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**Yemen uses U.S. money to buy Russian weapons**

**The deal**

**BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF AND NEWS SERVICES**

Yemen has been using American money to beef up its weapons stockpile with Russian-made equipment, says President Ali Abdullah Saleh.

And more purchases from Russia appear to be on the way.

The undisclosed amount of American funding came from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency for the arms purchases from America's former Cold War nemesis, with American knowledge, said Saleh.

"They [Americans] have given us a little money from the American Intelligence, which we used to buy a few airplanes to combat terrorism, through a negotiated contract with the Russians," Saleh said on Friday, during an interview on MBC Satellite Television.

Yemen now spends about \$540 million (YR 96 billion) on its military every year.

Russian military sources confirmed on Tuesday, that in 2002 Moscow supplied Yemen with 15 Mig-29s and more than 80 tanks.

That was disclosed while Saleh was in Russia for a four-day visit with President

Vladimir Putin to sign agreements regarding economic and military issues.

Putin said Tuesday that the Soviet Union had shipped about \$8 billion worth of military equipment to Yemen, Interfax reported.

On Wednesday Saleh attended a showing for MiG29 aircraft confirmed that Yemen is interested in making more purchases.

The revelation comes just two months after the international donor community met in Paris to hammer out a massive \$2.3 billion loan to Yemen for its development needs, a loan that Saleh acknowledges came only with the help of the Americans.

"They encouraged donor countries such as Germany and Holland, and the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank," he said.

Germany and Japan are responding to Yemen's recent openness about its military spending with concern.

Herbert Sahlmann, director of the Middle East Circle for Economic Cooperation in Germany's Ministry of Cooperation said Wednesday that German "assistance would be directed equally towards education and water."

And Japan said it would reconsider its \$20 million in annual aid to Yemen after it was discovered 10 days ago that Yemen bought 15 Scud missiles from North Korea.

Such recent developments show Saleh is now needing to leverage his diplomatic cards for maximum gain. Iraq is part of that equation.

He reiterated this week that America risks losing its international anti-terror coalition if it attacks Iraq.

In Moscow, Saleh and Russian President Vladimir Putin said the crisis in Iraq should be resolved through the United Nations.

Putin and Saleh appeared to be in full agreement over how to handle Iraq.

"The Russian and Yemeni points of view are identical as far as Iraq is concerned," Saleh said during a 45-minute Kremlin meeting with Putin. "Iraq must cooperate fully with the United Nations in order not to give a pretext for strikes."

Putin reiterated Moscow's insistence that the Iraq crisis be resolved "solely in the framework of the United Nations."

Continued on page 10

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# French security team in Yemen

SANA'A - A French security team is currently conducting talks with Yemeni security authorities on existing cooperation between the two countries in this field.

The talks have come after the attack of the French oil supertanker, Limbuge at al-Mukalla port on 6 of last October, as investigations are still going on to hunt down the elements who had helped in implementation of the attack incident.

26 September, a weekly newspaper reported on Thursday that the French interior ministry security team of inves-

tigators, currently visiting Sana'a is to follow up investigation into the terrorist attack of the French oil tanker was exposed to.

Yemeni authorities had in October and November arrested 20 persons suspected to be involved in the attack in which a Bulgarian seaman was killed.

It is also reported that a French team representing Justice Ministry would visit Yemen at the beginning next January to get acquainted with results of investigation on Limbuge incident and information gathered by Yemen on the incident.

# Yemeni opposition protest draft law against demonstrations

Eight Yemeni opposition parties have last week called on the parliament to reject a draft law preventing demonstrations without having permission.

The opposition parties say that the law would end public liberties. They expressed their concern of what they have considered as an attempt by the GPC, the major ruling party in Yemen, to confiscate democracy and restrain the freedom of expression.

The government had presented that law three years ago but felt obliged to withdraw it.

Local organizations also confirmed that

the government's aim behind the law was to distance itself from any angry reactions the masses may adopt over what is going on in Yemen and the region, saying that chaining the country with such a law would only represent a stand in anticipation of any domestic protest before taking place.

It is probable that the government's aim behind these precautions is to avoid repetition of events when Yemenis took to the streets in demonstrations after Iraq invaded Kuwait and forced the government to adopt a stand contrary to political rule it had intended to play.

# Parliament speaker: US launching terrorist war on Muslims

The US is declaring a war of terror against all Muslims and the threat to invade Iraq ushers a start of a broader campaign against Arabs, Yemen's parliament speaker remarked Sunday.

"America claims to be fighting terror but is practicing it ... The war it is launching is a crusader war" against all Arabs and Muslims, Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar told Okaz newspaper.

"America is demonstrating open hostility to all Arab and Muslim countries, the kingdom Saudi Arabia included. ... American hostility ... is targeting everything Islamic," al-Ahmar added.

Sheikh al-Ahmar also said this hostile policy has created among Arabs and Muslims a feeling of hatred towards the US and as a result of its double-standard policies in the Middle East.

Moreover, al-Ahmar warned that the future would be "dark and bad" for all Arabs and Muslims if Washington launched an attack against Baghdad. He added that the war will spread to all Arab countries.

# Readers' Voice

Yemen Times is reintroducing a popular feature "Reader's Voice" - formerly known as YT Opinion Poll. This is your opportunity to have a say on world and local affairs.

**This week's question:**

Do you think Yemen should suspend diplomatic ties with the US if it leads a war against Iraq?

Go to our website at: [yementimes.com/#poll](http://yementimes.com/#poll) and have your voice heard!



# Yemen in GCC a good idea

Yemen's inclusion to the Gulf Cooperation Council is a good idea, said Alwa'ee Bin Alwa'ee, Oman's foreign affairs minister, in an interview with Asharq Qatari-based newspaper.

The Oman foreign minister also commented on skeptics concerning Yemen's access to the GCC and that the GCC's decision to accept Yemen is wise and strategic.

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# Government has little control Tribal clashes continue

BY HASSAN AZZAIDI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Two people were killed and several others were injured in recent tribal clashes between Aal Hamd and Bani Nowf in al-Jawf governorate, 180 north-east Sana'a.

Prior to that, in a tribal conflict that occurred last month, four people were killed.

It's part of ongoing clashes in that part of Yemen.

Three people belonging to Bani Nowf were killed 5 months ago by tribesmen from Aal Hamd tribe who were working in security offices under

the pretext of being involved with car thefts.

These clashes have become common in areas where the government has no control over tribes.

Meanwhile, negotiations to settle tribal disputes between Jeda'an and Jahm tribes are at a standstill. The negotiations have been entrusted to the governor of Marib governorate, who has taken the help of some prominent Sheikhs and officials in the governorate.

The current tribal clashes between these two tribes have erupted at the beginning of 2001 where 12 people were killed and more than 56 injured.

An array of light and heavy weapons were used during the clashes.

Tribal resources said that the government's efforts to make reconciliation are attributed to the forthcoming parliamentary election, since both tribes are in the same election constituency.

Meanwhile, politicians in the Marib governorate have criticized the authorities for not putting an end to the long-term tribal clashes. The authorities gave free hand to these tribes to fight against each other without being intervened.

The breakout of tribal clashes occurred due to land disputes, in addition to long-term tribal revenge.

# Women's rights discussed

TAIZ - On the occasion of the National Day for Opposing Violence Against Women, the Yemeni Women Union cooperating with OXFAM met Dec. 16 to discuss issues such as equality between men and women, violence against rural woman, family and spousal violence and shapes of political violence. The workshop came up with the following recommendations:

- Prepare a strategy for the government to fight all forms of violence

against woman, and create a qualified governmental department to properly deal and handle the violence against women's complaints.

- Encourage the government and organizations of civil society to pay attention to the women's political rights through raising the awareness of importance of having women in the membership of the next parliament.
- Encourage the government to

reform some articles in the penal law and specify a minimum age for girls of at least 18.

- Bring attention to cases of women prisoners being held unjustly.
- Encourage the media to raise awareness of women's issues, especially in the rural areas, and provide the appropriate atmosphere so women can take part in local council policies and educational positions.

# Germany to continue support

While Japan has warned it may pull out some its \$20 million in annual support to Yemen in light of Yemen's recent purchase of Scud missiles from Korea, Germany says it's actually planning to boost its support, at least in some areas, to Yemen.

For example, it plans to boost education support in the four governorates of Marib, al-Jawf, Sada'a and Hajja.

Germany has also agreed to give support to Yemen's drinking water crisis.

During a press conference held at the Germany Embassy in Sana'a last Wednesday, German officials spoke highly spoke of enacting the Yemen government's water bill.

Regarding the missiles, German officials said they've spoken to officials in Yemen's government over spending to much money for military purposes while at the same time disregarding other vital needs.

The German officials said Germany is happy that there have been no kidnappings in Yemen in 13 months.

Several key financial cooperation projects in water supply and sanitation, basic health and family planning, building and rehabilitation of primary schools are part of Germany's support.

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# Yemen school website is looking for win

A team from Yemen is in the hunt for first-place in a Pan-Arab website competition that runs until Dec. 27.

The competition for the best Arab school website, run by Abu Dhabi satellite TV station, started few weeks ago.

Administrators of Mohamed Ali Othman School in Taiz are calling on all Yemenis to vote for its site.

"The site is publicity about the whole of Yemen and the ability of its people to innovate" says Mohamoud Daen the website administrator.

The site, which is run by a team of alumni and current students from the school, is currently second in the poll and is facing tough competition from two other websites.

The website is the brain child of MAO alumni students. It is designed to forge a better understanding of the school and also to act as a bridge to the worldwide community as a whole.

It will also serve as a reunion center of sorts for its alumni, many of whom now live in different parts of the world.

The website is owned and operated by students and alumni of MAO only.

The competing schools come from Yemen, UAE, Egypt, and Lebanon.

Each are competing for the name of the best school website.

The MAO site, [www.mao-school.com](http://www.mao-school.com), apart from being the first ever website for a Yemeni school, is well

differentiated and has set itself as a special school website. Though it contains the normal facts and information that every school website have, it positions itself as a portal for forming perspectives on Pan-Arab and Pan-Islamic trends.

The site posts important trends in Yemen, the Arab world, and the Islamic world and encourages visitors to post comments and to discuss the topics posted. It also has a dedicated discussion board in which several topics are posted for continual discussion.

Visitors can also benefit from the latest feature of the school, the College Placement Service. This service is intended to help students looking for placements at institutions for higher education in the US, Canada, the UK, and Germany: placements at affordable and accredited universities.

Other features at the site include a chat room, a polls section, an alumni database and e-mail service that boasts very good features like a 6 MB mailbox.

The site wants to help provide an academically rigorous bilingual education in Arabic and English, while seeking to meet the highest international standards. It aims to meet the specific needs of Yemeni students taking into account their Islamic and Arab heritage?

To vote, follow the posted steps at [www.mao-school.com](http://www.mao-school.com).

# The state of the world's children Why children must be heard

Asserting that tens of millions of children around the world feel disconnected from political institutions and lack trust in their governments, UNICEF said last week that children must be given more of a voice and more ways to participate in decision affecting their lives.

"Enabling children and adolescents to participate constructively in their communities and nations is crucial to nurturing their inherent optimism and preparing them for a constructive and meaningful adulthood," said Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF.

In a UN press release Bellamy said the recent surveys, coupled with UNICEF's positive experience involving children in its programs, had led the organizations to devote its flagship report to the subject.

The State of the World's Children 2003 examines the largely unexplored issue to "child participation" - that is, the degree to which children and young people are enabled to constructively engage in issues that affect their lives.

The report asserts that participation of children is essential to preparing them for the responsibilities they will assume as adults, as well as to more cohesive societies.

"Through participation at early ages in issues that concern them far from promoting anarchy or disrespect for authority, or undermining parental authority-we see a generation of young people who are more respectful and concerned about their rights and the right of others," the report states.

The report also asserts that there is a serious downside to leaving children out. It cautions that when children are excluded from the process of decision-making and are provided few opportunities to engage constructively in matters that directly affect their lives as they mature, they fail to develop vital skills, including the ability to express themselves, negotiate differences, make responsible life choices, engage in positive dialogue or assume responsibility for self, family and community.

# Looking to put commercial exchange over \$100 million High-ranking Indonesians in Aden

In an effort to look for ways to invest in Yemen, a 60-member Indonesian delegation visited Aden Dec. 19.

It was headed by Miss Dieh Meulide Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry, and also included 15 government officials, and 45 business officials from 25 Indonesian companies.

The group visited the Yemen Company for Flour Mills and Silos where Nashwan Ali Mohammed Saeed, general manager of the company, presented a demonstration about the structure and activities of the company, and the wheat it produces and exports to neighboring countries.

Meulide expressed her admiration about the company.

The delegation also visited the Aden Free Zone (AFZ), welcomed by Dirhim No'man Chairman of AFZ and a number of PSA directors.

There, the delegation was introduced to the AFZ project and the Aden Terminal Containers (ATC). They were presented with a detailed explanation of investment opportunities in the AFZ and the facilities provided for investors.

It also took a tour through the city as a whole where they saw the different tourist attractions in Aden. Several members said they were impressed with the old Yemeni civilization carried to Indonesia by Yemeni ancestors whether in architecture, culture or original Yemeni

Arts.

Iqbal Bahader Under Secretary of Trade and Industry, Ahmed Hayel Saeed vice-president of Hayel Saeed An'am Group, Abdul Wasa'e Hayel Saeed An'am, Rashad Hayel Saeed An'am regional manager of Hayel Saeed An'am Group in Aden and a number of political personalities in the province received the group.

The delegation was also met by Taha Ghanim Governor of Aden and Mansoor Abdu-Jaleel Governor of Lahj.

In a lunch celebration Ahmed Hayel Saeed chairman of the Chamber of Commerce in Taiz, delivered a speech on behalf of the private sector in which he praised the commercial relations between the two countries.

He pointed that the primary purpose of the delegation's visit was to seek investment opportunities in the country, as well as to witness the development and improvement which Yemen has achieved.

Meulide accented the historical and commercial links between the two countries. She also emphasized the necessity of expanding commercial exchange between Yemen and Indonesia from \$88 million to reach more than \$100 million.

Meulide indicated that it is important to strengthen and boost the commercial and industrial relations and cooperation between businessmen from both Yemen and Indonesia and to seek new opportu-



Part of the Indonesian delegation of 60 members that recently toured Aden looking for investment opportunities.

nities for cooperation in the future.

She added she was pleased with the development projects taking place now and the potential investment projects in the future, and Meulide confirmed the desire of many Indonesian as well as Yemeni businessmen to carry out combined projects to mutually serve the two countries, viewing Aden as a port through which Indonesian products could be promoted to the rest of the world.

Commercial exchange between the two countries is expected to top \$120 million by the end of this year.

The rate of Yemeni exports is rapidly increasing as well. Hale Saeed An'am Group was the first that took the initiative in opening commercial cooperation between Indonesia and Yemen.

This led to the signing many oil and mineral agreements, bringing relations between the two countries to a higher level.

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# US AID to operate again: Sources

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Yemen Times has learned from reliable sources that US AID, an American aid organization that had been active in Yemen for decades, is about to reopen operations here.

The United States Agency for International Development, which works primarily in education, health and social sector development, has been closed in Yemen for the past eight years.

Its office was closed in the wake of the civil war of 1994, when relations between Washington and Sana'a turned sour after Yemen forces entered Aden, without waiting for the US to help work out a settlement

between the warring political factions.

US AID had been active in Yemen for three decades.

American aid still continued during the period of US AID closure, through supplemental food aid, short-term loans, de-mining activities and political institutional development.

But there were few development programs.

If such reports are true, then the reopening of US AID would be a strong sign the Yemeni government has found favour in the US-led war on terror.

These reports could not be validated by the US Embassy or its foreign ministry.

## As much as \$50 M a year flows to Yemen

## U.S. cracks down on money transfers

BY YEMEN TIMES NEWS SERVICES  
AND YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Several American Yemeni have been caught in a U.S. crackdown on money transfers from the U.S. to various recipients in the Arab world.

U.S. Customs Service agents raided several businesses and homes in Dearborn, Mich., and arrested seven people this week.

Officials said the people and businesses were involved in illegal money transfers that sent as much as \$50 million a year to Yemen.

A day earlier, three men in Lackawanna, N.Y., were arrested and charged with sending more than \$480,000 to Yemen without a license to operate a money-transferring business.

The three — Mohamed Albanna, Ali Albanna, and Ali Elbaneh — were released on bail Wednesday. They are relatives of Jaber Elbaneh, accused of belonging to an al-Qaeda terror cell in Lackawanna.

Also this past week, the U.S. government, stepping up efforts to choke the flow of money to suspected terrorist organizations, announced indictments of seven people in Texas.

All are suspected of channeling funds to Arab countries that the U.S. govern-

ment says are terrorist havens.

