

Amran fight ends ... for now

By MOHAMMED AL-QADHI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Tribal and government efforts have succeeded to end armed clashes between tribes in Amran governorate that erupted last week, claiming the lives of 12 and injuring more than 20.

An official source in Amran told the Yemen Times that the clashes between the tribes of Thu Jabir and Thu Suda in one side and Thu Mukaitab in the other were stopped after tribal sheikhs and military figures interfered, and as the government took hostages from the two tribes to also help the end of fighting.

Military and security people were deployed to Kafa district, 170 km to the north of Sana'a. However, according to the official source at the local council in Amran, the problem is not yet sorted out, and the fight might resume.

The fight claimed the lives of 12 persons from the two fighting tribes, including two women and two children. The tribes used heavy weapons including artillery.

Governor of Amran Taha Hajir accused some tribal sheikhs of standing behind the fighting, to achieve personal interests.

The fight has been reported to have erupted due to a 4-year old tribal feud when Sheikh Ghalib Bin Suda was killed and some people from the other tribe were accused of operating the murder. Every now and then, problems between the two sides erupt, but this time it was most violent.

As many as 1,500 Yemeni are believed killed in tribal disputes every year.

The government has set up a committee to sort out such problems but to no avail.



Around a dozen people were killed in Amran despite many military and security vehicles in the area of Amran. Those forces rarely interfere in tribal clashes to avoid fatalities among them.
Yemen Times Photo by Hassan Al-Zaidi

Attempt to avoid violence

Price hikes delayed?

By HASSAN AL-ZAIDI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A hike in prices of oil products in Yemen may be delayed to avoid possible violent confrontations.

Recent reports suggest that the National Defense Council is recommending the delay to the government.

The government has already decided to go on with other price increases, part of a long-term economic reform package prescribed by the World Bank.

It includes price hikes to be implemented in the first half of this year.

Public response to the minor rise in wheat and other commodities prices was discussed in a recent meeting with the defense council and government, and the potential influence of such price hikes unrest in the country.

Several security measures were proposed to maintain security.

Security forces

The government is expected to carry out intensive precautionary security measures before the actual implementation of the next stage of the price reform, which will cause an increase in oil-derivatives including benzene and diesel for the second time.

It was in 1997 when violent demonstrations took place in the streets in protest of the rise in fuel prices at the time.

The protests had caused tremendous damage to stores and public areas as security measures by then were not adequate.

Meanwhile, tension is rising every day due to the increase of prices of basic commodities, despite the government's claim that external factors were behind this price hike.

The government was harshly criticized by religious and opposition leaders throughout the country lately, who called the latest rise in prices a means to 'steal food from the mouths of the poor'.

Renowned Sheikh and opposition leader Abdulmajeed Al-Zindani claimed that those who are keeping silent against this rise are "disbelievers in Dooms Day".

Sixth dose in a row

If it is to be implemented, the dose will be the sixth in a row since the government started implementing the economic reform package set by the World Bank and other international bodies, supposedly to help Yemen's economy recover and bring new sources of revenue to the budget.

The dose is being called the "fatal" dose, as many observers believe any price hikes at this particular time will have grave results on the poor, who are barely surviving.

The government says the increase is essential to carry out the economic reform package in a proper manner.

According to a source at the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the dose will be vital in providing Yemen with extra revenue to carry out its projects. The source added that \$2.3 billion is needed to cover the cost of strategic projects and programs to reduce poverty for 2004 and 2005.

Continued on page 3

Sana'a University getting overhaul Bassurah wants financial independence for universities

By MOHAMMED AL-QADHI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Professor Saleh Ali Bassurah, Sana'a University Rector said that the university has started implementing a part of an overall strategy during 2004 and 2005 so as to improve the university.

He told the Yemen Times that this year would be devoted to libraries and that they have already started rehabilitating central and branch libraries, setting up new mechanisms for buying books and periodicals as well as starting electronic appendix with an internet service and audiovisual library.

He said that he is ambitious that the central library be the best in Yemen, providing good services throughout the day for students and teachers as well as people from outside the university.

The other thing the new rector has initiated is publishing four scientific magazines under the name of Sana'a University to cover humanities, applied and natural, health, education and psychological sciences.

A contest, according to Bassurah, will be innovated to encourage write books related to Yemen or translated from other languages which would be published at the expenses of the university, including the author's payment.

As an ambitious and hardworking man, Bassurah, who succeeded well in running Aden University, set up new ideas to decentralize the work at the university, establishing various councils for the university which can handle the problems and issues of the people working at the university and then reporting that to the university council. These councils include libraries, authorship and publication, education colleges... etc.

The university has also started a program that aims to develop and improve the unified curricula for the seven colleges of education, colleges of arts, colleges of commerce and colleges of Sharia'a and law.

"This is a step to overhaul and innovate the curricula of the whole colleges and a part of the plan is that this curriculum would be updated every four years as the knowledge improves and renews and the need of the market changes as well," he said. The work at the building of the university printing house which stopped has been resumed.

Continued on page 5

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YEMEN TIMES
مسابقة صنعاء الثقافية
2004

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للمشاركة اقرأ التفاصيل:

على الراغبين في المشاركة في المسابقة تعبئة الكوبون المرفق وكتابة الإجابات الصحيحة للأسئلة المنشورة في كوبون الأسئلة للعدد الماضي ومن ثم قص الكوبون وإرفاقه مع كوبون الأسئلة وإرسالها 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 البريد الإلكتروني 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 أكثر 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.....

Polio vaccination continues

The vaccination results of the first round of the campaign to eradicate polio at the targeted directorates, implemented from Dec. 28 to 30 show success has been achieved, in addition to past successes where the coverage of oral vaccination during this round for children under 5 years reached 95%.

Taking into consideration that 985,615 children below five years of age are amongst 85 directorates in 19 governorates, 935,897 children of the same age group were vaccinated.

Currently preparations are underway to implement the second round of the campaign which is supposed to be implemented within a three-day period beginning Jan. 25, and is targeting the vaccination of 1.48 million children below five years of age in 123 directorates in 20 governorates, accompanied by giving 1.3 million children in the 6-59 months age group. These children will get a concentrated dosage of

vitamin A which is vital for health and growth and does boost their immunity against many diseases, the most important of which is measles, severe bronchitis and diarrhea.

The number of workers employed to carry out this round amounts to 4,696 distributed at 4,548 posts, in addition to voluntary workers amounting to 7,049 and supervisors amounting to 961.

On this occasion we call upon all the individuals to seize the opportunity and vaccinate their children who are under five years of age, to facilitate difficulties and accord the vaccination teams their assistance so as to avoid the infliction of their sons by polio whose consequences lead to permanent disability.

With the cooperation of every body, this dangerous disease shall be eradicated, and Yemen can obtain the International Certificate for the Eradication of Polio by the year 2005.

War feared between Al-Jahm and Abeedah

There are indications of impending war between two major tribes of Marib Governorate, say tribal sources.

The fear comes after the killing of two members of Abeedah Tribe last week by armed men subordinate to Jahm tribe, at Marib city center.

It's part of a tribal revenge case resulting from the war which broke out between both parties several years ago.

Trick lemonade used in robbery

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF
TAIZ

New techniques using anesthetics are being adopted by impostor pick-pockets in Taiz to steal from their victims.

A case in point is the incident which took place on Jan. 17, when Ahmed Kayed Hawrah, a 55-year-old-man was robbed. A stranger made the victim believe that he was a friend of his son in Saudi Arabia and hence invited him to take a lemonade drink, which had an anesthetic.

When the impostor noticed that the man has become benumbed he snatched away from his pocket and vanished. The victim was taken to the hospital where he woke up from his stupor.

Several such incidents have now been reported.

Don't blame merchants for price hikes: Chamber

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In response to recent reports and coming from the Yemeni government, the opposition, the private sector and media on the recent wave of price hikes, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry has responded.

It expresses surprise at what it believes is a media campaign against merchants as greedy.

The release described the assault as unjustifiable and brought forward some clarification.

It says there has been a world rise in the price of wheat by 40-60 percent and shipping cost by 100 percent, adding to that the rise in the Euro value against the dollar. That particularly affected the commodities imported from Europe.

The press release also said that some countries had adopted a preventative policy via providing protection mechanisms for the poor social segments.

In another point the chamber of commerce and industry release reiterated a previous call for not imposing any new duties or taxes because of the deteriorated living condition of the citizens.

Finally the chamber of commerce statement recalled that the government plans and strategies considered the private sector as a strategic partner and leader of the development process.

It says the government had promised to make available the factors of economic stability for providing more opportunity for more investment and economic growth.

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:

Which of those do you wish would win the upcoming US presidential elections?

- George W. Bush again
- John Kerry
- Howard Dean
- John Edwards
- Another democratic candidate
- I don't care, they're all the same for me

Do you believe that the claim that Yemen is not fit to join the GCC in present is realistic?

- Yes, and there is no need to be angry 44%
- No, Yemen is more or less fit to join the GCC 29%
- I cannot tell 15%
- Yes, but it should not have been said so bluntly 12%

Go to our website at:
yementimes.com/#poll
and have your voice heard!

Yemen recognizes Iraqi provisional council

By MOHAMED SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Iraqi Provisional Governing Council has appointed a chargé d'affaires in Sana'a.

It's the first official contact with Sana'a and shall open the path for contacts leading to the re-establishment of relations between Sana'a and Baghdad since last April, when the former Iraqi government was overthrown.

The new post began this week and shall remain until a new ambassador is appointed.



Mr. Fadhil H. Al-Azzawi, the newly-appointed Charge d' Affaires

International court workshop to be held

The Commission of Constitutional and Legal Affairs in the Yemeni Parliament and the Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Yemen will hold a workshop on the Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in the Yemeni Parliament.

To be held under the auspices of Sheikh Abdullah bin Hussain Al-Ahmar, the speaker of the Parliament, the workshop will be Jan. 19 and 20.

An ICRC press release on 18 Jan. said that some 150 personalities will participate in the workshop, among them various government, judiciary and civil society officials.

Lectures of Arab and Yemeni experts will deal with:

-The main features of the ICC including the relationship between national justice and the court

-The crimes under the court's jurisdiction: Genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes

-The establishment and functioning of the court and the enforcement of its rulings

-The court's statute in relation to Yemeni legislation and constitution; obligations of ratifying states

Following discussions involving the Yemeni Parliament, the National Committee for the Implementing of International Humanitarian law (NCIHL) and the ICRC, the Council of Ministers issued in 2003 a decree for

the ratification of the 1998 Rome Statute for the ICC.

The decree has been scheduled for debate in the Yemeni parliament.

The ICRC, present in Yemen since the civil war of 1962, runs a series of programs to promote the knowledge of International Humanitarian law, its integration into national law and its incorporation into teaching and training programs of schools, universities and the armed and police forces.

Since 1999, this is being done in full cooperation with the country's National Committee for the Implementation of IHL.

The opening ceremony of the workshop starts at 9:30 a.m. in the house of the Yemeni Parliament in Sana'a.



ADVERTISEMENT

إعلان

The Embassy of India, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen, wishes to dispose of its property at Crater in Aden, as per details given below:

A rectangular plot measuring 19,436.81 Square feet, be the same a little more or less, situated at Front Bay, Crater, Aden, and known as plot No. 10, lease No. 4348 (opposite Pizza Hut, Crater), is known as "Joshi building" and it bears house No. 303A.

The terms & conditions of the sale are as under:-

- (a) Property would be sold on "as and where is basis".
- (b) Purchaser is welcome to see the original document of the plot to satisfy himself/herself.
- (c) Purchaser may attach an irrevocable bank guarantee valid for two years from any International Bank, i.e., Indo Suez Bank or Arab Bank and the guarantee should be in favour of Embassy of India, Sana'a, for a minimum amount of US Dollar 2000/-
- (d) Purchaser may indicate the highest amount in US Dollars which he/she is willing to pay for the plot, as well as the structure on the plot without any repairs/renovation by the Embassy.
- (e) All bids should be sent in a sealed cover which would be forwarded to the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, for their approval and decision.
- (f) Decision of the Ministry of External Affairs would be final and they would stipulate the conditions for payment of the amount which would be in US\$.
- (g) It would be the discretion of the Ministry of External Affairs to sell the plot to any party.
- (h) Purchasing party would have to pay all the expenses for the transfer of the property.
- (i) After sale process has been completed, the Embassy of India Sana'a would release the Bank guarantees to unsuccessful bidders.

The Site is suitable for diplomatic missions, guest house, corporate office, bank or any other use party may like to make use of it.

All parties are requested to send their bids earliest possible but not later than 31st March 2004.

ترغب سفارة الهند بصنعاء، الجمهورية اليمنية، في بيع ممتلكاتها في منطقة كريتر في عدن كما هو موضح أدناه:

قطعة أرض مستطيلة الشكل تبلغ مساحتها (19,436.81) قدم مربع، تزيد أو تنقص قليلاً وتقع على واجهة الخليج، كريتر، عدن، وتعرف بالأرضية رقم 4348 (مقابل بيتزا هت كريتر)، والمعروفة باسم مبنى جوشي ويقع عليها البيت رقم 303A.

