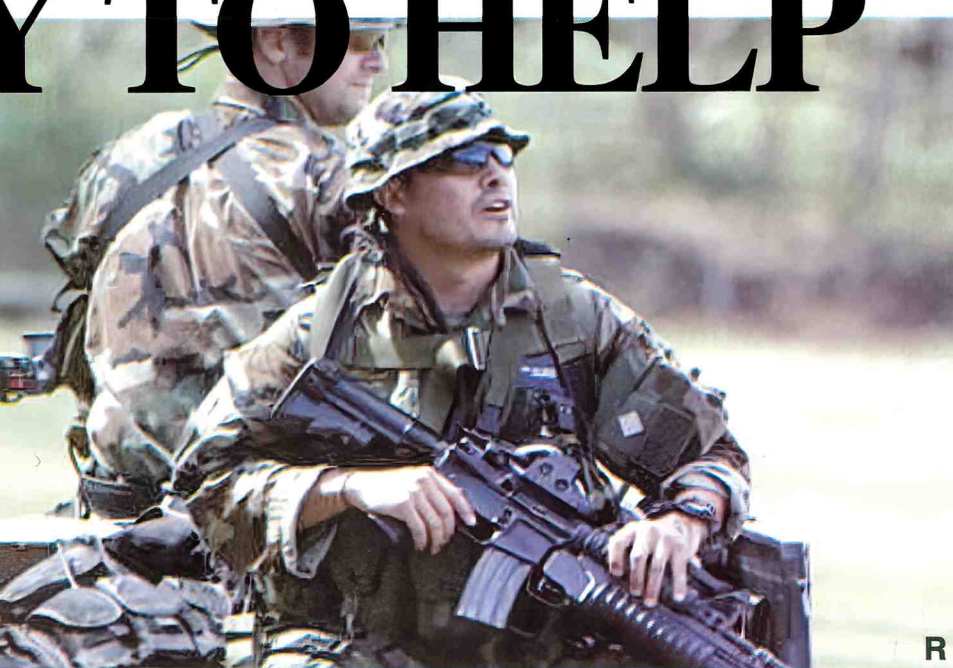
The Yemen operation was disclosed as the United States also prepared to send Army special forces trainers to the former Soviet republic of Georgia to help train that country's military in battling guerrillas near the Chechen border. The U.S. military also recently sent elite anti-terror trainers to the Philippines in the wake of Sept. 11 attacks on America.

In Washington, senior U.S. defense officials declined on Friday to give specifics of any package for Yemen, saying that talks were going on between the two countries on improved military-to-military ties in the war on terrorism.

"We agreed to work closely with them (Yemen) ... so they can more effectively combat terrorism," Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke told reporters.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher urged reporters not to overreact and assume a new front had opened up in the U.S. war on terrorism "every time somebody in a uniform or a counterterrorism expert shows up in some country".

He added, "We are fighting terrorism all



R

over the world, just like we said we would." Seeking to boost Yemen's ability to do counter-terrorism operations, "we're talking to them about the training and equipment that we can help with," Boucher said.

In December, Yemen launched a manhunt for two Yemenis and other suspected members of al Qaeda.

Washington has named bin Laden and al Qaeda as prime suspects in the September attacks on the United States. It also accuses bin Laden of planning the bombing of the U.S. warship Cole in the southern Yemeni port of Aden in 2000.

The newspaper quoted unnamed officials

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as saying the mission was approved after a month-long debate within the administration of President Bush about the size of the al Qaeda presence in Yemen.

U.S. soldiers will not be involved in combat missions in Yemen, officials said. Rather, the U.S. soldiers will "train with, assist and advise" troops from Yemen's Republican Guard. The U.S. soldiers also will share intelligence with the Yemeni soldiers.

Army Gen. Tommy Franks, the chief of the U.S. Central Command, had said Washington was considering providing military aid and counter terrorism assistance to Yemen.

Two of the people Yemen is pursuing, Mohammed Hamdi al-Ahdal and Ali Qaed Senyan al-Harhi, are suspected of involvement in the Cole bombing are believed to be under the protection of powerful tribal chiefs.

Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh Thursday urged the suspects to surrender and warned tribesmen against protecting them.

President launches projects

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF
President Ali Abdullah Saleh started to tour a number of governorates including Marib, al-Mahra and Hadhramout on Thursday.

The president was accompanied by some officials to familiarize themselves with the basic needs of these governorates and to inaugurate new essential projects.

In his speech following the Friday Prayer in Shebam, Hadhramout, the president urged businessmen to invest their capitals into various projects with the aim of providing new job opportunities.

Tens of thousands of Hadhramout governorate residents had emigrated to Gulf States, Indonesia, Malaysia and other South-Eastern Asia countries where they had started big businesses and are now capable of investing their capitals in Yemen.

In the same context, the president inaugurated Tareem-Shehn highway on March 3, a road which cost more than YR 7.3 billion. It is about 575 km long financed by the Sultanate of Oman.

The Yemeni government is also contributing 35 percent of this project. The new highway will link Yemen and Oman from the east-



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Negotiations with Chased Qaeda Members deadlocked

Recent mediations to convince Qaed Senyan al-Harethi to surrender himself to the Yemeni authorities have been to no avail.

Leading sheikhs of Mareb, headed by Sheikh Ameen al-Okaimi, an MP, his brother Yahya, as well as Ali bin Saeed Muaili, Sheikh of Abeeda, failed to strike a deal.

Sheikh, Hussain al-Ahmar, son of the Parliament Speaker, also resumed negotiations with al-Harethi in an attempt to persuade him to give up himself to the authorities.

However, al-Harethi had no confidence on the assurances made by the authorities, a tribal source told the Yemen Times.

President Salih stressed in a recent

speech to tribesmen of Mareb that Yemen has been requested to extradite only two persons (al-Harethi and al-Ahadal), believed to have links with al-Qaeda, to the US authorities.

On another development, a number of US military counterterrorism experts are expected to arrive soon in Yemen, within the framework of bilateral anti-terrorism cooperation between Yemen and the US.

US President George Bush earlier denied the report of the Wall Street Journal, that US troops are being sent to Yemen.

He said that whenever the US learns that al-Qaeda operates in certain countries, it will work with the respective governments to eradicate it.

National Day of Kuwait marked

A reception was held recently at the Embassy of the State of Kuwait on the occasion of the National Day of Kuwait. The party was attended by a number of ministers, officials and the accredited diplomats to the Republic of Yemen.

In a statement to the Yemen Times, Kuwaiti Ambassador, Yousef al-Onaisi, highlighted the level of cooperation between the people of Yemen and Kuwait. He added that Muscat summit's decision to make Yemen enter some of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) institutions is a recognition of its special strategic location as for the Gulf countries.

Group Wedding for Bohra

A group wedding was organized for 14 couples of the Bohra sect in Yemen

at the expense of His Highness the Sultan of Bohra, Mr. Mohammed Burhanuddin. A number of officials and diplomats attended the wedding.

Mr. Salman Rashid, the Fatimid Dai's representative in Yemen and Chairman of the association which organized and financed the wedding, received the guests and thanked them for attending.

Qat-free weddings are a remarkable note about the group wedding organized by the Bohra sect in Yemen. This is the fifth group wedding organized by Bohra.

SEDF established

A republican decree No. 39 for the year 2002 was issued with regard to establishing a fund to finance small enterprises. The decree has comprised 29 articles distributed to five chapters. The first chapter is on definitions

and naming, the second one on general judgments, the third on the fund's administration, the fourth comprises the financial fund system and the final chapter deals with the final judgments.

Shiite celebrate al-Ghadeer Day

The Shiite movement in Yemen celebrated the al-Ghadeer day which coincide with the Zu al-Hajjah 18, the day in which the prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) delivered his valedictory sermon.

The Shiites consider this day as the day in which Ali Bin Abi Taleb was appointed as the Commander of the Faithful. On this occasion, the Shiite movement in Sana'a and Serwah in Marib celebrated the festival together with the Esmalids sects in Sana'a and Haraz.

Ministry of Culture reshuffled

The Ministry of Culture underwent major changes in its top level leadership, as Ahmed Salim al-Qadhi was re-appointed as Vice-minister of Culture and a new 11 deputy ministers and directors-general were also appointed.

The reshuffle included the following appointments: Yousef Mohammed Abdullah as deputy minister for Manuscripts & Book Houses, Hisham Ali bin Ali, deputy minister for Intellectual Property Rights, Abdula Mohammed Bawazir, deputy minister of Antiquities & Historical Cities, Miss Najeeba Mahamoud Ali Hadad, deputy minister for Folklore & Theaters, Abdulwahab Mohammed

Qassem Shamhani, chairman of the Technical Office, Abdula Zaid Hamoud Essa, chairman of the General Authority for Preserving Old Cities, Jamal Abdulwali Abdalal al-Sheikh, vice-chairman for the General Authority for Preserving Old Cities, Mohammed Ali Qassem al-Arousi, chairman for General Authority for Antiquities & Museums, Ahmad Mohammed Ali Shamsan, vice-chairman for the General Authority for Antiquities & Museums, Mohammed Hussain Jaghman, advisor for the Ministry of Culture for the old cities affairs, and Shawki Shaif Saeed advisor for the Ministry of Culture.

Historical clock in Aden repaired

A DEN - The British Ambassador, Francis Guy paid a visit to al-Towahi clock site located at Gasar Mountain. The clock is one of the largest clocks in the world, after the Big Ben clock in Britain. It dates to 1890, during the British occupation to Aden City. Preparations are underway to repair the clock in Britain.

About 28,000 pounds was allocated to repair the clock but the concerned bodies didn't take care of the tender.

The clock is going to be repaired during the coming three months, which coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the Elizabeth's rule in Britain.

Middle-East delegation paid visit to Yemen

The Middle-East delegation for Computer program producers union recently paid a visit to Yemen chaired by the Regional Director, Gowad al-Redha. In a statement to Yemen Times, the Regional Director said that his visit to Yemen has come within the framework putting an end to use the copied systems in an illegal way.

Mr. Gowad also visited the Information Ministry, the Personal Division and the Civil Registration, the Computer Center at the Saba News Agency and the two deaneries of the Sana'a University and Technology and Science University.

"At the end of March the computer programs producers union in collaboration with Computer and Studies Center will hold the first training courses to avoid illegal programs in collaboration with the Ministries and the concerned bodies," the Regional Director, Gowad al-Redha concluded.

First eye diseases camp comes to a close

The first eye diseases camp organized by the People General Congress (PGC) from Feb. 25 to March 3, in Taiz ended yesterday with a high attendance of eye patients.

Specialized eye doctors conducted different eye operations for the patients free of charge, Sheikh Jabir Abdulah Ghalib, an MP and chairman of the PGC's branch, told Yemen Times.

He added that this camp was made so as to help the poor in the district to have a free but yet a reliable medical service that should be taken as an example.



In Brief

- The Ministry of Education and the British Council in Yemen organized a five-day workshop for 44 English language inspectors representing every governorate in Yemen.

The workshop took place at the Higher Institute for Training Teachers, Sana'a, 16-20 Feb.

The workshop covered three themes: Strategies & Methodologies of English Language Teaching, Models and Roles of Inspection, and Assessment of Teaching and Learning. It was delivered by two trainees invited from the specialized education college of Christ Church Canterbury, an affiliate of the University of Kent.

- The Indian Embassy School & Cultural Center organized on March 1, an Indian cultural event of the year 2002 at IDA hall, Baghdad Street Sana'a.

- Taiz University is to take part in the 5th Art International Meeting for Arabic and Islamic universities. The meeting will be held at the Egypt-based South Valley University on March.

- 163 traffic accidents took place in Mahweet, and resulted in the death of 41 persons and the injury of 199 others within the last couple of months.

- Traffic accidents in Taiz claimed the lives of 9 persons including two women.

- Hudaidah University is hosting Yemen's 1st International ELT conference from March 30 to April 2. The theme of the conference is "Old Borders, Fresh Crossing Thinking - Rethinking ELT in Arabia Flex."

- The Human Rights Information & Training Center (HRTIC) organized in cooperation with the Canadian Program for Development on March 3, a training course for police officers on human rights. Many police personnel as well as representative of the public security staff took part at the training course.

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Afghan troops say battling more than 5,000 Al Qaeda fighters

GARDEZ, Afghanistan (Reuters) - Afghan troops beaten back in an attack on al Qaeda and Taliban forces in eastern Afghanistan on Saturday were facing up to 5,000 die-hard fighters, soldiers returning from the front said.

In the first on-the-spot indication of the scale of the developing battle, the soldiers said their forces, backed by U.S. B-52 strikes, only numbered around 1,000 including about 50 American advisers.

The soldiers said they feared some of their units might have been cut off or surrounded in the battle about 20 miles east of Gardez, capital of Paktia province and near the Pakistan border. Reuters Television cameraman Taras Protsyuk said he had seen B-52 bombing and at least two U.S. military Chinook helicopters heading out of the site of the battle in the mountain village of Shahi Ko in Arma district.

The Pentagon has said pockets of Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network and followers of deposed Taliban leader Mullah Omar are seeking to regroup in Paktia province.



A Special Operations Force (SOF) commando from Task Force K-BAR conducts Special Reconnaissance on an undisclosed location in Afghanistan. Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network is regrouping and could be planning more strikes against the West, the Financial Times reported. Photo by Us Navy/Reuters

US, Britain, Turkey plan session on Afghan force

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - Turkey, edging closer to formally agreeing to command an international security force in Afghanistan, has called a meeting with U.S. and British officials next week to discuss remaining military and financial concerns, U.S. and other diplomats said on Friday.

The session is expected to be in Ankara late next week but the precise date has not yet been set. The envoys were hopeful a formal announcement would follow within days of the session, so troop contributors could finalize plans before Britain relinquishes leadership of the force in mid-April.

Turkey for weeks has expressed a number of concerns including the scope and future of the mandate for the troops. The 17-nation force with some 4,500 soldiers, mainly from NATO nations, is stationed in Kabul and its environs. "If they want us to undertake this task, of course there will be some requests and conditions on our part," Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit said in Ankara on Thursday. Diplomats said conditions remaining

included assurances of U.S. assistance in extracting the peacekeepers if they become endangered by hostile forces. Turkey also wants some financial assistance for its troops, which have to increase from the current 260 soldiers to the largest block in the International Security Assistance Force, known as ISAF.

"These appear to be acceptable," one envoy said.

The force is mandated by the U.N. Security Council until June but not organized by the world body, which means troop contributors pay for their own upkeep.

The issue, however, is not extending the mandate of the force, now restricted to Kabul, but expanding it to other cities, as advocated by U.N. officials and the new interim Afghan administration, headed by Hamid Karzai.

None of this would occur until June at the earliest and U.S. and British officials have given Turkey assurances it would not be taken by surprise. Britain and France intend to reduce their troops in April but Germany may increase them.

Cuba evicts intruders from Mexico embassy

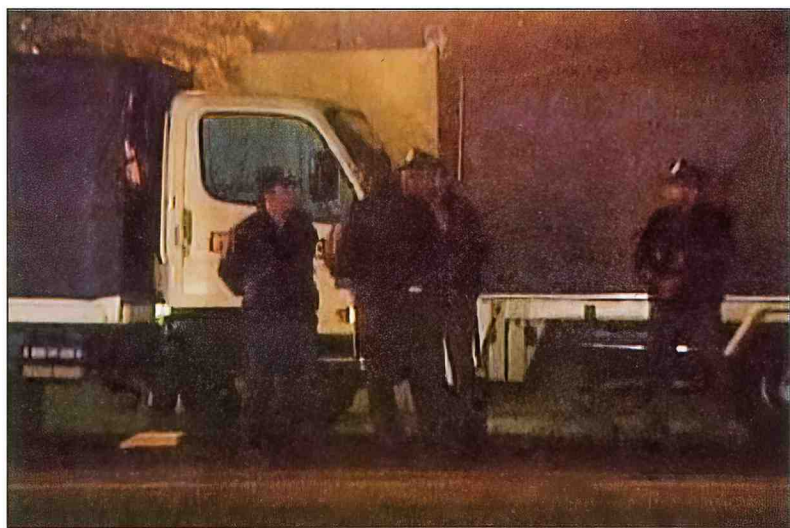
HAVANA (Reuters) - Cuban special forces entered the Mexican Embassy before dawn on Friday at Mexico's request and whisked off to an unknown destination 21 men who stormed the compound earlier this week with a hijacked bus.

Mexico labeled the men as criminals, but urged Cuba to give them "humanitarian" treatment after they were taken by surprise asleep in the embassy library in a roundup operation said to be designed by President Fidel Castro. The 21 Cubans were assumed to be in detention after the six-minute operation -- in which only one 38-year-old man physically resisted the 42 special officers -- ended the 30-hour standoff at the mission in Havana's posh Miramar district.

"The tiredness had taken its toll on them," Mexican Embassy No. 2 Andres Ordonez, who witnessed events with Ambassador Ricardo Pascoe inside the mission, told Reuters. "The commander (Castro) himself designed ... this operation." Most of the men, aged 17 to 38, allowed themselves to be marched away, while the oldest member of the group resisted but was subdued, he said. "There was no blood ... the whole thing took six minutes with an impressive neatness and efficiency."

Cuba did not say what would happen to the 21 or where they were being held. Mexico said none had requested diplomatic asylum or given evidence of persecution or risk to life. "From the moment they entered, we told them we considered them criminal intruders ... but we are not going to bring charges," Ordonez said.

The men, who shouted slogans against



Cuban police stand by a truck blocking access to the Mexican embassy in Havana February 28, 2002 after a group of young Cuban men broke into the diplomatic compound Wednesday night. Mexico said that 21 Cubans who broke into its embassy were not asylum-seekers and would be encouraged to leave as soon as possible. Photo by Rafael Perez/Reuters

Castro from the embassy roof on Wednesday night, had been hoping to start a new life in Mexico. They were dismissed from the outset by Cuba as "anti-social criminals" and are now expected to face charges related to the bus hijacking and forced entry.

"They were manipulated ... their socio-cultural level is extremely modest. They have no idea what the world is about," Ordonez said.

Although Mexico did not ask Cuba to guarantee any conditions for the 21 after their eviction, the Mexican statement said in an appeal for their fair treatment, "Given the assailants were induced and manipulated, Mexico has asked Cuban authorities to take into account humanitarian factors in the treatment of their cases."

Local human rights campaigner Elizardo Sanchez said he had no information as to the 21 men's whereabouts and was seeking an urgent meeting with Mexican officials to discuss their fate.

Cuban and Mexican communiqués both said Mexico's special envoy for the crisis, Gustavo Iruaga, the deputy foreign minister for Latin America and the Caribbean, and other Mexican diplomats, repeatedly asked the intruders during meetings on Thursday to leave.

The bus crashed through the embassy gate late on Wednesday, sparking scenes of chaos and violence in nearby streets between police and other mainly young people who had gathered hoping to enter the building. Sixteen of the 21 who made it inside were on the bus, while five others got in on foot in the melee.

Cuba listed penal records of 13 of the 21 who, it said, responded to an "invitation to assault the embassy" by an anti-Castro, U.S. government-funded radio station, Radio Marti.

Kosovo assembly to elect president, prime minister

BELGRADE, Chairman of the Kosovo Assembly Nexhad Daci announced on Friday that the assembly is scheduled to elect Kosovo president and premier and approve the appointment of other government members on Sunday, Yugoslavia's Tanjug news agency reported.

Daci made the announcement at a press conference in Pristina. Tanjug said that since Kosovo's main ethnic Albanian parties have reached an agreement over the issues concerning

presidential election and power sharing, Ibrahim Rugova, veteran leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), is expected to be the president while Bajram Rexhepi, a senior member of the Democratic Party of Kosovo, will be the premier.

In the new government of nine ministers, four will be from the LDK, two from the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, and the other three from other three different parties.

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Secret bunkers used after Sept. 11**Bush activated plan akin to Cold War era**

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - After the Sept. 11 attacks, President Bush set in motion a Cold War-era plan to keep the government running, sending civilian officials to live and work in secret bunkers outside Washington, administration officials said on Friday.

"This is serious business," Bush said of the necessity to ensure the continuity of the U.S. government in case of a catastrophic attack on the nation's capital.

"I have an obligation as the president, my administration has an obligation to the American people, to put measures in place, that should somebody be successful in attacking Washington, D.C., there's an ongoing government," he told reporters during a trip to Des Moines, Iowa.