A Hamas official, speaking on condition of anonymity, criticized the arrests.

"We consider this part of the ongoing war against Islam and the Islamic institutions across the world," the official said. "There are some elements in the American administration who are trying very hard to harm the image of Islam and to link it with so-called terror, which is not true, because Islam is a religion of tolerance."

Attorney General John Ashcroft had a different take on the situation. He said federal officials are targeting those who finance terrorism as much as those who carry out attacks.

"Just as we will prosecute the terrorists who plant the bomb, we will prosecute the terrorist supporters who write the check," Ashcroft said at a news conference.

A 33-count indictment unsealed in Dallas charged four brothers with money laundering and selling computer equipment to Syria and Libya. All four have been arrested.

The indictment also names a fifth brother, already in custody, as well as Mousa Abu Marzook, a leader of the Palestinian militant group Hamas, and his wife, Nadia Elashi, a cousin of the five brothers.

Justice Department officials said the arrests in Buffalo, Dearborn and Texas were not connected, but were part of an effort by government law enforcement agencies to cut off terrorist financing.

"The war against terrorism is a war of accountants and auditors, as well as a war of weaponry and soldiers," Ashcroft said. The Texas case involved a company in a Dallas suburb, Infocom Corp., for which all five brothers work. The company accepted a \$250,000 investment from Marzook's wife, who was deported in 1995 after the federal government designated him a terrorist, and made payments to Marzook's wife, according to the indictment. Both are out of the country. Marzook is believed to be in Syria.

Those arrested were Bayan Elashi, Ghassan Elashi, Basman Elashi and Hazim Elashi. The fifth brother, Ihsan Elashi, already is in custody on charges of illegally exporting computer goods to the Middle East. If convicted, they each face up to 45 years in prison and \$7.2 million in fines.

Ghassan Elashi, the company's vice president for marketing, headed the Holy Land Foundation for Relief and Development. The foundation's assets were frozen by the Treasury Department in December 2001 on the grounds that it allegedly funneled money to terrorists.

FBI investigators concluded that Holy Land leaders were Hamas members and the charity was the primary U.S. fundraising organ for the terrorist group.

Ashcroft said Infocom was in the same office park and shared some of the same employees as the Holy Land Foundation.

In Michigan, authorities arrested Mohammed Aidarus Abdulla, David Nasser Ali, Foad H. Mohamad, Jamil Manea-Ahmed Al-Najar, Hussein A. Mohamed and Abdulla H. Mohamad. The seventh individual arrested is an unidentified Immigration and Naturalization Service employee who officials say had overstayed his visa.

Customs agents seized records and computers from some of the businesses, which included convenience stores, service stations and restaurants. In addition, seizure warrants have been issued for records from banks in the Detroit area and Toledo, Ohio.

The Michigan and Lonyo Service Center was one of the businesses raided. It's owned by Ali and Kalid Kaid, who said it's a common practice in the Yemeni community to send money to relatives in their native country.

He was skeptical of the government's claim. "We really question the amount of money that the government is talking about," Kaid said.

## Spanish and U.S. action in missile affair called 'dishonourable'

## North Korea wants apology

BY ASSOCIATED PRESS  
AND YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A week after a North Korean vessel carrying Scud missiles to Yemen was boarded by Spanish and American marines, the North Koreans have demanded the United States compensate it for the seizure of the Pan Hope, criticizing the act as "reckless state-sponsored terrorism."

The ship was allowed to make its delivery of 15 Scuds to Yemen.

But North Korea has claimed that a Spanish warship fired at the Pan Hope, and American sailors looted it, according to the North's foreign news outlet, KCNA, which was monitored by South Korea's Yonhap news agency.

"The U.S. imperialists should apologize for their serious piracy committed against the ship and compensate for all the mental and material damage done to the ship and its crew," said North Korea's official newspaper Rodong Sinmun, carried by KCNA in a separate dispatch.

The report did not clarify what kind of compensation North Korea wanted.

At the request of the United States, Spanish Marines boarded the Pan Hope on Dec. 9 as part of anti-terror monitoring of ships in the Arabian Sea. The Marines found it had stowed missiles under cement sacks.

The United States took charge of the ship but released it after high-level talks with Yemen.

"When we refused to stop, saying it was a violation of international laws, the warships approached from the right side and indiscriminately fired at us, severely damaging the ship's equipment," KCNA quoted the North Korean ship's captain as saying. "American sailors searched the ship several times and looted valuables and money."

The agency said, "The behavior of the U.S. imperialist pirates can never be justified as it is reckless state-sponsored terrorism."

North Korea accused Washington of trying to "spark confrontation and a war." The communist country often accuses the United States of plotting an invasion.

The United States and its allies have been pressuring North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons development

programs.

North Korea insists it will address the nuclear concerns if the United States signs a nonaggression pact. Washington has ruled out such a pact unless North Korea first gives up its nuclear ambitions.

The United States keeps 37,000 troops in South Korea, a legacy of the 1950-1953 Korean War.

Earlier this week, the captain of a Pan Hope accused the United States of damaging his vessel and "piracy."

Kang Chol Ryong also denied that he had hidden the Yemeni-bound missiles under sacks of cement, and said he had rebuffed the Spanish Navy's order to stop because it was "dishonorable."

Captain Ryong spoke to reporters in Mukalla, the Yemeni port where the delivery was made, on Dec. 17, an hour before his ship sailed away from Yemen, having unloaded its cargo of 15 Scud missiles and other military equipment.

The U.S. Navy took charge of the ship, but allowed it to proceed after receiving assurances from Yemen that the missiles would not be transferred elsewhere.

Ryong demanded an apology from Washington adding "if the United States refuses, they will be condemned more strongly by the world's peace-loving people."

When a Spanish warship intercepted Pan Hope, it signaled that it should halt. But the Pan Hope continued sailing until the warship fired across its bows.

Ryong said he flouted the initial order to stop because it was "dishonorable as we were sailing legally in the open sea."

Spanish sharpshooters then fired at the Pan Hope's cables, breaking them so that a helicopter could hover over the ship and allow Marines to rappel down to its deck.

"Five wire ropes, other materials and shackles were destroyed. Other rooms were very seriously damaged," Ryong said.

"I never tried to hide the missiles," he added. "They were regularly stored under cover plates. It is not good to place them in the open."

The captain further explained that the ship crew was forced to kneel and be hit by the butts of rifles.

## Yemen in the GCC discussed

Yemeni Center for Strategic Studies in cooperation with Friedrich Ebert Foundation has organized a seminar to discuss the economical, political, cultural and security dimensions of Yemen's new partial membership the GCC.

The seminar is to be held this

morning.

It aims to define the difficulties as well as the benefits, which may result from Yemen's participation in the GCC.

It will help shape views of decision-makers and intellectuals interested in the issue, and encourage co-operation among Arab states.

1<sup>st</sup> Engineering Conference concludes

ADEN — Organized by the Faculty of Engineering, the 1<sup>st</sup> Engineering Conference was held last week in Aden University.

During the conference a number of eminent professors from foreign and Arab countries attended to exchange experience to tackle engineering-related problems in developing countries.

Dr. Saleh Basura, the Rector of Aden University, spoke of efforts made by researchers in the university.

More than 30 deans representing Arab universities from Palestine, Iraq, Syria, Bahrain, Sudan, Jordan, Algeria and Yemen were present.

The conference was also attended by Dr. Yahya Aashobi, the Higher Education Minister.

## Gunfight in al Mukalla

## Two security officials killed

SAN'A, Yemen (AP) - Yemeni security forces battled suspected al-Qaeda members holed up in a building in a gunfight that left two policemen dead and four others wounded, a security official said.

Two suspected al-Qaeda members escaped after the battle in the port city of al-Mukalla. The official said they were believed to be Shaker bin Hamel and Abdelhakem Abdo, wanted by the government as suspects in the Oct. 6 attack on the French tanker Limburg, which killed a crew member. Police in al-Mukalla approached the three-story residential building after being tipped off that al-Qaeda members lived there, the official said on condition of anonymity.

A gunbattle ensued and at least six officers were wounded. Two of the officers later died in the hospital of their wounds. One was identified as Yahya al-Mashoaly.

Security forces cordoned off the building and set up checkpoints in the city, about 350 miles southeast of the capital, San'a, the official said.

The attack on the Limburg was carried out by an explosives-packed boat that was detonated next to the tanker's hull. The damaged tanker discharged about 90,000 barrels of oil into the Gulf of Aden.

A similar attack on the destroyer USS Cole, in which 17 U.S. sailors were killed, was also blamed on al-Qaeda, the terror group blamed for the Sept. 11 attacks. Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden has Yemeni origins.

Another Yemeni government official said Friday that authorities were expected to charge 10 people in the Limburg attack.

A French security team is in Yemen investigating the attack, the official said, also speaking on condition of anonymity.

## Workshop held Dec. 16

## New times need new energy

BY FAHMA AL-FOTIEH  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Promoting renewable energy in Yemen was the theme of a workshop held Dec. 16.

Discussion focused on using new energy sources to help eradicate poverty, improve the quality of life and help the environment in Yemen.

The Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MOTE) and the Environment Protection Authority (APA) the United Nations Industrial Organization (UNDO), along with the Technical Supply Center (TSC) and the International Center for Science and High Technology (ICS) held the event called "Potential Renewable Energy Application in Yemen".

Abdulmalik al-Eryani, Minister of Tourism and Environment stressed the importance of using the affordable renewable energy especially in the ecologies and neighboring villages to reduce pressure on natural resources and maintain a clean environment.

Najwa Gadaheldam, UNDO expert in Vienna International Center, commented "The workshop has a quite good success for bringing together the Ministry of Environment and groups from the private sector and some NGOs together to realize renewable potential energy in Yemen. It's helped in taking steps forward. Hopefully now the Yemeni government will implement rules as soon as possible and put in place some policy issues and strategies for renewable energy implementations."

She added, "Of course we have to

come up with some fundable projects and also cooperate with other donors like UNDP or bilateral agencies in the country to implement something and to stimulate the market. Without private sector intervention there is no success at all. So we cannot take a long time. We need to have partnerships with business and get revenues from them."

A live demonstration for possible renewable energy applications was part of the workshop.

Ellen Von Zitzewitz, environmental expert in Ministry of Tourism and Environment told the Yemen Times "This workshop is to target the private and public sectors, specialists and key decisions-makers to take practical steps to install the renewable system in Yemen. Through this workshop, we are looking for a good policy and place as well as to promote and install

renewable energy systems in areas of special ecological value, and boast eco-tourism potential in places such as the Socatra and Kamaran Islands."

She also said, "In addition, we going to encourage local production. So we want to exempt the equipment required for establishing or expanding the renewable energy projects from tax and customs duties. Moreover we are going to study other countries successful experiences in this field and try to implement such experience and make it visible."

There was discussion concentrating on the government's role in enhancing and supporting the renewable energy investment. Besides funding projects, it's hoped it will help with training courses and encourage local manufacturing.

## Zabid's conference wraps up

BY FAROUK AL-KAMALI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

HODIEDAH — Organized by the Arts Faculty, the 1<sup>st</sup> Scientific Conference on Zabed concluded last Tuesday at the Hodiedah University.

It was held from December 14 to 17 under to look at Zabid's links with the Islamic and Arabic world.

Participants came up with the following recommendations:

- Establish a manuscript center in Zabed, classifying it, renewing and indexing them among the Arab and Islamic research centers.
- Create an Internet website for Zabed, the historical city.
- Establish higher studies section entrusted with analyzing the Yemeni heritage.
- Put emphasis on the significance to preserve the City of Zabed and its architectural designs.
- Establish the Islamic architecture section in the Engineering faculty and teach the Islamic City as one of the subjects in history departments.
- Record Zabid's history, its scientific and cultural heritage.
- Have a National Day for reviving cultural activities and tourist interests of the historical cities.

Zabid has been included in the World Heritage List by the UNISCO in 1993.

But due to the constant ignorance of the city it has been also threatened to be excluded from the brick-walled city of narrow, winding streets with over 200 mosques.

It was a flourishing theological town and the center for material dyeing and weaving.

It was also a center for military and political control of the region.

It contains many buildings that are a witness to this great past.

## ألف مبروك

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« عبد الإله » و « علي »

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بمناسبة زفافهما الميمون فألف مبروك

المهنيون:

احمد صبر ناصر وأولاده، محمد صبر ناصر، المطري يحيى علي، حمود ناصر الهمداني وأولاده، احمد ناصر صبر وأولاده وكافة الاهل والاصدقاء

*Likely to be published after Israeli elections*

# Mideast peace plan on hold

WASHINGTON, Dec 19 (Reuters) - A European Union official said on Thursday he hopes Middle East mediators will set a date to publish a peace plan, possibly in early February after the Israeli elections, saying "time is not on our side."

The EU had wanted to release the "road map" peace plan this week but appeared to bow to the U.S. and

Israeli desire to delay publication until after Israel's Jan. 28 elections. The EU, the United States, Russia and the United Nations make up the quartet of mediators that meets in Washington on Friday.

"If we can't agree on the publication of a road map tomorrow ... at the very least I hope (that we can) confirm the date when a road map will be

produced," European External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten told reporters.

"I assume that if the (Bush) administration doesn't think we should go with the road map's final version this week, then it accepts that we should do so as soon as possible after the election ... which would presumably mean in early February," he said.

The plan calls for a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

Patten said he did not want to defer releasing the plan until a new Israeli government is formed because this could delay the matter until March.

"The months are getting eaten up," he added. "Time is not on our side."

Israeli army gunfire killed an 11-year-old Palestinian girl in the Gaza Strip on Thursday as she opened a window in her house, her relatives said.

Israeli military sources said they had no information about a girl being shot but said an army patrol exchanged fire with Palestinian gunmen in the area, the site of daily clashes between gunmen and Israeli soldiers.

The death was the latest in a two-year-old Palestinian uprising for independence. At least 1,728 Palestinians and 670 Israelis have died since the revolt erupted in September 2000 after earlier peace talks collapsed.



Palstinians wait near a barrier erected by Israeli troops on the Gaza Strip's main north-south highway near the Jewish settlement of Netzarim Dec. 21. Israeli troops divided Gaza Strip in three parts, blocking passage to Palstinians after a Palstinian gunmen killed an Israeli settler. REUTERS



Participants of the four-party meeting on the Middle East — UN Secretary General Kofi Annan (2nd L), US Secretary of State Colin Powell (2nd R), Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov (L) and European Union Foreign Policy Chief Javier Solana (R) — speak to reporters after they met with US President George W. Bush at the White House in Washington Dec. 20. Xinhua

## OPEC to hike oil output if price stays high: Saudi

CAIRO, Dec 21 (Reuters) - The world's top oil exporter Saudi Arabia said on Saturday that OPEC would release more supply onto world markets if prices stayed above the cartel's \$22-28 a barrel target range until mid-January.

Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi said the 11-member group remained committed to a "fair price", and would deploy an informal output mechanism to tame a price rally fuelled by an extended Venezuelan oil shutdown and fears of war in Iraq.

"We have said many times we are dedicated to preventing shortages, we are dedicated to stabilising the market, we are committed to a fair price," Naimi told reporters on the sidelines of an Arab oil minister meeting in Cairo.

"We have a mechanism to trigger when it is necessary."

Under an informal output mechanism, OPEC aims to keep the price of its basket of crudes in the \$22-\$28 per barrel range by increasing supply if prices exceed the upper end of the range for 20 days.

OPEC's basket stood at \$29.56 per barrel on Thursday while New York crude futures settled on Friday at \$30.30 a barrel, gaining 11 cents on the day.

Qatar and Libya also backed an automatic OPEC output increase if prices stay above \$28 for 20 consecutive working days.

# Experts probe sites, Iraq media bashes Bush

BAGHDAD, Dec 21 (Reuters) - U.N. arms inspectors searched four suspect sites on Saturday and an Iraqi daily likened U.S. and British leaders to ruthless Mongol conquerors of old.

Iraqi officials said a team of nuclear experts had revisited al-Nassr al-Atheem Company, a heavy engineering plant located in the Daura refinery just south of Baghdad.

Other inspectors searched al-Raya Company, owned by Iraq's Military Industrialisation Commission, in the Taji industrial area north of the capital, and two other sites.

"Bush — Hulagu of the age", a reference to Mongol warrior Genghis Khan's grandson, who captured Baghdad in 1258, destroying the Abbasid Caliphate.

"Our balanced policy and the transparency with which we dealt with U.N. Security Council resolutions, despite their ill intentions, did not extinguish the rancour and bloodthirstiness which inflames the hearts of the American administration, which is still pounding

the drums of war," Babel newspaper said.

