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Sana'a declaration revealed following the conclusion of Sana'a Inter-governmental conference:

Conference calls for democracy, criticizes occupation

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Sana'a Inter-Governmental Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court was concluded on Monday with the Sana'a Declaration, which called for greater democracy and human rights, but which also criticized occupation, implicitly meaning US occupation of Iraq, and Israeli occupation in Palestine.

Democracy and human rights promoted

"The participants therefore agree to... Strengthen and protect human rights, including people's fundamental rights to express their views and adhere to their religious beliefs and ethnic identity" it said.

The declaration added that "democracy and human rights, which have their origins in faith and culture, are interdependent and inseparable;" and concentrated.

Occupation slammed

The conference participants slammed occupation in more than one place in the declaration. In the part mentioning the principles agreed upon by participants, the declaration said that participants agreed on the need to overcome "potential threats to the form and substance of democracy, including foreign occupation, imbalances in the international justice system, the concentration and abuse of power".

The declaration also stated that "Occupation is contrary to international law and basic human rights. There should be an end to occupation of Arab territories and all holy Islamic and Christian sites."

There was also a special emphasis on Palestinians' rights in mentioning



A group photo of participants in the Sana'a Conference, which was concluded with the Sana'a Declaration supporting human rights and democracy

that there should be "an end to all violations of human rights, in particular in Palestine, and ensuring the civil and political rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and their right of return according to international resolutions;"

Emphasis on international justice

There was also a specific focus on the International Criminal Court and international justice in general. In its 8th article, the declaration said that participants agreed to "strengthen the role of international judicial institutions, as an important element towards promoting respect for international law and human rights law, including

the International Criminal Court;"

The conference called for the ratification and implementation of the ICC in Yemen, in the region, and the world.

Elections emphasized

The issue of elections and elected bodies was also emphasized in the declaration. In its agreed principles, the declaration stated that "the basics of democratic systems are reflected in periodically elected legislatures, representing the citizens in a fair way and ensuring their full participation."

The declaration also expressed the participants' agreement to "strengthen democracy and pluralism and the establishment of elected legislative bodies to represent popular will and

assuring the fair representation of all sectors of society;"

Law enforcement

The participants have also agreed on the importance of the enforcement of the law equally on all citizens. "The effective application of the rule of law is vital to protect democracy and human rights and is the foundation for judicial independence and the application of the separation of powers;" the declaration said.

Participants also agreed on the importance of ensuring "equality before the law and equal protection under the law and fundamental fair trial guarantees;"

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First initiative of its kind proposed following Sana'a Conference

Efforts to establish first private Yemeni TV channel

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In a step considered the first of its kind, an initiative has been formulated to establish Yemen's first private TV and Radio Network in Yemen. In a press release sent to the Yemeni Media, the initiator of the channel, Sheikh Abdulqawi Ali Al-Showai said that the event coincides with the

Sana'a Inter-Governmental Regional Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court, which clearly emphasized on the importance of the freedom and privatization of the media.

"I am happy to announce our initiative for the first time to the public to establish a complete TV/Radio network. Our initiative is based on the spirit of the Yemeni constitution which supports the freedom of the media and protects the freedom of expression and opinion." Al-Showai said.

Al-Showai said that it is about time



Sheikh Abdulqawi Ali Al-Showai



Yemen follows the footsteps of Egypt and Lebanon in allowing the private sector to establish TV and Radio Channels, especially as Yemen is a pioneer in the Arab world in supporting democracy, and supported his claim by noting the Sana'a conference held during 11-12 January on democracy and human rights.

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للمشاركة إقرأ التفاصيل:

على الراغبين في المشاركة في المسابقة تعبئة الكوبون المرفق وكتابة الإجابات الصحيحة للأسئلة المنشورة في كوبون الأسئلة للعدد الماضي ومن ثم فقص الكوبون وإرفاقه مع كوبون الأسئلة وإرسالهما إلى مقر الصحيفة في صنعاء (شارع حده - خلف السفارة الفلسطينية) أو إلى مكاتب الصحيفة في عدن أو تعز أو الحديدة. كما يمكن للمشاركين إرسالها إلى بريد الصحيفة في صنعاء على عنوان (ص.ب. ٢٥٧٩ ، صنعاء). لن يتم قبول المشاركات التي ينقصها أي من الكوبونين أو التي تحوي معلومات شخصية ناقصة أو إجابات خاطئة لأي من الأسئلة المنشورة.

ستستمر المسابقة حتى مارس ٢٠٠٤ ويمكن للمشاركة أن يشارك لأكثر من مرة، وستعلن أسماء الفائزين في الصحيفة في وقت سيحدد لاحقاً، كما سيتم توزيع الجوائز في خلال أيام من إعلان النتائج. للاستفسار يمكن للمشاركين الاتصال بالصحيفة على ٢٦٨٦٦١ (٠١) في أوقات الدوام. حظاً موفقاً للجميع.....

المصداقية هي شعارنا، وثقتكم هي غايتنا، شاركوا وترقبوا أسماءكم من بين الفائزين.....

President Saleh requests fair trial of Saddam

BY MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In an interview with the Kuwaiti Al-Rai Al-Aam Newspaper, President Ali Abdullah Saleh expressed his wish for a fair trial of the former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein considering that the term Prisoner Of War (POW) used by the USA pertaining his case was correct as it represents the fact that he was facing the American and allied invasion when he was caught. He said that Saddam Hussein was arrested while fighting a foreign invasion in his capacity as the Supreme Commander of the Iraqi Armed Forces. And Hence, according to Saleh, it is only natural for them to treat him as POW, wishing from the USA to expedite pulling its

troops from Iraq and the handover of power to the Iraqi People.

In the interview, the president expressed his refusal of any partitioning of Iraq and said "We refuse any partitioning of Iraq for it is not in the interest of the country and we do not want to see any Arab country occupied."

With regard to the relations with Kuwait he declared that Kuwaiti-Yemeni relations are close and historic for more than 41 years following the revolution in Yemen. He also said that relations between the two country still remain good.

He added, "we hope that the brothers in Kuwait shall overcome the past. Yemen is known for its firm attitudes and had denounced the invasion of Kuwait by the Iraqis and the war on

Iraq by the Americans. Kuwait is a brotherly Arab country with which Yemen has no border, economic or political feuds."

The president seized the opportunity to stress that he is innocent from the false allegations attributed to him in that he advised Saddam to re-occupy Kuwait prior to the recent war on Iraq and that these are mere false and baseless rumors.

Furthermore, the Kuwaiti delegation which participated in Sana'a Interregional Conference on Democracy and Human rights concluded last Monday, stressed on the role of the International Criminal Commission in trying the former president Saddam Hussein according to the principles proclaimed by the conference.

Cabinet approves its 2004 program

The cabinet approved on Tuesday its 2004 program, which includes detailed plans for all ministries and concerned bodies on local and central levels.

The cabinet also approved a special study on the protection the Aden underground water basin. The study called for stopping any forms of agriculture and construction in the area to protect the basin from depletion and pollution.

The ministers also listened to a report on the sudden rise in prices of flour and other foodstuffs.

They authorized the Minister of Industry and Trade to take any measures in this regard based upon the cabinet's decision No. 69 for 2003.

The cabinet also discussed arrangements for Yemeni pilgrims who will perform Hajj this year.

The parliamentarians listened to a report from the Ministry of Human Rights on the condition of human rights in Yemen. Orders to concerned bodies were issued to review all measures to ensure further protections of human rights.

The cabinet also congratulated President Ali Abdullah Saleh on success of the Sana'a Regional Conference on Democracy, Human Rights, and Role of the International Criminal Court that was concluded on Monday. (Saba)

Yemen Physicians & Pharmacists syndicate, statement

Physicians & Pharmacists syndicate issued on Monday a statement addressed to its members saying although we have entered new year and despite of the regional and international events involving many lessons that we have to learn and positively deal with, in which we claim that we do understand the age and its changes. However, reality disproves our claims that we believe in democracy as a real practice and that we support the civil society organisations. Yet the reality shows that we practice a primitive totality and try to apply a kind of make up on it by media means!

The professional syndicates are unfortunately overseen by power dictates that reject the application of law, principles and relevant regulations. In this connection our syndicate, Syndicate of physicians & Pharmacists, is "seized" by the power represented by the Government, which supports ineffective and invalid administrative entities. The last general elections of the syndicate were organized in 1992. Furthermore, the syndicate's branches, above all Sana'a branch, have been invalid since 1997.

In this regard certain verdicts were issued considering these entities as illegal. Among those verdicts is that

one urging the social security authority to organize the elections in the due time, since it is the competent authority. But, what happened? The verdict was rejected by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the authorities connected hereto. Meanwhile, the Government has been continuing dealing with the incompetent entities and grants them privileges and authorizations, contrary to the applicable laws and regulations, particularly in terms of the rights of physicians and pharmacists as human beings. Hence, all institutions of the civil society are called for condemning this illegal policy in order get rid of it and achieve the creation of legal entities that can represent this social segment and defend its rights against the harms incurred by the current situation.

Basing on what has been stated above, we decided to hold congresses for the Syndicate's branches, including Sana'a branch, on Thursday, 4.3.2004. 10 AM at Al-Hikma House. The congresses will be supervised by the General Assembly of the Syndicate. Yet it is our pleasure to invite all civil & social institutions and the media representatives to attend the congresses towards supporting the syndicate and covering this event.

Teachers demand halt of governmental interference in NGOs

BY MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Yemeni Teachers Association issued on Thursday 8 January 2004, a statement in which it demanded from the government to stop meddling in the affairs of non-governmental associations and organizations. The association requested that the government leave them to manage their own affairs according to their articles of association and the regulatory laws.

The Association condemned in its statement the prevention of the Yemeni Students General Union from holding its conference at Sana'a University and expressed outrage at the arrests and pursuits of many student leaders in contradiction with the constitution and the democratic principles and attacked the allegations by the government of

being an observant of human rights and democracy.

The association called upon the Ministry of Education and the competent agencies in order to expedite the fulfillment of its demands in terms of the amelioration of the living standards and to stop all deductions from the rights and salaries of teachers which are carried out whimsically.

It finalized the statement by expressing anger against the deterioration of the living standard and the rise in prices causing further hardships to living conditions of citizens in general and teachers in particular, whose salaries are usually not enough to make ends meet.

"This requires the intervention of the government to stop the rise in prices and increase salaries in proportion with the present living conditions," teachers said.

Readers' Voice

Yemen Times is reintroducing a popular feature "Readers' Voice" - formerly known as YT Opinion Poll.

This is your opportunity to have a say on world and local affairs.

THIS EDITION'S QUESTION:

What do you expect would be the response of the public to the expected hike in prices?

- Violent demonstrations leading to victims
- Peaceful demonstrations
- No demonstrations and things will continue normally
- Let's wait and see

Do you think the Yemeni government is sincerely committed to letting the NGO sector get more involved in decision making procedures?

- No 63%
- Yes 29%
- I can't tell 8%

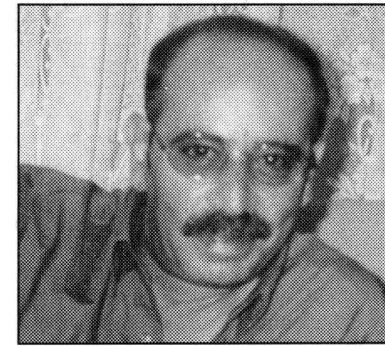
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and have your voice heard!

Journalist Ibrahim Hussein receives death threat

BY MOHAMMED BINSALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Journalist and writer Ibrahim Hussein Friday received a telephone call, threatening to ending his life at the hand of A.M. one of the YSP leaders.

This came following journalist Hussein's article on Thursday January 8 published by the 22 May weekly in which he had he discussed financial corruption of



Mr. Ibrahim Hussein

some opposition parties.

Responding to the threat Mr Hussein restricted his action to informing some newspapers on the story of threat, deeming it as a dangerous precedence by an opposition party claiming its respect for the constitution and law. He said he preserved his right to report to competent authorities and judiciary, holding the YSP responsible for any attempt against his life.

Yemeni-American pleads not guilty to U.S. charge

BUFFALO, N.Y. (Reuters) - A spokesman for the families of six Yemeni-American men who admitted attending a military-style al Qaeda training camp pleaded not guilty on Monday to charges he illegally sent millions of dollars to Yemen from his Buffalo, New York, cigarette and candy store.

Mohammed Albanna, 51, and three other men were indicted last week by U.S. prosecutors on charges that superseded those in December 2002 that accused them of sending money to Yemen, a country the U.S. suspects is a base for Islamic militants.

The recipients of the money were not identified, but prosecutors said the operation broke the USA Patriot Act, an anti-terrorism law passed after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks that requires money-transmitting companies with

overseas business to register with the U.S. government.

"The money was sent to families from here to Yemen and it did not go to terrorists," Albanna told reporters after his appearance before U.S. District Court Judge Hugh Scott in Buffalo. "It went to thousands of families."

The judge scheduled the next hearing for Feb. 23.

Albanna, a U.S. citizen, is a leader in the Yemeni-American community of Lackawanna near Buffalo on the Canadian border and often acted as spokesman for the families of the so-called "Lackawanna 6," whose case drew national attention in 2002-2003.

The six men pleaded guilty to charges of supporting the Islamic militant group al Qaeda by attending a training camp in 2001. Last month

they were sentenced to prison terms of between seven and 10 years.

Albanna's business supplies snacks and cigarettes to scores of delicatessens. He is the president of the Lackawanna Yemenite Benevolent Association.

Two members of his family, Ali A. Albanna, 29, and Ali Taher Elbaneh, 52, were indicted and also pleaded not guilty on Monday. A fourth man, identified by prosecutors as Abdul Wali Kushasha of Sanaa, Yemen, was also indicted.

The government said that between Nov. 1, 2001, and Dec. 17, 2002, about \$3.5 million was sent to Yemen. The government is seeking forfeiture of the money.

The charges carry maximum penalties of up to 10 years in prison and \$1 million in fines.



DFID would like to invite applications for the post of
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The UK Department for International Development DFID is seeking an enthusiastic self-starter to fill the position of Development Assistant. The job holder will be working under the guidance of the Head Office and direct supervision of the Development Officer. The job holder will provide full administrative cover for the country programme, including filing, general administration and will need good organisational skills.

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The starting salary for this post is US\$ 556. If you are interested in applying, please send your detailed CV along with a covering letter stating the post you wish to apply for to fax number 967 (1) 426 208. Deadline for receipt of applications is Tuesday 27 January, 2003. Please do not call us, only candidates who fulfil the job requirements will be shortlisted and contacted for an interview.

DFID is an equal opportunities employer. Applications from women and disabled people are particularly welcome.

German medical team performs 50 surgeries in Taiz

For the third consecutive week, a German medical team continued operating surgeries in Taiz governorate.

It has operated 50 surgical operations in one week at the Thawra hospital during its presence there.

Dr. Abdul Malik Al-Sayani, Al-Thawra Hospital manager in Taiz said the hospital has received 800 cases from all over the Republic, indicating that the German medical team would continue its work for the two upcoming weeks during which it will carry out general and facial plastic surgeries. It is worth mentioning that the German Medical Team belongs to the German Ahivar Association.

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Continued from page 1

Conference calls for democracy, criticizes occupation

Women's rights

The issue of gender equality was also mentioned in the declaration. In the fourth article, the participants agreed to "empower the role of women and their participation, protecting women from all forms of exploitation and any reduction of women's rights;"

Independent media

The declaration also highlighted the importance of having an independent media sector to promote democracy and human rights. "A free and independent media is essential for the promotion and protection of democracy and human rights. Pluralism in the media and its privatization is vital for

contributing to the dissemination of human rights information, facilitating informed public participation, promoting tolerance and contributing to governmental accountability."

Civil society and the private sector

Civil society was mentioned a number of times in the declaration and was considered of great importance in local governance and assisting in development. Among its main principles, the declaration stated that "Civil society should play its role responsibly within the framework of law and the principles of human rights and democracy."

Furthermore, the private sector was also mentioned as a means to promote

democracy and human rights. "The private sector is a vital partner in the strengthening of foundations of democracy and human rights; It has a responsibility to work with governments and civil society to enhance progress;" the declaration said.

Democratic dialogue promoted

The declaration also emphasized on dialogue between different entities within the same country and between entities of different countries. On this specific issue the declaration said "Cultural and religious diversity is at the core of universally recognized human rights, which should be over served in a spirit of understanding in the application of democratic and

human rights principles; this diversity should not be a source of confrontation or clashes but should be a source of dialogue and building bridges of understanding between religions and cultures;"

Arab forum created

The participants have also agreed on forming a forum called "Arab Democratic Dialogue Forum", which is meant to be "an instrument for the promotion of dialogue between diverse actors, for the strengthening of democracy and human rights and public freedoms, especially the freedom of opinion and expression, and strengthening the partnership between public authorities and civil society."

Efforts to establish first private Yemeni TV channel

"I furthermore, seize this opportunity to thank President Saleh for organizing and supporting the conference, which came out with a declaration that clearly pointed out in article (I) ensuring the importance of the freedom and privatization of the media," he added.

It is worth noting that article (I) of the Sana'a Declaration states that "free and independent media is essential for the promotion and protection of democracy and human rights. Pluralism in the media and its privatization are vital for con-

tributing to the dissemination of human rights information, facilitating informed public participation, promoting tolerance and contributing to governmental accountability. The media should contribute effectively and responsibly towards the strengthening of democracy and human rights knowledge."

According to Al-Showai, if the request to establish the channel is accepted, it would be the first time a private channel, which is to be named "Democracy Channel", will start operation just after it receives a

license from the concerned governmental authorities.

The founder believes that the government will respond positively to the request of founding the channel. "The channel will be founded on solid international standards and will be dedicated to supporting democracy in Yemen."

The press release mentioned that the channel will allocate part of its time to cover democracy-related activities and address human rights issues.

Al-Showai also mentioned that he

has high hopes and expectations that the regime in Yemen will implement the mentioned recommendation in the Sana'a Declaration and hence utilize, permit and give protection to the right of establishing free private media establishments (TV and Radio) to serve the public movement towards a more democratic country.

It's worth noting that if Yemen agrees to allow the private sector to run its own TV channels, it would be the third Arab country to do so after Lebanon and Egypt.

Taj Sheba celebrates New Year with reform school children

In a gesture of humane spirit and compassion, the Taj Sheba Hotel started the New Year last week by bringing a smile on the faces of children studying at the reform school run jointly by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

The General Manager of Taj Sheba, Mr. Rohit Khosla accompanied by his team personally fed 65 children one of the capital's reform schools.

The Taj Sheba hotel also distributed towels and blankets to the children, who expressed gratitude and thanked the hotel for this kind gesture.



Presidential decree on employment card system

A presidential decree was issued on 12 Jan concerning the system of the employment Card

This system aims at presenting data and information about human resources in the state and the control of the public employment's inputs and outputs as well as the changes which have taken place at the level of the administrative unit and the employee. The system aims also at

the eradication of dual and unreal employment. The decree also affirmed the necessity to establish a central database at the Ministry of Civil Service, the Social Securities and sub-databases for sectors and administrative units. The decree provided also for the formation of a higher committee and a technical sub-committee for supervising implementation of the system.

Sana'a Inter-Governmental Regional Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court 10-12 January 2004

Sana'a Declaration

At the conclusion of the Sana'a Inter-Governmental Regional Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court formed by Governmental and Parliamentary Delegations from all the Arab and neighbouring African and Asian countries, organised by the Government of Yemen and the non-governmental organization No Peace Without Justice, with the participation of 820 participants from 52 countries and representatives from regional and international organizations, as well as representatives of civil society and political parties;

the Conference represented a forum for bringing together representatives of governments, parliaments and legislative bodies to talk about issues related to democracy and human rights issues, the role of civil society and the rule of law and the International Criminal Court in an open dialogue that is furthering democracy and protecting human rights in the Arab and surrounding countries and underlining achievements in the region in those areas. Those achievements have emerged from their social and cultural realities and their heritage and political practice;

during two days of fruitful and profound discussion between participants on those topics, as an inseparable element to reach a consensus of understanding towards questions of the rule of law, democracy and human rights and a common endeavour to reach a common understanding of its dimensions, its interdependency and its repercussions;

delegations hereby declare they have reached the following principles:

a) Democracy and human rights, which have their origins in faith and culture, are interdependent and inseparable;

b) Cultural and religious diversity is at the core of universally recognised human rights, which should be over-served in a spirit of understanding in the application of democratic and human rights principles; this diversity should not be a source of confrontation or clashes but should be a source of dialogue and building bridges of understanding between religions and

cultures;

c) Democratic systems should protect the rights and interests of everybody without discrimination, especially the rights and interests of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups;

d) Democracy is achieved not only through institutions and laws but also through the actual practice of democratic principles, which should be measured by the degree to which these principles, norms, standards and values are actually implemented and the extent to which they advance the realization of human rights;

e) The basics of democratic systems are reflected in periodically elected legislatures, representing the citizens in a fair way and ensuring their full participation, on executive bodies responsible and committed to principles of good governance and on an independent judiciary that guarantees fair trial rights and protects the rights and freedoms of the people; these principles are the guarantors of good governance, which ensures the protection of human rights;

f) Efforts to ensure a forum for discussion and dialogue must be encouraged in order to exchange ideas, experiences and expertise and to promote participation and political and democratic development among participating countries;

g) The practice of democracy and human rights and enhancing its understanding requires overcoming potential threats to the form and substance of democracy, including foreign occupation, imbalances in the international justice system, the concentration and abuse of power, ineffective and unaccountable civil service, poverty, inadequate education, corruption, crimes under international law and discrimination;

h) The effective application of the rule of law is vital to protect democracy and human rights and is the foundation for judicial independence and the application of the separation of powers;

i) A free and independent media is essential for the

promotion and protection of democracy and human rights. Pluralism in the media and its privatization are vital for contributing to the dissemination of human rights information, facilitating informed public participation, promoting tolerance and contributing to governmental accountability. The media should contribute effectively and responsibly towards the strengthening of democracy and human rights knowledge;

j) Proper democratic governance and respect for human rights require a freely functioning, well-organized, vibrant and responsible civil society and a legal framework within which civil society can operate in a spirit of partnership and participation; Civil society should play its role responsibly within the framework of law and the principles of human rights and democracy;

k) The private sector is a vital partner in the strengthening of foundations of democracy and human rights; it has a responsibility to work with governments and civil society to enhance progress;

l) The developments in international relations and the increasing international interest in issues of human rights and the rule of law and the serious efforts to stop violations of international law require strong international judicial institutions to prosecute those who commit crimes under international law, in full respect for the fundamental fair trial guarantees and the rights of the accused.