Bush did not confirm details of a report in The Washington Post on Friday outlining contingencies for the survival of federal rule in the event of a crippling attack, but he said: "We take the continuity of government issue serio because our nation was under attack. And I still take the threats we receive from al Qaeda killers and terrorists very seriously."

Administration officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Bush activated a Cold War-era plan to ensure the government would continue to operate immediately after hijackers slammed commercial aircraft into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon near Washington.

Initially a temporary measure, the program has been extended indefinitely, the officials said. It is one of several steps the Bush administration has taken to ensure continuity in the event of a catastrophic attack.

Vice President Dick Cheney's activities and whereabouts have been strictly shielded. He frequently works at a "secure, undisclosed location" and rarely appears in the same place as Bush. In a worst-case scenario, Cheney is next in line for the presidency and would need help to run the government.

Originally designed to withstand Cold War nuclear threats and dating back to the 1953-to-1961 presidency of Dwight Eisenhower, the plan was implemented out of concern that the al Qaeda network -- blamed for the Sept. 11 attacks -- might obtain a portable nuclear weapon.

The administration officials stressed that U.S. intelligence had no specific



knowledge of any such weapon. Activation of the government-in-waiting plan was a prudent precautionary measure, they said.

"Of course we're taking steps to ensure the continuity of government," one U.S. official said. "Anything less would be irresponsible. We are taking all necessary steps to ensure the job of government can continue in any circumstances."

Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke said, "It is absolute common sense, absolutely appropriate that the government should have all the parts and all the pieces in place so in case of a cri-



Following the Sept. 11 attacks, President Bush set in motion a Cold War-era plan to keep the government running, sending civilian officials to live and work in secret bunkers outside Washington, in case of a catastrophic attack on the nation's capital, administration officials said March 1, 2002. Bush is shown meeting with Cabinet members at the White House Oct. 11. Photo by Win McNamee/Reuters

sis, in case of an emergency, the government can and will continue to function."

Under the classified "Continuity of Operations Plan," the Post reported, Bush has deployed a "shadow government" of about 100 senior civilian managers to live and work in fortified locations outside Washington.

The newspaper said high-ranking government officials representing various departments had begun rotating in and out of the assignment at one of two fortified locations along the East Coast.

A senior official involved in managing the program and quoted by the Post said the civilian force in the underground bunkers usually numbered 70 to 150, and "fluctuates based on intelligence" about terrorist threats.

In the event of a disabling blow to Washington, the underground government's first mission would be to prevent the collapse of essential functions, such as food and water supplies, transportation links, energy and telecommunications networks, public health and civil order. Later, it would begin to reconstitute the U.S. government.

Drawn from every Cabinet department and several independent agencies, those activated for what some call "bunker duty" live and work underground 24 hours a day, away from their families, the newspaper said.

NATO fails to net Karadzic in second Bosnia swoop

NEAR CELEBICI, Bosnia (Reuters) - NATO troops scoured woodland in mountainous southeastern Bosnia on Friday in the latest phase of a determined but so far fruitless effort to capture accused war criminal Radovan Karadzic.

Helicopters from the NATO-led SFOR peacekeeping force landed on hills near the village of Celebici and soldiers poured out to search the terrain, eyewitness Risto Bozovic said.

"I tried to approach them but the soldiers warned me not to come closer,"

Bozovic, 67, told Reuters at the scene. "They didn't search the houses, but woods surrounding the village."

Reflecting resentment among Bosnian Serbs at Western efforts to capture their wartime leader, he added: "If only I'd had a decent gun, I'd have killed them all."

Bozovic said he had seen about 25 soldiers disembark from two helicopters and conduct searches for around an hour. He said he had also seen two more helicopters land further away.

Friday's move came hard on the

heels of a NATO swoop on Celebici the previous day. Soldiers used explosives to blast their way into buildings and found three weapons caches from a compound where they believed Karadzic had been hiding.

SFOR said it had received fresh intelligence after Thursday's operation that Karadzic was still in the area. The peace force said in a statement that "while he was not seized, SFOR continues its efforts to apprehend him."

A NATO official told Reuters the peacekeepers were confident they had been close to grabbing Karadzic.

"We do not come out unless we are sure," said the official, who asked not to be named. He said that each attempt left NATO with new clues about how to get Bosnia's most wanted man.

"This leaves him with fewer places to hide and in the end there is a point where everyone slips up," he added.

Karadzic and Mladic are charged with genocide both for the 1995 mass killing of up to 8,000 Muslim men and boys at Srebrenica and for the three-and-a-half-year siege of the Bosnian capital Sarajevo, which killed around 12,000 people.

With their erstwhile patron, former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, now on trial at The Hague tribunal, Karadzic and Mladic are top of the U.N. court's wanted list.

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Following the military's strong grip in West Bank camps:

Israelis fear more bombings

JERUSALEM (Agencies/Reuters) - Following the suicide bombing that shook Israeli citizens last Saturday evening, Israeli citizens have expressed grave concern over expected bombings in retaliation to the Israeli army's strong grip in West Bank camps.

The explosion, which resulted in at least 7 dead and a large number of wounded occurred in a neighborhood as people were returning to the streets after the end of the Jewish Sabbath.

This comes at a time Israeli forces continue to maintain their hold on two West Bank refugee camps on Saturday despite international calls to withdraw after fierce fighting that has killed 20 Palestinians and two soldiers.

The two-day-old assault on the crowded camps of Balata and Jenin, both strongholds of Palestinian gunmen, has drawn vows of revenge from militant groups while threatening to derail a new Middle East peace initiative.

The army said the raids -- in which gun battles sometimes raged house by house and alley by alley -- were meant to root out militants and deny them a safe haven in the camps.

But Palestinian security sources said most of the suspects on Israel's most-wanted list for deadly attacks on Israelis had slipped away and found new hiding places.

The raids, which followed a Palestinian suicide bombing at an army checkpoint on Wednesday, have marked Israel's fiercest attacks against refugee camps in 17 months of conflict.

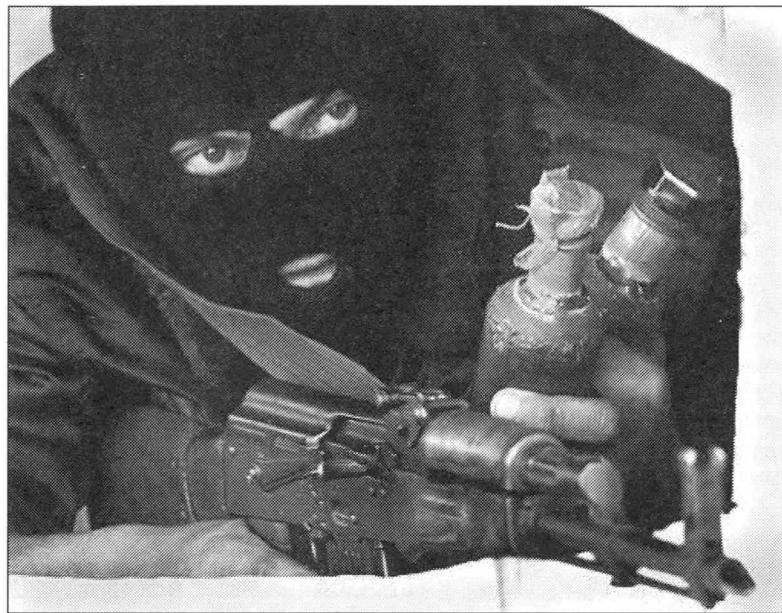
Palestinian President Yasser Arafat urged international action to halt what he described as a massacre.

"I call upon the whole world to act quickly before a state of chaos engulfs the whole Middle East region," he told reporters in Ramallah in the West Bank.

Arafat's Palestinian Authority responded by suspending all talks with Israeli officials, including U.S.-brokered security meetings aimed at paving the way for a cease-fire.

The Israeli campaign began on Thursday when troops stormed into Balata and also seized the outskirts of Jenin, both in the northern West Bank. On Friday, Israeli forces moved deeper into Jenin, playing a deadly game of cat-and-mouse with gunmen.

Palestinian officials said seven



A masked Palestinian gunman holds his weapons during an exchange of fire with Israeli troops inside the Jenin refugee camp, in the northern West Bank, March 2, 2002. Israel said its forces withdrew to the edge of Jenin, one of two refugee camps it raided on a hunt for Palestinian militants, but insisted it would go wherever it saw fit to track down killers of its citizens. Photo by Ammar Awad/Reuters

Palestinians were killed, among them a nine-year-old girl they said had been hit by fire from an Israeli helicopter, and 38 people were wounded.

Iraq dampens expectations for March 7 U.N. talks

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - Iraq's U.N. ambassador cautioned on Friday about expecting too much from next week's talks between his foreign minister and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, saying the session would be short and include discussion of issues other than weapons inspections.

With the US refusing to rule out an invasion of Iraq, the talks Annan is holding with Iraqi Foreign Minister Najji Sabri next Thursday have taken on added significance. Annan has said he would press Sabri to allow weapons inspectors back into Iraq for the first time in three years.

But Iraq's U.N. ambassador, Mohammed Aldouri, said in an interview that "we will look to the secretary-general to say what issues are still outstanding for the United Nations and we

will tell them what is outstanding for Iraq," Aldouri said of the March 7 session.

"There will be an exchange of views, but this is only one short session," he told Reuters. "We expect there will be following meetings in April."

Aldouri said Baghdad wants to discuss a wide range of issues and not be focused solely on the possible return of weapons inspectors, who left Iraq on the eve of a U.S.-British bombing in December 1998 and have been barred since then.

"We want to reach agreement with the secretary-general, but this is a package deal involving all of the issues," Aldouri said, without elaborating.

"Our primary concern has not changed. For the good of our people, we need the lifting of sanctions," Aldouri

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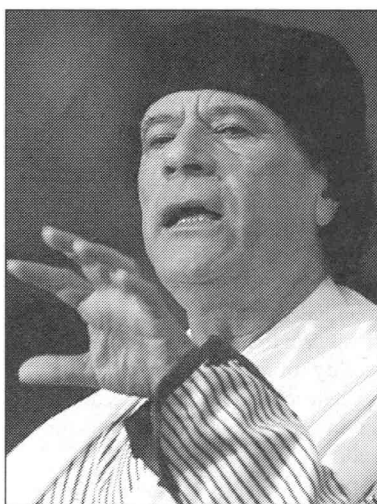
CAIRO, March 2 (Reuters) - Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak left on Saturday for his annual visit to Washington where he is due to discuss ways to end Israeli-Palestinian violence. Mubarak's talks with U.S. President George W. Bush are likely to address a new Saudi Arabian peace initiative.

Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah has proposed that Arab state would nor-

malise relations with Israel in return for full Israeli withdrawal from land captured in the Middle East war of 1967. Diplomats said that although the plan held little new, various parties were able to treat it as fresh starting point because it came from Saudi Arabia, a past opponent of normalisation with Israel.

Egypt has praised the plan, which has won international backing and received cautious welcome in Israel, but stressed the need for Israeli withdrawal from occupied Arab land.

Qaddafi reveals Arab-Israeli peace bid



Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi on Saturday unveiled a plan for Arab-Israeli peace in exchange for three conditions, including the right of Palestinians refugees to return to their homeland.

Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi also called on his country's parliament to examine Libya's pullout from the 22-member Arab League for its failure to fully support the Palestinians.

"I ask the General People's Congress (GPC, or parliament) to examine Libya's pullout from the Arab League which has become a masquerade," over its failure to support the Palestinians, Kadhafi told a rally in the northern coastal city of Syrte.

At the rally marking the 25th anniversary of the creation of the Libyan Popular Socialist Jamahiriya he criticised a Saudi peace proposal for Arab recognition of Israel in return for complete Israeli withdrawal from Arab land captured in the June 1967 war

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Palestinian Minister hails Saudi peace plan

AMMAN, Visiting Palestinian Minister of Local Government Affairs Saeb Erekat on Friday hailed the recent Saudi initiative as the most significant Arab plan since the Madrid Mideast peace conference.

During a meeting with Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Moasher, Erekat also said the peace initiative sends a crystal-clear Arab message that Arabs adhere to peace as a strategic option, Jordan's official Petra news agency reported.

He commended Jordan's relentless efforts to end the Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people.

"The peace we aspire for is based on Israel's full withdrawal till the June 4, 1967 line, including the pullout from Al Quds Sharif (Jerusalem), the Syrian Golan Heights and Lebanese Sheba Farms," Erekat said.

On his part, Moasher said Arab foreign ministers will conduct intensive consultations prior to the March 27-28 Arab summit in Beirut and will meet in Cairo on March 19 to crystallize specific ideas to be discussed by the summit to revive the peace process in the

region.

"It is significant to give Palestinians a hope to set up their independent state and to end the conflict through diplomatic channels satisfactory to all parties," Moasher said.

The Saudi plan is a political outlet to defuse the current crisis and chart a framework for the political settlement, he added.

Erekat arrived in Amman earlier in the day as part of a consultation mechanism between Jordan and the Palestinians on the peace process in the region.

His discussion with Jordanian official focused on the Saudi plan, which was formulated by Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdul Aziz and floated 10 days ago in the New York Times.

The plan called for Israel to withdraw its troops from all Arab territories it occupied during the 1967 Middle East War in exchange for Arab recognition of the Jewish state. Currently Jordan and Egypt are the only two Arab countries to have signed peace treaties with Israel. Xinhua

Saudi expects Arab backing for Mideast peace move

By Timothy Heritage

JERUSALEM (Reuters) - Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah told a European Union envoy Wednesday he expects to unite the Arab world behind a Middle East peace initiative next month as new violence lent urgency to his proposal. "He is fully determined to move forward with his ideas that he thinks may bring peace to the region," EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana told Reuters after meeting the prince. "He is going to coordinate his ideas with the Arab countries ...and he expects at the Arab League summit they will be approved," he said, referring to a Beirut summit on March 27-28. Israeli troops killed three infiltrators in a shoot-out near the Egyptian border and a Palestinian shot dead an Israeli businessman as Solana shuttled through the region discussing the de facto Saudi ruler's land-for-peace proposal. Prince Abdullah's initiative has won wide backing, including from the

United States, and diplomats say it offers "light at the end of the tunnel" after 17 months of Israeli-Palestinian violence. But it could be upset by any new surge of violence. The prince's comments to Solana raised hope that he is serious about pushing the proposal forward and added momentum to the initiative, although it contains little or nothing new. Saudi officials said Solana held two hours of talks with the prince in the Saudi Red Sea city of Jeddah. The envoy later flew to Cairo for talks with Egyptian leaders after two days of meetings with Palestinian and Israeli leaders earlier this week. Solana, speaking to Reuters on his arrival in the Egyptian capital, said a plan "could be approved unanimously by the leaders of the Arab world" at the Beirut summit next month. In an interview with the New York Times published last week, Prince Abdullah aired an initiative which resurrected an Arab offer to normalize relations with Israel in return for full withdrawal from Arab lands occupied

in the 1967 Middle East war. Saudi officials said little of the meeting but one remarked: "We expect the European Union to play a bigger role in the Middle East peace process in light of today's talks." SOLANA SEES HOPE Solana had discussed the Saudi proposal separately with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon earlier this week and said they welcomed it. "It's a message being brought by an important messenger. It brings hope," Solana said Wednesday before going to Jeddah. The prince's initiative restates the principle on which Arab-Israeli peace talks were launched in 1991. Collective Arab recognition of Israel has a broad appeal in the Jewish state. U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and President Bush have praised the prince's idea. Western nations in the United Nations Security Council lauded Saudi Arabia for floating the initiative, although Syria's ambassador said the peace



process required political will from Israel and "not further initiatives." Sharon told Solana he was ready to meet Saudi officials to discuss the peace proposal. But right-wingers have made clear they will oppose any proposal calling for a return to pre-1967 borders, saying it would threaten

Israel's security. Arafat said he fully supported the Saudi initiative. But the militant Islamic group Hamas said it opposed it because it did not require the return of all of what they call historic Palestine, which takes in territory that now makes up Israel.

Oman to issue government bonds worth \$130 million

MUSCAT, March 2 (Reuters) - Oman said on Saturday it would issue government bonds worth 50 million rials (\$130 million) to help finance development projects. The central bank said in a statement that the auction, the sultanate's first this year, would be held on March 25 and the bonds will be issued on the first of April. The bonds, which are available to local and international investors, mature on February 1, 2007. They carry a 5.25 percent coupon per year and interest will be paid on August 1 and February 1 of each year. Earlier this year, the Gulf Arab state said it would issue a total of 131 million rials worth of government bonds in 2002 to soak up funds and finance development projects. Oman last year issued 40 million rials worth of government bonds and 45 million rials in 2000. The government had committed itself however to exploring new income generating mechanisms other than oil and gas.

Gulf states slam Israeli, Palestinian violence

By Begona Quesada

GRANADA, Spain (Reuters) - Arab gulf states and the European Union on Thursday called on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories and said Palestinian officials must do all they can to halt suicide bombings on Israel. A joint declaration by the European Union-Gulf Cooperation Council meeting also called on Iraq to fulfil its U.N. obligations on weapons inspec-

tion, and praised reforms in Iran. The annual meeting takes place as Europe seeks to assert its weight in world affairs, amid concern over unilateralism by the United States whose President Bush has called Iran and Iraq part of an "axis of evil." EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana is touring the Arab world to drum up support for Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah's Middle East peace proposal

of Arab recognition of Israel in exchange for it withdrawing to its pre-1967 borders. The meeting in this former Moorish capital in southern Spain brings together the 15 EU countries and representatives of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, six countries that sit on nearly half the world's known oil reserves. "The two sides stressed that the Israeli

government must withdraw its military forces, stop the extrajudicial executions, freeze the settlements and lift ... all the restrictions imposed the Palestinian Authority and its elected leader President (Yasser) Arafat," the statement said. "And the Palestinian Authority must do everything to put an end to the violence and take determined and effective action against terrorists, whose attacks on innocent civilians are inexcusable," the statement said. Two Arab delegations had earlier been concerned that the statement equated Israeli attacks against Palestinian targets in the West Bank and Gaza with Palestinian suicide bombings, a diplomatic source said. "This was the most controversial para-

graph...because the Arab states did not think it was hard enough on Israel, but they adopted a more flexible attitude," the source said. U.S. saber-rattling on Iraq has unsettled European and Arab leaders, and the EU-GCC said it hoped Iraq and the United Nations could renew weapons inspections so that eventually sanctions against Iraq could be lifted. "This was all the more urgent in the present international context," the statement said.

President Bush's "axis of evil" speech, which also targeted North Korea, has been criticized by European leaders including EU External Affairs Commissioner Chris Patten and French Foreign Minister Hubert Vedrine, both of whom are attending the meeting. Trade often tops the agenda in EU-GCC meetings, but the 17 months of sustained violence in Israel and the Palestinian territories has dominated this 12th annual session.

في العدد الماضي تم نشر أسماء الفائزين بمسابقة الملايين الكبرى، ولأن العدد الماضي جاء مواكباً لإجازة عيد الأضحى المبارك، فقد رأينا أننا نعيد نشره هذا العدد.