"The Iraqi people say to Blair...and the henchmen of Bush junior, who are competing to serve their Zionist masters, that history has no mercy on

aggressors, just as it had none for Timur, Hulagu and others who harmed a country blessed by God as the cradle of human civilisation," the newspaper said.

The U.N. inspectors resumed work in Iraq on November 27 after a four-year

break to try to check Baghdad's assertion that it no longer has any programmes to produce chemical, biological or nuclear weapons, or long-range missiles.

Chief U.N. inspector Hans Blix and the head of the U.N. nuclear watchdog, Mohamed ElBaradei, have pressed the United States and Britain to share any intelligence they may have about any prohibited Iraqi weapons programmes.

The United States said it would give the inspectors new data soon, as well as suggesting names of Iraqi arms scientists for the U.N. experts to interview.

The United States declared this week that Iraq's recent arms declaration was a "material breach" of last month's Security Council resolution that gave Baghdad a last chance to disarm or face serious consequences.

General Hussam Mohammed Amin, the senior Iraqi official liaising with the inspectors, told Reuters on Friday that the U.S. response was "exaggerated" and politically motivated.



A member of a United Nations arms inspection team (L) talks to Iraqi officials before a search for weapons of mass destruction in Baghdad. REUTERS

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The successful candidate will need to have a professional approach, be flexible and be a good communicator. He/she must have excellent Microsoft Excel skills, and be proficient using the Microsoft Office Suite. Fluency in English is essential, with preference to those who speak Arabic.

He/She will be able to demonstrate a good understanding of: Yemen's tax regime, Letters of Credit and banking affairs to a level commensurate with the job description.

### Job Title

### Logistics Officer

#### Job Description

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#### Skills required

The successful candidate will need to have a professional approach, be flexible and be a good communicator. He/she must have excellent Microsoft Excel skills, and be proficient using the Microsoft Office Suite. Fluency in English is essential, with preferences to those how speak Arabic.

He/she will be able to demonstrate a good understanding of: Yemen's tax regime, import and export regulations including customs commensurate with the job description.

He/she will have a problem solving attitude, will be well connected within the industry related to his/her work, have an extensive knowledge of the various modes of transport and an excellent geographic knowledge of Yemen.

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### The Embassy of the Italian Republic in Sana'a

informs

all Italian residents in Yemen

that, with reference to the next Italian general elections, Italian citizens who are currently residing in Yemen will only be able to vote in the Italian municipality in whose electoral rolls they are currently registered.

Italian citizens traveling to Italy to vote on the occasion of the Italian general elections will therefore be entitled to apply for a 75% refund of the price of the airplane ticket to the Consular Section of the Embassy of the Italian Republic in Sana'a. The application will have to be accompanied by the voter's electoral certificate and original ticket.

## Journalist injured covering U.S. exercise in Kuwait

KUWAIT, Dec 21 (Reuters) - A French journalist was injured on Saturday while covering U.S. army training exercises in the Kuwaiti desert and has been evacuated to the military hospital in Kuwait City, a U.S. army spokesman said.

The spokesman said the name of the injured journalist was being withheld for the moment, and that the cause of the accident was being investigated.

More than 12,000 U.S. troops are in Kuwait, with many of them taking part in live-fire training drills as part of the long-running Operation Desert Spring training exercises.

Journalists have been given widespread access to cover the exercises as pressure mounts on Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to give up his weapons of mass destruction or face war. Iraq says it has no chemical, biological or nuclear weapons.

# Iraq, internal disputes hang over Gulf Arab Summit

DOHA, Dec 21 (Reuters) - Six Gulf Arab nations start a summit meeting in Qatar on Saturday amid fears of a U.S.-led attack on Iraq and rifts within their pro-Western alliance.

Iraq shares borders with at least two members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and any attack on Baghdad is likely to destabilise the whole oil-rich region.

All GCC members have publicly

opposed a war but, aware that they powerless to sway their key ally the United States, the conference is expected to focus on the January 2003 implementation of a long-awaited Gulf customs union agreement.

Internal disagreements, especially a diplomatic spat between regional powerhouse Saudi Arabia and political maverick Qatar, have also cast a pall over the two-day annual meeting.

"Iraq is the main problem on the field but no decisions or stances will be taken which will have an affect on the situation," said Gulf analyst Moghazy al-Badrawy.

The GCC is a loose political, economic and military alliance grouping Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman.

Many GCC nations host military facilities and are likely to become launch pads in any strike, sending jitters through a region which sits on almost half the world's oil reserves.

"There will be no Gulf initiative on Iraq. They will call on Iraq to implement international resolutions and put an end to (Iraqi) threats to spare the country and region from war," a sen-

ior Gulf Arab diplomat told Reuters. "Gulf Arab states are obliged to go by international resolutions."

The Iraq issue was also a factor in the diplomatic row which erupted between Saudi Arabia and Qatar earlier this year.

Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler Crown Prince Abdullah will not attend the summit and Bahrain has downgraded its representation.

Saudi Arabia, which played a leading role in evicting Iraq's invading army from Kuwait in the 1991 Gulf War, has yet to allow Washington to use its facilities for possible strikes on Iraq.

Qatar, on the other hand, has offered its military bases to the United States. Riyadh has also criticised Doha over programmes aired by the outspoken Qatar-based al Jazeera television and controversial ties to Israel.

Analysts said that given the charged political atmosphere, the summit would kickstart the GCC customs union on January 1.

The GCC agreed last year to move forward the implementation of the customs union to 2003 from 2005. The accord calls for lower tariffs on foreign imports to five percent from 4-15 percent now and pave the way for a long-sought trade deal with the European Union — the bloc's biggest trading partner.

A main dispute is over a six percent EU duty on primary aluminium Gulf exports. The GCC produces more than one million tonnes per year, about five percent of the world's total.

Gulf diplomats said the summit may also discuss a recent speech by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein apologising for the 1990 invasion of Kuwait.



Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani (right) attends the 23rd session of the Gulf Co-operative Council summit in Doha, Qatar, Dec. 21. The summit focused on the Iraq crisis and Gulf customs union to be launched next month. REUTERS

## Ivory Coast

# UN to look into mass killings

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 21 (Reuters) - With fighting raging in the Ivory Coast, the United Nations condemned rebel attempts to overthrow the government and decided to send a mission to evaluate reports of mass killings of civilians.

In a statement read at a public meeting on Friday, the U.N. Security Council commended France for sending troops to its former colony and urged Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo to produce a peace plan that would involve all parties.

The 15-nation council expressed "grave concern" about the fighting in the West African nation, the world's biggest cocoa grower. It condemned "attempts to use force to influence the political situation and overthrow the elected government."

After a failed coup in September, the main rebel group seized the largely

Muslim northern half of the country and demanded the resignation of Gbagbo, a Christian from the southwest, who won a disputed election two years ago. Two other rebel factions in the far west want to avenge the death of a former junta leader by Gbagbo's men.

The Security Council also expressed "its deepest concerns at reports of mass killings and serious violations of human rights in the country."

In a separate initiative, the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Sergio Vieira de Mello, announced he was sending a mission to the Ivory Coast to report to him and U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan on abuses against civilians.

The mission will spend a week in the country, meeting government officials and other leaders, regional and local human



French troops taking up a new position in the Ivory Coast. (File photo) REUTERS

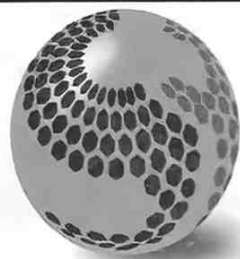
rights groups and others.

Hundreds of people have already been killed in the fighting and one mass grave has been found behind rebel lines. Each side accuses the other of summary executions and torture.

France, which has sent hundreds of troops to the West African nation and

expects to have 2,500 soldiers on the ground by the end of the month, was commended by the Security Council of which it is a permanent member for its intervention. The council also backed U.N. assistance to mediating efforts of the regional Economic Community of West African States, known as ECOWA.

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3. Identify local resources for meeting the needs of refugees;
4. Identify training needs for implementing partners staff, identify local resources to meet these training needs and organize training program for staff;
5. Assist the refugee community to identify its own needs and establish priorities to meet these needs through developing self-help group;
6. Prepare monthly reports on needs identified, activities conducted and services rendered as well as plans for the future;
7. Brief Protection in Field Office on psycho/Social needs of refugees and work closely in collaboration with the protection officers on issues pertaining to refugees particularly in regard to refugee women;
8. Develop income-generation activities and support other efforts at self-help among the community of refugees;
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# Kashmir militants kill five civilians

SRINAGAR, India, Dec 21 (Reuters) - Suspected Muslim militants killed five civilians including four members of the same family in attacks in India's Jammu

and Kashmir state, police said on Saturday. The attacks came after suspected separatist guerrillas shot and killed a newly

elected state legislator on Friday. Violence has continued unabated since a new government came to power last month promising to bring peace to the

troubled region.

A police official said three men and a child were killed and three women were wounded when gunmen entered a house in Sopore, a town in northern Kashmir, and fired indiscriminately.

In a separate incident, a woman was killed by militants in the Rajouri district, southwest of Srinagar, police said.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Mufti Mohammad Syed, the new chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir, said the rebel attacks was aimed at derailing efforts to bring peace to the Himalayan region.

Syed's coalition government has vowed to bring peace to the strife-torn state where more than 35,000 people have been killed in the 13-year revolt against New Delhi's rule.

"The attacks on innocents are basically designed to derail the peace process and senseless and brutal killings can lead militants to nowhere," Syed said in a statement.

"Forces inimical to peace would be fought and isolated."

More than a dozen guerrilla groups are fighting Indian rule in Jammu and Kashmir, which is at the heart of more than 50 years of hostility with Pakistan.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and sending Islamic militants across the border into Jammu and Kashmir.

Pakistan denies the charge, saying it only provides moral and diplomatic support to what it calls a legitimate Kashmiri struggle for self-determination.



Kashmiri Muslim villagers carry the coffin of Abdul Aziz Mir, a recently elected state legislator, during his funeral at Konibal, about 30kms (18 miles) south of Srinagar, on Dec. 21. Thousands of Kashmiris attended the funeral ceremony a day after separatist guerrillas shot him dead. REUTERS

## German peacekeepers

# Six die in Kabul helicopter crash

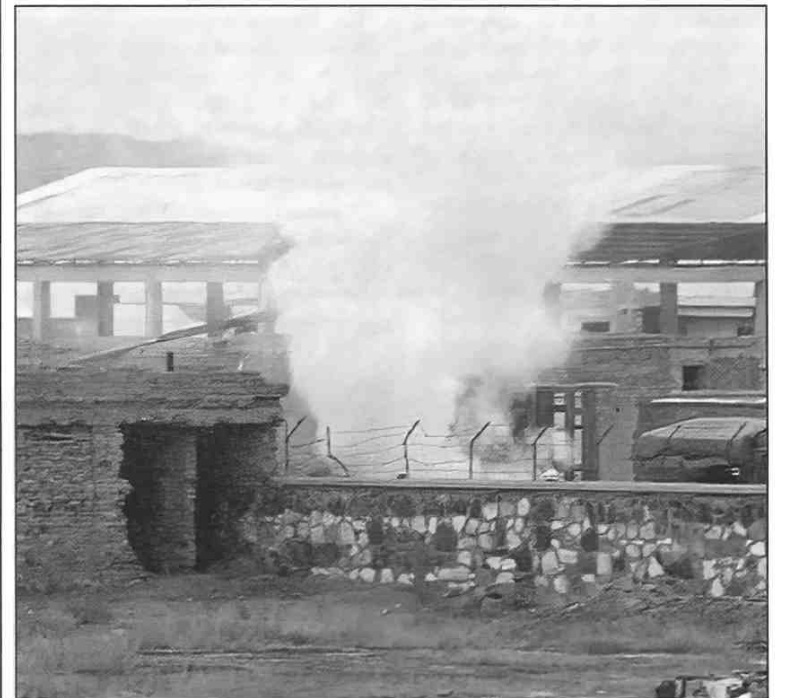
KABUL, Dec 21 (Reuters) - All six passengers died when a military helicopter belonging to German peacekeepers crashed on Saturday just before landing at the airport near the Afghan capital Kabul, a senior Afghan government official said.

Defence ministry spokesman Gulbuddin said the helicopter crashed a few miles (km) east of Kabul airport near a road leading to Bagram air base, the headquarters for the U.S. military in Afghanistan.

"All six passengers...have been killed," Gulbuddin told Reuters, adding that the cause of the crash was not yet known.

Germany is due to take over joint command next year of the 22-nation International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), which is charged with keeping the peace in the Afghan capital.

ISAF officials were not immediately available for comment.



Smoke rises from the site of the German military helicopter crash in Kabul Dec. 21. Six people in the helicopter and up to eight on the ground died on Saturday when the military craft crashed just before landing at Afghan capital's airport, a defence ministry spokesman said. REUTERS

# U.S. soldier killed in Afghan firefight

BAGRAM, Afghanistan, Dec 21 (Reuters) - An American soldier died of gunshot wounds after enemy forces fired on a patrol car in eastern Afghanistan in the early hours of Saturday morning, the U.S. military said.

It was the first death of a U.S. serviceman from hostile fire in Afghanistan since May 19, and followed a grenade attack in the capital Kabul on Tuesday in which two American servicemen and their Afghan interpreter were wounded.

Another U.S. soldier was wounded in a rocket attack in eastern Afghanistan on Friday, while another was wounded in a training accident in southern Afghanistan the same day.

"A U.S. soldier died from gunshot wounds after his unit came under fire from enemy forces in eastern Afghanistan," Lieutenant Tina Kroske, a spokeswoman for the U.S. military in Afghanistan, told Reuters.

"The firefight started at approximately 4

a.m.," she said, adding that the attack took place in the eastern province of Paktika. "They were on routine patrol when they came under fire from enemy forces."

Another U.S. soldier was wounded on Friday in a rocket attack on a coalition "safe house" in the mountainous region of Asadabad in northeastern Afghanistan near the border with Pakistan, the military said at their Afghan headquarters at Bagram air base.

A third soldier involved in training the Afghan army was wounded in the southern province of Kandahar on Friday when he tried to correct a miss-fire on a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, the U.S. military said in a statement.

Earlier this week a U.N. group said al Qaeda had recently set up several new training camps in eastern Afghanistan near the border with Pakistan, although a U.S. official told Reuters there was no evidence of any such camps.

On Tuesday, a grenade was thrown into a jeep carrying two U.S. soldiers and their Afghan interpreter in the capital Kabul, wounding all three.

A teenage boy confessed to carrying out that attack to protest against the treatment of Muslims in Palestine and Afghanistan, according to Afghan government officials. Two days later, three Afghans, including the attacker, were killed in a grenade attack on a base used by international peacekeepers in the capital Kabul.

About 40 U.S. servicemen have been killed and 300 wounded in combat and non-combat incidents since operations began in Afghanistan against al Qaeda and the former Taliban regime in the wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States.

There are about 8,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan and thousands more coalition troops.

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**Bush cancels trip to Africa****U.S. hastens moment of truth with Iraq**

WASHINGTON/BAGHDAD (Reuters) - The United States was poised on Saturday to hasten the moment of truth over Iraqi disarmament by giving U.N. arms inspectors secret data on suspected weapon sites and the names of scientists likely to have inside information.

New signs of U.S. preparations for a possible war on Iraq included President Bush's cancellation of a trip to Africa on a few weeks' notice and a U.S. request to Germany to provide 2,000 troops to guard U.S. bases in the country at the end of January.

Bush on Friday called the arms declaration provided by Iraq in response to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1441 "disappointing," echoing the grim tone of Secretary of State Colin Powell who had condemned it as a "material breach" of the resolution.

Iraq rejected the U.S. "material breach" characterization — a potential justification for war under Resolution 1441 — as extreme.

"This is an exaggerated response," General Hussam Mohammed Amin, the chief Iraqi official liaising with the U.N. inspectors, told Reuters. "It was political. Even before they were able to read and analyze the declaration they said it had many gaps."

The United States, seeking a swift conclusion to the arms inspection process initiated by Resolution 1441 last month, said it planned to give the U.N. inspectors new intelligence on sites where Iraq may be hiding its weapons of mass destruction program either on Friday or over the weekend.

There was no indication early on Saturday that the data had been provided yet.

Officials said the information would involve fewer than six sites where U.S.

intelligence believed Iraq has "suspicious chemical weapons or elements of production."

Other U.S. officials said Washington may suggest names of Iraqi scientists for the U.N. experts to interview as early as next week.

"We may make suggestions ... possibly next week," a senior U.S. official told Reuters. "We've told (U.N. inspectors) the Iraqis are not going to slow roll us on this (and) drag it out for months and months and months."

**Iraqi scientists**

The Bush administration, believing information gleaned from Iraqi scientists could be decisive in showing Baghdad has weapons of mass destruction, has urged U.N. inspectors to take scientists and their families out of the country so they will feel free to talk.