شروط وحالات البيع مبينة كالآتي:

- (أ) ستباع الممتلكات على أساس الزمان والمكان.
- (ب) لمزيد من الاطمئنان يمكن للشاري/الشارية أن يرى الوثائق الأصلية للأرضية.
- (ت) يمكن للشاري إرفاق ضمانات بنكية غير ملغية وصالحة لمدة عامين من أي بنك دولي مثل بنك أندوسويز أو البنك العربي وتكون الضمانة لأمر السفارة الهندية بمبلغ 2000 دولار أمريكي كحد أدنى.
- (ث) بإمكان الشاري/الشارية أن يبين أكبر مبلغ بالدولار الأمريكي سوف يدفعه قيمة للأرضية وكذلك البناء الذي على الأرضية بدون أي إصلاحات/تجديدات تقوم بها السفارة.
- (ج) يجب إرسال كافة العطاءات في ظرف مختوم والتي سوف ترسل إلى وزارة الشؤون الخارجية بحكومة الهند، نيودلهي، وذلك للموافقة وأخذ القرار.
- (ح) قرار وزارة الشؤون الخارجية يعتبر نهائياً وسوف يشترطون شروط دفع المبلغ والذي سيكون بالدولار الأمريكي.
- (خ) سيكون من حق وزارة الشؤون الخارجية بيع الأرضية لأي جهة.
- (د) الجهة التي سوف تشتري سيكون عليها دفع كافة نفقات نقل الممتلكات.
- (ذ) بعد إتمام عملية البيع، سوف تقوم السفارة الهندية بإطلاق الضمانة البنكية للمزايدين الذين لم يحالفهم الحظ.

يعتبر الموقع مناسباً للبعثات الدبلوماسية، نزل، مكتب شركة، بنك أو أي شيء آخر قد يرغب أحد في استعماله فيه.

يرجى من كل الراغبين إرسال عطاءاتهم بأسرع فرصة ممكنة قبل تاريخ 31 مارس 2004م.

Egyptian-based awards**Four Yemeni businessmen honored**

BY MUNEEB MOHAMMED SAEED
YEMEN TIMES
ADEN BUREAU

CAIRO — Al-Raie Al-A'am International House has granted its prizes for 2003 to a number of Yemeni businessmen.

It is a prize usually granted to leaders and pioneers in economy, industry, investments, banks and top businessmen in the Arab world.

The honoring ceremony was held at

one of the biggest hotels in Cairo on Jan. 16, and was attended by representatives from various Arab countries.

Ali Abdulla al-Waziri, chairman of Al-Waziri company for general trade and cement marketing and transport, was awarded from Yemen.

He was granted the Golden Crown and International Golden Document for pioneering, economy and international excellence, for his prominent role in developing a fleet of trans-

portation.

Economist Eng. Saleh Mohammed Bahoul, chairman of the board of directors of Mukalla Factory for Fish Canning /Al Ghuaizi, was granted the prize of International Golden Knight in appreciation for his pioneering efforts in development of the fishing sector in Yemen, and his great role in supporting the Yemeni national economy.

Businessman Mohammed Ahmed Juman had been awarded the

International Golden Knight and the Golden Document for pioneering and economy and international excellence for his prominent role in establishment of educational and economic projects and services of social issues.

The International Golden Knight prize and the Golden Document was granted to the Yemeni Businessman Sharaf Sallam Qassem, chairman of the board of directors of al-Qassem company, for regional and world maritime navigation movement.

Continued from page 1**Price hikes delayed?**

Yemen was initially in need for \$5 billion to initially start implementing its development programs, which will need tens of billions of dollars to achieve fully.

Furthermore, Yemen was so far only able to secure \$380 million in terms of loans and \$140 million in terms donations. It is expected that donors will continue to provide the government with further funds in the years to come, but the government is still aware that without economic reforms, the country's economy will not develop according to plans.

Three-step process

Governmental sources say that the economic reform program will continue this year in three basic steps.

The first would be to let prices rise in basic commodities including wheat and sugar, and will not provide any subsidies despite any possible local pressure.

The second step is to go ahead with the planned hike in prices of oil-derivatives, which will include a 50% raise in benzene prices and a similar increase to diesel prices, which will

in turn raise prices of most other commodities and services.

The third step is to implement the 10% extra sales taxes on all businesses in the country, which will also lead to the rise of prices, but which will provide the government with sustainable income.

It is hoped that the three steps would be implemented smoothly without any disturbance or violent reaction from the public or the business community.

However, the government's decision to go on with these steps in the economic reform package is not 100% confirmed, and hesitation to take such steps are quite visible in the responses of the government when asked about them.

Last week, Yemeni Prime Minister Abdulqadir Ba Jammal attributed the increase of prices of commodities to global factors, and gave the impression that the government is working to minimize suffering of citizens and not taking measures to raise prices, which contradicts with the government's plans to raise its revenues from oil.

Italian-Yemeni medical conference concluded

The 4-day Italian-Yemeni Medical Conference sponsored by the Yemeni Ministry of Health in association with the Yemeni Italian Friendship Society and the Italian Embassy, concluded in Sana'a on Wednesday.

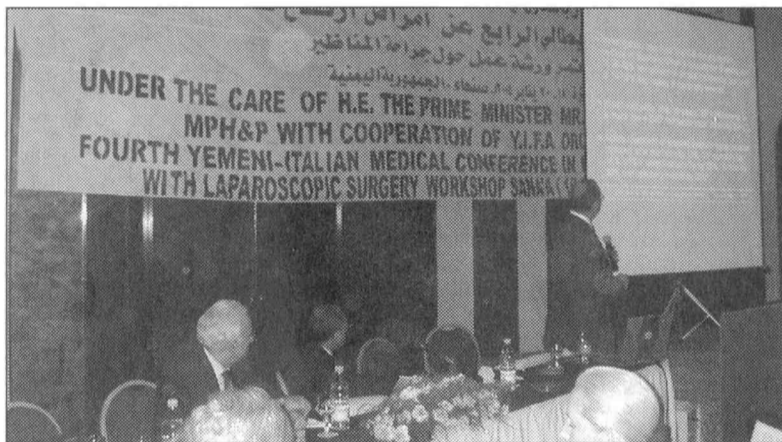
The conference shall go on for four days and the number of participants is 70 from both countries.

At the opening session Dr. Mohamed Al-Noami, the Yemeni Health Minister declared that this conference is being held within the bilateral relations of Yemen and Italy.

High Blood Pressure and its complications is the theme of this conference,

due to its significance and the danger it poses on the patients and that it is on the rise due to new ways of life prevailing nowadays.

Moreover an Italian Embassy press release announced that the Italian Embassy shall grant the Yemeni Health & Population Ministry as well as the Red Crescent financial assistance amounting to Euro 50,000, to upgrade traffic accidents emergency services.



A panel view during the inauguration

Announcement

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Hazib requests Quranic Schools not become politicized

Hussein Hazib, Taiz Governorate's Education Office General Manager, has recently reiterated the need to review the status quo of Quranic Schools, to make them abide by their destined religious goals, and not to become a subject of contention amongst political parties.

This declaration was voiced during his meeting Jan. 14 at the Department of Quranic Teaching Department.

He added that such schools are a serious matter and should not be a subject of political outbidding for purposes averse to the Almighty.

He categorically refused the involvement of political parties in this, indicating that Quran is everybody's constitution without any exception, and that the teacher and supervisor of the subject should be responsible enough.

He affirmed that the correction should be introduced within two months of the meeting whereafter the department shall submit lists of schools, excluding pretentious ones, as well as lists for qualified tested teachers and supervisors who are in compliance with the set norms.

Cabinet approves timetable of streamlining judiciary

The government approved in its last Tuesday meeting the detailed timetable for carrying out the program of streamlining the country's judicial system and developing the Commercial and Public Funds Court for 2004.

The program is to be carried out with the aim of realizing judicial stability, developing related audit, training judges and prosecutors, completing the infrastructure of judiciary, updating the Judiciary Information Center and connecting of all judiciary facilities through a computer-based information network. SABA

VACANCY
Statistician/Qualitative Data Management Consultant

International NGO seeks an experienced statistician to assist in carrying out a baseline survey for a health and education program. Tasks expected of the consultant include data quality and data entry control and management, cleaning of data, analysis and presentation of quantitative data using SPSS. Candidates should have qualifications, skills and prior experience in management of quantitative data. Fluency in Arabic required, knowledge of English is preferred.

Please send your CV within 2 weeks to the following address:

PO Box 19404, Sana'a or fax 01-510010
Only short listed candidates will be contacted

Vacancy Announcement

A multi national oil field chemical Co. plans to recruit two Yemeni nationals ambitious to work as chemical engineers at oil fields on a rotational basis.

Qualifications:

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Sheraton has new lobby

Sheraton Sana'a Hotel has announced the re-opening of its new lobby after it completed its months-long renovation.

According to a press release of the Sheraton, the new lobby includes "personalized sit down check-in / check-out desks, extended business center with a meeting room and latest technology, elegant lobby lounge with extended seating serving refreshing beverages and snacks and an enlarged lobby offering additional space."

Among the features of the new lobby is the resident pianist who will be performing classical masterpieces daily in the Lobby Lounge

and Al Mandhar restaurant.

The façade of the hotel has been redesigned and offers easier access to the lobby, shopping arcade and the rest of the hotel.

This comes just a few weeks after the arrival of the hotel's new general manager. The new management is expected to carry out a marketing campaign upon the complete of all stages of the renovation.



37 dead in last week's traffic accidents

Thirty seven people were killed and 243 others wounded in traffic accidents across the country last week, an official report said.

The report, published in Al-Thawra Daily, said that 194 incidents occurred during 12-18 January, resulting in such a high number of deaths and injured.

The incidents varied from turnovers to crashes and have caused material losses estimated at YR 21.5 billion, the report added.

The report revealed that careless driving, ignoring the speed limits and the bad condition of automobiles or roads were mainly responsible for most of those incidents. SABA



Archive photo of a deadly road accident in Sana'a

Siamese twins share a heart in Hajjah

A Yemeni woman from Hajjah gave birth Tuesday to Siamese twins in a hospital in Hajjah province.

The two babies conjoined below the chest were born after a caesarian operation for their 25-year-old mother.

Amirah J. Ramadhan, a doctor in the hospital told Saba that the cesarean delivery was carried out after an eight-month-long pregnancy.

"It was discovered that the two brothers were Siamese just one month before the forced labor," she said. "They share only a big multi-chamber heart and big kidneys." "Their condition is good and stable," she added. SABA



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Continued from page 1

Bassurah wants financial independence for universities

University Centers

The existing centers at the university have been planned to be reorganized as there is no system for them. "These centers like that of the water, women, population studies would be reorganized so as they can play a role in serving the society as well as be a source of capital for the university. We are planning to set up new centers for university development, continued education and international relations," Bassura said.

He pointed out that it is important to have a center for international relations which would study Yemen's relationship with the world and can be of help to the ministry of foreign affairs. The university is also planning to establish a research center that can serve both the postgraduate studies as well as provide paid consultancy for interested companies and establishments. A part of the overall plan is to set up a computer network for the university departments so that a good database would be generated; this would make it easy to run finance procedures of the university easily and smoothly as well as announcing the results of the students' exams through an intranet set, which would stop forgery.

Of course, the appearance of the university and its beauty is targeted by the university leadership plan which aims to pave its streets with asphalt, green it and establish new more gates along with rehabilitation of the Jamal Abdulnaser Hall, building a new one at the college of medicine.

A multi purpose hall project would be financed by the end of this year. The college of media has been provided

with a computer laboratory for the TV and radio studio. The rector is ambitious to start a new building for the college of languages, introducing new languages like the Italian and Spanish in addition to the languages of English, French, Persian, and German which are already taught.

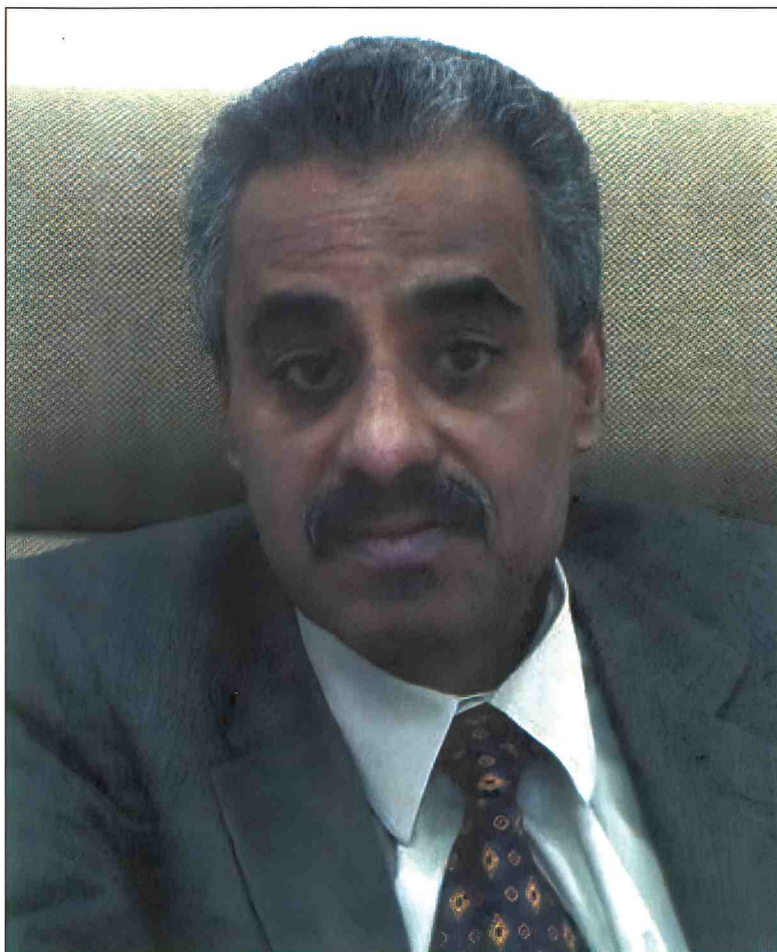
Branch Colleges of Education

When asked about the branch colleges of education in other governorates, Bassurah said that there is no infrastructure for these colleges whose buildings were just either schools or institutes and then became colleges for education whose teaching staffs are mostly non-Yemenis.

