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Monday, 16 December 2002 - VOL. XII • Issue No. 51 • Price 30 Yemeni Riyals • Founded in 1991 by Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

إربح الملايين
مع مسابقة «يمن تايمز»
ص 22، 23

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A week of high drama ends; missiles in Yemen

They're ours!

By Reuters and Yemen Times News Services

ADEN - Days after the United States released the North Korean ship that carried them, Yemen received a shipment of 15 Scud missiles from North Korea.
"The North Korean ship arrived at Hodeida port and immediately started unloading," a port official told Reuters on Saturday.

Our view: See page 12

The So San first arrived in Yemen late on Friday at Al Mukalla port on the Arabian Sea after the United States released it on Wednesday, admitting that North Korea was not violating any law by transporting the missile cargo.
The ship had earlier been intercepted by the Spanish Navy in the Arabian Sea. Spain

said 15 Scud missiles, 15 conventional warheads and 85 drums of unidentified chemicals were found hidden under cement bags on the ship.
The ship carrying the missiles was stopped by two vessels from the Spanish navy participating in Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S.-led global anti-terrorism coalition, said Alberto Martinez Arias, a spokesman for Spain's Defence Ministry in Madrid.

Continued on page 2



A Spanish military helicopter drops a crewman to the North Korean ship So San in the Arabian Gulf, where a shipment of 15 Scud missiles were discovered, hidden, for Yemen. To avoid a diplomatic row with Yemen, the U.S. has allowed the delivery. (Reuters)

But at what cost?

BY REUTERS
YEMEN TIMES NEWS SERVICES
AND YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Sana'a - While Yemen has in its possession 15 Scud missiles ordered from North Korea, there may be a high price to pay in strained diplomatic relations.

Japan said Thursday it might consider freezing economic aid to Yemen in a protest to North Korea's shipment that Yemen imported this week, al-Jazeera satellite channel reported on Saturday.

A spokesman for the Japanese government said the measure came as part of Japan's policy of fighting acquisition of mass destruction

weapons.
Related to the issue, the Japanese foreign ministry summoned Yemen's ambassador Abdulrahman Mohammed Al-Hothi and told him North Korea's development, deployment and exports of missiles were a menace to the world.

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary expressed his country's belief that such things as weapons of mass destruction should not proliferate.

"As a matter of course our country believes that such things as weapons of mass destruction, which could become the cause of conflicts, should not proliferate," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said.

Hiroyasu Ando, who is the head of the ministry's Middle East bureau, reminded the Yemeni envoy that Japan pays "full attention to exports and imports of weapons" in considering its official aid to developing countries.

Ando called the missile shipment delivery an "extremely regrettable incident to our country" and asked the ambassador to convey Tokyo's demand that it would not be repeated.

Japan had extended 21 million dollars in so-called official development assistance (ODA) to Yemen in fiscal year 2000/2001.

Continued on page 8

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Continued from Page 1:

A week of high drama ends; missiles in Yemen

They're ours!

Crews from the Spanish ships Navarra and Patino stopped the unflagged ship So San east of the island of Socotora and called U.S. authorities for assistance, Martinez said. The Spanish navy stopped and boarded the ship after its crew refused to identify themselves.

The North Korean captain of the So San initially told Spanish officials the ship was carrying cement. The missiles were discovered shortly thereafter, Martinez said.

The shipment raised U.S. concerns that it might end up in the hands of a third party.

Yemen said on Thursday the Scud missiles and warheads were aimed at boosting its defenses in a troubled region, but promised that it did not plan to buy more.

The release of the ship appeared to defuse a potentially explosive situation in a region where tensions have been high since the United States made clear it was prepared to go to war with Iraq over its suspected weapons of mass destruction.

The Scud is a crude, Soviet-designed ballistic missile which can carry nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. Scuds are inaccurate but that may not matter if the warhead is a weapon of mass destruction.

Yemeni officials said Sanaa bought the Scuds in 1999 at the height of border tensions with neighboring Saudi Arabia and Eritrea. Both disputes have been resolved since.

Yemen is trying to shed an image as a haven for Muslim militants and has arrested dozens of al Qaeda suspects in a major crackdown as part of the U.S.-led war on terror.

It inherited an unspecified number of Scuds from South Yemen after it united with the pro-Western North in 1990. Southern rebels used them against the north in the civil war of 1994.

Earlier in the week US Whitehouse spokesman Ariel Fleischer said there is no provision under international law prohibiting Yemen from accepting delivery of missiles from North Korea.

"While there is authority to stop and search, in this instance there is no clear authority to seize the shipment of Scud missiles from North Korea to Yemen and therefore the merchant vessel is being released," Fleischer said.

Fleischer went out of his way to say the United States has no diplomatic complaints against Yemen, underscoring that Yemen is not only a sovereign government but also a reliable partner in the U.S.-led war against terrorism.

"I think that Yemen understands the United States' commitment to making certain that terrorist regimes in the area do not receive weapons," Fleischer said.

The decision to release the ship came after US Vice-President Dick Cheney tried to persuade President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen to give up delivery of the battlefield-range missiles, the same kind Yemen has bought from North Korea before.

Cheney then consulted with US President George Bush, and afterward the Yemeni leader — who also spoke today with Secretary of State Colin L. Powell — was told that he could have the ship's contents.

Administration officials said Saleh had agreed to keep control of the missiles and not pass them on to either Iraq or terrorist groups. The State Department spokesman, Richard A. Boucher, also said Secretary Powell had received assurances from Saleh that no more Scuds would be bought from North Korea.

Cheney's involvement underscored the sensitivity of the diplomatic task. He and Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld have been outspoken about the need to cut off North Korea's

sources of income and highly critical of its sale of weapons to other countries.

But administration officials acknowledged that it was impossible not to yield to Yemen's request for the missiles because of its strategic location and its cooperation in the American fight against Al Qaeda.

Asked whether the United States had thought Iraq — which has no history of buying from North Korea — was the intended recipient of the missiles, American officials said it had been considered a possibility.

If Iraq had been the buyer, not only would confiscating the shipment have been legal under United Nations resolutions, but Iraq would also have been in material breach of those resolutions. The missiles would have given the United States grounds for war.

Fleischer called the effort against the freighter "a very successful coalition interdiction."

But that was apparently cold comfort to Mr. Bush, whom a senior official described as "a very, very unhappy man" after deciding to send the ship on its way to Yemen.

Veterans of the former US Clinton administration, described by Bush and his aides during the presidential campaign as being too soft on North Korea, said they were stunned by the decision to release the cargo.

"The administration's actions in this case were confused and contradictory," said Robert Einhorn, who led the non-proliferation efforts in the State Department under Clinton.

"They must have known the nature of the cargo and the destination from the beginning," he said. "They should have determined at the outset whether they were ready to see it through. Now, having reversed themselves, how can they go to other countries and try to discourage them from purchasing North Korean missiles?"

The Bush administration in August imposed sanctions on the North Korean company Changgwang Sinyong Corp. for selling Scud missile parts to Yemen. At that time, U.S. authorities asked Yemen why it bought the parts, and that country apologized and promised not to do so again, two defence officials said Wednesday.

The United States and other countries interested in preventing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have banded together under the Missile Technology Control Regime to try to discourage exports of such technology.

Under the U.S. sanctions, Changgwang Sinyong Corp. will be barred for two years from obtaining new individual export licenses through the Commerce or State departments for any controlled MTCR items. The sanctions have little practical effect, one official said, because there is so little commerce between the United States and North Korea. But the official said they reinforce Bush's message that North Korea spreads dangerous technology.

"It is necessary to heighten vigilance against the U.S. strategy for world supremacy and 'anti-terrorism war,'" the North's official newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, said in an editorial. "All countries are called upon to build self-reliant military power by their own efforts."

Yemen has been a nominal ally in the global war on terrorism despite strained relations with Washington. Yemen is Osama bin Laden's ancestral homeland, was the site of the bombing of a U.S. warship and has vast areas where Al Qaeda members and other terrorists are believed to hide out.

North Korea shocked U.S. officials by admitting in October that it had a secret program to enrich uranium to make nuclear weapons. The U.S. administration has vowed to try to solve the problem through diplomacy,

though Bush already had named North Korea as part of a three-country "axis of evil" and administration officials have worried that the reclusive Communist dictatorship has become a seller of missiles to countries such as Iran and Libya.

The U.S. administration met the discovery with a measured reaction, declining to characterize either how much concern it raised among U.S. officials or the range of options for a response. A White House spokesman for national security issues said the United States would enlist the help of U.S. allies in the region to fashion its next move — a decidedly diplomatic, and possibly slow, approach.

"This is an issue of concern," said spokesman Sean McCormack. "We are working with other governments to figure out the next step."

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WFRT launches campaign

SANA'A-Organized by the Women Forum for Researches and Studies, (WFRT), the national campaign to oppose violence against women was launched last Saturday and will continue until Wednesday December 18 in a number of Yemeni cities.

The 5-day national campaign covered a number of Yemeni cities including Hajjah, Ibb, and Hodiedah.

The first city that witnessed the activity was Hajjah. A number of awareness raising activities and symposiums were held in order to raise awareness among the public there of the need to oppose violence against women.

International human reports indicate that women are exposed to violence and inhuman practices in Yemen. In addition to this, they fall prey to pauperism and armed clashes.

The national campaign was formed within the framework of long-term and well-planned program to limit violence cases against women.

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German delegation visits Yemen...

Organized by the Research and Studies Center, a forum entitled "At the Beginning, it was Dialogue", was concluded last week in Sana'a in the presence of German as well as Arab thinkers and poets.

Leading the German delegation was intellect and 1999 Nobel-prize winner Gunter Grass, who was honored by the

president of the republic, Ali Abdullah Saleh during the visit.

Gunter highly spoke of the president's role in proposing to hold the Yemeni-German-Korean conference to present the similar experiences of Yemen and Germany in achieving their unity to become good examples for Korea to follow.

The German delegation toured a number of the Yemeni cities Such as, Taiz, Aden, al-Mukalla, Marib and al-Jawf.



Gunter Grass, 1999 Nobel-prize winner

...Al-Ahdal back to Sana'a

Yemeni novelist, Wajdi al-Ahdal has returned to his home country last Thursday after spending a few months in exile where he sought political asylum as his life was threatened by religious fanatics and tribal members who pledged to kill him.

The al-Watan Saudi-based newspaper indicated in its last week's edition that al-Ahdal had expressed his happiness and said that he was greatly touched by the stance of the German

intellect, Gunter Grass who initiated the talk to President Ali Abdullah Saleh to return al-Ahdal from exile.

Gunter Grass was awarded the first class Legion of Merit by the President of the Republic in the field of Arts and Science.

During his meeting with the president, Mr. Gunter Grass raised al-Ahdal's issue and stressed on the importance of tolerance.

Wajdi al-Hadal is the writer of the

story Qawarib Jabalia, (Mountains boats), who ignited a wave of criticism by Islamic fundamentalists in the country.

Al-Ahdal has already published at least seven short stories and novels. He gained the first rank in the Arab Youth Ceremony in Egypt in 1998. He was also awarded the al-Afif Cultural Prize for the best short story in 1997. He was also presented the President's Award for short story in 1999.

Aden Festival inaugurated

ADEN - The Aden Festival for Tourism and Shopping was inaugurated last week at the presence of a host of well-known businessmen, and a number of the diplomatic corps.

As a result of this, a carnival was held at the parade ground in Aden governorate.

The festival will continue from December 11 to January 5, 2002.

During the inaugural ceremony, several activities were performed including, the youth and students parades, cultural activities, and folkloric dances, which reflects the social and cultural heritage that Yemen is so famous for.

The festival is considered to be the first of its kind to be held in Yemen which aims primarily at making Aden a

tourist spot for all its visitors and lovers.

Nabeel Ghanem, the festival coordinator told the Yemen Times that the festival will be held annually.

He also spoke highly of the efforts exerted to make a success of the festival for promoting the tourist industry in Aden.

Evaluating AIDS in Sana'a

SANA'A - Immigrants to Yemen are part of the focus of a new health ministry program to study AIDS in the capital secretariat and the surrounding areas.

These areas are known to have immigrants from the neighboring countries where AIDS is widely spread.

The surveys have been conducted by the national program for rolling back

AIDS. It's estimated more than 400,000 thousand people in the Arab world have AIDS.

On his part, Dr. Abdulkareem Shaiban, Yemen's Deputy Minister of Public Health & Population, says that the health ministry faces several problems, including the immigration of people from the adjacent countries, both legally and illegally; people who can

bring with them several diseases including AIDS.

He noted further both national and international organizations operating in Yemen are doing their best to tackle the issues.

Raising public awareness is part of that. Delivering lectures and holding instruction symposiums is crucial to that process also.

Science conference underway

By FAROUK AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

HODIEDAH - Organized by Hodiedah University, the activities of the 1st Science Conference for Zabeed started on December 14 and will continue to Dec. 18.

During the inaugural ceremony, Dr. Yahya Shoabi, the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research delivered a speech emphasizing that not only the city of Zabeed is abounding in the Yemeni heritage and civilization, Yemen as a whole has culture centers and cities.

The higher education minister said that the universities campuses are not only a place for getting lessons and lectures, but they are also research centers in all domains of learning, knowledge, and human civilization.

Dr. Shoabi spoke highly of the leading role of Hodiedah University for organizing the 1st Science Conference for the City of Zabeed, particularly after holding similar conferences such as the conference related to English teaching.

The Hodiedah University will establish an academic manuscript center in the city of Zabeed revolving on collecting, compiling, and documenting the manuscripts of the city, Dr. Qasem Buraih, Rector of Hodiedah University, noted in his speech.

"The scientific research will remain our main tool in the process of development. So we expect tremendous success as a result of this conference," the rector added.

On her part, Dr. Khawla Ashameri, the Dean of Faculty of Arts delivered a speech that it is necessary to depend on history which manifests itself in rich cultural heritage.

"Due its opulent heritage, the invitation to hold this conferences will link the past to the present," Dr. Ashameri noted further. The conference has more than 40 researchers representing Arab as well as foreigners participating in the conference.

International award given in memory of Prof P.C. Mahalanobis

Recognizing the contribution of Prof. P.C. Mahalanobis to statistics, the government of India has instituted a biennial international award in his

memory.

The prize is to be awarded to a statistician from a developing country who has earned a reputation for lifetime work involving statistics and the promotion of the best statistical practices.

For implementation of the Mahalanobis Award, a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the International Statistical Institute (ISI), Voorburg, Netherlands.

The first Mahalanobis Prize will be awarded at the 54th ISI Session in Berlin in August, 2003.

The ISI Mahalanobis Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Jean-Louis Bodin, acting as the jury for this prize, has invited the entire statistical community world wide includ-

ing National Statistical Societies and Statistical offices to propose candidates from developing countries for the above award, preferably with arguments supporting the proposed candidate.

Appropriate proposal in English may be sent to the Committee Chair, Jean-Louis Bodin (jean-louis.bodin@adef.fr) or to Marcel Van den Broeck at the ISI permanent Office (isi@cbs.nl) address below before March 30, 2003.

The Director, Permanent Office, International Statistical Institute, 428 Prinses Beatrixlaan 2273 XZ Voorburg The Netherlands

Election challenges reviewed

Courts of first instances throughout the country have finished last week reviewing and settling election challenges so as to pave the way for election committees to publish and announce judgments for four days starting today, December 16th.

This duration is considered to be crucial period for the concerned bodies to be informed of the challenges to be accepted or refused before the courts of appeals.

These courts are to receive the challenges starting from today and will continue for 25 days.

Dr. Abdulmumin Shuga'a Addeen, a member of the Supreme Committee for Elections and Referendum and the Chairman of the Legal Affairs Sector declared to the Saba Agency that the courts of appeals will deal with challenges starting from tomorrow until January 14.

These challenges will come out with decisive and final decisions.

Dr. Abdulmumin added that the third phase for challenges was of great significance and had achieved the desired goals to refine and clean up voter lists for the upcoming parliamentary elections to be held in April of next year.

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Videocon introducing new products

In a meeting held at the Taj Sheba Hotel in Sana'a, Videocon GM along with staff members came together to introduce a set of new TV products to the Yemeni market.

The meeting which was also attended by several key guests focused on Videocon's achievements and plans for the future.

Below is the statement of GM of Videocon-Dubai office, Mr. Jaidep Rathore.

"On behalf of Videocon, I welcome you all to Sana'a for this small get together. Videocon has been doing very well in Yemen with Al-Wajih group and I would like to thank you all for putting such fantastic business for our Company in Yemen.

Videocon has been very successful in the Middle East and Yemen is one of the major markets for our company.



the compressor plant in Italy which makes world class compressors for refrigerators and air-conditioners.

Overall this year, the group will touch a turnover of \$2.5 billion, which is the largest turnover by any electronic giant in India.

As far as our plans for the Middle East, we have huge warehousing in UAE-Dubai and also regional office to cater to this potential market.

Being the leader from and India in exports, we are planning very strategically to target the mass consumer products at the best quality and prices.

The company is planning to launch new models around 5 nuns, which will be having Arabic on screen displays along with 4 other languages. There is new frost-free line up from 210 ltr to 450 ltr, where the company is even supplying to SAMSUNG also.

We are planning to launch a new line of



Before I brief you about our future plans for the Yemeni market, let me just share with you some of our major doings in the Indian as well as global market.

Videocon is the single largest exporter in consumer electronics from India where they have achieved more than \$200 million of exports in different global markets of Russia CIS, Africa, UK, Yugoslavia, Bangladesh, and Vietnam.

This year the company has bagged orders more than \$900 million for picture tube supply in Russia and to getting to achieve 300 million businesses in exports of ctvs/refrigerators/washing machines/air conditioners.

Besides electronics, the company also has one of the India's largest glass shell plants and a petroleum drilling unit which is one of the largest in India. There is also

washing machine. There will be a new series of vcd and dvd's very soon to be given to the market at very attractive prices in order to capture the major mass market.