"If you get the right defector, that's all you need ... A couple of key people may be all you need," the U.S. official said.

But chief U.N. weapons inspector

Hans Blix has resisted, saying: "We're not going to abduct anybody and we're not serving as a defection agency."

Blix has asked Iraq to provide a list of scientists and others associated with its chemical, biological, nuclear and missile programs by the end of the month.

Bush, asked by reporters on Friday if the United States was on a path to war, said the Iraqi arms document as analyzed by the United States "was not encouraging."

"We expected him to show that he would disarm," Bush said of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. "Friends in the United Nations so that this body ably led by Kofi Annan has got relevance as we go into the 21st century."

U.S. officials have said Bush could take a decision in late January or early February to go to war.

The U.N. Security Council has asked arms inspectors to provide a detailed assessment of Iraq's arms declaration on Jan. 9.



Iraqi students look out of a window at the Faw primary school in the sprawling slums of Saddam City, a Baghdad district with two million people. (Reuters)

Continue from page 1

**The Deal**

...Saleh's visit was also expected to address the two countries' plans to increase deals in the oil and gas sectors, and in power and irrigation.

The two leaders signed a statement on friendship and cooperation in cultural, economic and military spheres, and Putin proposed that they increase cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

"Russia regards Yemen as a partner for the future," Putin said.

Saleh also met with the speaker of the upper house of parliament, Sergei Mironov, where the Yemeni leader noted the high level of cooperation between the two countries with military goods.

After his visit to Russia, Saleh also stopped in Beirut to round out a period in the last two weeks that has seen him maneuver in complex international relations.

"Nothing justifies a strike," against Iraq, he told Abu Dhabi's all-news

Arabic satellite channel. Saleh said "the United States needs to preserve the international coalition to combat terrorism."

"It could lose this coalition and the international sympathy it received as a result of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks as well as the attacks on the [USS] Cole and the embassy in Nairobi," Saleh said earlier to the Qatari-based Al-Jazeera television in Moscow.

Yemen is also a key partner with the United States in the war on terror, and Saleh said Yemen "has taken a balanced position in the dialogue with the United States and Russia."

In business back home, Saleh is trying to cool al-Qaeda activities in Yemen.

He made a formal request — not his first — to Yemeni parties linked with al-Qaeda. The request tells suspected al-Qaeda that are hiding in remote mountains and deserts of the country to listen

to reason and end actions that damage Yemen's reputation around the world.

After talks with Lebanese President Emile Lahoud, Saleh also blamed Israel's "criminal actions" against Palestinians for regional tension.

The President started a short visit to Syria on Dec. 21 in which he held talks with his Syrian counterpart, President Bashar Al-Assad.

The two presidents exchanged views on major events including the Iraqi crisis.

Among the main points discussed were the results of the visit of President Saleh to Russia and Lebanon and the latest historic visit of Bashar Al-Assad to the UK.

The two presidents reiterated their commitment to the pan-Arab attitude, rejecting any military strike against Iraq and demanding an enforcement of the UN resolutions dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

**Bomb suspects under formal investigation in France**

PARIS, Dec 21 (Reuters) - Four suspected Islamist militants arrested this week in a raid near Paris that unearthed possible bomb-making devices have been placed under formal investigation, French media reported on Saturday.

The suspects were placed under investigation late on Friday for "criminal conspiracy in connection with a terrorist enterprise", after questioning by two anti-terrorism judges.

The three men and a woman have not confessed to anything.

Under French law, a formal investigation does not necessarily mean charges will be brought, but allows authorities to keep suspects in custody.

Police raiding a suburban flat used by the suspects, three Algerians and a Moroccan, found electronic parts used in detonators and a chemical that can be used in explosives, as well as a chemical protection suit, a large sum of cash and false identity papers.

The French Interior Ministry had said on Friday that the suspects were without doubt preparing at least one attack in the relatively short term.

The ministry has named in a statement Merouane Benhamed as one of those arrested, saying he was an Algerian militant who had taken part in conflicts in Afghanistan and Chechnya.

It also said that two of the suspects

said they had received training in Georgia's Pankisi Gorge and had met Chechen military chiefs.

France can hold terror suspects for questioning for up to four days, after which they must be either released or placed under investigation.

This week's arrests were the latest in a series of raids by French police on suspected militant cells in recent weeks.

France's five million strong Muslim community is Europe's largest. Many men are believed to have gone through France on their way to train with al-Qaeda, which is blamed for the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.



## THE SOCOTRA CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPEMENT PROGRAMME (SCDP) is recruiting Young and Well Qualified Yemeni Nationals for the post of:

**Protected Areas Management Officer**

**Duty station:** Socotra Island

**Direct Manager:** Biodiversity Component Coordinator

**Principal Responsibility**

Actively participate and consequently take a leading role in the process of establishment of the pilot protected areas network in the Socotra Archipelago and then work to ensure the effective implementation of their management plans and land-use strategies.

**Operational Tasks**

- \* Contribute to the process of establishment of pilot protected areas within the biodiversity component.
- \* Participate in building the protected areas local management teams and their capacities.
- \* Liaise with the local community and their leaders and the local government regarding the development and management of PPA.
- \* Work as a counter part for the biodiversity component coordinator in all aspect of establishment and management.
- \* Contribute to the process of development of PPA's management plans.
- \* Follow up the day to day management of the PPA's local management teams.
- \* Take part in building the capacity of the PPA's local management team including work planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- \* Liaise with other biodiversity component units regarding all aspects of PPA's development and management and particularly the research and survey, education and awareness raising and tourism teams.

**Qualification**

A minimum of high school degree is required and a BA or a BSc. Degree in the field of environment or related subjects is preferred.

**Skills**

- \* Basic management skills.
- \* Fluency in Arabic language (spoken and written).
- \* Good command English language (spoken).
- \* Fluency in Socotri language is preferred.
- \* Basic computer skills.
- \* Ability to work in hard conditions.
- \* Good communication and negotiation skills.

**Information System and GIS Officer**

**Duty station:** Socotra Island and Sana'a

**Direct Manager:** SCDP Resident Coordinator

**Principal Responsibility**

To administer the program's information, filing and documentation systems and manage the GIS computerized data base that is relevant to the program needs and provide information-related support for the program various teams and partners.

**Operational Tasks**

- \* Oversee the establishment and administration of the information system including electronic and hardcopy filing versions.
- \* Ensure the proper documentation of the program information and facilitate access to it.
- \* Work closely with the program coordinator for the development and implementation of an IT policy for the program.
- \* Manage the program GIS database and provide support to the team on information mapping and data analysis using primarily map info software.
- \* Train the local team on information system handling and access.
- \* Liaise with the Sana'a PSU team on the IT and filing system for continuous update and information exchange.

**Qualification**

- \* Relevant computer qualification (i.e. BSc. in computer programming and software management)
- \* Experience with map info software and/or other GIS systems.

**Skills**

- \* Advanced computer skills (office 2000, GIS and related software)
- \* Fluency in Arabic language (spoken and written).
- \* Good command in English language (Spoken and Written).
- \* Ability to work in hard conditions.
- \* Training and teaching skills.

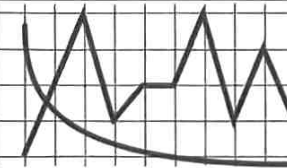
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**Deadline for Application: 15 January 2003. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for an interview**

**For more information on the SCDP: [www.socotraisland.org](http://www.socotraisland.org)**

# YT Business



An interview with **Abdullah Abdulwali Nasher**

## Banking more complex in post 9/11 world

**T**he International Bank of Yemen is a monetary organization that has achieved great success and improvement since its establishment in 1979 with a capital of YR 1 billion. Abdullah Abdulwali Nasher head of the administration board, spoke to Mohammed al-Masani of the Yemen Times about the bank's experience in facing the financial and monetary challenges in Yemen while maintaining the well respected reputation of the bank.

**Q. How do you evaluate the progress of the Yemen International Bank during the past few years?**

A. The most important aspect of the bank's policies which we maintained in the past and still preserve today is customer relations management, through providing the best high-level service to all our clients, as well as creating cooperative relations with different banks in Yemen and outside.

The bank has also played a significant role in supporting the Bank Committee and its activities. This committee is one of those civil society organizations, and through it a lot can be achieved in the monetary domain.

As for our accomplishments recently, our premises are counted as among the best. Considering externally, its beautiful architecture and size, which made it a landmark in the city, and internally the highly advanced banking instruments and machines it is equipped with.

The bank now provides on-line services and phone banking services. These, along with standard banking services provide our customers with quick, efficient and reliable computerized services.

In fact, we recently are going to include pipeline service with the latest technologies and equipment, and linking all these facilities in all our branches with a central database in order to facilitate and enhance customer transactions and services.

Another accomplishment credited to the bank is the automation of the working procedures and the enhancement of abilities and skills of our staff through proper training by experts. The bank has implemented system and process guides that

was designed by KPMG-Hazem Hassan, being another achievement of the bank and a step forward towards the future.

**Q. What are the challenges that face investment activities in Yemen?**

A. The government has put in place legislation and rules that govern the monetary market and allow investment in the country. This encourages investors on the national, regional and international levels to employ their money in projects of various types.

The government also in its strategic development plan focused on investment activities where it planned an investment law project that eliminates all the shortcomings of the past along with granting investors many privileges, by this, reflecting the state's good will and positive attitude towards investment in Yemen.

Nonetheless, most of the challenges that face the monetary market are related to the existing economic down phase. And this requires an economic and financial remedy through increasing expenditure.

Also, most banks refrain from granting loans or facilitating them due to the increasing indebtedness of clients, and not being able to retrieve these debts because of bias judiciary against the banks. Hence, most banks have preferred to invest their money in treasury permits rather than lend to clients.

Therefore, updating and fixing the law is a vital requirement in improving investment and should utilize more attention from the state. The monetary field in spite of the clear improvements still suffers from unfair proceedings by criminal, civil, and commercial courts, which influence the national economy negatively.

In addition, there is the great challenge of weak and inefficient management in the private, government and mixed sectors. The weakness of such management forms a great obstacle against investors and investment in the country.

**Q. What does the term "Black List" that commercial banks and others publish mean? And how do you deal with clients' loans and other services you provide clients?**

A. After great discussions and reference to other countries' experiences, active



Dr. Abdullah Abdulwali Nasher

banks in Yemen have resorted to what was named the "Bad Loans List". The purpose of this list is to enable banks to retrieve their rights from those clients who fail to fulfill their obligations. It is an executive method with a managerial aspect designed to avoid going to courts as much as possible.

The essence of this concept is to apply pressure on clients to pay their debts, especially that most such clients are able to do so yet opt not to betting on the court's statements in the case of a court dispute with the bank. The method comprises of depriving those clients from dealing with any bank in the country, of course, unless his name has been crossed from the list. And since it is an imperative necessity to deal with a commercial bank for such clients, they eventually yield.

Actually, this method has proved to be very useful. And we in the Yemeni International Bank deal with the Bad Loans List in a proper and correct way. We are committed to our agreements with other banks and refrain from dealing with any party which is in the list in any matter.

As to how we act with loans, we must say that at this stage we are very careful in our loan dealing and we mostly operate with a predefined set of trustworthy clients. Hence most of our income is invested in treasury permits. This is not only our method, but most of the active banks in Yemen do the same. It is true that by this, banks in an indirect way contribute in the downfall of economy as they do not promote investments and projects in any sector, whether industrial, commer-

cial, agricultural, services or tourism. Such investments could have improved the national income level and present opportunities for employment. However, we have our strong reasons for taking this manner of action among which, most importantly is the deficiency of the judiciary system.

**Q. What are the challenges that Yemeni banks face, especially in present circumstances?**

A. It is said that 9/11 was a turning point in the present history of the world, and most importantly, the international war against terrorism began. As a result of this, and combating money laundry as well, many obligations arose on banks.

As an example, Basel Committee on Banking Supervision had set a number of principles governing banking deals such setting up the basis of "Monetary Awareness" which concentrates on customer satisfaction and legal stand checking. These principles were referred to as "Customer due Diligence for Banks" from which a set of rules called "Know Your Customer" has emerged. It is these principles and rules which Yemeni banks should comply with in this era of globalization and information explosion.

Such process requires high level expertise and financial cadre, and this on its own is a great challenge facing Yemeni banks today. Especially that our Arabic and Islamic region has clearly become targeted. As a consequence, we need to avoid being in a position of suspicion and the Yemeni citizen needs to be aware of the needs of his homeland without being radical or engrossing in religious extremes.

Globalization forms a great challenge facing Yemeni banks, and so the standard and efficiency of our manpower must be improved. Simultaneously updating and enhancing monetary systems and equipment causing the banking sector in Yemen to be in place with the giant technology steps. Yemeni banks must take measures to merge in the future with the international banks in order to be able to face and deal with the international competition, which will increase after year 2005.

**Q. What are your other investment projects in the region and your plans for future expanding?**

A. We have set in place a strategy at the beginning of my taking charge of the bank. And we have transformed this strategy into a number of action plans based on the environment, and on human, material and technical resources research studies. In fact we have already started renovating the bank automatically in order to advance pays system and provide fast and efficient services to our clients.

The bank's practical plans target growth and expansion, and speed in delivering satisfactory services to clients. And this is what we aim at achieving in the future through setting these plans and practical steps. We have started executing these plans and the process is still continuing.

**Q. What are the negative impacts of 9/11 on the bank and money transfers?**

A. In general, negative consequences of the attack on the United States of America hurt the global economy, and the Arab and Islamic countries in particular, among which, naturally Yemen is one. As a result of that event, banking and monetary procedures have become much more complicated, and there are consequence of the war against terrorism and the money laundering agenda as well.

The Arab citizen has become a source of doubt and suspicion and invariably, all his dealings required more careful assessment and investigation. Due to this, many innocent people have had to pay the price, and the banking transactions have become much more complicated, hence slower. The problem is that we depend to a great extent on migrants monetary transactions for our local income. These transactions have declined since 9/11.

**Q. How do you rate the Central Banks policy in dealing with other banks? How do you think it should be?**

A. The Central Bank's policy with banks is good and is built on a foundation of cooperation and synchronization. The Central Bank works in unity with other banks to serve the economic purposes of the state. Yet we hope that the Yemeni Central Bank pays more efforts to support the growing and enhancements of the Yemeni banks according to a predefined plan that aims at serving the general welfare.

## Higher prices are one result

# Limburg blast will be felt for years

By FAROUK AL-KAMALI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

**Y**emeni economists say overall losses from the Oct. 6 bombing of the French supertanker Limburg are still being assessed, but it's known already that the average Yemeni will take a big part of that hit through higher prices for commodities.

According to the Minister of Transportation and Marine Affairs, Captain Saeed Yafa'ee, actual losses in the last two months have reached \$ 7.7 million.

Those losses include custom duties losses of the terminal containers in the Free Zone in Aden.

The ripple effect, however, has already begun in other less-tangible national revenues such as, tourism, marine life, and investments. So the loss could jump significantly from its present monthly rate of \$3.8 million.

In addition, there has been increases of insurance fees for ships heading towards the Yemeni harbors.

Undoubtedly, the incident of the terrorist act has greatly affected marine activity along the whole Yemeni coastlines. This has enabled the international insurance companies to impose additional duties on ships heading towards Yemen.

Despite measures taken to guard the Yemeni harbors, fears have been still

haunting the minds of those who take the charge of the international insurance companies not to take risks or sail Yemeni harbors.

To find out more of the consequences of the blast, the Times met with shipping officials.

Mr. Matloob Atef Asharqi, the Chairman of the Boards of Saba International Shipping of Project Investment Comp. Ltd. said while the bombing has caused harm to the Yemen's economy, fishermen have also been greatly affected also due to the marine pollution.

"Fishermen have been deprived from fishing in the seawaters for a long period. This has also has greatly affected the fish wealth of the territorial waters," he said.

**Aden hurt**

Concerning the navigation companies,



Mr. Matloob Atef Asharqi,

Asharqi noted that navigation lines used to run to the Free Zone harbor in Aden have been shifted to the Jeddah, Salalah, and Djibouti harbors. Thirty ships a month used to come to Aden.

One of the negative impacts of the Limburg is the decision taken by the insurance companies to raise the insurance fees on the containers coming to Yemen. A fee of \$500 has been imposed for each container estimated at 40 f., \$250 for a container estimated at 20 f., and \$10 for a ton of a wood.

Mr. Abdul Rahman Baasher, the General Manager of al-Mandab Marine Services Co. Ltd. said, "Undoubtedly, the incident has negatively reflected itself in the and a sense of fear has been began to be felt among the navigation companies, particularly the insurance companies entrusted with the insuring ships and commodities. These companies have



Mr. Abdul Rahman Baasher



French oil tanker Limburg

imposed doubled insurance duties on the regular ships and the supertankers."