"These colleges need not only our attention but also that of the government. Of course, there will be a new system for the universities set up by the higher studies ministry; this would target education colleges in particular and there is a possibility that some of them would be changed into community colleges while some of them like that of Amran and Sa'ada would become universities," he said.

He agrees that expansion in announcing new universities without a good vision and strategy is a real catastrophe but he said such branch colleges are a heavy burden on the university and take a lot of its budget as the government does not provide enough financial support for them.

When they become universities, they will have independent budgets. He said that he is paying more attention to the main colleges in Sana'a which, need restructuring and overhauling and they have to open up new departments that



Professor Saleh Ali Bassurah

fall in line with development in knowledge and information, focusing on applied sciences.

Need for financial independence

The Rector demanded that university should be administratively and

financially independent which would help reduce the bureaucracy and centralized work one has to go through to get anything done for him.

"If the universities are independent, they can run their own projects and become self-funding institutions

through selling consultancy and training to various establishments and institutions as well as starting afternoon education programs.

Through these activities which need financial and administrative independence, I call for this step which would assist the government as universities will not totally depend on the government in their budget," he stressed.

Bassurah said that the budget given by the government covers 60-70% of the university needs. However, this budget is not open for the university leadership but is tried to several conditions set by the ministry of finance.

He also demanded that higher education in Yemen needs a lot of improvement targeting both the curricula and the teaching staff most of them need rehabilitation and training. He blamed some of them of lacking innovation and change, teaching the same syllabus or ideas for 20 years. He said some of the teaching staff does not even read the daily newspapers. However, he said there are some distinguished ones.

Students Union

With regards to the violent incident that took place recently at the university, he said he came to the university where there has been a chronic problem related to the legitimacy and illegitimacy of the students' union. He said there were elections in 1996 and 2001 coincided with partisan problems and competitions and that the university refused the second election.

But, the union was there. He said he came and decided to deal with it till there is another fair and democratic

election. When the students wanted to run a ceremony to express support for the Palestinian people, he agreed to that. But when they wanted to run the election, there was, according to him, a mistake as the students presented a request for a permit only two days before and that he already agreed with them to do that before at least a week.

"We have nothing to do with the problem; we set up a committee to investigate into the problem. How can we order the arrest of the students while there is a fact-finding committee?"

It was the security which made the arrest on the basis of a case filed by some students and security men were attacked in the incident. However, we worked hard to get them released and allowed them to hold a press conference at the university after their release," he said.

He pointed out that the university is interested in having an elected union that represent all the students, urging the political parties to leave the university away from their competitions and that it should be a field for students to compete each other in their educational performance and activities.

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To be Yemen's largest hotel

Movenpick on the way



Movenpick Hotel & Resorts (MH&R) recently signed an agreement to bring its first hotel in Sana'a.

Following the agreements in both Dubai and Al-Khobar, a new hotel in Sana'a is now on the expansion list of the Swiss chain.

The new Movenpick hotel is set to be established as the most lavish and by far the largest hotel in Sana'a and in Yemen.

Located in the newly-developed and prestigious area of Dahr Himyar, just seven minutes from the city center and 20 minutes from Sana'a International Airport, the hotel project will include 330 luxury rooms of 42 sq. m size, among them 31 suites, and a presidential suite, to be available to guests from September 2004.

Movenpick's excellence in dining lends itself wonderfully to the hotel and provides an exquisite experience: Six international and themed restaurants and cafés will offer a variety of culinary experience and ambience.

The hotel will also feature the largest conference and banqueting facilities including a ballroom of 1,000 sq. m capable of hosting large events, weddings and conferences for up to

1,500 guests and nine meeting rooms with various sizes supported by a state of the art business centre.

Sports and leisure facilities will include both indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a fitness center, an aerobics studio, sauna, steam rooms, Jacuzzis, squash and tennis courts as well as a children's playground.

Hussei Ahmed Banafa'a, Managing Director of the International Company for Touristic investments Ltd. the owning company of this exceptional hotel, is delighted that the new agreement has been concluded: "Movenpick Hotels and Resorts enjoy an excellent reputation in the Middle East, and are known for Swiss quality of the highest standard. It was for this reason that we decided to award the management agreement to MH&R, and are convinced that we have found a strong international partner."

With this agreement, MH&R will be enjoying international representation with 49 hotels in 15 countries: Germany, Switzerland, Italy, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Morocco, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, and now in Yemen.

At times, it can be deadly

Smuggling hurts everyone

BY ABDULAZIZ MOHAMED
ABDULLAH
YEMEN TIMES
ADEN BUREAU

Smuggling in general is a very negative and dangerous phenomenon that requires the attention and effective response of the authorities due to the grave impacts it has on social and economic aspects in the country.

For one, it deprives the state from deserved taxes.

But if the smuggled goods are manufactured within the country, then it is even more severe, as it also harms national industry and results in unjust competition with goods that are not taxed, and those are extremely cheap compared to other goods.

This results in gradual collapse of national production. If the authorities continue to stay silent concerning this matter, then this would result in the possible conclusion by smugglers that the government is actually happy about the situation and cares little about their violations that are killing the economy.

I believe the government will be held accountable if this phenomenon continues.

Death in pharmacies

Just as it is unjustifiable for the government to turn a blind eye on smuggling in general, it's no-action scheme concerning smuggled medicine is even more outrageous and cannot be tolerated.

The reason is quite obvious, as those medicines kill patients who may end up buying the cheaper medicine due to their weak economic conditions, which resulted in the low purchasing power of citizens.

In an issue of 26-September weekly published in April 2002, Yemeni medicine producers have called upon the

Ministry of Public Health and Population along with the Supreme Medicine and Medical Accessories Authority to act swiftly to stop the illegal selling of smuggled medicine in the republic's pharmacies.

Apart from smuggling medicine, some cases of fake medicine were also revealed bringing the issue to even greater levels in terms of priority and importance. The news item published in the same newspaper mentioned above -26 September- in December 2003 said that there are efforts to stop the distribution of fake medicine throughout the country.

The news article said that the Ministry of Health along with security authorities have already started a wide campaign to limit the number of smuggled or fake medicines from being sold, and to impose strict punishments on pharmacies that sell them.

This comes after the number of smuggled and fake medicine has risen to alarming rates.

Medicine that doesn't enter the country legally is probably too faulty to enter the country that is why those medicines are being smuggled or faked. Many cases of poisoning and health problems have been reported to patients who had medicine that was later found to be defective or expired as it was either fake or smuggled.

There are many international specifications and standards that need to be observed in any medicine entering the country, and those medicines that fail to meet the criteria are usually smuggled.

The government must carry out its duties responsibly to stop the cancer of smuggling to eat away what is left of our vulnerable and weak economy. Grave consequences will eventually result from any negligence or carelessness by the government regarding this issue.



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Israeli forces wound 3, destroy houses in Gaza

GAZA, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Israeli forces raiding a refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip wounded three Palestinians with a tank shell on Tuesday, and armoured bulldozers demolished 15 houses, sending residents fleeing, witnesses said.

The incursion into the Rafah camp was launched six days after a Palestinian mother of two blew herself up at the main border crossing between Israel and the northern Gaza Strip, killing four Israeli soldiers.

Witnesses said two bulldozers backed by five tanks destroyed the houses and damaged eight others. They said one of the tanks fired a shell, wounding three people.

A Palestinian woman, filmed by a Reuters camera crew, waved a white flag in front of one bulldozer as it topped a one-storey house.

The Israeli army had no immediate comment on the latest of several raids on Rafah in the last three months.

But an army spokeswoman said buildings in Rafah were often used by gunmen to shoot at soldiers stationed at Israeli outposts along the nearby border with Egypt.

"There is non-stop anti-tank and other gunfire at soldiers, and the structures that were destroyed were the sources of fire," the spokeswoman said.

Rafah has been a frequent flashpoint of violence since the start of a Palestinian uprising in September 2000.



A Palestinian woman searches the rubble for her belongings as an Israeli armoured bulldozer demolishes her home in the Rafah refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip Jan. 20. Israeli forces raiding a refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip wounded three Palestinians with a tank shell on Tuesday, and armoured bulldozers demolished 15 houses, sending residents fleeing, witnesses said. REUTERS

Pakistan's Musharraf to talk security in Turkey

ANKARA, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Pakistan and Turkey, two Muslim nations battered by militant violence and striving for good relations with the West, will pool resources on Tuesday in the battle against Islamic extremists.

Officials said an agreement on "terrorism and crime" was one of three accords due to be signed during President Pervez Musharraf's three-day visit to NATO member Turkey, a country with which he has close personal and political ties.

"It is a joint endeavour between Turkey and Pakistan that terrorism should be rooted out," Pakistan's ambassador in Ankara, Sher Afgan Khan, told the Turkish Daily News in an interview published on Monday.

"The decision is there, the commitment is there and cooperation with Turkey will be very welcome."

Musharraf, who has survived two recent assassination attempts blamed on Islamic extremists opposed to his support for the U.S.-led "war on terror", arrived in Ankara on Monday night amid tight security.

A wave of coordinated suicide bombings claimed by al Qaeda killed at least 61 people in Istanbul in November, and Turkish press reports said some of the militants behind the attacks had been trained in extremist camps in Pakistan.

Washington sees both countries as key strategic allies. Turkey in particular it views as a model "Muslim democracy" that should be emulated elsewhere. Ankara portrays itself to the European Union it seeks to join as

a potential channel to strengthen European influence in the Islamic world.

It was not clear what kind of cooperation had been agreed.

Both countries maintain strong intelligence services that co-operate closely with U.S. agencies. Turkish intelligence has in the past been very active in Afghanistan, which neighbours Pakistan, and is eager to trace any links between domestic Islamic militants and groups beyond Turkey's frontiers.

On Tuesday, Musharraf will meet Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan and make the first address to the Turkish parliament by a Pakistani leader. On Wednesday he visits Istanbul, Turkey's economic hub, before leaving on Thursday for the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

AGAINST AL QAEDA

Erdogan is himself viewed with some suspicion by the armed forces which, as in Pakistan, have traditionally played a key role in politics. The generals are wary of his roots in political Islam though his policies are strongly pro-Western.

Musharraf lived in Turkey for a while as a youth and speaks some Turkish.

Khan said Musharraf would discuss the situation in Afghanistan where Turkey has sent troops as part of a NATO force trying to stabilise the country after the ouster of the Taliban regime by U.S.-backed forces in late 2001.



Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf (R) lays a wreath at the mausoleum of Ataturk, founder of modern Turkey, in Ankara Jan. 20. Musharraf's is on a three-day visit to NATO member Turkey, a country with which he has close personal and political ties. REUTERS

UN arms inspectors join U.S., British in Libya

VIENNA, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Inspectors from the United Nations nuclear watchdog joined U.S. and British weapons experts in Libya on Tuesday as they prepared to begin dismantling Tripoli's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons capabilities.

Western diplomats said staff from the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) departed on Monday and arrived early on Tuesday morning in the Libyan capital, where around a dozen U.S. and British experts arrived on Monday.

"The Libyans have stuff that needs to be moved out, so there's no point in waiting," a diplomat said, referring to Libya's weapons of mass destruction programmes, which Tripoli volunteered last month to abandon.

IAEA chief Mohamed ElBaradei agreed on Monday on the agency's role in Libya with his chief U.S. critic, John Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, and Bolton's British counterpart William Ehrman.

ElBaradei said the IAEA would verify that Libya's atomic programme is properly dismantled, while the Americans and Britons would physically destroy the weapons capabilities.

Diplomats familiar with the IAEA's disarmament work said this was precisely how the agency had worked in Iraq and South Africa, the two other countries where it oversaw the destruction of nuclear weapons programmes.

"They (the IAEA) go in there and verify the dismantling," said one Vienna-based diplomat. "They don't otherwise get their hands dirty."

In his annual State of the Union address later on Tuesday, U.S. President George W. Bush was expected to refer to Libya as an example of how U.S. policy has helped make the world safer.

Qatar to waive most Iraq debt after Baker visit

DOHA, Jan 20 (Reuters) - The Gulf state of Qatar, a key U.S. ally, said on Tuesday, following talks with Washington's Iraq debt envoy, that it would waive most of the \$4 billion or so Iraq owes it and will consider writing off the rest.

"The state of Qatar will forgive most of the debts Iraq owes it and will consider waiving the remaining amount at a later, more appropriate time," a Qatari foreign ministry official told the state's Qatar News Agency (QNA).

"Reducing debt in 2004 is a crucial and defining issue and provides Iraqi people a chance to build a free and prosperous country," QNA reported

the official as saying.

Iraq owes Qatar about \$4 billion that has accrued since the 1980's, another official told Reuters.

Iraq is estimated to owe Gulf countries \$45 billion, mostly money given to Baghdad during its 1980-1988 war with Iran. Iraq insists the money from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states was given as grants.

The decision followed a meeting between Qatari Crown Prince Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani and the United States' Iraq debt envoy James Baker.

Baker is also visiting the Gulf states of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates this week

to secure pledges to reduce Iraq's debt.

The United States, struggling with a deadly insurgency in Iraq, sees freeing the country of its estimated \$120 billion foreign debt burden as key to reviving the economy.

Baker has in recent weeks already secured pledges from major creditors, such as Germany, France and Japan, to reduce the debt. Iraq is the most heavily indebted country in the world in terms of its population.

Analysts say Gulf heavyweight Saudi Arabia is key to finding a deal to ease Iraq's debt and support economic recovery after the U.S. overthrow of Saddam in April.

Japanese army revels in historic Iraq mission

SAMAWA, Iraq, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Eager Japanese troops quickly launched into their historic mission in Iraq on Tuesday, visiting the site of their proposed camp and waving politely as they were cheered by delighted Iraqi onlookers.