The participants therefore agree to:

1. Work seriously in order to fulfill the above-stated principles;

2. Strengthen and protect human rights, including people's fundamental rights to express their views and adhere to their religious beliefs and ethnic identity;

3. Occupation is contrary to international law and basic human rights; there should be an end to occupation of Arab territories and all holy Islamic and Christian sites as well as an end to all violations of

human rights, in particular in Palestine, and ensuring the civil and political rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and their right of return according to international resolutions;

4. Empower the role of women and their participation, protecting women from all forms of exploitation and any reduction of women's rights;

5. The establishment of an independent and fair judiciary and the separation of powers;

6. Ensure equality before the law, equal protection under the law and fundamental fair trial guarantees;

7. Support efforts towards sustainable development, which is necessary for building and strengthening democracy, including democratic institutions within the state, and promoting and protecting human rights;

8. Strengthen the role of international judicial institutions, as an important element towards promoting respect for international law and human rights law, including the International Criminal Court;

9. Strengthen democracy and pluralism and the establishment of elected legislative bodies to represent popular will and assuring the fair representation of all sectors of society;

10. Work towards future modalities of democratic consultation and cooperation among themselves, including civil society, and the establishment of an Arab Democratic Dialogue Forum as an instrument for the promotion of dialogue between diverse actors, for the strengthening of democracy and human rights and public freedoms, especially the freedom of opinion and expression, and strengthening the partnership between public authorities and civil society.

Participants in the Sana'a Inter-Governmental Regional Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court

Sana'a, 12 January 2004

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Yemeni civil society urges ICC ratification at national roundtable workshop

Momentum is gathering from all sectors of Yemeni civil society in support of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Just before governments from around the Arab world and beyond arrived in Yemen to discuss this important issue, NGOs from several governorates, representing a diverse range of Yemeni civil society came together for a first ever two-day "National Roundtable on the Ratification and Implementation of the International Criminal Court in Yemen".

Held between 7-8 January, 2004, the roundtable was co-sponsored by the Federation International des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme (International Federation for Human Rights, FIDH) and Sisters' Arab Forum for Human Rights (SAF, Yemen), with the support of the newly created Yemeni Coalition for the ICC and the International Coalition of NGOs for the ICC (CICG).

The idea for the Yemeni Coalition for the ICC was first discussed at the FIDH regional NGO Conference on "Anti-terrorism, and the post 9/11 Attempts to Undermine Human rights and international humanitarian law" held in Ankara, Turkey between September 19-22, 2003 which ended with the launch of the FIDH campaign for the ratification and implementation of the ICC Statute in the countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean.

Ms. Amal Basha, representing the SAF, initiated and played a leading role in creating and launching the Yemeni Coalition for the ICC, which now represents over 60 non-governmental organizations from around Yemen. The group is also supported by numerous Yemeni human rights activists, journalists, law professors, parliamentarians and prominent government officials.

Ms. Amal Basha of SAF welcomed the participants and honored guests, at the opening ceremony on January 7, 2004, which was attended by NGOs, representatives of foreign intergovernmental organizations and members of the press. The ceremony enjoyed the gracious presence of Her Excellency, Ms. Amat Al-Aleem Al Soswa, Minister for Human Rights, as well as Her Excellency Ms. Emma

Bonino, Member of the European Parliament, the Honorable Mr. Gianfranco dell'Alba, Secretary General of No Peace Without Justice, and Ms. Jeanne Sulzer, on behalf of FIDH. Speakers praised the event as a necessary complementary event, together with the today's opening of the Democracy, Human Rights and International Criminal Court event. According to Ms. Jeanne Sulzer, International Justice program of the FIDH, the goal of the two-day roundtable was, "to support and strengthen Yemeni Civil Society in its efforts to raise awareness about the ICC; to develop local expertise to assist the government in drafting effective ratification and implementation legislation; and welcoming Yemeni NGOs into the worldwide campaign for the ICC."

According to Ms. Jeanne Sulzer, International Justice program Director of the FIDH, the goal of the two-day roundtable was "to support and strengthen Yemeni Civil Society in its efforts to raise awareness about the ICC; to develop local expertise to assist the government in drafting effective ratification and implementation legislation; and welcoming Yemeni NGOs into the worldwide campaign for the ICC."

The first day of the roundtable focused on worldwide efforts to establish the ICC and the role of civil society, presented by Mr. Joydeep Sengupta of the Coalition for the ICC. Other presentations by Ms. Jeanne Sulzer and Ms. Stephanie David of FIDH, included the United States campaign to undermine the ICC and the process of ratification and implementation of the ICC in the Middle East/Arab Region. Mr. Shawki Al-Kadi, Member of the Yemeni Parliament, one of the leading Yemeni experts on the ICC spoke on the jurisdiction of the ICC and the crimes within the jurisdiction of the ICC. Other presenters from FIDH, SAF and the Coalition for the ICC introduced the principle of complementarity between the ICC and national courts, the ICC Prosecutorial Strategy, Victims Issues in the Court and Gender Justice and the ICC.

The highlight of the roundtable was a presentation by Professor Ahmed Al Hamidi, from the University of Tai'z, Yemen, a leading expert of Yemeni law and the ICC.

"There are no constitutional objections, or any conflict with Shari'a law, for Yemen's ratification of the ICC" Professor Al-Hamidi, declared.

The roundtable ended with a concrete set of strategies and a plan of action, on behalf of the Yemeni Coalition for the ICC. An immediate declaration (see below), was adopted. A detailed post-roundtable report will be produced by FIDH and SAF, with the Yemeni Coalition and will be available for distribution in Arabic and English from www.fidh.org, or from sisters' Arab Forum office in Sana'a.

The International Criminal Court came into force, thanks to the extraordinary support of global civil society, favoring accountability for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. This unique process benefited from the unprecedented partnership between Like-Minded States, independent NGOs and inter-governmental organizations, supporting the creation of a fair, effective and independent International Criminal Court. It is therefore, very encouraging, that civil society in Yemen has identified the ICC as a key priority in the nation's move towards a stronger democracy and protection of human rights. An historic innovation of the ICC is that it will allow victims of the worst human rights violations to participate, to be represented and to seek reparation.

The victims of these heinous crimes should always remain at center of the ICC process, both domestically and internationally.

The participants adopted the following Declaration:

"We, the participants of the National Roundtable on the International Criminal Court, which took place from 7-8 January in Sana'a organized by Sisters Arab Forum for Human Rights, the International Federation for Human Rights and the Coalition for the International Criminal Court, urge the Yemeni Parliament to ratify Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court."

- The Sisters' Arab Forum for Human Rights (SAF)

- The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

- The international Coalition for the ICC (CICG)

Arab delegates to Sana'a conference:

A positive step forward

INTERVIEWED BY YASER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Most of the Arab delegates that participated in the Sana'a Inter-Governmental Regional Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court held during 11-12 January have expressed satisfaction with the conference and its theme and hoped that more such events would be held in the future. In an attempt to get the impression of a few Arab delegates representing different countries in the region, Yemen Times obtained the following statements.

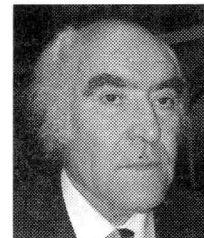
Dr. Isam Ali Al-Rawas
Dean of the Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sultan Qaboos
Sultanate of Oman



"The Sana'a conference is an important meeting to discuss significant issues and is considered an essential step to have us get used to accepting the principles of democracy and discussing them in a way that conforms to our beliefs and regulations. We should not be influenced a lot of the agenda that comes from abroad, but we should modify it to suit our needs in our societies.

On the other hand, the International Criminal Court is essential to preserve democracy and human rights. It is an important body that would remind all who want to cross the red lines of the consequences of violating democracy and human rights."

Dr. Al-Habib Al-Junhani
Staff of the Tunisian University and writer
Tunisia



"I have presented a study in English and French on the civil society, modernization and Islam during the conference and want to stress that there can be no development without the strong presence of the civil society.

Democracy and economic development are two sides of the same coin. Recent researches confirm that democracy requires a long time to evolve and our problem in the developing countries, and specifically in Arab countries is our rush in demanding ideal democracy. It is important to

realize that democracy as an evolving process and what is important is that we set our targets and walk in the right path.

I believe the Sana'a Conference is important step in the right direction, and we need not rush into expecting fruitful results in the near future."

Mudhaffar A. Rashid
Researcher in Human Rights and Amnesty Int'l member
Kuwait



This conference is quite important especially for the Arab world as it was an opportunity to exchange ideas and listen to the views of others. It is an important event that should be repeated to identify our problems and work on solving them without any loyalties or compliments to any official or non-official side. Brining governments and non-governmental bodies together in such an event was an excellent idea, bringing the conference closer to reality on the ground.

Hussein Al-Manswari
Representing Civil Society
Yemen



"What has been said in this conference is quite interesting and came up with practical resolutions. However, what has been said in this conference needs to be translated into reality.

Only then will the interests and ambitions of the people be met."

Nasser Mohamed Al-Odaili
Gulf Development Program
Saudi Arabia



"What is important in the event is that it brought the civil society to discuss and present its ideas. After attending the different discussion sessions, I have come to conclude that participants seem to believe in the role of the civil society and officials have come to understand that they are never a threat to governments. The culture of enabling the civil society to take leading roles in Arab countries will require a longer time, and it is time to educate the next generation of the importance of the civil society. Efforts should be exerted by governments to integrate

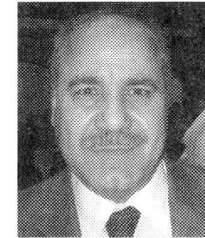
issues related to the importance of civil society to curricula of students in preliminary stages to enhance this culture in the future."

Abdulkareem Dahman
Parliament Member
Algeria



"This event, in all its three dimensions, human rights, democracy, and International Criminal Court, is a pioneer step taken by an Arab country with the participation and support of international institutions and governments. I hope that the events of the Sana'a conference are steps to found a new and strong Arab civil society. Hence, we have to speed up implementation of the resolutions coming out of this conference so as not to be accused of sponsoring terrorism, but rather sponsoring initiatives that promote human and civil values and democracy.

Marwan Mohammed
Parliament Member
Jordan



"In my opinion, the conference will have a role in formulating future politics in the Arab world, especially as this period is quite encouraging to form democracies and promote human rights. Islam has called for democracy before the West and in my views, such initiatives need to come from our own countries and not from the West.

The participation of civil society organizations along with official bodies has enriched the conference and resulted in an environment of mutual cooperation rather than conflict and discord."

Ahmed Hussein
Official representative
Bahrain



"The holding of such conferences is positive and beneficial in formulating a common culture that would support and enhance human rights and democracy in the Arab world. We want more of such conferences and seminars to be held in those specific fields, especially as human rights and democracy have become so important in this era."

Attorney General calls for universal approach to human rights, democracy and rule of law at International Conference in Sana'a

In a speech at an Arab regional conference in Sana'a, Yemen, the Attorney General Lord Goldsmith called for the adoption of a universal approach to human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In addition he urged more states, particularly from the Arab world, to ratify the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court.

Speaking at the 2-day inter-governmental Regional Conference on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the International Criminal Court, held during 11-12 January, the Attorney General emphasized the link between human rights, democracy, rule

of law and economic prosperity. He also welcomed existing programs of reform, and underlined the UK's willingness to assist in constructive partnerships.

Commenting before he left Sana'a on Tuesday the Attorney General said:

"I am delighted to have had the opportunity to attend this important event and add the United Kingdom's support to the call made at the Conference for more states, particularly those in the Arab world, to become parties to the Rome Statute for the International Criminal Court. The Court's establishment last year represents a milestone in the development of

international justice and the continuing fight against impunity for perpetrators of the most serious crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. The UK remains one of the strongest supporters of the ICC and is working nationally and within the EU to promote the universality of the Court's jurisdiction.

"Almost half of the states in the world are parties to the Rome Statute," he continued. "But if the ICC is to be truly universal, it is vital to increase representation from states in the Arab world and in Asia. This increased participation would be mutually strengthening. The Court would not only

increase its jurisdiction and legitimacy, but would also be able to draw on the valuable legal traditions and jurisprudence of Arab states. At the same time, joining the fight against impunity for perpetrators of the worst international crimes would bolster the domestic judicial systems of those Arab states which choose to become parties to the Rome Statute.

"A combination of strengthening the rule of law and democratic processes, and increasing the promotion and protection of human rights, underpins sustainable economic development. I welcome the initiative taken by the Yemeni Government to hold a conference seek-

ing ways to build regional consensus on the way forward. It is for Governments and people in the region to take the lead in addressing these issues. The British Government encourages the efforts they are making. The UK has much experience to offer, particularly in areas such as human rights, economic and legal reform, political pluralism and the role of women. We stand ready to assist, in a constructive partnership, those in the region who are promoting reform for the benefit of all."

During his visit to Yemen, the attorney General also met the President and Prime Minister of Yemen. He held discussions with the Yemeni Foreign

Minister, Dr. Abu Bakr al-Kirby, as well with the Minister of Justice, the Minister for Human Rights, the Yemeni Attorney General and other leading Yemeni figures. Discussion covered a range of issues, including counter-terrorism cooperation, the UK's said program for Yemen and human rights and rule of law issues. The Attorney General also held bilateral discussions with other delegations at the conference, including discussion on a justice reform cooperation program with Sudan and justice reform issues in Iraq, and had a short meeting with the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno Ocampo

U.S. troops kill 4 Iraqi civilians, chopper crashes

FALLUJA, Iraq, Jan 13 (Reuters) - American soldiers killed at least four Iraqi civilians on Tuesday in a town at the heart of the anti-U.S. insurgency while a U.S. Apache helicopter crashed nearby, probably after being hit by ground fire.

Paul Bremer, the U.S. administrator of Iraq, said attacks on the coalition had come down dramatically and plans to hand over power to Iraqis were well under way, although it would not be possible to hold elections before the June 30 deadline.

A U.S. Army foot patrol came under rocket attack in the town of Falluja, west of Baghdad, after a noisy anti-American protest and the soldiers killed at least four civilians when they returned fire, including an elderly woman, witnesses said.

"Two rockets were fired at them," said Khalas Ahmed, a 15-year-old boy selling cigarettes from a nearby kiosk. "The Americans started firing back. The bullets hit my kiosk and I dived to the ground."

The woman who was killed was on a balcony of a nearby house and a passing car was caught in a hail of bullets which killed all three men inside, other witnesses said.

A U.S. military spokeswoman in Baghdad said she had no immediate information on the incident.

Hundreds of people took part in the demonstration, which was called to protest against the arrest of a young woman by troops in the town on Monday. Speakers said the woman was alone at home at the time and that her arrest was an insult.

"Is it sensible that a great nation (the U.S.) storms houses where there are only women and children?" asked one speaker. "This woman represents the honour of the people of Falluja."

Falluja, 50 km (30 miles) west of Baghdad, is a stronghold of anti-U.S. guerrillas who have mounted almost daily attacks on coalition forces.

At least three U.S. helicopters have crashed around the town in less than two weeks, including the Apache on Tuesday. U.S. spokesmen say all three were likely brought down by ground fire.

"Our initial information tells us that it's possible that the (Apache) helicopter was downed by, or at least was struck by, enemy fire," a U.S. military spokesman said after the chopper crashed near Thirthar lake, north of Falluja.

Both crew members survived, other spokesmen said.

HELICOPTERS DOWNED

Also near Falluja, a Black Hawk helicopter crashed after being hit by ground fire last week, killing all nine soldiers on board, and an OH-58 Kiowa observation helicopter was shot down on January 2, killing one pilot and injuring the other.

Bremer, the U.S. administrator, told CBS television's "The Early Show" that "In the last three or four weeks we've seen a rather dramatic reduction in the number of attacks on the coalition, they are down by about 50 percent."

"I think we have found since the arrest of Saddam (Hussein) a better way to go after the insurgency, more



U.S. Army troops recover an Apache attack helicopter from a field near the restive central Iraqi town of Falluja January 13, 2004. A U.S. Apache helicopter that crashed west of Baghdad on Tuesday may have been shot down by Iraqi guerrillas, a U.S. military spokesman said. REUTERS

intelligence about who they are and, even more important, we are finding a lot of people...coming over and providing us information, saying they want to work with the coalition."

Bremer acknowledged that some Iraqis, including respected Shi'ite

leader Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, had demanded that an elected government take over in June, but he said that was not possible.

"The problem we have is a technical one, which is that at present there is no electoral commission," he said. "There

is no electoral law... There is no voter registration. There are no electoral constituencies. There are none of the things that we need to conduct a legitimate and effective election here."

The current plan, to have a government nominated by regional caucuses

and elections next year, was the best compromise, he said. "It's not as good as an election but we believe it is important to return sovereignty to the Iraqi people on the timeline we've agreed, which is by the end of June."

Top Iran officials ready to quit in election row

TEHRAN, Jan 13 (Reuters) - About 12 top Iranian government officials are ready to quit if powerful hardliners do not overturn a decision barring hundreds of reformists from running in parliamentary elections, reformist MPs said on Tuesday.

The MPs, who declined to be identified, told Reuters the list of those prepared to resign included four of Iran's six vice-presidents and six ministers.

The threat raised the stakes in the struggle between hardliners and reformists and may also increase pressure on reformist President Mohammad Khatami to step down in solidarity with his colleagues, analysts said.

"They have their resignation letters ready and will submit them," if the bans are not retracted, one MP told Reuters. "They want to resign and are ready to resign," said another.

Asked about the possible resignations, government spokesman Abdollah Ramazanzadeh told Reuters: "I don't know about it. It's a decision for each individual minister."

The hardline Guardian Council announced on Sunday that about half of the 8,200 aspiring candidates for the February 20 parliamentary vote had been disqualified.

Until now Khatami has tended to avoid confrontation with hardliners who have blocked his reform attempts.

"Pressure is growing on Khatami to take a stand. But I doubt he will resign," said political analyst Mahmoud Alinejad.

The decision by the Guardian Council, a conservative constitutional watchdog comprising clerics and Islamic lawyers, has highlighted the relative impotence of Khatami's government.

Unelected hardliners also control Iran's judiciary, armed forces and state media.

About 80 members of the 290-seat



Iranian President Mohammad Khatami (C) meets with Iran's regional governors in Tehran Jan. 13. A top Iranian official has warned the reformist government may be forced to resign if it cannot overturn a decision to ban hundreds of liberal candidates from running for parliament, the official IRNA news agency reported on Tuesday. REUTERS

parliament, including its two deputy speakers, have been ruled out of the election race.

Vice-President Mohammad Satarifar told the official IRNA news agency the government may as well resign if it could not guarantee a fair election. State governors have also threatened to quit.

EMPTY THREATS?

Conservative MPs issued a statement describing the process of vetting candidates as a "legal, normal, and wise issue."

"Disqualifying those who do not qualify to serve as the nation's representatives is not a violation of people's rights, it safeguards their rights," they said.

Barred candidates have two chances to appeal their disqualification before

campaigning starts on February 12.

Parliament Speaker Mehdi Karroubi said on Tuesday he hoped for results from ongoing talks with the Guardian Council to try to persuade the body to reconsider.

Disqualified MPs, dozens of whom have been holding a protest sit-in at parliament since Sunday, called on the council to make public documents that explained why they were barred.

Many of those excluded were accused of showing insufficient commitment to Islam and Iran's system of clerical rule.

Blocked at almost every turn by hardliners, liberal MPs and Khatami have made repeated threats to resign in recent years.

But the threats have so far not been carried out, devaluing their impact.

"They've threatened to quit or boycott the elections so many times now that few believe them and even fewer care," said one European diplomat.

He said the mass vetting of candidates was the hardliners' response to losing control of parliament in 2000. Then, only eight percent of candidates were weeded out before the vote, and reformists won nearly 70 percent of seats.

"They wanted to make sure this time and they calculated that there wouldn't be a massive public outcry, which there hasn't been," the diplomat said.

Disillusioned by Khatami's failure to deliver on promises to enforce the rule of law, ease social restrictions and raise living standards, many of Iran's disproportionately youthful population have lost faith in the reformist movement.