Mr. Baasher also noted the problem at Aden.

"These supertankers will head towards other adjacent harbors due the reduction of insurance duties. This will have its own impact upon the national economy for an unknown period of time.

Losses are not restricted to ships and supertankers.

Baasher emphasized the damage from the environmental pollution for the sea animals including fish and coral reefs. "I'm afraid that this environmental pollution will extend for a long period of time."

On the negative impacts on the naviga-

tion companies Baasher said, "The shift will accompany other aspects, including commerce and custom companies. This will lead to inescapable consequences including to the consumer," he added.

To summarize, the Limburg incident will not be a normal one in the history of Yemen. Its negative impacts will not be the first or the last. It may extend for years to come.

We can say that the oil tanker blast has added an unexpected new burden on the Yemeni State budget and the government's development efforts. This urges the speed in removing dangers resulting from the incidence that would hinder the efforts of improving the national economy.

## The Road Ahead

### Boosting workplace commitment

By RAIDAN A. AL-SAQQAF  
r\_saqqaf@hotmail.com

**I**n order to thrive a business needs to have a working culture of commitment and loyalty. They are critical factors to the overall success of the organization. People are an organization's most competitive asset: the more commitment they have, the greater competitive advantage the organization has.

So how committed are your employees? Employee commitment is of five levels. At the lowest level there are those who spend eight hours at work and go home. For them, work is where they can earn money and support themselves. Their commitment is limited to their pay.

Next come those who are committed to a job as a means to something else, for example working for the experience. They see their current job as an interim move towards what they really want and their commitment is short-term.

Then comes the level of those people who are committed to their professions; they provide an excellent service to the organization, but as soon as the organization no longer satisfies their needs they move on to another.

The fourth level consists of people who are committed to the work or the work's product. If they have a job, they finish it even if they have to do the work of several other people, make personal contributions or look for a greater workload. They are workhorses that work without considering the organization's long-term objectives.

The fifth level is made of those who link their own success to the success of the organization. They focus their skills and abilities for the sake of achieving the organization's broad objectives and they know how the business performs in order to achieve these objectives. Organizations usually put the highest value on this type of commitment; because they are the people who build its future and ensure its success.

Now, is commitment dead in your organization or not? The answer depends on the commitment levels of your employees. Nevertheless, it's good to make their work more enjoyable by injecting a feeling of fun and happiness, to capture the hearts of the employees and hence help in retrieving commitment to work. This makes them feel they are a vitally important part of the organization and more connected to the organization; In fact, information sharing within a company is one of the best ways of assuring employee commitment and hence superior performance for the organization.

Encouraging employees to feel liberated while they work, helping them to be creative and think outside the box is critical for success. As a matter of fact, derived learning and training helps employees emancipate their actions and improve their performance. They are the ones who are committed and want to ensure the success of their organization. After all, the reward of the organization's success is their reward.

*Remember: People can and do make different commitments, so enhance their commitment to ensure their personal success, as well as the long-term success of the organization.*

**Words of Wisdom**



The main comment that kept coming time and again is that the Yemen Times has become the most widely used source on current information in English on Yemen. The accuracy and objective reporting have made the paper the "most reliable" source on Yemen.

But it not just that. It has to do with the broad-based business, culture, social issues, health, environment, sports and many other aspects of life in Yemen.

That does give a comprehensive and balanced view of the situation.

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



**OUR OPINION**

**What does the future hold?**

In a time when we have become certain that a war against Iraq is coming, we are anxious to know exactly what the future holds. Our government has already angered its people by assisting the U.S. to assassinate Yemeni citizens using an unmanned plane. It will even be put in an even more embarrassing situation once the war starts.

As a people, Yemeni are proud and attached to their religious and national identity. They would probably react strongly to such a step by the US, possibly causing Yemen to withdraw from the US-led coalition against terror.

In his statement to al-Jazeera Satellite Channel, President Saleh said the US "could lose this coalition and the international sympathy it received as a result of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks as well as the attacks on the Cole and the embassy in Nairobi."

Hence, we expect turmoil and instability to climb in the Yemeni streets as days pass by, because to the very last moment, the government is expected to hold tight to its support of the US in its war against terror. This may happen despite the strong possibility of placing Yemen, again, on top of the list of potential targets in the future.

The US should realize the patience of Yemeni and Arab nations is being tested through the continuous American threats in the diminishing hopes in the possibility of resolving the Iraqi crisis peacefully.

It is also of great importance for the US administration to realize that even if Arab leaders agreed to support or at least stay silent concerning the strike against Iraq, Arabs and Muslims would be infuriated, causing possible violence in many parts of the world.

It can be observed that even though the war has not come, yet various attacks launched by al-Qaeda and others are already taking place in many parts of the world against Western interests. Hence, it would only be natural to realize that those attacks may rise in number causing great concerns for the US and its allies.

It is us, Arab and Muslim nations, that will be affected most from any further turmoil. We have already gone through a lot of wars in the past, but this war could be furious.

According to New York Times, President Saleh said in a meeting with George W. Bush that if he attempts to overthrow Saddam Hussein, it is like putting a cat in a cage, causing it to turn into a lion.

US President Bush responded in saying that "the only way to cure the cat is to cut off its head."

But wait a second? Is the US sure it could cut off the head that easily?

Who knows, the cat may be eventually killed, but after the cage, and the whole room turns into a bloody site. Who want this to happen? It surely can be done, but the ones who will be affected most will be none other than the innocent people.

*The Editor*

**What's in a name?**

**Al-Qaida is not al-Qaeda**



BY SHAKER AL-ASHWAL  
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Our car cruised nicely along a straight road on a flat valley surrounded by grayish mountains. Except for the green tees that lined the road, the land was dry and not much vegetation was growing around. A group of camels gathered around a small grassy area, but the speed of the car prevented me from taking a snap shot of the scene.

The car slowed down as several cars ahead of us were checked by soldiers. Soon enough it was our turn. The soldiers looked inside the car quickly and motioned to us to move and the driver did. Look! Look! To the right Ali yelled; the small sign, he added. I looked at the sign and understood what he wanted me to see it. The sign itself was not that attractive it was a small sign held by a rusty rod and on it I read "Welcome to Al-Qaida." I smiled because I was familiar with "Al-Qaida," the town lying on the border between the provinces of Taiz and Ibb.

The car climbed a steep hill and followed the curvature of the road leading to "Al-Qaida." We drove past a barrel placed by traffic officers on the road to guide traffic; 30 yards later we came to a quick stop. Having heard so much about "Al-Qaida" lately I allowed myself to sink into a state of confusion. The word "Al-Qaida" had acquired a different meaning lately, and along with it a negative connotation. Nowadays, "Al-Qaida" refers to the mother of all terrorist organizations and headed by the number one suspect sought by the U.S. today, Osama Bin Laden.

As our car entered Al-Qaida, the town, there was no evidence of "Talibans" here, few people walked around carrying Kalashnikovs but they were carrying bags of vegetables and produce. These people definitely did not look threatening, nor did they look like they were in control of this town. Uniformed officers were walking around, directing traffic and observing the law of this land. Many people had facial hair, but the beards were not long I counted four people in the area with Taliban-like beards, the rest had beards that did not exceed one-inch in length. Although it shares the name with the now-famous Al-Qaeda the people here are no Osama fans or Taliban followers.

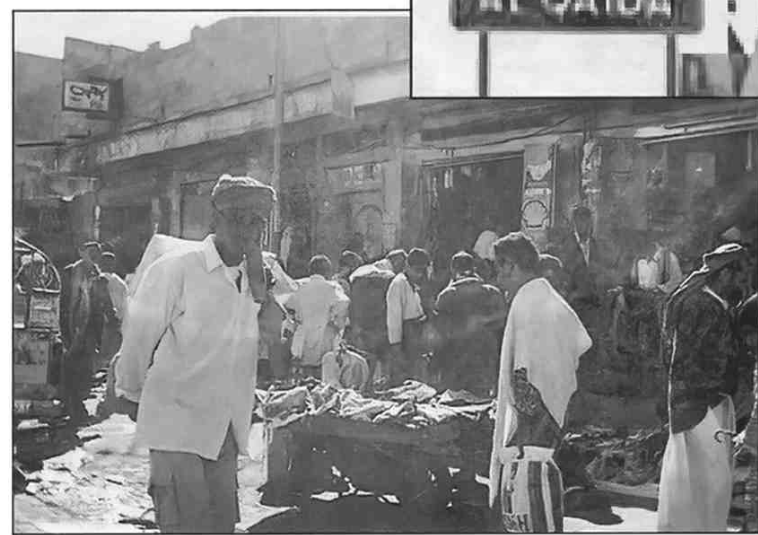
Apart from those with beards and some facial hair that characterize Middle Eastern society, the rest of the people belonging to this "Al-Qaida" look normal enough to erase any suspicion. Where is Osama? My friend asked a street peddler, who was moving near our creeping car selling some tomatoes to feed his children, "Osama! Who?" he asked us. I said to myself this is no Osama territory. He probably has some fans here like he does in

many places but this Al-Qaida is not a hub for Osama or the Talibans. Groups of girls were walking wearing their uniforms and heading home from school, this is definitely no Taliban land. Al-Qaida is but a small town whose only crime is its name.

The Arabic language is about to suffer a loss of one of its words, that word is, you know it, Al-Qaida. Al-Qaida also spelled Al-Qaeda means a base, and it was a commonly used word until September 11, 2001. It was then that it became sinful, and suspicious to use the word, however, Al-Qaida residents in Yemen are hoping that they will be able to keep the name. Although west-

erners use it freely Arabs and Muslims including Yemenis have censored themselves and stopped using it for fear of mistaken association with Osama's Al-Qaeda. The continued war on Al-Qaeda the Bush's number one enemy may push them to change their town's name to avoid being hit by a misguided cluster bomb seeking the other Al-Qaeda and becoming "collateral damage" in the war against terrorism.

People now are quick to qualify the word "Al-Qaida" in Yemen with the word "town" immediately adjacent to it to avoid any confusion. Yemenis in the United States have stopped talking about that town or referring to it knowing that their phones could be tapped. I wonder if some American Yemenis have stopped investing in "Al-Qaida", the town for fear that their investment could be interpreted as support of Osama's Al-Qaeda.



View of Al-Qaida

My observations confirmed that this "Al-Qaida" is a Yemeni town like the rest of Yemen full of peaceful people buying and selling and surviving striving for a normal life like the rest of us. Like the rest of Yemen it is keeping a low profile and hoping that this mistaken association with terrorism fades to reveal the true spirit of a striving nation for peace and normalcy in these crazy times.

This town exemplifies how the brush of terrorism, first picked up by the terrorists known as Al-Qaeda, and now in the hands of the U.S. administration, has tainted everything and everyone of Middle Eastern association or origin.

My bewilderment was abruptly ended by the loud horn coming from a car trying to squeeze through the constricted space created by that chaos. Seconds later the most annoying symphony was produced by the vehicles as their horns began to compete for atten-

tion. This was a typical Yemeni market; people come here from nearby villages to sell their produce and buy what they need. Most of the shoppers appeared to be villagers who come to this old and famous market to get what they need and return to their villages.

You can buy everything you need here, vegetables, fruits, meet, sweets and especially made goat cheese, that is what this Al-Qaida is famous for.

**COMMON SENSE**



By Hassan Al-Haifi

**The Mideast's butcher market**

"Can you imagine it?" said Jamil to his buddy Fadhel, as the two customers crowded around the butcher shop window. "US President George W. Bush wants the whole world to wage a war against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, yet cares the least about all the bloodletting and terror, which his bloodthirsty buddy, Ariel Sharon is enjoying in Palestine night and day."

"Oh come on," Jamil. "How can you expect us to talk regional politics when we cannot even get to our favorite butcher shop for tenderloin cut," remarked Fadhel, as he noticed a little boy trying to make headway for the butcher or for the butcher's pocket. He wasn't sure which goal the boy had in mind, but he was not taking chances.

Keeping an eye on the seemingly mischievous kid, Jamil responded, "Night and day, all we hear on television is: 'The inspectors are coming, the inspectors are looking at a shoe shine polish factory today; George Bush is adamant that Iraq is in violation of the Bush Resolution, Iraqi scientists must come outside and talk to the UN inspectors.'

"It all seems like the games children play in neighborhood fights. What has international diplomacy turned into?"

"No, Jamil, you mean the United Nations Resolutions," Fadhel corrected his friend.

The boy switched his pickpocket victims. "What United Nations resolutions? Jamil asked somewhat cynically. "The United Nations is nothing but an echoing rendition of American foreign policies."

The butcher took a moment from the merciless strikes on the carcass he was working on.

"Come on you guys, this is a butcher shop, not a qat session. Hey, Fadhel! Watch out for that little punk, he is notorious. He already scored from seven victims, right from where you are standing. I swear if I ever get a hold of him, he will have this knife cut through the marrow of his wrist!"

On hearing that, and seeing the butcher lift his big, fat knife, and seeing it come down like a guillotine on the poor carcass, cutting the thigh bone of the bull with relative ease, the boy ran away from the crowd. Everyone laughed, and then went on calling: "Sa'ad! Sa'ad! Come on; how long do we have to wait?"

The butcher then commented: "Why don't you try to cut up this monster then?"

"We got enough butchers as it is in the Arab World and the sad part is they probably cut more human flesh than livestock flesh!" quipped an intellectual nearby, still trying to make sure that the mischievous kid kept away from his pockets.

"You mean the Zionist gang in Israel?" said another customer looking rather amused by the skill shown by the butcher who systematically cut up the carcass into more manageable smaller parts to dole out to his customers.

"No!" said the butcher taking another slight pause from his cutting, which now had taken a more rapid pace now. He happily looked at the crowd, now the size he likes it to be. He knew he didn't take a risk slaughtering this bull, "He means our Arab leaders, who have spent billions on weapons, they have used against their own people more than they have used against our Zionist enemies."

"Just imagine this," Jamil returned to his dis-course, while not forgetting to move up closer to the butcher's window ledge, so not to lose his turn. "The Zionist systematic slaughter of the Palestinians has taken a back page in most newspapers and is now after the weather report, even in the Arab satellite channels, while all this coming and going out of Iraq is front page headline news and the first item on satellite channel newscasts. There is blood being spilled night and day in Palestine, with Sharon and Netanyahu are having the time of their lives, raising their Zionism achievement score card points with the international Zionist establishment. Meanwhile, Arab leaders and the Arab public is getting suckered into believing that what is going on in Iraq is for real."

The butcher came out with his bombshell: "I am telling you the Arabs will someday wake up to find that they will only be able to buy meat with a coupon stamped by the Jewish Defense League or the United Jewish Appeal. Oh sure, Bush will get elected for a second term. That is the reward for his coziness with his Zionist pals and making suckers out of all of us, as well as the American people."

*Letters to the Editor*

**Nobody cares**

Dear Editor,  
I am student at Sana'a university and this is the first time to write to Yemen Times. I hope it won't be the last.

I have read in the issue No. 51, "Ethiopia needs us" and I am so insistent to give my opinion. First I want to say to my brother Faiq Shaikh that I am agree with you completely with every word. You have said the distance between Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia is less than 300 miles, but they don't care about them.

Why? Because in my opinion in this time nobody cares about others, they only think about themselves. They spend their money only on luxurious things. They don't need it only for one thing to boast at the other people, and here I don't mean only Saudi Arabia, but also I mean the other countries.

It seems they forget everything that the prophet Mohammed has told them before.

In this time nobody cares about orphans, poor people and even neighbors. You can live in a building without knowing your neighbor's name who lives close to you, or about people in

*Letters to the Editor*

Ethiopia who die because they don't have anything to drink or eat.

Not only Ethiopians need assistance. There are many, for example, in Somalia. When are we going to wake up and know that Islam is a religion of generosity, love, help and many good adjectives, not a religion of selfish, hate, injustice, and many bad adjectives?

Finally I want to say to my brother Faiq Sheikh, that from your words I found you are among the few people who care at this time.

Rania al-Kulaibi  
zean9000@hotmail.com

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**Publisher & Editor-in-Chief:**  
Walid Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

**Head office:**  
Telephone: +967 (1) 268-661  
Fax: +967 (1) 268-276  
P.O. Box 2579, Sana'a

**Email:**  
yementimes@yemen.net.ye  
yementimes@y.net.ye  
yementimes@yementimes.com  
Website: http://www.yementimes.com

**Branches:**  
Aden Bureau Chief:  
Ridhwan Alawi Ahmed  
Tel: +967 (2) 347-057, 346596;  
Fax: +967 (2) 347-056  
Email: ytaden@y.net.ye

Taiz Bureau Chief:  
Imad Ahmed Abdullah  
Tel: +967 (4) 217-156  
Tel/fax: +967 (4) 217-157  
P.O.Box: 5086, Taiz  
Email: yttaiz@y.net.ye

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**Saleh proves he's shrewd**

# Yemen plays off old rivals

By PATRICK E. TYLER  
For The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18 When Yemen's president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, met with President Bush a year ago, he offered to help reconcile America's grievances with Saddam Hussein of Iraq, a longtime ally of Mr. Saleh's.