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I once again thank you all for joining us here and wish very happy selling and happy association with Videocon.



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Power outages

Yemen's candles in the dark

BY HASSAN AZZAIDI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Writing this time will be apart from politics. Due to lack of electricity, we can't even watch TV through which we find what's going on the world.

Actually I was deprived of watching the TV when the electricity was cut suddenly, leading to the breaking down of the TV and some other electrical apparatuses in my home.

In fact, the troublesome policy of "turning of/on" was very dominant since the capital Sana'a has used electricity. Most of the people, except those who have generators at home, are very annoyed.

It is very common that people need to turn around night and day in Ramadhan. Subsequently, people become very active at night from 7:00 PM till the dawn. Electricity is of urgent necessity for them.

The disconnection of electricity in markets has caused even more annoyance than at houses.

You can only hear cries of chil-

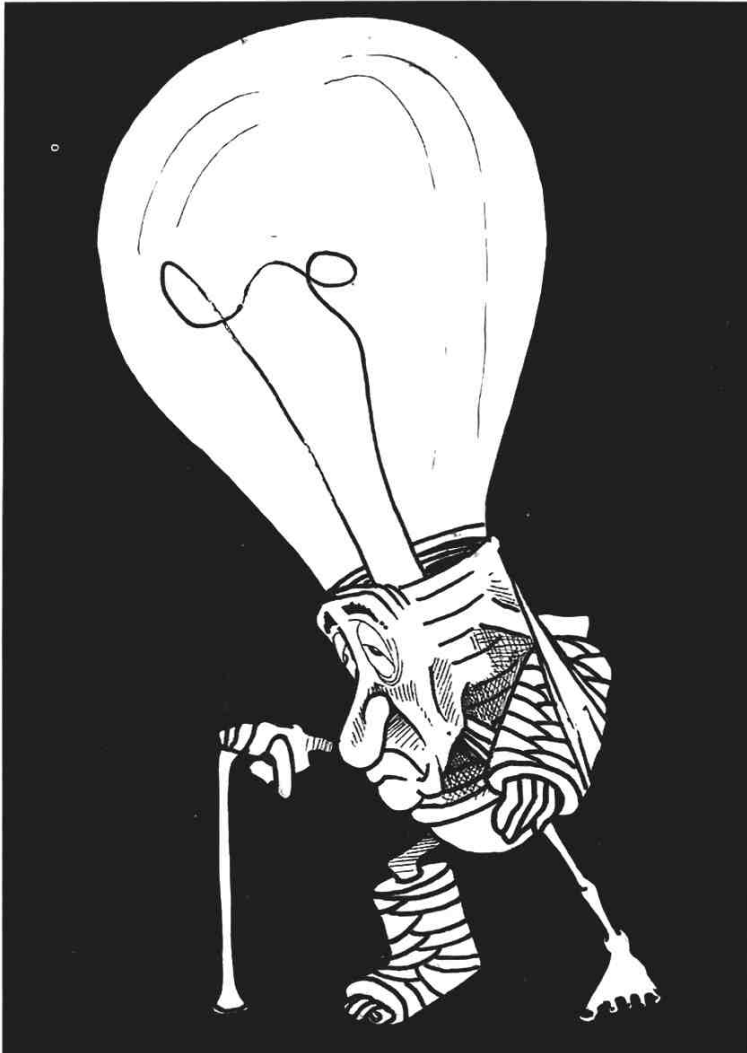
dren among the darkness and the women experience harassment in the dark streets as the electricity disconnects.

I do inquire, do our officials feel satisfied on this miserable situation? Is it really a big problem which could not be solved over the last decades?

The public now suspects that the officials in the ministry of electricity are in league with candles traders who wants electricity to be disconnected to have more profits as the demand on candles will be increased.

Yemen may one of the countries with the largest population of consuming candles as some like to comment that "Yemen is like the candle which burns to give light to others." One could not decide whether it's a false or right statement due to the electrical disconnections which the state could not handle, in spite of the expensive bills the people receive monthly against the services which forced me to buy a new TV and refrigerator.

Who will compensate the poor citizen who has no money to replace these damaged apparatuses? God help us.



Building a better Yemen

We need to change our school system



YASSER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Knowledge, education and development go hand in hand. Any progress in society is attributed to the educational skills and abilities people assimilate during their lifetime. These generally depend on the kind of education they receive.

Further, an educated workforce is the cornerstone of any society. Most of the countries lacking basic education, and Yemen is among these countries, suffer in other areas also.

In Yemen, education has been deteriorating increasingly.

The inglorious conditions of learning inside schools, universities and the absence of a mature learning environment today have all affected the educational process.

The lack of proper methodical and systematic learning is also a stumbling-block holding back any educational improvements. In other words, the lack of educational means and resources like libraries or well-qualified teachers can be extremely harmful.

No definite vision of the educational strategy has been mapped out in order to improve the situation. This can be ascribed to a number of reasons summed here as follows:

First, Yemen has still hurt by the negative effects of segregation, that is different curriculums dominated Yemen's school system until 1990.

We should ask the people in charge of education whether the current curricula will take us to our goals.

The volume of science courses is too

small in comparison with the theoretical courses. There is hardly any hands-on training and experiments.

The 1994 civil war had its negative effects upon learning in Yemen.

Books and teaching aids are the tools to use in reaching goals. But in most countries, there is a periodic review of the curricula in order to upgrade the information the students receive. In Yemen, this is lacking.

That is why some of the things taught in our classes are rather funny, if not absurd. Even if the syllabus is good, the teaching aids going with it are not available.

Let us take an example. The English Crescent series is provided with good recorded songs and dialogues that could make learning very exciting. Unfortunately, the tapes and recorders are not available in schools.

Conditions in schools in the countryside are even more pathetic. Over 120 students cuddle up to each other in each small classroom, and often must sit on the ground. Sometimes, people in charge of restructuring educational plan and amend syllabuses are not among the most capable educators persons.

Yemen has undergone a rapid increase of population, estimated at 18.3 million people in 2000.

The overpopulation constitutes an economic burden for the bodies concerned due to the limitless demands and needs of the social services and the essentials.

Such an economic deterioration has its own inevitable consequences upon the educational reality in Yemen. It has been estimated that the number of registrants at the basic school for both boy and girl students doesn't exceed 62.3 percent.

There is another problem. It's subsequent governments have not dealt with the topographical diversity which makes transportation inaccessible, and the build-

ing of schools, particularly in the remote and mountainous areas, isn't happening.

Population statistics have indicated that the number of students at the general education schools total 4 million. The number of schools at both the urban and the rural areas have reached 14,000 schools. Most of these schools are concentrated at the urban areas and some districts which are in need of renovation and some other schools are built randomly and also in need of reconstruction.

There is a sharp shortage of qualified and specialized cadres in basic education. This is clearly represented by the incompetence of the qualified teachers, headmasters, and education inspectors.

It is noticeable that the traditional educational process has been still the most dominant method of teaching. Despite updated curricula in all its aspects particularly in its scientific method, there has been still shortage of labs, and other educational tools.

The educational problems in Yemen is not restricted to the basic education, it also comprises the secondary education outputs where only small number of students benefit from such education.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education, the number of high school dropouts is estimated at 176,981, both males and females.

Clearing, financial aid is needed, and the private sector needs to help pave the way for a highly developed educational environment.

This, along with updating curricula and qualifying teachers, will also help pave the way for the unemployed.

While the need is for private investment, some have fears about the way the private sector runs schools, and that universities and private institutes will pursue excessive profits at the expense of good programming.

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ظاهر عبد العزيز السقاف

وبهذا المصاب الجلل نتقدم باحر التعازي واصبح المواساة لآخ / عبد الملك ظاهر السقاف، وللاستاذ / رضوان علوي السقاف، ولكافة أسرة الفقيد وجميع آل السقاف، سائلين المولى عز وجل أن يتعمد الفقيد بواسع رحمته ويسكنه فسيح جناته، ويلهم اهله وذويه الصبر والسلوان.

إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون.

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Gyrif: A tradition of communal self-help in Soqatra (Part 2 of 2)



SERGE D. ELIE*
jds_elie@yahoo.com

Once that was done, the next step was to get the master builders (*Ma'alama*) to agree on a date they would be available to lead the construction process. Subsequently, all able-bodied relatives were invited to show up on the agreed upon date. On the day prior to holding the Gyrif, the women would move to the site with all cooking utensils and all of the food: Two goats, twenty kilos of wheat flour, twenty kilos of rice, five kilos of sugar, seven liters of goat ghee, among other things. The women would spend the night there, as it was imperative that tea be ready to be served at once upon the arrival of the participants who would be leaving their home early without breakfast.

It was about 10:00 am when I arrived at the site, the people were getting ready to have their breakfast (*Qashim*). Since six o'clock in the morning the master builders and their helpers were at work. Already the architectural skeleton was in place. The back walls, or more appropriately, the panels, of dry palm tree branches and leaflets weaved together and tied around the tree trunks used as pillars, were in place. The job was supposed to be completed in one day. There were about three dozen people: women, men and children of all age groups. A division of labor could be perceived: young girls and boys to fetch the water and fuel wood among other errands; women and adolescent girls doing the cooking and cleaning; men and adolescent boys doing the construction work. A small group of elderly

women and men were there apparently to provide moral support, as they seemed not be particularly involved with any task. The sitting arrangement around the mats laid out for breakfast reflected as well a division according to gender and age category: The elderly group of women and men ate by themselves, the boys and girls ate separately in a far away corner, perhaps as not to make a nuisance of themselves, the rest of the adult males gathered around the remaining three mats shared between young and middle age men. The women served the food on large aluminum plates, which were taken by young men to the mats. The women ate after everyone else was served.

The breakfast was a carbohydrate rich, thus a high-energy porridge named "*acid*", which is also eaten on the mainland but at lunchtime. It is made up of wheat flour and looks like oatmeal when prepared. It is served in large aluminum plates and presented like a crater with elevated sides and a depression in the middle where clarified butter from goat fat (*Hyma*) is put. A bowl of white sugar was brought along. The sugar is sprinkled on the porridge before it is scooped up with the fingers and dipped



A Palm tree embracing the sky. Photo by M. S. Noman Al-Absi

into the butter and swallowed down. Lunch was goat meat and rice. The latter is a relatively recent import to Soqatra. It has replaced the traditional dish of *Maqdere*, made up of maize imported from east Africa, called "Suwahal" by Soqotrans, which is a reference to the land

of those who speak Swahili. Its importation was discontinued during the 1970's, due to changes in economic relations and market destinations when Soqatra became part of South Yemen.

The "matriarch" who had organized this Gyrif was an ample-bodied woman of

African origin clad in a tightly fitted yellow caftan tied at the waist and a headscarf of the same color worn *a la Africaine*. Whatever was her intention in wearing this dashing outfit, it demarcated her from all of her entourage, and confirmed her status as the one in charge. Her age was not evident from looking at her, as if dissimulated under her smooth dark skin. But she is probably well beyond fifty. My initial characterization of her as a "matriarch" turned out to be correct.

She is the last among five siblings, and it is said that she was always the leader among them. That natural predisposition to lead has spilled over in the public realm. She is known to the public as "Haytham," which is the name of a prominent political figure Aden before Unity; a clear testament of how all perceived her. She is the matron at the weddings in Hadiboh, orchestrating the work to be done, so that everything goes correctly.

Indeed, that was the role she was playing when I saw her, as evidence in the completion of the work on the *Mahjir* long before lunchtime. Perhaps her natural ability to assume the role of leader was taken from her father who was the chief

(*Muqaddam*) of all people of African descent on the island during the Sultan's era. In fact, the Sultan only referred to him when it concerned matters relating to such people. And all people of African descent came through him if they wanted the Sultan's attention.

Conversation during breakfast confirmed the Soqotran custom, at least within certain communities, of giving someone a name based on some communally recognized attribute. The people sharing the mat with me were introduced by their communally given names. In one case, a man named Atta was associated with the protagonist of a mythical story about a dark skinned man wanting to marry a light skinned woman named Adla, but her uncle refused until the man could procure a large dowry under impossible conditions, which he did with the assistance of his friend Shoeb. Perhaps this man had experienced a similar ordeal in real life.

The Gyrif is one of those meaningful events that displays as well as reinforces the Soqotran communal ethos. Its practice, which used to be widespread on the island, is now being gradually restricted to close-knit communities or among members of extended families, as people now prefer to be paid in cash given the increasing monetization of the economy. Perhaps the sad eventuality is that the Gyrif, at some point in the future, might become more of a manifestation of the poverty of its organizers as well as participants because of their inability to pay for services, than an expression of communal solidarity.

* He is a Doctoral Researcher in Social Anthropology at Sussex University in the U.K.

Zabeed Conference Kicks Off

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Hodeidah — The first international scientific conference on Zabeed has started last Saturday at Hodeidah University and will continue until December 18th.

During the conference, a number of eminent professors, historians and researchers representing a number of foreign and Arab countries are attending this conference, which is the first of its kind.

The Rector of the Hodeidah University, Qasim Boraih told the Yemen Times that this activity has come within the framework of the extensive efforts made by the university in order to present Zabeed in its originality.

"Our universities have a leading role to make the public know all there is to know about our cultural heritage through publishing and buying old manuscripts and holding periodical cultural competitions among students," he said.

In order to raise awareness of the great significance of the our cultural heritage, the rector said that this could be achieved through publishing the *Tihama* magazine for reviving the cultural heritage and protecting the city from decay for Yemen in general and Tihama in particular, the rector also said.

In this context, a scientific conference will revolve around the historical importance of the Zabeed's city in the Arab and Islamic world.

Objective of conference

The conference has garnered the attention of Yemen's President Ali Abdullah Saleh with a view of promoting the academic and research responsibilities of the university.

The main objectives of the conference are:

- Giving a historical background of Zabeed through lectures in order to inform the public of the significance of Zabeed's long history.
- Announcing Zabeed as an



Dr. Qasim Boraih, Rector of the Hodeidah University.

international cultural sanctuary, particularly after the decay has been detected of collapses of some archaeological buildings.

- Attracting the attention of the governmental bodies concerned and the Arab and foreign organizations interested in protecting the historical and archaeological sites concerning Zabeed as one of the significant historical cities in the world.

More than 150 different approaches are to be discussed during the conference in the presence of more than 40 participants on the following six themes: Zabeed through history; arts and architecture; religious and scientific approaches; Mecca-Medina-Zabeed relationship through history; Zabeed in the memory of the world; Zabeed and its relation with other centers in the world.

Participants have come from countries ranging as far Canada and India to enrich this event.



Participants without researches:
Dr. Abdullah bin Qaid Hassan Al-Abbadi, Saudi Arabia
Dr. Mohamed bin Ali Musfir Assirri,

KS
Dr. Hussein Khadir Ahmed, Egypt
Dr. Mohamed Abdo Al-Sururi, Yemen

Research papers admitted for the conference:

Presenter	Research	Premise	Coming from
Dr. Abdurahman Al-Shuja'	Emergence of the Ziyadi State: Between illusion and reality	first	Sanaa
Dr. Abdo Thabit Al-Absi	Historic City of Zabid: Between preservation and development	second	Sanaa
Dr. Abdullah Abdulsalam Al-Haddad	Prevailing Military City of Zabid and its defensive and architectural factors	second	Sanaa
Dr. Yahya Hussein Al-Nono	Imam Jameleddin Al-Mohamed Abdullah Al-Raimi in conveying views of Zaidi Scholars in his book "Remarkable meanings in differences among Sharia"	third	Sanaa
Dr. Abdurrahman Ahmed Al-Khamisi	Imam Ibn Al-Daiba' Al-Shaibani Al-Zabidi and his efforts in Hadith	third	Sanaa
Dr. Abdullah Al-Washli	School of Zabidi Fiqh and its link to Hijaz Iraq and Sham	fourth	Sanaa
Mohamed bin Moamed Ali Matta	Zabid in the eyes of poets	first	Zabid
Daood Salim Abdo Bazi	Traditional architecture arts in Zabid	second	Zabid
Dr. Ahmed Awwad Juma Al-Kubaisi	Ibn Al-Daiba' Al-Shaibani and his scheme "Delightful antiquity in the happenings of the honorable delegation"	third	Hodeida
Dr. Munir Hamoud Farhan Al-Kubaisi	Jamaleddin Al-Raimi and his approach in his book "Umma's Umda in Imams' united views"	third	Hodeida
Dr. Khalil Rajab Hamdan	Efforts of School of Zabid in readings	third	Ibb
Dr. Najeeb Ali Abdullah Ali Al-Maqdari	Debate on the preservation and development of cultural historic cities (Historic city of Zabid as case study)	second	Dhamar
Dr. Khalid Nasir Ba Rashad	Mud architectures in Zabid (comparison study)	second	Hadramout
Salim Abdullatif Al-Shawwafi	Zabid in the orientals sources in a bibliographic and practical reading	sixth	Yemen
Dr. Bashir Mahdi Al-Kubaisi	Fundamentalist curriculum of today's Zabid school	third	Hodeida
Dr. Mohamed Al-Atrash	Efforts of Zabid's scholars in Quranic studies	third	Hodeida
Abdo Ali Harun	Relation between Zabid and Saudi Arabia	fourth	Zabid
Dr. Mohamed Abdulwahid Al-Shuja'	Ibn Al-Muqri and his Fiqh in the book "Title of Al-Sharaf Al-Wafi" - a figure from Zabid	third	Sanaa
Dr. Salim Ahmed Mahal	Zabid's role in forming the sect map of Yemen	third	Hodeida
Dr. Hassan Issa Ali Al-Hakim	Ibn Al-Daiba' Al-Shaibani and his efforts in recording Zabid's history	first	Iraq
Dr. Shakir Mahmoud Abdumunim	Zabid cultural establishments during the rule of king Al-Ashraf Al-Ghassani	first	Iraq
Dr. Salime Abdurassool Shahib	Zabid and elements of its religious structures (schools and mosques)	second	Iraq
Dr. Ghazi Rajab Saheed	Baghdad of Yemen (Zabeed: an honorable place named 'Baghdad of Yemen')	second	Iraq
Dr. Khalid Yousuf Saleh Daood	Zabid's cultural role in the Lajjahiya State era	third	Iraq
Dr. Najiya Abdullah Ibrahim	Scientific heritage of Zabid Cay from the perspective of Ottoman historian Haji Khalife	third	Jordan
Dr. Ibtisam Marhoon Hassan Al-Saffar	Hasibiye's standing in the comparison between arts and their masters	third	Jordan
Dr. Ali Tawfiq Al-Hamad	Zabid and the Arabic glossary (analytical reading in the Taj Al-Aroos glossary)	third	Jordan
Dr. Abdulqadir Salman Al-Maaidi	Sketches and plans of Zabid and its architectural development	second	Sharjah-UAE
Dr. Abdulkhaleq Mohamed Al-Anees	Contribution of Imam Majdeddin Al-Farooz Abadi in the scholastic explanatory movement of Quran (through his book 'simplifying the fatiha of the Anab in the explanation of the Quran's fatiha')	third	Dubai
Dr. Abulqassim Saadallah	Communication between Sheikh Mohamed Murada Al-Zabidi and scholars of the Arab Magreb	third	Algeria
Dr. Abdullah Al-Sharif	Zabid and its agricultural elements through writings (geographical reading of the relation between rural and urban areas)	sixth	Tunisia
Dr. Sundar Gobal	Trade between Yemen and India in the seventeenth century AD	first	India
Dr. Ali Hussein	different Quranic readings for Zabid	third	USA
Dr. An Regor	sketches and history of the city of Zabid	first	France
Dr. E. G. Kel	ancient evidences proving the links between Zabid and the external world (Egypt-Iraq-China-Iran-etc.)	second	Canada
Dr. Ingrid Haimer	Research on Zabid	second	Canada/Germany
Dr. Hussein Ameen	Zabid and the genuinity in its relations with Iraq and its pioneer cultural rank in heritage	sixth	Iraq
Abdurrahman Tayyib Ba'aka	Zabid Oxford and Yemen	third	Zabid
Abdullah Khadim Al-Amri	Zabid and educational centers interlinked	third	Zabid

While peace plan lags

Israel nabs Palestinians

JERUSALEM, Dec 14 (Reuters) - Israeli forces detained at least 14 Palestinians in the West Bank in a new sweep for militants on Saturday as international peace efforts looked likely to be eclipsed by wider Middle East developments.