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لمزيد من المعلومات عن موعد تسليم الجوائز ومكان تسليمها اتصلوا بالآخ / نصري ابوبكر، على سيار رقم: ٧٩٦١٧٥٤

مسل	الجائزة	اسم الفائز	المحافظة
الأولى	مليون ريال	عدنان غالب علي احمد السعدي	حجة
الثانية	نصف مليون ريال	أمير احمد ثابت نعمان العريفي	صنعاء
الثالثة	ربيع مليون ريال	حياة يحي مصلح النعبي	صنعاء
الرابعة	مائة ألف ريال	وضاح عقيل عبد الله عبد العزيز	صنعاء
الخامسة	مائة ألف ريال	نبيل محمد علي باحبيب	عدن
السادسة	مائة ألف ريال	جنيتي تبتلال جويال	عدن
السابعة	مائة ألف ريال	فلووم عوض محمد غربي	عدن
الثامنة	مائة ألف ريال	نادية ابوبكر القطري	صنعاء
التاسعة	مائة ألف ريال	سليمان عبد الله عبد الشيباني	صنعاء
العاشر	مائة ألف ريال	محمد علي حمود السريحي	صنعاء
الحادي عشر	تذكرة سفر مفتوحة من البنية	حسين قاسم حسين القبيبي	صنعاء
الثاني عشر	تذكرة سفر مفتوحة من البنية	صلاح احمد سالم محمد	عدن
الثالث عشر	تذكرة سفر مفتوحة من البنية	نيبازي حمود ناجي الأشول	صنعاء
الرابع عشر	تذكرة سفر مفتوحة من البنية	محمد علي سالم النجاري	صنعاء
الخامس عشر	غسالة خمس كيلو جرام	محمد عبد الملك رحمان	الحدودية
١٦	غسالة ٥.٢ كيلو جرام	رائيا توفيق عبد العاطف العامري	صنعاء
١٧	١٦ بوسه من فيديو كون	فانز يسلم صالح العذري	حضر موت
١٨	١٦ بوسه من فيديو كون	Tadesse Teferedegnaw	صنعاء
١٩	١٦ بوسه من فيديو كون	ياسر حمود عبده الاموي	اب
٢٠	١٦ بوسه من فيديو كون	هبة عبد العزيز محمود محفوظ	صنعاء
٢١	٧٥ وات من فيديو كون	سميرة ياسين غالب	صنعاء
٢٢	٧٥ وات من فيديو كون	ذكري احمد محمد طالب	المعلا
٢٣	مكيف هواء	جميل ناجي احمد ناجي	صنعاء
٢٤	منقى هواء	نجيب محمد محمد يحي القدسي	صنعاء
٢٥	غسالة صغيرة	مروان محمد غالب مرشد	صنعاء
٢٦	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	حفظ الله علي محمد عبد الله القرين	صنعاء
٢٧	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	احمد عمر مبارك بن اسحاق	صنعاء
٢٨	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	ربيع محمد علي محمد القهري	صنعاء
٢٩	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	احمد عبده محمد سيف البهاني	صنعاء
٣٠	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	رحمة عبد الله عبده محمد القدسي	تعز
٣١	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	احمد محمد محسن النويرة	صنعاء
٣٢	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	مروان عمر محمد العمودي	حضر موت
٣٣	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	احمد جابر حسين الوهادي	صنعاء
٣٤	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	شائع عوض كرامة بن ويز	سينون
٣٥	قسمة شراء بـ ١٥٠ من بريماما	طلال عبد الله عبد الوهاب النقيب	صنعاء
٣٦	ثلاثة غرفة نوم	فلووم عوض محمد غربي	عدن
٣٧	إقامة بومين لشخصين في تاج سبأ	جميل ناجي احمد ناجي	صنعاء
٣٨	إقامة بومين لشخصين في تاج سبأ	صالح محمد احمد الصباحي	البيضاء
٣٩	عشاء لأربعة أشخاص في تاج سبأ	زينب محمد سالم علي	صنعاء
٤٠	إقامة في فندق عدن ليومين	محمد حسن قاسم الشميري	البيضاء
٤١	إقامة في فندق عدن ليومين	احمد عبد الله جبار الأنسي	صنعاء
٤٢	إقامة في فندق عدن ليومين	يسف عبد اللطيف يعقوب ابراهيم حداد	صنعاء
٤٣	إقامة في فندق عدن ليومين	حسان داود سالم محمد	عدن
٤٤	إقامة في فندق عدن ليومين	رياض عبد المولى مقبل نعمان القباطي	تعز
٤٥	خلاف عابلي Kenstar من أرتكس	محمد عبد الله محمد حسان	سينون
٤٦	خلاف عابلي Kenstar من أرتكس	محمد احمد صالح القدسي	صنعاء
٤٧	خلاف عابلي ديونجي من أرتكس	بينة احمد عثمان سعيد	صنعاء
٤٨	خلاف عابلي ديونجي من أرتكس	محمد ناجي صالح	عدن
٤٩	جهاز توسنار للسندوتشات من أرتكس	فاكر عبد القادر محمد منصور المعلي	صنعاء
٥٠	جهاز توسنار للسندوتشات من أرتكس	نسيم محمد حمود الصعري	صنعاء
٥١	استنوار كرويس ١٢٠٠ كترول	يسام حزام محمد علي الاغري	صنعاء
٥٢	كرويس ١٢٠٠ من أرتكس	عبده علي حسن النقيب	الضالع
٥٣	خط GSM تلفوني من سيستل بين	العازر محمد سالم علي	صنعاء
٥٤	خط GSM تلفوني من سيستل بين	ابها محمد علي الدوجي	المعلا
٥٥	خط GSM تلفوني من سيستل بين	توفيق مجاهد سالم	عدن
٥٦	خط GSM تلفوني من سيستل بين	فريد احمد يسلم بن فتح	المكلا
٥٧	خط GSM تلفوني من سيستل بين	مختار منصور علي محمد الجابري	صنعاء
٥٨	خط GSM تلفوني من سيستل بين	عدنان عبده محمد مرشد الدوبي	صنعاء
٥٩	خط GSM تلفوني من سيستل بين	محمد عبد الله علي غلاب	صنعاء
٦٠	مجفف ومسرح شعر من أرتكس	زكريا احمد حسن	تعز
٦١	طاحنة بهار من أرتكس	فكري محمد قائد جازم	صنعاء

Bahrain moves to free telecom. sector



MANAMA, Feb 28 (Reuters) - Bahrain has signed an agreement with a British firm to prepare a study on the possibility of opening up the kingdom's telecommunications sector to competition, local media said on Thursday. Transport Minister Sheikh Ali bin Khalifa al-Khalifa signed the deal with British firm Intercai Mondiale, a strategic consulting firm, to conduct the study. U.S. legal consultants White & Case will provide legal and logistic services for the study, which is scheduled to be completed in July. No further details were immediately available. Bahrain Telecommunications Company BTEL.BH (Batelco) is currently the sole provider of telecommunication services in the Gulf's main financial and banking hub. Batelco is 39 percent owned by the Bahraini government and 20 percent by Cable and Wireless C.W.L of Britain. The rest is traded on the Bahrain Stock Exchange. Bahrain's King, H.M. Shaikh Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa had declared that his country will be taking significant strides towards more freedom and democracy. This step in freeing telecommunications is seen by observers to be one of the issues that the king has started in this respect.

إنهاء علاقة

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Religious violence rages, Indian PM pleads for peace

AHMEDABAD, India (Reuters) - Violence raged in India's western Gujarat state on Saturday as the Prime Minister appealed for peace while sending in fresh troops to quell the country's worst religious bloodshed in a decade.

Despite the deployment of thousands of heavily armed soldiers to reinforce overstretched police in Gujarat, 35 people were burned alive in two separate clashes between Hindus and Muslims.

The death toll is nearing 300 from four days of violence sparked when a suspected Muslim mob on Wednesday set fire to a train carrying Hindu devotees, burning 58 mostly women and children to death.

"Whatever the provocation, people should maintain peace and exercise restraint," Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee (news - web sites) said in a nationally broadcast address calling for peace. "The burning alive of people, including women and children... is a blot on the country's face."

But on the streets, some members of the country's Hindu majority shunned his words. "Learn from us how to burn Muslims," said chilling graffiti on a wall in Naroda on the out (news - web sites)skirts of Gujarat's capital Ahmedabad.

After three days of violence, there was hardly a home or mosque left untouched by violence in the town's Muslim quarter.

"There are times when the country is put to test," Vajpayee said. "Such a situation has been created today because of the violence in Gujarat."

On Saturday, at least 27 people were burned alive in a predominantly Muslim village and eight more when a mob torched a Muslim-owned bakery. Gujarat authorities have rounded up about 1,200 people since the killings began, but seem so far to have prevented the violence spreading much beyond Gujarat's state borders.

MOBS BLOCK POLICE

Wednesday's attack on the train set off a wave of Hindu revenge attacks aimed at Muslims, escalating a simmering dispute over whether a Hindu temple should be built on the site of a former Mosque. Thousands of soldiers sent to the region have so far been unable to staunch the bloodshed. Officials said more reinforcements were being sent to try to restore calm.

Mobs blocked roads to stop police trying to rescue the victims of Saturday's worst killings, in the mainly Muslim village of Bijapur, a government security official, Ashok Narayan, told

Reuters.

"The miscreants blocked the road and did not allow police to reach the spot," Narayan said. But he added police had managed to rescue 40 people from the village. While relative calm returned to Gujarat's main city, Ahmedabad, which has born the brunt of the bloodshed, Narayan said the situation in rural areas was "still bad."

"We are trying to get additional forces and are also trying to set up peace committees at district levels. These committees will have representatives from all communities and will initiate dialogue to maintain harmony," he said.

A curfew has been imposed across large parts of Gujarat and police have been ordered to shoot violators on sight. Police shot two people dead on Saturday.

In the Hindu-dominated areas of Ahmedabad, men with sticks and iron rods held vigils through the night as rumors spread of retaliatory strikes by Muslims. Authorities said they had begun moving Muslims in some parts of the state from mixed neighborhoods to heavily-protected Muslim enclaves. The bloodshed is the worst crisis to hit Vajpayee's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since it came to power in 1999. The party also rules Gujarat state.

OFFER ON TEMPLE ROW

In a bid to ease tensions a BJP ally, the hardline Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), on Friday offered to consider delaying its controversial campaign to build the disputed temple on a site sacred to both Hindus and Muslims in the northern Indian city of Ayodhya.

The Hindu devotees who died in the train inferno on Wednesday were on their way home from a vigil in Ayodhya in support of the VHP's plans to build the temple on March 15.

In 1992, Hindu hard-liners razed the 16th century mosque on the site, triggering India's worst religious clashes since the sub-continent was divided in 1947. More than 3,000 people died across India in the 1992 riots. Muslims account for more than 12 percent of mainly Hindu India's one billion population, making them one of the largest Islamic communities in the world. While the country is officially secular, religious tensions constantly test its social peace.

Religion also dominates relations between India and neighboring Islamic Pakistan, who have fought two wars over Muslim-majority Kashmir and are currently engaged in an uneasy border stand-off after Muslim militants attacked India's parliament in New Delhi.



A Muslim child injured in communal riots sits bandaged in a mosque in the western Indian city of Ahmedabad on March 2, 2002. Violence raged in India's western Gujarat state as the Prime Minister appealed for peace while sending in fresh troops to quell the country's worst religious bloodshed in a decade. Photo by Kamal Kishore/Reuters

Drug trade flourishes in the Taliban-free Afghanistan

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The opium trade is flourishing in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban and the U.S. government said on Friday it is unclear whether the new government can persuade local leaders to stop it.

In its annual report on the international drug trade, the State Department said the Taliban, driven out of power by the U.S. military last year, virtually eliminated opium poppy cultivation in the regions under their control.

Overall opium production fell dramatically, to about 74 tons in 2001 from about 3,656 tons in 2000 and almost all the production was in parts of Afghanistan held by the Northern Alliance, Washington's ally in the war against the Taliban.

Afghanistan has traditionally been one of the world's major producers of opiates, along with Myanmar, which regained its place as top producer last year because of the Taliban ban.

Opium is the raw material for the opiates heroin and morphine, and Afghanistan has been the major supplier of those drugs to the region and to Western Europe.

The U.S. report, released on Friday, said widespread cultivation of poppies resumed in Afghanistan after the collapse of the Taliban and drug traffickers remained active in Afghanistan and the region.

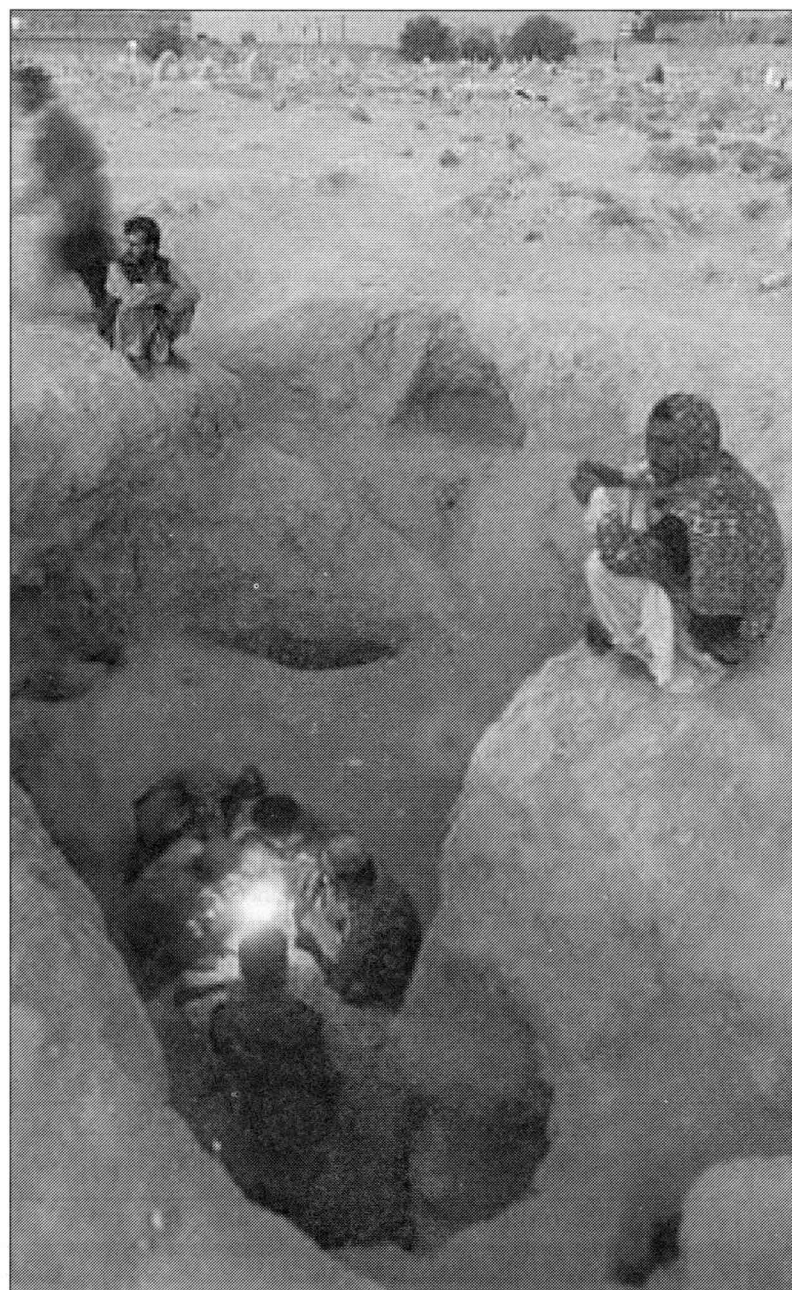
The interim authority in Kabul, led by Hamid Karzai and backed by the United States, has announced its own ban on growing opium but its writ hardly runs beyond the capital.

LOCAL POWER CENTERS

The report said, "The Authority lacks means to enforce its ban, and it must work with local power centers and the donor community if the ban is actually to be respected."

"It remains uncertain whether the urgings and even the financial support of the international community will be sufficient to eliminate poppy cultivation in Afghanistan quickly. ... In the wake of hostilities, which faction is actually in control in which region varies. Whether factions will follow a ban on poppy cultivation issued by the Interim Authority is uncertain," it added.

The Northern Alliance, which dominates Karzai's government, does not appear to have taken any action against drugs in the parts of the country that it



The opium trade is flourishing in Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban and the U.S. government said on March 1, 2002 that it is unclear whether the new government can persuade local leaders to stop it. In its annual report on the international drug trade, the State Department said the Taliban had virtually eliminated opium poppy cultivation in the regions under their control. Pakistani drug addicts are shown smoking heroin in Quetta, Pakistan near the Afghan border on October 1, 2001. Photo by Jerry Lampen/Reuters

does control, it said. "There have also been recent reports of farmers cultivating a second opium crop in Northern Alliance-controlled areas," it added.

The United States is putting some hope in regional efforts to stop Afghan opiates leaving the country through the Six Plus Two group, which brings together the United States, Russia and Afghanistan's six immediate neighbors.

It said it would work with other donors on a strategy to eliminate production and to develop indigenous law enforcement and judicial systems in Afghanistan.

"In the meantime, narcotics trafficking in the region will continue, despite the best efforts of the Interim Authority and the international community," it added.

Philippines says end near for Abu Sayyaf

MANILA (Reuters) - The Philippines said on Thursday the end was near for the Abu Sayyaf Muslim rebel group linked to Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network but added it faced a tough job flushing out the insurgents.

"We have killed about 190 Abu Sayyaf members and captured quite a lot of them and many surrendered also because of the intense pressure of the military. So we are now seeing the end game, the end is near so far as the Abu Sayyaf is concerned," Philippine National Security Adviser Rolio Golez told a business forum.

He said the group started in May, 2001

with a little over 1,000 in the regions of Basilan and Sulu and is now down to 180 members due to a very intense military campaign.

But Golez said it was still a tough job for Filipino troops as the rebels were now believed to be hiding in a rugged terrain area on Basilan island.

The Abu Sayyaf, which operates in the south of the country, is included in Washington's list of foreign terrorists organizations, and is also the target of joint military military exercise between the United States and the Philippines

The group claims to be fighting for an

independent Muslim state in the south, but in reality pursues kidnap for ransom.

Since May, Abu Sayyaf has been holding an American couple hostage on Basilan island since their abduction from an upscale beach resort in central Philippines. Military officials said government troops clashed with the combined forces of the Abu Sayyaf bandits and guerrillas of a separate Muslim group in Basilan earlier on Thursday, wounding eight rebels. There were no reports of casualties on the government side. Golez also said there were some groups trying to obstruct the government's fight against terrorism, namely the New People's Army (NPA) -- the militant arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) which threatened to hurt American soldiers should they wander into their territory.

Commonwealth heads urge unity against 'terrorism'

By Michael Perry

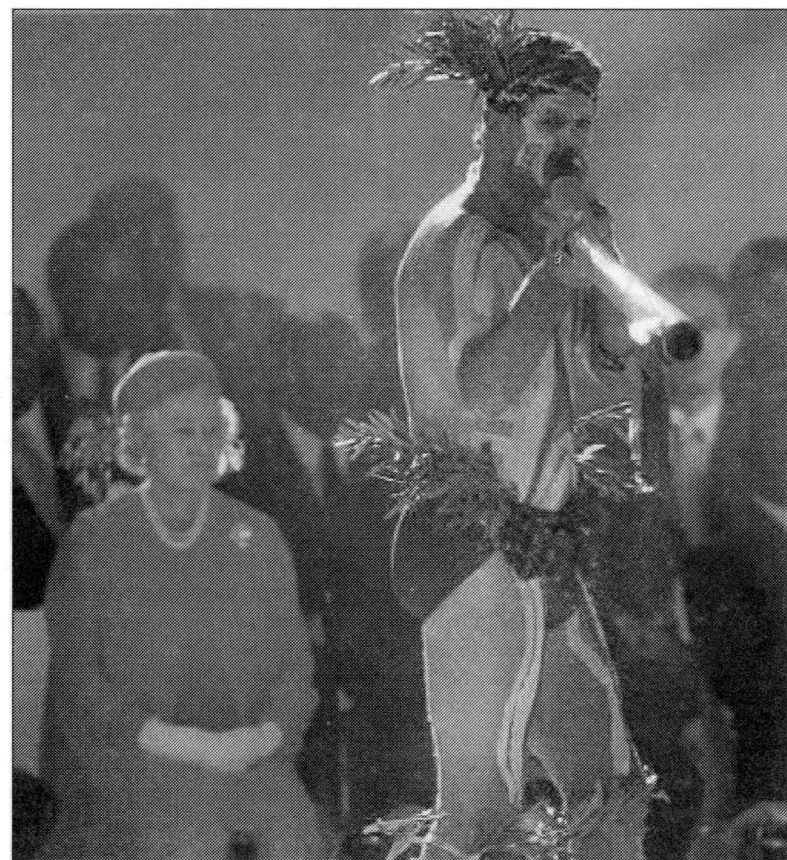
COOLUM, Australia (Reuters) - Commonwealth leaders began a four-day summit in Australia on Saturday urging some of the world's poorest nations to join the "fight against terrorism," racism and religious intolerance. They also called on the world's rich nations to adopt more humane globalization policies to reduce the gap between rich and poor, which provides fertile ground for political instability.

But the biennial summit of the group composed mainly of ex-British colonies is divided over whether to impose sanctions against strife-torn African nation Zimbabwe over allegations President Robert Mugabe has tried to rig the March 9-10 presidential election.