There is an Arab proverb, the Yemeni president said. If you put a cat into a cage, it can turn into a lion. Mr. Bush responded that he had no intention of reconciling, a senior administration official said.

"This cat has rabies," Mr. Bush said, referring to Mr. Hussein, and then added with a bluntness that was said by officials in the room to have shocked Mr. Saleh, "The only way to cure the cat is to cut off its head."

In the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks, the global campaign against terrorism forced the United States into an important but uneasy alliance with Yemen and its president, Mr. Saleh, an army commander who seized power in Yemen in 1978 and who sided with Iraq during the Persian Gulf war of 1990-91.

But even as he positions himself now in the American camp, Mr. Saleh, ideologically, remains closer to Iraq, and some American and Saudi officials say the Yemeni leader is straddling the diplomatic fence, accepting hundreds of millions of dollars in assistance from the Central Intelligence Agency while taking delivery, as he did this month, of North Korean Scud missiles.

The missiles ostensibly were purchased for Yemen's Army. But experts point out that Scuds are weapons of marginal military utility against any potential foe and could easily be resold. There is also no discernible enemy target they could reach from Yemen.

In any event, Mr. Saleh might not have

been able to afford them, administration officials acknowledge, without some covert American assistance.

There is growing concern that Mr. Saleh's government or tribal leaders allied with him have continued to provide sanctuary to Qaeda cells, including the one that carried out the October 2000 attack on the destroyer Cole at Aden, killing 17 Americans.

At the time, Mr. Saleh declared Yemen's network of militant Islamic groups off-limits to United States investigators.

One regional expert in the administration said it was Yemen's history to play off rivals. During the cold war, Mr. Saleh ordered Soviet weapons while he tilted politically toward Washington and courted Western oil companies. At various times he used close relations with Iraq to fortify himself against Saudi Arabia, his largest historic rival.

"Anybody saying that Yemen is playing both sides in the war on terror doesn't know Yemen, and Yemen's need for stability and security," said Yemen's ambassador to Washington, Abdulwahab A. al-Hajiri. Noting the attack on the Cole, the ambassador called Yemen a "victim of terrorism."

One of the poorest nations in the Middle East, Yemen and its 19 million people are spread across an arid landscape where intertribal rivalry and conflict abound. Yemen is also the ancestral homeland of Osama bin Laden, whose father was born in the mountainous Hadramaut region, which straddles the caravan route that connected the Queen of Sheba's realm to King Solomon's court.

To its neighbors, today's Yemen has been strikingly a friendly territory for Qaeda operatives. On Nov. 3, a Hellfire missile fired from an unmanned Predator drone killed two Qaeda men and four other passengers in a sport utility vehicle.

Until his arrest in the United Arab

Emirates in early November, Al Qaeda's chief of operations for the Persian Gulf, Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, moved in and out of Yemen with impunity even as Saudi Arabia's intelligence service was demanding his arrest for plotting in 1998 to attack the armored limousines of Saudi leaders with antitank missiles.

"The kingdom tried to get al-Nashiri from the Yemenis," said Prince Turki al-Faisal, former chief of Saudi intelligence and now Saudi ambassador to Britain. "The kingdom enlisted the support of the U.S. in convincing Yemen to cooperate, but to no avail."

As recently as February of this year, Mr. Nashiri was spotted by Saudi officials walking down a street in the Yemeni capital, Sana, in the company of the deputy director of Yemen's intelligence service, Col. Abdulaziz al-Safani.

"These people are under the protection of the government," one Saudi diplomat asserted. But Yemeni officials insist that is not the case. Ambassador Hajiri asserted that Mr. Nashiri did not set foot in Yemen during 2002 and therefore could not have been in the company of a Yemeni intelligence officer.

"Yemen is a tough client," said one administration official who follows the Middle East. "We have to hold their feet to the fire to carry through on anything."

Mr. Saleh's allegiance is the subject of an ongoing debate within the Bush administration. The complexities of Yemen's tribal politics underscore the perilous aspects of alliance management in the anti-terror campaign where trust is often the first casualty.

The Scud episode proved embarrassing for President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney, who decided that the United States had to accede to Mr. Saleh's demand that the missiles be delivered to Yemen's army after they were intercepted at sea.



A senior administration official explained the White House motives more bluntly: the United States needs Yemen. As long as Mr. Saleh allows the C.I.A. to fly pilotless Predator drones over Yemeni territory and cooperates with American Special Forces and C.I.A. teams hunting for Qaeda members, the administration will not allow conflicts over weapons purchases to undermine an important relationship.

A C.I.A. spokesman declined to discuss covert funding to Yemen. A senior administration official acknowledged that money provided covertly could have freed other funds in cash-starved Yemen to purchase the missiles.

The Yemeni ambassador said: "Whatever the U.S. is giving is given with a clear idea on what it will be spent on. You think the U.S. will give money without knowing where it will go or be used for?"

Yemen also needs the United States, the ambassador said. Yemen is home to as many as 60,000 militants who fought the Soviets in Afghanistan in the 1980's as allies of the United States, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

Still, there are an estimated 60 million Kalashnikov rifles in Yemen; some tribal chiefs are so heavily armed that they park Soviet-era tanks in their courtyards, the business end of the barrel facing out. The kidnapping of foreigners by Yemeni tribes to extort favors and concessions from the government is common.

So is terrorism directed at Mr. Saleh's

government, most prominently over the past year by a group called Al Qaeda Sympathizers, who have carried out a half dozen bombings and demanded the release from detention of more than 170 of their comrades.

After the Sept. 11 attacks, the Pentagon put Yemen on a potential target list, and Mr. Saleh later told Muslim leaders that he was determined that Yemen not become the next Afghanistan. He flew to Washington to declare his support for Mr. Bush's anti-terror effort.

During the White House meeting on Nov. 27, 2001, administration officials said, Mr. Bush told Mr. Saleh that Yemen's cooperation in the fight against terrorism would define relations between Yemen and the United States and between the two leaders personally.

Mr. Bush said a good first step would be the arrest of two of the most-wanted Qaeda operatives in Yemen, Qaed Salim Sinan al-Harethi and Muhammad Hamdi al-Ahdal, American and Yemeni officials said. In Yemen, they are known as Abu Ali and Abu Asem, reputed members of the Qaeda cell that attacked the Cole.

Mr. Bush offered to send Special Forces troops if Yemen's Army was not up to the job of confronting tribal leaders sympathetic to Al Qaeda, a senior administration official said, but Mr. Saleh pleaded for time and patience, saying Yemen's tribal politics which have fueled frequent fighting in the past, and did not fade away with the union

of North and South Yemen in 1990 made it difficult.

A year ago, the Yemeni leader sent heavily armed troops into eastern Marib Province, a stronghold for Qaeda sympathizers. But instead of making the arrests that Washington was pressing for, the troops were outgunned. Eighteen soldiers died.

Yemen's ambassador blamed the debacle on lack of preparation and "some misunderstanding." Mr. Saleh thought "other more carefully planned attempts" would follow, the ambassador said.

Mr. Saleh quietly told Washington that he was ready to accept assistance and a greater covert American presence in Yemen. C.I.A. financing and special forces training of Yemeni Army forces began early this year, administration officials said.

Last January, Mr. Bush sent an emissary to Saudi Arabia seeking Saudi agreement to conduct covert operations with Saudi and Yemeni forces, including Predator flights from Saudi bases along the Yemeni border. Crown Prince Abdullah gave his approval, Saudi officials said.

C.I.A. and Special Forces teams arrived in Saudi Arabia within weeks. "They are not difficult to accommodate," one Saudi said. "All they need is a warehouse." In the seven months that preceded the first Predator strike, Yemeni and Saudi operatives cooperated to track Qaeda targets, but key Qaeda leaders, like Mr. Ahdal, are still at large in Yemen.

# Hawks poised to pick Baghdad's bones

ATHENS  
By LINDA HEARD

The United Nations was guilty of un-professionalism last week, and that is putting it politely. While it operates ostensibly as an international body, representing the interests of its member states, the alacrity with which it handed over the original 12,000-page Iraqi report on its weapons of mass destruction (or lack of them) to the U.S. was almost indecent.

Nations such as Syria and Norway did express outrage at this blatant favoritism but their voices were soon drowned out. What would the reaction have been if, say, China or Russia had received the document one full day before the other permanent members of the Security Council?

Strangely, Washington condemned the report as being full of holes even before its experts had had the opportunity to turn back its covers. Although, White House spokespersons such as Secretary of State Colin Powell, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage and even George Bush himself have reiterated on numerous occasions that war is not inevitable and all that Iraq has to do is abide by Resolution 1441, American actions tell a completely different tale.

The Pentagon has shipped tens of thousands of American troops and equipment to its two bases in the Qatari desert where it has been conducting 'war games'. Reports out of northern Iraq indicate that the U.S. military is already working with Kurdish militias, and Washington is pushing Recip Tayyip Erdogan, leader of Turkey's ruling AKP Party, for the use of Turkish bases and airspace during any upcoming conflict.

**Membership carrot**

America went as far as holding out the carrot of EU membership to Turkey in return for cooperation over Iraq, but this backfired with EU Commissioner Chris Patten suggesting that perhaps the EU should reciprocate by offering Mexico

membership of the U.S.. This is not a view taken by Prime Minister Tony Blair who is known for constant kowtowing to America's diktats and support of its Iraq policy.

Both Blair and the Bush regime are anxious to find fault with the Iraqi government, which, thus far, hasn't put a foot wrong as far as the inspectors are concerned. On the contrary, it has extended itself to ensure smooth, hassle-free inspections.

However, during a routine visit to an Iraqi centre for communicable disease control last Friday, there was a slight hiccup caused by a few locked doors.

The American media immediately launched into a feeding frenzy. It was 'breaking news' on all networks. They made it sound so sinister that employees of the centre were, no doubt, enjoying their weekend and had taken the keys to their offices home with them.

**Fabricated scenario**

As anyone who lives in the Arab world would attest, it would have been even stranger if the inspectors had found every office open on Islam's holy day. After a flurry of telephone calls, someone turned up with a hand drill and it was a case of all's well that ends well. It isn't hard to imagine some of the Washington hawks muttering, 'Aw shucks. Foiled again' in response.

It is hardly surprising that Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz and other Iraqi officials have made statements to the effect that the current inspections are nothing but a sham, a fabricated scenario destined to eventually provide the pretext for a U.S. attack.

In the meantime, the US military is all set to receive vaccinations for smallpox - a deadly and virulent disease, which has long been eradicated from the face of the earth. American first responders have the option of being vaccinated too and George W Bush has 'heroically' offered to stand alongside his men and women in uniform and submit to the jab.

Israelis too are lining up for smallpox

vaccinations and equipping themselves with gas masks.

An assessment prepared by Paul Jabber for the U.S. National Intelligence Council in December last year, suggests: "... if Saddam is to be dislodged by military force, a massive air campaign will need to be mounted that will bear the major burden of destroying Iraq's military assets, internal security apparatus, and installations that are known or suspected of having WMD potential.

"Clearly, such a campaign runs the risk of inflicting serious collateral damage on the civilian population and the country's economic infrastructure. Perhaps more ominously, it may unleash lethal biological, chemical or nuclear agents locally and regionally in the course of destroying them."

Six Iraqi opposition groups seemingly care little about the devastating effect that a full-scale war might have on their countrymen and, instead, are eagerly preparing for a Saddam-free Iraq. Their combined future role was discussed in a London hotel last weekend.

In the Iraqi capital, the long-suffering people are almost resigned to the thought of an imminent war. Most are fatalistic. The middle-aged have survived wars with Iran and Kuwait and the young have lost educational opportunities and witnessed the death of their children and siblings due to 10 years of punishing U.S./UK-led sanctions. If the Bush administration has its way, their suffering is far from being over.

After a catalogue of failures, the U.S. is still trying to come up with a link between the Iraqi regime and Al Qaida. Bush recently claimed that top Al Qaida lieutenant Abu Mosaab Al Zarkawi - who Germany says heads up Al Qaida's European operation - was a patient in a Baghdad hospital and now operates out of Iraq.

There have also been unsubstantiated accounts in American newspapers that Iraq has sold large quantities of VX nerve agent to Al Qaida members. The various articles were jam-packed with innuendo, statements

from anonymous officials and lacked any credible substance.

**Occupation**

But with war with Iraq now looming large on the cards, the Bush administration isn't one to rest on its laurels. It is already setting up a post-Iraqi occupation war plan, which could involve Iran.

Already accusations are flying out of Washington that Iran has built two suspicious nuclear facilities, although Mohammed Al Baradei, Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, has explained that he has known about these constructions for some time and has been invited to view them early next year.

Naturally, once General Tommy Franks, Commander in Chief of the U.S. Central Military Command, and his merry band are ensconced in Iraq, they will be perfectly positioned to set their sights on 'freeing' the Iranian people too. Secretary of State Colin Powell is working the psychological front and he indicated that it was the U.S. policy to assist in democratising the region.

Ironically, North Korea, which openly admits to having a nuclear weapons' programme is not being aggressed by Washington. After America's recent stoppage of fuel shipments to the North and the recent debacle over the illegal seizure by Spain and the U.S. of its vessel the So San, North Korea is determined to look after its own interests. Yet, despite the clear and present danger here, the Bush administration holds up the principle of negotiation as being the way forward.

**Genuine motive**

This, is, of course, the best way forward but if limiting weapons of mass destruction is the genuine motive for America's stance vis-à-vis Iraq, one can only wonder why Baghdad can look forward to bombs rather than discussion. Of course, there is one major difference here. Iraq boasts the second largest oil deposits in the world, while North Korea's claim to fame is being one of the poorest of the world's nations.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri sent a letter to Kofi Annan last Saturday pointing out that allied planes had violated Iraqi airspace on 1, 141 occasions between November 9 and December 6. Sabri's appeal is destined to fall on deaf ears.

Due in part to the Bush administration's bellicosity, the world is becoming ever more hostile. The Clinton White House looks positively benign in retrospect. Those were the days of South Korea's Sunshine Policy,

willingness on the part of Israelis and Palestinians to implement the Oslo Accords, and amicable dialogue with Tehran.

Iraq was then hopeful of getting the sanctions lifted and rejoining the world community and Western economies were booming. What a difference just two short years can make. For some it's the difference twixt life and death.

Linda S. Heard is a writer on Middle East affairs.

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A Canadian in Yemen

# A letter to Santa Claus

**D**ear Santa, As Christmas is now upon much of the world, and you're the man who gives so much, it's time again to write you my annual letter.

First, thanks for last year's gift, the Gulliver's Travels book. It was a great read. I enjoyed the Houyhnhnms, those horse-like characters. They're so bright. So noble. And those savage Yahoos. So dim. So lost. Poor Gulliver couldn't see himself in them. But Gulliver was a world traveler. Like you Santa. So, as you go on your annual trip around the world on this



Thomas Froese

Dec. 24, take a good look. It seems to me distribution problems down here are getting worse.

Start with my street here in Yemen. Soccer, or 'futbal' as they call it, is all that Middle East kids love. The boys in the hood here play in front of our place all the time. Their ball, though, beaten and deflated as some folks here feel, looks like it's been through the war.

These kids aren't David Beckham. They won't make Time Magazine. But is anyone who kicks a ball around worth \$9 million a season? How much is that a goal? In Canada, average National Hockey League plunkers now get \$1 million to lace up their skates. And Michael Schumacher pulled in \$80 million last year. For driving his car.

There are bigger problems though. Like toilets. I don't even like to think about this. But a concern I had when arriving in Yemen this year was that Jean and I wouldn't have decent facilities. Thankfully in our home we do. But many Yemeni, especially those out in the country, are among three billion folks on Earth who don't have a pot to call their own. That's half of the world's people. What's with that?

Granted, things could be worse. It's easy to complain we don't have shoes until we see someone without feet. Yemen's neighbours in Ethiopia are running out of food. Fast. They say 15 million might die in the next months. As usual, the children will go first.

Guess they won't need toilets. Ethiopians are actually beautiful people. I've discovered that some come to impoverished Yemen for a better life. Jean and I know several. Guess poor Yemen will have to do more. Some Westerners say they apparently have something called donor fatigue. Is that kind of like free will?

It's not like there's no money. On your trip to Ethiopia, look down on nearby Djibouti. That's where the Yanks are playing war games. Keep an eye out for those Predator drone planes though. The kind that just killed some al-Qaeda suspects here in Yemen's countryside.