An Israeli army spokesman said 12 "terror suspects" were nabbed overnight around Ramallah, political base of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, and two in the area of Bethlehem. Troops continued scouring the biblical city after daybreak.

On Friday, the army killed two militants in the West Bank. Hamas, an Islamic group sworn to Israel's destruction which has spearheaded suicide bombings in a more than two-year-old independence uprising, issued new calls for revenge.

The United States has tried to keep the violence contained so as not to buck its campaign to disarm Iraq, and forms part of a "Quartet" of Middle East mediators due to meet next week on a peace plan initiated more than six months ago.

But diplomats said it was unlikely the so-called "road map" for three-stage rapprochement between Israel and the Palestinians, culminating in security for the former and statehood for the latter, would be completed on December 20.

"The signal the United States is sending us is that you should not expect a completed road map. Our side is arguing back on that," a European diplomat said on Friday.

The Quartet mediators — the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations — broadly agree on what the plan should include but disagree on when to release it.

The Israelis and Palestinians disagree on the more fundamental question of

how specific the plan should be.

In Israel there was little surprise at the turgid timetable, pointing at general elections scheduled for January 28.

"Washington has made it clear that no final plan will be presented before the new government is in power," an official in Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's office said. "Of course, that new government will then have to approve the plan."

Palestinians considered the United States was again acting as Israel's guardian ally.

"This shows that the American policy intervenes only for the good of Sharon, not for the good of the peace process," Palestinian official Saeb Erekat told Reuters.

Most in the region believe the road map will go nowhere until the Iraq issue is resolved.

One senior Israeli security source said a U.S. offensive on Iraq was expected in late January, and saw Washington applying "peace pressure" on Israel in conjunction with any such move.

"America's war will not be very popular in the Arab world, so we expect it to apply more 'peace pressure' on Israel to accommodate Palestinian negotiating demands," the source said.

For now, Israeli-American ties seemed robust as ever.

Israeli Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz was to leave on Saturday night for a week of high-level talks in New York and Washington, the official in Sharon's office said.

The hawkish Mofaz was due to meet with his U.S. counterpart, Colin Powell, who in a Washington policy speech on Thursday blamed the Middle East stalemate on Palestinian "terror".



An Israeli soldier (L) holds out his arms as he prevents a group of Palestinian schoolgirls from passing through part of the West Bank city of Hebron December 14, 2002. REUTERS

A dozen sites searched in one day

UN hunts weapons

BAGHDAD, Dec 14 (Reuters) - U.N. weapons inspectors pounced on about a dozen sites in Iraq on Saturday as President Saddam Hussein's foes met in London to plan for a future without him.

A defiant Iraqi official said the Arab world should know that the United States and Israel were making a fuss over doomsday weapons to mask their determination to destroy Iraq.

Iraq denies it has any banned weapons.

Urged on by Washington, the United Nations is pressing Iraq for a list of scientists linked to its chemical, biological, nuclear and long-range missile programmes so that U.N. experts can interview them inside or outside the country.

Chief U.N. arms inspector Hans Blix has asked Iraq in writing to name the scientists by the end of December. An Iraqi official has said the list is in the works.

Can interview anyone

Under Security Council resolution 1441 of November 8, the inspectors have the right to interview in private anyone who might know details of Iraq's weapons programmes, if necessary by taking them and their families out of the country.

The United States wants Blix and his counterpart at the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, to do just that.

But some diplomats believe Washington is pushing the issue to pro-

voke a clash between Baghdad and the U.N. arms experts that could provide a quick pretext for a war on Iraq.

"We are not going to abduct anybody, and we're not serving as a defection agency," Blix said last week.

Washington says it will topple Saddam and disarm Iraq by force if it fails to disarm voluntarily.

Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz, opening a poetry festival in Baghdad, challenged the idea that disarmament was the real issue.

"The Arab nation should not be deceived by false excuses by America and Zionist imperialism that they are launching their aggression on Iraq to eliminate its weapons of mass destruction," he said.

"The United States and its ally Israel are using all their means of deception to destroy Iraq."

Missile research project inspected

Another U.N. team spent over two hours inside an unmarked walled compound in the Baghdad residential area of al-Amiriya, which turned out to house a missile research project.

"The company has been recently established. It deals mainly with research and development of all kinds of solid-fuel missiles within the range of 150 km (95 miles)," Ma'rouf al-Chalabi, director of al-Fateh Company, told reporters.

"The inspectors toured all the departments, had access to all the documents and copied some computer files," he said.

Chalabi said U.N. inspectors had known of the project in the 1990s. Three cruise missiles had destroyed its previous site during a U.S.-British bombing campaign in December 1998.

U.S. officials and U.N. diplomats have said the 12,000-page weapons declaration Iraq submitted a week ago appears to fall short of the full disclosure demanded by resolution 1441.

The resolution says falsehoods or omissions in the document, coupled with any obstruction of the inspections, would be a "material breach" of Iraq's obligations.

ElBaradei, the IAEA chief, said on Saturday the United Nations would need a few months to assess the Iraqi dossier.

"By January, we should have a status report which should move us forward," he told Reuters. "We still need a few months before we come to a conclusion on the Iraqi declaration."

Washington may argue that force is the only way to make Iraq comply, but will look for other violations, not just holes in the document, to get world support for military action.

London's Daily Telegraph, in an unsourced report on Saturday, said defence chiefs had told Prime Minister Tony Blair he must decide within 10 days whether to send British troops to the Gulf.

But a Defence Ministry spokesman told Reuters no decisions had yet been taken on military options.



Delegates, guests and press attend the opening of the Iraqi Opposition Conference in London, December 14, 2002. The opponents of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein met on Saturday to map out a future for the country and called for a federal, tolerant Iraq in the event Saddam is ousted from power. REUTERS

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Denies its for military use

Iran committed to use nuclear energy

TEHRAN, Dec 14 (Reuters) - Iran said on Saturday it was determined to meet its booming demand for electricity with nuclear power despite U.S. concerns the technology could be used for military aims.

Washington, which has labelled Iran as part of an "axis of evil" bent on developing weapons of mass destruction, accused Iran on Thursday of building two nuclear sites of a type that could be used for making a nuclear weapon.

Iran denied the accusation and said its plans to construct reactors were a peaceful application of nuclear technology. It said the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had been told about the plants and was free to inspect them.

"Within the next 20 years, Iran has to produce 6,000 megawatts of electricity from nuclear power," Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi told official IRNA news agency.

Washington has argued that Iran, which is the second-largest oil exporter in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries, has no need for nuclear power.

But Iran is keen to avoid diverting too much of its valuable oil exports into the domestic market where subsidies are high.

Iran's domestic electricity demand is currently growing 6.5 percent annually and Iran needs to add 2,500 megawatts to its generating capacity each year, Iranian officials have said.

The Islamic Republic's first nuclear power plant, near the southwestern port city Bushehr, is due to come on stream at the end of next year or early 2004.



A Sept. 16 satellite image shows facilities in Natanz, Iran believed to be part of a previously unknown segment of Iran's nuclear program. The U.S. State Department said on Dec. 13 that Iran was trying to hide parts of the nuclear facility it is building by burying some of the buildings underground. Iran said Friday they were for non-military uses. REUTERS

The 1,000-megawatt plant is being built with Russian help, despite heavy U.S. lobbying of Moscow to block the construction.

A senior government official told Reuters on Friday Iran was currently negotiating with Russia to build several more nuclear power plants in coming years.

Iran's Atomic Energy Council earlier this week commissioned a feasibility study to be carried out on building a second 1,000 MW nuclear plant, IRNA

said.

The Vienna-based IAEA on Friday said it was aware of Iran's nuclear power programme and planned to visit the country in February to inspect all facilities currently under construction.

Kharrazi said the inspectors were welcome and dismissed U.S. accusations that Iran was trying to conceal two nuclear plants near the central Iranian towns of Natanz and Arak.

"We will officially invite them for inspections since the agency must

carry out its necessary planning and supervision before the centres are implemented," Kharrazi said.

"We have been in contact with IAEA over the two centres and basically there is no possibility of concealing such centres," he said.

The United States and Iran have been enemies since radical students seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran shortly after Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution and held 52 hostages for 444 days.

In Kenya

Thousands welcome opposition leader

NAIROBI, Dec 14 (Reuters) - Tens of thousands of Kenyans welcomed the country's main opposition presidential candidate home from a hospital stay in Britain on Saturday in a massive show of support ahead of elections on December 27.

Opposition leader Mwai Kibaki, in a wheelchair and wearing a neck brace after a car crash earlier this month, was given a hero's welcome by crowds yearning for change after almost 40 years under the ruling KANU party.

The opposition leader, considered the likely winner by many analysts, waved from his minibus as a tide of supporters surged through the Nairobi's main street ahead of his motorcade, bringing the city centre to a temporary standstill.

Kibaki remained in his wheelchair as he made brief remarks to a mammoth rally of opposition backers in the capital's Uhuru Park, who chanted "Rainbow, Rainbow" in support of his National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) party.

"In these elections we'll fight it out peacefully, we want peace, nobody will benefit if there is no peace," said Kibaki, in reference to the violence that marred previous multi-party polls in 1992 and 1997.

Many observers say Kibaki, a former vice president and one-time finance minister, stands a good chance of beating KANU candidate Uhuru Kenyatta at the polls, at which President Daniel arap Moi is constitutionally bound to step down after almost a quarter of a century in power.

A triumph for Kibaki and his NARC umbrella group of opposition parties over Kenyatta, the 42-year-old son of the country's first president, would be the first opposition victory since multi-party polls were introduced in 1992.

The December 3 car crash, which broke Kibaki's arm and dislocated his

ankle, threw an element of uncertainty into the NARC campaign, but opposition leaders told the rally they were still confident of victory.

"If it was a horse race it would be a dead certainty that maybe the only way to lose would be by falling," said senior NARC member Kijana Wamalwa. "Since that is not likely I think it's now a one horse race," he told the crowd.

EXTENT OF INJURIES UNCLEAR

Supporters in the crowd said they would vote for the man they hope will reverse years of economic decline regardless of his injuries.

"He'll be okay, his brain is still intact, that's what matters," said Francis Wanjohi, 29, a hawk who turned up to the airport to welcome Kibaki home.

Kibaki, who has pledged to end years of corruption and economic stagnation under Moi, has boosted his chances by assembling a broad opposition alliance, seeming to end the disunity that has previously hamstrung the opposition.

KANU officials downplayed Kibaki's massive welcome, saying it would not translate into votes come polling day.

"It is just a farce," KANU Deputy Organising Secretary Peter Kuguru told Reuters. "They have been buying people beers and paid them some money to attend the party in hired minibuses, these are not supporters."

Kibaki, 71, was flown to London for treatment after his car swerved off the road and into a ditch outside Nairobi. NARC officials said they did not suspect foul play.

Critics say Kenyatta, a businessman with little experience of government, will serve as a stooge to protect Moi's interests should he win the election — charges Moi and Kenyatta deny.

Continued from front page

But at what cost?

Al-Houthi promised to convey the message to his government. He said the missiles would never be re-shipped to a third country, the statement said.

It's unknown if any other countries who have traditionally helped Yemen will give similar warnings.

Regardless of the response of other countries, it's clear there are plenty of critics in the U.S. calling the American green light for missiles to Yemen a case of high irony.

And it is giving Yemen more negative attention than ever in the debate over how to deal with Middle East tensions and the so-called War on Terror.

One irony is that the United States — the world's largest weapons seller and heartiest participant in the international arms bazaar — complaining about North Korea shipping 15 Scud missiles to Yemen, according to peace activists.

For Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to call North Korea the "single largest proliferator" of missile technology is, as they say, the pot calling the kettle black. "I guess you've got to remember that irony is essentially dead in the United States," said Scott Lynch, from Washington-based Peace Action.

"But even so, this one has got to be seen as highly ironic. One could even move up to hypocritical."

Rumsfeld's reaction, buttressed by Bush administration officials throughout the day yesterday, came after Spanish authorities discovered the Scud missiles, infamous for their attempted use against Israel by Iraq's Saddam Hussein during the 1991 Gulf War, in a cargo ship in the Arabian Sea. Ultimately, the ship was allowed to sail on its way after U.S. officials said there was no legal basis under international law to detain them.

"The audacity of the administration never fails to shock me. The U.S. needs Yemen as a partner in the region," added Lynch. With

President George W. Bush pushing for a second war against Iraq, "they can't afford to piss off Yemen, and that is cynical ...

"At the end of the day, the administration deigns unto itself the right to make the rules for everybody."

On Capitol Hill yesterday, several lawmakers also saw a certain irony in U.S. criticism of North Korea, followed by an abrupt and red-faced announcement that the shipment would not be stopped.

Massachusetts Democratic Representative Edward Markey accused Bush of being "dangerously inconsistent" for allowing the Scuds, along with 15 conventional warheads and assorted drums of chemicals, to proceed to Yemen.

"(He is) tough on Iraq, diffident on North Korea, ineffective in Iran, and hypocritical at home in initiating the development of 'mini-nuke' weapons, plutonium pits and other signs of our insincerity towards curtailing our own (weapons of mass destruction) technology," he told Reuters.

"Let's not compound this further."

Bruce Campbell, from the Centre for Policy Alternatives, an Ottawa-based think tank, said that the Scud controversy was an example of "do as I say, not as I do."

According to U.N. statistics for 1996-2001, the U.S. dominated the global arms bazaar, delivering 45 per cent of conventional weapons sales.

In 2000, the U.S. netted \$14 billion (U.S.) in arms sales, double its closest competitors, Britain and Russia.

"It just seems as if they want to protect their territory from up-comers like North Korea," said Campbell. "It's a double standard. It's about proprietary rights rather than outrage about what's actually being sold."

The view of the U.S. administration appears to be that "it's our God-given right to police the world, and never mind the contradictions," said

Campbell.

U.S. policy is certainly awash in contradictions, agrees Steven Staples, arms and security expert for the policy group, Polaris, based in Ottawa, Canada.

"They are preparing to go to war with Iraq even though no substantive link has been found between Iraq and Al Qaeda. Meanwhile, North Korea admits it does have a weapons-of-mass-destruction program, and the U.S. isn't doing anything," he said.

"Furthermore, the U.S. has been arming the Middle East for decades. In fact, the United States helped arm Saddam himself," he said, referring to the 1980s when Saddam was a U.S. ally in the region and the Iran was considered the biggest threat. Many of Saddam's war crimes, now cited by Bush as reasons to go to war, were carried out during the days of friendly ties with Washington.

"The U.S. is in no position politically or ethically to bring peace to the region," said Staples. "My strongest hope is that the United Nations will hold out against the war. We are literally dangling by a thread between peace and war now, with the U.N. in the balance."

Staples believes it will be a particularly difficult situation for Canada if the U.S. goes to war without U.N. support. That's because Canadian warships are already in the region as part of an international coalition under American leadership to enforce sanctions against Iraq.

"It's much trickier politically to actually pull your forces out,

than to join a campaign," he said. "It will be very interesting to see what Ottawa will do (in those circumstances)."

At Washington's Center for Arms Control, analyst Eric Floden agreed that Washington has no business criticizing other countries for doing what it does.

"It's simple," he said. "The bottom line is that the U.S. doesn't want any country to buy weapons from anybody else, and it wants to dictate who can buy weapons and who can't."