Four pristine Japanese military vehicles, the national flag emblazoned on the side, sped through the

dusty streets of Samawa shortly after dawn on their way to a barren stretch of land where they plan to set up base and start work soon.

An advance team of around 35 soldiers arrived in southern Iraq in a blaze of publicity on Monday, with Japanese and local media intent on

giving blanket coverage to the first deployment of Japanese troops to a combat zone since World War Two.

The group is expected to spend a couple of weeks checking on security in Samawa and assessing the humanitarian needs of the local population before calling for a wave of reinforcements from neighbouring Kuwait.

By March, up to 1,000 members of the Self-Defence Force, as Japan's army is called, are expected to be deployed in Iraq, carrying out humanitarian and reconstruction work, including a water purification project, but having no combat role.

The dispatch has caused huge controversy at home, with the Japanese population largely anti-war and the country's constitution banning its troops from hostile engagement.

Japanese forces have been involved in peacekeeping missions in Cambodia, Rwanda and other trouble spots since 1992, when the laws on deployment were softened slightly.

But the operation in Iraq is a major step up from those activities and it is a surprise for ordinary Japanese to see images of their soldiers bearing weapons and engaged in duties in a country that many consider still to be at war.



A Japanese Self-Defence Forces soldier stands guard during an inspection of the filed which is to become their base in Samawa, southern Iraq Jan. 20. The Japanese troops inspected the file with officials of Japan's Foreign Ministry on Tuesday after arriving in the southern Iraqi city, about 300km south of Baghdad, on Monday night to engage in humanitarian and reconstruction operations. REUTERS

Arab League stops Israeli reporters meeting chief

CAIRO, Jan 20 (Reuters) - The Arab League turned away two Israeli journalists who came to its Cairo headquarters for an interview with the secretary-general, Arab League sources said on Tuesday.

Secretary-General Amr Moussa cancelled the appointment with the Spanish television station they worked for on Monday because the league has a policy of boycotting Israel and Israelis, they said.

Arab League spokesman Hossam Zaki said later Moussa cancelled the appointment only because he was busy.

"He cancelled his appointment with them because the Arab League does not allow Israelis to enter... due to the league's boycott of Israel and Israelis," said one league official.

The sources said Arab League security checked the journalists' papers at the door, found they were Israelis and then asked Moussa's office for instructions.

The names of the television station and the Israeli journalists were not immediately available.

Nigerian govt seeks last-minute stay for strike

LAGOS, Jan 20 (Reuters) - The Nigerian government sought a last-minute court injunction on Tuesday to prevent unions from staging a general strike over rising fuel prices, just hours before the shut-down was due to start.

The government appealed against a high court decision last week that gave unions in the oil exporting nation a green light to strike from midnight on Tuesday.

General strikes in Africa's top oil producer normally disrupt many key sectors of the economy, but analysts said the shut-down was unlikely to hit Nigeria's two million barrels per day of oil production.

Unions complain that fuel price rises have hiked transport costs in the impoverished African nation and epitomise the government's "anti-people policies".

"We are appealing the court ruling so they call off the strike and we can talk," a government spokesman said.

Talks between trades unions and the government are set to resume at 4 p.m. local time (1500 GMT), although several previous meetings have ended in deadlock. Unions have warned Africa's most populous nation to prepare for a long shut-down.

A general strike over fuel prices in July lasted eight days before the unions backed down. Oil production and exports from the OPEC member country were unaffected.

The threatened action comes amid widespread dissatisfaction with President Olusegun Obasanjo's handling of the economy since he was first elected in 1999.

COSTLY IMPORTS

Despite being a top oil exporter, Nigeria depends on costly imports because its four oil refineries do not work properly.

The government argues that higher fuel prices are necessary to attract investors to the refineries, which are slated for privatisation by mid-year.

The strike was called after Obasanjo introduced a new tax worth 1.5 naira (1 cent) per litre of gasoline to pay for road repairs, the last straw for unions which had narrowly averted a strike in October, when the government deregulated the market.

Unions are demanding that the government reduce fuel prices to 34 naira (24 cents) per litre, from 42-44 naira now.

Local media said Obasanjo planned to leave the country on Tuesday for a four-day trip to Switzerland and Britain, but the president's spokeswoman said he was still in the country on Tuesday afternoon. She could not confirm his travel plans.

SARS bites deep into Hong Kong snake restaurants

HONG KONG, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Opposite a writhing mass of snakes in a glass tank, Kam Oi-ho stirred a steaming pot of snake soup and filled a bowl for his first customer of the day.

Chinese people think eating snakes is good for you, especially in winter when the meat is believed to keep you warm. But not this year.

"Our business has plunged 70 to 80 percent since the SARS outbreak last year," Kam said, as he looked around his near empty stall, which also sports bottles of wine containing snakes and their innards.

"The recent scare in Guangzhou has slashed business by another 40 percent in the past few weeks," he said.

China has confirmed three new cases of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in recent weeks in the southern province of Guangdong, where the disease first emerged in late 2002 before spreading to more than 30 countries.

The virus eventually infected about 8,000 people and killed nearly 800 of them, including 299 in Hong Kong.

Snake lovers used to have their fill in small Hong Kong stalls like Kam's, where snakes are sometimes killed and skinned next to your table. There were even special snake banquets, where every part was used and cooked in different ways.

The mild-tasting meat is firmer than fish but often more tender than chicken. The organs of the animals, most of which are caught in the wild in Southeast Asia, are touted as having all sorts of benefits.

But experts believe the SARS virus jumped from animals to humans. Prime suspect is the civet cat, also served up as a delicacy, and even though snakes have never figured on

the list of possible SARS sources, diners are taking no chances.

"Since the SARS outbreak last year, I feel wild animals are disgusting. I haven't had any snake soup since," said Betty Chan, a company executive. GOOD OLD DAYS

On the walls of Kam's shop, one of Hong Kong's oldest and best-known, ageing newspaper clippings are proof that business was brisk in the past.

"In the peak winter season, we used to sell 300 to 500 bowls of snake soup a day. Now we sell maybe only about 100 bowls," said Kam, whose "Snake King Yuen" stall also supplies snake meat to large restaurants.

"Out of every 100 restaurants that used to serve snake soup or dishes, only 10 are still doing so," he said, as he drew a wriggling serpent from a container and headed to the slaughter room.

"We keep only 50 snakes in this stall, compared with more than 1,000 in the past," Kam said, as he slit a snake lengthwise with a knife, removing its skin and plucking out the organs.

"There are about 100 snake stalls in Hong Kong. I think about half of them will have to fold soon," he said.

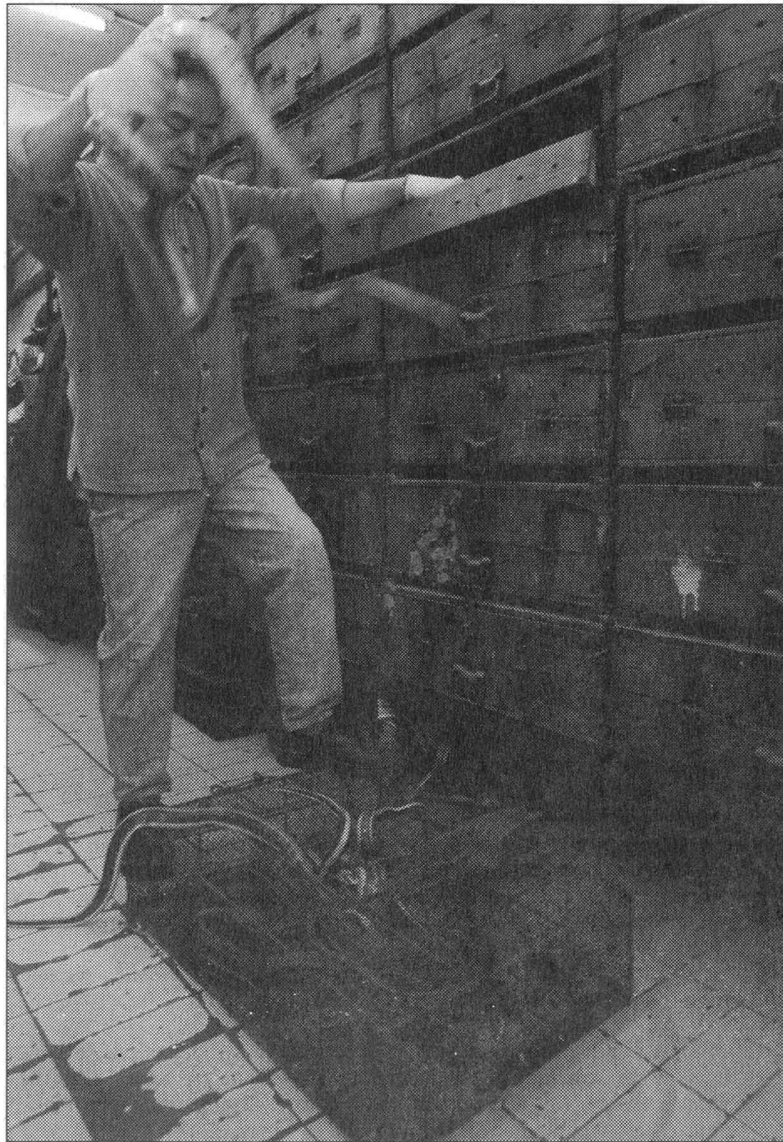
Yip Kwok-leung, who runs the Snake King Leung eatery, agreed.

"This is the worst time in my 20-odd years in this trade. Our customers have fallen by half since the last SARS outbreak and I think the trade will get more difficult in the future."

But snake meat still has some fans.

"There are so many animals that are said to be bad to eat. Can we possibly avoid all of them?" said Peter Leung as he waited for his order.

"I live far away but I had to come here for snake soup because many others have shut down," he said.



Store owner Kam Oi-ho pulls out snakes from their drawers at his store selling snake soup in Hong Kong Jan. 15. For hundreds of years, Chinese have been eating snakes as a health-enhancing delicacy. Picture taken Jan. 15. REUTERS

S.African judge in India jail over rape complaint

BOMBAY, Jan 20 (Reuters) - An Indian court has remanded in custody a South African judge, who was attending an anti-globalisation meeting in India, after a fellow delegate filed a rape complaint against him in Bombay, police said on Tuesday.

The remand statement said the South African woman was raped in a hotel room in downtown Bombay on Monday morning when she visited the judge to discuss an AIDS project for the World Social Forum.

A lawyer for Sirajuddin Desai, 53, a high court judge in Capetown, denied the allegations and said his client was innocent.

"My client is innocent. He has been framed," C.R. Hirani, Desai's lawyer, told Reuters. "No such incident took place in the hotel."

Police said no formal charges had been filed as they were investigating the complaint and awaiting medical reports of the judge's blood samples.

A senior police officer said the judge would be in judicial custody until January 23.

"We are conducting investigations, but details of the investigations cannot be disclosed," said Ahmad Javed, Bombay's joint commissioner of police.

A WSF organiser condemned the incident.

"We not only condemn the incident but we are also deeply concerned that the security of women delegates to the city should be at risk. We demand immediate action by police in this case," said a statement from the WSF organising committee.

U.S. rejects report of Afghan civilian deaths

KABUL, Jan 20 (Reuters) - The U.S. military on Tuesday rejected reports from Afghan provincial officials that it had killed 11 civilians, including four children, in a weekend air strike in central Afghanistan.

A military spokesman said the strike during an operation in Uruzgan province's Charcheno district on Sunday killed "five armed men" who left a compound where "mid-level leadership" of the ousted Taliban regime had gathered.

Reacting to reports from senior government officials in the province, who said U.S. planes had killed 11 civilians, including four children and three women, U.S. spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Bryan Hilferty told a news conference:

"Typically, the Taliban are attempting to spread disinformation, propaganda, in order to discredit the coalition.

"Our aircraft did not engage non-combatants. We clearly identified and engaged five armed adult males. We

have reviewed the incident, but, as I stated above, there is no indication that any civilians were involved."

Uruzgan's governor, Jan Mohammad Khan and Charcheno's district chief Abdur Rahman both said on Monday that 11 civilians were killed in the tiny village.

Uruzgan was a stronghold of the Taliban before its overthrow by U.S.-led forces in late 2001 and was the scene of a notorious incident in July 2002 when a U.S. helicopter gunship fired on a wedding party.

The Afghan government said 48 people were killed and 117 hurt in that incident. The U.S. military eventually said 34 died and 50 were wounded — most women and children — but said the aircraft came under fire.

Only last month, 15 children were among 18 civilians killed in bungled U.S. air strikes targeting militant commanders in the southern provinces of Paktia and Ghazni.

At least 23 dead in Algeria blast, refinery shut

SKIKDA, Algeria, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Rescue workers searched through rubble for missing workers at Algeria's largest refinery and export port on Tuesday after a blast at a nearby liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant killed at least 23 people, officials said.

The explosion, the worst LNG accident for nearly 30 years, ripped through the vast petrochemical complex in the port city of Skikda, 500 km (310 miles) east of the capital Algiers on Monday evening, caused at least 74 injuries and shut down all activity at the oil and gas refinery complex.

Nine workers were still missing, state radio said.

"We're working to remove debris and look for survivors and bodies," Energy and Mines Minister Chakib Khelil told state radio. He said the cause was not yet known.

A French and a Turkish worker received injuries in the blast, officials told Reuters.

"We have halted the refinery of Skikda as a preventive measure to avoid problems that could result from the

blast," Khelil said without specifying whether the oil installations were damaged.

The minister did not say when the 335,000-barrel-per-day refinery would reopen. He said the priority was to find survivors and secure the installations.

A shipping agent said the oil port was shut for exports and imports but Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika said his country would respect its supply commitments to foreign partners.