U.S. urges private Arab investment in Iraq

MANAMA, Jan 13 (Reuters) - A senior U.S. official appealed on Tuesday for private Gulf Arab investors to play a bigger role in rebuilding Iraq and undertake long-term ventures there.

But many investors in Bahrain, the region's banking and financial hub, said they were wary of any involvement in Iraq due to its insecurity and political instability.

"The economy in Iraq is too important to be left to governments. Iraqi people desperately need to be put to work. They need to learn from you such skills as marketing and management," Assistant Commerce Secretary William Lash told a gathering of leading Bahraini businessmen.

"The private sector should play an important part in reconstruction efforts in Iraq. But we are looking beyond reconstruction. We are after people looking towards long-term investments there," he said.

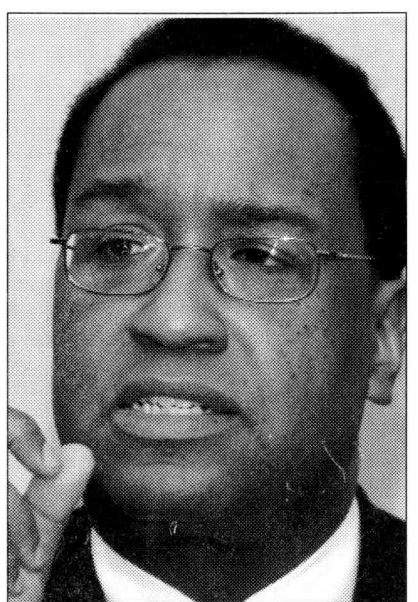
But many businessmen said they would stay away from Iraq until the political and security situation improved.

"It would be very, very wrong to invest in Iraq now. I don't advise anyone to go there. There is no business in Iraq," Samme Rajab, head of a major private trading firm, told Reuters. "I assure you no one in this room has the courage to go to Iraq," said Rajab, who did business with Iraq before the U.S.-led invasion.

The United States has allotted \$18.6 billion to fund reconstruction projects in Iraq, to be awarded only to firms from countries that supported the war in Iraq. Bahrain and other Gulf Arab states are among the beneficiaries.

Bomb attacks have been an almost daily occurrence in Iraq since Saddam Hussein's toppling by U.S.-led forces in April 2003.

"What if a new government in Iraq decides not to honour what the occu-



U.S. Assistant Commerce Secretary William Lash appeals in the Bahrain capital of Manama January 13, for private Gulf Arab investors to play a bigger role in rebuilding Iraq and undertake long-term ventures there. But many investors in Bahrain. REUTERS

pation authorities promised. What will happen to our money then?" asked one Bahraini businessman.

Lash, who has been on a regional tour to promote private investment in Iraq, insisted Iraq was an emerging market with a promising future despite present risks.

"There are very serious security threats, but there is competition. In 15 years, those businesses which are already on the ground in Iraq will be the established ones," he said.

Lash said the U.S. administration in Baghdad was trying to implement a system to protect foreign investments.

"Be patient. We cannot replace in six months 30 years of neglect, mismanagement and repression," he said.

At least 21 fighters killed in Somalia clan clash

MOGADISHU, Jan 13 (Reuters) - At least 21 Somali fighters were killed when a long-running dispute between rival clans over grazing rights degenerated into clashes in the central town of Ceelbur, residents said on Tuesday.

Elders who traditionally defuse tensions between younger clansmen failed to stop the confrontation, which broke out on Monday and persisted on Tuesday in the town, some 175 km (109 miles) northeast of the capital Mogadishu.

The confrontation set members of the Murusade clan against fighters from the Duduble clan, both branches of a bigger clan known as Hawiye.

Sources among the Murusade fighters said they had lost 13 men while the Duduble said eight of their men had been killed. Clan sources said more than 26 combatants were wounded.

Residents said the clash was rooted in a dispute that has been rumbling for weeks over access to nearby wells for cattle in the arid area.

The violence erupted as various Somali faction leaders met in Kenya to try to revive a stalled peace process for the country, carved into a patchwork of rival territories since the central government was overthrown in 1991.

U.S. congressman wants reward for bin Laden doubled

KABUL, Jan 13 (Reuters) - The reward for finding Osama bin Laden, the elusive leader of the al Qaeda network and the world's most wanted man, should be doubled to \$50 million, a U.S. congressman visiting Afghanistan said on Tuesday.

Mark Kirk, a Republican congressman, also said U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan could remain there for more than a decade to help stabilise the war-shattered and chronically unstable country.

Saudi-born bin Laden has been on the run since 2001, when U.S.-led forces toppled the Taliban regime that had sheltered him. If he is still alive, he is widely believed to be hiding along the rugged Afghan-Pakistan frontier.

"I will be going back to Washington to propose a 50 million dollar reward and also to make the reward much more flexible," Kirk told reporters at the heavily guarded U.S. embassy.

Before his trip to Kabul, Kirk also visited the North West Frontier Province in Pakistan, where support for the Taliban, al Qaeda and their Islamic militant allies is strong.

According to Kirk, support for the militants was declining, but he added that they were receiving assistance from drug dealers to fund their "jihad", or holy war against 12,000 U.S.-led troops and the U.S.-backed government in Kabul.

"I would not be surprised if it is ten years or more," he added, when asked how long U.S. troops would remain in Afghanistan.

He said U.S. President George W. Bush "has indicated in private meetings to the congress that there is no limit to the time that we will be assisting the government of Afghanistan."



Osama Bin Laden is seen sitting at an undisclosed location in this November 10, 2001 file photo which was published by the Pakistani newspaper daily "Dawn" soon after U.S.-led forces attacked Afghanistan to topple the Taliban regime that had sheltered him. The reward for finding Osama bin Laden, the elusive leader of the al Qaeda network and the world's most wanted man, should be doubled to \$50 million, a U.S. congressman visiting Afghanistan said on Tuesday. REUTERS

China says Shenzhen patient is not SARS suspect

BEIJING, Jan 13 (Reuters) - China debunked rumours on Tuesday that a sick man in the southern boomtown of Shenzhen was a possible SARS case, but a Hong television report said one of two earlier suspected had been confirmed as having the deadly virus.

Shenzhen garment trader Chen Xiaohu, 38, had SARS-like symptoms a month ago, but doctors determined he was suffering from a form of bacterial pneumonia, Xinhua news agency said.

The Xinhua comment came as Asia faced a new health scare in bird flu, with the World Health Organisation (WHO) confirming that the disease had killed three people in Vietnam.

Chen was put into intensive care on January 10 for "respiratory distress, coupled with other symptoms such as pneumonia, respiratory failure and failure of other organs in the chest", the agency said. His condition was now under control.

"Shenzhen City has strictly followed the requirements for reporting set by the World Health Organisation," Zhou Jun'an, head of the Health Bureau of Shenzhen City, was quoted as saying.

"There has been no confirmed or suspected SARS case in Shenzhen since winter."

Shenzhen is a special economic zone surrounded by Guangdong

and the former British colony of Hong Kong.

In Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong about 90 km (55 miles) northwest of Shenzhen, a 20-year-old waitress had been confirmed as having SARS, Hong Kong Cable Television said, the country's second confirmed case of the deadly disease in just over a week.

The television station quoted sources from China's Health Ministry as saying a formal announcement would be made later.

Last week China confirmed its first SARS case since the WHO declared an end to the last outbreak in July. That victim has now recovered and left hospital.

On Monday, China reported a third suspected case of SARS in a 35-year-old investor in Guangzhou.

WHO researchers in Guangdong, working with the Health Ministry, are examining all possible sources of SARS infection — animals, humans and the environment.

The government has ordered a cull of civets — weasel-like animals that are a local delicacy and the prime suspect — in hopes of averting an outbreak.

The virus first emerged in Guangdong late in 2002 and went on to infect more than 8,000 people in nearly 30 countries, killing nearly 800.

Indian PM in campaign mode, bides time on polls

NEW DELHI, Jan 13 (Reuters) - India's prime minister flies on Tuesday to Gujarat, scene of some of the country's worst religious bloodshed two years ago, to court voters ahead of early polls expected to focus on a booming economy.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won state elections in Gujarat on a hardline Hindu stand after the violence in which, human rights groups say, about 2,500 people were killed.

But with economic growth forecast above seven percent this year, bumper crops after the best monsoon in a decade and a faltering opposition, analysts expect the BJP this time to seek the centre ground by focusing on good governance and Vajpayee's leadership.

"The scale at this stage seems to be tipping towards the BJP because of the charisma of the prime minister," analyst Bhabani Sengupta told Reuters. "They are trying to cash in on people's confidence in Vajpayee and the upturn in the economy."

Vajpayee, 79, has not yet called the poll but said on Monday it should be over by the end of April, five months early.

But the election commission may not be ready for the task of getting the hundreds of millions of voters to the polls — it needs 300,000 more voting machines, for example — until May.

As well as the good news on the economy and a thaw in ties with nuclear rival Pakistan after a meeting between Vajpayee and Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, BJP leaders are highlighting the popular prime minister and his performance.

And although Vajpayee has called for a clean campaign, junior activists stress the Italian birth of the leader of the main opposition Congress Party, Sonia Gandhi, something opinion polls show is a major weak point for Congress.

The BJP is riding high. It swept Congress, for decades an unbeatable political force, out of power in three northern states last month. India's more populous northern states account for a majority of seats in the 545-member national parliament.

Most of the BJP's allies are also sticking by it and Congress is struggling to stitch up its own secular alliance — the first time it is fighting polls at the head of a coalition.

TOUCH OF GOLD

"Anything Atal-ji touches would seem to be turning to gold," The Times of India newspaper said of Vajpayee on Tuesday.

"By contrast, the Congress looks mired in a holy mess."

With bulging coffers, the government last week unveiled billions of dollars worth of tax cuts and other measures targeted at the middle class. Economists say while there may be some fiscal slippage during the campaign they do not expect any major impact on India's slow and often erratic reform process.

"There will be an awful lot of noise and agitation about a number of issues. But in the end, the Indian policy juggernaut or ocean liner has its course set, which is towards reform," said David Simmonds, a strategist at the Royal Bank of Scotland.

With few major differences between the BJP and the Congress on foreign policy and economics, regional issues and alliances will be critical.

Congress could also seek to exploit fears that behind Vajpayee's moderate face, the BJP remains true to its hardline Hindu — Hindutva — roots.

"He is not immortal," said Sengupta. "There are fears that underneath Vajpayee's moderate secularism, there is a deep layer of Hindutva."

The party rose to prominence in the late 1980s on a fierce Hindu revivalist campaign focused on building a temple on a site holy to both Hindus and minority Muslims, which has become a symbol of, and trigger for, communal tensions.

Since then there have been several instances of religious violence in India, the latest of which was in Gujarat in 2002 when officially more than 1,000 people died.

But since leading an unwieldy and ever-changing coalition into office in 1999, the BJP has been forced by its more secular regional partners to tone down its so-called saffron politics.

Although the BJP is expected to win the most seats, neither it nor Congress is likely to win a majority, so smaller parties will decide who forms government as they did in the outgoing parliament, where the BJP has 180 seats and Congress 109.

"Neither coalition can be certain of victory," said Sengupta. (\$1 = 45.46 rupees)

Uganda rebels retreat to Sudan to regroup - army

KAMPALA, Jan 13 (Reuters) - Some rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) have fled to Sudan under pressure from the Ugandan army, whose troops advanced on their positions after the end of heavy rains, an army spokesman said on Tuesday.

Spokesman Major Shaban Bantariza said the end of the rainy season made it easier for government troops to make inroads, having previously been held back in the muddy terrain.

The rebels, led by self-proclaimed mystic and prophet Joseph Kony, have waged war against the Uganda government for 17 years, and are feared for maiming civilians and abducting children for use as sex slaves and child soldiers.

"In the last few weeks the rebels have been trying to return to Sudan as our pressure on them has increased," Bantariza told Reuters. "It's now the dry season and we can move our vehicles around much quicker with no mud to slow us down."

The rebels have in the past fled to Sudan to take cover from army advances.

In 2002, following an agreement with Sudan, Ugandan troops entered Sudan and flushed the rebels from their bases.

In October last year, they renewed their agreement to cooperate in driving out the rebels from southern Sudan bases.

But Bantariza said Uganda was worried they still had arms caches at

some of the camps that had been abandoned, but which had not been occupied by Sudan.

Since the beginning of the year the army has said it has scored successes against the rebels, who split into small groups to evade a government offensive backed by artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships.

Bantariza said there were now only about 500 LRA rebels, down from 3,000 at the same time last year. Many had been killed, captured or had surrendered, he said.

The army spokesman in northern Uganda, Lieutenant Charles Magezi, said since the beginning of the year the army had killed 82 rebels, captured 40, rescued 147 people they had abducted and seized guns and ammunition.



A nurse sits at the front desk of the No. 8 People's Hospital in Guangzhou where suspected SARS patients are receiving treatment Jan. 13. In Guangzhou, the capital of Guangdong, a 20-year-old waitress has been confirmed as having SARS, Hong Kong Cable TV said, the country's second confirmed case of the deadly disease in just over a week. The TV station quoted sources from China's Health Ministry as saying a formal announcement will be made later. REUTERS

البقاء لله
أحر التعازي وأصدق المواساة نتقدم بها للمحامي
عبدالكريم عبدالله الشيباني
لوفاة المغفور له بأذن الله تعالى والده
تغمد الله الفقيد بواسع رحمته واسكنه فسيح جناته.
«إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون»
الأسيف: غسان عبدالكريم وإخوانه

Turkish Cypriot leader approves new coalition govt

NICOSIA, Jan 13 (Reuters) - Veteran Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş on Tuesday approved a coalition cabinet which has pledged to work for the reunification of Cyprus before the Mediterranean island joins the European Union on May 1.

But the Greek Cypriot government responded coolly, saying progress was only possible if the Turkish Cypriots and their patron Turkey unequivocally accepted U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's peace blueprint as the basis for further negotiations.

"I have approved the cabinet list and have appointed Mehmet Ali Talat as prime minister," Denktaş, a fierce critic of the U.N. plan, told reporters at his residence in the northern half of Nicosia, Europe's last divided capital.

Talat, who supports a swift return to stalled reunification talks, is the first centre-left politician to head a government in the breakaway enclave, which is recognised only by Ankara.

Denktaş's son Serdar Denktaş will be foreign minister and deputy prime minister in the new cabinet, whose formation followed weeks of haggling between supporters and opponents of the Annan Plan.

Turkey's lira currency and bond prices have risen strongly in recent days on hopes that Talat will soon resume peace talks with the Greek Cypriots and push for a settlement.

Without a deal, only the internationally recognised Greek Cypriot government will enter the EU,

cementing the island's ethnic division, deepening the Turkish Cypriots' isolation and possibly harming Turkey's own hopes of joining the wealthy bloc.

"The Annan plan will be the basis for negotiations," Talat told reporters. But he also signalled that his government would work closely with Turkey in the search for a settlement.

"For negotiations to begin, we need to arrive at a common approach with Turkey," Talat said.

TURKEY IS KEY

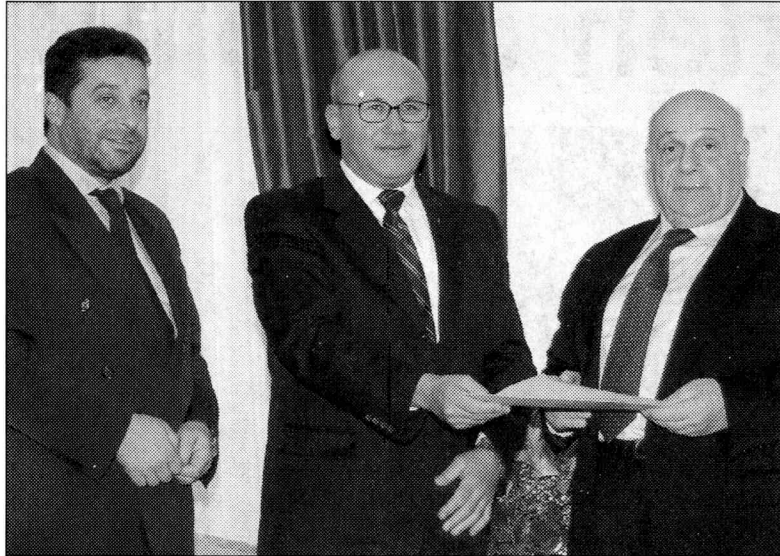
Reunification talks broke down last March over the elder Denktaş's refusal to accept the U.N. plan, which he said favours the more numerous and wealthier Greek Cypriots.

Denktaş, who is president in his self-declared republic, will remain as the Turkish Cypriots' chief negotiator, but Talat told CNN Turk his government would also play a key role.

Turkey, worried that a lack of progress in reunifying Cyprus could scuttle its own hopes of starting EU entry talks in early 2005, is expected soon to clarify its views on the Annan Plan.

Turkish media say Ankara will seek changes on sensitive issues such as territory, the return of Greek Cypriots to the north and the removal of Turkish troops.

But Greek Cypriot government spokesman Kypros Chrysostomides highlighted his side's suspicion of Turkish motives.



Turkish Cypriots' Prime Minister Mehmet Ali Talat (C) hands his cabinet list to Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş (R) as his coalition partner deputy premier Serdar Denktaş stands next to him at his office in Nicosia Jan. 13. Veteran Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş on Tuesday approved a coalition government headed by Mehmet Ali Talat, who strongly supports a speedy return to stalled Cyprus reunification talks. Denktaş's son Serdar Denktaş (L) will be foreign minister and deputy prime minister in the new cabinet. REUTERS

"The issue is not what the Turkish side says, but what they will do if negotiations start," Chrysostomides told reporters.

"As things presently stand...I don't think the U.N. secretary-general will call for negotiations soon," Chrysostomides told reporters.

He said Annan had sent a letter to Cypriot President Tassos

Papadopoulos ruling out major changes to the U.N. blueprint, which envisages a loose federal government and broad autonomy for the two ethnic communities.

Cyprus has been divided along ethnic lines since 1974, when Turkish troops invaded the north of the island after a brief Greek Cypriot coup backed by Greece.

Karadzic's wife says she'll stand by her man

PALE, Bosnia, Jan 13 (Reuters) - A NATO manhunt for top Bosnian Serb war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic went into its fourth day on Tuesday, piling pressure on his family and provoking a vow from his wife that she would never give him up.

The search of a former Karadzic home last visited by NATO troops in July 2002 followed extensive searches in his wartime headquarters town, Pale.

They began on Saturday after a tip that the fugitive, on the run in mountainous Bosnia for the past eight years, was injured and maybe seeking urgent medical help.

His wife, Ljiljana Zelen-Karadzic, said on Tuesday the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) was aware that for the past three years no one from the Karadzic family had slept in the house they searched overnight.

She told the Bosnian Serb SRNA agency that NATO was constantly following her and her children and that the only thing that they did not know was her husband's whereabouts.

"I will...not tell them that," SRNA quoted her as saying.

A spokesman for the peace force said the latest raid stemmed from intelligence gleaned over the weekend in Karadzic's former stronghold of Pale — the most extensive search for Karadzic in almost two years.

Karadzic and his wartime military chief Ratko Mladic are indicted for genocide by the U.N. war crimes court, for the siege of Sarajevo and the Srebrenica massacre of about 8,000 Muslims in Bosnia's 1992-95 war.

NATO officials say their capture is important for the alliance's eventual aim of withdrawing troops from Bosnia.

After a manhunt in the town of Pale lasting the better part of three days, Tuesday's raid targeted a house in nearby Breznik in the mountains above the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo.

It began at 1:00 a.m. (0000 GMT).

At midday, several dozen Italian, U.S. and British soldiers could be seen deployed around the building.

Caretaker Jovica Vukadin told reporters that U.S. and British soldiers backed by Italian Carabinieri paramilitary troops had broken into the empty residence.

"They took my mobile and documents and interrogated me until dawn," he told reporters outside the white, three-storey house.

Ljiljana Karadzic as well as daughter Sonja and son Sasa all live in Pale in separate homes, which were searched by some 200 U.S., British, Italian, German and



An Italian soldier of the NATO peacekeeping troops inspects the door of a house belonging to the family of Bosnian Serb war crimes suspect Radovan Karadzic in Pale Jan. 13. REUTERS

Germany plans big cuts to armed forces

BERLIN, Jan 13 (Reuters) - Cash-strapped Germany unveiled deep cuts in planned arms procurement, troop numbers and military bases on Tuesday as it seeks to revamp the armed forces amid growing international commitments.

Defence Minister Peter Struck said he would cut up to 26 billion euros (\$33 billion) from military spending plans and shut 100 bases in a shake-up to meet new security demands for more peacekeeping and conflict prevention abroad.

But he was at pains to underline that the cuts would not affect procurement contracts that had already been signed and would mainly affect a "wish list" pencilled in for the future under plans drawn up by previous ministers.

"It's about switching military planning from unrealistic projects



German Defence Minister Peter Struck (R) walks past inspector general of Germany's army Bundeswehr Wolfgang Schneiderhahn before a news conference on reform of the Bundeswehr in Berlin Jan. 13. REUTERS

back to realism," he told a news conference.

Demands on the German military have risen steadily in recent years as the country has shed its post-war reluctance to engage in international operations. It has thousands of troops serving abroad, with big contingents in Afghanistan and the Balkans.

But with Germany on course to breach European Union borrowing limits for the third year in a row this year, Struck's budget is frozen despite the country's ambitions to play a part in world affairs more in keeping with its economic clout.