For example, Bush administration officials said Monday the U.S. will sell equipment to the military-backed government of Algeria to help combat Islamic militants. That makes Algeria just the most recent nation in a long list of countries who buy arms from the U.S., despite criticism from human rights groups.

Richard Sanders, co-ordinator of the Coalition to Oppose the Arms Trade, says it's unfortunate that the irony of the U.S. position doesn't jump out at people.

"To us, it's mind-boggling," he said from Ottawa. "The U.S. sells the world's largest volume of weapons to more countries than anybody else, they have 1.5 million troops stationed around the world, they spend more than \$500 billion (U.S.) a year on the military budget ... they just fought a war against Afghanistan and they are ready to bomb Iraq," he said. "I guess it's not the kind of irony you laugh at."

Final comment must go to Toronto's Matthew Behrens.

"We find the situation very ironic, given that we went to jail."

On Tuesday, Behrens, along with 25 anti-war protesters from Raging Grannies to a 7-year-old, showed up at the gates of Wescom Inc in Burlington, Ontario, Canada. The company makes communications equipment with military applications, and is being purchased by L-3 Communications Holdings Inc., a major supplier to the U.S. defence department.

The aim, accordintio Behrens, was to "conduct a citizens' weapons inspection of the facility," just as U.N. inspectors are inspecting installations in Iraq. It wasn't even a surprise visit, according to Behrens, whose organization, Homes Not Bombs, sent a letter to the company last week.

But when they showed up, police cruisers were on the site and Behrens and two colleagues were taken to the regional police station in Halton and charged with trespassing.

"While U.N. inspectors have enjoyed unfettered (and often unannounced) access to a host of suspected Iraqi weapons production sites," the Canadian protestors ended their attempted inspection with a "free ride in handcuffs down to the local police station," said the group said yesterday in a statement.

"It was a clear indication of the hypocrisy that underscores the demands of nations which are armed (and arming) to the teeth that only one nation be disarmed."

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Afghan army graduates to join U.S. operations

KABUL, Dec 14 (Reuters) - About 200 Afghan soldiers from the fledgling, Western-trained, national army were sent to join U.S. soldiers in their hunt for Taliban and al Qaeda fugitives, a government spokesman said on Saturday.

The troops, based in the southeastern province of Paktika, will be the first Afghan soldiers to have direct involvement in the U.S.-led coalition's campaign against terror, said presidential spokesman Syed Fazl Akbar.

Akbar said the soldiers would be moved to the provinces of Paktia and Khost near the tribal belt with neighbouring Pakistan, where U.S. troops have come under sporadic fire in recent months.

"Their job is to participate in the cleaning up operation and the restora-

tion and maintenance of security," Akbar told Reuters.

The government was keen to extend its rule over areas outside Kabul and sending Afghan army graduates to key locations in the country was the first step, the spokesman said.

Six battalions, totalling less than 2,000 men, have graduated in recent months from an intensive training programme conducted by an international staff, led mostly by U.S. troops.

He added that the total strength of the new army was not expected to exceed 70,000 troops.

U.S.-backed President Hamid Karzai faces the dual threat of Taliban and al Qaeda sympathisers and unruly provincial leaders and warlords locked in violent disputes over land and territory and seemingly uninterested in joining the central govern-

ment.

Renegade warlord Padshah Khan Zadran has launched fierce offensives in the past against provincial governments in Khost and Paktika, and he continues to oppose Karzai's rule.

Thousands of U.S. troops have been hunting for al Qaeda and Taliban operatives in south and southeastern Afghanistan, where many are believed to have fled after the hardline Islamic Taliban regime was toppled from power last year.

But local resistance to the United States and to the stop-and-search tactics its soldiers have adopted in the deeply conservative area is strong.

Karzai has said forming a national army is a key priority to help Kabul consolidate its grip over outlying regions. But the formation of the army has been slow.

Lift-off of Japan rocket with first foreign load

TOKYO, Dec 14 (Reuters) - Japan successfully launched a rocket and deployed a foreign satellite into orbit for the first time on Saturday, moving a step closer to winning international trust key to its trouble-plagued satellite launch business.

The new generation H-2A rocket, carrying four satellites, including one from Australia, lifted off into the clear skies from Tanegashima, a small tropical island about 1,000 km (625 miles) southwest of Tokyo, at 1031 a.m. (0131 GMT).

The 53-metre two-stage rocket, the fourth H-2A, released all four satellites, including Australia's FedSat, into their intended orbits, the National Space Development Agency (NASDA) said.

"The success shows that the H-2A

rocket is moving a step closer to winning world-class trust," said Atsuko Toyama, minister of Science and Technology, which oversees NASDA.

It marks the second time the H-2A has succeeded in deploying satellites into orbit, following a launch in September which NASDA officials hailed as a major step towards a commercial satellite launch business.

Japan launched its first H-2A rocket, without a payload, in August 2001, but the second rocket failed to put a test satellite into orbit in February.

A successful deployment of the payload, especially of the Australian satellite, had been seen as vital to the future of Japan's fledgling space programme, which critics have slammed for its expense and a series of launch failures.

NASDA president Shuichiro

Yamanouchi said if it were not for the failures, there would not have been Saturday's success.

"The consecutive failures became the foundation for success," Yamanouchi told a news conference.

A mishap in 1999 resulted in the loss of a 10-billion-yen prototype, while another unsuccessful launch a year earlier cost 60 billion yen, prompting calls within the government — which was looking for ways to cut expenditure in the face of prolonged economic slump — to scrap the programme.

The humiliating failures sapped international faith in the H-2A, already facing an uphill battle in a global commercial market.

From top Kashmiri militant group

Pakistani court frees separatist leader

LAHORE, Pakistan, Dec 14 (Reuters) - A Pakistani court freed a top leader of a banned Kashmiri militant group from house arrest on Saturday and rival India said that was proof Pakistan continued to support terrorism.

Maulana Masood Azhar of Jaish-e-Mohammad, a group Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf outlawed a year ago for fighting an insurgency in Indian-controlled Kashmir, was placed under house arrest in the Punjabi city of Bahawalpur in December, 2001.

Under a Public Safety Act, Azhar's arrest has come up for review by a special judicial commission every three months.

On Saturday, a three-member review board of the Lahore High Court rejected a request by the Punjab Home Department to extend Azhar's detention for another three months, saying there were no grounds to keep him in detention any further.

Masood was one of three men released from an Indian prison in a barter deal with New Delhi after an Indian airliner was hijacked in late 1999 and flown to Kabul, where the then-ruling Taliban government helped to negotiate a settlement.

"It is quite clear that investigation and charges against Masood Azhar have not been pursued by Pakistani authorities with any seriousness," an Indian external affairs ministry spokesman said in a statement.

Masood was allowed contact with his cadres when in prison, later conveniently detained at home while his family received money from Pakistan authorities, it said.

"It is quite clear that Pakistan is continuing with the policy of terrorism as an instrument of its state policy, in violation of international law, and its own publicly declared commitments".

India blames Pakistan for allowing Pakistan-based militant groups to cross into Indian-ruled Kashmir to fight an insurgency there that has claimed more than 35,000 lives since 1989.

Pakistan rejects the accusations, saying that it has stopped infiltrations across the heavily militarised Line of Control that separates the nuclear-armed rivals in Kashmir. But it does offer what it calls the "Kashmiri free-

dom struggle" diplomatic and political support.

The Indian ministry statement said: "It is well known that Al Qaida and Taliban remnants are today largely based in Pakistan, which is the epicentre of terrorism in the world.

"Any strategy which seeks to ignore Pakistan's own involvement with and sponsorship of terrorism and focuses, even for the short term, only on the unwilling and limited support provided in search of a few of the hard core Al Qaida, will never see long term victory".

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Applications for the NFP (accompanied by letter of acceptance) need to be submitted no later than 1 April 2003. The application form can be found on the NUFFIC website from the Royal Netherlands Embassy.

For brochures, application forms or any further information on the Netherlands Fellowship Programme, please visit the consular section of the Netherlands Embassy on Wednesdays only between 11.00 and 12.00 hrs.

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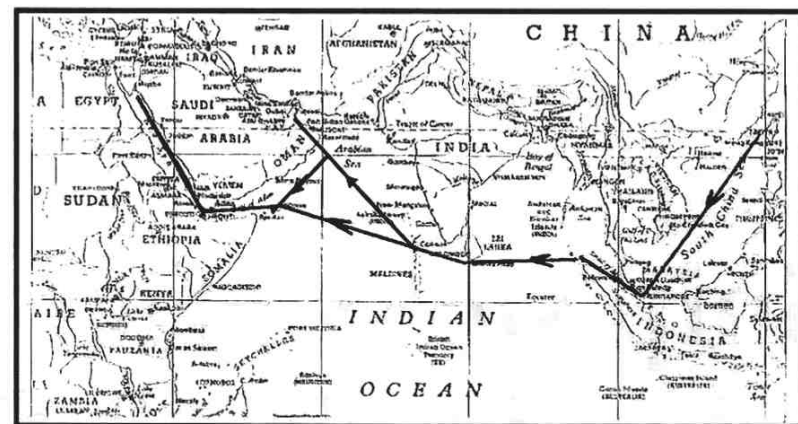
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Newsmaker

Rasmussen lauded for EU growth . . .

COPENHAGEN, Dec 14 (Reuters) - Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen won a place in history and plaudits from his peers for his role in sealing a historic deal to expand the European Union to include 10 mostly ex-communist east European states.

The physically fit and no-nonsense premier, who turns 50 next month, also steered clear of troubles as Turkey reluctantly accepted an EU decision to consider it for entry talks in 2004.

"At the end of the meeting I went up to him, shook his hand and said 'Bravo, bravo, bravo'. He deserved it," Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi told a news conference. "He has won his place in history."

The Liberal Danish premier was even welcomed with applause by a

normally critical European press corps when he arrived for the final press briefing to announce the result of one of the most successful summits in the EU's 45-year history.

Many said Rasmussen, just one year in office, was the right man at the right place at the right time.

"It certainly was not easy for him being relatively new in his position, and for a small country to take the helm of the EU at such a crucial time," Hungarian Foreign Minister Laszlo Kovacs told Reuters.

"He was straightforward, and while that can sometimes be a problem during such difficult negotiations, it never was with him."

Rasmussen, a former tax and economy minister in the late 1980's and

early 1990's, has won high marks from his EU peers and candidate countries for his single-minded focus on the enlargement and his ruthless chairing of meetings. He is almost obsessed by keeping his timetable.

"The Danish presidency has really been superb. I would offer special congratulations to the prime minister who conducted a meeting that could have gone on for a very long time...with good humour and efficiency," British Prime Minister Tony Blair said.

At the concluding press briefing Rasmussen apologised for exceeding the original programme, described by many as rather optimistic, by a couple of hours. He also admitted he had to be a bit harsh in the last-minute wrangling over money.

. . . while EU celebrates, considers orderly home

COPENHAGEN, Dec 14 (Reuters) - The European Union was on the road to becoming wider and bigger on Saturday after embracing 10 mostly ex-communist nations but now has to make an orderly home for 450 million people speaking a multitude of languages.

With all-night champagne parties celebrating the EU's biggest ever expansion over, reality was still setting in about what comes next and what could still go wrong.

The decision to add 10 new members to the present 15 came at the end of an intense two-day Copenhagen summit and means the EU's population will grow by 20 percent to 450 million people, creating an economic colossus to rival the United States.

On the horizon are another 65 million if Turkey fulfils its pledge to be ready to start formal entry talks by 2004.

"Good Morning Europe," was the headline of Poland's leading business daily Rzeczpospolita while Slovenia's Novy Cas

proclaimed "We've got it. They invited us to the EU."

"Europe is spreading its wings in freedom, in prosperity and in peace.

This is a truly proud moment for the European Union," Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the summit host, said in an emotional final speech.

Poland, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak republics, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Cyprus and Malta won the right to join the EU in May 2004, creating a bloc of 25 nations extending from the Atlantic to the eastern Mediterranean.

The candidates, whose 75 million citizens are, on average, less than half as well off as their EU counterparts, won promises of extra cash, higher farm subsidies and output quotas in bargaining which ran late into Friday evening.

EU leaders made minor concessions, but managed to keep the overall cost of paying for the expansion to some 40.8 billion euros — less than was originally budgeted back in 1999.

But the challenges before formal entry are many.

TOWER OF BABEL

They range from a risk of the EU turning into a so-called "Tower of Babel" from the many languages in which negotiations must now be con-

ducted to gridlock on decisions because of the need for consensus and unanimity.

The first steps are referendums in the 10 countries accepted at the summit on arrangements — mainly financial — for entry.

Hungary is the first with a referendum in April followed by votes in other countries over the next year.

Reflecting deep-seated concerns of becoming second-class EU citizens, opponents were already setting out their stalls.

"Also Officially in Europe" wrote Slovenian daily Delo. It derided EU farm policy as "catastrophic".

Poland's Lech Walesa, former leader of the Solidarity trade union, could not resist a swipe at the deal Poland negotiated.

"We paid a heavy price for this day. Those who once pulled us to the East now pull us to the West," he said.

Czech Republic political commentator Viliam Buchert said economic benefits were not the important issues.

"Why haggle with Brussels for a few euros when there is no discussion on whether the united Europe will not take away a part of our sovereignty?" he asked in a newspaper article.

U.S. Cardinal Law flies home to uproar

ROME, Dec 14 (Reuters) - Cardinal Bernard Law left Rome on Saturday and headed home to Boston to face the legal and moral music after his resignation over the worst scandal to hit the Roman Catholic church in its U.S. history.

Law, 71, left Rome as quickly as he arrived a week ago for talks with Pope John Paul.

He first handed in his resignation over the Boston clergy sexual abuse scandal in April, but the pope rejected it then and had been reluctant before this week's discussions to see Law go.

The cardinal returns to a U.S. church wounded by scandal, whose epicentre is in the archdiocese Law headed until Friday.

The anger and hurt that has spread far from Boston was evident in an e-mail sent to a reporter in Rome from a grandmother in Staten Island, New York City. The woman, who called herself a senior lay member of her parish, said: "What has gone on is disgraceful, whether in Boston or anywhere else."

"I honestly feel bad for the good people who are in the priesthood and doing a good job, but those who harmed children should be hung and treated no differently than any one of us that commits a crime," she said.

Apart from outrage from Church members, Law faces a subpoena served on him the day he left for Rome, to appear before a Massachusetts grand jury investigat-

ing sex abuse by priests, Boston sources familiar with the inquiry have said.

Also, angry protesters have urged criminal indictments against Law and his former top associates.

On Thursday Tom Reilly, attorney general for Massachusetts, accused the archdiocese of endangering countless children by covering up the behavior of paedophile priests for decades and possibly generations. Documents show that one priest had a history of molesting boys, another maintained a "double life" with a girlfriend and a third supplied cocaine to a teen he had sex with, but the archdiocese gave each of the three new jobs.

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Crew rescued

Ship sinks after collision in North Sea

LONDON/PARIS, Dec 14 (Reuters) - A Norwegian-registered ship sank in the North Sea taking a multi-million dollar cargo of luxury cars with it after a collision with a container ship in thick fog on Saturday.

All 24 crew were rescued after the collision in the early hours at the entrance of the Dover Strait between England and France.

The Tricolor was carrying 2,862 cars, including BMWs, Volvos and Saabs, worth between \$40-50 million, a spokesman for Norwegian shipping company Wallenius Wilhelmsen Lines said in Oslo.

The car carrier had about 2,000 tons of oil on board, according to Lloyd's Casualty Reporting Service.

Belgian coastguards said there was a slight leakage, but the Belgian sea rescue service said it was not aware any oil had spilled.

Lloyd's said the Tricolor, which was taking its cargo from Zeebrugge in Belgium to Southampton in England, was now lying in about 25 metres of water.

Lloyd's said the container ship, the Bahamas-registered Kariba, was seriously damaged but was making its own way to the Belgian port of Antwerp.

The Tricolor's captain and two officers were taken on board the Kariba, British and French coastguards said.

The rest of the mostly Filipino crew were picked up by a tug boat and have

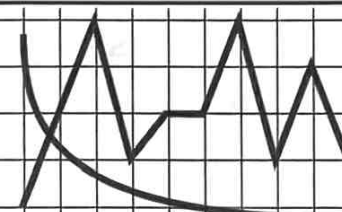
been taken to hospital in the French port Dunkirk, but there were no reports of injuries, they said.

A Belgian frigate Wandelaar is insuring security around the Tricolor while Franco-British tug boat Far Turbot is on its way to the ship, French authorities said in a statement.



Philippines seamen survivors of Norwegian freighter "Le Tricolor" which sunk after colliding with a container ship Saturday morning about 37 kilometers of Dunkirk leave Dunkirk Hospital to seamen houses on December 14, REUTERS

YT Business



Still an ongoing concern, but . . .

Rial plummet slows in 2002

By Yemen Times Staff

Yemeni currency exchange rates have fluctuated during 2002, and the Yemeni rial has seen a loss of three points of its value against foreign currencies, registering 174 rials against the US dollar in January and 177 rials at the end of last November. Although some banking sources consider the Yemeni rial loss small when measured against its big losses previously in the past three years, the purchasing power of the rial has retreated noticeably due to decline of individual incomes.

Sources have attributed the non-stability of the Yemeni currency to a fierceness of brokering on liquidity in the market and the banks manipulation in prices and their lack of commitment to a pricing unified with rates issued by the Yemeni Central Bank.

The sources see that availability of foreign currency reserves at the Central Bank has helped to some extent in relative stability of the rial after some financial sources had expected a collapse in its price at the end of this year to reach 200 rials against an American dollar.

According to Central Bank statements, the volume of reserves in value of foreign assets the bank possesses amounted to around \$4.72 billion to the end of last September, which is the highest rate the bank

achieves.

This monetary reserve has given the bank the power to overcome market speculations that has reduced by 25% the difference in decline of the rial price as it was expected at the beginning of the year.