Officials at the scene said they believed a boiler at one of the gas units was the origin of the blast, which was felt for kilometres (miles) and destroyed three of the refinery's LNG plants.

OPEC member Algeria, which has been hit by a decade of Islamic rebel violence, is a major oil and gas producer and has one of the world's largest natural gas reserves. It is a key supplier of gas to Europe.

Skikda is Algeria's largest port and handles the majority of the country's crude, refined and petrochemical products exports.

Officials told Reuters it was too early

to evaluate the damage because it was so extensive, with metal, glass and concrete debris spread across the 92-hectare (227-acre) site.

It was the worst LNG accident since 1975 when about 40 people died in an explosion in Staten Island, U.S., Andrew Flower, an independent gas consultant, told Reuters.

REFINERY ABLAZE, WORKERS ANGRY

A Reuters reporter at the scene said fires were still burning at the Mediterranean refinery complex operated by state-owned energy group Sonatrach, where 12,000 people work.

"The place is covered in fumes and some fires are burning but they're small," the reporter said.

"Rescue workers are searching under the rubble of one building where they expect more bodies are buried."

Several workers, many crying and angry, met President Bouteflika at the site. An official inquiry has been opened.

The workers complained that they had warned that an accident would happen



Flames light the sky after an explosion at Algeria's largest refinery and principal oil exporter in the port city of Skikda, 500 km (310 miles) east of the capital Algiers, early Jan. 20. Rescue workers searched through rubble for missing worker on Tuesday after a huge explosion at its key gas installations killed 23 people on Monday evening, official media said. REUTERS

and that the boiler was faulty but no one listened.

Khelil said the oil installations at Skikda were not destroyed in the blast

but the main electricity plant of Sonelgaz serving the zone was damaged and had been halted as a preventive measure.

S.Lanka president's party in alliance with Marxists

COLOMBO, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga's party formed an alliance with a Marxist party on Tuesday, sharpening a political divide on the island that has held up efforts to strike a peace deal with Tamil Tiger rebels.

An alliance signing ceremony between Kumaratunga's Sri Lanka Freedom Party, which is in opposition, and the hardline People's Liberation Front (JVP) was shown live on state television and has boosted expectations of snap parliamentary elections.

Kumaratunga is currently locked in a tense power struggle with Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe which has stalled a bid to revive talks with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). Constitutionally, only the president can call a snap election.

"I would think there is a logic to that, that they call an election before people can scrutinise the alliance agreement," said Rohan Edrisinha, a law professor at the University of Colombo.

He said a prominent JVP role would make it harder to forge a widespread consensus in the south on peace negotiations.

"Anything with the JVP makes it difficult to see a quick resumption of the peace process," he said.

The agreement called for the parties to work together and accused the government of ignoring a crime wave, allowing a jump in the cost of living and turning a blind eye as the Tigers set up a separate state in the north and east.

These have "rapidly brought the country to the brink of disaster," said the agreement, which added that the parties were dedicated to a "negotiated settlement" to the two-decade civil war that has killed 64,000 people.

But whereas Kumaratunga's party maintained that devolution of power to minority Tamils was one way of ending the conflict, the JVP reiterated in the agreement that it was opposed to that.

Devolution has been a cornerstone of Wickremesinghe's negotiations with the Tigers, suspended by the rebels last April.

Kumaratunga, whose party lost parliamentary elections to Wickremesinghe in late 2001, seized control of three ministries in November, giving her control of the military, police and state media in the run-up to any election.

She said she had taken over the ministries because the prime minister had given away too much to the rebels.

The LTTE warned on Monday that the political impasse was threatening a Norwegian-brokered ceasefire that has mostly held since it was signed nearly two years ago.

The JVP was at the heart of rebellions in 1971 and 1987 in which an estimated 80,000 people died, but in recent years has entered mainstream politics and has 16 seats in parliament.

Wickremesinghe's United National Party and Muslim allies have 114 seats in the 225-seat parliament, but also have the support of 15 Tamil legislators, while Kumaratunga's party has 77 seats.

"This historic agreement will create a revolution in local politics," said JVP General-Secretary Tilvin Silva.

Hope dims for crew of capsized ship off Norway

OSLO, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Hours after the last signs of life were heard, rescuers scoured icy waters off the Norwegian coast on Tuesday for 16 members of a mainly Filipino crew feared dead after their cargo ship capsized in a shallow strait.

Two bodies were recovered from the freezing North Sea after Monday's accident and 12 members of the 30-strong crew were rescued alive, including three pulled out overnight from a hole cut in the upturned hull of the Norwegian-owned "Rocknes".

The trapped men had been heard knocking and shouting from inside for nearly seven hours after first communicating with rescuers by a scribbled note passed through a small opening.

But on Tuesday morning rescue workers said there had been no signs of life from within the 166-metre (544-ft) ship for several hours.

"At this moment, I don't think we can find more survivors in the ship," said Bergen police spokesman Trygve Hillestad. "There is no hope for people in the water, it's very cold, around minus six degrees (21 degrees Fahrenheit)."

The hole cut in the hull had plugged because rescue workers wanted to keep as much air in the boat as possible, to stabilise it and keep it floating, he said.

The Rocknes, with a crew of 24 Filipinos, three Dutchmen, two Norwegians and one German, was carrying rocks to Germany when it overturned in shallow waters shortly after leaving the port of Bergen, in southwestern Norway.

Odd Kjaergaard, who witnessed the disaster through binoculars, told Norwegian television: "It all of a sudden capsized in a matter of seconds. Rescue workers were there a minute later."

Officials had not released the nationalities of the dead, but a hospital official said the 12 survivors were



A video grab image shows rescue boat floating next to the capsized Norwegian-owned freighter Rocknes Jan. 20. Hours after the last signs of life were heard from the freighter which capsized on Monday, rescuers scoured icy waters off the Norwegian coast on Tuesday for 16 members of a mainly Filipino crew feared dead after their cargo ship capsized in a shallow strait.

the crew's three Dutch members, eight Filipinos and one Norwegian.

Searching sea and shore

Ten boats were searching the sea around the wreck, and Red Cross and civil defence staff would soon begin scouring the shoreline for the 16 missing crew, Hillestad said.

Flags flew at half mast in the city of Bergen, but some officials insisted hope was not lost.

"As long as we have the rescue operation going, we hope to find more people," said Else Beth Roalso, a

spokeswoman for the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre for southern Norway.

The ship capsized less than a hundred metres (yards) from land and was later moved closer to shore to make rescue work easier. Officials said efforts would be made to tow the ship to an even more sheltered area so that divers could enter.

Booms were put in place to contain a spill of the ship's 445 tonnes of fuel oil to protect marine life and picturesque recreational areas on the coast.

"It is incomprehensible. The ship

was only three years old and the crew were very experienced," Atle Jebben, chairman of the Rocknes' owners Jebben Management AS, told reporters.

He said the cause of the accident was unknown.

The ship had been checked by Norwegian maritime authorities last year, Jebben said.

Rescuers said one end of the Rocknes had dipped deeper into the water during the night, but it was too early to say whether the ship would sink.

Italy coalition allies trade blows over reforms

ROME, Jan 20 (Reuters) - Fresh strains appeared at the heart of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's government on Tuesday as his unhappy allies fell out over constitutional reform plans.

Reforms Minister Umberto Bossi threatened to bring down the coalition if his demands to give the Italian regions more powers went unanswered, raising the political temperature at an especially delicate moment for crisis-hit Italy.

Berlusconi himself has not been seen in public for a month after undergoing minor plastic surgery during the Christmas holidays, but aides said he was working behind the scenes to try to end the cold war that is lacerating his administration.

Government tensions have grown steadily in recent weeks, with a controversial constitutional reform bill acting as a focal point for the discontent.

The bill, which goes before the upper house of parliament this week, aims to devolve some health, education and policing powers away from central government to Italy's 20 regions.

The package was approved by all the coalition parties, but tempers flared when Bossi's Northern League party introduced an amendment to allow regional clusters to set up assemblies.

The conservative National Alliance party fears this will lead to the creation of mini-parliaments and weaken national identity. It has indicated that it will shoot down the proposal and has won support from the powerful Roman Catholic Church.

"Institutional reform should be pursued without raising the slightest doubt over the question of national unity," said Cardinal Camillo Ruini, head of the Italian bishops conference.

The criticism angered Bossi. "If devolution doesn't pass then everyone will have to go home, at once," he said in an interview with La Stampa newspaper published on Tuesday.

Paralysing government

The Northern League has threatened to quit the government on numerous occasions only to draw back from the brink each time. Analysts expected this latest row would also be settled but said the constant in-fighting was paralysing decision-making.

Berlusconi won power in 2001 promising sweeping reforms, but 2-1/2 years later, his grand project looks badly battered.

Attempts to reform the pension system are going nowhere while plans to overhaul the media sector were rejected last month by President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi amid criticism that the planned law favoured Berlusconi's own media empire.

The latest bout of government turbulence has coincided with deep gloom in Italy following the discovery in December of multi-billion-euro fraud at dairy giant Parmalat — one of the few Italian companies to boast a global brandname.

A rash of transport strikes and persistently high inflation have added to the widespread negative sentiment.

Amidst the depression, 67-year-old Berlusconi has been conspicuous by his absence. Speculation that he might be ill was stifled last week when his doctor announced that he had simply undergone minor plastic surgery to remove some age lines.

However, sceptics have accused Berlusconi of shunning Rome to avoid a showdown with National Alliance leader Gianfranco Fini, who wants to give the government a major facelift.

A senior National Alliance politician, Agriculture Minister Giovanni Alemanno, said at the weekend that if they did not win satisfaction within two weeks they would leave the coalition.

Berlusconi is expected to return to the limelight on Saturday with a rally celebrating his 10th anniversary in politics, but with his coalition in trouble it might not be the triumphant re-entry he had hoped for.

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مركز كريتر سنتر
لا تفوتك الفرصة بالفوز بالجائزة الكبرى
سيارة سوزوكي ليانا
وهناك المزيد
تخفيضات هائلة

تسوق وأربح جوائز أسبوعية

تمتع بالتسوق في مركز كريتر سنتر والذي يقع في قلب مدينة عدن ويحتوي على تشكيلة واسعة من المحلات التجارية والمميزة ويضم أكثر من (50) محل رائدة في مجال البيع بالتجزئة

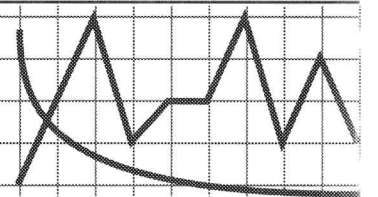
والتي توفر لكم كل متطلباتكم وبأسعار مغرية

ادوات التجميل، العطور، الأكسسوارات، الملابس، الرجالية النسائية، الساعات، النظارات، الإلكترونيات، الاتصالات، الجوال، المنتجات الجلدية، الهدايا وأجهزة الكمبيوتر إضافة إلى السوبرماركت

Grand Draw
27 January

السحب على الجائزة
الكبرى في 27 يناير

YT Business



Economic turnout of Socotra aloe plant



By MAHYOUB
AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A modern scientific study conducted by a scientific team from the Socotra Friends Society has affirmed that there are important curing and beautifying characteristics and economic return of the Socotra plant of aloe.

A scientist from the Irish Ulster University who has carried out the study along with head of Socotra society that the species of Socotra aloe now available in the island are four with variance in significance and type of juice they produce. The study also revealed the co-existence between all types of

Socotra aloe in the main areas of their habitat especially in the high rocky regions.

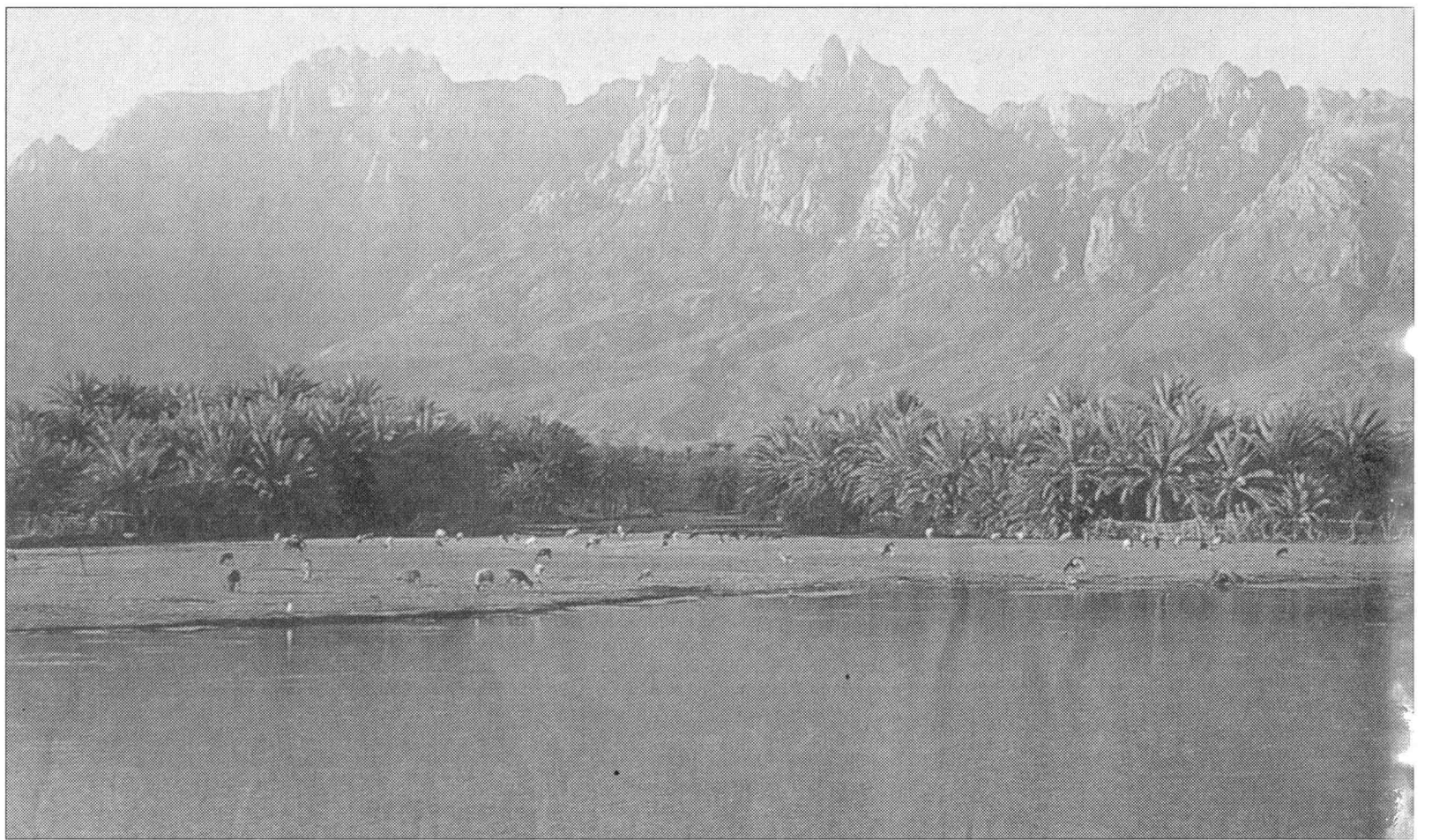
The study also concluded the existence of treatment benefits of the Socotra aloe as it has been proved that its juice and nectar are useful in treating skin diseases and bleeding of women.