Opening the summit with Queen Elizabeth, Commonwealth Secretary General Don McKinnon said: "We know we can make a difference in the fight against terrorism." But he added the greatest challenge facing the world was the huge divide between rich and poor. "No one in the world can have a secure future when half the world has no future at all," he said. "In the Commonwealth we want to have a spirit of generous globalization."

The 54-nation Commonwealth represents 1.7 billion people, about one third of the world's population, but includes some of the poorest nations on earth like Bangladesh and Tuvalu.

Many question the relevance of such a varied group, but in her opening



Britain's Queen Elizabeth watches an aboriginal dancer during the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Coolum March 2, 2002. Leaders from Commonwealth nations around the globe have gathered in Australia for the 35th biennial summit. Photo by Pool/Reuters

address Queen Elizabeth said it was just such diversity which made the Commonwealth relevant after last year's hijacked airliner attacks in the United States.

"The events of 11th September have reminded us all of the need to build bridges between different cultures based on greater knowledge and understanding of our differences," she said.

Mugabe tells Britain:

'Go to hell'

HARARE (Reuters) - Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe has accused Britain's Tony Blair of endorsing opposition rival Morgan Tsvangirai in next week's election, saying the country's former colonial rulers can "go to hell." Mugabe's latest volley against Britain came on the eve of a weekend Commonwealth summit where Blair was expected to call for immediate sanctions against Harare in response to government intimidation ahead of the March 9-10 presidential poll. Tsvangirai, leader of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), poses the strongest challenge to Mugabe since he led his ZANU-PF party to power 22 years ago. Adding to rising tension, the MDC said on Friday it had canceled an election rally in the eastern town of Marondera after reports that Tsvangirai would be harmed. "What Zimbabweans seek from the security officers is peace and protection, not intimidation and harassment. We thus condemn attempts by some members of the army and police to intimidate the population," the statement said.

The allegation could not be independently verified and Marondera police could not immediately be reached for comment.

The MDC says at least 107 of its supporters and activists have been killed in political violence which began ahead of June 2000 parliamentary elections, narrowly won by Mugabe's ZANU-PF.

Mugabe, quoted in Friday's official Herald newspaper, told a rally in Gurube in northern Zimbabwe on Thursday that Britain's prime minister had shown his bias toward the opposition.

"Blair stood in parliament unashamedly to say the British government should stay ready to recognize and support the victory of MDC and should not stay ready to recognize the victory of ZANU-PF," Mugabe was quoted as saying. "But of course we say: 'Go to hell'. Go to hell, our people have decided and that is what matters

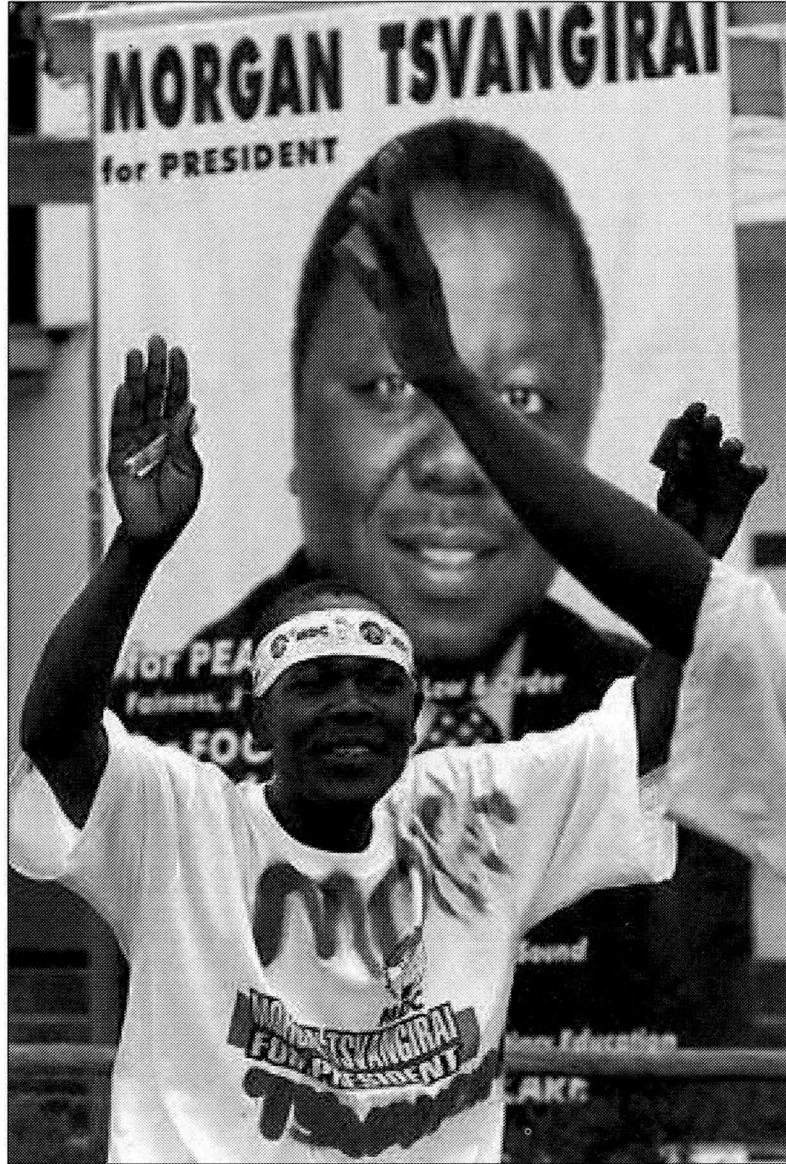


Photo by Reuters

to us. It is not the right or responsibility of the British to decide on our elections. We don't decide on their own and why should they poke their pink noses in our business?" In parliament on Wednesday, Blair accused Mugabe of acting like a dictator and said Britain would push for action against him at a Commonwealth summit this weekend. Opponents accuse Mugabe and his

ZANU-PF party of instigating a wave of violence against supporters of Tsvangirai, who has been accused of treason after the release of a videotape purporting to show him discussing a plot against Mugabe. Tsvangirai has denied the charge and sued an Australian television station for broadcasting the tape.

Election fallout

Martial Law is now declared in Madagascar's capital

TANANARIVE, President of Madagascar Didier Ratsiraka declared to exercise martial law in the capital city of Tananarive on Thursday.

Ratsiraka told reporters that he had named General Leon-Claude Raveloarison as the "military governor" of the capital to handle the crisis in the city caused by a dispute over last December presidential elections.

On Wednesday, the government of

Madagascar imposed a curfew in Tananarive, which was ordered after a day of clashes between the supporters of opposition leader Marc Ravalomanana and those of Ratsiraka.

Ravalomanana supporters clashed with Ratsiraka backers early on Wednesday, with more than 10 people injured.

Ravalomanana had claimed to win the first round of presidential election on

December 16 in the Indian Ocean island country and declared himself president.

The government declared a state of emergency last Friday, following weeks of protests by the opposition. The international community has urged the both sides to return to talks and call for a second round of elections on March 24 that is ordered by Madagascar's High Constitutional Court.

S. Africa reports no increase in flow of Zimbabwean refugees

JOHANNESBURG, The South African National Defense Force (SANDF) commanders on the country's border with Zimbabwe have reported no increase in the flow of refugees into South Africa.

The numbers of Zimbabwean refugees caught by SA security forces had actually decreased, the South African Press Association reported on Saturday quoting Colonel Tol Snyman, commander of the Soutpansberg military area and Colonel Pine Pienaar, the chief of staff of Regional Joint Task Force.

This was despite a reported increase in the level of violence in Zimbabwe in the run-up to the presidential election there on March 9 and 10, food shortages and high inflation.

Snyman said about 4,000 Zimbabweans were intercepted at the border, or between the border and the

Soutpansberg in January 2001. This year the figure was 2,600.

There was no clear reason for the decrease, but last summer was much cooler than this year's, with the temperature in the border town of Messina this summer routinely an energy-sapping 40 degrees Celsius. Snyman said this made it difficult for his troops to function, and made it more unpleasant for migrants as well.

An indication of this was the poor physical state of the people detained, Snyman said.

"Their condition is terrible. Many had been walking for the last four or five days with no food and no water. They are extremely hungry and thirsty by the time we reach them," he said.

One aspect that has changed from previous years was the demographics. A year ago most of those crossing the border were aged about 30. By late last

year they were about 25. Now most were between 16 and 20.

Snyman said that he had two companies of soldiers — about 300 soldiers in total — permanently patrolling along the frontier to intercept illegal border-crossers.

Roadblocks were also routinely set up in the area within 10 kilometers of the border.

Further from the border, commando units, working with police and traffic authorities also had checkpoints to filter out the illegal immigrants from legitimate travelers.

Turning to the question of a sudden, mass, inflow of refugees, Snyman said the SANDF was ready to handle the safety aspect of such a development.

"We have all drawn up our contingency plans and have identified the triggers that will activate them," he said. Xinhua

At least 16,000 Congolese refugees in Rwanda seek repatriation

NAIROBI, Over 16,750 Congolese refugees in the Rwandan northern province of Byumba wish to be repatriated back home, a representative of the refugees was quoted by Rwanda News Agency as saying on Friday.

"We are Congolese, we want to be repatriated back to our country," their representative told visiting High Commissioner Lubber who assumed office on January 2001 succeeding Mrs Sadako Ogata, a Japanese diplomat and academician who served since 1991.

According to the United Nations field office in Byumba, most of the refugees in Byumba are Congolese Banyamulenge and Banyamasisi who fled the Kivu provinces of the DRC at

the start of the war that toppled the former Zairean president Mobutu Sese Seko in 1996.

"They were shifted to Gihembe camp in Byumba in 1997 to date," UNHCR Assistant Public Relations officer Mika Inamahoro told Rwanda News Agency.

The refugees appreciated the security rendered by the Rwandan government and the schools as well as health facilities that are provided but they said more scholarships and also medications are needed to cater for the respiratory and eye infections that are on the rise.

On his part, High Commissioner Lubbers said, "I wish and pray that one day you all return home."

"I replaced Mrs Sadako Ogata last

year, and I wish to be the last person in this office to visit you here in this refugee camp," Lubbers told the refugees.

He said that next time he comes, he will visit them from their homes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo but not in the refugee camps in Rwanda.

In December 1997, following attacks perpetrated by infiltrators in the site of Mudende in the Rwandan western province of Gisenyi, where Congolese refugees were hosted, the Rwandan government and the UNHCR transferred the refugees to Gihembe camp in Byumba. At the end of January 2002, the camp hosts over 16,750 persons distributed in 4583 families. Xinhua

Angolan President seeks ceasefire, investment

LUANDA, Angolan President Jose Eduardo dos Santos has said that the government forces are to make contact with the rebel National Union for the Independence of Angola (UNITA) to establish a truce, which would pave the way for negotiations on a ceasefire and eventual peace.

According to local media reports on Saturday, during his visit to Brazil, Angolan President dos Santos said on Friday in Brasilia, capital of the country, that it was important to bring about normalization in Angola by concluding the Lusaka peace agree-

ment.

Dos Santos was speaking after a meeting with his Brazilian counterpart Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who "encouraged the Angolan government to take firm steps to reestablish peace and begin reconstruction of the country".

An Angolan delegation will visit Brazil soon to set up partnerships with Brazilian businesses and seek finance for rebuilding the war-torn country, dos Santos added.

However, Angolan President dos Santos, during his recent visit to the

United States, ruled out a unilateral ceasefire or amnesty to rebel UNITA still taking arms.

The Angolan civil war, which broke out since the country's independence in 1975, has claimed a million lives and left 4.2 million displaced.

On February 22, leader of the rebel UNITA Jonas Savimbi was killed in battle by Angolan government forces and the international community considers the death of Savimbi as a good chance for peace in the southwestern African country. Xinhua

U.N. seeking release of kidnapped Somali worker

NAIROBI (Reuters) - The United Nations is doing all it can to secure the release of a U.N. worker abducted in the Somali capital but has scant information on the kidnapers, a U.N. spokeswoman said on Friday.

Gunmen seized a Somali worker with the United Nations children's agency UNICEF in Mogadishu on Thursday, a day after U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said it was too dangerous to open a U.N. office in the anarchic city.

The spokeswoman named the worker, the first U.N. employee to be snatched for a year, as Ahmed Moalim Mohammed, a Somali national. There are currently no international U.N.

staff in Mogadishu because of the security situation.

"Mohammed is working on projects that benefit the Somali people. We are doing everything to secure his release," said Sonya Green, a Nairobi-based spokeswoman for the U.N. humanitarian coordinator for Somalia.

Green said the motive for the kidnapping remained unclear. It was U.N. policy not to pay ransoms for kidnapped workers, although no demand had yet been received, she said.

The kidnapping was the second incident in a week involving a Somali national doing U.N. work, a spokeswoman said in New York.

Hassan Sheikh Ali, a UNICEF con-

sultant, was killed after being accidentally caught in a cross-fire in Mogadishu, U.N. spokeswoman Marie Okabe said.

At least 27 people have died in clashes over the last few days in the country, including a 70-year-old Swiss woman who had worked for a humanitarian agency in southern Somalia.

The United States and Ethiopia, among others, fear the deeply splintered northeast African nation could become a haven for al Qaeda fighters fleeing Afghanistan after a Washington-led military campaign targeted them for masterminding Sept. 11 hijack attacks on the United States.

EU urges cessation of hostilities in Angola

LUANDA, The European Union (EU) has called on Angola's warring parties for a "rapid cessation of hostilities", stressing the urgent necessity of ending a conflict that is provoking a very grave humanitarian situation, according to a EU statement reaching here on Friday. In a statement issued in Madrid, the EU Spanish presidency expressed the conviction that peace could only be achieved "through the effective engagement of

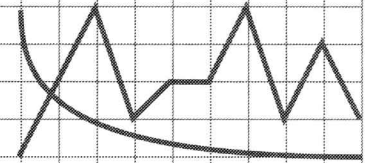
all in favor of peace and reconciliation" on the basis of the aborted 1994 Lusaka peace and power-sharing accord. The EU welcomed the "positive signs" given by the Angolan government, which has pledged its commitment to seek a "definitive end to all hostilities" after the death of Jonas Savimbi, leader of the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), on February 22.

The EU also urged rapid steps to aid Angola's estimated 4 million war-displaced people and expressed hopes that conditions would be created for the government to organize planned elections and reinforce the democratic process.

The civil war in Angola, which broke out in 1975 soon after the country's independence from Portugal, has so far claimed 1 million lives and left 4.2 millions displaced.

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YT Business



Controversy continues to brew over government's plans to privatize

By Mohammed H. al-Qadhi
Yemen Times Staff

Controversy in political and economic circles is brewing over the government's privatization policy. Many people in these circles, in fact, oppose the economic and financial reforms the government has started since March 1995 in assistance with the IMF and WB technical consultation experts.

The government justifies privatizing crippled state establishments by noting that the private sector needs more investment, while the government needs to get rid of bureaucracies which are adding to its deficit and dragging down the economy.

Those opposing privatization say that taking the government out of some services will hurt social equity and slow economic development. Moreover, they say, economic feasibility studies need to be carried out before certain projects are privatized, so that they don't collapse altogether.

The rules of privatization

Without ever giving a formal hearing to opposing views, the Yemeni government has gone ahead and set regulations and laws in place for the transfer of publicly-held assets. It has established a technical office that supervises selling campaigns and draws up lease contracts. It has also passed the privatization law No 45 for 1999.

Dr. Yahya al-Mutawakel, chairman of Privatization Technical Office, which is affiliated to the Industrial Ministry, said that the government carried out the first phase of privatization program before the law was passed. In this phase, 16 industrial establishments were liquidated and leased. They are now run by the private sector.

Opposition parties headed by the Yemeni Socialist Party have stressed that liquidating successful establishments in particular is a misguided policy. They formed a committee of opposition and independent voices to support the preservation of establishments of the public sector, particularly the successful ones.

The government, meanwhile, stresses that the privatization policy was drawn up to create a proper atmosphere for boosting activities of the private sector. It has tried to convince opposition parties of the necessity of privatizing these public establishments, giving guarantees to settle conditions of laid off workers.

Commenting on the government action, Badr Ba Salem, Industrial and Commercial Chamber GM, said "It is really hard to comprehend the privatization reality. It is true the government can't bear the heavy burdens and problems of crippled establishments. However, what has so far been done is not privatization. Rather it is liquidation for these crippled establishments."

He takes the view that the solution lies

in creating a good environment that generates the investments process.

Privatized sectors to date

Despite the controversy over privatization and its impacts on low-income people, a number of establishments are already privatized in different sectors. They are as follows:

1) The Financial and banking sector:

Procedures to privatize one of the most successful banks, the Yemeni National Bank, are now over. Another diagnostic study to privatize specialized governmental Banks: Agricultural, Industrial, and Housing Banks, is now underway.

The government announced late last year that it would privatize 60% of the National Bank and it will keep 40% of its ownership. This decision is being opposed by the opposition parties, as the bank is ranked number two in terms of its official importance in Yemen. Besides, it is an active commercial bank with 33 branches in different governorates of the Republic.

Independent economic sources say that the government wants to liquidate the Yemeni National Bank because it was established and developed within a country dominated by the YSP in the then Southern part of the country, before unity in 1990. Therefore, it is a matter of a political decision that has nothing to do with the privatization program, they said.

Sources at the Yemeni National Bank confirmed that the bank, established 30 years ago, made good financial profits. Therefore, it should be kept within the public sector, they believe.

They reveal that profits increased by 46% in the first ten months of 1999 and employment increased by 91%. Moreover, the bank had more investments after the unity, they say, adding that in 1998 profits increased by 23%.

The bank capital has also increased by 37% in the second half of this year, 2000, which makes it stand as a financial competitor to the activity of the main central Bank in Yemen.

However, the cabinet has not considered the financial successes of the National Bank. It agreed last July to give 60% of the bank to the main partners and 20% for public subscription, while keeping 20% for the government.

2) The industrial sector:

In this sector 16 establishments were liquidated and some leased for the private sector including the Dairy and Leather Factory in Aden.

3) The tourist sector:

Nine hotels were restored to their owners after they were nationalized during the socialist reign in Aden before the unity. Seventeen tourist establishments were leased for local and foreign investors.

4) The agricultural & transportation

poverty in Yemen. Jan Luis, Vice-president of the World Bank for the Middle East & North Africa, said Yemen enjoys good relations with the WB, and that has not changed as a result of the September 11 attacks against the US.

He added that the bank has been supporting the Yemeni government to reassess the consequences of the attacks. Luis points out that Yemen has already achieved positive results with the support of the WB in areas of education, health, water and rural roads.

He also said that WB wants to help

sector:

Government farms and leased establishments have been liquidated. Three other establishments are on sale now and liquidation while shipment and discharging in the National Marine Company are now being privatized.

5) Communication Sector:

President Ali Abdullah Saleh declared last June that within the free market orientation policy, the government will study privatization in the field of communication, as national, Arab and foreign capitals compete to introduce the best services.

The Ministry of Communication presented suggestions before the Yemeni Cabinet including privatizing 60% in the field of communication keeping 40% for the governmental sector. This has the objective of encouraging investors making them take part in enhancing the economic development in the country.

6) Aden Refinery and Airport Services:

The government has also sought partial privatization of Aden Refinery administration, which refines oil at more than 100 thousand barrels a day. It also sought to privatize part of Sana'a International Airport Services.

Structural reform and privatization

The government says that privatizing these establishments will bear fruits in terms of encouraging ownership and private investment in a competitive atmosphere, leading to combat monopoly.

Another advantage it sees is that privatization will relieve the burden of debts which resulted due to the government support to these establishments. The government believes this will guarantee the flow of new investors and modern technology to the country, which, in turn, will boost industrial production and encourage the establishment of stock market.

Therefore, privatization law stipulates in one of its articles that crippled establishments are not to be sold until they are highly assessed, and then put on sale through defining shares of public subscriptions selling the government shares in the mixed sector.

Experts believe that establishing a stock market will help the government put shares up for public subscription. However, selling these establishments out of this market will only increase the rampant financial and administrative corruption in these establishments.

Dr. Taha Alwan, administrative management teacher in the Faculty of Economy and Administration in Aden University, points out that obstacles facing privatization in Yemen are attributed to some legal limitations, that is difficulties to define and specify duties of public and private sectors and lack of information pertaining to future results of privatization.