Struck said that on top of the closures and spending cuts, forces would be cut by 35,000 troops to about 250,000.

"That will open up room for targeted weapons investment from 2012," he said.

EU Commission threatens fines over water pollution

BRUSSELS, Jan 13 (Reuters) - The European Commission threatened on Tuesday to fine Greece, the Netherlands and Belgium if they did not comply with EU water quality rules.

The EU executive Commission has taken the three states to the European Court of Justice for their failure to meet EU requirements on limiting water pollution.

"It's the second stage of legal action which could result in fines if the problem is not resolved," Environment Commission spokeswoman Ewa Hedlund told a news conference.

Both Athens and the Hague have failed to put a proper programme in place to reduce the presence of dangerous substances such as arsenic in water. Meanwhile, Belgium has not fully implemented EU laws on drinking water quality.

The Commission has started legal action against Portugal and France and is threatening to take a further three states — Ireland, Spain and Germany — to court in Luxembourg for flouting a host of water quality laws.

O'Neill says did not take U.S. Treasury documents

WASHINGTON, Jan 13 (Reuters) - Former U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, under fire for criticizing President George W. Bush's leadership, denied on Tuesday he had taken secret documents from the Treasury.

On Monday, hours after O'Neill criticized the president on CBS television, the Treasury Department said its Inspector General was investigating how a document marked "secret" was shown during the interview.

Speaking on NBC's "Today" show, the ex-Treasury Secretary said the documents were given to him by the Treasury's chief legal officer after he requested them to help former Wall Street Journal reporter Ron Suskind write a book on O'Neill's time in the Cabinet.

"I said to him (the general counsel) I would like to have the documents that are OK for me to have. About three weeks later, the general counsel, the chief legal officer, sent me a couple of CDs, which I frankly never opened," said O'Neill, who resigned under pressure a year ago in a shake-

up of Bush's economy team.

O'Neill, the first major Bush insider to criticize the president, said he had given the compact disc with the documents to Suskind.

"I don't honestly think there is anything that is classified in those 19,000 sheets," said O'Neill, adding only the cover sheet shown on television bore the words "secret."

But O'Neill said he was not surprised the Treasury was looking into how he got the documents. "If I were secretary of the Treasury I would have done the same," he said.

He described the reaction to Suskind's book as a "red meat frenzy" and said people should read his comments in context, particularly about the Iraq war.

"People are trying to say that I said the president was planning war in Iraq early in the administration. Actually there was a continuation of work that had been going on in the Clinton administration with the notion that there needed to be a regime change in Iraq."

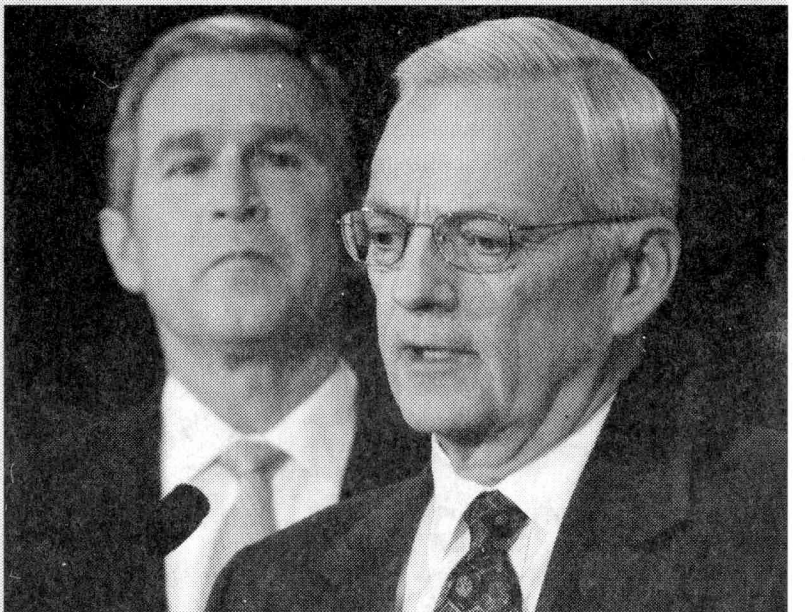
What surprised him, said O'Neill, was how much priority was given to Iraq by the president.

Asked about comments he did not believe Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, the main reason cited for going to war, O'Neill said he never saw "concrete evidence" of such weapons.

"I think the fact that we have not found them makes the point. But that doesn't make the point that we should not have got rid of Saddam Hussein."

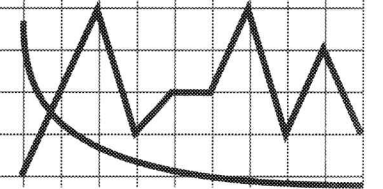
Asked about his comment that during Cabinet meetings Bush was like "a blind man in a room full of deaf people," O'Neill said he regretted some of the language he used to describe his former boss.

"If I could take it back, I would take it back. It has become the controversial centerpiece." Pressed whether he would vote for Bush in the November presidential election, O'Neill said he probably would, but he said the American people needed to demand more of their leaders.



Former U.S. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill (R) speaks after he was chosen by U.S. President-elect George W. Bush to be the nominee for the U.S. Secretary of Treasury in Austin, Texas, in this Dec. 20, 2000 file photo. O'Neill, under fire for criticizing Bush's leadership, denied on Jan. 14, that he had taken secret documents from the Treasury. REUTERS

YT Business



Yemen responds by closing its borders to Saudi goods

By MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Yemeni-Saudi differences on marketing the two countries' products have merged to surface as Sana'a has dealt with the Saudi attitude in the same manner. Sana'a has decided to prevent the entry of Saudi products in reply to the Saudi decision it had taken lately to prevent Yemeni agricultural products from entering its territories. Saudi authorities ascribe he causes of its decision to claiming that Yemeni products were polluted with contagious bacterial viruses.

In return for that, according to news reports, Sana'a has denied the Saudi allegations concerning the pollution of its agricultural products describing them as groundless.

Official source at the Yemeni ministry of agriculture had strongly rebuffed the Saudi allegations saying that news was groundless and not dependent on a scientific fact adding that Yemeni exporters were committed to implementing specifications of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries with regard to agricultural products. He considered the Saudi decisions of boycotting, whether in the past period or presently as not based on accurate scientific data.

The Saudi al-Watan newspaper mentioned at the end of last week that the Yemeni authorities had requested from their Saudi counterparts to reconsider the boycott it had imposed lately on exporting agricultural products.

The paper also mentioned that an official source at the Yemeni agricul-

ture ministry explained that the 7-member Saudi team of experts was convinced of safety of the measures followed in agriculture and export but the Yemeni agricultural bodies were surprised by the Saudi boycotting decision against Yemeni agricultural goods. The Yemeni official considered the Saudi decisions were not based on accurate scientific data and that a ministerial meeting held in Riyadh last August had decided to send a technical team. The government source added that "Yemen exports its agricultural products to Arab and European countries and they are welcomed because of their good quality and suitable prices. The ministry of agriculture has taken a series of measures and controls aimed at improving the level of the goods quality and protecting the consumer inside and outside Yemen."

It is worth mentioning that Yemeni political and economic circles had asked the government to have a suitable reply to the Saudi decision and to prevent the Saudi products from entering the Yemeni markets in the same manner. Political sources said the Yemeni decision of preventing the Saudi goods would lead to stop many Saudi factories that depend on Yemeni markets for selling their products as the volume of their annual sales amount to about SR 800 million.

Meanwhile Kuwait had on Tuesday strongly denied importing of any Yemeni agricultural products, pointing that in case it wanted to import any products it would be according to the law of the unified agricultural quarantine of the GCC countries. According to the Kuwaiti newspaper al-Watan and in commenting on news about



Various Yemeni agricultural products on market

infection of Yemeni agricultural products with pollution a Kuwaiti agricultural official said Kuwait was not importing any of products at the time being.

On the other hand a reliable source told al-Nahar weekly last Thursday

that a meeting would be held beginning of next week in the governorate of Sa'da comprising merchants and farmers from the Abha chamber of commerce and representatives of Yemeni chambers of commerce and industry to discuss the subject and the issues of

difference in an attempt to solve them.

The Saudi ambassador to Yemen had a few days ago denied in a press statement that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia had closed its borders to Yemeni products, while observers considered the Saudi measure as part of

series of pressures practiced by Riyadh because of it claims as Yemeni leniency in hunting down of smugglers of weapons and rugs across the borders. It had said before that all weapons and explosives used in acts of terror were coming from Yemen.

Improving infrastructure for fighting poverty

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Yemeni government is trying to improve the infrastructure in a bid for curbing the negative impact of the spread of poverty phenomenon in implementation of a strategy aimed at raising the proportion of covering from the networks of waters to 69% for urban population and 65% of rural areas population by the beginning of 2005.

The plan includes rising the number of beneficiaries of the sewage networks in the urban areas to 1.7 million people and an average of covering to 44%, increase in the electricity coverage from the public network to 40.30% from the total number of population by 2005 and to around 22.2% of the countryside population.

The plan also includes addition of 3.300 km of asphalt roads, 2.950 km of gravel-paved roads, strengthening of about 3.194 km of asphalt roads in addition to increasing the number of beneficiaries of social services to about 600.600 case in 2005.

According to the plan the government of Yemen would expand the umbrella of social securities to cover 529000 workers, among whom about 70000 workers from the private sector and training 5430 handicapped in centers of regular education. The plan also includes the providing of 4190 opportunity for handicapped rehabilitation, accommodation of 6750 of orphanages at the social care houses and lodging of 2500 homeless and beggar children.

According to sources at the ministry of planning and international cooperation oil revenues in 2005 would reach 16.2% of the GDP while it is expected that non-oil revenues reach at 12.5% of the GDP in the coming year.

As for current revenues it is expected to be retreat-

ing to 29.5% of the GDP in 2005.

Under the recession of current revenues the government intends to adopt a containment policy regarding spending especially the current spending that is expected to drop from 28.2 of GDP in 2003 to 25.4% in 2005.

As for spending on salaries and wages it would be bigger than the volume of spending recorded in 2003 by 9% of the GDP and it is expected an increase in development spending to arrive at 7.8% of the GDP compared to 7% in 2003.

The development spending is aimed at sectors connected to mitigating the phenomenon of poverty for improving the living of the people and providing serv-

ices for them in the countryside.

Official sources mention that spending on education, health and social care, as a proportion of GDP in 2005, would amount to 9.6%, 2.2% and 1.4% respectively.

Official sources mention that the strategy included lists on investment programs and projects necessary for realizing goals of the plan for fighting poverty as the cost of investment projects during the years 2003-2005 are estimated at YR 413.40 billion. The government says the local councils in the districts and even in the governorates have to follow up and observe implementation of the strategy so that to achieve its goals in fighting poverty.



Training the handicapped on professions

Computer... would it help increase production in Yemen?

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Would the computer finds a marketable trading market or is it still at the beginning of the road leading to a big promotion for computer machines and benefiting from them in future?

It seems there are many questions but the important thing is would the institutions and companies benefit from computer statements and figures and also the internet language and to what extent the people utilize the computer for the interest of any party it is used?

No doubt the computer has an ideal relationship to the increase of production and organization of works and programs related to bilateral relations, but companies and establishments in Yemen, despite of possessing computer machines, many of them do not use but very few.

A field study mentions that the computer in newly used in Yemen and many people are ignorant about how to use it and its benefits. Computers mostly are bought for decoration or for teaching children as for big businesses they do not use it that much. The study estimated the average of

companies and establishment's benefiting from computers as not forming more than 255 of the number of computers possessed by the people and consequently 75% of the computer equipment available at the markets are used at communications centers and internet cafes for browsing.

The study estimated that the Yemeni people are unaware of much information on computer equipment and their programs. Dealers in computer say the desire for possessing computers is dropping in the countryside to a less than 8% while it reaches at 18% in rural areas.

Companies and establishments owners are not acquainted with information provide by computers, especially pertaining to information and statement they need for developing their performance an guaranteeing safety of entering data in time.

Computers help speed up taking correct decisions in time and that would enable the increase of volume of production and other additional works.

We can conclude here that companies and establishments dealing with and using computers in a scientific manner is still at its beginning and the question is needing of support for increasing production.

Why is my son being sent to Iraq?

BY ALEX BELLOTTI JR.*

I saw my son off to the war in Iraq, at 7:30 a.m. Monday. So far it is the hardest thing I have had to do as a parent.

It is a war the American people have been told is over, but it is a war nonetheless. I know — it's now more of a "police action." That's what the Vietnam War was called for some time. But we don't refer to Vietnam as a police action today — we call it "the Vietnam War." Nearly 60,000 Americans lost their lives there before we left in disgrace.

It is a war that we have 130,000 American troops engaged in, a quarter of them guardsmen or reservists. With the deployment that includes my son, the proportion will increase to 40 percent of the U.S. force in Iraq. It is a war, where guardsmen are carrying an increasing toll in casualty numbers. As the Associated Press reported on New Year's Day, two-thirds of all the casualties in Iraq have been men and women in their 20s. A quarter of them have been guardsmen.

My son is 20-year-old PFC Christopher Bellotti, one of 180 soldiers in the 1st Battalion, 107th Field Artillery Regiment, of Pennsylvania's Army National Guard, in Pittsburgh. Like many of today's guardsmen and reservists, Christopher joined the 107th for the educational benefits. Pennsylvania and The National Guard

offered full tuition reimbursement to any state institution of higher education. Thoughts of serving the state during times of crisis, plus the idea of being on a "big gun" crew and actually firing them (and the attractive signing bonus), sealed his fate. When he enlisted at the age of 17 while still in high school, we were told that chances of his unit being deployed were very slim. After all, the 107th had not been called up since Korea — another war that was not a war.

There are three other boys from our old Beechview neighborhood in Christopher's unit: One of them, Bobby Hillen, is the young father of a newborn baby girl — a daughter who won't see her father for a year and a half.

Since the end of major combat, our young men are still dying over there, and I can't really comprehend why. I don't know why President Bush sent our men there in the first place. I don't know why the president was so dead-set against letting U.N. weapons inspectors finish their job there. I want to know why.

I know all of the officially stated reasons: Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and would use them; Saddam Hussein was a cruel and evil dictator who murdered tens of thousands of his own people; he had to be removed from power to make the world safer. But when Donald Rumsfeld, as a special envoy for the Reagan administration, traveled to

Iraq in 1984, the United States was eager to improve relations with Saddam, despite his use of chemical weapons against his own countrymen, the Kurds, and in spite of Congress' condemnation of the use of those weapons. Where was our concern about a safe world then?

I have heard too many things that just don't add up, and I don't believe for one minute that this has made the world safer. In this world of color-coded security alerts and spiraling worldwide terrorist attacks, I certainly do not feel safer.

I don't deny the world is indeed better off without Saddam Hussein. But there are many other countries with just as cruel and evil leaders. The United States has no qualms cozying up to other despots in the region, as in Uzbekistan, whose prisons are filled with thousands of political prisoners, and people are jailed and tortured oftentimes for simply practicing their religion. Will we have to deal with our mistakes in countries such as Uzbekistan in another 20 years, just as we are dealing with our mistakes in Iraq now?

And do we not have a world organization — the United Nations — formed to provide peacekeeping and peacemaking assistance, humanitarian aid and the protection of human rights around the world? The United Nations is not perfect, but it is the best thing we have. As one of the original founding countries of the United



Nations, we must adhere to its bylaws. We can not choose when to follow the United Nations' mandates and when not to. This is not democracy.

I have heard all of the arguments against my beliefs, and been called many things, among them unpatriotic. They don't take into account, or choose to ignore that, when called, I served my country in the Army from 1972 to 1975. I was one of the lucky ones. I received orders for duty in Vietnam, only to have those orders rescinded because our government was pulling soldiers out by then.

I have been told I should be proud of my son, the implication being that I am not. I could not be more proud of

him. I am proud of the man my son has grown up to be. I am proud of the deep sense of humanity and humility he possesses in his heart. I am proud of his devotion to his family, and his unwavering sense of humor. And I am proud that he saw fit to join the National Guard, answering the call of his state and country, as every able American should. But I am not proud of my government asking him to do something I do not believe in.

He is not in Iraq yet. His unit was sent to Fort Dix for a training period of only 30 to 45 days, where they will be retrained as military policemen, before entering Iraq. And while I know in my heart that his orders won't be rescinded as mine were, I

can only hope and pray that his stay in Iraq will be a short and safe one. But in the back of my brain remains that one nagging unmentionable doubt.

And while this chapter ends, another chapter arrives.

As we — the family and friends of our young and not-so-young soldiers — watched them board the three charter buses and drive away from Hunt Armory, the unspeakable silence we were all feeling was briefly broken as we clapped for these, our brave sons and husbands and fathers.

* Alex Bellotti Jr., a U.S. Army veteran and native of Pittsburgh, is a writer and photographer living in Harrisburg, PA.

The Israeli wall of apartheid

BY MARIA VICTORIA VALDES-RODDA FOR GRANMA INTERNATIONAL

More than just a safety belt, as Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon is attempting to sell the idea, the Israeli wall is a measure of force designed to directly intimidate 30% of the Arab population in the West Bank. Initiated June 16, 2002 and 347 kilometers in length, it has the veiled purpose of perpetuating an illegal border demarcation as the foretaste of an independent Palestine, in the event of some of the many Middle East peace initiatives bearing fruit in the near future.

In the last few days, a telling photograph has been circulating on the Internet: A father from the enclosed Palestinian side hoisting his young son over the electrified wire in the hope that his relatives on the other side will take hold of him. The break up of Palestinian families is just one of the many destabilizing effects of the Israeli occupation.

The real essence of the imposed demarcation

The wall is also related to the control of hydraulic resources (69% of the water mass and 36 important drinking water sources are located in the Arab zone), the seizure of the best cultivable

land (14.5%), preventing access to employment in Israel, closing roads and highways or converting the sector of east Jerusalem into an island by 18 kilometers of it encircling the Holy City.

In essence, it is also a way of dividing the geography of a nation into different cantons (separating 14 villages), in order to create an administrative and territorial fragility in the future, making in practice an ungovernable monster: the phantom state.

The wall is born of the distortion of some of the demarcation lines unilaterally established by Israel following the Six Day War, given that just an irrelevant 11% of the current section fell within the UN's so-called "green line" or the old pre-1967 border.

Defying international law

Since Sharon presented the plans for the wall in its totality to the Israeli public last October 24, many organizations and the United Nations in particular have reminded that government of the many violations of international law it is incurring. It is defying what is established in Article 52 of the 1907 Hague Convention and ignoring the regulations stipulated in the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the destruction and confiscation of property in occupied territories.

For its part, the Palestinian

Liberation Organization (PLO) as a whole, and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine as one of its member parties, have criticized the racist attitude of the Israeli government in its persistence to complete the task when many people worldwide are already comparing it with symptoms of South African apartheid.

A report from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs echoed Palestinians' fears by indicating that the lives of some 680,000 people in the so-called semi-autonomous territories are at risk, given that some 400,000 of them located to the east of the barrier will be forced to cross it on a daily basis to reach their agricultural plots, jobs and families, whilst a further 11,000 will remain virtually trapped altogether.

Along with various attempts at disavowal through letters from its Foreign Ministry, on December 11, the Palestinian side, represented by Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia, called for a process of profound reflection in the interests of avoiding major setbacks within bilateral relations that would result in acts of resistance and self-defense in the face of new Israeli annexations in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

"It would be a terrible error to impose a solution on us by force," Qureia told the influential Israeli daily

Maariv. Those words were leveled as a result of a Sharon "initiative" to contribute more million-dollar funds to the security strategy in which the wall is the key bastion. The World Bank itself has said that the construction of each kilometer of the wall costs more than 1.5 million Euros.

"Dismantling the settlements is a positive thing, but if Sharon wants to construct a fence and use it to annex Palestinian land, that is unacceptable. It won't help, it won't be a way out, it will only lead to disaster and unnecessary deaths on both sides", insisted the Palestinian National Authority's prime minister.

Tel Aviv is disguising its colonialist strategy with the announcement that it is to close down dozens of the 150 illegal settlements. It is not committing itself to defining steps in line with international law through a withdrawal of its pre-1967 positions, but is manipulating the situation in order to maintain almost 60% of the West Bank, a significant section of the Gaza strip and 2% of Jerusalem.

This concerns the forcible design of the potential map of an independent Palestine. And it is doing so with its customary language of violence, currently in the form of hundreds of kilometers of concrete, electric fences and 30 military checkpoints in order to resuscitate apartheid.

Where's the outrage?

BY RUTH ROSEN FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

The respected and nonpartisan Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington released on Jan. 8 a long-awaited study whose major conclusion is that the Bush administration "systematically misrepresented" the threat from Iraq's weapons programs.

Three leading nonproliferation experts — Jessica T. Mathews, Joseph Cirincione and George Perkovich — authored the study, which is based on comparisons of declassified U.S. intelligence documents with U.N. weapons inspections reports and Bush administration statements.

Although the authors agree that Iraq's weapons programs potentially constituted a long-term threat, they argue that they did not "pose an immediate threat to the United States, to the region or to global security."

The U.N. inspections, they also conclude, worked far better than realized and proved to be more reliable than American intelligence.

The Carnegie report says that Bush administration officials misrepresented Iraq's threat in three specific ways. First, they lumped together the threat posed by nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, even though there was no serious evidence of nuclear weapons.

Second, they told the American public that Saddam Hussein would give WMD to terrorists, for which there was no evidence.