Bankers, however, consider that lagging by the sides of the government monetary sector and the private sector, in the establishment of a stock exchange market, will keep the rial weak. This threat is thought to be the reason behind the chaos prevalent in the present banking market, which in turn negatively affects the rial's power.

However, despite that the foreign assets of the Yemeni banking apparatus have risen till the end of last September to YR 766.5 billion, the committee assigned with the establishment of a stock exchange market is still preparing studies needed for guaranteeing the establishment of a successful market.

A recent report on human development mentions that the economic and financial reforms the government has been implementing since 1995 have harmed people of limited income, and has not helped improve their purchasing power, whereas unemployment among has risen by 35%.

It is to be pointed out that the value of the Yemeni rial was 50 rials against the dollar at the beginning of carrying out the economic reforms and increased to 177 rials against the dollar after floating the currency price in the market.

Since 2000 USS Cole blast

Terrorism slows Yemen's economy more than ever

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemen's efforts for developing its promising economic sectors have collided with 9/11 and its fallout, including the American campaign on terror.

The Yemeni government found itself confronting terror even before Sept. 11, 2001, when a suicide bomber blasted the USS Cole in Aden in October 2000. The incident resulted in a decline of foreign investments at the Aden Free Zone and a tarnished reputation of the container port built by the Yemeni government to consolidate the country's world commercial role and restore Aden as an active trade center.

Investors began to act slowly in establishing factories and installations necessary for the Free Zone. Even domestic capitals hesitated in embarking on investment in this region citing reasons of unstable security there.

The Cole explosion resulted also in abstention of tourists from visiting Yemen, considering it as harboring terrorists and tribal elements that were behind incidents of kidnapping foreigners.

Then the events of September 11 gave discomforts for Yemen heavier than the Cole incident, as the leader of al-Qaeda organisation Osama bin Laden has been linked to having origins in Hadramaut.

Yemeni authorities have intensified their security cooperation with the United States and demonstrated their credibility in the war against terror. But the Yemeni economy did not recover.

On the contrary it has been seriously



French oil tanker Limburg

affected by consequences of the American international campaign. Prime minister Abdulqader ba Jammal said that in the first year after 9/11 that his country has lost around one billion dollars.

He confirmed that a number of companies and some businessmen from western countries who had previously decided to invest in Yemeni economic sectors have frozen their investment projects following the September events, a matter that redoubled slowness of investment operations in the Aden Free Zone.

Problems of the Yemeni economy have also been aggravated more after the incident of the French oil tanker Limburg on Oct. 6. Official circles have estimated losses sustained by the Yemeni economy at YR 1.3 billion, or US \$7.6 million a month.

The Limburg incident has also caused serious damage to fish wealth, damaged the coral reefs and caused death of fish, birds and marine life.

Also, following the incident, costs of insurance on maritime vessels coming to Yemeni ports have risen, and that has deprived Yemen of a significant source of national income in the wake of retreat of navigation activity by 50%.

Yemen has borne results of keeping security in the ports and coasts extend-

ing for a distance exceeding 2500-long km. American and western assistance has been confined to technical aspects and bearing costs of some equipment.

Meanwhile, the tourist sector has lost revenues of up to \$250 million while the Yemeni airways sustained losses of over that sum.

Then came the operation of assassinating the prime al-Qaeda operative in Yemen in Mareb in joint effort of Yemen and the U.S. to add more hardships to the Yemeni economy.

The operation has also put on the Yemeni economy responsibilities of hunting down the runaway elements suspect of their link to al-Qaeda organisation.

Added to that is the financing of campaigns of research and erecting security barricades and points equipped with developed devices.

The authorities also fear possible disturbances to take place in the tribal areas, which could lead the US company Hunt Oil, operating in Mareb, to reduce its operations of extracting and marketing crude oil, which would result more catastrophe to the economy.

So Yemen is swallowing consequences of terror and the campaign against it and this is directly reflected on its economy.

Italians involved in symposium now underway

Soothing therapy for Yemen's tourism

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

As part of efforts to activate the Yemeni tourist sector, tourist authorities want to benefit from using hot-springs in Yemen's countryside.

Yemen's tourist sector has sustained financial losses following the events of 11 September in the United States.

But there are a number of volcanic hot-springs flowing from depths of the mountains, and are in several governorates, mainly Ibb, Taiz, Dhamar and the valley of Hadramaut.

The State Authority for Tourist Development has concluded an agreement with officials of geologic surveys and mineral riches on publishing a book and an atlas on hot-springs in Yemen to help tourism.

Finishing such a book and atlas is aimed at providing information on sites of hot-springs and usefulness in curing some diseases from the medical point of view.

In order to develop tourism to the hot-springs, the authorities of tourist development and geological survey have agreed to a joint preparation for the Yemeni-Italian symposium on hot-springs.

The symposium is to be held from Dec. 10 to 21 to explain information about hot-springs in order to supply the tourist sector with new financial resources.

The geological survey authority will present a technical study on the subject. The symposium would be held in Damat area under the motto of "Hot-Springs in Damat Basin and their Exploitation for Therapeutical Tourism."

The geological survey authority would also implement a number of geophysical studies, digging works and drawing up hydrological maps for any hot water basin.

This work is to be done in response to a request by the state authority for tourist development that seeks to expand investment of springs, and make up for the losses of the tourist sector.

Visiting hot-springs for treatment is given much attention by Yemenis who go there for recovery from some diseases, due to the cheapness of the therapy compared to high costs of medicines and medical examinations at government or private hospitals.

In order to protect some hot-springs that have been exposed to random digging, the tourist development authority and the geological survey authority have agreed to solve the problem of squandering hot waters of Damat to re-organise the Damat basin.

Tourist sources expect that therapeutic tourism at hot springs would see an increase in the number of foreign tourists, especially among Gulf tourists. The sources also mention that there is a good turnout by Saudi citizens and that taking care of the hot springs would lead to activation of tourist services.

The Road Ahead

Planning a new product?

By RAIDAN A. AL-SAQQAF
r_saqqaf@hotmail.com

Success in the increasing competitive market of today depends on understanding and analyzing the decision-making process made by customers, especially if you are planning a new product.

A customer is an individual who is a part of a network of many more individuals called society. When this customer is about to make a purchase he consults other members of his network, and in turn his purchase decision will be affected by the word-of-mouth referrals by them; most properly they would advise to buy something familiar or similar to what they already have. This is called conformity, and in most cases that product would be the market leader.

It is critical for a new product to succeed that it be noticeable and eye-catching. Especially lifestyle products; the more noticeable a product, the easier it is to advertise. More importantly, noticeable products create publicity. Have you ever happened to see a golden colored car and asked which make it is? Or went shopping and saw a unique pack of chocolates and asked to learn more about it?

A good example can be the Personal Computers market. The market leader includes those computers which operate with Windows. Alternatively, players such as Apple computers, in order to sell, encourage customers to break the norm by "thinking different" and buying some other type which is conspicuous, i.e. an Apple Computer.

As humans, we have a sense of curiosity about anything new and striking that we come across. We then form either positive or negative perceptions or attitudes towards it. This attitude is influenced by many characteristics such as packaging and price. But more than that, it is influenced by the society and their feedback / referrals about it.

For example if you are to purchase a new TV set, you go to the shop and see that most of the TVs look alike and share common features. Here comes the role of noticeable products; they stand out in the group and catch your attention more than others do. In turn when you reflect on what you saw, it is the product that is different that you remember most. As a matter of fact this might create a trend. For example, who wore jeans to work some 20 years ago?

On the other hand, conspicuous products that are poorly planned can be dangerous. To avoid customer misconceptions, research at every stage is critical. How different should this new product be? What do consumers feel about the new product? This research may give you insights and some sort of direction you need to market the new product.

Remember: Planning a new product? Make it noticeable and eye-catching and do it properly because conspicuous products are easy to advertise and create publicity.

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Drama on the high seas and . . . Egg on Washington's face

PARIS (Reuters) - The egg on Washington's face over its seizure of a North Korean arms shipment to Yemen spread across the pages of the European press on Thursday as allies questioned U.S. tactics in its war against terror.

"Intercept of North Korean missiles misfires" was how Britain's Financial Times headlined its story on the dramatic seizure by Spanish warships in the Arabian Sea on Wednesday and the reluctant U.S. decision to release the ship hours later.

"The whole affair was a flop," the French daily Le Figaro wrote. "It looks like the Americans screwed up." Liberation, another Paris paper, remarked.

Richard Murphy, former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, told Italy's La Stampa that the freighter incident was "really very embarrassing to the United States."

Acting on U.S. information, Spanish warships stopped the unflagged cargo ship So San on Monday and found 15 Scud missiles and conventional warheads as well as 85

drums of unidentified chemicals hidden under cement bags on the ship. It handed control over to the United States.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld denounced North Korea on Wednesday as "the single largest proliferator of ballistic missile technology on the face of the earth" and said the arms would not reach their destination.

But later in the day, Washington reluctantly handed the shipload of missiles over to Yemen, which insisted it had bought them legally and would not hand them over to anyone else.

On Thursday the United States apologized "for what could seem an absurd situation," a Spanish Defense Ministry spokesman said.

FIGURING OUT A FLIP-FLOP

Washington's flip-flop raised suspicion in Madrid that Spanish forces had been made fools of by their American ally. "Spain has had to carry out a thankless task which undoubtedly carried risk for our troops," the

conservative daily El Mundo wrote in an editorial demanding an explanation.

It suggested Spain should withdraw its ships if Washington could not explain why it risked Spanish sailors' lives. "In such a sensitive area, you can't have the feeling of ridicule felt by policemen when they arrest a criminal and see the judge let him out by the back door," it wrote. The seizure also turned the spotlight on impoverished Yemen, which has joined Washington's war on terror but has yet to shake off its image as a haven for Muslim militants.

"The fact that an ally of ours, right in the middle of the Iraqi crisis, buys 15 Scud missiles from North Korea shows that this alliance is very different from those we had during the Cold War, which were much more reliable," Murphy told La Stampa.

Washington's leniency with Yemen, apparently due to a concern not to alienate even a shaky ally, exposed "new contradictions in U.S. foreign policy," Germany's Stuttgarter Zeitung observed.

"It puts pressure on North Korea but just looked on as Pakistan, a U.S. ally in the war against terror, secretly delivered nuclear technology to North Korea," it wrote.

"This climb-down (over the missiles) will certainly give another argument to those who oppose a war against (Iraqi President) Saddam Hussein and denounce Washington's double standards," Le Figaro wrote.

SILLY STUNT OR SERIOUS SPLIT?

Not everybody was as critical as Britain's left-leaning Guardian, which headlined its editorial on the seizure: "Silly stunts are not serious policy."



Bags of cement are placed to cover one of the crates of Scud missiles aboard the So San, sent to Yemen from North Korea.

Several commentators saw the seizure as Washington's way of proving North Korea was exporting missiles.

"The goal of this episode...was obviously to expose North Korea as an arms supplier," wrote the Austrian daily Die Presse. "The U.S. wanted to catch the North Koreans in the act."

France's Le Monde saw Washington infighting behind the flip-flop. "There is every reason to think that the seizure was authorized, probably at the suggestion of Vice President Richard Cheney, without the State Department being consulted," it wrote.

"The So San affair seems to be a new display of activism by the hard-liners in the Bush administration."

Why keep Palestinians out?

Jordan needs to open up

DAOUD KUTTAB

WHEN IT BEGAN as a Jordanian temporary procedure aimed at averting the possibility of mass Palestinian exodus is now posing a problem. For nearly a year now, Jordan has imposed tight measures on the crossing of Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip into Jordan. The King Hussein Bridge on the River Jordan is for most Palestinians the only available passage point out of Palestine.

Like any sovereign country, Jordan has the full right to declare and execute whatever policy it sees fit for its national security and interests. When first implemented, Jordan's declared policy was that Palestinians who had medical needs, educational goals or were travelling via Jordan were to be exempted from undergoing the new procedures. All others had to obtain a special permit issued based on a financial pledge that Jordanian relatives of the person intending to visit would sign at the Ministry of Interior in Amman.

Authorities set up offices at the very first Jordanian entry point on the bridge to authorise entrance. The process was expected to be lengthier than usual. Now, despite the fact that there is no tangible sign yet that there is any discernible Palestinian emigration and despite the decrease in the possibility of war with Iraq, the procedures at the King Hussein Bridge have grown more complicated for the average Palestinian.

It is true that, in their desperation to travel for business, pleasure or for simple family meetings, some Palestinians might have used strange and unusual tricks in order to circumvent these regulations and to obtain the approval of the security officials at the bridge.

With some Palestinians finding loophole after loophole in this temporary policy and with Jordanian authorities responding by adding yet more restrictions, often the average Palestinian with legitimate reasons to come to Jordan or travel via Jordan is the one suffering the most.

A serious revision of the entire procedure at the bridge is needed. Such revision must take into account the need for serious Palestinian-Jordanian cooperation.

If the aim is to limit or avert the possibility of mass emigration, then surely the Palestinian leadership is as much interested in it as Jordanian is. And since almost all Palestinians coming to Jordan (except for East Jerusalemites) must exit from Jericho, which is under full Palestinian National Authority control, any limitation to travel can start before Palestinians venture all the way into Jordanian territory.

A revision of this policy would also require a much more transparent policy. The Palestinian public must be well informed of the procedures it needs to follow in order to obtain the necessary permission to enter Jordan. Procedures need to be announced using Jordanian and Palestinian media. This would save much trouble and pain for Palestinians who suffer so much to get to the Jericho crossing only, after a long wait on the Jordanian side of the bridge, to be returned because they are missing a certain paper or because the papers that were acceptable the week before are no longer acceptable.

A simpler procedure

A much simpler procedure to solve this problem would be to give the Jordanian diplomatic mission in Palestine the right to issue a visa-like permit. Throughout the world, diplomatic missions carry out such activities. They are much more qualified to check the authenticity of a Palestinian document than a Jordanian security officer. This would make it much easier for the Palestinians, who can easily come to the Gaza or Ramallah missions, submit their applications, sign the documents and pledges and wait while their application is processed. Once ready, they can travel without harassment or long delays. It is difficult and embarrassing for the Palestinians to ask their relatives to put up the bond for them and then to suffer through procedures and delays.

Normally, upon crossing into Jordan, most Palestinians who would travel with me on the bus would breathe the air of freedom when seeing the first Jordanian policeman. For the past year, though, this feeling of relief seems to have been replaced by fear that they will be turned back.

Of course, a more appropriate policy would be simply to rescind the procedures of the past year and return to the open-bridge policy that worked successfully for over 30 years.

Stakeholders want more accountability

Let's manage Arab corporations better

BY HENRY T. AZZAM*

If a company in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt or the Gulf is generating profits for its investors, does anybody care how the board is organized, or how often it meets, or if there are independent directors serving on the board, or if the posts of the chairman and the chief executive officer are separated, or if it has an effective internal audit committee?

The answer to these questions is yes. Besides existing shareholders, there are other stakeholders who are keen to know how the board and the management of the company are taking into consideration the interests of employees, consumers, new potential new investors and the civil society at large. Farsighted boards recognize that dealing fairly with all groups is consistent with building long-term value for shareholders. Regulators, on the other hand, would like to have in place good corporate governance to make their domestic markets more attractive to local and international investors. Board members, management and regulators are appointed not just to look at today's business but to ensure there will be a one to manage tomorrow.

In the US, as well as in Europe and, to a lesser extent, the Middle East - and following recent corporate scandals and worldwide bankruptcies - investors have started to question the credibility of corporate leaders and that of the accounting, legal, and audit firms who were supposed to protect shareholders. They want stringent rules and regulations aimed at punishing wrongdoers and insuring transparency, fairness and integrity.

Since the early 80s when Ronald Reagan came to power in the US and Margaret Thatcher in the UK, governments have increasingly been seen as the problem, not the solution, as obstacles not facilitators, and as bureaucracies that

restricted capitalism's entrepreneurial spirit. Yet in less than a year and after the collapse of companies like Enron and Arthur Andersen, all this has changed. The US corporate model that involved a strong chairman/CEO and a compliant board combined with surging markets and a litigation culture driven by powerful lawyers, has been discredited. Market participants now want regulators to reform corporate governance.

It is well known that capital markets can function efficiently only if the highest standards of accounting, disclosure and transparency are observed. Central banks, monetary authorities and securities commissions in various Arab countries have been regulating their respective capital markets in an efficient and progressive way. However, this year's banking debacle in Jordan, the underperforming Egyptian banking sector and the rising number of weak corporate performance in the Gulf suggest that the authorities should consider introducing additional regulations as part of reforming corporate governance in their respective countries. Regulatory authorities in the region may want to consider requiring all public and private share holding companies to have independent members serving on their boards. As independent directors, they should not be major shareholders of the company and should not have a significant business relationship with it in order for them to bring an objective view to board deliberations. Many large public companies in the Gulf still have large family share holdings, family representatives among their senior management and strong family representation on the board. This creates a potential conflict of interest between the firm and the controlling family.

Independent directors alone will not be sufficient to bring about better corporate governance. Also needed is the separation of the often combined positions of chairman of the board and CEO. It is still common in various Arab countries

for the chairman of the board to be also the CEO of the company. When the CEO runs his company's board, he will be in effect his own boss and a number of fundamental conflicts of interest can exist. It is more difficult for a board to monitor and evaluate a chief executive's performance and hold him accountable for results if he is also the chairman. It is a standard practice in the UK, continental Europe and Canada that the post of chairman is separate from that of CEO. In a recent survey of board members from 500 large US companies, McKinsey & Co. found similar views. Nearly 70 percent of respondents said a CEO should not run the board.

Only few regional firms have effective audit committees as part of the function of their boards, and when such committees do exist they are not formed of independent directors. Audit committees are expected to ensure compliance with policies, plans, procedures and regulations. They are the first line of defense against mismanagement and financial irregularities. A well managed committee insures the reliability and integrity of management and accuracy of financial information that the company produces. The scope of work of these committees also includes the responsibility to identify suspected acts of fraud or conflict of interests involving the operation of the company.