In his study on "Privatization in

the country with its economic performance by creating an environment conducive for investment and reducing unemployment.

Luis met President Saleh, who briefed him on Yemen's efforts to deal with such national issues.

Ways of enhancing the existing partnership between Yemen and the WB, especially with regard to upgrading the civil service, were also discussed.

The World Bank is implementing 19 projects for roads construction estimated at \$45 million Another \$150 million will be earmarked for new water and sanitation projects.

Yemen is currently implementing an economic reform program with the support of the WB, which is also supervising the reconstruction of the government's enterprise and developing oil and energy resources.

Yemen", Alwan warns against many hazards posed by globalization. He views that achieving a successful privatization policy depends on the availability of a competitive atmosphere.

Monitoring privatization

As the privatization process means the disposal of public wealth, the Central Organization for Control and Audit (COCA) was authorized by the government to monitor its implementation and evaluate its outcomes.

In this program, COCA has two goals: the first is called "Commerce, Economic & Legal Skills" which is to define the costs, revenues, and profits made by the project that is intended to be privatized.

The second duty called "Personal Skills," in terms of active contact with high administrative units to explain the organization views on the feasibility of privatizing establishments and their social, cultural and environmental outcomes.

The point is that the performance of this organization is very much questioned by opposition parties, for its decisions are not taken seriously on the part of high authority institutions.

Future plans

In the second phase of the privatization program, the Yemeni government plans to involve the private sector in establishing expanding projects in three cement factories through defining shares with defined rates. It also plans to privatize the Yemeni Drug Company (YADCo) which is one of the most suc-

cessful companies in the public sector and the best in administration and production.

The technical privatization office is preparing a list of consultative companies interested in preparing privatization feasibility studies of other projects such as electricity and water services.

Revenues of privatization

Yemeni privatization law indicated in Article 32 that revenues of privatized establishments are to be put in a special bank account called Privatization Revenues Fund. This account is included in the state budget as a separate fund to support social and economic development projects.

However, Dr. Abdulraakeeb Muqbel, teacher of the Trade Law, Hodeidah University, comments on this and said "The public sector plays a substantial role in terms of creating job opportunities and enhancing living stability for many families. Therefore, in carrying out privatization program, the Yemeni government has to tackle the negative outcomes in terms of finding solutions to the increased number of poor people below the poverty line and increased unemployment rate which will result due to laying off workers in these privatized establishments.

WB, quick implementation of privatization program

The government is trying to take consultations and recommendations of the WB in carrying out its privatization program. WB Middle East unit chairman,

said.

"If Yemen carries out this program in a transparent way, privatization will attract foreign investment which will work as an income source for the government. The government may focus on activities of much interest to the private sector. In the coming reform phase Yemen has to move fast towards privatizing big projects in cement, electricity and Aden port fields, all of which will attract big foreign investment."

Social outcomes

Critical of recommendations of the WB, opposition parties oppose the privatization policy, it does not guarantee compensation and security for workers in these establishments.

Despite the government endorsement to establish Sustenance Fund to support laid off workers, privatization faces many challenges including lack of social security alternatives.

Some laid off workers commented on this fund by saying that the fund was a temporary measure that did not ensure their social security.

They believe that reforming conditions of crippled establishments could only be achieved through reforming the administrative units, giving incentives to workers so as to achieve the desired production and expected profits.

By and large, disputes over the implementation of the privatization policy in Yemen has slowed the government course to implement the program, to avoid its negative results and social turmoil.

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Minimum Requirements:

- Completion of secondary (Technical) education (12 years) followed by 2 years full-time formal training in mechanical trades and 6 years of related experience.
- Fair knowledge of English.
- Valid heavy equipment operator certificate or license.

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Attention: Senior Supervisor, Human Resources**

PLEASE DON'T CALL US, WE WILL CALL YOU IF YOU WERE SELECTED FOR TEST AND INTERVIEW

\$210 Million for Yemen

By Mahyoub al-Kamali
Yemen Times Staff

Yemen will receive new loans worth US \$210 million from the World Bank.

Road, water and sanitation projects will take up \$ 190 million of the total, said Ahmed Mohammed Sufan, Minister of Planning and Development. Education will also get a portion of the balance.

The WB will also provide the necessary technical assistance for the work, which is geared to help alleviate

Economic data pushes Dow to 6-month high

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Stocks rallied on Friday, with the blue-chip Dow Jones industrial average hitting a six-month high, after upbeat data on manufacturing, construction and consumer spending raised hopes the economy and corporate profits will rebound soon.

A rosy business outlook from Novellus Systems Inc. NVLS.O, a major producer of chip-making equipment, also helped. Novellus shares soared 14 percent and a sector rally ensued.

"It's an extremely powerful and meaningful rally, based on the economic data, which negate the thought the economy is in recession. That's what the market wants to hear," said Peter Cardillo, chief strategist at Global Partners. "Novellus' bright outlook also added a lot of wood to the fire."

The Dow surged 262.73 points, or 2.6 percent, to 10,368.86 — its strongest close since Aug. 27, 2001.

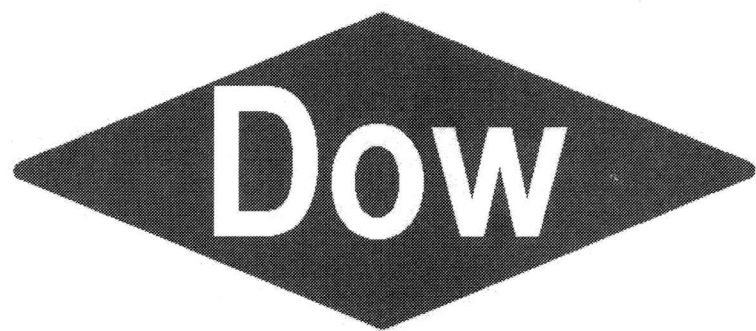
The broader Standard & Poor's 500 Index .SPX rose 25.05 points, or 2.26 percent, to 1,131.78. The technology-laced Nasdaq Composite Index .IXIC pulled in a gain of 71.26 points, or 4.12 percent, to 1,802.75.

For the week, Nasdaq rose 4.54 percent, snapping a four-week losing streak. The Dow average rose for the third week, gaining 4.02 percent, while the S&P 500 climbed 3.85 percent.

A key report showed factories had boosted production in February for the first time since July 2000 to meet a wave of new orders as demand for manufactured goods soared. That, plus other data for January showing U.S. consumer spending surged and construction spending grew at its fastest pace in a year, offset a drop in a closely watched consumer sentiment gauge.

"For several months now, the economic data has been stronger than the market," said Edward Hemmelgarn, chief investment officer of Shaker Investments, which oversees \$2.3 billion. "People are taking the better economic numbers and, for the first time, believing that that may translate into better corporate (earnings) numbers."

Semiconductor stocks helped lead Nasdaq's rebound after the update by Novellus, whose shares rallied \$5.97 to



\$48.56. "There are signs of the downturn going away," Novellus Chairman and Chief Executive Richard Hill said. "We see that February has followed January with continued signs of recovery."

The Philadelphia Stock Exchange's semiconductor index .SOXX jumped 11 percent, reflecting gains in the shares of others such as Applied Materials AMAT.O, up \$4.51 at \$47.98.

"Maybe we can see other companies giving better guidance or even hint at increasing capital spending," Cardillo said.

Chip giant Intel Corp. INTC.O climbed \$2.43 to \$30.98, helping both the Dow and the Nasdaq. It reported China was set to overtake Japan as its largest Asian customer within two years.

Chartered Semiconductor Manufacturing CHRT.O, the world's third-largest independent foundry, raised its guidance and pointed to a sector rebound. It rose \$2.87 to \$25.35.

Crown Castle International Corp. CCI.N, the No. 2 wireless tower operator, rose 27 percent, or \$1.69, to \$7.90, after it reported greater-than-expected leasing revenues for the fourth quarter amid a downturn in the industry.

AT&T Wireless Services Inc. AWE.N fell sharply as the nation's No. 3 wireless company warned that revenue growth will slow due to the weak economy and increased competition. It was the most active stock on the Big Board, slumping \$1.49 to \$8.60.

Biotechnology companies Invitrogen Corp. IVGN.O and Protein Design Labs Inc. PDLLO sank after each said sales growth in 2002 would be slower than expected. Invitrogen

fell \$11.52 to \$34.12. Protein Design fell 93 cents to \$14.94.

PerkinElmer Inc. PKIN sank 31.52 percent after the maker of scientific instruments lowered its earnings forecasts and said it would cut 500 jobs and reorganize a unit. Shares plunged \$7.25 to \$15.75.

But Andrx Corp. ADRX.O surged 25.29 percent after a federal judge threw out a lawsuit claiming its planned copycat forms of British drug-maker GlaxoSmithKline's drugs Wellbutrin and Zyan infringe Glaxo patents. Andrx jumped \$8.46 to \$41.91.

A rise in mortgage applications and industrial metal prices, along with a fall in corporate bond yields, helped to push a weekly indicator of U.S. economic activity slightly higher last week, the Economic Cycle Research Institute said.

"It's hanging in at relatively modest growth rates, which is telling you that the recovery is not going to be a gang-busters recovery," said Anirvan Banerji, ECRI research director. "But if it stays here, then we don't see a double-dip recession."

The Dow muscled right through a key technical "resistance" level at 10,300. A close above that level, technical analysts believe, opens the way to tackle resistance at 10,400 to 10,500.

Resistance — a level where sellers are likely to emerge — is now set at 10,500 for the Dow, 1,850 for Nasdaq, and 1,132 for S&P, according to Schaeffersresearch.com.

Support — where buyers are expected to swoop in — is at 1,750 for Nasdaq, 10,200 for the Dow, and 1,120 for the S&P. The levels are key elements of technical analysis, which studies prices, volume and charts.

Ex-Enron president Skilling hits back

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - As Congress squeezed former Enron Corp. ENRQ.PK president Jeffrey Skilling this week for more facts on the company's historic collapse, Skilling used a television interview to take another swipe at U.S. lawmakers.

Escalating his war of words with the nation's elected representatives, Skilling accused Congress of playing "judge and jury" in its probe of his role in the Enron debacle.

"The United States Congress has decided that I am guilty until proven innocent," Skilling said in the interview on CNN's "Larry King Live."

"I don't think the Congress was acting as a fact-finding entity, trying to figure out what happened," he said. "It's an election year, and during an election year, I guess you would expect something like that to happen, but I think that Congress is acting as judge and jury," Skilling said.

As Skilling counter-punched, California Democratic Rep. Henry Waxman sent him a letter asking for responses to 17 questions about Enron's broadband services, electricity markets, off-the-books partnerships and political activity.

Waxman asked Skilling to respond to the questions by March 7. A letter sent to Skilling on Thursday by four other lawmakers, including House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Rep. Billy Tauzin, set the same deadline.

Ten congressional committees are probing the corporate scandal at Enron that led to the largest bankruptcy filing in U.S. history, destroyed thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in investor equity and shook investor confidence.

The Justice Department is conducting a criminal probe and the Securities and Exchange Commission is also investigating the downfall of what was once America's seventh-largest firm.

Skilling, who resigned unexpectedly from Enron last August just over three months before it fell apart, said his workaholic tendencies had taken a toll on his personal life and he left because "I was tired."

The former Enron executive said when he left, he believed the company was "in great shape," and that he was subsequently shocked at its collapse.

Skilling has testified before Congress, but some other former top officers have appeared and refused to testify, citing their Fifth Amendment rights.

Continuing his approach of openly confronting questioners, Skilling told King on CNN he had some regrets.

"Would I have done some things differently? I think — I think we all would do — we would do a number of things differently," he said. King did not ask exactly which things Skilling would have changed.

Asked if he was angry with Enron internal whistle-blower Sherron Watkins, Skilling said, "I'm not angry at all. I think Sherron is absolutely entitled to her opinion. ... I think some of the things that she said about her opinion of what I was thinking, I think, were incorrect."

A few Enron managers have told Congress they tried to warn Skilling and former Enron Chairman Kenneth Lay last year of accounting problems with a web of off-the-books ventures that ultimately unraveled and brought down the company.

Watkins has told Congress she warned Lay, but was too intimidated to take her concerns to Skilling, who was approached by other worried subordinates. Among them was Jeffrey McMahon, then treasurer and now Enron president. Waxman sent a list of questions to McMahon, as well, on Friday.

Exchange Rare for the Yemeni Rial as of February 9

Curr.	Buying	Selling
USD	173.25	173.47
GBP	248.15	248.46
EUR	151.94	152.13
SAR	46.20	46.26
KWD	263.47	264.19
AED	47.17	47.23
EGP	37.36	37.41
BHD	459.55	460.13
QAR	47.58	47.64
JOD	244.36	244.67
OMR	450.00	450.57
DEM	77.70	77.80
CHF	102.73	102.86
FRF	23.17	23.20
ITL	.078483	.078583
NLG	43.18	43.23
SEK	16.51	16.53
BEF	3.77	3.77
JPY	1.299943	1.301594

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

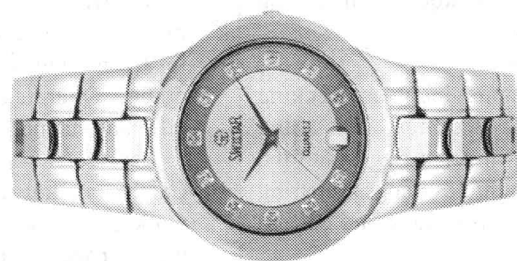
Middle East Stock Exchange Indicators

CSE	-0.4%	02/03
BSI	+1.01%	02/03
BSE	+0.13%	28/02
TUNINDEX	+0.21%	01/03
HFI	-0.12%	28/02
IGB	-1.05%	31/12
ISE100	+2.51%	01/03
KSE	+1.15%	11/02
MSM	+1.55%	09/12
Al-Quds	+2.87%	27/02
TEPIX	+0.07%	02/03
AMMAN SE	+0.41%	28/02
DUBEX	+0.13%	02/03

International Stock Exchange Indicators

NASDAQ	+4.11%	01/03
DOW JONES	+2.60%	01/03
NIKKEI	+2.12%	01/03
EURO 500	+1.06%	01/03
FTSE 100	+1.33%	01/03
CAC 40	+0.52%	01/03
S&P 500	+2.26%	01/03

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VACANCIES

The Embassy of United States of America announces for an immediate job vacancies within its organization.

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Education: Completion of secondary school is required.

Prior work experience: One year of clerical experience is required.

Language abilities/Knowledge: English level III (good working knowledge) is required. Knowledge of PC-based databases, spreadsheets and word processing programs is required.

Skills and abilities: level II typing: 40 wpm (English) is required.

Salary: The minimum starting annual gross salary for this position is YR722,595 of which one forty percent is paid in U.S. Dollars.

2) Human Resources Clerk

The position is located at the Administrative Section, of the American Embassy, and will be responsible of performing a variety of clerical and administrative support duties to the Human Resources Unit. Duties may include typing of correspondence, telegrams, announcements, and forms. Assists other members of staff in preparing and typing periodic employment or informational lists and reports. Translates routine correspondence or documents from Arabic into English, and vice versa, and other duties as assigned by supervisor.

Minimum qualifications: Completion of elementary school is required.

Experience: One to two years of clerical experience is required.

Language: Level III English ability (good working knowledge) is required.

Skills/Abilities: level II typing (minimum 40 words per minute with a small number of errors) and able to use PC and typewriter.

Salary: The minimum starting annual gross salary for this position is YR800,355 of which forty percent is paid in U.S. Dollars.

How to apply: All qualified Yemeni nationals should complete OF-612 (Application form for Employing Foreign Nationals) OR submit a current C.V. with certificate and recommendation letters attached. Applicants could submit the application or C.V. in person to the Embassy's gate or send it to the following address, Embassy Human Resources Office, American Embassy, Dhahr Himyar Street, P.O. Box 22347, Sana'a, no later than March 13, 2002.

Introducing the first documentary film on Socotra ISLAND OF THE DRAGON'S BLOOD TREE



Photo / illustration by Hvala

The Slovenian film producer Arsmidia has made, in coproduction with TV Yemen and TV Slovenia, a 53-minute documentary film about the island of Socotra.

The initiative and idea of 'The Island of The Dragon's Blood Tree' came from Miran Hvala, who first came to Yemen in 1982.

An opportunity for Hvala to visit Socotra came in 1999 when the island was opened for tourists. "What I found was the Sleeping Beauty of Yemen - an island of amazing beauty, of wonderful, open people and an abundance of endemic fauna and floral species--- and the living fossil called the Dragon's Blood Tree, i.e. the *Dracaena cinnabari*," Hvala said.

A wider project

In the following year, a camera crew of three spent a week on the island, working on a wider film project. The crew included the director Igor Likar, who in 1993 and 1997 won the Golden Butterfly of Trento, Italy. Also involved were Janez Kalisnik, a renowned cameraman and Hvala as an executive producer, PR man, organizer and others.

The team shot mainly on the site

around Hadibo (the site, the coast and fishermen), Qalansya (the lagoon and the surroundings) and the Dixem plateau (the Dragon Tree and the Canyon.)

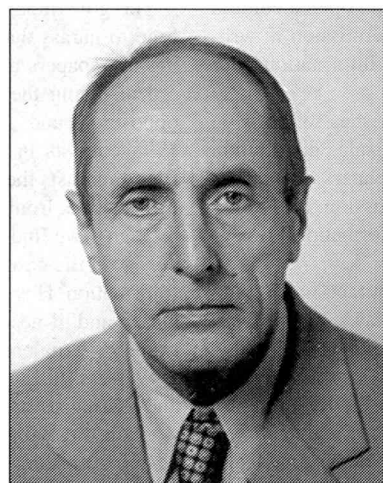
Logistic support and expertise were offered by the Socotra Biodiversity Project crew, led by Dr. Edoardo Zandri.

The documentary was taped on Kodak 16mm film and produced according to professional standards as a documentary film essay. It was released in mid-October 2001 on TV Slovenia, covering by satellite HOT-BIRD3 the whole of Europe.

More information is available on www.rtv slo.si/Socotra. An English VHS version is available to all interested, as well as pictures and slides for professional purposes.

The distribution and broadcasting of the pictures to a wider audience, especially those of national services, would represent a good opportunity to promote and campaign for the protection of this endangered virgin island.

Slovenian Hvala has held a number of different positions within the Slovenian Radio and TV, such as electronic engineer on the transmitter department, head of the engineering department of the transmitters and

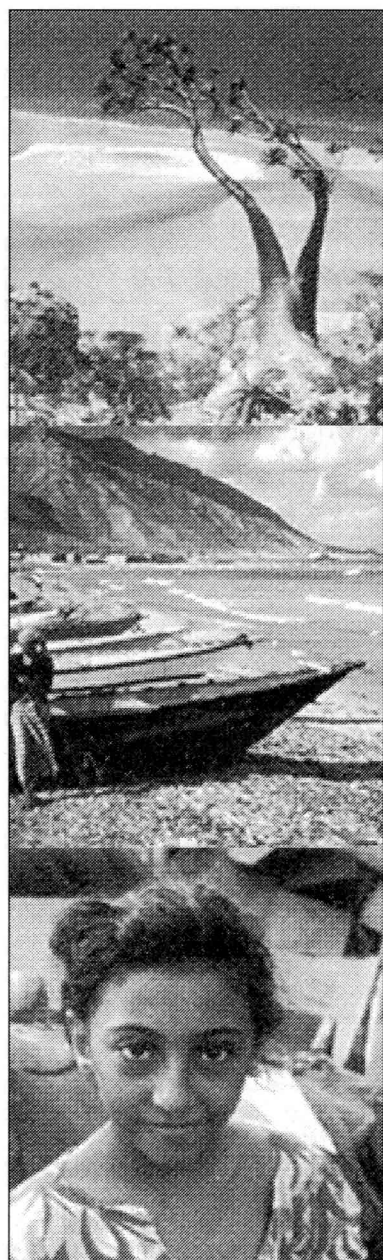


Miran Hvala

assistant of General Director for financial management.

He also cooperated with Yemen TV and Radio for a number of years before he turned to making documentary films.