The study made it clear that the

aloe juice is gathered in bags made of goatskin once in two years and the productive quantity of a typical site reaches to 15 thousand kg as an annual average.

Secretary of the Socotra Friends Society has confirmed he need of knowing the genetic and chemical composition in order to know more about benefits of the plant in terms of curing aspect and in beautification, which is a task to be accomplished by members of the society at a later time.

The study also indicates that the Socotra aloe is an available economic resource in case it is used in a sustainable manner but also drew the attention that the plant is exposed to problems resulting from random and irregular irrigation and negative effects of crustacean and honey insects. The Society of Socotra Friends intends to devote this year's enlightenment program for conducting more studies on the environment in Yemen. It should be pointed out that the Socotra Friends Society was established in 2001 at a meeting held at the plants garden in Edinburgh, Scotland. Members of the society are consisting of Yemenis, British and some of European Union countries.



A view for Socotra island renowned for its unique specie aloe plant

Fighting child labour program, activated

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The ministry of social affairs and labour is working on drawing up new perceptions for fighting the phenomenon of child labour, in response to official directives and with the help of the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

A meeting organized by the unit of child labour at the ministry of social affairs and labour on how to confront this phenomenon and possibility of activating the ways necessary for curbing child labour which has become serious in the Yemeni society.

The meeting stressed the importance of setting up clear-cut plans for activating the efforts in the area of preventing child labour and providing necessary protection for the life of younger people and also to work for curbing the habit of school children leaking from schools to the labour market.

The ministry intends to establish applicable treatments enabling the children families to find income-yielding resources that would get them not forced to push their sons to labour

markets at an early age.

Modern social studies have warned against aggravation of child labour in Yemen and its serious reflections on childhood situations in educational and health fields. The studies have disclosed causes behind students flee schools to labour market citing the most important of which as retreat of the purchasing power of the national currency, drop in level of family income, and rise in rates of number of dependent children ranging between 5-7 children in each family in addition to the high cost of living in the country.

Children do usually work in dangerous professions like workshops, carrying heavy weight things, selling products on sidewalks and squares and other jobs that usually endanger their lives and expose them to suffering, catching diseases without entertaining any health securities.

For this reason the government has launched a campaign for curbing the phenomenon of child labour and set up a committee for implementing the national program for this purpose. The committee is consisted of a number of ministries, the higher council for motherhood and childhood and a number of societies working in this field.

Project for engaging expatriates in securities system

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Legal advisor to Yemeni community in Riyadh Abdulghani al-Shaibani offered a project for including the Yemeni expatriates in the countries they are living in the securities system inside Yemen and that has included proposals and remarks aimed at achieving mutual benefit for the state and the expatriate.

The project presented to the min-

istry of civil service contained demanding the state establishment for social securities to create a special system for participation of expatriates and explaining the social and securities benefits he expatriate would gain in future. The project suggested that embassies and communities in the countries where the expatriates are living should carry out propaganda promoting among he expatriates to join the securities voluntarily and duties of subscription should be defined according to capabilities of those of limited income as

the establishment considers.

The project also suggested mechanisms of implementation through involving the expatriates in the securities system provided that the concerned parties coordinate with the state where expatriates live to open accounts in its banks in the name of the state establishment of securities so that the subscriber be able to deposit his payable installments at the establishment's account.

The project requested the establishment to issue a special card for the expatriates bearing the number

and name and necessary statements concerning the expatriate to help him pay installments without delay.

The project also suggested the appointment of a representative for the establishment to be based at the Yemeni embassy and his tasks are to complete necessary procedures for expatriates' subscription, opening accounts for them and issuing cards for them.

The project expects that this tendency would provide for the expatriates security for their future and families in emergency cases and for dealing with the problems that may encounter the expatriate in cases of his being exposed to danger. In the foreseeable period the project aims at contributing financial revenues and hard currency to the Yemeni state that can be invested in various fields of economic feasibility.



Social securities Establishment, Sana'a

Correction

In the interview published on this page last week, the correct name of the interviewed personality is Haj Mohammed Ahmed Juman, and not as mentioned in the interview. Our apologies to Mr. Juman and our readers...

Exchange Rate for the Yemeni Rial as of January 20

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	184.2500	184.5000
Sterling Pound	331.4800	331.9300
Euro	228.4500	228.7600
Saudi Rial	49.1300	49.2000
Kuwaiti Dinar	625.1300	625.9800
UAE Dirhem	50.1600	50.2300
Egyptian Pound	29.9800	30.0200
Bahraini Dinar	488.7200	489.3800
Qatari Rial	50.6000	50.6700
Jordanian Dinar	260.0400	260.3900
Omani Rial	478.5900	479.2400
Swiss Franc	145.5300	145.7200
Swedish Crown	24.9000	24.9400
Japanese Yen	1.7256	1.7279

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

Words of Wisdom



One of the most important indicators of a new spirit and new system in Yemen is the degree of respect for the law. In this respect, law enforcement is something unimportant. Not only that, but the law is more than violated by the very people who should enforce it or at least who serve as role models for the public. Thus, the law has lost lots of its prestige.

Prof. Abdulaziz Al-Sagqaf (1951-1999)
Founder of Yemen Times

OUR
OPINION

Who's running the world?

A question that has been raised by a prominent Polish magazine was "Who's running the world today?" The question was part of a survey questioning editors throughout the world. As one of the participants in this survey, I answered by giving George Bush and Bill Gates. One can easily deduct that the two names are controlling two giants, the USA government, and the largest software company of the world.

Why George W. Bush? It is obvious that the USA today is the sole superpower in existence. It is in control of the largest and most powerful economy, and the strongest army in the world. Hence, it makes sense to conclude that the person in charge of this superpower will be the single most powerful person in the world in this particular time.

It is also common-sense to understand that the power of George W. Bush is temporary because once he is out of office; he loses all his power and returns to the mass public as a regular citizen.

Some may dispute by saying that Bush is merely acting based on interests of small groups in the White House or elsewhere, and that those behind the scenes, including Dick Cheney, may be more powerful.

This may be true in terms of forming decisions, but the ones who eventually will have to take them is the US president. He will be the person to eventually sign and approve, and hence is indeed the single most powerful human being in today's world.

He demonstrated his power in the war on Iraq and Afghanistan, and he could perhaps do it again.

Regardless if another person such as Ariel Sharon is also influential in pressurizing the US administration because of the strong lobby Israel has in the White House, and regardless of the fact that the US President acts based on the will of the American people, that doesn't mean that it is him who can act or refrain from acting if he wants to.

Why Bill Gates? It may look like Bill Gates has nothing to do with being a powerful individual as he is merely a businessman. But when looking into the achievements he has done ever since he founded Microsoft, the world's largest software program, one can see that this has indeed changed the world.

With a program like Windows, starting by Windows 3.11, followed by Windows 95, 98, millennium, and XP, Microsoft was able to monopolize the PC industry through its powerful operating system which facilitated the transfer of information through the Internet in a spectacular fashion.

Yes indeed, Microsoft was able — by producing software products that entered many homes, such as MS Windows, MS Office, etc — to difference in providing advanced technology in very low prices, and in most of the cases for free as a result of open exchange of MS pirated programs.

As a person, it is Bill Gates who personally started his programs on MS DOS, and evolved them in time through his company, to become the single most widely used operating system in the world (Windows), which then gave precedence to the most widely used Internet browser in the world, i.e., Internet Explorer.

Thanks to Gates, today, globalization has taken everything by storm, and the Internet has become a daily necessity that has a tremendous impact on world economies in every aspect imaginable.

Those two in my opinion are the supermen of today's world; the first politically, and the second economically. It is a pity that they both are from the same country, which is also the superpower of the world. It remains a matter of time until we find emerging superpowers resembled in other countries, which could consequently give birth to new leaders and to new super individuals who would run the world in the coming decades.

The Editor



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An Open Letter to Bush:

Curse can only be stopped by justice



BY BAKR HAMUD AL-JUNAID
Bakr.AlJunaid@
sabafon.com.ye

I send this letter to You President Bush, the so-called President of peace and freedom and to the people who believe him.

Your Excellency, Mr. Bush
Regardless of the consequences of this letter to you, whether be blame, black email that includes threats, etc., I will never stop writing about the double standard policy that you are adopting.

You have succeeded these days in making people of the USA and other countries believe that what is right is wrong and the wrong is right. Or as Shakespeare said in one of his tragedies (Macbeth) "Foul is fair and fair is foul."

You have done a good job in controlling Arab regimes, which have turned to be like toys in your hands. They have been manipulated and played with the way you wanted. Congratulations on this achievement!

The whole world continues to watch Israel's war against unarmed civilian Palestinians. You too are watching the crimes of the Israeli State against Palestinians and their leader President Yasser Arafat. You must be aware of the killings, the massacres, the mass graves, the plane attacks, the tanks ravaging Palestinian towns and cities. You know about the bullets that penetrate innocent bodies, shatter windows, and you must have heard of the cars crushed by Israel tanks, the trees that were uprooted, and much more.

You also do know that many Palestinians are living without sufficient water, food, or medicines. They have no ambulances that can bring the wounded to hospitals, and if they get one, Israeli soldiers would prevent them from hospitalizing the injured. There are times when there is no way to take the dead from the streets or from under the rubble, and you know that well!

Your government has a major hand in all of this because you support Israel in all means possible, regardless of if it is right or wrong.

The brutalization in the occupied territories is taking many forms: the images are there for all to see of children terrified, elderly shot at, and women terrorized, traumatized: There is an uneven war in Palestine, and you know that is true.

In a time Sharon is congratulating his Israeli Defense Forces for their success in crushing innocent people,

and for their "courage" and intelligence in causing maximum destruction to Palestinians and then you congratulate him by calling him a "Man of Peace"?

Sharon says that the Israeli Defense Forces will continue their military operations until their mission is completed. Do you know what that mission is? It is to destroy all forms of dignity in all Palestinians, even if it would mean to build a wall around Palestinians and even if that means their genocide.

All of this is happening while the world is watching silently, because they know you and your government are behind Israel's atrocities.

But let me tell you this, Your Excellency.

The whole world is watching you too. This includes Washington clique around you. The world is observing your foreign policy, which is a policy designed to divide the world into those who are with you and those against you; good and evil; civilized and uncivilized; On the other hand, the ones you call evil or uncivilized are those you easily converted into terrorists. So that your war on 'terrorism', vague as it is, legitimizes the state terrorism of Israel in the public's eyes.

Palestine is one more diabolical scene in the Theater of the Absurd in which you are a major player. You did it recently in Afghanistan, when the world's richest and mightiest country went to war against the world's poorest country. You launched this war with the pretext of finding Osama Bin Laden and his supporters. You bombed a whole country and its people almost out of existence and persist in continuing with this bombardment.

You repeated your war on Iraq, and who knows who would be next?

Who will bear the costs of your wars? What about those thousands killed? Who will feed the seven million starving refugees? We are talking about hundreds of thousands of potential deaths and billions of dollars in collateral damage your Administration has caused.

The price will probably be paid by your children and your grandchildren, who will be asked by our own grandchildren one day "why did you do it?"

Will history still be written by the privileged and the powerful? Or will the voices of Ramallah be heard? Will the stories of Bethlehem be told? Will the dead of Jenin speak? Will all of your crimes ever end?

Will we ever find those who have disappeared? Will Palestine still remain a distant dream? It will if you do not stop playing God, e.i., a self-proclaimed god who speaks from both sides of his mouth. You continue to

call for stopping the 'violence on both sides' Both sides, Mr. President? One side that has the tanks and the gunships and the latest high-tech US heavy weapons and the other side, which is constituted of children with stones just for the sake of self-defense. If you are talking about suicide bombers, I would like to remind you of what was once wisely said about them, "Suicide bombers are not born, they are made." Perhaps the time has come to ask why they were made. You should also accompany that question with others such as "Why do so many people around the world burn the American flag? Why is there so much anger, even bitterness about the policies of the USA?"