Third, administration officials omitted "caveats, probabilities and expressions of uncertainty present in intelligence assessments" from their public statements.

In other words, officials used a "worse case" scenario that was not based on actual intelligence.

In early 2002, according to the Carnegie report, the U.S. intelligence community possessed an accurate assessment of Iraq's weapons programs. Soon afterward, a "dramatic shift" occurred as "the intelligence community began to be unduly influenced by policy-makers' views." This change coincided with the creation of a separate intelligence unit, the Office of Special Plans, in the Pentagon.

The Carnegie report — a serious indictment of the Bush administra-

tion's credibility — instantly became the lead story on the British Broadcasting Corporation report and front-page news in newspapers around the world.

Not so in the United States.

On the same day, at a State Department news conference, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell conceded that he had no "smoking gun, concrete evidence" that Saddam Hussein ever had any ties to al Qaeda, the terrorist network responsible for the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Powell's admission contradicts Vice President Dick Cheney's frequent statements that have sought to link Hussein with al Qaeda terrorists.

Also last week, the Bush administration quietly withdrew a military team whose 400 members have scoured Iraq for the biological and chemical weapons cited by the White House as the immediate reason for going to war last March.

This group is part of the larger Iraq Survey Team, whose 1,400 members have spent the last seven months (and hundreds of millions of dollars) trying — but failing — to uncover any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

To many military observers, the withdrawal of this team reflects the administration's tacit acknowledgment that no WMD are likely to be found.

So now we know that the U.S. government misled Congress and the American public.

What will it take for the American people to realize they've been betrayed?

Have we grown so jaded that we no longer expect the truth from our country's leaders?

War is a serious matter, perhaps the most consequential decision ever made by elected leaders. Yet the Bush administration manipulated intelligence and then sent tens of thousands of young people off to war for reasons that have yet to be revealed. As a result, hundreds of soldiers have died and thousands more have been injured, and for what purpose?

Some will greet all this news with a yawn. "Haven't we heard all this before?" they will ask. "We know there weren't any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. We know there never was an imminent threat. So get over it."

But I won't. And neither should you.

America's red ink

EDITORIAL NEW YORK TIMES

The International Monetary Fund has long been accused of failing to sound the alarm before countries with reckless fiscal policies implode. So it was nice to see staff members of the fund's Western Hemisphere department hold a press conference last week to publicize one nation's worrisome trends, which threaten foreign investors and the global economy.

Who was in for the scolding? Haiti? Argentina? Mexico? Not exactly. It's the United States the fund is worried about. An economic slowdown and President Bush's huge tax cuts con-

spired to swing America's federal budget from a surplus of 2.5 percent of gross domestic product in 2000 to a deficit of some 4 percent in 2003. Add the states' own budget shortfalls and the country's trade deficit, the I.M.F. report notes, and the United States faces an "unprecedented level of external debt for a large industrial country."

Robert Rubin, the former Treasury secretary, and Donald Kohn, a Federal Reserve governor, have also railed against the deficit in recent days. But there is something humbling about hearing it from an international organization charged with monitoring economies on the brink.

In most countries, the I.M.F. is often viewed as America's agent, preaching the inconvenient gospel of fiscal disci-

pline and austerity. There is a certain poignancy now in having the I.M.F. preach the so-called "Washington consensus" to Washington.

The I.M.F. forcefully argues that the United States will need to adjust taxes and spending to bring its finances under control; the recovery alone won't do it. The fund's report warns that America's profligacy and its voracious appetite for credit will drive up interest rates around the world, threatening the global economic recovery and American productivity growth.

Foreign investors are already selling the dollar in reaction to Washington's fiscal recklessness, but the fund warns that this selling could accelerate and create a currency crisis. It also notes that present trends pose dangers for the

future of Medicare and Social Security.

Most damning of all, the report attacks the "complicated and nontransparent manner" in which the administration's \$1.7 trillion in tax cuts were enacted, designed as they were to mask their true budgetary impact. The I.M.F.'s frustration is understandable. The United States has provided other nations with a terrible model of obfuscatory governance. Congress and the Bush administration enacted "phased in" tax cuts that were supposed to be retired in a decade, accelerated their phasing in and then, after they were priced under the assumption that they would fade away, pledged to make them permanent.

No wonder the rest of the world is appalled.

Al-Hittar: "US and western states supported sending mujahideen youth"

BY MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Judge Hamoud Abdulhameed Mohammed Al-Hittar, a prominent Yemeni Islamic figure now a member of the Supreme Court of Yemen. He is one of the Judiciary Higher Institute graduates and holds Masters Degree in Islamic sciences. He's been working in judiciary since his graduation.

There have been many explanations and definitions given to the meaning of terror. Each side or party defines it in its own way. America and some western countries for instance are prejudiced against Islam in general and the Wahabi, the Sunni and al-Jama' sect in particular. They visualize them as if they have sown terror all over the world and threatening mankind.

Since terror has been for some years a controversial issue especially in determining its definition and meaning

recognizable internationally and to end the never-ending argument about it, we find it very significant to sound out ideas and viewpoints of experts in various scientific fields including religious and legalist. The main aim is to reach a definition for terror acceptable and agreed upon by various political, social and legal spectra. To this end the Yemen Times reporter Mohammed Bin Sallam has interviewed one of the renowned Yemeni Islamic jurists Judge al-Hittar to get acquainted with Yemeni jurisconsults' definition of terror and who could be described as terrorists.

We have asked him first to respond to the prejudice launched against Islam and Muslims, to which his answers were rather characterised by a diplomatic style, avoiding many of queries but he promised to give detailed answers in proper time. On our part we figured out that he is right in his stance if we take into consideration that all the Islamic leaderships abstain from replying to America and he west statements in this regard for one reason or another.

Q: There has been much talk about terrorism, and as Muslims we have not yet given a specific explanation to it, we may not agree with the western definition, could you give us your definition?

A: Definition of terror is still an object of dispute between Arab and Islamic countries on the one hand and others on the other. There are serious differences on the concept of terror and the kind of acts that could be described as terrorist or to form an act of terror. Arab interior and justice ministers have to reach at a concept of terror in compatibility with the agreement on combating terror despite that the concept mentioned in the agreement does not agree with definitions mentioned in Arab countries laws.

There is in fact a Yemeni call for holding an international conference to discuss the issues of terror and to come out with a clear-cut explanation for it. At all events all acts of aggression are terror according to the Islamic law viewpoint.

Q: Who is the terrorist?

A: He is the one who perpetrates aggression on others and causes with his acts horror to those living peaceful life.

Q: Could those who used to work under the umbrella of Jihad and dissemination of Islam in many countries such as Afghanistan, Bosnia Herzegovina and Chechnya be categorized as aggressors and terrorists?

A: This title cannot be given to them all. Some people have a mistaken understanding of Islam and as a result they adopt an extremist or exaggerated religious stands and out of this come the terrorist acts. Terrorism and extremism can result from ideological origins and consequently some people carry out such acts for achieving religious ends without perceiving reality of those acts that may form contravention of Islam. Some individuals or groups that perpetrated some terrorist acts in some Arab, Islamic and other world countries may have thought their acts as being jihad for the sake of God but in fact they are crimes punishable according to the Islamic law.

Q: Since when have you begun to realize there is terrorism in Yemen? You haven't mentioned that a long time ago.

A: Terrorism is not a modern phenomenon; it has a long history, before Islam and after it. There has been recently much talk about terror, especially in the nineties and beginning of the third millennium. Mentioning and talking about terror gained higher pitch and increased the world over in the wake of September 11 events. The talk on terror in Yemen has been coming to surface between every now and then.

Terrorism and extremism can result from ideological origins and consequently some people carry out such acts for achieving religious ends without perceiving reality of those acts that may form contravention of Islam.

But since terrorist act have begun to pose danger to security and safety of the society particularly since the incident of Abyan governorate where aggression took place against foreign tourist there has been the loud cry that said no to terror in Yemen.

Q: What groups can be pronounced as terrorists? What do you think of such group of the society?

A: Terrorism has no religion or certain land. There are terrorists affiliated to various religions, not only Muslims. There are polytheist and Jew terrorists committing terrorist acts. But it seems that in Yemen terrorist acts are connected to specific groups formerly affiliated to al-Qaeda, Jihad and Aden-Abyan army organisations. Thank God most of those groups who had affiliation with those organisations before the dialogue held with them have abandoned their affiliation after the dialogue.

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Q: The total number of Yemenis and non-Yemenis who were calling themselves "Afghan Arabs" and came to Yemen till the beginning of 1994 is estimated at 32 thousands, how many of them are still in Yemen? Have they all become terrorists whereas, you used to call them mujahideen?

A: Not all who came from Afghanistan are terrorists or extremists. Many of them went to Afghanistan in response to call by Muslim scholars for jihad against the Soviet Union while it was occupying the Afghan territories. They had obeyed calls by Arab and Islamic governments and supported by America and western governments. They maintained their holy war till the end of the Cold War and collapse of the Soviet Union. All have then abandoned them thereafter. After they used to be welcomed as guests in any Arab, Islamic or non-Islamic capital, they are now hunted down wherever they hide. The only problem lies in those who harbour ideas of al-Qaeda organisation.

Q: But most or all of those who were in Afghanistan or Chechnya or Bosnia Herzegovina are being arrested and doomed as terrorists.

A: It is not like that for those who went to Afghanistan at the time of the Afghan jihad against the Soviet Union. Arrests included those who went to Afghanistan after dismantle of the Soviet Union and end of the cold War. Religious scholars say judgment changes according to time, venue and situation. That has been declared as legal opinion by Muslim jurisconsults and none has disagreed with them, even the Christian religious scholars or others. They have all been in agreement on the imperativeness of confronting the Soviet Union during its occupation of Afghanistan. After withdrawal of the soviet forces and collapse of the Soviet Union the dispute developed among the Afghan factions and

jihad had no longer been a legal duty as before.

Q: We perceive what had been going on under the cover of jihad was rather a conflict between the communism and capitalism and its arena was Afghanistan and other areas, were the Arabs and Muslims used as tools for those wars by their own will or were forced?

A: Perhaps interests of Muslims and the west concurred in ending the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. No doubt America played a big role in that war and was the major supporter for the Afghan war then and it is the greatest beneficiary from collapse of the Soviet Union. The conflict was then going on between the capitalist pole led by America and the communist pole led by the Soviet Union. The war in Afghanistan and many other areas was an extension of the conflict between the two world superpowers for settling their accounts.

Q: do you affirm that the American dictates to some Arab and Islamic states such as Saudi Arabia and Gulf countries that used to send the mujahideen to side with it against communism?

A: Possibly the American influence on some Arab and Islamic regimes was evident and consequently made those regime influence their religious scholars who gave legal advice for jihad.

Q: Who then could be responsible for that and could be accountable for those numbers of Yemenis to Afghanistan, Chechnya and Bosnia Herzegovina under cloak of jihad? Who were the countries that were supporting them at that time?

A: We are here not in respect of discussing this question. To deal with each of the cases we can determine the responsibility for each. I'd like to say those youth went to fight in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union in obedience to legal opinion the scholars under demand of their respective Arab and Islamic governments with support of the United States and other western states.

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Q: Why don't you call in the first place to the accountability of those who imperiled the life of those Yemeni youth under naming now you think it is terror?

A: No Muslim scholar has called on any person to commit terrorist acts. Maybe some of the youth have carried with them the idea of the imperativeness of jihad in Afghanistan and that mobilization continued during the Cold War period and the legal opinions of jihad been used by some people who wish to achieve personal interests at the expense of Islam and Muslims.

Q: You have talked much in press and television interviews about religious tolerance moderateness, why was this not mentioned before?

A: I admit that the religious moderate address was absent over periods of time and now it has become an urgent necessity for the embodiment of the spirit of Islam. Islam is the religion of moderateness and extremism has nothing to do with Islam.

After the successive events in the Islamic world and the world in general it has become so important for the Muslim scholars to reconsider the religious address and to proceed in their address from the religious precepts and to return to the bases stipulated in the Koran and the prophet tradition governing relations with non-Muslims. The essence is that the Muslims relations with others are based on security and peace. It has prohibited the killing the soul that God prohibited to kill and should not be there any aggression on people despite of the religion, or colour or gender, origin or because of an economic or political or social position.

Q: You mentioned about the release by Yemen authorities of tens of those suspected of having links to al-Qaeda organisation after religious dialogue with them, how many of them remained and did you meet all those prisoners?

A: The dialogue included all the persons detained since the events of 11 September and the crisis of terror. The decision taken by the government of Yemen stipulated those accused by criminal issues to court and release others who are not accused of such cases. After the first round of dialogue 36 persons were released and were put under observation for a year. Reports have proved the good commitment of the released as a result of dialogue. That step encouraged the Yemeni government to take a bigger step and so another group of 92 persons were also released in addition to promising another 54 persons who have voluntarily surrendered themselves to security authorities and committed themselves to results of dialogue.

Q: Where all the groups depicted as terrorist almost affiliated to the Wahabi sect as the American and the west describe them? How can you convince them while you are not a Wahabi?

A: Dialogue was based on evidence and sound logic and ideology of the Sunni and Jama'a is known to us. We discuss out of the evidence that their ideology is based on and we can not hold a certain creed the responsibility of what has happened.

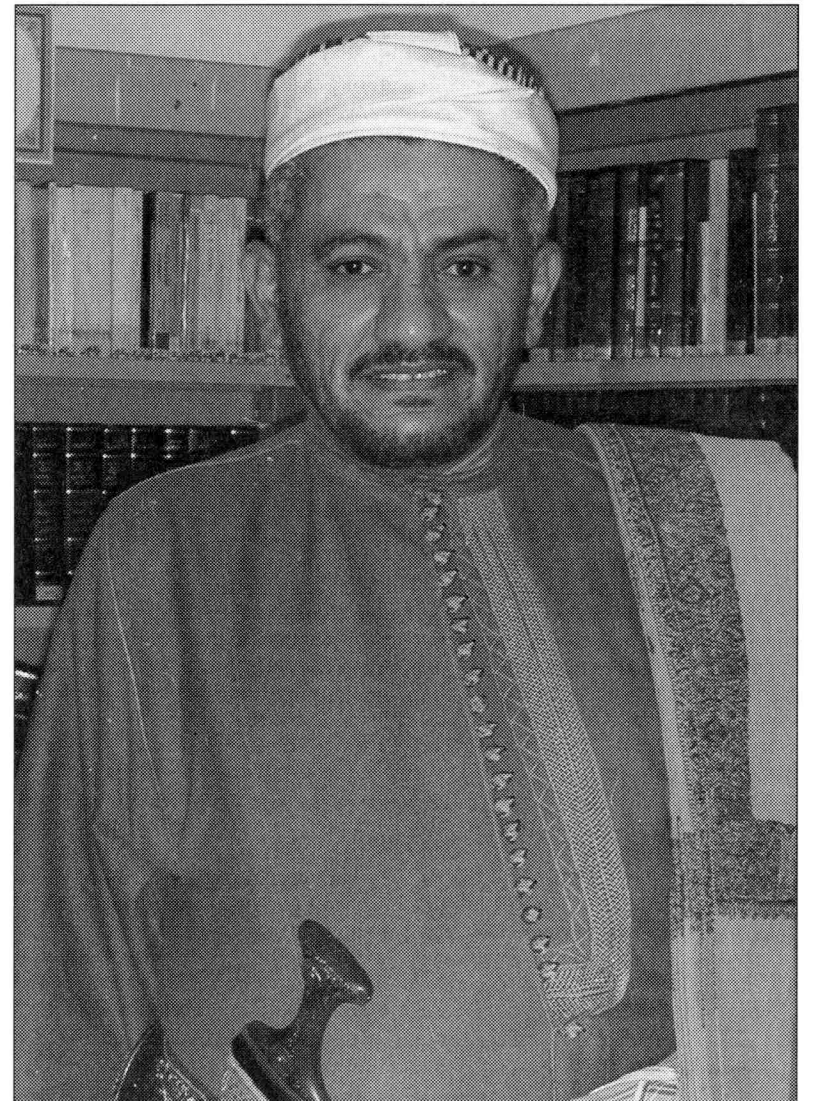
Q: Have those got convinced to abandon the Wahabi doctrine and join another faith?

A: Our mission is not for making them discard a certain faith but rather convincing them to the good conduct represented by abandoning violence, extremism and terror as well as commitment to the constitution and valid laws. They have to abide by preserving security and stability, respect non-Muslims rights, not to attack embassies or interests of sisterly and friendly countries, not to interfere with any person entering Yemen under permission of concerned authorities even if he were carrying nationality of country with which we are at war or not having relations with it as long as he was guaranteed safety by the state, even if he is carrying the Israeli nationality, he should not be exposed to aggression.

Q: Many of those have spent years in Yemeni prisons without trial or certain charges and then you say charges on many of were not proved but you do not apologize from them criticize the authorities that imprisoned them, is not that contradicting the Yemeni laws or human rights and heavenly laws? Or was that just a policy for appeasing America and the west?

A: Our task was ideological and had no relation to investigations or judicial security aspects. Out of this we held dialogue with them.

We are not concerned with legitimacy of capturing or imprisonment, ours is an ideological one. Since the events of 11 September and the world is living



Judge Hamoud Abdulhameed Mohammed Al-Hittar

into a state of emergency and Yemen is part of this world. what happened in Yemenis the same that did in other Islamic and Arab countries and in countries known as more advanced in the question of human rights such as the United States, France, Germany, and Britain and others. It can be said that the events of September are like the straw that broke the camel's back with regard to human rights.

Q: During your dialogue with those youth, have not they offered grievances, didn't they complain that they were unjustly imprisoned and haven't they asked you to convey their grievances to international organisations?

A: The persons with whom we held dialogue have requested legitimate demands concerning the constitutional and legal aspects. Most of those requests were for sending the defendants with criminal issues to judiciary or to release others who are not accused of such issues. They also asked for stopping illegal pursuits against them as well as studying the issue of an amnesty for the persons who were convicted and committed to results of the dialogue. We have conveyed all those demands to the concerned authorities and a decision was taken to release all those persons arrested without a legal justification.

Q: Some media reported of American and Western objections to the release of more than 54 of the group of Aden-Abyan army after their arrest for a short time though some of the intercepted a military convoy last year resulting in killing and wounding many Yemenis, was their release for a deal or some power centres that protect them mediated for their release?

A: That news was groundless. American objections were to the suspects of the incident of Cole. Those people for sure were not included in the release process and would be sent to court after finishing legal procedures. As for other persons their imprisonment was not in response to American demands and there were no American objections to their release. Yemen is a sovereign country and there is no deal as some would like to mention. The amnesty for them was issued in embodiment of the Koran texts. They have declared their repentance before their capture and took the initiative to turn down themselves and according to law they are pardoned.

Q: What of the blood shed in the incident?

A: This will be considered according

to the law.

Q: Have you dialogued those accused of blasting destroyer Cole and Limburg tanker?

A: We have conversed with all persons detained after the 11 September events and certainly they were included in that but the ideas in their minds are still as they were for some still think that these acts are considered jihad. Measures to be taken against them would be according to the law.

It can be said that the events of September are like the straw that broke the camel's back with regard to human rights.

Q: Commercial guarantees were demanded from the persons who had been released, why specifically commercial not others? Was that for making it too difficult for them to keep them in prison?

A: We recommended the setting free of persons not wanted for criminal issues or those detained without legal justifications. The guarantees were asked by security authorities and were justifiable. The guarantees do not form any hindrance any way. The first released group has brought the requested guarantees and also those who were decided to be released among the second group. Those who could not bring a commercial guarantee could bring a guarantor.

Yemen under permission of concerned authorities even if he were carrying nationality of country with which we are at war or not having relations with it as long as he was guaranteed safety by the state, even if he is carrying the Israeli nationality, he should not be exposed to aggression.

Q: On what bases the detained were released while some were kept behind though they were accused of the same issues?

A: Those released persons were not accused of criminal issues but were detained for precautionary reasons after the events of 11 September and security authorities were unable to do something about them. After we ended dialogue with them and the results we had reached they were released. As for the criteria they were results of the dialogue, security danger and extent of commitment to those results.

Q: There are still in Yemen many religious institutes, like the Salafi responsible for mobilization for terror, why the state does not work for closing them down or put them under its control?

A: As a committee we have laid a dialogue foundation and have raised a recommendation to the president of the republic and in turn he had sent it to those institutes calling on them to depend moderateness in preaches, and programs and curricula especially in important questions. It is not necessary for the state to close down these establishments but the important thing is moderateness and discarding extremism and all forms of terror. I think there are many in these institutes who are in charge and he had told them to commit to the curricula of education. They are now under the nose of the authority. If they would not change or rectify their conditions now they would do that in future. I think you have observed the president's address at Hudeida University as it was addressed to those universities and institutes to abide by stabilizing moderateness.

Q: What are the main short and long-run goals the authority has drawn for dialogue with hardliners?

A: There are certain and clear aims for the dialogue, they are in brief; the embodiment of Islam's moderateness and tolerance, fighting all forms of extremism and terror, rights of the ruler and obeying him, abiding by the constitution, enhancement of protection of rights guaranteed by Islam for non-Muslims in the Islamic community, respect of agreements between the Yemeni republic and non-Islamic states and protection of their embassies, keeping promises, stabilization of security and stability of the republic of Yemen and giving safety guarantees to persons entering its territories under permission of the state concerned authorities.

Q: What's the American and the west's stances regarding the Yemeni government approach with the extremists?