For more information, contact Hvala Lubejeva 3 SI-1000 Ljubljana Slovenia Tel/fax: +386 1 5190486 email: hvalamm@hotmail.com or in Sana'a Fax: +967 1 274119 NTSC COMP before end of March



Tourism & Environment minister: "The ministry is exploring new potential markets that bring tourists to Yemen"

Yemen's tourism industry has suffered since the September 11 attacks on the USA.

More than 90% of international booking contracts, in fact, were cancelled, causing huge losses to tourism business and related services.

Some tourism establishments closed down and others laid-off or sent away most of their employees on holidays without pay.

Some hotels have been operating at 5-10% of their operation capacities.

In light of this new and difficult situation, Yemen Times writer Ismail al-Ghabri met with Mr. Abdul Malik Abdul Rahman al-Eryani, Minister of Tourism and Environment.

Following is an edited version of their conversation.



YT - What are the measures being taken by the ministry to face the catastrophic fallout of the September 11 attacks on the USA?

Al-Eryani - The ministry has taken steps to address this issue. The High Tourism Council devoted a meeting in November to deal with this issue. The council has approved a comprehensive plan and policy. Accordingly, a joint committee involving the ministry, the Hotel Union and Tourism Agencies Society was established to carefully study the magnitude of the impact.

The ministry is exploring new potential markets that bring tourists to Yemen, from such places as other Arab countries, South East Asia and Africa in addition to enhancing domestic tourism. Tourism promotion will be enhanced, targeting these markets, and Yemenia flight networks will be gradually expanded.

More other urgent measures have been taken to mitigate the direct impacts on the industry and limit losses to tourism establishments. The package includes postponing taxes due on affected establishments for the period 1999 to 2001, and giving more support for flight passenger insurance.

YT - What are the new projects to be launched by the ministry in the year 2002?

Al-Eryani - The ministry will continue to support tourism business. Efforts will be made to open new markets. We are planning in 2002 to organize promotional activities targeting potential tourism. 2002 will see a change in our promotional and marketing activities both at the international and national levels. The ministry will also work on revising our tourism strategy and policy.

YT - What about the crippled projects, such as the construction of tourist townships and hotels?

Al-Eryani - A decision was taken by the High Tourism Council to assist such projects. Investment facilities will be granted to contribute in payment of interest due on tourism investment loans and postponement of payment deadlines.

YT - What are the major obstacles hindering tourism in Yemen?

Al-Eryani - The strategic vision for 2025 had identified the tourism industry as an important sector contributing to the economic development of the nation. We are taking serious measures to improve the performance of his sector.

However there are certain obstacles hindering tourism that need to be addressed both in the short run and long run. There is a need to improve the infrastructure. The legal and institutional framework is also a priority. Other areas include improvement of tourism police services and development of national capacities and skills operating in the industry and serving the sector.

YT - Does the ministry have any role in fighting kidnapping?

Al-Eryani - No doubt, kidnappings have affected the tourism industry and our image abroad. The government has

taken serious measures to address this issue. A special law was enacted in 1998 enacting penalties. The ministry is cooperating with the Ministry of Interior and other relevant agencies. Actions have been and are taken to improve tourism security services and to enhance local community participation in tourism business.

YT - Yemen has a unique biodiversity, especially in its islands? Are there any investors in these islands?

Al-Eryani - Indeed Yemen is rich with its biodiversity, especially in the islands. Socotra Island is unique in its natural resources and biodiversity. We are committed to integrate economic concerns with environmental protection in environmentally sensitive areas.

For example, in the case of Socotra a zoning plan has been prepared and approved, identifying resource use reserve, general use zone, national parks, areas of special botanical interest and nature sanctuary. A draft Master plan has been prepared aiming to achieve socio-economical development in the island and preserve its unique biodiversity. An eco-tourism department has been set up and we are cooperating with the Island Development authority concerning tourism investment in the islands. Our aim is to promote tourism activities and investments based on sound environmental impact assessment.

YT - Why doesn't the ministry promote domestic tourism?

Al-Eryani - This is not true. We are paying attention to domestic tourism and encourage this field. As I have mentioned earlier, we are planning to organize domestic promotional activities in four governorates. This package includes organization of tourism exhibitions, marketing seasons and awareness campaigns. Participation of local community in tourism activities is also an important issue in our agendas.

YT - The World Earth Summit will be held this year. What has the ministry planned for this summit?

Al-Eryani - Preparations for the nation's participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development has been underway since October 2001. A committee and a temporary secretariat have been set up to supervise and follow up the process.

The preparatory committee has been mandated to prepare the National Report on Sustainable Development to be presented to the summit, scheduled to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002. The committee consists of representatives from relevant ministries, authorities, academic institutions, womens' associations, the private sector and environmental NGOs.

The committee has already two meetings to launch the preparation, review progress made on environmental management at the local level,

preparation process plans, formation of seven thematic working group and the outline of the working papers of these groups.

A national workshop was organized on January 21st to review guidelines for the preparation of the national report and exchange information with relevant stakeholder. We will be discussing the draft report soon, in March, in a national forum.

At the regional level, we have been actively involved in preparation of the regional report. In fact Yemen is chairing the Arab group in Johannesburg.

YT - There are different groups involved in protecting the environment. How can these bodies consolidate the work of the ministry?

Al-Eryani - Environment protection and concern for sustainable use of the natural resources has grown gradually since the late 80s, both on the part of the government and the public. The government has been undertaking active roles in environmental management and institutionalized environmental work. The Ministry of Tourism and Environment was established in 2001 with broad responsibilities for environmental management.

Growing public interest resulted in the creation of a number management systems and the formation of a number of non-governmental organizations and increasing involvement of media in environmental issues. The academic institutions and scientific communities also got more involved in environmental research. Environmental research centers have been introduced in Aden, Sana'a, Hadramout and Hodaidah universities.

We cooperate with these groups and make use of their facilities. National consultants and academics have been providing services to environmental work whenever a major action is planned and relevant entities and stakeholders are invited to join. The ministry is also considering resource mobilization from donor communities not only for the ministry and its authorities, but also for other relevant agencies and NGOs.

YT - Many western countries have advised their citizens not to visit Yemen. Has the ministry taken action to ameliorate the image of Yemen overseas?

Al-Eryani - European countries such as Germany, UK and Italy have already removed such bans. This is a step ahead and reflects the achievement of the ministry and our diplomatic mission to improve the image of Yemen overseas.

YT - Any final comments?
The ministry appreciates your interest in tourism and environmental sectors and is interested to enhance the role of media to support tourism promotion and environmental awareness.

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**SOCOTRA
THE ISLAND OF THE
DRAGON'S BLOOD TREE**

www.rtv slo.si/socotra

Silver-smithery: Sublimity of the great art

Silver-smithery is one of the oldest and the most popular handicrafts in Yemen. It has been handed down from one generation to another. Well-known places in silver-making can be found in many different cities in Yemen including Shabwa, particularly in al-Awalek district, which is our focus in this interview. The silver-smiths in the al-Awalek are well-known for their dexterity which is deeply rooted in the past.

chest or foreheads and still be worn by women in some villages of the country.

Yemen Times has met up with one of the prominent silver-smiths in al-Awalek, who gained a good reputation in silver-smithery. Following is an edited copy of their conversation.

Q: Silver-smithery is one of the technical and significant handicrafts. How do you find this job?

A: Actually, it is laborious job which

A: There are of course several different names in each district of Yemen. In al-Walek district, we call jewelry which are put by women on their faces *Ganagen Woozek*. Others worn on their chest are called *Lazem* or *Khetr* which are similar to necklaces, and there are also jewelry which is worn on women's waists, termed in our country as *Zemam*, *Mushalshal* or *Raggashat*. There are also circle-like jewelry which used to be worn by old women on their humerus, and is still be worn in some villages.

Q: But what we see these days is that silver-smithery is somewhat different from that of the past. How do explain this?

A: As I have said earlier, tastes are different from that of the past and each one has his own way and taste. In the past for instance, the bride used to wear a lot of jewelry in different parts of her body, such as, her heads, arm, fingers, chest, humerus and even in her legs. but we see now is the opposite. Women wear light jewelry and in order to be attractive. We can say that time and place is the major difference of the past and the present.

Q: Silver-smithery is very popular here in Yemen, does it have a good

demand in the Gulf States?

A: Frankly speaking, there is a good demand inside the country more than that the outside. The majority of people here in Yemen prefer to buy jewelry rather than gold. Yemenis who travel abroad whether in the Gulf States or the other countries of the world constitute a good thing for exporting our valuable silverware to these countries.

Q: What are the different materials used for silver-smithery including the traditional and the modern ones?

A: To talk about the silver-smithery is a long process. But we are here don't use the traditional way of silver-smithery. It has been handed down from our ancestors. We use special herbs to polish silver which is mixed with lemon and then together with silver pieces. Then, we dry them and put them inside powder. We are still use the traditional way in silver-smithery which is preferred by all.

Q: Any last comments?

A: I thank the Yemen Times for its limitless efforts in taking care of the Yemeni heritage in general. Without its efforts, many people in Yemen would not know the tremendous treasures we have in our homeland.



They make beautiful types and antique forms. They make very beautiful rings, necklaces, medals, Yemeni swords, etc. Lots of people tend to decorate their Jambias with golden pieces.

Many tourists are fascinated to see all these things in Yemen and they appreciate such talented people. This is evident from the fact that they sometimes stand for hours looking at these people working in a state of meditation.

The trade of silver was restricted to some skilled people and has become a source of income for most silver smiths. Coins were made of silver and among these is the *Ryal* which was termed at that time as *Maria Treza*. It was used to be worn by women on their

needs a creative mind. It should be molded in accordance with different tastes which suits any admirer. There are several silver drawings which can be molded with a special solder and liquid material used for linking pieces and forms together to get any attractive form.

Q: Are there any other industries in which silver can be used?

A: Silver-smithery is used in jewelry and used also in different industries such as the making of guns, heads of Jambias and other industries.

Q: There are several names of jewelry in your district. Can you tell us some of these names?



A Donkey's Diary A story by Ali Ahmed Qubatti's

Today: no

This morning my owner led me to the farm because, as he said, oxen became more expensive; therefore, he must use the donkey, (i.e) me instead of them.

I thought of that for a long time. I couldn't refuse, for if I refused he would use the came as usual. I went out following him in farm, and the hand labor started. It was not easy to work, because I was in need of practice because of the unjust small trenches of the ground. As a result whenever I diverted left or right, he lashed me till my legs bled.

Today: yes

I heard on the radio that a society called "The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" had been formed. On hearing this, my owner trembled frightfully. But he commented: "This society didn't represent lords of labor rather than a group of these who didn't

own tools of production."

So he wouldn't attend meetings of that society, because it didn't represent anyone but itself.

When I heard the news soon I went out to hang a sticker on my leg "Let lashes of injustice end forever".

Today: An attitude

I met a friend loaded with bags of flour. He talked to me cheerfully about what that society represented and that he collected donkeys to demonstrate in front of the society to claim a reduction in labor hours.

Today: Who?

I refused to eat my fodder which is less than enough to feed a lamb. How about me who worked from 5 A.M. to nightfall, bearing lash stings while I hit the ground with my feet? My master grew more angry when he saw my legs not moving in spite of their pain. He felt tired of beating me, so he left the

yard to bring another can of seeds. I swallowed them quickly. I felt sympathy for him, therefore I went out with him.

Today: why?

My master ordered me not to take part in the demonstration with other donkeys promising to answer my claims. It was not wise to stand against those who provided you with enough food.

Then he added if I behaved wrongly, he would stop giving me food for three days. As he said that, jesters had nothing to admit, except shouting and sweeping thoughts of present and future of donkeys thinking that would pave the way to control donkeys and lead them in a way that served their interests.

Near the well a quarrel took place between representatives of the society and donkeys' owner of donkeys.

You don't care for their hunger but

you care for their production. You order them to obey you, but neglect your duties towards them. As if the game won't pass because they are more attentive than you, guess till they get their rights completely.

We donkey's owners know them well more than you do. You are merely a group of paupers wishing to exploit donkeys by the name of donkeys. Such injustice should continue no more. You should be fought.

Today: the end of 11

Till now I still think of what should be done. All began to feel weak points in donkey's lives. But the last decision should be taken into consideration. I think the recent struggle is for our interests, those of us, the donkeys, especially when fodder is served generously.

Translated by: Sa'ad Sharif Tahir

A Canadian in Yemen:

Where the streets have no name

It was Day 8 of my life as a foreigner in Yemen as I sat in a dilapidated cargo office at the international airport in Sana'a. Here I am, one more person living in this place of one million souls.

Yemen is among the oldest inhabited regions of the world. And I'm likely the only one with a Canada hockey cap.

On a wall in the airport office is a dated poster advertising a regional airline. Pictured, as if looking through an airliner cockpit, are popular global destinations, including New York's Statue of Liberty with a prominent backdrop of the World Trade Center's Twin Towers.

'Fly with us'

"Fly with us and see the world," says the ad, somewhat innocently.

A clerk is filling out papers so I can collect my cargo that's arrived from Canada. He pleasantly asks if I prefer my form to be filled out in English or Arabic.

"English," I say.

"Are you American?" he then asks. "Canadian," I respond.

He smiles and nods, "Canadian okay. Better than American."

I glance at the poster and recall a meaningful visit I once made to New York over an Easter weekend. A friend who grew up in Brooklyn, one of New York's districts, had showed me his hometown. It was a lifetime away.

Back at the cargo office, amidst bustling activity and overwhelmingly loud interactions, a manager informs me I need to return "tomorrow" because the office is about to close for the day. It was just 11:30 in the morning.

Thankfully an insider arrives to my aid, and after a couple of hours of paper shuffling, a dozen signatures, several payments and trips between office and shipping building, my bins of personal belongings are released to me.

Why the delay?

"I am the computer," is the comment from a clerk at my last stop, while he printed my file in a large ledger.

Another local puts it this way, "We have a very good administrative system, but a very stupid management system."

'In sha'a 'llah'

It was a good introduction to the concept of "in sha'a 'llah," an expression I'm discovering means, 'definitely yes,' 'definitely no,' or any shade in between. Yemen runs on its own clock.

With the help of a Korean doctor friend, I finally get my cargo onto a beaten Toyota 4x4 and we make our way through this city's dusty streets. As a Westerner, it's a discovery to see women covered head-to-toe in their black baltas, and men with their jambias.

As a Canadian, I'm also taken aback by the poverty. Considering life is harder outside the capital, I see why Yemen ranks 150th on the UN's human development scale. I'm saddened to learn the average lifespan here is just 56 years.

I also see why Yemen's rate of traffic deaths is among the world's highest. I'm told there are 14 streetlights in Sana'a and it seems half don't work. I'm not familiar with the many intersections that run on a first-honk, first-drive basis.

My doctor friend and I reach home safely. My wife Jean Chamberlain-Froese, is also a doctor, a Canadian obstetrician who is here to help save the lives of the many Yemeni women who are dying during childbirth. She and I live on a typical Sana'a side street. Like many roads, it has no name.

So what is a Canadian to make of this ancient place that, until recently, has existed in oblivion to many Westerners?

With 20 million people and 60 million guns, even if most are for show, it seems like America's old Wild West. In places like Canada, Yemen is known for incidents such as the 2000 bombing of the USS Cole. That Osama bin Laden has roots here doesn't help Yemen's image.

Still, I believe there's more to this country than accounts of inefficiency and violence. That's what my New York City friend told me as he showed me the slums of his New York home on that Easter weekend. "You have to look past what you see to know what it's really like here," he said.

After attending an Easter church service with him, in the heart of what had previously been the most foul part of New York's Times Square, I understood

his point. People are people. And while cultural change can be painfully slow, history shows it does happen.

In Yemen's case, while it's clear America is not loved here, I think of the trust that is developing. It's reported the U.S. is offering it up to \$800 million, largely to bolster Yemen's national security, and that is nothing to turn away from.

I'm impressed also that Yemen is a fledgling democracy. Its government is not perfect, and needs to held to high standards. But Yemen has, at least on paper, rights such as freedom of the press, something unheard of in neighboring countries.

Happy Arabia

I've also discovered the value of treating foreigners kindly is deeply engrained here. In fact, this region has been known for centuries as Happy Arabia. It reminds me of Newfoundland, an east-coast province in Canada that is poor economically, but rich in spirit. It has among Canada's friendliest people.

Interestingly, Yemen is from where the Queen of Sheba came, seeking Solomon's wisdom. And 2000 years ago, the mrryh and frankincense given to the Christ Child by wise men from the East, in all likelihood, originated here. These commodities from southern Arabia were highly valued throughout the ancient civilized world for their pleasing aroma.

Is it reasonable to think, then, Yemen will ever again leave this type of sweetness for others to enjoy? The answer, I suspect, will be determined by how much the West and East can co-operate for the good of both.

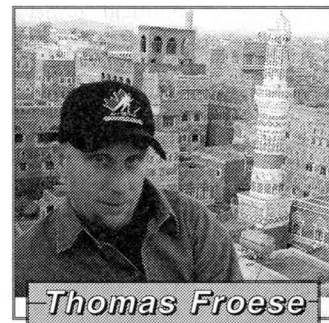
American human rights activist Booker T. Washington says it well in his biography *Up from Slavery*, "that one of the most vital questions that touch our American life is how to bring the strong, wealthy and learned into helpful touch with the poorest, most ignorant and humblest, and at the same time make one appreciate the vitalizing, strengthening influence of the other."

He asks, "How shall we make the mansion on Beacon Street feel and see the need of the spirits in the lowliest cabin in Alabama cotton fields or Louisiana sugar-bottoms?"

For the West, this same question remains: How will we make today's mansions of the developed world feel the need of the spirits of the lowliest places, in the proverbial cabins and cotton fields of places like Yemen? Will Westerners even try to tug on the trousers of our influential, or offer our own services when we have something of value?

Likewise, will Yemen be receptive to help when it is offered? Or will they allow their own fears and stereotypes of the West to close the door on people who can help them have a unique position in the Arab world?

Thomas Froese, (140765@sympatico.ca) is a YemenTimes editor.



First benevolent medical camp now going in Sada

By Sa'ad Sharif Taher
Yemen Times Staff

General hospitals and medical centers in remote rural areas provide poor or inferior medical services compared with hospitals in big cities; therefore, sick people rarely get full care.

So it's a welcome move that Dr Abdulnasser al-Minibari, the Health minister has proposed what is called "The Benevolent Medical Camp" to offer better medical services to such people. This includes major surgical operations and free medicine.

Orders were given to al-Thawra hospital in Sana'a to organize staff of different specialized doctors toward this end.

The idea was used in Abyan last October and now another group has been serving in Martyr Ali Abdul-Mughni hospital in Saddah, since earlier this month.

Dr. Mohammed Saleh Abdul-Mughni, director of the hospital said: "We prepared a sterilized hall for operations and up to February 9, 69 major surgeries have been performed. In addition to operations, large quantities of medicine are also being offered

freely. If there were another anaesthetic set, two operations could be done at the same time.

Q: What did the visit paid by H.E. Minister of health signify?

A: We were highly honored by his visit on 4th Feb, 2002 because as far as I feel it had a pleasant echo in the region and to our personnel in particular.

He promised to look into all our needs of equipment, medicines and

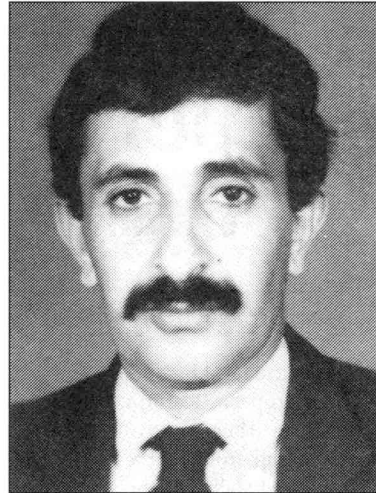
adding extra doctors.

Q: What are your future projects?