When coming to the September 11 attacks, why was revenge and retaliation your only response? Revenge is destructive, it corrodes; for violence is a cycle that must return to destroy and it is only a matter of time before it happens.

Sharon will not be Prime Minister forever. He will be judged in the World Court of the People for war crimes and for crimes against humanity. Sabra and Shatila will haunt him: Jenin will indict him. Only history will tell if his friends will be judged too. You too will not be President for all time. But you will continue to be a father, perhaps a grandfather. As you gather your grandchildren around you, what stories will you tell them? Will you tell them that once upon not-so-long-ago... hundreds of Palestinians were being massacred... you looked away, you spoke your double standard speeches, you did your political somersaults... extermination was your script... you had the main actor's role in the Absurd Theater.

Will you tell them that you had no answer except violent ones? What will you tell your grandchildren? Perhaps you should listen to other stories, i.e., stories that come from the corners of the Arab streets, stories that come from the people of the South, stories that come from people of conscience all over the world and there are many in your part of the world too. You should hear the stories of courage, dignity, of harmony and hope: stories that come from the children, who were tortured, terrorized, traumatized in wars made or encouraged by you. They are stories from both so-called civilized or uncivilized children of the rain, of the sun... children of the stars...that speak of justice.

As a final word Mr. President, I want to stress to you that justice, and only justice can stop the curse of greed and violence and war.

Only Justice, Mr. President, can stop the curse!

Letters to the Editor

Appeal to President Saleh
I am addressing this appeal through your 'letters to the editor' section to the President of Yemen Ali Abdullah Saleh. I would like to inform our President that as government scholarship grantees, we don't receive the required attention and care from the Yemeni Embassy in Delhi, India:

We have submitted many complaints to the Embassy about our situation in India regarding our scholarship dues, which actually are not enough to cover our basic needs during our study while residing in India.

We mentioned many problems that hinder our pursuit of studies, but no positive answers or responses were given so far.

Secondly, our tuition fees and other fees of study for the academic year 2003-2004 have not been paid to us yet. Despite the fact that some students' tuition fees have been sent from the Central Bank of Yemen to the Embassy, they are kept in the Embassy's cashiers and were not delivered, while many other students' fees have not been sent at all.

I want to stress that we

have to pay fees to the Indian universities in order not to face any academic problems such as paying for extra late fees, not being allowed to attend the exams or get our admission canceled, etc.

Hence, we would like our respected President of Yemen H.E. Ali Abdullah Saleh to take some courageous steps in tackling our problems as he is always known to be a man of action and good deeds.

Mohammed Al-Mogbeli
mogbeli@maktoob.com
India

Islam respected women, Muslims don't

When I look back at the years I have spent in Muslim countries and compare it to my years in non Muslim country I wonder and ask myself are woman really respected in the Muslim world?

Unfortunately my answer is "NOT ALWAYS".

It is sad to know that Islam has liberated woman, respected their existence and put heaven under the feet of a woman (mother's of course who bring to the world the children that fill it be they woman or men), and

Letters to the Editor

know that Muslim woman in Muslim countries are denied their rights.

For example, in most Muslim countries young woman are being forced to get married to whom ever their parents choose for them to marry despite their disagreement with such marriages they tend to accept it.

In most Muslim countries women are always told that they are made for the kitchen and should only take care of their husbands and children.

In most Muslim countries woman can not walk in the shopping malls alone freely without being harassed by some men.

In some Muslim countries some women are still denied the right to education.

In most Muslim countries women have no real roles in the working environment. In fact there are only few women in the work environment in any sector of the government or in the public.

All this is happening when we all know that our Islam has given women all the rights they deserve.

Islam gave woman the right to say no to a man she does not accept as a husband.

We all know that woman's

role in a real Islamic society is more than just the kitchen and the house.

In a real Islamic society, both men and women work together to build a better society were Islam is really practiced, were the men respect woman and realize that in the days of the prophet (SAW), woman took part in the war and have helped with everything.

Let us practice our great religion to build a better society.

Neena A.

nina2255@hotmail.com

A proposal on eye glasses

While I was in Yemen, and particularly in Sana'a, I came across to see many poor citizens who were suffering from eye sight problem. These poor citizens were not able to afford to buy tested eye glasses as the prices are too high for them.

Can I request from wealthy businessmen in Yemen to establish a free eye camp every 3 months or so with eye specialists and provide free tested eye glasses with frames to the poor citizens.

Mushtaq Ahmed

mushtaqyemen@yahoo.co.in

COMMON
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

Playing with the numbers

There is a lot of talk these days about the number of Jews vs. the number of Arabs, who are living in the Holy Land and there is a continuous warning that Israel will be drowned by the horrifying thought of Arabs outnumbering Jews and Israel losing her not so genuine "Jewish" nature. To the observer, such talk only lends credence to the obvious ethnic prevalence to the chauvinistic movement that Zionism really thrives on. The fact of the matter is that the Arab World as a whole already surrounds Israel and that Israel is no more than a mutation of Twentieth Century "nationalist" dogma forcefully planted in it. For one thing, there is no such thing as a unique "national" character to Israel and as far as back in time as anyone knows there has never really been any, whether in Palestine or anywhere else in the world for that matter. Oh sure there were Hebrew tribes that roamed like many of their Arab cousins in the ancient world, but for reasons no one can explain, the Israelites just never settled anywhere for any succeeding span of generations. The phenomenon that is today Israel is of no real link to any of the roaming tribes of the sons of Jacob and we have yet to see any modern Jews (from outside the Middle East) able to substantiate their lineage to any breadth of time, let alone to the age of King Solomon. Moreover, most likely the majority of the existing adherents of the Jewish faith are really descendants of converts and if there were any Jews of the Jewish communities of Europe who might have been migrants from the Middle East, one who has delved in history for many years finds it difficult to find the records that speak of these migrations in a substantive way. In addition, the adherents to the faith, who predominate in Israel have none of the ethnic features of the indigenous inhabitants of the region, while the Middle East Jews (who are more like second class citizens in Israel) are much more closer to their Arab cousins and may have a more definitive claim to their Semitic origin. The reader is to be reminded that Semites entails the Arabs as well and therefore the term anti-Semitism is misleading when only applied to discrimination against Jews.

Back to the numbers game. One wonders why the people who bring out the numbers scare would think such horrifying thoughts as the Jews loosing their character, if they became outnumbered by "wild Arabs" in their midst. The fact of the matter is that the only ethnic features that characterized the Holy Land were those of the Palestinians and later the Arab Jews, who went to Palestine. The latter have never found it really troubling living amongst their Arab cousins even at the heyday of Arab/Moslem power and in fact were in some cases more prosperous than the overwhelming majority of their Arab cousins. So what is the worry, then? When a state is based on a chauvinistic creed, there is bound to be a perpetual phobia hanging over its domain, especially if that domain is not by all means legally theirs. If the Arabs outnumber the Jews in Palestine, the rightful owners could insist on what is rightfully theirs, if we assume that all the people would be living in a democratic environ. But we all know, what is occurring in Palestine now could never be, but an effort to make sure that the Arab populations have the hardest time in the world to eke out any sort of normal livelihood and to ensure that the demographic balance and territorial snatch shall always be in favor of the Israelis. Look at the Gaza Strip that minuscule strip, that is for all intents and purposes no more than a concentration "refugee camp", with hundreds of thousands of Palestinian living under the worst conditions imaginable. The numbers in Gaza have literally no meaning because they are so helpless, and merely trying to survive has been their major preoccupation. Besides this squalor, within a few meters, one can see the extravagance of Israeli settlements, with all the amenities of modern life at their disposal, while the third most powerful armed forces protects them from any encroaches by the entrapped Arabs in their misery and discontent, with every movement well under the control of the most modern human surveillance apparatus sprouting all around.

We are not sure why the numbers game is being raised so vehemently these days. Chances are it is an effort to lend some legitimacy to the Zionist claim of ownership to real estate that is not theirs to start with. But more likely it is to keep the Jews in Israel and their backers elsewhere on the horrifying thought that they will have to forget about any thought of a peaceful end to the Middle East conflict, because peace means Jews will be outnumbered and that is simply not in any Zionist agenda we know of. So all those Israelis in Israel, who may have become convinced that peace is a viable conclusion to all these years of endless conflict, should throw out their horrible imagination. The constant reminder of a prevailing Arab population could never acceptable to Zionist creed, because the Jews will then have to live with rightful claimants to the land. Keep those numbers ticking.

Will anyone hold Bush accountable?

BY JASON LEOPOLD
FOR COUNTERPUNCH.ORG

You'd think that President Bush would be facing, to quote Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, a long, hard slog in his bid to recapture the White House for a second term what with all the information trickling out of the president's administration the past few months showing that senior administration officials knowingly misled the American public about the reasons for launching a preemptive attack against Iraq.

But, unfortunately, there's too much infighting taking place among the nine Democrats campaigning for their party's presidential nomination and not enough attention to the administration's misdeeds. Too bad, because this is the type of ammunition that even the weakest Democratic candidate should be able to easily spin to convince voters that Bush should be replaced come November.

Still, despite the evidence that shows how Bush and his closest advisers have spent most of the three years they've been in office lying to the American public about their knowledge of the 9-11 terrorist attacks right on down to the reasons the United States invaded Iraq, Bush's approval rating is still above fifty percent and he holds a strong lead over all of the Democratic presidential contenders.

Maybe the drama now unfolding will put a permanent dent in Bush's armor once and for all.

Bush's former Treasury Secretary, Paul O'Neill, has revealed in a new book, "The Price of Loyalty," by journalist Ron Suskind, that the Iraq war was planned just days after the president was sworn into office.

"From the very beginning, there was a conviction, that Saddam Hussein was a bad person and that he needed to go,"

O'Neill said, adding that going after Saddam Hussein was a priority 10 days after the Bush's inauguration and eight months before Sept. 11.

"From the very first instance, it was about Iraq. It was about what we can do to change this regime," Suskind said. "Day one, these things were laid and sealed."

As treasury secretary, O'Neill was a permanent member of the National Security Council. He says in the book he was surprised at the meeting that questions such as "Why Saddam?" and "Why now?" were never asked.

O'Neill was fired from his post for disagreeing with Bush's economic policies. In typical White House fashion, senior administration officials have labeled O'Neill a "disgruntled employee," whose latest remarks are "laughable" and have no basis in reality.

Moreover, claims by O'Neill that the U.S. and Britain were operating off of murky intelligence during the buildup to war came six days after Bush's inauguration. It was then that British intelligence communicated to the CIA, the Pentagon and National Security Adviser Rice's office that an Iraqi defector told British intelligence officials that Saddam Hussein had two fully operational nuclear bombs, according to two senior Bush advisers.

The London Telegraph reported the defector's claims on Jan. 28, 2001.

"According to the defector, who cannot be named for security reasons, bombs are being built in Hemrin in north-eastern Iraq, near the Iranian border," according to the Telegraph report. The defector said: "There are at least two nuclear bombs which are ready for use. Before the UN inspectors came, there were 47 factories involved in the project. Now there are 64."

That information turned out to be grossly inaccurate, but it was cited by Vice President Dick Cheney during a

speech in 2002 as a means to build the case for war.

However, O'Neill's allegations that Bush planned an Iraq invasion prior to 9-11 are backed up by dozens of on-the-record statements and speeches made by the president's senior advisers, including Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, during Bush's first four months in office.

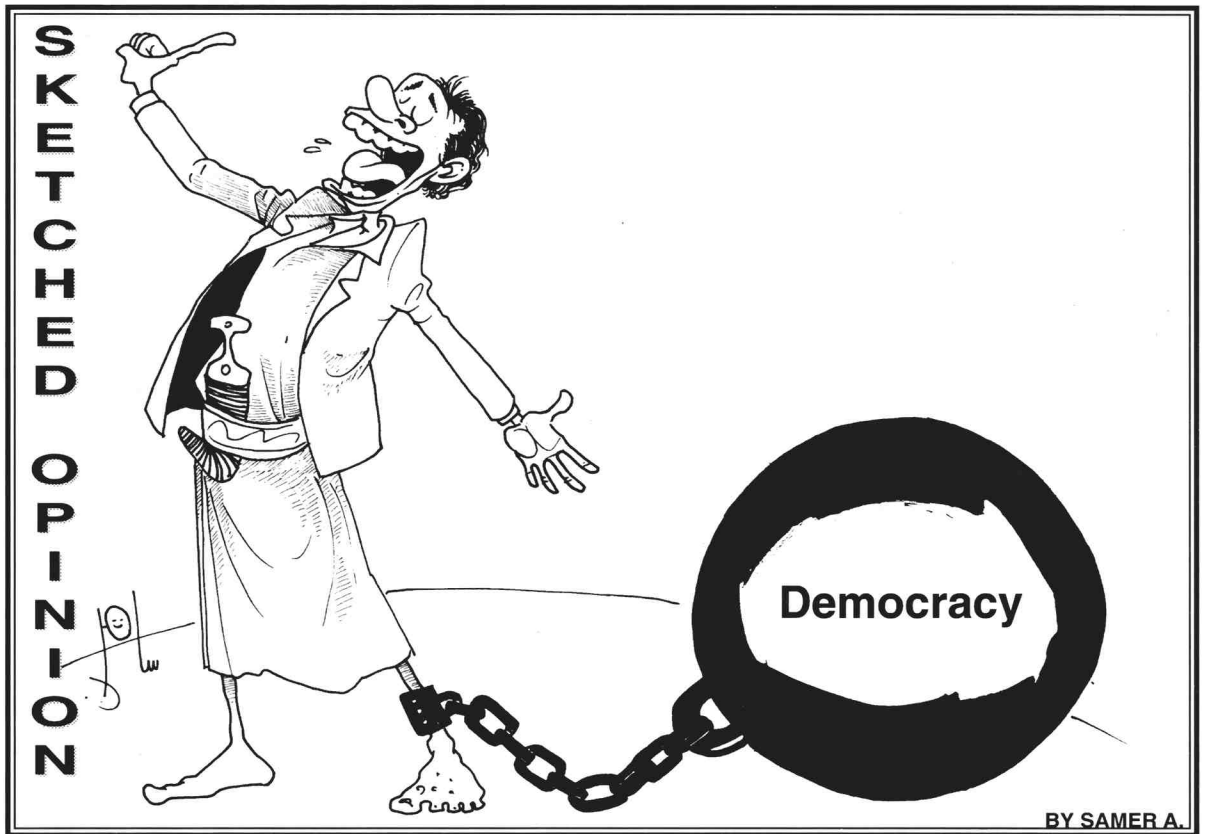
In dozens of transcripts posted on the Defense Department's web site between January and May 2001, months before 9-11, Rumsfeld said the United States needed to be prepared for surprises, such as launching preemptive wars against countries like Iraq.