A: Dialogue is a Yemeni idea that has received American and western support and welcome because what is the product of thought could not be solved but by thought. Problems originated from thought could be resolved by dialogue because force would increase the idea and strengthen it. Would you accept an idea imposed on you by someone else, can you accept it by force? Dialogue is the ideal means to solve ideological problems. It is not in interest of the United States to continue in military confrontation that might not result in the impact entailed.

Frankly speaking, the wrong ideas about Islam that have been inflicted on

Dialogue is the ideal means to solve ideological problems. It is not in interest of the United States to continue in military confrontation that might not result in the impact entailed.

Islam and Muslims due conspiracies and intrigues he severest damage. Some reckless acts and behaviour gave America justifications. Were it not for those act America would not have reached to Iraq and would not be able to tighten its military grip on the entire world.

Q: Are you with the American stand in invading Iraq and Afghanistan?

A: I am against practices not having any relationship with Islam and against pretexts giving others the justification to impinge on its position or sovereignty or independence of our nation.

Q: Do you think many of those youth were deceived by some power centers claiming jihad for Islam?

A: I am with the dialogue for rectifying the wrong concepts the some is trying to fix in their souls. They have felt the importance of the results we reached through dialogue. They represent ideological convictions rather than a mistake imposed by one party on another. When those people announced their commitment to the constitution and valid laws, including the law for political parties and political organisations that bans any party formed on military formations basis or includes in its membership such formations and prohibits joining it, that means they have discarded any affiliation to any armed organisation.

Q: When do you think the trial would be for those condemned of criminal issues, why the delay?

A: The two big incidents deemed as the most significant acts of terror in the Yemen; the incidents of Cole and Limburg have their justification and some persons were captured inside Yemen and others abroad. Some of them Yemen received from sisterly countries and others Yemen is still hoping to have them repatriated so that the trial can begin. Moreover, a number of those accused of in the incident of Cole like Abu Asem al-Ahdal have not been directly dialogued by me so far, though there were some indirect dialogues. There is nothing preventing the holding of direct dialogue with him.

Q: Any final comment?

A: I'd like to thank you for the opportunity of this interview and God's mercy for my brother and colleagues.

I send a call to all Arab governments, telling them that dialogue is the best means for solving ideological problems from which terror stems. Sooner or later they would have to have dialogue and it is better to begin it before it is too late. It is a call for all Arab and Islamic regimes.

league Dr Abdulaziz al-Saqqaf. I send a call to all Arab governments, telling them that dialogue is the best means for solving ideological problems from which terror stems. Sooner or later they would have to have dialogue and it is better to begin it before it is too late. It is a call for all Arab and Islamic regimes. I think the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has begun to take dialogue steps and it may yield good results. Everything can face difficulties at the beginning but I don't believe merely thinking of dialogue could be an important step, let alone that embarking on implementing dialogue is considered another step.

Continued from Back page

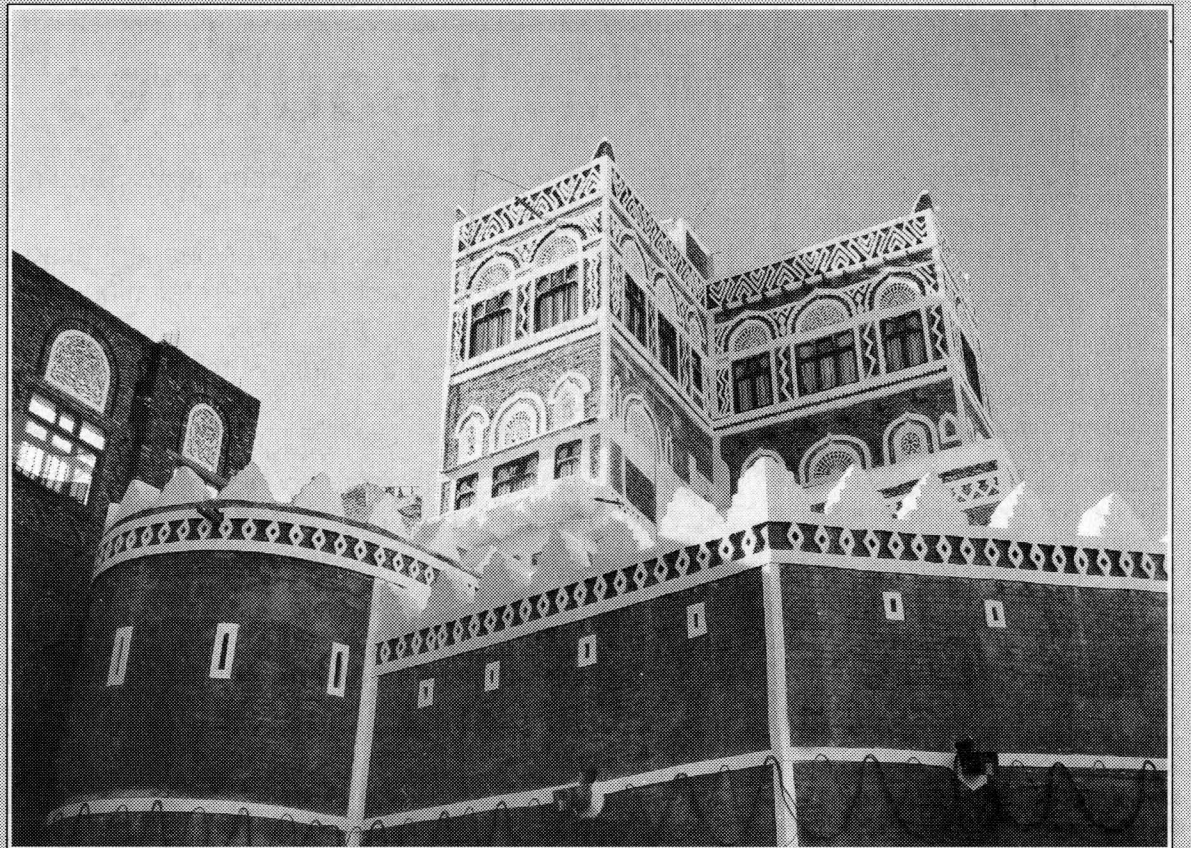
Old City of Sana'a, glory and pride

Architectural beauty

Sana'a as a city has a hidden touch of beauty symbolized through its liveliness along with its obvious beauty through its architecture. There are various structures composing the city, there is the Samsara which is a place where travellers stay over night and where goods are stored, the market places, the steam Turkish baths, schools and mosques, all together making this city fulfill all demands that could come from the people or the visitors. All these monuments form together or individually a rich heritage that narrates historical stories and legends.

Historians could not tell exactly the date of which this kind of architectural style, which is influenced by the Himiari style of construction almost seven centuries old.

Construction in Sana'a basically consists of a huge foundation underground basement which is supported by Habash stone, these are small black irregular shaped stones known for their strength and resistance to humidity. The houses are generally composed of a number of stories sometimes reaching eight floors, with a fence that surrounds them. The ground floor is generally used as store, the first floor generally as living rooms and guest rooms where spacious rooms are made to accommodate many people in meetings and celebrations. The second floor is generally dedicated to women and chil-



Old Sana'a architecture is genuine and unique not to be found in any other part in the world

Photo by M. S. Noman

one of the world's architecture wonders, especially that the closeness and characteristics of the people are reflected in the beauty, pride and proximity of the buildings.

Markets revealing a past commercial activity.

Sana'a has represented distinguished commercial activities during many historical periods of time for it served old Markets before the Yemenites embraced Islam, of those markets which it served as a pivotal point are:-

Okaz, Dumat Al-Jandal, Hajar and Aden. Sana'a was the most crucial point on the Laudanum, Myrrh and Incense Caravan Routes particularly those coming from Aden passing through Sana'a all along to Mecca. Of the main routes Darb Asaad Al-Kamil (later termed as Darb Al-Feel). The Souk in Sana'a used to be held around the time of Mid-Ramadan and was the most prominent. Other prominent Arab ancient Markets are "Al-Moshqar" now named Hofuf, Sohar and Daba on the Arabian Sea, Shahar Mahrat on the Arabian Sea, Aden & Okaz.

The old city of Sana'a now holds markets named as follows:-

Souk Al-Milh, Souk Al-Zabeeb, Souk Al-Kat, Typical Yemeni Daggers Market, Al-Mikhlas, Silver Souk, Loqma Souk, Textiles Souk, Copper Souk, Traditional Costumes Souk, Autumn Souk, Fruits Souk, Nadara and embroidery Souk.

These souks represent a popular heritage, as Sana'a was renowned since yore for its distinguished dagger industry, Silver, Copper and Yemeni Agate in addition to land cultivation tools and pottery of all types.

Some handicrafts date back more than 2000 years and are inherited from father to Son throughout the

years such as Smithery, Tanning, Dyeing, Textiles and Leather.

An International Patrimony:

In The last two decades, namely in 1984, Sana'a was proclaimed an International Cultural Patrimony by the UNESCO and an International Campaign was declared in order to preserve this patrimony with its tremendously distinguished architecture after sensing that the city is apt to fade away due to the modernization process which came only natural due to the fact that the people wanted to change their life patterns particularly following the boom witnessed by this country during the seventies of the past century.

The cooperation by the UNESCO with the local state organs was able to a large extent to foil all attempts aiming at changing the architectural and city external and internal appearance.

Now, the old city of Sana'a contains a number of museums and important places which reflect the great cultural heritage of this country. Thus, the protection of all historical, architectural and cultural sites as well as the archaeological excavations to come and the constant need for readying the city to receive tourists, is considered to a large extent the responsibility of everybody.

All in all, Sana'a remains the most prominent historical Arab City in the Arabian Peninsula, given its being a living museum and its architectural, spiritual, historical and exceptional nature, which requires more protection and restoration aiming at preserving its true identity.

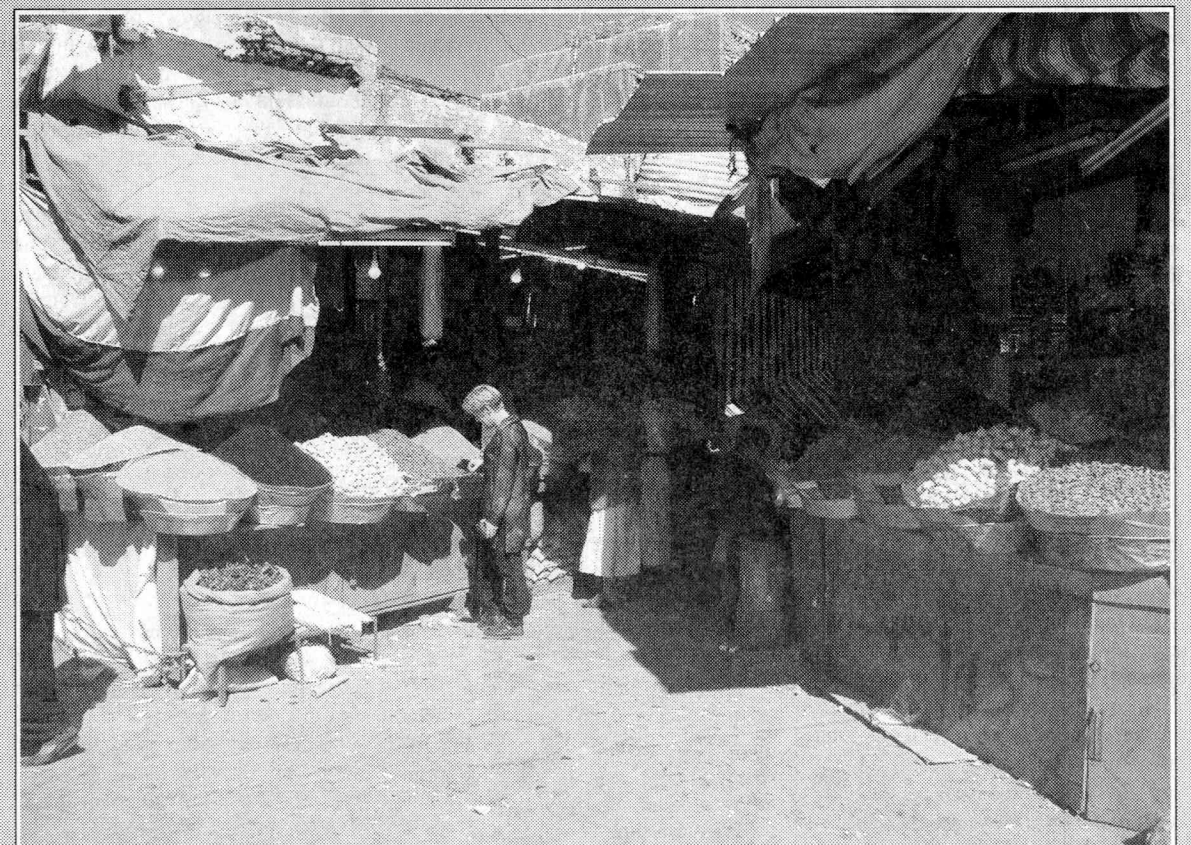


People crowds in one of Old Sana'a allies

dren and the men are generally at the highest floors where there is what is called in Yemen "al-Mafrag" which is a room at the top of the house with glass windows through which they can view the outside gardens while they are in Qat sessions. The design of houses is done carefully taking care regarding the weather changes and the temperature.

The distinguished architectural designs for old buildings in Sana'a are always considered of the architecture wonders worldwide. Starting from the foundation stones in order to keep the balance of the building and its strength to support the many stories. Also the construction using the special stones is effective for the environment and does natural cooling and ventilation effects. The stories are connected with spiral staircases that link to all rooms in the house. An interesting part is that the higher the building is the narrower or the smaller the rooms are built, perhaps for an engineering purpose. And the building rocks of the houses are fitted with cement and other materials that maintain its strength in a way that resists earthquakes and storms.

The city really is worth becoming



Part of souk Al-Milh

تهانينا والف مبروك

أجمل التهاني وأطيب التبريكات نرفها للشباب الخلق

علي حمود الثلثيا

بمناسبة دخوله القصر الذهبي

الف مبروك وعقبال البكري

المهنتون: نائل الميسري، خالد المساجدي، أحمد زليل، محمد وعارف

قليل، وضاح المشريقي، طه الدرهم، محمد أبو علي وسالم صبيح.

Local Press

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr



Al-Shumou weekly, 10 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Exchanged accusations between endowments minister and his deputies on standing behind influential persons to seize endowments lands
- Observers; Al-Tayyib is behind ill preparation for democracy and human rights conference
- Hamoud Munassar, Raufa Hassan, prominent candidates to journalists chairman post
- Central apparatus report discloses facts on Najad and Sabrulmawadim electricity project

Columnist Rashida al-Qaily confirms in her article that the international legitimacy has become just a stick in the hands of America which has become looking at the world as if it cattle it hits with the stick of international legitimacy and lashes with the whip of fighting terror. America does all this for the sake of its interests not for the world peace. None threatens the world peace except the axis of evil composed of America, Israel and Britain when it falls in love with Washington.

It can be a good opportunity to remind the democracy and human right conference held in Sana'a of some of America's crimes against human rights and freedoms in the world. In its aggression on Iraq dubbed as "Dust Storm" the American military forces dropped around 90 thousand tons of bombs equal to sevenfold and half of the power of the bomb of Hiroshima in addition to launching 50 thousand missiles depleted uranium projectiles on Iraq.

America itself wants to exclude its citizens from being subject to laws and provisions of the international criminal court. There is no surprise in that because America is the power in the world that committed crimes against humanity. Human memory is unable to remember the huge quantity and way of organic alliance between America and crimes against humanity such as what happened to the red Indians, Africans, Japan, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Somalia and Palestine in addition to its crimes cooked on a simmering fire against world nations by imposing governments allied to it or supporting oppressive dictatorships or taking destructive economic measures ...etc. of the series of the evil hobbies on which America's rulers and politicians are addicted.



Al-Thawri weekly, organ of YSP, 8 Jan 2004.

Main headlines:

- Two YSP leaders, Ghalib and Salami met a number of European Union ambassadors
- Human rights in Yemen, "transparent" oppression, "public" torture
- YSP organisation in Socotra warns of transferring ownership of its headquarters
- Saudi boycott heralds postponement of Yemen joining the GCC

On democracy in Yemen the columnist Jamal Amer says the regime in Yemen boasts of hosting the international conference on democracy and human rights. Our regime's understanding of democracy does not go beyond the freedom of screaming and writing that must not impinge upon the policy-maker in this country but if it does so what is written does not change one example event of corruption even if he has offered hundreds of official documents. Similar to that is the regime's understanding of human rights which, out of the regime's viewpoint, means protection of the influential ones. Those who eat the citizens sustenance under the cover of laws approved by a parliamentary majority most of them from sheikhs, military and big businessmen and their sons. These are too far from feeling the hunger of the people. The authority in Yemen escapes from application of democracy and practicing it to searching for a brilliant form for it that does not go beyond the the-

Main headlines

- Security strict measures accompany Sana'a democracy conference
- Intelligence official attempted assassination failed
- Yemen bans Saudi products in retaliation for Saudi boycott
- Released students tell the story of their arrest circumstances, sue Bajammal
- Despite objection to way of ignoring, the JMP decides to attend democracy conference
- 14 trade unionists detained in Hadramout
- Journalists emphasize on withdrawing their draft law
- JMP decides participation in international conference on democracy and human rights
- Dispute stepped up on purging membership of journalists syndicate
- Concluding a visit to Turkey, Syrian president warns against dangers of partitioning Iraq
- Iraqi diplomats stage hunger strike
- Roundtable on international criminal court
- Reports on arrival of 13 American media men, among them two Israelites
- In a dangerous escalation of Sana'a University events, GPC accuses Islah of instigating problems, parliamentary committee not legal
- Sana'a hosts the largest international demonstration on democracy and human rights
- President Saleh reviews Yemen's vision of democracy and its positive developments on the national arena
- PM: Yemen's delegation to the conference groups all political parties and civil society organisations
- Al-Suhaibi: sales tax law would be subjected to amendments, no need to campaign against it
- Government discusses conditions for operating container port in Aden
- The president reiterates Yemen's support for struggle of the Palestinian people
- Large-scale international and Arab participation in Sana'a conference on democracy, human rights and law
- Participating delegations: Yemen's hosting of the regional conference confirms the world appreciation for its democratic regime
- WB extends \$40 million to fund a project for preserving subterranean waters in Yemen
- Saudi Arabia lifts ban on Yemeni agricultural products
- 3rd meeting of working group between Yemen and GCC held

oretic feature by hosting activities concerned with democracy. Thus the authority thinks it has become democratic and has the right to ascend the chair of a master and teaching other regimes and instruct them to attain democracy perfection.



Annas weekly, 12 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Europe cold winter enkindles fire of prices in Yemen
- In Taiz and Ibb, season of girls kidnapping
- Reconciliation efforts fail to disengage family disputes in Tamar
- American pressures prevent participation of Saudi foreign minister and Jordan's Queen from attending democracy conference in Sana'a
- Ibb: Prisoners at criminal investigations prison threaten to disclose means of torture used for the first time

Columnist Dr Faris al-Saqaf says in his article as soon as it was announced officially that the democracy conference to start in Sana'a the active movement began in Sana'a. For the first time the conference convening seemed as a surprise for politicians in Yemen particularly that they think themselves as representing civil

society organizations and formations of partisan action and imagine they are active democratically in the domain of human rights and the law.

They wonder how could that happen that a conference held in their capital and could not be knowing about it and its topics and discussions.

Whatever courses the argument takes it is a fact that Yemen is smart enough to take the initiative for hosting the conference. It is an act very useful for the political and democratic life. Repetition of Yemen's embracing of such meetings would give Yemen a feature of democratic changes and political reform so that its announcements are altered into commitments and responsibilities.



Al-Shoura weekly, organ of the People's Forces Union of Yemen, 11 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Opposition wavers of boycotting democracy conference
- Dr al-Mutawakil: Opposition parties play their national role despite of difficulties
- 16 new detainees from the Grand Mosque
- Israel's curse prevails over democracy conference
- Jawf teachers maintain their strike
- Journalists Syndicate membership list to be published on 20 Jan

Columnist Dr Abdumalik al-Mutawakil says in an article the conferences of democracy and human rights in which official and public delegations take part are changed into a flagrant outward appearance of despotism and violation of human rights. Governments protocols impose discrimination between the government delegations and the public delegations under various pretexts such as security requirements. Governments are governments and the public is a public and there is no way for their meeting.

It would have been taken easily if the matter was related to places of eating, residence and means of transport, but to have such phenomenon extended to keeping representatives of the people silent and only official delegations have the right to speak and distribute duties at the conference of democracy and human rights, that is a matter too difficult to keep silent about unless the people's representatives have got used to suppression and weakness.



Al-Mithaq weekly, organ of the GPC, 12 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- President Saleh: Democracy is the choice of peoples for security, development and future
- Dr al-Eryani: Democracy imposed from outside would continue, Arab general orientation towards development of democracy
- Al-Amal Bank for small loans, declared
- Aden Governorates puts the final touches for closing down nationalized houses file

Columnist Dr Abdulaziz al-Maqaleh says in his article we have to remember well that profound political and economic analyses that preceded the war on Iraq were all pointing to oil and nothing than that. Oil was the first and last goal of that war and the talk about democracy is like the talk about the weapons of mass destruction as a kind of deceit and throwing dust in the eyes of the idiots. The documents that the British intelligence had published last week on American plans for invading the Gulf and Saudi Arabia in 1973 confirmed in a way not allowing any chance for doubt in credibility of the political and economic analyses that pinpointed that the Arab oil is a premonition of the American administration since that time, i.e. since 1873 and perhaps before that date.