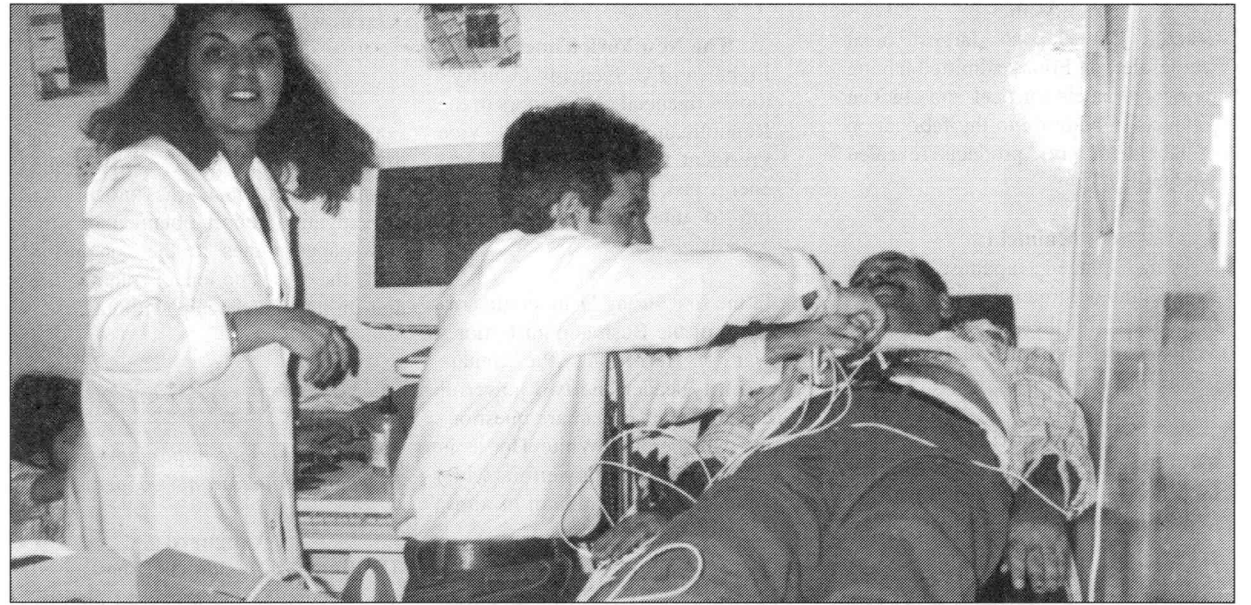
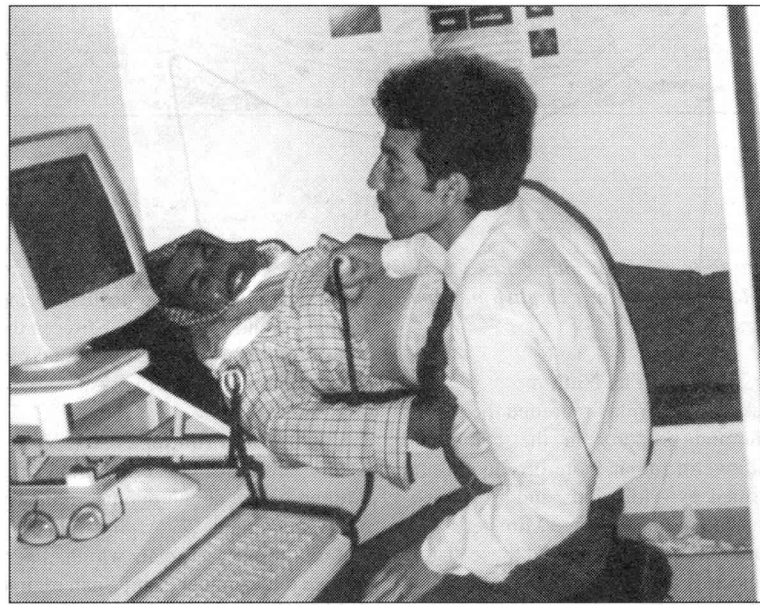
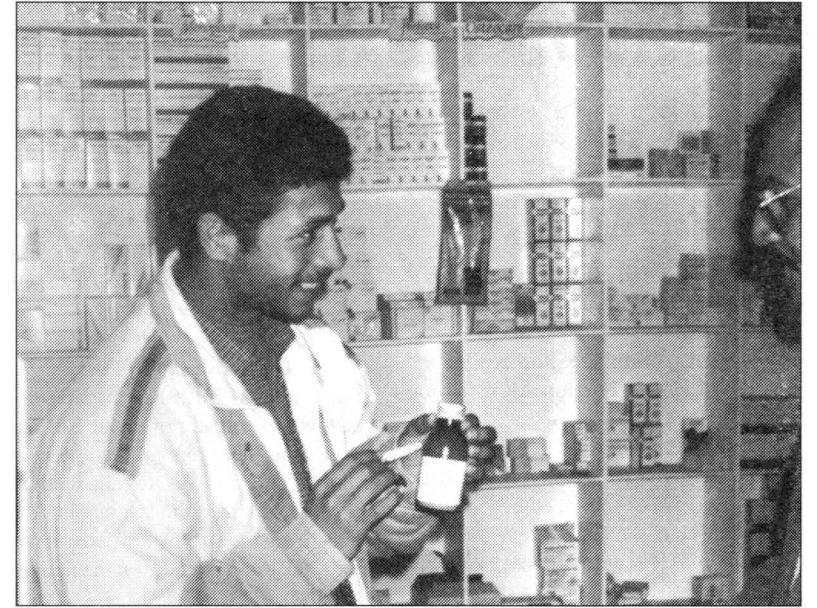
A: We are working to establish nursing schools with boarding houses to both male and female students, we are also trying to expand our room to 20 beds, in addition to offering additional staff and new machines.

Q: What's your last word?

A: We are very grateful to the minister and we highly appreciate his gener-



ous visit and our thanks to Dr. Mohammed Fadhil, general director of financial affairs and supplies for providing us with much X-ray films.



Dr. Yuriko of JICA to the YT:

"I hope the history of our collaboration will be a history of combating TB in Yemen"

More than three million people are killed by TB, one of the most frightening diseases in the world, every year.

In Yemen, about 15,000 TB patients are detected and treated.

Many international organizations have been working hard to help Yemen decrease the rate of TB patents since years. One of these major organization has been Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) which has an office in Sana'a.

As far as TB control is concerned a lot of Japanese health experts have been sent to Yemen last of whom was Dr. Yuriko Egami who left Yemen last week after two years and a half of great and sincere efforts in the field of TB control.

Ms Yuriko Egami is a doctor with a specialty of International Health. After her post-graduate training in Pediatrics for six years, she learned Public Health and have been working in this field, in Djibouti, Honduras (Central America), Geneva, Bangladesh and Yemen, with an NGO, WHO (World Health Organization), and JICA.

The Yemen Times met her just a few days before she returned to Tokyo after finishing her contract and filed the following interview:

YT - When did you come to Yemen?

I came to Yemen for the first time in January 1999 as a short-term consultant. Then, since August 1999 I stayed in Yemen for two-and-a-half years.

YT - What are the things that you have been doing?

My assignment as a Chief Advisor of the Yemen TB Control Project (third phase) is to give technical and managerial advice on TB control to the National TB Control Program (NTP), Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP).

YT - Can you give us some idea about Tuberculosis and its control?

Tuberculosis (TB) is regarded as one of the most frightening diseases in the world, and more than three million people are killed by TB every year.

In Yemen, about 15,000 TB patients are detected and treated. We have effective drugs for TB, and patients have to take these medicines as indicated by health staff at least eight months to be cured, even cough or fever stops a few weeks after taking drugs. If a patient stops taking drugs before the period, there is a chance of Mycobacterium getting resistant to many anti-TB drugs (which is called multi-drugs resistance (MDR)-TB) and it costs thousands of dollars to treat a

patient with MDR-TB. So, the most important in TB control is to complete the treatment by taking anti-TB drugs everyday until the end of the course, and to cure the patients so as to avoid emergence of MDR-TB.

The current strategy for TB control is called DOTS (Directly-Observed Treatment, Short-course), which more than 200 countries have adopted globally.

There are five components of DOTS which are essential to achieve successful TB control program. The most important is (1) management of the patients, i.e. to make sure that patients take medicine, by watching the patients taking the drug in front of health workers everyday which also allows better communication and reliability of health staff and patients.

The concept is that it is the responsibility of health staff, not patients, to complete the treatment.

Other components are; (2) political commitment to TB control by the Government, (3) diagnosis and follow up of the patients by sputum smear exam which is economic and reliable method to confirm the patients excrete the Mycobacteria, (4) stable and timely drug supply system with adequate amount of stocks, and (5) recording and reporting system which allows us to evaluate the treatment outcome of the patients.

DOTS strategy is effective in curing

more TB patients and in controlling the emergence of MDR through preventing patients default, as well as to enable the program evaluation by patient's management with reporting.

Good results

Since 1995 when the Ministry of Public Health of Yemen adopted DOTS strategy NTP has obtained prominent results with its continuous efforts and the partners' supports. NTP, MoPHP are responsible for TB control in all of Yemen, and they are making efforts to expand DOTS strategy to enable good TB control services for the people in Yemen.

They maintain the national policy, get budgets, procure and distribute anti-TB drugs, train health staff, and collect data of the patients for cohort analysis to find out the outcome of the patients (how many % are cured). In each Governorate, one Governorate TB Coordinator (GTC) is responsible for implementing all the activities in TB control of the respective Governorate.

The next target

I have been working with NTP, MoPHP to support above-mentioned activities for better TB control services to Yemen, at both central and Governorate level. Until 2001, we expanded DOTS strategy so that at least one unit for TB control would be available in one district in Yemen. The



next target is to expand DOTS to all peripheral health facilities so that TB control services will be much closer to the people.

YT - When did the TB control program begin?

The Japanese government started collaboration with the TB program in the Yemen Arab Republic in 1983, where we established the basis of a national TB Control, foundation of these TB Centers, and human resource development.

After the unification of North and South, the second phase started in 1993 where we focused on integration of NTP to Primary Health Care system as well as intensification of the TB program in the southern area. The third phase started in August 1999 and will be continued until August 2004. The Japanese Government has continuously supported the Project with strong back up by JATA (Japan Anti-TB Association).

YT - How much has been spent on TB control (from the Japanese Government)?

The provision of equipment has been at JY 466 Million. Unfortunately I have no idea about the running cost.

The Grant Aid project for TB centers has so far been JY 2500 Million plus sending Japanese experts (69) and Mission teams (17), and Yemeni trainees to Japan (63).

YT - How many Yemenis have been trained in Japan in the field of TB?

63 trainees since 1983 up to now. (see table)

YT - What is your advice to the Ministry of Health in Yemen?

First of all, I would wish that Ministry staff would work for patients and people, so that better health services may come closer to the people.

The Ministry of Health in Yemen takes a very good initiative in donor's coordination. Each agency has its own strategy for support, and I would wish that the Ministry might get more ideas about which agency wants what kind of support. We are always suggesting the idea that the Japanese Government would like to support in which manner. By knowing this, the Ministry can maximize the support of donors and agencies.

Better TB Control Program in Yemen and its sustainability may rest in expanding our partnership to advocate TB control policies, to raise awareness and demand for effective TB control and to assist in the delivery of resources and services.

I believe that early this century we will witness the expansion of effective TB control in Yemen through our partnerships. I hope the history of our collaboration will be a history of combating TB in Yemen, at a time when TB is one of the biggest health problems in the world.

The Budget allocation from JICA to The National Tuberculosis Control in Yemen

1. Project Type Technical Cooperation

The Input from JICA

	Project Phase I	Project Phase II	Individual Experts	Project Phase III	Total
Period of Cooperation	1983/9/1 to 1992/8/31 (9 years)	1993/2/21 to 1998/2/20 (5 years)	1998/2/26 to 1999/8/5 (1.5 years)	1999/8/6 to 2002/3/31 (2.6 years)	(17.3 years)
Mission Team (times)	9	5	2	1	17
JICA Expert (> 1 year)	15	4	1	3	23
JICA Expert (< 1 year)	16	20	5	13	54
Yemeni Trainee in Japan	40	14	1	14	69
Equipment provided (JY)	246,475,000	133,564,000	4,267,000	81,522,000	465,828,000
Running Budget (JY)				37,366,600	Until 4/2002

As of Feb 2002, USD1=JY132

2. Grant Aid

1986	Construction of National Tuberculosis Institute (Sana'a)	JY 918 Million
1987	Construction of Tuberculosis Centers (Hodeidah, Taiz)	JY 1,080 M.
1991	Expansion of National Tuberculosis Project	JY 580 M.
2000	Aden Tuberculosis Center (Plan)	JY 564 M.

Major news items in leading international newspapers

Japan

The following are major news items in leading Japanese newspapers.

Asahi, Yomiuri, Nihon Keizai

A report on a Foreign Ministry in-house investigation will admit to Liberal Democratic Party lawmaker Muneo Suzuki's deep involvement in government assistance projects on four Russian-held islands off Hokkaido, ministry sources said Friday.

Asahi

Starzen Co., Japan's largest meat wholesaler, on Friday admitted having fabricated labels for beef and chicken products in addition to the fabrication of labels for pork products revealed Wednesday.

Mainichi

A war-displaced Japanese woman from China was reunited with her older brother at the Health Ministry in Tokyo on Friday, ministry officials said.

Yomiuri

Snow Brand Milk eyes establishing a joint holding company with JA group to take over milk business.

Philippines

The following are major news items in leading Philippine newspapers.

The Philippine Star

The Philippine anti-graft court special division deferred on Saturday for two weeks the trial of the plunder case of detained former President Joseph Estrada to give his seven newly appointed lawyers time to prepare for his defense.

Today

Field training in the ongoing

US

The following are major news items in leading U.S. newspapers.

The Washington Post

U.S. President Bush has dispatched a shadow government of about 100 senior civilian managers to live and work secretly outside Washington, activating for the first time long-standing plans to ensure survival of federal rule after catastrophic attack on the nation's capital.

The New York Times

- Eighteen of U.S. energy industry's top 25 financial contributors to the Republican Party advised Vice President Dick Cheney's national energy task force last year, according to interviews and election records.

- In the first strong Democratic criticism of the Bush administration's war on terrorism, the Senate majority leader and two powerful committee chairmen are questioning whether the White House is expanding its military efforts without a clear explanation of its aims.

Germany

The following are major items in leading German newspapers.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

The European Reform Convention began on Thursday, with a compassionate call from its president Valery Giscard d'Estaing to the attendants to work out a "Constitution for Europe". He urged 105 representatives of European national governments and parliaments as well as the European Parliament and the European commission to work for the convention's success.

Die Welt

The situation of the Bundeswehr (German Defense Force) is more catastrophic than what was known. An investigation report obtained by this newspaper comes to the conclusion that "the troops no longer stand before the military leadership without reservation."

Nigeria

The following are major news items in leading Nigerian newspapers.

Vanguard

The European Union (EU) has raised an objection to the proposed plan by the Nigerian federal government to ban importation of about 20 items from the EU this year. The objection by EU member countries was based on their belief that the proposed ban would reduce the volume of trade between Nigeria and their countries and contradict a World Trade treaty.

The Punch

Experts from the United States has set up a base at the Ikeja Military Cantonment, preparatory to their clean up of remnants of exploded bombs following January bomb blasts.



Courtesy: Arab News

Pakistan

The following are major news items in leading Pakistani English newspapers.

The Nation

Pakistan on Friday regretted the loss of life and property in the communal killings in Indian state of Gujarat and termed as "ridiculous and irresponsible" the Indian Defence Minister's allegation that ISI was behind these disturbances.

The News

The United States has handed over to

Pakistan a draft memorandum of understanding (MOU) to formalize and further extend cooperation between the two countries to curb international terrorism and terrorist networks.

The Frontier Post

Efforts continue to rehabilitate the Afghan Army, as the defence ministry has reappointed 27 Afghan generals and top military officials who had performed duties under Zahir Shah regime and later in successive communist governments as leaders of the 'under construction' national army.

Britain

The following are major news items in leading British newspapers.

Financial Times

British Prime Minister accepted for the first time on Friday that British troops may have to remain in charge of Afghanistan's international security force after the April deadline set by Britain.

The Daily Telegraph

British Prime Minister Tony Blair paved the way for Peter Mandelson to return to high office on Friday after virtually apologizing for sacking him as Northern Ireland secretary.

The Independent

A British Muslim holiday maker is believed to have been murdered and a

fellow traveler injured in religious violence in India that has killed almost 300 people. Two other Britons in the same party are missing.

The Times

Scotland Yard is proposing a middle way option of on-the-spot fines for cannabis possession amid growing unease within the police over the controversial "softly-softly" approach pioneered in London.

The Guardian

An urgent warning was issued Friday night to British politicians and their staff after packages containing a toxic substance were intercepted by Scotland Yard en route to the prime minister and a Scottish MP.

Turkey

The following are major news items in leading Turkish newspapers.

Hurriyet (Freedom)

The relations between Turkey and Greece are being shadowed by a request from the Greek General Staff and Foreign Ministry that the "Strait of Istanbul" be renamed as "Bosphorus Strait" and written in the NATO document. Turkish authorities regarded this move of Athens as "arrogant" and "very unfriendly."

Milliyet (National)

The European Parliament (EP) has called on Turkey to stop interrogations

into the Turkish People's democratic Party, which works for the civil rights of Kurds, but has no connection with the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). The EP warned that banning the party will damage Turkey's effort to join the European Union.

Turkish Daily News

The 76-year-old Turkish prime minister, Bulent Ecevit, is fighting a new front to convince the Turkish public that he is in good health. Turkish newspapers have published conflicting news reports on his health, arguing whether he can face an election campaign in 2004.

India

The following are major news items in leading Indian newspapers.

The Times of India

Riots, arson, mob rule and mass murders, all targeted against the minority community, continued well into the day on Friday all over the west state of Gujarat. The death toll after two days of governmental inaction shot up to 250.

The Hindu

A joint appeal, issued Friday night after a meeting between Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee and leaders of major political parties, urged the people to isolate the perpetrators of violence and defeat their sinister designs.

violence broke out in some parts of the country on Friday during the 12-hour strike called by the World Hindu Community. However, there was mixed response to the call elsewhere in the country except Gujarat, the state worst hit by the strike.

The Statesman:

Violence broke out in some parts of the country on Friday during the 12-hour strike called by the World Hindu Community. However, there was mixed response to the call elsewhere in the country except Gujarat, the state worst hit by the strike.

Egypt

The following are major news items in leading Egyptian newspapers.

Al Ahran

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak chaired a cabinet meeting Thursday to tackle issues pertaining to his visit to the United States set for Saturday, especially the Middle East peace process and bilateral economic cooperation.

Al Akhbar

President Mubarak Thursday met with European Union foreign policy chief Jovier Solana over the outcome of the EU official's talks with Palestinian, Israeli and Saudi officials on the situation in the region, and European initiatives to be adopted by EU leaders during their Barcelona summit set for March 15-16.

Al Gomhuria

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher denied on Thursday reports that Cairo was mediating a meeting between Saudi Arabia and Israel at the request of Tel Aviv.

The Egyptian Gazette

President Mubarak on Thursday received a telephone call from Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and discussed with him the current deterioration in the Middle East as well as other issues of mutual concern.

South Africa

The following are major news items in leading South African newspapers.

Saturday Star

The government and the South African National Defense Force are ready to deal with any overflow of the situation in Zimbabwe into South Africa, Defense Minister Mosiuoa Lekota said on Friday.

The Citizen

Commercial farmers in Namibia will be made to pay a special land tax from next month in an effort to ensure that the land is used to its full economic potential, a news report said on Friday.

Kenya

The following are major news items in leading Kenyan newspapers.

Kenya Times

France is looking into ways of increasing tourists flow into Kenya, visiting French Minister for Public Works, Transport and Housing Jean Claude Gayssot said.

Daily Nation

Kenyan detectives are analyzing forensic evidence to determine if any of the 10 suspects in custody was involved in the murder of top policeman Njiru Kyanda.

East African Standard

Seven people are feared dead after they consumed a lethal brew which they looted from a vehicle that had overturned in Ndia Division of Kirinyaga District in Kenya's Central Province.

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Yemeni Nationals

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- Carries out repairs to stand alone A/C units on variable speed drives (VSD) in the field. Includes inspecting equipment, evaluating nature of problem, obtaining spare parts if necessary, carrying out repairs using basic hand tools and a variety of operational equipment, using oxy-acetylene welding equipment, as applicable, replacing refrigeration and vacuum gauges, purging refrigeration lines with nitrogen, attaching vacuum pump and refilling system with required gas.
- Carries out planned maintenance. Includes visiting unit, replacing or cleaning filters, checking control panel and wiring etc, checking tension and condition of belt, checking fire and manual dampers, checking level of refrigerating coolant if necessary, checking thermostat settings, closing up unit and returning unit to service. Carries out own electrical isolation as necessary.
- Carries out repairs to walk-in freezers and chillers in the camp. Includes assessing nature of the problem, obtaining parts as necessary, carrying out repair using a variety of hand tools and equipment, and handing unit back to user.
- Repairs water coolers, domestic fridge-freezers and ice-making machines following standard repair procedures.
- Carries out other similar or related duties such as assisting automotive shop mechanics in carrying out auto repairs as required, repairing and maintaining extracting fans on kitchen roof, and providing assistance to electrical technicians during peak loads.