Today, most members of audit committees at Arab companies tend to be major shareholders or represent strong shareholding interests, rather than independent professionals. Audit committees typically meet twice a year. Only a few committee members bother to review their companies' internal audit reports - let alone understand them. It is important therefore for committee members to be independent and financially literate and for the audit committees on which they serve to meet regularly and have unrestricted access to financial records.

If, year after year, there are companies who fail to generate profits, then the

problem has less to do with regional uncertainties and lack of sufficient macro-economic growth and a lot more with bad management, corruption and absence of vision, leadership and direction. We will never get far in terms of real change if we take the easy road of blaming outside factors for our mistakes. Companies who have been in the red year after year should take a very honest look at themselves and either sack senior management and revamp the board, or close the firm and quit the market. A strict regulation dealing with this issue should be put in place whereby a change in the management of those firms that consistently underperform would become mandatory.

To conclude, Arab corporations, especially those listed on regional stock exchanges, need stronger, independent board members able to devote proper attention to audit committees. It may be difficult to find good candidates to serve as independent board members; nevertheless companies should draw on retired directors, former CEOs, academics, expatriate professionals and public servants. We also need well-functioning audit committees and a separation of the positions of the chairman of the board and the CEO. Equity research and commercial banking activities should be completely separated from debt and equity raising activities and other investment banking services. If the region's regulatory authorities do not introduce more effective corporate governance and enforce compliance with these rules, they will be encouraging market participants to look elsewhere for investment.

Capital will always go to those markets where the rules of investing are most transparent and where there is a system of checks and balances that protects shareholders' interests.

* Henry T. Azzam, chief executive officer of Jordinvest, wrote this commentary for The daily star

Al-Mudhafar Mosque**An Islamic architectural wonder**

BY FAROUQ AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES TAIZ

People in Taiz carry dates while approaching the Al Mudhafar Mosque to break their fast and perform prayer.

Ramadhan's true spirit can never be felt without going to the mosques for prayers. However, praying in Al Mudhafar Mosque has a special and unique historic and religious value for the people of Taiz. During Ramadhan, the mosque witnesses unusual activity as people pray, read the Holy Qur'an, and relax with spiritual comfort asking God for forgiveness.

The mosque is located in the heart of the old part of Taiz City. It was in that particular area where kings of Bani Rassol, kings of Bani Iyooob and others lived.

It witnessed the greatest cultural re-

naissance in the Yemeni history in the Rassoli state founded by Omar Bin Rassol, who once inhabited Taiz. After his death, his son Yousef bin Omar was nominated to be king "Al Mudhafar".

His era witnessed an intellectual and cultural revival which was evident in the numerous number of mosques, schools and libraries. The king Al Mudhafar, described as a wise and generous and one who encouraged education, founded this mosque which carried his name later on (647-694 of hejra) for Hadith and religious education as well as Quran sciences. King Al Mudhafar was fond of sciences and superior to his colleagues in the different religious sciences.

After the Al Mudhafar's death, the Mudgafarian School witnessed an architectural expansion, so its architectural type was changed and new buildings were added to the school, like the western side by the grandson of Al Mudhafar in (764-721) of hejra, and King Al Ashraf made a modification to the eastern side.

During King Dahfer's era, there was an expansion in the praying house and Manbar was added.



The al-Mudhafar Mosque stands out amidst the cityscape of Taiz.

In 1962, the only minaret of the mosque was downed. It was recently rebuilt on the Sana'ani type.

In spite of all these changes, the mosque could reserve its founder's name "Al Mudhafar" Yousef Bin Rassol. Now it is the best and the largest mosque in Taiz.

Al Mudhafar Mosque is very wide from inside, the roof has three big domes and is surrounded by another small one carried by a tall stay. The hall inside has room for 500 persons, and a separated

praying section for women, having a capacity for 300 persons.

Al Mudhafar Mosque charms its visitors by its nice domes dating back to 500 years, and its high minarets which hug the sky and reflect the great Islamic civilization.

It is a pity that most of the manuscripts and sculpture written on these domes were wiping out due to the random repairs of the mosque.

The minaret of the mosque was about 45 m high. After its collapse, it was

rebuilt by Imam Ahmed Hammeed Adeen to be 35 high and then collapsed again, then was rebuilt again in 1984.

The mosque has three eastern doors and three western doors, a northern gate, and it still has its original walls, but the ceiling's woods were replaced by concrete cement which distort its original type. The visitor to Al Mudhafar will feel proud of such a great architecture and beauty, and will feel pity and sorrow for the latest repairs which offended the value and the beauty of the mosque.

Al Alama Ismael Bin Ali Al A'akwa'a said in his book "Islamic Schools in Yemen," that "The building of Mudhafarian School is of the Islamic antiquities wonders as an evidence of the Yemeni genius designers and artists who could draw such a beautiful picture on the halls and ceilings of Al Mudafarian School."

We refer to the need for promoting religious tourism and drawing attention to great samples like the mosque of Al Mudafar.



The al-Mudhafar Mosque is a favorite place to pray during Ramadan.

Parts of Yemen's economy rebounding**Welcome to Yemen, welcome to Arabia Felix**

The Yemeni government continued its endeavors in 2002 to implement the economic, financial and administrative reform programs, liberalizing its economy and removing constraints that hamper development.

It also granted the local and foreign private sectors facilities, increased the role of local communities and NGO's, expanded the domain of democracy and political participation, integration of women into the society and it delegated more powers to local authorities.

Major economic indicators witnessed significant improvements. Prices and exchange rates stabilized, the deficit in trade balance dropped and a surplus was realized and the gross domestic product realized a growth rate of 5.5%. This was in addition to the improvement in the atmosphere and promotion of infrastructure.

Recently, the second five-year plan for 2001-2005 was approved. The plan aims at developing sectors with relative advantages, such as fisheries, agriculture, tourism and mineral resources. It also aims at implementing a comprehensive program for controlling poverty, eliminating unemployment and training manpower. Of the same significance is the orientation of economic policy to join the World Trade Organization and integration into global economy.

Like many other countries in the world, tourism in Yemen was adversely affected by the September 11 attack on America. Yet, the government undertook a number of measures to assist the private



Gren Valley, Dhisufal-Ibb (photo by: M. S. Noman Al-Absi)

tourism sector to surpass the crisis and mitigate consequences.

After the September 11 attack, the Yemeni government undertook a comprehensive campaign to combat terrorism and prosecute those accused of kidnapping. Those efforts resulted in stability of security and complete stop of kidnapping.

There was also implementation by the government a security program in all Yemeni areas particularly remote areas.

There is cooperation and coordination

between the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and the Ministry of Interior to implement a security plan for the safety of tourists.

A Yemeni Coast Guard Authority is now established and a national Security Council was formed.

The government continues its efforts to enhance partnerships between the public and private sectors and open broader horizons for joint international cooperation.

The Yemeni government appreciates

the actions of friendly states such as Germany, the UK and Italy to promote trade and service exchange between Yemen and the European Union.

The Ministry of Tourism and Environment and establishments affiliated to them are following the implementation of basic services for promotion of tourism, particularly in tourism attraction areas through surveys, studies and coordination with agencies concerned with implementation of the infrastructure.

The government gives special concern to promoting beaches, islands, and other places of environmental tourism, especially Soqatra Island that is characterized by its unique biological and environmental diversification.

Yemen Airways (Yemenia) is renovating its fleet and adding three more Boeing 737s and negotiating for two Airbus aircrafts, or two Boeing 777s.

Excavations reveal the largest historical temple of Oam at AL-Jazira area in Marib. Further excavations are being carried out in the area. The government intends to erect a tourist park in this area. There are also other archaeological discoveries in Shabwa, Hadramout, Ibb, Hodeidah and Sa'dah governorates.

We therefore call upon European companies that engage in the field of tourism to renew their dealings with their partners in Yemen. We assure them of the existence of huge investment opportunities in certain areas with high profitability, particularly the beaches, islands and places of environmental tourism.

Living wisely**Be smart: Work hard & plan**

BY A'RIF AHMED AL-AHDAL
TEACHER, EDUCATION COLLEGE
HODEIDAH.

Do sane and insane have the same meaning? Certainly not. They are totally different. The difference is that the sane think better while doing anything whereas the insane don't. While the sane have goals to achieve and work very hard toward, the insane live aimlessly like anything. They never think of tomorrow.

Which group do you think you belong to? Hopefully the sane. Yes, every person has right to aspire for a better position in life. In fact every one of us must have his or her own true ambitions. If there is will, there is a way.

To accomplish one's dreams, one needs to have self-esteem. For this, one has to realize that one has the right to become a better person in life. This self-esteem leads to self-confidence, a very

important catalyst for every person, particularly students.

It gives a student faith in himself and the energy to march ahead in achieving his goals. Let us not forget the following lines: "If you think you can, can, you can, if only you have the will. If you think you will, you will, if only you want to."

It is a fact that every single person has some hidden potential. Needless to say, self-confidence plays a very important role in maximizing the hidden potential. Self-confidence becomes more commendable if accompanied by hard work.

As the journey of many a mile begins with a small step, every moment is a fresh beginning, well-begun is half-done and hard work is the essence of success. Let us begin to work harder and make better human beings of ourselves.

Let us do our best to come up in life, shall we?



A good work ethic will lead to confidence for many Yemeni in need of a better life.

The science of our well-being

How the brain perceives pain

NORBERT R. MYSLINSKI
FOR THE WORLD AND I

The feeling of pain is useful in that it calls attention to an injury or malfunction of a body part. There are times, however, when a person suffers from persistent pain, the cause of which may be difficult to identify. By investigating the nervous system, scientists are beginning to discover how we feel hurt when our body is damaged or fails to function properly.

We all dream of a painless world: one without the throbbing headache, the piercing toothache, the agony of childbirth, arthritis, or cancer. To say that we dislike pain is an understatement—some regard it as God's greatest curse. In fact, we spend huge amounts of time, money, and energy trying to alleviate pain, confident that our lives would be easier, happier, and more productive without it.

What if we could banish pain from our lives? Take the case of eight-year-old Bobby Clark. Since birth, he has been insensitive to bodily harm. He has never shouted or cried because something hurt, never reflexively removed his hand from a hot stove or sharp knife. He continues to be fascinated by things that most of us quickly learn to avoid. He lives in a painless world, but he is neither happy nor healthy.

Bobby's wounded and maimed body betrays this lack of respect for the destructive world. His skin is covered with scars from sharp objects that he could not feel. His arms are bent and deformed from the many times they were broken. His lips are bitten raw. Some of his fingers are shortened, and others are missing because he did not feel enough to pull them away. Bobby has a rare, inherited disorder of the nervous system, present from birth and affecting the entire body. He will suffer from it for the rest of his life.

Functions and forms of pain

Pain is one of our body's most important security systems. One critical factor for our survival is the ability to become immediately aware of injury through the experience of pain. Theologian C.S. Lewis called it the "divine megaphone" through which God speaks to us and commands our attention.

Pain is a teacher, requiring its pupils to learn, remember, and adapt. Its lessons are valuable to us because we possess these abilities. Simple animals, by contrast, do not have a memory and would not benefit from the negative reinforcement of pain. They are protected by the instinct they need to survive. Thus we see that on the evolutionary tree, pain was a rather late development. Although most primitive life-forms could react to stimuli, actual suffering was not manifested until the limbic system—the emotional part of the brain—was developed, particularly with the advent of mammals.

Most of us are familiar with the pain associated with cuts, burns, stings, and various other injuries. Once the body heals, the feeling of hurt goes away. Such cases are placed in the category of acute pain.

On the other hand, many suffer from ongoing conditions such as back pain, recurrent headaches, cancer, or arthritis. Some continue to feel the hurt of an injury long after the wound has healed. Such cases are grouped in the category

of chronic pain.

There are several general distinctions between acute and chronic pain. While acute pain can be easily localized and has a clearly defined cause, chronic pain is hard to localize and its cause is often ill defined. Acute pain is reduced when the cause is taken away, but chronic pain persists even after the cause (if known) is removed. The autonomic response—including heart rate, respiration, and sweating—is heightened by acute pain, but it adapts to regular levels in cases of chronic pain. A person with acute pain may suffer from anxiety, but someone with chronic pain may suffer from depression.

Surprisingly, pain that is perceived in one part of the body may be caused by a problem or malfunction in another area.

For instance, pain in the lower leg may be the result of a slipped disk in the spinal column. This condition, known as projected pain, arises because a sensory nerve (neuron) that extends into the lower leg is irritated by compression in the spinal cord, and the brain interprets the signals it receives as representing damage to the lower leg.

Some people experience a similar but slightly different condition, known as referred pain. For instance, a person suffering from a heart attack may experience pain along the inside of the left arm. The reason for this phenomenon is not entirely clear, but it is thought that sensory receptors in the heart and left arm may be linked to a common neuron that extends from the spinal cord, and pain signals sent by the heart are interpreted by the brain as pain in the left arm.

Where does it hurt?

In answering the question "where does it hurt?" most people indicate the injured part of the body. Aristotle, however, might have said that pain exists in the heart, while Bertrand Russell would have said that it exists in the mind. Today's neuroscientists point to the brain, while noting that various parts of the nervous system are activated to respond to bodily damage.

In the early 1970s, the dominant theory about chronic pain was that it originated in the peripheral nervous system—that is, the system of nerves that extends beyond the brain and spinal cord. This view was advocated by Dr. John Bonica, the "father" of the pain clinic movement, and other leaders in the field. Physicians therefore tried to prevent nerve impulses from reaching the brain by cutting peripheral nerves or blocking them with alcohol.

Challenging that view, Dr. Benjamin Crue Jr. proposed that chronic pain orig-

inates in the brain rather than in the periphery. The observation that pain could not always be blocked in the periphery indicated that it was already in the head. In fact, the cutting of peripheral nerve fibers sometimes increases the pain rather than relieving it. In addition, referred pain, projected pain, and the effectiveness of placebos all point away from the injured part as the source of our pain. The ultimate argument is that amputees still feel pain in their phantom limbs.

Recently, researchers have discovered that the skin and other tissues contain specific receptors—called nociceptors—that are sensitive to injury or potential injury. When these receptors (which are macromolecules on the surfaces of certain nerve endings) are activated, they initiate messages that are transmitted to the brain. Almost immediately, the motor neurons reflexively move the person's body away from the source of injury, even before he becomes aware of the pain.

Several areas of the brain take part in processing the signals received. The reticular activating system (a region that projects from the brain stem to the cerebral cortex) directs attention to the source of injury; the parietal lobes of the cerebral cortex help localize the pain and enable the person to realize its importance; and the limbic system adds the suffering component of pain. The experience is then filed into memory by the temporal and frontal lobes of the cerebral cortex.

Congenital insensitivity to pain (as in the case of Bobby) can occur in various ways. Usually, there is an absence of neurons that normally mediate pain messages from the skin to the spinal cord. In some cases, the cells and tissues of the patient's nervous system are not detectably different from those of a normal person. In such cases, there may be a problem with the functioning of nociceptors in the skin. In other cases, the problem may lie in the processing of emotions in the brain.

Recent research has shed new light on pain-specific neurons and their corresponding nociceptors. For instance, David Julius and coworkers at the University of California in San Francisco created a mouse with significant insensitivity to heat-induced pain. They did so by removing the gene for a pain receptor protein called VR1 (vanilloid receptor type 1). The mouse demonstrated no aversion to heat at levels that would normally be painful and no distinct preference between plain water and water laced with capsaicin, the spicy ingredient in hot peppers. Evidence suggests that when nociceptors are repeatedly activated by a stimulus, they become increasingly sensitive, leading to the development of chronic pain. Since these receptors are found only on pain-specific neurons, blocking them could help alleviate pain with minimal side effects. The key here is to block these receptors just enough to prevent or turn off chronic pain, without interfering with the important protective acute response. The latter response maintains our reflexes that enable us to quickly withdraw from harm's way.

The blocking of peripheral pain neurons, however, is not likely to block all types of pain. The glial cells of the nervous system also contribute to pain. Until recently, glial cells were regarded as providing only structural and nutritional support. A recent breakthrough, howev-

er, shows that they can produce and maintain chronic pain. According to Linda Watkins of the University of Colorado, spinal cord glial cells release chemicals (called pro-inflammatory cytokines) that promote pain caused by nerve damage, such as neuralgia, or diseases such as AIDS. All current pain medications alter the function of neurons. These findings suggest an additional area that needs attention in the treatment of pain.

Gender and age issues

Gender differences are a relatively new focus for pain research. Until recently, scientists seeking to standardize data used only male animals in most laboratory studies of pain. They thereby eliminated variations induced by cyclic changes in female reproductive hormones and the potential harm to an undetected or future fetus. In addition, many trials of new medications and other treatments excluded women. According to some researchers, it was too costly to include female animals or women in complex studies.

Then in 1990, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) launched its Office of Research on Women's Health, which drew attention to unmet needs in this area. That was followed by the NIH Revitalization Act of 1993, requiring that women be included in NIH-funded clinical research. In 1996, the NIH established its Pain Research Consortium with representatives from all NIH divisions, and in 1998, this group sponsored the first conference on gender and pain.

Gender differences include the observation that women report pain more often than men do, in more body regions, and have more severe and persistent pain. Migraine headaches affect mainly women in their childbearing

years, decreasing with age. When women and men are given the same pain stimuli in laboratory studies, women say "ouch!" before men do.

On the other hand, women discriminate better between types of pain and tend to use more coping strategies. The open expression of pain sometimes helps people gain better control over it. Nonetheless, being seen as "too emotional" may work against a person and lead to inadequate care.

The feeling of pain may also differ with the type of problem. For example, boys rate having braces tightened as more severe than do girls, while girls rate having a broken arm as more painful than do boys. Even so, girls generally grade many procedures as more painful than boys do. In comparable situations, girls are more likely to be fearful and anxious, and boys to be angry.