What really saddens is that there are still some information forums defending the forces of occupation under feeble justifications and exposed calls such as the allegations of "liberation" and "spread of democracy".



26 September weekly, organ of the Yemen Armed Forces, 8 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- President Saleh: Cannot develop military establishment without comprehension of modern sciences
- Shoura Council recommends reduction of car customs at similar rate of the GCC states
- Communications and naval affairs minister: New airport in Sana'a, port in Socotra, completion of liberating overland transportation
- Annexing Bura' still under study

Columnist Iskandar al-Asbahi writes in his article saying the world is holding dialogue with Sana'a as the capitals embraces two large activities representing the focal of interest. The first is connected with the regional conference on democracy and human rights and role of international criminal court. Organizers of the conference selected Sana'a for holding this conference is due to what Sana'a has offered in the field of democratic change and human rights. Response of participants to this high-level presence by representatives of governments, international and regional organisations, parliaments, civil society organisations, thinkers, writers and media men comes in appreciation of the good reputation Yemen entertains in its policies and relations.

World Press

Major news items in leading international newspapers

Provided by Xinhua

Egypt

Al Ahram
US Assistant Secretary of State for Mideast Affairs William Burns arrived in Cairo on Monday on a brief visit to Egypt.

Burns is to hold talks with Egyptian officials on the latest Mideast development.

Al Akhbar
Egyptian-Moroccan summit will begin in Cairo on Tuesday as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak

and Moroccan King Mohammed VI will probe the developments of peace process in the Middle East, situation in the occupied territories and Iraq, in addition to means to enforce the roadmap peace plan.

The Egyptian Gazette
Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa refuted claims that the next Arab summit will be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, stressing that the summit will be held in Tunisia on time.

Britain

The Independent
The Royal Courts of Justice will host the opening of a trial unprecedented in British legal history: The Bank of England stands accused of lying to the government and the wider world for nearly 20 years over the notorious collapse of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

The Guardian
A committee of MPs claims in a report on Tuesday that it is very easy for the public to evade tax and the government is losing between two-three billion pounds a year through evasion and a failure by officials to

chase the cheats.
The Daily Telegraph
The Inland Revenue should investigate tax evasion more rigorously because fraudsters probably believe that the chance of being caught is remote, MPs say on Tuesday.

The Times
A leaked memo reveals Tuesday how former ministers are organizing a sophisticated whipping operation to defeat British Prime Minister Tony Blair in his "make or break" Commons vote on top-up tuition fees.

Japan

Asahi, Mainichi, Nihon Keizai, Yomiuri
Japan's first bird flu outbreak in 79 years killed about 6,000 chickens.

Mainichi
About 60 percent of prefectural governors across Japan are dissatisfied with Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's national and local fiscal reforms.

Nihon Keizai
Japan's welfare ministry is to create framework about merging nurseries and kindergartens.

Yomiuri
Japanese government mulls appointing a professor from Tokyo University as ambassador to the United Nations.

Pakistan

Dawn
Pakistan said on Monday it remained optimistic as well as confident about the peace process with India and made it clear that there would be no compromise on aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

The News
Pakistan and Afghanistan Monday vowed to fight out terrorism and enhance trade and business relations. The pledge was made during a

one-on-one meeting between Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali and Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

The Nation
India will hold consultations with Pakistan soon to decide on the dates for the resumption of composite dialogue and also at what level and the venue for the talks, Indian External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha said Monday.

India

The Hindustan Times
Islamabad on Monday said no decision had yet been taken on inviting Indian Deputy Prime Minister L.K. Advani and that there was no move to have an extradition treaty with India.

The Times of India
Indian External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha will visit the US next week and meet US Secretary of State

Colin Powell.

The Hindu
Indian Prime Minister A.B.Vajpayee Monday accepted the Bharatiya Janata Party's strong and unambiguous recommendation for early Lower House polls and said he hoped "a new government will be in place by April" so that the party could march even more confidently towards the goal of making India a developed nation by 2020.

Kenya

East African Standard
Kenya is likely to strike oil in the near future because preliminary findings by an Australian exploration company show that Kenya might access commercially viable deposits at the coast, Energy Minister Ochillo Ayacko said on Monday.

Kenya Times
Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in

Nairobi was indefinitely closed on Monday when more than 3,000 rioting students engaged police in running battles as they protested over failure to get lecturers, who have been on strike for weeks.

Daily Nation
A 84-year-old Mau Mau veteran, Mzee Kimani Ng'ang'a, started learning at a primary school in western Kenya's Eldoret on Monday with the hope to learn to read Bible.

Philippines

Philippine Daily Inquirer
An eight-hour blaze engulfed a squatter colony in the Port Area in a district in Manila and was put out at 8 a.m. Monday, with almost all of the houses inside the compound being razed and some 80,000 people homeless, according to a fireman. Philippine Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman said only 22,000 people were rendered homeless. Damage was placed at 40 million

pesos (727.273 US dollars). No resident was reported killed or injured.

The Philippine Star
The Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs decried Monday the action of the United States Justice Department in serving subpoenas to 30 Filipino telecommunications executives attending the Pacific Telecom Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Book Review

Her stories: Mapping feminist moments



BY DR. MURARI PRASAD SANA'A UNIVERSITY

Sanjukta Dasgupta's *Her Stories*, unlike Dan Jacobson's *Her Story* (Andre Deutsch, 1987), is not about the fate of anonymous, taken-for-granted women. Her selection of the eight short stories by contemporary women writers of Bengal for English translation is informed by their representative salience, in that they signpost "women's resistance to, reconciliation with and rejection of patriarchal ideology". To be sure, these writers are not feisty feminists but the crucial motivations for their stories come from their perception of systemic relations of inequality, involving the relations between men and women. Notably, their narratology is dotted with scintillating insights into women's psyche as well as into inchoate longings of their heart. The constitutive sites of contestation are the given institutions of the state, community, the family and society at large.

The volume opens with Ashapura Devi's "Opium" (*Afing*) written in the 1950's. We notice an empathetic representation of a finely nuanced character: Sumita is a talented girl hemmed in by conservative family norms in a traditional household. Her husband Sudhiranjan is considered impudent for choosing a woman flautist as his wife. As it happens, Sudhiranjan capitulates to patriarchal values. With a muffled complaining cry Sumita, eventually, retreats to complaisant femininity. We do discern a shift from tradition to modernity in the narrative, but the

protagonist is too diffident to strike out on her own. In "Chinta", Mahasweta Devi foregrounds an invisible woman engaged in the toughest battle for survival in absolute impoverishment. The narrator's focus on the exploitation and oppression of the vulnerable subalterned gender feeds into her activist role, and prioritises economic themes to arrest the marginalisation of disadvantaged women. Unlike Chinta, Nabanita Deb Sen's Sarama in "Surrogate" (*Porobrit*), educated and economically self-supporting as she is, gives off the self-affirming flame of freedom. She longs for genuine motherhood by way of having a child of her own, and refuses to be a mere receptacle of her husband's lust. When she discovers the latter's deception, she aborts and upturns the given assumptions of woman's passivity and self-effacement.

With a change of gears in the feminist dynamic, Bani Basu underlines the bonds of sorority in her short story "Quintuplets" (*Panchojonyo*). She is a prolific and gifted writer of amazing range and versatility. The story in this collection examines a different world and imagines an unconventional project. Five women forge and fortify their ties to look ahead, rather than getting weighed down by heterosexual trauma, misery and privations in their frustrating family life. Like Virginia Woolf's portrayal of a satisfying woman-to-woman relationship in *A Room of One's Own* (1929), or Lakshmi Kannan's presentation of supportive relationships between women in *Going Home* (1998) for that matter, Bani Basu imagines some kind of a woman's collective as a symbol of feminine strength and independence. A similar portrayal of friendship between women in 'Friendship', a short story by Telugu woman writer Volga, reveals important terms of political consciousness among women writers. Unlike Krishna in *Panchojonyo*, Jaya in Volga's story doesn't emerge a winner. Her friendship with Mariyamma, Suguna, Sarita and Malati comes to an end because of an external interference unleashed by patriarchy. Contrapuntally, Joya Mitra's "From the Heart of Darkness" (*Andhakare Utsho Theke*) dramatises the tense turnaround in a tolerant wife pushed to the brink of humiliation and hurt. Shantobala Kuila, unlike her mother, understands the advantages of education and dreams of an unshackled future for her daughter, even by going to the extent of killing her hidebound and obdurate husband.

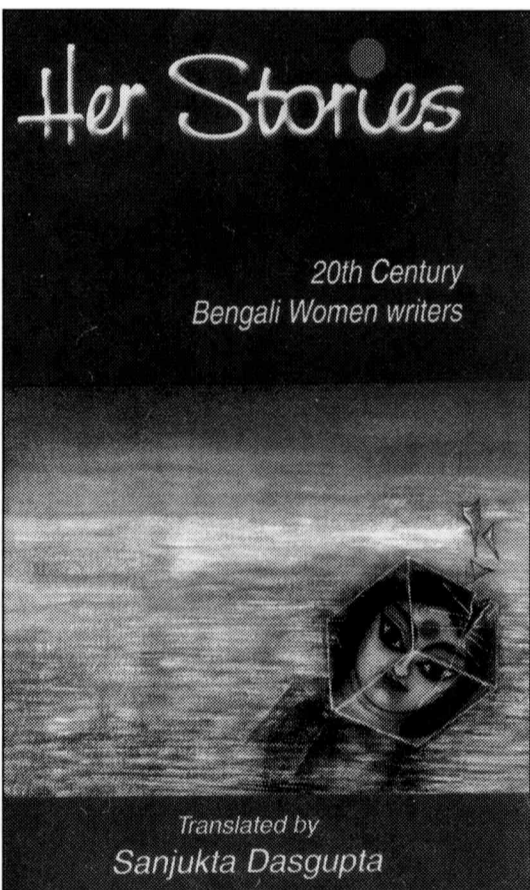
By far the best story in the collection, in my view, is "Good Woman, Bad Woman" (*Bhalo Meye, Kharap Meye*) by



Sanjukta Dasgupta

Suchitra Bhattacharya. As the plot unfolds, we notice ramifying dimensions of patriarchy which underpin society as a hypocritical institution. Urmi is a woman of social conscience and discernment. She can map the moral geography of Simran, her husband, and register her disapproval of his double standards. Her empathy with Ria, a bar singer and so a 'bad woman', problematises the issue of sexual freedom and foregrounds the lacunae in the conceptual definition of marital rape within the confines of ever-enduring family. Quite legitimately, in this variegated assortment of subjectivities Minakshi Sen's "Face" (*Mookh*) and Anita Agnihotri's "The Drowned Man" (*Doba Manush*) underscore the brutalized State apparatus and exploitation of women's religion and caste in a male-dominated dispensation, respectively. Altogether the situation portrayed in these stories is profusely sad but unbelievably vibrant.

These twice-born tales have a flow and felicity. Sanjukta tackles the problem of complex cultural negotiations in the target language with ease and expertise. In her intelligible and equipollent rendition of the culturally rooted texts she maintains a fine balance between 'domestication' and 'foreignization' (to use Lawrence Venuti's translation categories) with her range of stylistic repertoire to capture, normalize and render varied dialects and registers in the source text. Barring occasional syntactical slips and lapses in punctuation, she overcomes the conundrums of translation by retaining the resonance of the original text as well as by sustaining the grammatical sub-text of the host language. The book offers a succinct blurb and jacket flier with stimulating support material in the form of comprehensive editorial input. Notably in addition, each story is preceded by a brief bio-critical introduction and interview with the author of the selected story (as Ashapura Devi died in 1995, her son and daughter-in-law comment on her work) to facilitate a fuller perspective on the concerns configured in these narratives. My only quibble is that the token inclusion of Bengali writers based elsewhere in India, or across the world. Nevertheless, the volume does provide readers outside Bengal with a rewarding overview of women-centred writing in Bengali in post-independent India.



Sanjukta Dasgupta (Trans.), *Her Stories*. New Delhi: Srishti Publishers & Distributors, 2002, pp.195, Rs.195.

YOUTH FORUM

If you want ...
If you want others' respect,
You may have to gain it your self,
Though it may be hard,
If you don't have self respect,
Be reliable to others,
Act in a mannered way,
Get hold of yourself,
Have self-confidence,
No sense of superiority or inferiority,
And they will give you more respect, then ever.

If you want to see life beautiful,
Do not wear the dark glass;
Not even the transparent one;
But wear the pink one;
Close your eyes to everything you don't like.
Take a rest from your troubles,
Be a friend for yourself.
Listen to yourself... Discuss with yourself
Be fair to her. To see life beautiful,
Take a long rest,
Look at the world for the first time, with a new sigh
And start, start again,
You'll see life beautiful.

RANIA AL-SHADADI
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
LEVEL 1, KHAWLAN

For all lovers
Tell me, tell me, tell me
Tell me what I can do
With the days that follow
When you are with that fellow
And I am death that deadly blow

To remember the tangos we danced?
Or to echo the words we passed?
To look at the future from the past?
Or to cure the heart you captivated?
Tell me, tell me, tell me
Your love will ever be
An integrate part of me
Your memory will ever be
Like honey of that bee

But please! Do not say
Your love will never be
For it, I will not see
And words, I can not say.

It seems bearable if you say
Hey! C'mon! Bring us to that day
When you reigned my sense say
What else I can say
But thank god
For restoring my conscience

ESAM ADDU' AIS, 3RD LEVEL
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH,
SANA'A UNIVERSITY

Poetry corner

For my girl

Neither you nor me
Can love expound.
But we both can see
That our love is so profound.
And you know how happy I be
Every time you're around.
Like a king I feel in power and ability,
Because it is with your love I have
been crowned.

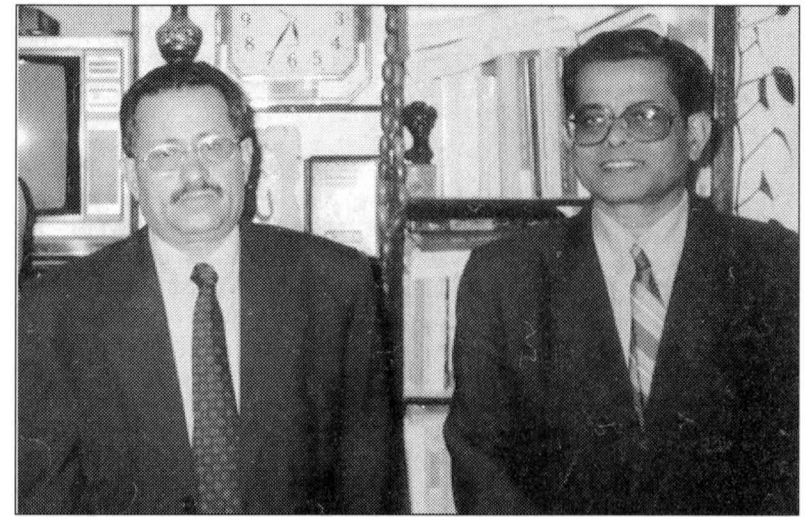
And it's because of your beauty
The self inside me 'I've found.
Your passion is easy for me to see,
Even if you utter no sound.
There is no better music for you and
me
Than listening to our hearts with
pleasure profound.
Though souls are said to be free,
Yours and mine are lovingly bound.
I here perpetuate your name in my
poetry
And wish I could you in my heart
impound.
To you my soul sends mahabbaty -
Whether my body be on or below the
ground.

KHALED HUTHAILY,
PH. D SCHOLAR, MONTANA UNIVERSITY,
USA

Prof. Ahmed Mohammed Shuga'a Al-Deen to Yemen Times

"Ibb university is committed to ushering in a new era in education."

Since its inception in 1996, Ibb university has been consistently striving to establish itself as a pre-eminently front-ranking university. This relentless endeavor has crystallized itself and has gathered further momentum after Prof. Ahmed Mohammed Shuga'a Al-Deen assumed the august office of its Rector. In our attempt to shed light on some of the significant milestones the university has crossed so far, Dr. Ramakanta Sahu had an informal chat with Prof. Shuga'a to get a slice of his vision and futuristic outlook on a number of pertinent academic issues including his agenda of action for placing the university in the forefront of academic excellence.



Prof. Dr. Ahmed Mohammed Shuga'a (L) with Dr. Sahu

Excerpts

RKS: Could you please give us a brief account of the origin and growth of Ibb University and your association with it?

Prof. Shuga'a: Let me begin by thanking *Yemen Times* for evincing keen interest in the current academic issues in Yemen.

I'm happy that the *Yemen Times* is the first English newspaper that is interviewing me after the "Green Newspaper" in Ibb.

Actually, I joined Ibb University quite recently. In fact, Ibb University is one of the relatively new universities in Yemen having been established in 1996. Ibb University has eight colleges with an enrolled strength of 9,650 students.

The University is committed to ushering in a new educational revolution in Ibb. Therefore, it is one of my top priorities to unleash efforts to place the university in the forefront of the universities in Yemen in particular and the universities of the Arab world in general. The reforms I envisage would involve the whole gamut of university ambience including teaching staff, students, other academic fields and the university administration per se.

RKS: How does the present Ibb University compare with other universities in Yemen, Sana'a University, for example?

Prof. Shuga'a: Sana'a University, the mother of the universities in Yemen, was established in 1970 followed by Aden University in 1975. Therefore, there is a big difference between Ibb university and those universities in terms of faculty members, students, infrastructure and other facilities considering the inceptual time gap between them. However, I will work hard with determination and optimism so that Ibb University could achieve great strides in academic, scientific and administrative as well as other allied fields.

RKS: Kindly tell us something about the outstanding academic achievements of Ibb university?

Prof. Shuga'a: Most of the academic distinctions of Ibb University are correlated with its eight premier colleges, which are doing well in terms of their avowed goals in the academic fields. To my mind, this will enable the University to take its legitimate position among the other universities of the Republic to render signal service to the society.

We have to bear in mind the fact that the population density in Ibb is the highest in the Republic of Yemen. This point has to be taken into consideration when we are thinking of human resource development in the Republic in different fields such as education, environment, health and other similar significant fields whose development is concomitant with the university education.

RKS: What are your views about launching a faculty improvement program and enhancing the students' attainment level?

Prof. Shuga'a: I am planning to take the following measures in the University of Ibb:

- Review the current academic programs in order to change them in accordance with the new developments in the field of education.
- Incorporate innovative methods of evaluation of:
 - Performance of members of the teaching staff by the chairpersons of the respective departments along with their

evaluation by students.

ii) Performance of the chairpersons of the various departments by the Deans.

iii) Performance of Deans by the Rector.

c) Bring about research journals conforming to international standards in order to promote original research work by the members of the teaching staff, students and other researchers.

I am confident that these measures will significantly contribute towards achieving progress in different academic and administrative affairs of the University. I am pretty sure these will help revitalize the academic atmosphere and activate the administrative set-up of the University.

RKS: What is your opinion about improving the students' level of attendance in the classes?

Prof. Shuga'a: I feel that the most important factor to draw students to classrooms is to motivate them. This can be achieved by bringing about improvement in classroom ecology which in turn depends on the excellence of the staff members. Students are very keen to attend when the teacher is highly qualified, well-organized, well-resourced, honest and excellent in his profession. I am pretty sure that promoting a lively interaction between this kind of teacher and students will be a positive step towards ensuring a higher attendance rate. Moreover, there should be extra-curricular and cultural activities for students to ensure a holistic growth of their personality. These would cumulatively exert positive impact for the promotion of the academic profile of the University.

RKS: Could you please tell us about the most pressing problem faced by the University and what is your proposed course of action?

Prof. Shuga'a: The most pressing problem faced by the University is the unavailability of underground water to meet the increasing needs of the college laboratories, mosques and for other day-to-day needs. Therefore, it is very urgent to solve this chronic problem.

However, there are other problems also which, we hope to overcome, by implementing the following action-plan in foreseeable future:

- Equip the library with new, standard and recent books in various disciplines.
- Set up new laboratories to cope with the emerging demands.
- Equip the colleges with new and high capacity multipurpose computers and Internet for staff members as well as for students in order to improve teaching, research, and global 'connectivity'.
- Acquire more land in order to build new colleges for future needs.
- Construct new, well-furnished buildings for visiting professors as well as for other visitors.
- Have a suitable conference hall, as well as hostels for students to accommodate students of different streams from various parts of the country and abroad in order that the University could play a

more meaningful and more positive role in the society.

RKS: You would perhaps agree with us that the salary structure for academic staff of the universities in Yemen does not compare favorably with that in other Arab countries. What is your opinion about a hike of staff salaries?

Prof. Shuga'a: Actually, each country has its own circumstances and special problems. The Arab Gulf countries have an improved economy. Moreover, their population is very limited compared to their assets. Therefore, they can spare a lot of their available resources to spend lavishly on developmental projects. We should bear in mind that the rate of growth of population in the Republic of Yemen is disproportionate to the resources available. For example, it was as high as 3.7 in 1994 and the estimated rate of growth is 3.5 in 2003. The economy of the Republic of Yemen is not on par with that in other Arab Gulf countries.

However, in comparison we can find out that the salaries for academic staff is much better than those working in other sectors; but at the same time we have to work for increasing the salaries of our academic staff within the constraints of the country's economy.