Minimum Requirements:

- Completion of Secondary (Technical) education followed by two years' full-time formal training in air conditioning/electrical trades with 4 years of A/C maintenance experience.
- Commenced hands on training for work order and permit procedures.
- Good English skills.
- Valid Yemeni driving license.

If you have the above requirements, please send your CV to the following address
NOT later than March 25, 2002.

Canadian Nexen petroleum Yemen
Human Resources
P. O. Box 15137
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen
Fax No. 01-269899

Attention: Senior Supervisor, Human Resources

Please don't call us, we will call you if you were selected for test and interview.

Press Scanner

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr

Al-Shoura daily
2 March 2002

Main headlines:

- President Ali Abdulla Saleh Opens Tareem-Thamoud Strategic Highway The president Urges heading for agriculture, more industrial investments
- President Bush Expresses Satisfaction over Yemeni-American cooperation in fighting terror
- Yemen takes part in Arab Labor Conference
- France warns Israel against its military adventures, calls for immediate pullout
- Gaddafi discloses proposals for

- peace in the Mideast
- Israeli warplanes violate Lebanese airspace

The newspaper's editorial says the social development emerges as a pivotal issue in president Saleh's visit to the governorates of Ma'reb and Hadramout. The president's speeches during his visits focused on development of that issues. The president emphasized that the issue depends on both material and moral pillars represented by rationalizing the awareness and behavior in general through taking care of performance of education establishments and guidance. The president stressed the necessity of

eliminating the phenomenon of vengeance that contradicts morals and values of our people and our religious ideology. He urged on the scientific upbringing of the young generation depending on bequeathing science and knowledge to them.

On the materialistic side the president encouraged businessmen to head for investment in agriculture as a basic cornerstone for the national economy as well as industrial and other areas of investment.

In his speeches the president has also stressed the true spirit of citizenship urging to be given the position it deserves. He put stress on the combined responsibility in fighting acts

threatening stability and security, which harm the homeland's reputation and make it miss economic opportunities and the citizens' interests.



Al-Ayyam daily,
28 February 2002

Main headlines:

- President begins a tour of Hadramout
- Culture ministry closes down French cultural centre in Sana'a
- Yemen repatriates a Saudi citizen suspected to be linked to al-Qaeda
- Yemen Central Bank's foreign reserves increase



- 56 Articles amended, 19 omitted from text of investment law draft
- Foreign minister begins a visit to Japan
- French Embassy in Sana'a expresses astonishment over closing down the French Cultural Centre

- U.S. Ambassador to Al-Ayyam: The important thing to have stronger government and security to encourage investment
- 31 Yemeni expatriates detained in New York while on their way back home

Continued from page 12

Yemen needs a free press

Prosecution and closing of newspapers

Newspapers are liable to closures and arbitrary restriction in violation of local and international law.

Al-Shoura (voice of the Federation of Popular Forces), closed down since 26th September 1999, was prosecuted in August 1996, May 1997, September 1998, and March 1999.

Al-Wahdawi, mouthpiece of the Unionist Nasserite Party, was prosecuted in June 1998.

The Yemen Times was accused of slander and spreading lies after publishing articles in November 1998, accusing government officials of channeling international development funds into their own bank accounts. The prosecution was dropped in July 1999 following the death of the editor-in-chief Dr. Abdulaziz al-Saqqaf in a tragic traffic accident. Dr. Saqqaf was the most important and influential defender of human rights, free press freedom and expression and democracy in Yemen.

Al-Thawri, voice of the Yemeni Socialist Party, stood in the defendant's dock in January 1997 and June 1998.

A case was also filed against Al-R'ay Al-A'am (Independent) in September 1998 and it was blocked several times. The last one was on 2/12/1998. Al-R'ay Al-A'am office in Sana'a was bombarded by unidentified people on Sunday evening, February 20, 2000. In a statement, chief editor of the paper Mr. Al-Ulifi held the Minister of Interior responsible for the explosion.

Cases were also filed against other newspapers like Al-Sahwah (Islah party), Ray (Sons of Yemen League Party), Al-Haq, Al-Ayam.

Hassling journalists

The other major headache faced by the media in Yemen is harassment. The harassment of the independent press and journalists is not limited to threats of legal action and prosecution.

Yemen journalists, thinkers, and opinion makers are subject to different sorts of harassment. They are detained, imprisoned, beaten up and threatened. Some of the journalists are civil servants and therefore they are subject to removal from their posts or suspension of their salaries. Abdurraheem Musen of Al-Thawri and Ahmad Al-Ashwal of Al-Wahdawi are cases in point.

Not only that, journalists and international media reporters are badmouthed and even accused of being agents of international Zionism, of being mercenaries working against the interests of the country. For example, Mr. Abbas Ghalib, Chief Editor of Al-Mithaq weekly (voice of the ruling party PGC) lashed at the Arab and foreign newspapers and agencies' correspondents with accusations of being spies of foreign agencies. That was on October, 1999.

As a reaction, the correspondents filed a defamation suit against Mr. Ghalib. The first hearing of this case was held in February 2000. The investigation is still going on. Some are also accused of being secessionist working against the unity of the country. Some are subject to abrupt and unusual heart attack, like Abdulhabeeb Salem Muqbil (1996), Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf (Yemen Times Chief Editor) was killed in a traffic accident in June 1999.

Several journalists were beaten up by security officers while reporting the case of Sana'a university's ripper, Mohammed Adam Omar, Sudanese national, in May 2000. Two female journalists, Ramah Hujairah and Aida Abdulhameed were harassed and received phone threats after the same story of the Sana'a University massive killer. Althakafia weekly, was harassed because of reproducing a story "Sana'a an open city" for a Yemeni writer who died 25 years ago.

Its editor, Sameer Al-Yousifi was arrested for some time. The story was considered to have abused Islam.

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) 2000 report on press freedom in Yemen says there were different sorts of violations against the press. They vary from lawsuits to torture and sometimes assassination attempts.

These violations and others triggered a lot of concern and worry about the future of the press freedom in the country.

Professionalism constraints

As we said earlier, the Ministry of Information is the authority to issue licenses for kicking off a paper or magazine. The role of the YJS is still very absent. The Ministry issues licenses to everybody despite of their being journalists or not. Most of the people running newspapers in the country are not journalists by profession. They don't look at the press as a mission and a tool of change in the society. Rather, they run them in a way similar to running shops or groceries.

In some cases newspapers are used as a means to blackmail or harass others. This has made people lose confidence in the press and its unbiased stand as a voice of the voiceless. The owners of newspapers on their part exploit journalists and still deal with them as ordinary workers and asking them to sign in and out. They don't understand what it means to work in the press.

The Ministry of Information still divides the press into three categories; government, partisan and independent. While, in fact, a press should go beyond such division. The press in general should be free despite of its affiliation or color.

The private sector has not yet started investing in the press and this is why the economic situations of the newspapers are still very poor. Some of them are seasonal. They publish in particular occasions once they are able to guarantee some ads. Some of them are family newspapers. Once the father or editor dies, his son is to replace him, regardless of his qualification or profession.

All this has disturbed the professionalism of the press in Yemen. This has made some European countries question the professionalism of the Yemen press, and look up for means to support the press in this regards as a part of supporting the drive for democracy, in which professional media is an important component. The Dutch government has already started thinking about this issue very seriously. A Dutch journalist has carried out a report on this matter to be presented to the Development Minister in the Hague. Other donor countries should think seriously to help the Yemeni press in this respect.

The ongoing battle

The above instances clearly illustrate the deeply disturbing and outrageous panorama of events concerning the press in Yemen. It is an ongoing legal battle between the Ministry of Information, on one side and the partisan and independent newspapers on the other. From this, only one can comprehend the predicament and hardships Yemeni journalists face. They have to practice giving lip service to the people in authority, otherwise they won't be able to obtain their blessing. The list presented above is enough to make one able to understand their ordeals.

Another important point that should be highlighted again is that Yemeni society is still troubled by the high rate of illiterate people, estimated roughly at 80%. In addition, most of the Yemeni population (around 87%) live in the countryside, inaccessible to newspapers' coverage. This indicates that the role of newspapers in informing the people is still very limited.

Hence, the government monopoly over the TV and Radio stations should come to an end, since these two organs play a major role in shaping public opinion, particularly in the countryside. To boost its democratization further, Yemen needs the launch of free and independent electronic media. Unless the people are adequately informed, they will not be able to make decisions that have meaning in their lives.

** This paper has been presented to the New Media and Change in the Arab World Conference, held in Jordan, March 1, 2002*



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Microsoft Launches Xbox in Crucial Japan Market

By Reed Stevenson

TOKYO (Reuters) - Microsoft Corp Chairman Bill Gates took to the streets of Tokyo's trendy Shibuya area on Friday to make sure the U.S. software giant's Xbox game machine got off to a strong start in Japan's tough gaming market.

Microsoft said it was ready to ship 250,000 of the rectangular black boxes built around a big "X" logo and prepared a dozen games titles to convince Japan's gamers and powerful game publishing community that the Xbox is here to stay.

The goal, Gates said in an earlier interview with Reuters, was not to try to beat its robust U.S. launch in November, but to win the hearts of hard-core gamers.

"Our goal in our launches is to have the really dedicated gamers get the machine and tell their friends, 'look, this is the next generation,'" Gates said.

Analysts said it would be hard to imagine Xbox knocking Sony Corp's best-selling PlayStation 2 out of its top position any time soon -- if at all.

Atsushi Ishizaka, 22, showed up 12 hours before the launch to be first in line to buy the first machine in Japan from Gates.

"I felt that this was a really impressive machine," he said, as Microsoft employees handed out green gloves, Xbox logo hats and steaming cups of coffee to keep the crowd warm.

Ishizaka is a hard-core gamer who said he was in Times Square on November 15 for the initial Xbox launch, making Friday's purchase his second machine.

At 34,800 yen (\$260), the Xbox costs 5,000 yen more than the PlayStation 2 and 9,800 yen more than Nintendo Co Ltd's Game Cube.

Asked if Microsoft could stage a repeat of its strong U.S. debut, which resulted in sales of 1.5 million units in just six weeks, Gates said: "This is not the Christmas season, you shouldn't compare us to numbers like that. As we get into next December we should be able to deliver good numbers."

Microsoft said the Xbox, which also

plays DVD videos and sports an Internet connection, would be backed up by an online gaming service by the end of the year that would allow users to compete and interact in virtual game world from living rooms.

In an apparent departure from its previous aim of starting an online gaming system six months after each country's Xbox launch, Gates said Microsoft was planning a dual U.S.-Japan online system debut by year-end.

Gates was joined by Japanese rock star Yoshiki, leader of the band "X Japan," to kick off the launch amid cheers from the crowd of several hundred people. He also popped into a popular nighttime TV talk show to hand out a few consoles and plug his new machine.

BETTING BIG

To make sure it can claim a piece of the \$20 billion global video game industry, Microsoft has invested more than \$1 billion in the machine and promised to spend a further \$500 million into promoting the Xbox.

"Japan is the most challenging market for Microsoft as far as the Xbox is concerned," said Hirohisa Ohura, Microsoft Japan's managing director in charge of Xbox operations.

Gates said Microsoft was able to increase Japan's marketing budget thanks to a strong U.S. debut.

While the Xbox has 75 U.S. and 31 Japanese game titles lined up, PlayStation 2 already has 220 U.S. and 400 Japanese games.

"Sony does have a significant lead," said Credit Suisse First Boston analyst Jay Defibaugh. "And they have more concrete plans for online gaming."

Sony, in a preemptive move, last week unveiled plans to begin online offerings for the PlayStation from April.

Microsoft has stressed that it is easi-



er for game developers to write software for the Xbox than the PlayStation 2 and that its high-capacity 8-gigabyte hard drive and high-speed Internet-ready Ethernet port will help makers develop more interactive and appealing games.

Gates said such features "allowed them to bring down their lead time and focus on the creative aspects of the game."

Game consoles live and die by software sales because they generate lucrative royalties for the hardware makers.

Xbox's fast computer and video chips allow users to combat each other and virtual opponents in games such as "Halo" and "Genma Onimusha" with fluid moves that match the PlayStation 2.

Software powerhouse Konami Co Ltd lined up three sports titles and jet-flying game "Airforce Delta II," while Sega Corp came out with its "Jet Set Radio Future" in-line skating action game.

Asked if Microsoft was willing to buy a stake in a Japanese game maker to clinch key game titles, Gates said: "We're Microsoft -- we're open to any sort of relationship. We haven't done any minority investment at this point but we're always open-minded to do something like that if it would help somebody do a breakthrough game for the Xbox."

Leaving little to chance, Microsoft also prepared 50,000 special edition translucent Xbox models for the launch and developed a smaller controller for the Japanese market. (\$1=133.73 Yen)

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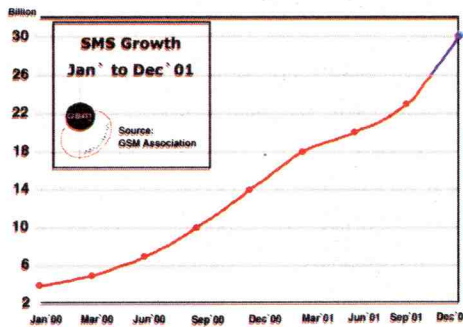
This service is one of the advanced GSM technology applications and one of the most commonly used world-wide. Users can enjoy the benefit of SMS being a very efficient and effective communication tool.

The SMS is one of the easiest and cheapest GSM services to use across the world. Customers can exchange written text messages via their mobile phones at a very low cost.

This can be done locally or internationally. In both cases, the cost of sending an SMS remains very low.

SabaFon has provided this service, in both English and Arabic, to its subscribers free from any monthly subscription. This means that ALL SabaFon subscribers can activate this service at no cost and also receive messages free from charge. They can also send local or international SMS text messages according to their needs.

The SMS is one of the fastest growing GSM services in the world. In just two years, the number of SMS messages sent worldwide has grown from 1 billion messages per month (April 1999) to an average of more than 16 Billion messages per month in Q1 2001. More than 50 Billion SMS text messages were sent over the world's GSM networks in the first three months of 2001 - reports the GSM Association. The below chart shows the trend in SMS growth and forecast, January 2000 to December 2001.



Following the global trend, the SMS in Yemen is growing very fast. The practicality as well as efficiency of this service are the dynamics for its growth in the

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Almost half of Canada watches their hockey team win Olympics for first time in 50 years

Canada strikes Gold!



OTTAWA (Reuters) - Canada's House of Commons has taken time from deliberations on tax rates and lumber disputes with the United States to glory in the Olympic gold-medal victory of the Canadian men's hockey team over Team USA.

"My question for the prime minister is, how about that Joe Sakic?" the leader of the parliamentary opposition, John Reynolds, said in his leadoff in the daily question period, referring to the most valuable player in Sunday's final.

"I'm very happy that the leader of the opposition mentioned that. It was a fabulous afternoon yesterday. We were all cheering, but it is not only yesterday. The last two weeks have been very, very good," Prime Minister Jean Chretien responded.

Chretien watched the 5-2 victory with his wife Aline at his 24 Sussex Drive residence in Ottawa. He congratulated captain Mario Lemieux and manager Wayne Gretzky by phone afterwards.

"Winning this game was very, very important, because for the first time in 50 years, hockey, our game, was coming back to Canada with a gold medal," Chretien declared to a standing ovation in a rare multi-party tribute.

"There were probably not many homes in Canada that were not celebrating," he added.

Even the Bloc Quebecois, which would like to take Quebec out of Canada, doled out praise.

"I would like to congratulate our athletes, all our athletes," Bloc leader Gilles Duceppe said.

Outside Parliament, a lone horn-blowing car waving a huge Canadian Maple Leaf flag pursued the celebrations that had spilled out onto Canada's streets from coast to coast on Sunday afternoon.

CBC television said a record 10 million Canadian viewers -- one in three citizens -- watched the game.

The National Hockey League's website says hockey's origin is uncertain, but Canadians have long claimed ownership and it had rankled them to have waited half a century between the nation's last Olympic gold in hockey in 1952 and the hockey gold medal in Salt Lake City on Sunday.

Speed skating

South Korea Olympic chief intends to resign

Reuters

PhotoSEOUL

(Reuters) - South Korea's Olympic Committee head Kim Un-yong has expressed his intention to resign over a speed skating dispute at the Winter Olympics in which a Korean skater was disqualified from a gold medal.

But it was not clear whether Kim's resignation was final, Korean Olympic Committee spokesman Park Pil-soon told Reuters.

"Mr Kim expressed his intention to resign," he said. "Our board members unanimously agreed to ask him to cancel his resignation and conveyed it to him, but Kim left the meeting room without saying a word," Park said.

Seoul's YTN cable news network reported the resignation, then followed with a report saying it had been retracted.

It was also not clear whether Kim would quit as South Korea's delegate to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

A week ago, Korea's Kim Dong-sung crossed the line first in the 1,500 metres men's short track final at the Olympics but was disqualified for impeding U.S. skater Apolo Anton Ohno.



Apolo Anton Ohno (2L) of the United States tries to pass South Korea's Kim Dong-sung in the final lap of the men's 1500 m short track final at the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Winter Games. REUTERS/Kimimasa Mayama

Ohno received the gold medal and the United States Olympic Committee got a deluge of e-mail threats from Koreans. South Korea's appeal of Kim Dong-sung's disqualification was rejected.

South Korean media, politicians and fans condemned Kim Un-yong for overruling the South Korean delegation's threat to boycott the Salt Lake City closing ceremony in protest.

Kim Un-yong was a strong contender last July to take over the IOC presidency from Juan Antonio Samaranch but Jacques Rogge of Belgium won the prized position at a congress in Moscow.

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In the last few years, Aden has become the most attractive destination for local tourism from all over the country. During the Eid vacations of the winter season, Aden's charming moderate weather plus its beautiful beach have become two major reasons for hundreds of thousands of Yemenis and foreigners to flood the city during this time.

However, the star of last Eid was no doubt the Sheraton Goldmohur Aden Hotel, which is owned by Al-Kathiri Investment Group. Uniquely strategic location by the western clean beach west of Aden has made Sheraton Goldmohur one of the preferred hotels



Despite the fact that the hotel was recently inaugurated, as it was opened less than a year ago, Sheraton Goldmohur hotel stands as the fastest growing hotel in terms of popularity and preference by many Aden-lovers.

"We feel Sheraton Goldmohur Hotel's extra feature is the open beach that it has. It is the only hotel that has a beach that is open for water to refresh itself, hence it is a hotel where you have the option to swim in the sea or the swimming pool of its own," said one of the hotel's guests for the last Adha eid vacation.

of the whole city by tourists from within the country and from abroad.

The hospitality level is excellent, so is the service. Bookings for rooms at the hotel have started months before the Eid vacation, making it extraordi-

nary difficult for anyone who may have come a few days before the eid to find any vacant rooms.

"Quality service to our guests is our number one priority" says Mr. Alaa' Hamed, the Sales Manager of the hotel.

Overall, Sheraton Goldmohur Hotel serves as a good example of a hotel that combines both a strategic location and quality service, making it a unique and first class hotel for a fabulous vacation in the city of Aden.



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Made-in-Yemen project inaugurated

The Yemeni Industrialists Society (YIS) has declared a national project "Made in Yemen" which aims at raising awareness of the economic importance of the national industry as an economic support to the national economy.

The project also aims at promoting



national industries and providing the essential services for an industrial future in Yemen. A new marketing administration was inaugurated by the YIS.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Chairman of the YIS, Dr. Abdulgabar Hayel Saeed, and the Deputy Industry Minister, Mohammed al-Haimi and others. Mohammed al-Haimi, the Deputy Industry Minister was awarded the medal of "Made in Yemen" on behalf of the Minister of Industry.



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جدا 2002

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