Treatment that works for one sex may not work as well (if at all) for the other. For example, narcotic analgesics are less effective in women than in men. Research indicates that sex hormones, primarily estrogen and progesterone in women and testosterone in men, contribute to this variability in pain responses. Pain issues take on greater importance as people grow older. On average, women live six years longer than men. In a recent report on managing chronic pain in the elderly, the American Geriatrics Society estimated that 25–50 percent of those living in society at large



A mosquito bite activates special injury-sensitive receptors, called nociceptors, in the skin. These receptors, located on certain nerve endings, initiate signals that are transmitted to the brain. World & I

have pain problems. About one-fifth of the elderly population reported taking pain-relieving medications several times a week. In nursing homes, however, as many as 80 percent of residents may have substantial pain that is undertreated.

From an overall perspective, scientists have made great progress in piecing together the increasingly complex puzzle of pain. Nonetheless, much more work remains to be done. Fortunately, the number of new breakthroughs has helped brighten the financial outlook for research in this area. In particular, NIH funding has increased from \$67.3 million in 1995 to \$157.1 million in 2002. Yet, even as we benefit from current and future discoveries about how to alleviate pain, we can think about Bobby—the child with congenital insensitivity to pain—and consider that under many circumstances, pain can be a blessing rather than a curse.



Different types of hurtful stimuli elicit dissimilar responses. In addition, research shows gender differences in the way people respond to pain.



Different types of hurtful stimuli elicit dissimilar responses. In addition, research shows gender differences in the way people respond to pain. World & I

JOB OPPORTUNITY



Yemen Hunt Oil Company is currently seeking experienced personnel to work on "FSO" SAFER. The successful candidate will be required to perform these tasks at the ship on a rotational schedule (28 days on / 28 days off).

Electronic Engineer

Minimum Requirements :

- Must have a bachelor degree in Electronic / Electrical Engineer from a recongized and reputable University or an approved instrument apprenticeship program.
- Must have a minimum of 5 years experience as an Instrument and Control Systems Engineer and must be able to follow systematically electrical drawings for troubleshooting.
- Must possess proficiency in English, both spoken and written.
- Must have good computer skills.

Main Responsibilities :

1. Calibrate and maintain the Daniel metering system to international standards.
2. Calibrate and maintain the boiler control system.
3. Calibrate and maintain the fire alarm systems.
4. Calibrate and maintain both fixed and portable gas monitoring systems including LEL, O2, etc.
5. Calibrate and maintain other electronic, pneumatic and hydraulic control systems as required.
6. Other tasks as may be assigned by the Senior Machinery Operating Engineer.

All candidates must be YEMENI NATIONALS.
Deadline for the application: **December 31, 2002**

If you meet the above requirements, please forward your resume to:

YEMEN HUNT OIL COMPANY
Attn: Human Resources Manager
P.O.Box 481
Or
Fax: 1- 416 898
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

Please do not phone us. We will call you for an interview, if you are a successful candidate

Local Press

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr



Al-Shomoa
weekly, 14 Dec.
2002.

Main headlines:

- American embassy in Sana'a opens contact channel with al-Biedh
- Yemen and Sudan could face American-European aggression launched from Eritrea and Djibouti
- The president discusses a number of issues with Russian president Putin Monday
- Japan may freeze economic aid to Yemen over missiles
- Aden witnesses financial corruption in latter months of this year
- YR 152 million worth in financial violations at works office in Taiz

The newspaper's editorial says all political data in the country clearly indicate the existence of a conspiracy aimed at the entire area of Yemen. This conspiracy is woven by the Americans while a small group of its agents in the country have speedily volunteered to implement. This group, and America, did not take into consideration the volume of relationship with America or the size of cooperation shown by the Yemeni government and the opposition. Amidst that and within confirmation that the U.S. CIA has opened a channel of dialogue with Yemeni opposition abroad, mainly with Ali Salem al-Biedh, this could be a dangerous

indicator that could not at any rate be looked over as all data point to a scheme for partitioning the country and take back to the status before 1994.



Al-Thawra
daily, Dec. 14
2002.

Main headlines:

- "So San" anchors at Hodeidah seaport at dawn Saturday
- Weaponry shipment arrives in Yemen
- Parliament resumes work Saturday
- Cultural cooperation draft agreement between Yemen and Russia
- Baradie does not rule out summoning Iraq's scientists to be interviewed abroad
- Yemen's First Instance Courts conclude deciding electoral challenges in all governorates Sunday

The daily editorial today is devoted to comment on the North Korean ship carrying a shipment of Scud Missiles to Yemen saying the diplomacy of reasonableness, balance and clarity has helped Yemen acquire what it has gained of high status among nations. Had it not been for the good relations that the Yemeni diplomacy has worked on building it and establishing relations of close cooperation and friendliness with various countries at all political levels, it would not have been possible to solve the

issue of the ship carrying a shipment of arms for our armed forces, especially after it has taken an international dimension because of the media fuss aroused about it.

The immediate and quick action and the direct handling made by the Yemeni diplomacy through the immediate announcement on our country's property of the shipment of weapons and offering justifications and reasons on legality of the arms deal, all that has had its active effect for silencing the many voices that took part in the artificial fuss and it has had the role in putting an end to making many of those parties to disappear. President Ali Abdullah Saleh has played a remarkable role in leading this diplomacy to its success as he has administered the crisis in a positive way that led to put a quick end to the incident. Out of his stand characterised by sticking to the right, the president addressed the American administration by telling it that possessing weapons is for defence not for aggression and it was inevitable to concede to the Yemeni strong pretext especially that Yemen has confirmed its keenness on the peaceful policy and solving of its issues and problems with others by negotiations and arbitration.

The American positive response to the Yemeni demand and the quick release of the ship and the weapons shipment gives a new evidence on soundness of the Yemeni attitude and Yemen's credibility in its diplomatic dealing.

JOB OPPORTUNITY



Jannah Hunt Oil Company is currently seeking a **Lead Mechanic** to work in the Halewah Processing Unit. The successful candidate will be required to perform these tasks at the Jannah Hunt field facilities on a rotational schedule (28 days on / 28 days off).

Lead Mechanic

Minimum Requirements :

- Must have completed City and Guilds Tech Certificate or equivalent .
- Must have 10 years experience of Oil/Gas Plant Equipment Maintenance on Solar Taurus Gas Turbines, Ajax and Ariel Reciprocating Gas Compressors, Caterpillar gas and diesel fuelled generator sets and plant utility equipment.
- Must be familiar with Permit to Work formalities.
- Must have experience of team leading or supervisory duties.
- Should possess a good command of spoken and written English.
- Must be physically in a good shape.

Main Responsibilities:

To lead a small team of mechanics in the day to day planned and breakdown maintenance activities in a hands on capacity on oil and gas processing and power generation equipment. Assume a focal point role for day to day liaison with Production Operations on mechanical maintenance activities, and assisting with planning resources and prioritising workloads. Interfacing daily with Electrical and Instrument Leads as required. Reporting directly to the Field Maintenance Supervisor.

All candidates must be **YEMENI NATIONALS**
Deadline for the application: **December 31, 2002**

If you meet the above requirements, please forward your resume to:

JANNAH HUNT OIL COMPANY
Attn: Human Resources Manager
P.O.Box 481
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Fax: 1- 416 898
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen

Please do not phone us. We will call you for an interview if you are a successful candidate.

World Press

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

Egypt

Al Ahram

Egypt's permanent delegate to UN Ahmed Abul Gheit Friday highlighted the vital role of UN in the field of maintaining peace, describing it as an international organization for settling disputes worldwide.

Al Akhbar

Egypt has officially applied to join the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, Assistant Justice Minister and chief of the Anti-Money Laundering Unit Serry Syam Friday told an international conference held in Moscow.

Al Gomhuria

Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Fayaz Naga Friday said the Japanese government has approved Egypt's request on resuming giving governmental soft loans, which is due to be paid back over 40 years with a grace period of 10 years.

Egyptian Mail

Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Maher said in remarks published on Friday a US initiative to promote democracy and open markets in the Middle East region was well-intentioned, but did not address the key problem of the region's conflict.

Germany

Frankfurter Allgemeine

The government has planned to introduce interest tax to appease the debate over the re-introduction of property tax and enhance the income of public budget at the same time.

Die Welt

Value of the euro continued to increase on Friday and reached the highest level against the US dollar this year. Dealers said the uncertainty

on the markets before the release of new economic figures in the United States had caused the increase of euro.

Besides AWACS surveillance planes, the United States have also raised informal request for the NATO to provide marines stationed in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea with German soldiers. Germany still rejects an "active military involvement" in a possible Iraq war.

Japan

Yomiuri, Mainichi, Nihon Keizai:

Japan's governing coalition parties unveiled a package of tax reform proposals for fiscal 2003 on Friday, which features tax breaks for companies to boost the economy and tax hikes on tobacco and liquor to help shore up the nation's dismal finances.

Asahi

Japanese government is to promote

downsizing of general constructors.

Yomiuri

Japan's ruling parties agreed to promote the Defense Agency to Defense Ministry.

Nihon Keizai

Japanese government set FY 2003 economic growth rate at 0.6 percent.

Britain

Financial Times:

Europe threw open its doors to the east on Friday as years of tortuous negotiations with 10 candidate countries ended amid jubilation at the EU summit in Copenhagen.

The Independent

A plane carrying Celtic football fans home from a match in Spain had to land in Cardiff in Wales on Friday after disturbance in which a flight attendant was allegedly attacked.

The Times

American and British intelligence services have dismissed President Saddam Hussein's 12,000-page declaration on Iraq's weapons of mass

destruction to be full of holes "big enough to drive a tank through."

The Daily Telegraph

Britain's defense chiefs have told Prime Minister Tony Blair that he must decide within 10 days whether British forces should be sent to the Gulf if they are to be a credible threat to Iraq.

The Guardian

Hundreds of children smuggled into Britain by professional gangs over the past few years have been "lost" by authorities who have no idea where they have gone or what has happened to them.

Pakistan

The Nation

India and Pakistan will complete within the next three or four months the withdrawal of troops massed on their border for the past year, Pakistani Secretary of Defense Hamid Nawaz said on Friday.

The Statesman

A two-pronged campaign for destroying the poppy crop cultivated over large swathes in defiance of a government ban and hunting down al-Qaeda and Taliban activists has quietly been launched in a number of tribal areas, well-placed sources told The Statesman on Friday.

The Nation

Pakistan has assured the United States that the government of Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali will continue supporting as frontline state to the international community in the war against terrorism.

India

The Times of India

India's 32nd National Games were declared open by Indian President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam after a breathtaking show at the G.M.C. Balayogi stadium in Hyderabad, the capital of Andhra Pradesh, south India.

The Hindustan Times

Fifteen persons were killed, 42 injured Friday when an overcrowded bus carrying them overturned on National Highway 31 in West Bengal, east India.

The Hindu

Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee Friday expressed concern over the slow pace of progress in many areas of the economy including removal of Inspector Raj, Center-State fiscal problems, labor and power sector reforms as well as infrastructure investment. "We need to move more rapidly in these areas," he said.



Arab News - Khalil's cartoon

Nigeria

This Day

Nigeria and the African Development Bank on Friday signed a loan agreement of 15.6 million US dollars for the revival of the country's ailing electric power sector.

The Guardian

Thousands of young men have been massing outside military barracks in Cote d'Ivoire's main city of Abidjan,

pleading to fight in the country's spreading civil war after a government call for new recruits.

Weekend Vanguard

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo on Friday vowed that his administration would not spare any politicians caught to be perpetrating acts of violence in the conduct of 2003 general polls.

Kenya

East African Standard

The presidential candidate of Kenya's main opposition group National Rainbow Coalition, Mwai Kibaki returns home Saturday after spending several days in a London hospital.

Raila Odinga and Simeon Nyachae, two of Kenyan opposition leaders, declared Friday they were willing to forgive President Daniel arap Moi for any wrongs he might have committed during his 24-year presidency.

Daily Nation

The Kenyan police said Friday they had found no evidence linking six Pakistani and three Somali suspects to an attack on Israeli tourists but instead charged them with being in the country illegally.

The People Daily

Nine of the 13 suspects held for questioning over the Nov. 28 terror attack at the Kenya's coast city of Mombasa have been released.

Fielded over-age players in under-17 competition**Yemeni footballers kicked out of games**

Kuala Lumpur, Dec 12, (YT/IRNA)—The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has decided to deprive Yemen from participating in the upcoming AFC under-17 competitions scheduled for next year in Finland. The AFC also slapped fines and sanctions on Yemen along with Pakistan for fielding over-age players in Asia's under-17 main rounds, held in the United Arab Emirates in September.

The players concerned and managers of both teams are suspended for two years, keeping them from taking part in the next AFC under-17 event due in 2004.

Both countries were also fined US \$10,000.

AFC President Mohammad bin Hammam, in disclosing the sanctions following a meeting of the Executive Committee in Kuala Lumpur on late Wednesday, said that the fines and sanctions were in line with the confederation's efforts to ensure fair play in its age-group tournaments.

"It shows our determination to ensure that the game is clean at this level. Just as there are incentives for players and teams who excel, we need to also punish those who flout the regulations.

"We will not hesitate to come down harder the next time round on those who are caught cheating. The fact of the matter is that the stern action we have been taking against cheating in the game is showing results.

"It is our belief that fewer teams are now resorting to fielding over-age

players. The message of stern action is getting through loud and clear. This is good for the development of the game in Asia," Hammam said.

Another country sanctioned by the AFC was India—but for another reason.

AFC imposed a one-year ban on India hosting any international football tournaments after failing to provide a report on a mass brawl.

AFC general secretary Peter Velappan said the body was seriously

upset that Indian officials had not made a report on a punch-up between players from Calcutta's Mohan Bagan and Brazilian side Palmeiras.

"Despite numerous reminders and time extensions, the AIFF (All India Football Federation) had yet to submit this report to the AFC," he told.

Players from both teams were involved in ugly skirmishes during the Indian Football Association Shield. The AIFF was also fined US\$5,000.

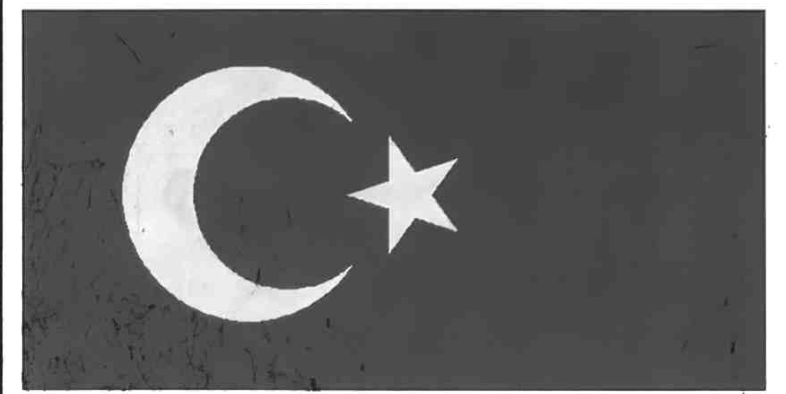
Vellappan said the AFC took a dim

view of the fact that despite numerous reminders and time extensions, the AIFF had not submitted its findings on the incident that was widely publicized in the international media.

The players were suspended for two years from their national teams, while the Pakistan and Yemeni Football Federations were each fined US\$10,000 and barred from competing in the next year's under-17s tournament in 2004, Hammam said.



Four players in our Yemeni under-17 national team were proven to be over-aged following x-ray examinations. The players were suspended for two years from their national teams, while the Yemeni Football Federation was fined US\$10,000 and barred from competing in the next under-17s tournament in 2004.

Turkey game to decide England's Euro 2004 fate

LONDON (Reuters) - England's chances of winning their Euro 2004 qualifying group will be decided by their home game against World Cup semi-finalists Turkey, according to coach Sven-Goran Eriksson.

Turkey are top of Group Seven with a maximum nine points from three games, while England are second with four from two games after being surprisingly held 2-2 at home by Macedonia in October.

"Yes, I think we can win the group, of course," Eriksson said in a wide-ranging interview on BBC's Breakfast with Frost programme to be broadcast on Sunday. "But the crucial game will be against Turkey at home in the beginning of April."

Yet Eriksson's ambitions with England go far beyond beating the Turks to the automatic qualifying slot for the championship in Portugal.

Flanked by England captain David Beckham, the Swede said: "A big dream of course is to win a big tournament with England. That's what we're working for and as David said we shouldn't talk so much about it, we should go out and try to do it."

Eriksson believes England went agonisingly close to a highly successful World Cup campaign, which ended with a 2-1 defeat by eventual champions Brazil in the quarter-finals.

"I think we learnt, if I shall talk football, that we need some more time to prepare before the next Euro or World Cup," said the Swede.

SHORT TIME

"Three weeks is a very short time between (when) you finish the league, in England, and you start the World Cup.

"And I think if we had had one more week we could even have done better — I'm sure about that."

Off the pitch, the private lives of both men have rarely been kept private over the past year, though they accepted the media spotlight came with the territory of being famous.

Eriksson, who had a highly publicised affair with Swedish TV presenter Ulrika Jonsson earlier this year, said: "Your private life, I think it's a price you have to pay if you want to stay in this country and if you want to stay in football.

"I always said that I accept it and it goes on."

But he added: "The day I don't accept it any more, I will leave this country because that kind of the press is more difficult in this country than Italy, Portugal or Sweden where I'm coming from."

Beckham, who is married to former Spice Girl popstar Victoria, said: "I think that something needs to be done about certain things but...it's part and parcel of being a footballer and being a manager these days.

"It's unfortunate that your private life comes into the game because at the end of the day all I've wanted to do is play football all my life... But you cope with it."