A new Predator goes for \$4.5 million. That's from the \$400 billion or so the US now gives its military every year. That's six times what Russia spends. Santa, it's what the next 25 countries spend combined. But hey, those Yanks need protection.

About clean water. A billion people now don't have it. But there is wine. I hear that some Canadians are

drinking a little more of it these days. Can you turn some into water? And then back again? For the Ethiopians I'd recommend a white Valle Berta Gavi from Italy. It's rich on the palate, but still crisp. Clean as a vicar's conscience.

Yeah, for some people, this Christmas kind of stinks. But you can cover the smell easy. Hugo Boss is nice for the guys. Give the ladies a more luxurious aroma, something romantic, but sophisticated for the times.

Nobody will think about Louis IX and Marie Antoinette. You know, the 18th century French royals. While their parties at Versailles were swinging, revolution outside was brewing. Eventually things exploded with a bang. That left everyone with the smell of blood. Less pleasant than frankincense for sure.

Frankincense was a valued item of trade in ancient Yemen, when this region was known as 'the ends of the earth.' You know, for the right person frankincense is still a great gift idea.

Yes, that person is you Santa. Frankincense and myrrh from the ends of the earth. Merry Christmas. Please, do enjoy it. After all, Christmas really is all about you. It's about your honour and your glory. It's about someone else's glory? Really? Folks around here don't seem to know that.

Anyway, I think this year Jean and I have all we need. We have each other, and more. But please. Teach us to be thankful every day. Teach us to be generous throughout the year. And wherever our travels may lead, please do help us all find some horse-sense so that we don't live our lives, short as they are, like a bunch of Yahoos.

Thom

Thomas Froese  
(140765@sympatico.ca)  
is a Yemen Times editor.

Old traditions are one cause of...

# Secret marriages

By ABDUH M. ASSABRI  
YEMEN TIMES STAFF  
abdusabri@yahoo.com

To elope is to secretly leave your home in order to get married, especially without other people's approval or permission.

Why elope?

The first question is, why does this phenomenon happen in our community? Yousef Naji, a specialist in sociology, points out that the main reason behind youths' elopement is the traditions and conventions that are still predominant in our community have become a stumbling block in front of the youths.

We need to look at this issue from different angles.

The first one is closely related to the parent's constant refusal to accept the husband-to-be. He, in one way or another, is perceived as a man who can't afford marriage expenses or he may belong to a low social standing.

Meanwhile, it is customary for Yemenis to intermarry with the same, family or group. It is not allowed for a person who doesn't belong to the same family or group to intermarry. This class of people are still common in our community. They consider themselves from a high social background, (Sadah) while the suitors, according to them, are of poor background.

So the parents refuse to accept the husband-to-be. There is no room for marriage arrangements and elopement is the easiest and the shortest way to get married.

Such a story occurred three years ago when a woman from Khowlan eloped with a man from Haraz. This has escalated in a very tense atmosphere between the two tribes.

The story has come up to be of pas-

sionate love-affair between the two couples. Due to the objection of the woman's family to the man mentioned, they found the solution in elopement. As a result of the mediation, the Haraz tribe has to pay YR 20 million and the other tribe has to free ten Harazi hostages.

Family long-term disputes

Sarah Ahmed, a university student, said that the motive behind elopement, which occasionally occurs in our community, is attributed to long-term family disputes. "This manifests itself when, for instance, the mother dies and the father resorts to looking for a new wife," she said.

"Girls in such cases, are marginalized by their fathers and therefore they are deprived from their fathers' love and affection. Not even a single word of love is uttered to them, the intimate family atmosphere is spoiled by the new step-mother," she further added.

Consequently fathers turn their backs. It's then when a certain kind of secret love-affair relationship grows between



lovers, which in turn paves the way for elopement.

Mustafa Ali, a student said that parents are also always turning their backs and never showing any interest towards their sons. As a result, Mustafa said, "It is easy for the eloping couples to establish love-affair relationship. In this case, it is easy for the eloping couples to get married."

We in this case don't oppose the young couples from establishing love-affair relationship. We therefore refer to the motives behind the eloping phenomenon that has been still common in our community.

Elopement is perceived as scandalous by some people, while other sees it a good opportunity to get married, particularly when there is no way except to elope.

Psychological studies indicate that the motive for eloping is that the very concept of elopement seems romantic. Sometimes the heart whispers the emphatic desire to be married.

When a relationship has been growing properly, nothing says, "I love you" like the thought of eloping. Eloping couples

find they can express their individual style in a small, private love-affair.

Eloping is not strange

Eloping is not a strange thing for us. We perhaps heard and see similar stories occur from time to time in our community. A similar eloping phenomenon has occurred when I was on a holiday during the Eid vacation when a 14-year girl and 16-year boy have eloped and never come back. No one knows what his or her destination is.

This perhaps reminds us of the old movies, where an impetuous groom procured a ladder beneath the window of his true love's bedroom window and whisked her away for an otherwise forbidden wedding ceremony.

Other places in the world see that elopement is meaningful. Just because elopement appears impetuous doesn't mean that marriage is unimportant.

On the contrary, elopement addresses the great value a couple places on becoming a husband and wife.

At the same context, many couples have invested years in relationship that leads to a simple elopement. Thus, the term appears to be affordable. It takes little time.

For some modern couples, a meaningful and romantic elopement may be the only opportunity to be wed.

An elopement doesn't automatically exclude others. Sometimes close friends witness the ceremony. Often parents are present to give their blessings. Nothing prevents a couple from hosting a small meal following the ceremony or a festive reception when they return from their honeymoon.

So I wonder, is elopement right for you? If "yes," then congratulations!

## MUS'ID & MUS'IDA

First Ever Yemeni Radio Series published in a newspaper



Written by  
Abdurahman Mutahhar

36



Translated by  
Janet Watson



### Marriage for the sake of inheritance

**OM** - The Yemeni philosopher said, 'I was troubled today.

We raised her and brought her up, but someone else claims her.

When death overtakes me, he'll come to cut up my wealth.'

**Ma** - Yes, exactly! 'When death overtakes me, he'll come to cut up my wealth.' But there's more to it, Mus'id.

'You took care to bring her up, You who call her, "My loved one!"

They can make you bow your head in shame and bring about calamity!'

**M** - I don't know about that one, but I do want to talk to you about that first saying which concerns men getting married simply in order to get their hands on the woman's inheritance.

**Ma** - That happens all the time! If we were to tell you about my brother-in-law, for example, you'd laugh yourself silly!

**M** - Go on!

**Ma** - Very well! When my mother died, God rest her soul, all the family and in-laws came along to carry the bier. After everyone had paid their respects and the mourning was over, that brother-in-law of ours came up all of a fluster, wanting us to work out how much the deceased had left. He said he knew how much his wife's share was worth and what she would inherit from her mother. I told him he didn't need to worry, because the legacy was huge! There was land, two villas let out to foreigners, two old houses in the Old City, and I thought she had around seven or eight million in the bank. I told him Mus'id was the executor, and that he should go to see you to find out exactly how much his wife's share would be.

**M** - He did come to see me, Mus'ida, and I told him that the legacy of the deceased was a coral necklace, ten gold pieces, a sheepskin wrap and an old waistcoat, and that that was all to be shared out between the two sisters and their brother. The brother let his sisters have everything, and they each took five gold pieces. That left the coral necklace, the

sheepskin wrap and the counterpane between two sisters.

**Ma** - Well, I then saw him when he'd taken the sheepskin wrap and the counterpane, saying that they were his wife's share, and that I should take the coral necklace.

**M** - Goodness me, Mus'ida, he must have been crazy!

**Ma** - Don't worry yourself, I was even crazier than him! I snatched the sheepskin wrap from him and told him to take the counterpane and the coral necklace. The sheepskin wrap was not going to leave that house and I was not going to let go of it! It's the only proper piece of inheritance we have left.

**M** - How right you were! That sheepskin wrap is an example of a local Yemeni handicraft which is no longer carried out. The problem is that shepherds in the villages are no longer concerned about sheep, and our sons today haven't got it into their heads that sheep with their milk, skin and wool are a source of income and an essential part of self-reliance. Worse than that is that your brother-in-law,

your sister's husband, was just waiting for the angel of death to throttle your poor mother so that he could inherit the sheepskin wrap on behalf of his wife and go and deprive us of the last example of traditional local industry that we have. But God was merciful when you kept the wrap for yourself, Mus'ida, and that'll serve as an example for anyone who decides to go back to this type of traditional Yemeni handicraft. The Yemeni proverb goes, 'If you lose your cover, you deserve to be cold!' And the Yemeni song goes,

'My friend, if your family quarrel with you, take your wrap and come over to me!'

Aqwal, ps. 61, 69.

Aqwal, p. 61. Typically for Ali ibn Zayid, the original is cryptic and leaves much unsaid. The intended meaning is that girls need to be brought up correctly if parents are to avoid later problems.

Continued from back page

## Wadi Khabb ...

During Spring, the sun is made milder by thick clouds. Everywhere, people were sitting on the roofs, as if on terraces, and were talking to one another. Thousands of dates were drying on the roofs. The night hid the murmur of a thousand prayers, and thousand of memories were kept. Countless marriages were performed after Eid alFitr celebration.

In the past, long caravans came past here. Wadi Khabb was a very important

station, a stopover, on the incense trail. Caravans knew that for weeks, and months, they had to proceed in the same direction, from Mareb to Najran and onwards, confront the same perils, live, eat and pray, enjoy, grieve, and sometimes die together. They eased to be strangers to each other - no vice remained hidden, no artifice could last. With the passing of caravans they accumulated riches and knowledge, or per-

haps only a story, anecdote, a word, or greeting. They saw passing through different peoples, merchants, notables, students, or ulama.

Countless palm gardens were once more full of delicious tender fruit, the dates. From their watch towers once so high, most of them remain in tact. Flat-topped towers, sand-like castles are hidden among dense palm groves and flowering orchards, and lush green fields, whose fertile soils have been cultivated by the man since time immemorial. Here every day seems identical from dawn to dusk.

Houses are of the same colors of the sand and have a contrasting explosion of colors from inside. When prayers are fin-

ished conversation begins. During the afternoons visiting begins, recognizing each other worth. It will be the same tomorrow and every day. The sun is about to burst behind the mountains. Incense burners release fragrant whisper of smoke, and sweetened the drinking water.

Wadi Khabb, the oasis of life, once stopover for caravans passing from Mareb en route to Najran, on the ancient trade route from India, offers outstanding architecture, no one building seems the same, palm groves, row of palm trees, an unique island civilization in the middle of vast sea of sand and rock.

The scent of old Arabia is here: a mixture of triumph and personal sadness, and feeling of pleasure after its absence. What

is the sweetest thing in creation is being asked. The sweetest thing is love from the heart, am told.

Towards the east palm groves soon fade into sands and the luxuriness of Wadi Khabb quickly vanishes. Behind is the realm of sand, wind and drought. Lost in the silence are the steps the sand dunes roll away. Great grandeur, full moon, edge of Empty Quarter across the field of dead grass and a coastline of sand along the horizon.

Modern times are different:

They have to do something about issues such as hopes, dreams, justice, respect and inclusion of opportunities, cooperation and exchange.

To open us means to choose the path of

knowledge.

In case of Wadi Kabb it would be most important to tap their emotional energy in order to get their commitment and pride for modern Yemen. Further due to its good geographical location between Mareb and Najran besides building of essential infrastructure and provision of services creation of an investment atmosphere would be of special interest. Some of the projects and or undertaking: marketing of agricultural products, dates, vegetables, corns and citrus, packaging plants for dates and fruits, bottling plants for water and juices. There is plenty of pure water, improvement of irrigation systems and vocational education.

Secretary General of the NPC highlights recent conference

# Yemen's development slowed by population explosion

**Y**emen's National Population Policy Conference is held periodically to help raise awareness among the public of Yemen's population crisis. It also brings attention to national programs, resources and foreign assistance to deal with the issue. The conference also shares information with other countries with similar conditions. To help understand recommendations of the recent 3<sup>rd</sup> National Population Conference, Israel al-Ghaberi interviewed Mr. Ameen Maroof al-Janad, the Secretary General of the National Population Council. Following is an edited transcript of their conversation.

**Q: How do you evaluate the recent 3<sup>rd</sup> National Population Conference held in Sana'a?**  
**A:** We can say that participants in the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Population Conference in Sana'a received information on the cultural, social, and economic level. As you may know, at 3.7% growth, Yemen's annual population rise is among the highest in the world. This increase is hindering Yemen's efforts to cope with the rest of the developing world. Reduction of population growth rate is essential for Yemen's development. In this respect, observers have noticed unprecedented reactions over the conference's axis. That can be

clearly seen through exchanges of opinions and interjections made by participants, which seem to have taken into account. These axes have positively reflected the keen interests of participants in order to engage starting-points in the process of the population plan, which in turn could serve other social classes. The results of the three conference's axis discussed and reviewed by participants during the conference have showed the successes, failures and future visions for the population policy. This has also deepened the notion of scientific methods to implement and find a comprehensive understanding of the national commitment for the material and technical requirements.

**Q: Do you think that the conference has achieved tangible success?**  
**A:** Holding recent conference in Sana'a is of great importance to review the long-term population issues in Yemen. Orientation towards the population challenges is one of the successes achieved by the conference. The main factor of success can be attributed to the president's patron and the constant efforts made by the prime minister and the minister of the public health and population in order to make a success of such conferences.

**Q: What are the main recommen-**



Mr. Ameen Maroof al-Janad

**dations of this recent conference?**  
**A:** The conference has come up with a number of recommendations revolving around the legislative and institutional arrangements with emphasis on supporting the secretariat-general for the national population council, along with widening its administrative and technical body. A great stress has been also placed to review some of laws and legislation in accordance with the population policy within the framework of the platform of the political parties. In addition to this, participants also focused on enhancing the necessity to make collective efforts together with

governmental and non-governmental bodies in the context of raising awareness of the population issues and preparing a network supervised by the secretariat-general to reactivate interjections mentioned in the population work plan. During the conference, participants have recommended to qualify the technical and scientific competency for the Yemeni researchers in the related field along with enhancing the statistical bodies and the population information systems in this regard.

**Q: What is role of the cabinet's new law to include population studies as a school subject?**  
**A:** The cabinet's decision to include the subject of population studies in the education curricula and the Yemeni universities is a major concern entrusted to the education ministry and the ministry of higher education, and a host of eminent professors in accordance with the population policy.

What has been achieved so far cannot be measured by other productive institutions.  
**Q: How do you evaluate the work of National Population Council during the last 10 years?**  
**A:** The secretariat-general has achieved plans and programs where the national strategy is the first strategy to be implemented, in order to cover the 10-year period starting from 1990 to 2000.

In addition to this, the secretariat-general has prepared also a new population policy for the term 2001-2005, issued in four official documents under the following headings:  
 1) Problems and challenges.  
 2) Principles and objectives.  
 3) The population Work Plan, (2001-2005).

Pursuance mechanism document in collaboration with the executive bodies where the secretariat-general has been entrusted with providing them with the necessary information plans and programs. It has also taken a keen interest in raising the population awareness through direct contact with the people through the media. This direct contact has helped a lot to raise public awareness of the great significance of the reproductive health and birth planning which has been marginalized in the rural areas and some neighborhoods in the main cities particularly those

who have low-paid incomes. In the same context, the National Population Conference has taken into account recent regional national and international developments as well as the challenges of the third millennium. It is also in full compliance with all national efforts towards comprehensive development within the context of the National Strategic Vision for sustainable developments until the year 2005. The National Population Conference lends itself as an appropriate means for integrating population concerns into Five-Year Development Plan, (2001-2005). Accordingly, use has been made of previous socio-economic and population studies including the final results of the 1994 population census, health and demographic surveys and population projections which have all dealt analytically with population issues and their relationship with development and the environment.

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## Summertime birth linked with celiac disease: Study

**N**EW YORK (Reuters Health) - Children born in the summertime have a greater risk of developing celiac disease, new study findings from Sweden show, suggesting that the disease may be due to some sort of seasonal environmental exposure. Celiac disease affects the small intestine, interfering with the absorption of nutrients from food. People with the disease can't tolerate a protein called gluten found in wheat, rye and barley. While genetics are believed to play a role in celiac disease, the specific genes involved have not been identified. Experts don't know why some people develop celiac disease, which usually lasts a person's lifetime.