RKS: Yemen Times is the first and the only newspaper, which has a full page on Education, and we have recently completed 200 lessons of "Improve Your English" for students. What is your opinion about it?

Prof. Shuga'a: Congratulations on the completion of 200 lessons of "Improve Your English". I hope that other newspapers will do the same for the improvement of linguistic skills of our students. Besides, I hope that *Yemen Times* could expand its sphere of activities in order to achieve a more dynamic role in the sphere of the educational development in the Republic of Yemen.

RKS: Any last message to the students of Ibb University in particular and Yemeni students in general.

Prof. Shuga'a: All I hope is that all students would strive towards getting more knowledge, prepare their lessons well, attending the classes and being more judicious in engaging themselves in socially productive activities as much as possible in order to serve their country after the completion of their studies in the university.

I hope that they are going to be role models in terms of their code of conduct, behaviour and attitudes and would richly deserve to be the torch bearers of the glorious heritage of Yemen and our living hope for tomorrow.

Ahmed Mohamd Shuga'a Al-Deen
Education: University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado, USA, Ph.D
1974, Colorado, USA M. A. 1980
University of Sana'a BA, 1976
Taiz High School, Yemen, Diploma, 1971

Readers' Forum

Dear Dr.Sahu
On behalf of so many people you generously help, I sincerely convey my thankfulness and obligation to you for the valuable role you play in not only publishing our works in this esteemed page, but also encouraging and giving us the hope to do much better.
My gratitude is also due to Ms. Shefali Bakshi for the honest and sustained effort she puts forth for third-year students, Faculty of Education, Hodeidah, to inspire and encourage us to put our best foot forward.

Sa'eeda Obaid Ali Obaid,
Level 3, Dep. of English,
Faculty of Education,
Hodeidah.

Dear Sa'eeda,
It is heartening to note that our efforts for young and budding writers like you are coming to fruition. Please keep up your academic and creative pursuits. We'll continue to foster and nourish the seeds of your creativity. Thanks
Dr. Sahu

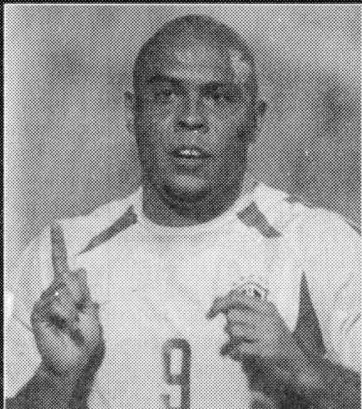
Ireland friendlies against Brazil and Czechs

DUBLIN (Reuters) - Ireland will play world champions Brazil in an international friendly in Dublin on February 18, the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) says.

Ireland, who failed to qualify for the Euro 2004 finals, will also host the Czech Republic in March, the FAI said.

"It is fantastic to be able to bring the highest calibre opposition to Dublin," Ireland manager Brian Kerr told the FAI website. "It's a great opportunity for our squad to show their abilities against the best in the world and will provide excellent preparation for World Cup 2006 qualifying games."

Ireland will face France, Switzerland, Israel, Cyprus and the Faroe Islands in European qualifying Group Four for the 2006 World Cup finals, which take place in Germany.



Ireland will play world champions Brazil in an international friendly in Dublin on February 18, the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) says. Brazil's Ronaldo celebrates after scoring his team's second goal against Uruguay in the first half of their qualifying match for World Cup Germany 2006 in Curitiba, Brazil, November 19, 2003.

REUTERS/Sergio Moraes

Capriati pulls out of Australian Open

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Twice former champion Jennifer Capriati has withdrawn from next week's Australian Open because of injury, tournament organisers say.

Tennis Australia announced on Tuesday that the world number six had pulled out because of a back problem.

Capriati won the Australian Open in 2001 and 2002 and would have been among the favourites in Melbourne this year.

The American is the latest in a series of top players to withdraw from the first grand slam of the year.

Serena Williams announced last week that she would not be defending her title. Four-times winner Monica Seles and 1995 champion Mary Pierce have also pulled out.

There are also concerns about world number two Kim Clijsters after she injured her ankle in the Hopman Cup last week while Jelena Dokic is unlikely to play after pulling out of two warm-up events citing "personal reasons".



Twice former champion Jennifer Capriati has withdrawn from next week's Australian Open because of injury, tournament organisers say. Capriati is pictured in this November 9, 2003, file photo. REUTERS/Lucy Nicholson

Butt reportedly asks for a transfer

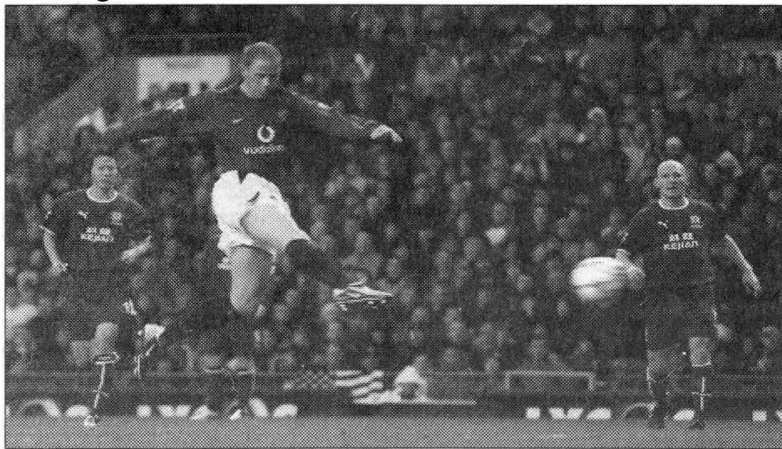
LONDON (Reuters) - England midfielder Nicky Butt wants to leave champions Manchester United, according to a BBC report.

"Nicky Butt has asked to leave, it is a very sad situation," United manager Alex Ferguson was quoted as saying on the BBC's website on Tuesday.

Butt's decision to ask for a transfer stems from his failure to earn a regular place in United's first team this season.

"With Phil Neville (moving into midfield), and the emergence of Darren Fletcher and Kleberson, it has made it difficult to get in the first team so he (Butt) has asked to leave," said Ferguson.

Butt, who turns 29 on January 21, is a one-club man. He has won 30 caps for England.

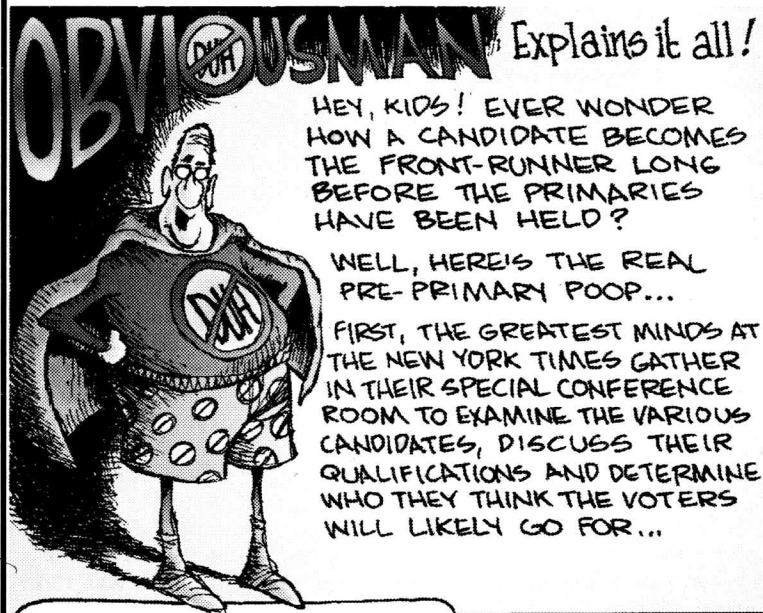


England midfielder Nicky Butt wants to leave champions Manchester United, according to a BBC report. Butt (C) fires the ball into the back of the net in the premier league match at Old Trafford on December 26, 2003. REUTERS/Ian Hodgson

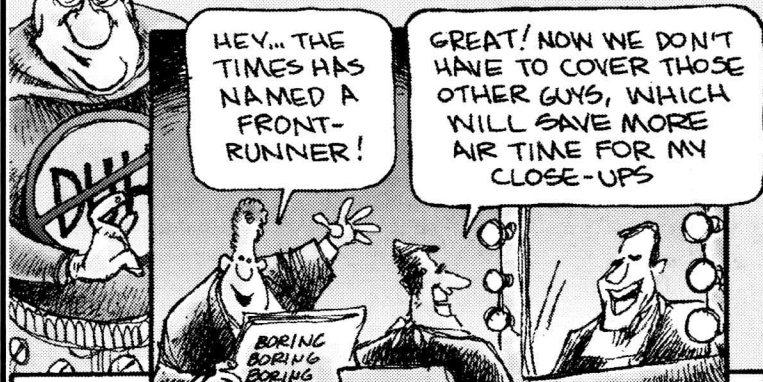
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Hi	29	30	31	31	31	32	32
Lo	21	21	22	22	21	20	19

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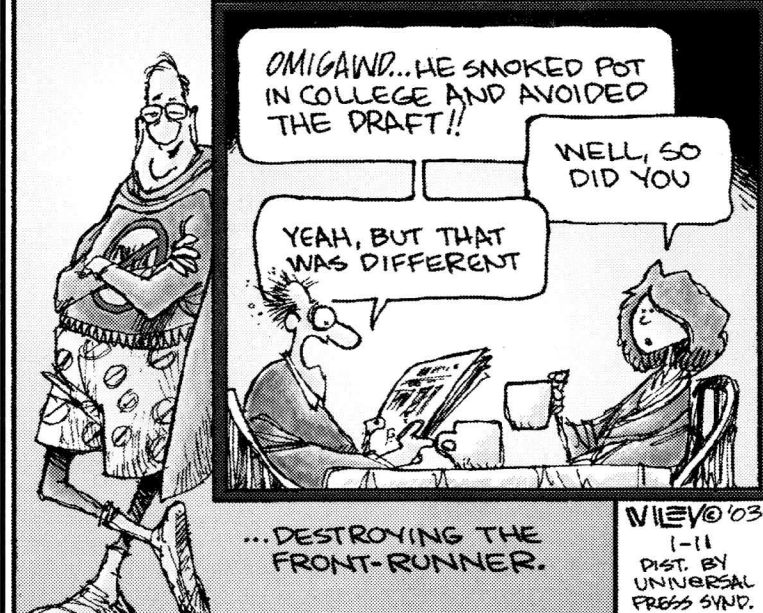
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 1-Aisha's hair is long, _____ and black. 2- A dijambia has a _____ blade.
 3-Many team sports use a _____ ball. 4- Ablackboard is _____ in shape.
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 1-straight 2-curved 3-round 4-rectangular
 Q(2)What do you say in these situations ماذا تقول في هذه المواقف
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THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY BY Eugenia

<p>Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19) A relationship may be playing on your mind today. Stay calm and make an effort to be fun to be with. Emotions may be running high, so put your energy into being affectionate, passionate and devoted.</p>	<p>Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22) Travel opportunities must be taken advantage of. However, if you can't go anywhere, at least travel down the information highway. Research to enhance your next step in life.</p>	<p>Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21) Let someone in a position to help you do so. You will have a lot of trouble getting things off the ground by yourself today. This is not the time to go it alone.</p>
<p>Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20) Don't look back or stop now. Go after your goals. Work-related matters could swing in your favor if you just give it your all.</p>	<p>Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22) Do as much as you can to stay ahead of the game. Focus on your work. Push your talents and proposals and don't hold back.</p>	<p>Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19) You can't trust someone else to do your work. If you really want to get ahead, show your worth to those who can influence your future direction. Business trips will pay off.</p>
<p>Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20) Decide what you would like to do to change your look or your image. Socializing with someone you are intimately interested in will bring positive results. Be careful not to move too fast.</p>	<p>Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 22) Don't let mixed emotions throw you for a loop. Prepare to make decisions that will eliminate interaction with the people causing you so much grief. This is a turning point in your life.</p>	<p>Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18) Knowledge will be the key to your success. Take part in anything that will give you the ammunition you need to take on competition. A love interest will flourish.</p>
<p>Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22) Catch yourself before you overreact or do something you may regret later on. You won't have clear vision or all the facts regarding a situation that is bothering you. Don't force issues today.</p>	<p>Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21) Limitations are apparent, causing you to lose ground should you proceed. Focus on yourself, your friends and your creative endeavors. Secret activity will not be in your best interest today.</p>	<p>Pisces (Feb 19-Mar 20) Take care of any chronic health problem. Don't take shortcuts with legal or financial matters. Stay on top of all your important issues. Don't let yourself get run down.</p>

Tailor uses High-Tech shorts to measure clients

HONG KONG (Reuters) - Sam the Tailor has measured them all — from towering Chinese basketball player Yao Ming to bulky former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and svelte David Bowie.

But next time, if a celebrity feels reluctant to get a personal measurement in Sam's back-street shop in Hong Kong's crowded Kowloon district, they won't have to. They can just put on a pair of high-tech shorts that takes their measurements.

The disposable shorts, which come in different sizes, help project a customer's figure and size in a special fitting-room developed in the United States with Sam's help.

"The new thing is coming out. You've got a computer machine, which measures everything," said Manu Melwani, the real name of the Indian tailor known in palaces, boardrooms and to stars around the world as Sam.

"Some customers feel very shy when they get measured inside-leg.... We will give him one of the underpants, boxer shorts, tight ones. When he wears them, the measurement will tell us ... everything," he said.

Perhaps this is something of a shame for such a traditional business, which was founded by his father 50 years ago and built on a reputation for quality, discretion and decency.

The Melwani family men decided to become "Sam" after one Englishman a long time ago couldn't be bothered to remember their Indian names and called his father that instead.

Melwani is reluctant to talk about individual clients. But his shop is decorated with snapshots of famous people. Britain's Queen Elizabeth, Bill Clinton, Margaret Thatcher, Nelson Mandela, Richard Nixon, Luciano Pavarotti, Roger Moore, Bruce Willis, all smile from the wall above.

It is not easy to imagine these celebrities in his humble shop in the back of a building in Nathan Road among the discount shops and fast food restaurants for low-budget tourists.



Manu Melwani, or 'Sam the Tailor', is reflected in a mirror as he looks at snapshots and letters from his clients inside his shop in Hong Kong, December 16, 2003. The Indian tailor, who has measured the towering Chinese basket player Yao Ming, corpulent former German Chancellor Helmut Koh, U.S. President George Bush, Michael Jackson and David Bowie, is known across the World in palaces, boardrooms and amongst the stars as 'Sam.' Photo by Bobby Yip/Reuters

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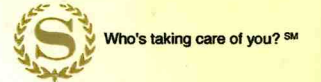
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Putting Foundation Stone for the Factory of Jotun Yemen Paints Company Ltd.



By Ridwan Al-Saqqaf
Yemen Times Manager
Aden

The morning of Monday 12.1.2004 witnessed laying down the foundation stone for the Factory of Jotun Yemen Paints Company Ltd.

Mr. Abdulkarim Shayef the Deputy Governor of Aden accompanied by Mr. Anwar Ali Sooltan, the chairman of the board of Jotun Group of Companies in Oman and Yemen, Mr. Rashad Hayil Saeed Anaam the Regional Manager of Hayil group of companies, Mr. KPV Mohan Menon, the Resident Manager, Mr. Vijay Kumar, Jotun Co. General Manager in the Sultanate of Oman, Mr. Anwer A. Shakoar, Administration Manager and Mr. Arif Ali, Deputy Sales Manager, as well as a number of responsible, General Managers, Capitalists and Businessmen. The factory is situated near to Abyan Beach and its prospective cost shall amount to US\$3,000,000 (Three Million United States Dollars). Following the foundation stone laying ceremony, the delegation held a press conference in Aden Hotel during which Mr. Anwar Ali Sooltan, Jotun Board Chairman in Oman and Yemen together with Mr. Rashad Hayil Saeed Anaam answered questions from the journalists about the functions and factory sections.

Mr. Anwar Ali Sooltan, said that the factory shall be established within 11 months and shall be capable to produce Jotun Paints with a capacity of 5 Million Liters in each shift whereby Jotun Paints will be domestically manufactured. In his answer to a question about his opinion of the Yemeni markets, he said that Yemen is a huge consumption market and that the success prospects shall be even more great given our dealings with our partners the Hayil Saeed Anaam Group of Companies since 1996. He went on to say that Jotun Paints are no. 1 in the Arabian Gulf States Markets. That Jotun has been awarded many trophies, appreciation and quality certificates in the Sultanate of Oman. He declared that Jotun Company is considered the second in the domain of Paints Manufacturing and the fourth in Maritime Paint Manufacture, that it possesses advanced technology and is prevalent in the Arab Gulf States Markets and the Arab world in general.

It is worth mentioning that Jotun Company was first established in 1926, adding that it started



activity in the Dubai Free Zone in 1974 and as business in Yemen achieved gains the idea came up to establish a Jotun paints factory in association with Hayil Saeed Group of companies and the factory established on seven production lines in an area of 19000 square meters. In building the factory we concentrated on Environment Protection aspect through a system and technology that does not affect the environment and the fact that Jotun products do not contain lead which affects environment in industries. Moreover, our products are made out of maritime dyestuff that do not affect the sea environment due to a particular formula.

That this factory shall meet all the requirements for any required quantities as of the packing 15 liters and above. The factory shall also cater for particular needs where clients request a certain color that is unavailable by our mixing of colors through a machine especially made for this. In fact we can separate more than 20,000 colors within a few minutes.

In his answer about why the factory was not

located in the allocated industrial area, Mr. Rashad Hayil Saeed Anaam, the Regional Manager of Hayil group of companies, said that the project comes within an initial phase and with a workforce capacity of 250, that Jotun Group of Companies and Hayil group of companies are to establish gigantic projects complementary to the other projects and that as for why it was not located in the free zone, it is because it is destined to the local market, that other projects have been planned for the free zone. He added that this factory boasts having people of experience given the practical background of Jotun in the paints domain. That the administration shall consist of highly qualified personnel mandated by Jotun Co. which boasts having the biggest Labs in Dubai.

After that Mr. Vijay Kumar delivered an introductory lecture about Jotun Group of Companies worldwide which possess more than 40 factories around the world, famous for its quality in more than 65 countries.

The ceremony was attended by some political figures, capitalists and business men.



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 صنعاء - الجمهورية اليمنية

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صناعات، شارع جمال، أمام المرشدي
هاتف: ٢٧٩٢٨٨

عقارات
 للإيجار: فيلا مفروشة بحديقة صغيرة جميلة للعمل في حدائق السكنية لإيجاب، جوفية نوم تيبسي، مرفح جلوس، طام وغرفة شغله، للتواصل: ٧٧٤٤٤٠٠
 للإيجار: مركز اتصالات في شارع عشرون العربي جوار مطابع صنعاء الحديثة لاؤفست في موقع ممتاز على الخط الرئيسي، للتواصل: ٢٣٣٣٢٨
 للإيجار: محل إصبعي القديم خلف مطابع صنعاء، هاتف: ٢٧٢٥٠٠
 للإيجار: محل إصبعي في شارع عشرون العربي جوار مطابع صنعاء الحديثة لاؤفست في موقع ممتاز على الخط الرئيسي، للتواصل: ٢٣٣٣٢٨

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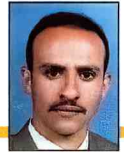
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Old City of Sana'a, glory and pride (Final part)



YASER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Of the main and important features of Sana'a is Ghamdan's Palace, the Great Mosque, Salt Market, Old Samsara, Bab al-Yemen, the National Museum, the Military Museum, the old Steam

Baths and valley of Wadi Dhahr.

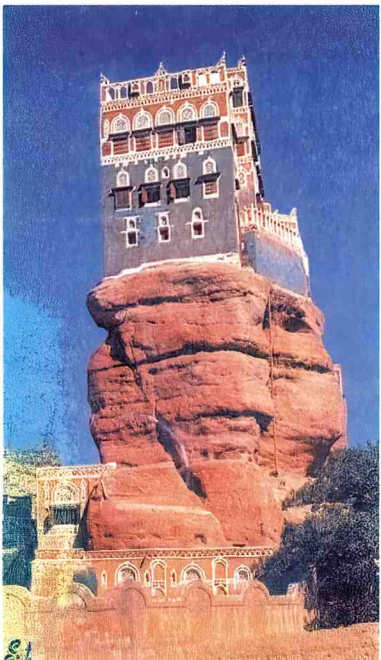
Sana'a is also composed of a number of palaces and forts and protected villages. And these are famous for handicrafts and small industries such as gold smithery, silver making, embroidery and others. Some of these villages are significantly important historically and have a long history that goes back to the pre-Islamic era such as Shibam al-Gharas village which is famous for its stone graveyards reaching 4 meters high. These were the graves of kings and royal families who governed the area during the second century AD.

Forts are also of the interesting features of Sana'a, and these spread over a large area in the governorate and date back to the third century AD.

And the city also embraces a number of schools and mosques where Islamic studies used to be taught and are still taught today, of which the Great Mosque is the most famous built in the 8th year of Hegira according to the architectural style of the Mosques in Mecca during those times.

The city is surrounded by a chain of mountains called al-Sarat from all directions, these are of the highest in the whole region such as Prophet Shuaib Mountain which is 3766 meters above sea level.

Sana'a contains around 6500 stone houses, 106 mosques, 20 steam/Turkish baths, 20 old markets dating to the 11th century AD.



Dar Al-Hajar in wadi Dahr

Continued on page 13

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