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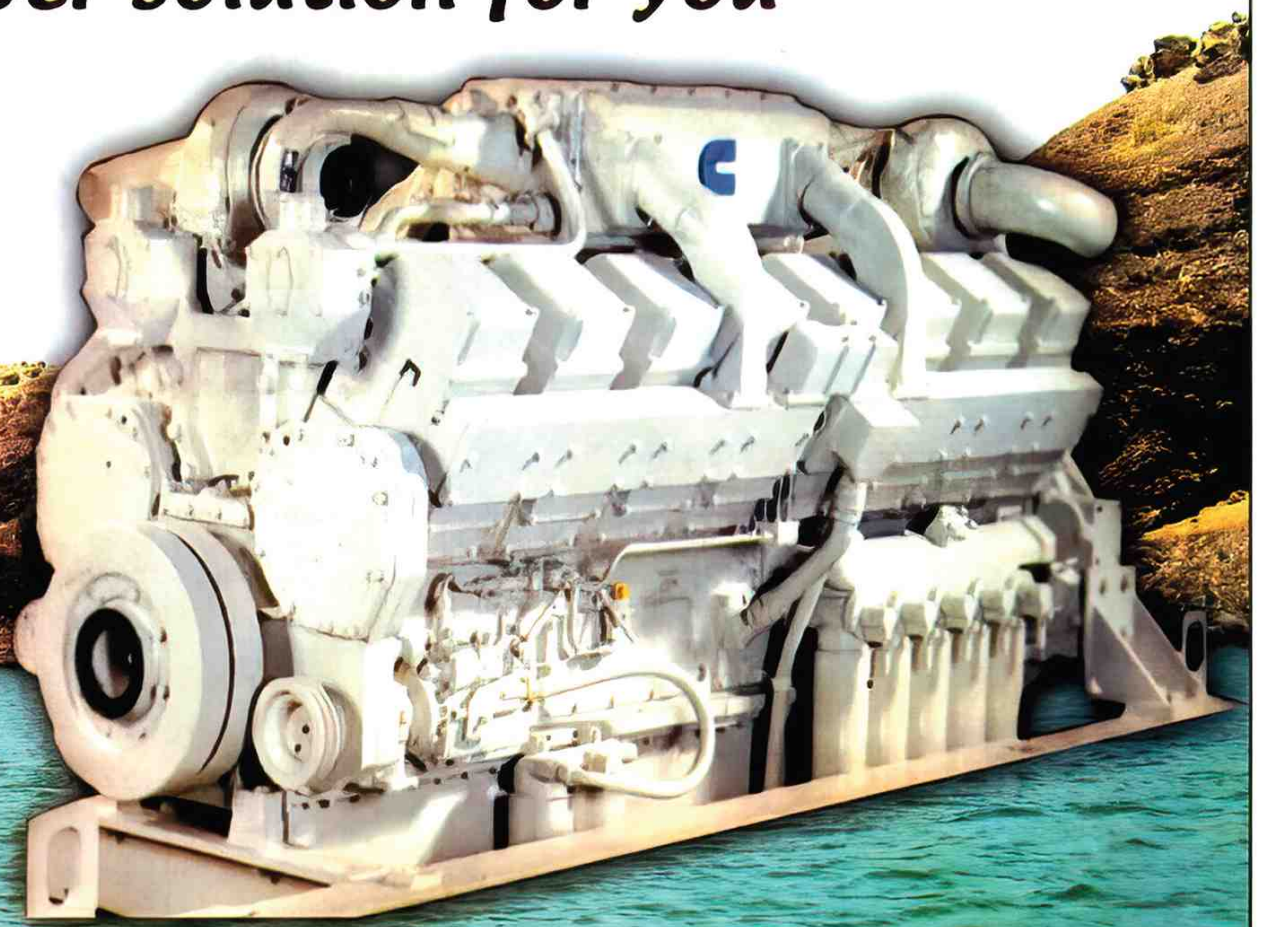


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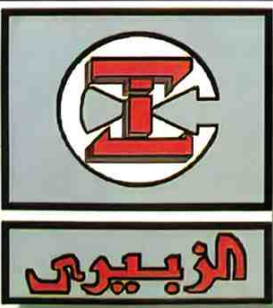
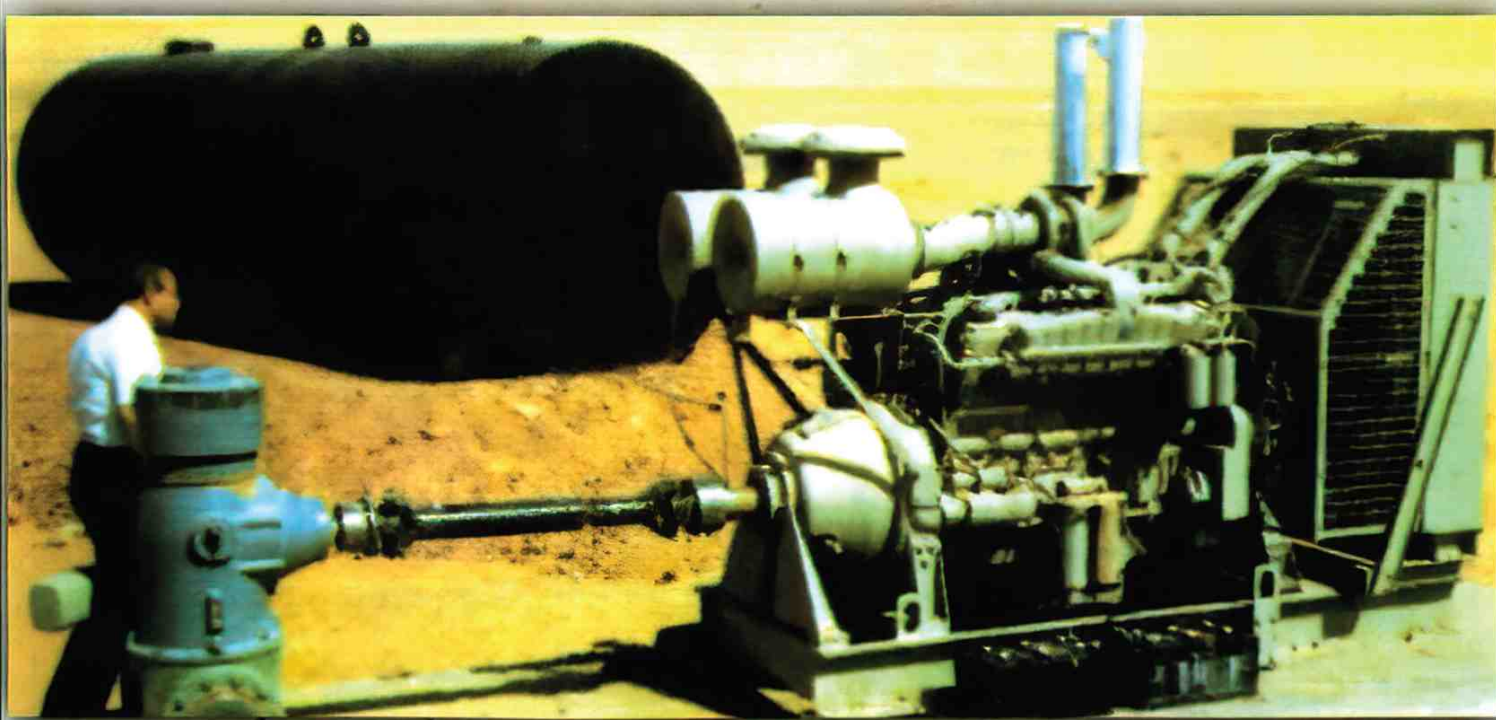
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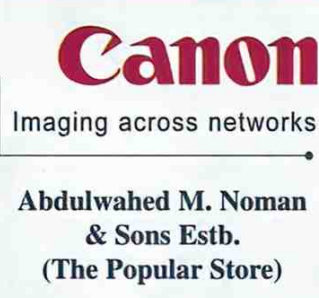
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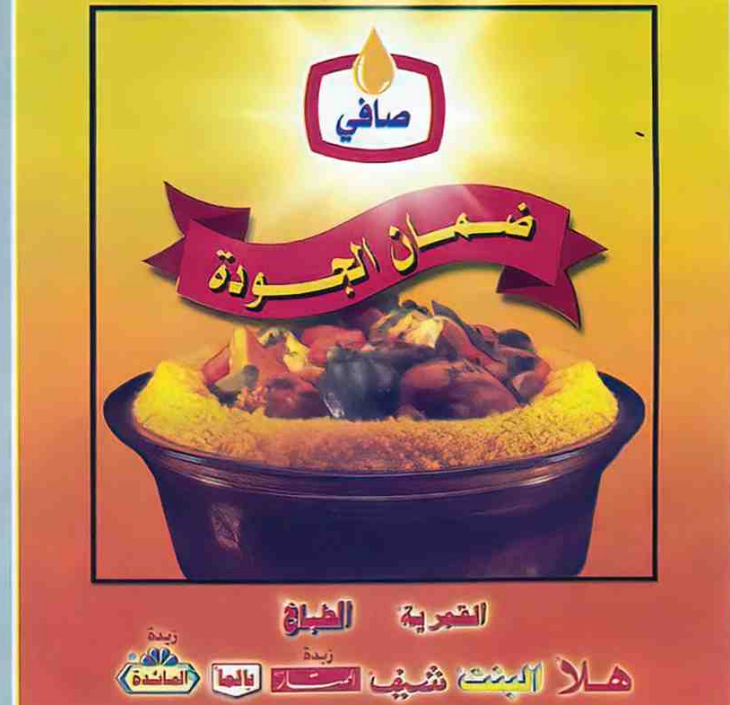
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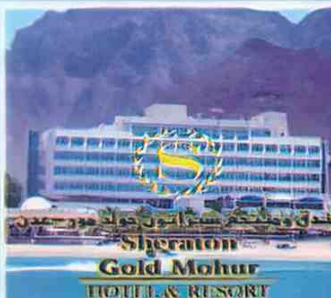


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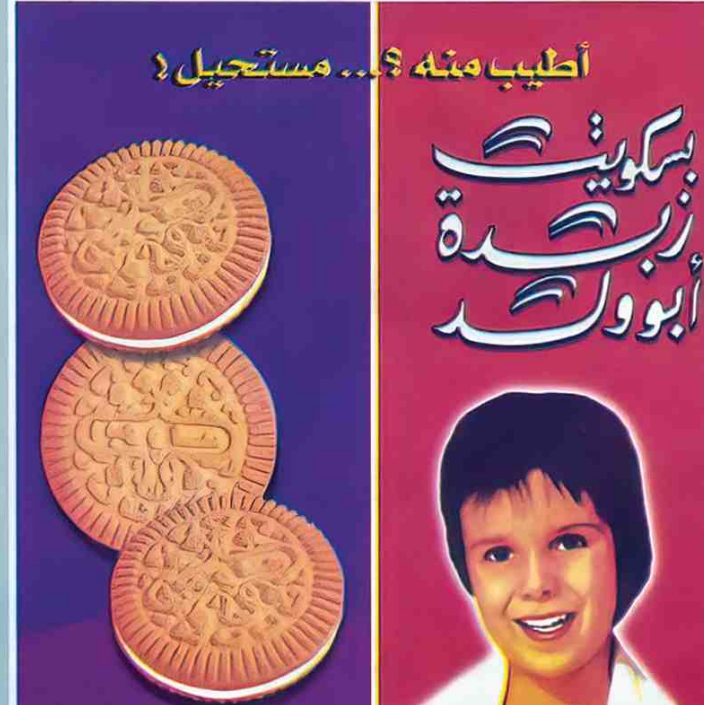


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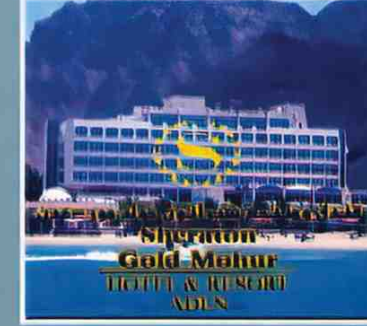
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Questions for Issue 51

Check the right answer

- When does the world celebrate the International Day of Human Rights?
 - December first
 - December tenth
 - December 31st
- The famous Yemeni intellectual who received the Sharjah Arab Culture award last year was:
 - Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh
 - Sulaiman Al-Eesa
 - Ibrahim Al-Hadrani
- Al-Tabbakh cooking oil, which is the preferable oil for the family, is rich with:
 - Vitamins A and D
 - Vitamins A and G
 - All mentioned above
- Choco wafer is a product belonging to the brand:
 - Teashop
 - Asgel
 - Al-Halawiyat
- A food product with no added preserving material is among the best produced from beans and carries the following brand name:
 - Al-Aila
 - Al-Hana
 - Breeze
- One of those products does not belong to "Al-Basha":
 - Al-Basha Chocolates
 - Roxy Chocolates
 - Al-Nujoom Chocolates
- Yemen Gulf Bank is located in...
 - Al-Tahreer Street
 - Al-Zuhary Street
 - Al-Shokani Street
- Al-kabous Corp. is the sole agent for Power Horse drinks. It is an/a... Product :
 - Austria
 - USA
 - Italian
- One of those Delonghi products is ranked the first in the world:
 - Heaters
 - Boilers
 - Both
- In what year was the Yemen General Insurance Company established?
 - 1977
 - 1978
 - 1979
- In what year was the Yemen Dairy & Juice Industry Co. Established?
 - 1978
 - 1979
 - 1980
- Where does the headquarters of Suzuki-Yemen, member of Bamaarof Group, lie?
 - Hodeidah
 - Aden
 - Sanaa

أسئلة المسابقة للعدد ٥١

اختر الاجابة الصحيحة

- يحتفل العالم باليوم العالمي لحقوق الإنسان في:
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 - العاشر من ديسمبر
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 - سليمان العيسى
 - ابراهيم الحضرائي
- زيت الطياخ، الزيت المفضل للعائلة مدعم بـفيتامينات؟
 - (أ، د)
 - (أ، ج)
 - جميع ما سبق
- شوكو ويفر، منتج يندرج تحت علامة:
 - تشوب
 - أصيل
 - الحلويات
- منتج غذائي خالي من المواد الحافظة مصنوع من أجود أنواع البقوليات يحمل علامة تجارية هي:
 - العائلة
 - الهناء
 - بريز
- أحد المنتجات التالية ليست من منتجات «الباشا»:
 - شوكولاتة الباشا
 - شوكولاتة روكسي
 - شوكولاتة النجوم
- يقع المقر الرئيسي لبنك اليمن والخليج في:
 - شارع التحرير
 - شارع الزبيري
 - شارع الشوكاني
- فيديو كون شركة لإنتاج الأجهزة المنزلية الكهربائية والإلكترونية أحد منتجاتها التلفزيون المشهور باسم:
 - Bazooka
 - Renstarloaster
 - Challenger
- أجهزة ديلونجي الإيطالية تحتل منتجاتها التالية الترتيب الأول عالمياً:
 - غلايات
 - غلايات
 - جميع ما سبق
- متى تأسست الشركة اليمنية العامة للتأمين (ش.م.ع)؟
 - 1977م
 - 1978م
 - 1979م
- متى تأسست الشركة اليمنية لتصنيع الألبان والأشربة؟
 - 1978م
 - 1979م
 - 1980م
- أين يقع مقر سوزوكي اليمن-عضو مجموعة بامعروف؟
 - الحديدة
 - عدن
 - صنعاء

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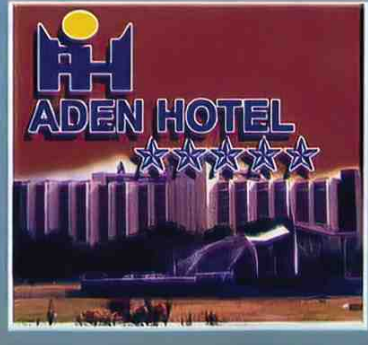
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Just one-quarter of blasted rock in usable

Marble ruined in Ruwaik Mountains

By HASSAN AL-ZAIDI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Despite the fact that mineral resources receive great attention and concern by modern countries worldwide, in Yemen we seem to lack the slightest of concern for our own.

Those resources play a pivotal role in developing our economy, as they're a main source of revenue. However, negligence and abuse of those resources, including valuable rocks such as marble, have become a widely observed phenomenon throughout the country.

Construction marble is unique with its elegant architectural beauty when used in houses and structures throughout the country. Marble is a crystalline rock having one or more of minerals such as calcite, dolomite, ocrpentine and travertine. It is valued for its coolness, smoothness, shine and light reflective qualities.

It's believed by some to be formed by a very slow process of re-crystallization over a period as long as two to three million years. The original rock became molten by the intense heat that prevailed and the escape of carbon dioxide is prevented by the high pressure.

Abuse of our mineral resources is mainly due to the increasing activity of certain merchants and companies in digging for marble rocks in areas rich with mineral resources. Among those sites is an area in the Ruwaik Mountains in the

middle of the Empty Quarter Desert where the Safir oil fields are. The area is composed of a chain of three marmoreal mountains of interesting shapes in the middle of the desert.

With no sense of responsibility, trucks carrying tens of workers come to the area and destroy the mountains to collect the largest amount of marble rocks possible without prior knowledge of the state.

Then the trucks carry those rocks to Sanaa where they are sold for high prices. However, the mountains end up in ruins, as only one quarter of the destroyed rocks are usable. The workers do not have the equipment or skills to professionally derive the marble rocks.

"We use dynamite explosives to bring the mountain blocks apart to obtain those valuable rocks" a worker at the site said.

A polish businessman visiting the area was willing to invest in this field until he saw what was going on in that region. "Why do Yemenis destroy their natural resources with their own hands? What are the authorities doing about this?" he asked.

What the businessman doesn't know is that this has been going on for tens of years, which could give an impression of the volume of destruction and loss caused to our economy. Yemen is rich with marble, as it is estimated that the country has more than 885 million cubic meters of marble that could indeed be utilized for the best of our country's interest.



Workers are dwarfed against the marble rock face in the Ruwaik Mountains.

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