The illness is of concern because gluten-containing cereals "are an important part of the diet in many countries," lead author Dr. A. Ivarsson of Umea University and colleagues write in the current report in the December issue of the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health. In the current investigation, Ivarsson and colleagues studied 2,151 children 15 or younger who were diagnosed with celiac disease to determine if the risk of the disease varied with month of birth. Compared to Swedish children without celiac disease, those diagnosed with celiac disease were 40% more likely to be born during a summer month. But this seasonal variation was only seen among children diagnosed with the disorder before they

were 2 years old. While more girls than boys had the disease, the seasonal risk pattern was more pronounced among boys, the researchers found. The relative seasonal risk persisted throughout the 10-year study, although the incidence of the disease varied throughout that period. "This suggests causal environmental exposure(s) with a seasonal pattern," the authors write, noting that the cause could be some type of infection, or perhaps the interaction of an infection with other exposures, although a non-infectious exposure could also be responsible. "Primary prevention might be possible if these causal exposure are identified."

## Study reveals why pregnant women snore

**L**ONDON (Reuters Health) - Pregnant women have narrower upper airways than other women, which might explain why they are more likely to snore, a new study reveals. The investigation of 137 women was carried out by doctors at the Edinburgh Sleep Center. They found that the upper airways narrow when women are in their third trimester of pregnancy. Women with preeclampsia, a potentially life-threatening pregnancy complication, had even narrower airways. The researchers, led by Professor Neil Douglas, said at a recent British Thoracic Society meeting that changes in the upper airway could contribute to increased blood pressure for women with preeclampsia. "Snoring is common in pregnancy and snoring pregnant women have increased

rates of preeclampsia," they noted. Preeclampsia affects up to 5% of first-time pregnancies and is a major cause of maternal and fetal illness and death. Risk factors include age, a previous history of the condition, diabetes and kidney disease. A pregnant woman with the condition may develop dangerously high blood pressure and begin excreting protein in the urine. To assess the significance of snoring in the development of preeclampsia, researchers recruited 50 women in the third trimester of pregnancy, 50 non-pregnant women and 37 women already diagnosed with preeclampsia. Using a technique called acoustic reflection, the investigators measured the dimensions of each patient's upper airway. The results showed airways were narrower in pregnant women than in those not expecting babies and narrower yet in women with preeclampsia. They also

showed that three out of four women affected by the condition snored in their sleep, compared with 28% of pregnant women and 14% of non-pregnant women. "These changes could contribute to the increased snoring in pregnancy and to the upper airways resistance episodes during sleep in preeclampsia, which may further increase blood pressure," the researchers report. Mike Rich, spokesman for the lobby group Action on Preeclampsia, said the results were interesting but stressed that snoring alone was not the cause of preeclampsia. "Preeclampsia is caused by a restriction in the development of the arteries and veins between the placenta and the mother's body. This develops in the first trimester of pregnancy," Rich said. "Snoring may have a peripheral impact but it's unlikely to cause preeclampsia because it will already be there," he added.

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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 ).

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- 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.

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# Horoscope

by Boadachia

- Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)**  
 A younger person should be on your mind or taking up your time. You will be highly energetic and have a lot to offer others. Self-improvement projects will be successful and enhance your appeal. 5 stars
- Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22)**  
 You need to help others if you want to feel good about yourself. Your ability to help by being a spokesperson for those less fortunate will earn you great satisfaction and praise. 4 stars
- Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)**  
 Expect to have problems with family members. Don't allow harsh words to upset you. Try to avoid overspending or you will create a lot of stress for yourself in the New Year. 2 stars
- Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)**  
 Keep in mind that others will judge you on your ability to be professional and handle yourself well under pressure. Don't blow it now by being critical or judgmental. 2 stars
- Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20)**  
 You will enjoy getting together with friends to share a little reminiscing as well as catch up on the latest gossip. New romantic ties will develop if you are receptive. 4 stars
- Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)**  
 Someone with a unique and powerful mystique could easily mesmerize you today. Keep things in perspective before you do something foolish. Infatuations must be avoided at all costs. 5 stars
- Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)**  
 Be careful where you leave your possessions or cash. Don't believe everything children tell you. Do some investigating of your own so you can get to the truth. 3 stars
- Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)**  
 Don't let a family member talk you into investing in a scheme. Just listen and decline politely. Do not overextend yourself financially regardless of the situation. 3 stars
- Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22)**  
 You need to take a long, hard look at yourself and start to make the changes necessary to feel good about the way you look. Get into a routine and put in the effort to get the results. Consider enlisting a friend to get involved. 2 stars
- Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)**  
 Social events will promote new connections. If you join organizations you believe in, you'll meet people who can help you get ahead. You will be inspired to follow your dreams. 3 stars
- Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)**  
 Problems will surface if you have to deal with institutions. Work on things you have control over. Be careful not to overdo it or to make promises that you can't keep. 3 stars
- Pisces (February 19 - March 20)**  
 Put in a few extra hours in order to tie loose ends. You will be able to put your creative flair to work for you. You will leave a lasting impression. 3 stars

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- Other tasks as may be assigned by the Senior Machinery Operating Engineer.

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للسفريات، ت: ١١١١٢٢٢، صبا، ٧١١١٣٧٤

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٢٧٢٤٥٢, ٢٧١٨٢١, ٢٧١٨٢٢, ٢٧٩٥٩٤  
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**سيارات**  
مختار عبده الدغيث: ثانوية عامة، دبلوم تقني (صيانة سيارات - خفيفة وثقيلة)، يجيد اللغة الانجليزية كتابة ونطقاً، عن ت: ٧٢٣٥١٣٥٧

د. مصطفى: طبيب خريج جامعة عدن ٩٢، خبرة ٧ اعوام في الأمراض الباطنية وطب الاطفال، يرغب في العمل في مستشفى او مستوصف خاص في اي محافظة على ان يتقن خاص في اي التخصصات، وان يكون عقد العمل لمدة ٦ اشهر مبدئياً، فاكس: ٠١/٣٨١٥٦

عبد اللطيف حسن المعصري: خريج ثانوية عامة قسم علمي، يجيد اللغة الانجليزية كتابة ونطقاً، ويجيد استخدام الحاسوب، ولديه خبرة في مجال التجارة في البيع والشراء لمدة ٨ سنوات، عن ٢٨٢٢١٧

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**عصام عبد الله الجاسي**  
بمناسبة الخطوبة وقرب الزفاف

**الف مبروك**  
والف مبروك  
يوسف محمد علي، طالب علي، مترجم، موظف استقبال، منسق علاقات، بكالوريوس الاسود، ت: ٧١٢٨٨٧٣

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شركة رائدة في مجال التجارة والتسويق تطل عن حاجتها لسكرتيرة تجيد استخدام الكمبيوتر طباعة عربي/الانجليزي، والانترنت، واللغة الانجليزية، ولديها خبرة لا تقل عن ٢ سنوات. للاستفسار: ٧٢٢١٤٢٤١

يعلم معهد توب سنتر - صنعاء، عن حاجته الى مدرسي لغة وكمبيوتر وسكرتيرة تنفيذية بخبرات سابقة ومؤهل جامعي كل في مجاله، وخبرة لا تقل عن سنتين والاولوية للطلبيين في اللغة الانجليزية في المحادثة المدير العام/ م. احمد نعمان، رئيس مجلس الادارة الشيخ/ عبده شمسان. ٧٢٨١٥٤٩ فاكس: ٥٠١٧٠٦ - صنعاء - حدة

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Room Rate Includes Breakfast, Taxes and Entrance Ticket

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TAJ SHEBA HOTEL  
SANA'A YEMEN



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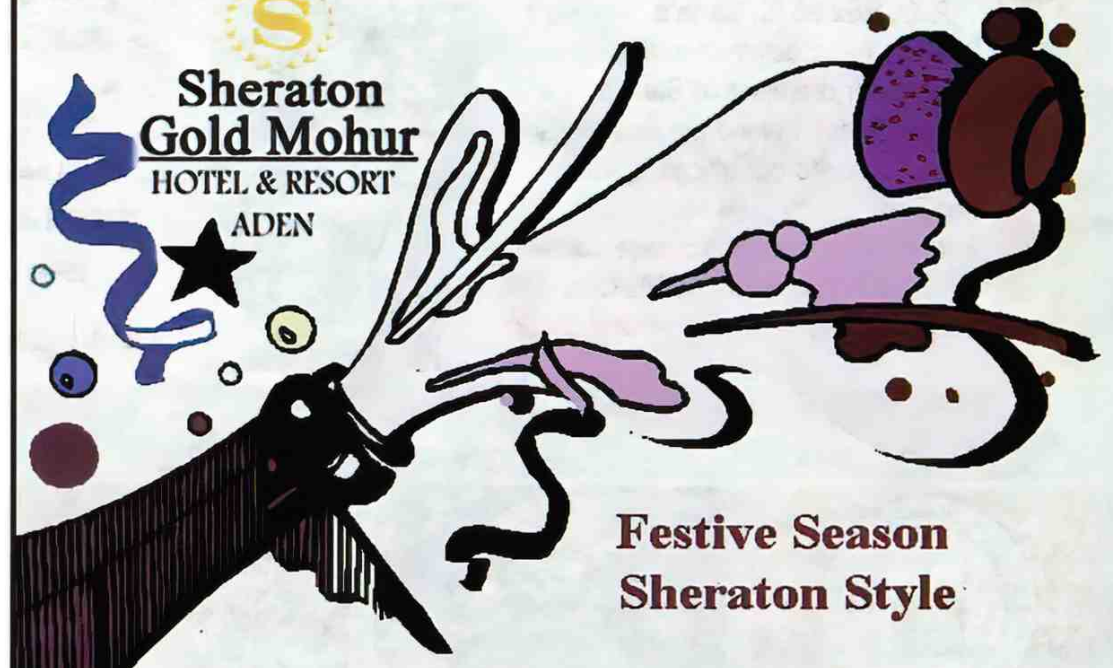








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**Sunday December 18**  
Join us - For "Christmas Tree Lighting" at the Lobby along with Christmas Choir, a homemade cookie & Mullet Wine  
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المائدة  
أصل المكرونة .. مكرونة المائدة

**Instructions**  
Answer all the questions and fill the necessary information.  
Tear the coupon and send it to:  
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زينة  
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# YEMEN TIMES

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Yemen Airways  
خطوط اليمن



**SUZUKI YEMEN**  
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أطلب دائما الأصلي... أطلب دائما اليمني  
الشركة اليمنية الأهلية لتصنيع الزيت والسمن (ش.م.ي)  
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**القمرية**  
ماتم بيتاشين (أ.أ.و.د.)  
KAMARIA



**بنك اليمن والخليج**  
Yemen Gulf Bank  
Tel. 967-1-260823, Fax: 260824 E-mail: ygbank@y.net.ye Website: www.yg-bank.com

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Member of Thabet Brothers Group  
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**فندق تاج سبأ**  
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**الشركة اليمنية المطاحن وصناعة البقالة**  
YCFMS  
Yemen Company for Flour Mills & Sweets



لو خيروني... باختر الهنا



**القمرية**  
ماتم بيتاشين (أ.أ.و.د.)  
تحتي الأصالة  
صافي



**أصيل... والطعم هو الدليل**



**كوار**  
الفنار  
حلاوة طليعية  
من المصنع الخاص

**أسئلة المسابقة للعدد ٥٢**

**Check the right answer**

- The late Hayel Saeed Ana'am prize at the 5th session, 2001-literary creativity was won by
  - Abdulkareem al-Razhi
  - Mohammed Muthana
  - Arwa Abdo Othman
- The famous German writer and winner of 1999 Nobel Prize in literature, who visited Yemen lately is:
  - Gunter Grass
  - Marquize
  - Adonis
- One of these products is not listed in the Saffi Ghee products competition:
  - Al-Qamaria Ghee
  - Al-bent Azzarqa Ghee
  - Attabbakh cooking oil
- Which one of the following is the first biscuits in Yemen and one of products of Hayel Saeed Ana'am Company Group:
  - Strawberry yogurt
  - Apple yogurt
  - Mango yogurt
- Al-Maeda Spaghetti is one of the products of:
  - Hayel Saeed Ana'am companies
  - Thabet Bros. Companies
  - Derthem Companies
- The three ATM cards introduced by Yemen Gulf Bank to its valuable customers are:
  - Golden, Silver, & Bronze.
  - Platinum, Golden, & Silver.
  - Golden, Silver & Blue classic
- Yemen Gulf Bank has introduced three ATM cards to their valuable customer...
  - Golden Silver & Bronze
  - Platinum, Golden & Silver
  - Golden, Silver & Blue Classic.
- Where is the headquarters office in Yemen of Videocon Co. for household appliances located:
  - Azera'a Street.
  - Al-Qyada Street.
  - Al-Hasaba Street.
- The famous Italian Glem Gas cookers are produced in Italy since
  - 1959
  - 1995
  - 1970
- When was the Red Sea Contracting and Construction Company (S.Y.C.) established?
  - 1976
  - 1977
  - 1978
- What is the abbreviated name of Red Sea Contracting and Construction Company (S.Y.C.)?
  - Redco
  - Greenco
  - Blueco
- Where is the headquarters of Suzuki-Yemen, member of Bamaarof Group located?
  - Hodiedah
  - Aden
  - Sana'a
- أختر الإجابة الصحيحة
  - ٧- يقدم بنك اليمن والخليج لعملاء ثلاثة أنواع من البطاقات ATM:
    - ذهبية، فضية و برونزية
    - بلاتينيوم، فضية وذهبية
    - ذهبية، فضية، أزرق كلاسيكي
  - ٨- أين يقع المركز الرئيسي لشركة فيديوكون للأجهزة المنزلية:
    - شارع الزعارة
    - شارع القيادة
    - شارع الحصبة
  - ٩- طماخات جدم غاز الإيطالية الشهيرة تنتج في إيطاليا منذ:
    - ١٩٥٩
    - ١٩٩٥
    - ١٩٧٠
  - ١٠- متى تأسست شركة البحر الأحمر للبناء والمقاولات (ش.م.ي.)؟
    - ١٩٧٦
    - ١٩٧٧
    - ١٩٧٨
  - ١١- ما الاسم المختصر لشركة البحر الأحمر للبناء والمقاولات (ش.م.ي.)؟
    - ريدكو
    - جرين كو
    - بلو كو
  - ١٢- أين يقع مقر سوزوكي اليمن-عضو مجموعة بامعروف؟
    - الحديدة
    - عدن
    - صنعاء




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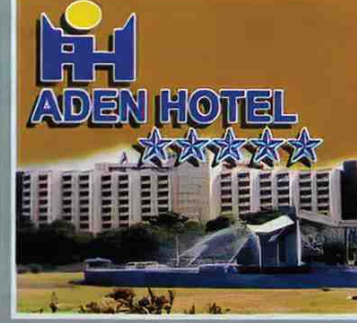
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*A journey of colours*

# Wadi Khabb is Yemen's oasis

BY IRENA KNEHTL FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Situated on the western edge of the forbidding sands of the Rub AlKhali, an hour drive from Najran, and two hours from Hazem in the Al Jawf governorate, surrounded on its other three sides by rugged granite cliffs, is the Wadi Khabb. It stands at the confluence of the Wadi, mountains, and sands, whose fertile soils have been cultivated by man since time immemorial. It is a rich, beautiful and fertile valley with ancient history, where traditional skills and styles of living have survived into harsh modern era.

the Wadi Khabb Valley has for thousands of years formed a garden retreat of great natural beauty and wealth, where traditional clay houses lie hidden among the dense palm groves, flowering orchards, and lush green fields. It has been recorded as calm and prosperous region during the time of the Himiyar civilization. Roman legionaries under Aelius Gallus attempted to capture it during the reign of Augustus Caesar.

**Fertility and architecture**

Traditional clay houses are surrounded by luxuriant palm groves. Each of these houses is a kind of domestic fortress as much as nine stories high whose tapering, flat-topped towers are crowned with ornately molded crenella-



Some of Yemen's most fertile land is in the Wadi Khabb.



Irena Knehtl with some Yemeni children.

tions. Sand-castle like, they are not built to a single rigid design, but have their own individual form.

In the past they served also as effective fortifications. But they retain a warmth and softness – a homeliness that accounts for their unique aesthetic appeal. The thick clay walls provide an exceptional coolness, and the air of tranquility of the interiors enhanced by diffused light that filters through strained-glass windows, surrounded by green fields, and orange groves. Serene towers are rising naturally out of the earth, they were made in the midst of green palm groves.

During another trip, Wadi Khabb was in full flood, and behind the long glitter-

ing sweep of the palm with soft dark clouds, hanging over the mountains in the background capturing the play of light and shade. The shelters of their inaccessible mountains were shared with eagles, their companions in dignity.

Countless little dishes were pressed upon us, dates in all varieties, shapes and tastes, starting with date juice, date fetta, and date bread, and biscuits, but also almonds, nuts, dried and fresh fruits as from the time immemorial when there was joy in living and glory and dying. Wadi was covered in a veil of peace and serenity which nothing seems to be able to destroy as if created for eyes, limbs and heart.

Continued on page 14

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