"If you think about it, Dick Cheney's (Secretary of Defense) confirmation hearing in 1989 — not one United States senator mentioned a word about Iraq," Rumsfeld said in a May 25, 2001 interview with PBS' "NewsHour." The word "Iraq" was never mentioned in his entire confirmation hearing. One year later we're at war with Iraq. Now, what does that tell you? Well, it tells you that you'd best be flexible; you'd best expect the unexpected."

In fact, Rumsfeld discusses the above scenario in a half-dozen other interviews in May 2001 and appears to suggest, by specifically mentioning Iraq, that history would eventually repeat itself.

Responding to a reporter's question on Jan. 26, 2001 about the Bush administration's policy toward Saddam Hussein's regime days after his Senate confirmation hearing, Rumsfeld said "I think that the policy of the country is that it is not helpful to have Saddam Hussein's regime in office."

In his inaugural address on Jan. 20, 2001 President Bush also alluded to the possibility of war, although he did not mention Iraq by name.



"We will confront weapons of mass destruction, so that a new century is spared new horrors," Bush said. "The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake... We will defend our allies and our interests."

Further evidence suggests that when the Bush administration took office it was worried that the U.S. was losing international support for the sanctions it placed on Iraq ten years earlier leaving the door open to the possibility that Saddam Hussein would be let out of his proverbial box. President Bush sent Powell on a trip to the Middle East in late February 2001 to study the situation in Iraq to decide whether the administration should keep the sanctions in place or whether it should start to lay the groundwork for a preemptive strike.

But Powell returned to the U.S. and championed the sanctions saying, Iraq posed absolutely no threat to the U.S., during testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on March 8, 2001, much to the dismay of Vice President Cheney, Rumsfeld and his deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, all of whom believed in using military force to oust Saddam Hussein.

"When we took over on the 20th of January, I discovered that we had an Iraq policy that was in disarray, and the sanctions part of that policy was not just in disarray; it was falling apart," Powell said during his Senate testimony. "We were losing support for the sanctions regime that had served so

well over the last ten years, with all of the ups and downs and with all of the difficulties that are associated that regime, it was falling apart. It had been successful. Saddam Hussein has not been able to rebuild his army, notwithstanding claims that he has. He has fewer tanks in his inventory today than he had 10 years ago. Even though we know he is working on weapons of mass destruction, we know he has things squirreled away, at the same time we have not seen that capacity emerge to present a full-fledged threat to us."

In an interview with broadcast journalist Charlie Rose last Wednesday, Richard Perle, the former chairman of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board and one of the major architects of the war against Iraq, lent further credibility to the claim that one of the reasons Iraq became a target for invasion was because support for sanctions were eroding.

Perle also said that White House lawyers advised President Bush and members of the National Security Council to accuse Iraq of violating United Nations resolutions by concealing stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons so as not to break international laws when the time came to attack the country.

With the possibility of finding Iraq's alleged WMD's, which the Bush administration used to as a basis to invade Iraq last March, becoming increasingly remote after 10 months of

combat and as the President's hand-picked team hired to search for the weapons begins to filter out of Iraq empty handed, Bush and his hawks still maintain that the war was justified.

In a heated exchange with "20/20" anchor Dianne Sawyer several weeks ago, Bush admitted that he personally saw no difference as to whether Iraq had physical weapons or a weapons program. Either way, the president said, "Saddam Hussein was a dangerous person." But it wasn't the threat of an Iraqi weapons program that Bush said threatened the U.S. when he spoke before the U.N. Security Council and Congress and the Senate to support the war. It was an actual stockpile of weapons that posed the threat.

Finally, Bush is going to face a tough crowd come September. That's when the Republican National Convention hits New York City and officially nominates Bush for a second-term. This is the same New York City that Bush denied tens of billions of dollars in aid to after the terrorists obliterated the World Trade Center, breaking a promise to help rebuild the city's downtown area. And this is the same New York City that the Environmental Protection Agency, on orders from the White House, told New Yorkers it was safe to breathe when reliable information on air quality was not available.

Beware, Mr. President, you messed with the wrong city.

The fall of Baghdad's tiger

BY GUINNESS OHAZURIKE
FOR NEWSWATCH NIGERIA

Saddam Hussein was dug out of a rat hole, emaciated, disheveled, disoriented and humiliated. The picture shattered the image of invincibility that he laboured for years to build, less than befitting to a life cast in enigmatic light.

Wonders shall never end! The tiger of Tigris has been caged at last without claws to kill, without the last kicks of a dying horse, not even the protesting whimper of a lost mongrel. Who in his right senses would have believed that the man who could threaten the best trained military in the world from million miles away capitulated without a fight? Yet it happened and the world received the news with pleasant shock. Saddam Hussein was hiding in a one-man hole in a small walled compound and surrendered meekly - not using the pistol he had in his possession when American soldiers took him prisoner in a battle of wits where neither bomb nor bullet was fired. The dictator was dug out of a rat hole, emaciated, disheveled, disoriented and humiliated. The picture shattered the image of invincibility that he laboured for years to build, less than befitting to a life cast in enigmatic light.

The lives of dictators are spiced with irony to interest historians. What an irony that in his eventful soldiering career, he built a deserved reputation of a brave subaltern but now as a general he has proved himself an effemi-

nate coward, to be resented by his troops as an exemplary shame. Would it have been better if he committed suicide? Maybe not, yet that would not have been unreasonable for a man who had urged many young men to take that route to unmarked graves. Would it have been better if he fought to the last breath? Why not, soldiers are trained to fight in defence of country and if need be die in battle. His two sons died fighting and what a great disappointment they would feel that the hero in whose mould they were cast surrendered meekly without a fight. In good old days, as a consummate member of Boys Scout with youthful vigour one could have done better, and opted for a more courageous and dignifying option. The daughter of Slobodan Milosovic fired one shot at those who captured her father, and that remains to her credit. Saddam had a gun but lacked the nerves to pull the trigger, how are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perish!

The questions that beg answers are one too many. Why didn't Saddam surrender when doing that would have saved thousands of lives and spare his country the punishing bombardment that destroyed their whole infrastructure? Why didn't he fight until defeated instead of being prisoner of war in American custody? Why not spare his person the anguish of hell on earth, watching his own derisive funeral the talking drums narrating his life story in derogatory terms? If Saddam had died fighting he would have in that vain attempt salvaged whatever remained

of his vanishing dignity. Alas, he lost all, even the dignity of a defeated soldier. I often hear the consolatory wise saying, "a survived corporal is better than a dead colonel." This could be true in some situation, but the case of Saddam will prove also that survival for its sake alone could lead to a protracted and painful march to the grave, in such a way that the dead might not be ushered into the dignifying presence of his ancestors.

Why would Saddam choose life in humiliation over death in defeat? My first guess is that American troops may have managed miraculously to knock the bull unconscious and then took him prisoner. The capture could not have happened in terms such as described to the world that he surrendered meekly with his mind, soul and five senses still intact in functional capacity. There must have been a lethal but non-combatant interlude preceding his capture, more so, as the man looked not only dazed and disconnected from his immediate surrounding. One is not oblivious of the fact that a capture was the preferred option to keep alive hope of ever discovering the elusive weapons of mass destruction upon which the war was rationalised. While the world rejoices at the capture of the madman of Baghdad, that itself cannot justify a war that should not have been waged in the first place. Nothing has yet happened to warrant the waste of human lives in Iraq, including innocent women and children, insurgents and the coalition forces.

A second guess why Saddam was

captured alive is the ever present irony in the lives of dictators, they are cowards who strive to keep life at all cost, but often lose it in a rather ignominious manner. I am persuaded to believe that Saddam Hussein, despite his proven disregard for the sanctity of life, evidenced in thousands of his country men he sent to shallow and unmarked graves, wanted to cling to life at all cost and still does not want to lose it anytime soon. Before now, however, his thoughts, words, and deeds do not point to any congruent enunciation of principle for which he could die, suggesting that survival was the motive for his ruthless misuse of power and the desire to cling onto it till the very end at the risk of humiliation. The humiliation has already started. I wonder if anyone asked his consent before shaving his tattered beards, and many will be such indignities in the near future to bring his disoriented mind to reality. Not long ago, America vehemently protested the media exposure of their soldiers taken prisoners as a violation of one Geneva Convention. When I saw Saddam on display, opening his mouth wide like a toddler before an overbearing dentist, scratching here and there to indicate the presence of live or kindred parasite, I wondered whether he is not a prisoner of war protected by that same Geneva Convention. So why make him an object of media display like a work of art in public exhibition?

Then it occurred to me that a greater humiliation might befall him when they arraign him before a criminal

court to stand trial for alleged crimes against humanity. Not that the pursuit of justice is no longer a noble cause. In any event the culprit has shown the potential to do enough evil that even if presumed guilty until his innocence is proved would still appear in order. Yet, a trial scenario looks complicated to contemplate in any frame approximating fair hearing. Will America ensure fair trial for Saddam Hussein? We hope so! For sure he will not be tried within United States territory not only because he has not violated any domestic law, rather America will not want blood on his hands. An alternative is to use the International Criminal Court at The Hague, but there the wobbling feet of legal justice will only lead him behind the tall walls for a long term. Besides, the court will not be able to deliver the ultimate punishment - death penalty and anything short of that outcome will be less than sufficient to appease the vindictive bile upon which all penal systems thrive. In any case, America remains the strongest opponent of the International Criminal Court. A frightening alternative will be to deliver Saddam to Iraq officials, most of them victims of his terror regime so that under the cover of trial they could extract maximum revenge from their former tormentor. This option will not only establish firmly the authority of the evolving regime in Iraq but at the same time will be in line with America's concept of criminal justice. In Baghdad, a member of the Iraq Governing Council told the Associated Press that Saddam

could be "tried in the next few weeks" and executed if convicted. No one has considered the backlash such trial and execution would cause in a country that is divided along several religious and ethnic lines. Again, execution will surely embarrass some members of the coalition countries such as Britain, because the European Union forbids death penalty as inhuman punishment.

As exciting as the unfolding situation is, the moment requires some astute statesmanship, so that in dealing with this despicable tyrant no one commits murder in healing wounds. In the history of man death comes to many as unpleasant surprise and few have the privilege to plan for their end. Considering the peculiar circumstances surrounding his life, one had expected Saddam to anticipate his demise and figure out a way to die with a shred of dignity or in a conundrum of mystery to intrigue people, holding their hands with some surprising secret that may never emerge. Indeed mystery bestows prestige, ask the elusive master terrorist Osama, who has been hiding. Looking at Saddam with resentment and disappointment, and cheering the coalition forces with wholehearted praise for a good job done, one cannot but wish the world now short of one tyrant would become a better place for all. There must be few, if any, dictators who lived to a glorious end, and that humbling reality should be the singular most important lesson to learn from Saddam's march from palace to prison and, who knows, to the grave.

Ancient ship seeks to prove Africa-Asia ties

By GORDON BELL

It looks more like a giant spider than a boat, yet the Borobudur has already sailed more than 8,000 miles, retracing an ancient trading route stretching from Asia to the bulge of Africa.

The strange craft with its muddle of beams and gangly outriggers seems somewhat out of place moored outside Cape Town's opulent Cape Grace Hotel, wedged between the gleaming yachts of millionaires.

The 19-metre-long (57-foot) wooden vessel, based on an 8th century Indonesian design, left Jakarta in August and is on its way to Ghana — seeking to prove that trade links between Africa and southeast Asia were thriving more than 1,000 years ago.

Apart from some modern safety features such as radar, global positioning system and a satellite phone, the boat is an almost flawless replica of a carving on the wall of Java's Borobudur Temple.

Briton Philip Beale, 42, left his job as a fund manager in London two years ago to live out a decades-long dream to test the ancient design, an ambition he has had since visiting the Indonesian temple as a 21-year-old.

"You could say it's been on my to-do list for 20 years," he told Reuters, on the quay at the Victoria and Albert Waterfront, one of South Africa's top tourist spots.

The total cost of building the ship and running the expedition is estimated at 200,000 pounds (\$360,000), covered largely through private and corporate sponsorship as well as funding by the Indonesian government.

Indonesian influence on Africa

Beale's expedition aims to prove that

Indonesian trade ships could make the 10,000 mile (16,000 km) journey around Africa's Cape of Good Hope.

Some people believe the route to be a first millennium trading route that brought spices and silks from the Orient to Madagascar and other African shores in exchange for iron ore, ivory and skins.

One school of thought even suggests early Indonesians may have colonised Madagascar and exerted a strong cultural influence over parts of the continent.

If the early trading route theory could be proved, it would supplant claims that the Chinese were the first foreigners to visit southern Africa, believed to be in the 14th century, about 100 years before the first documented European journeys to the continent.

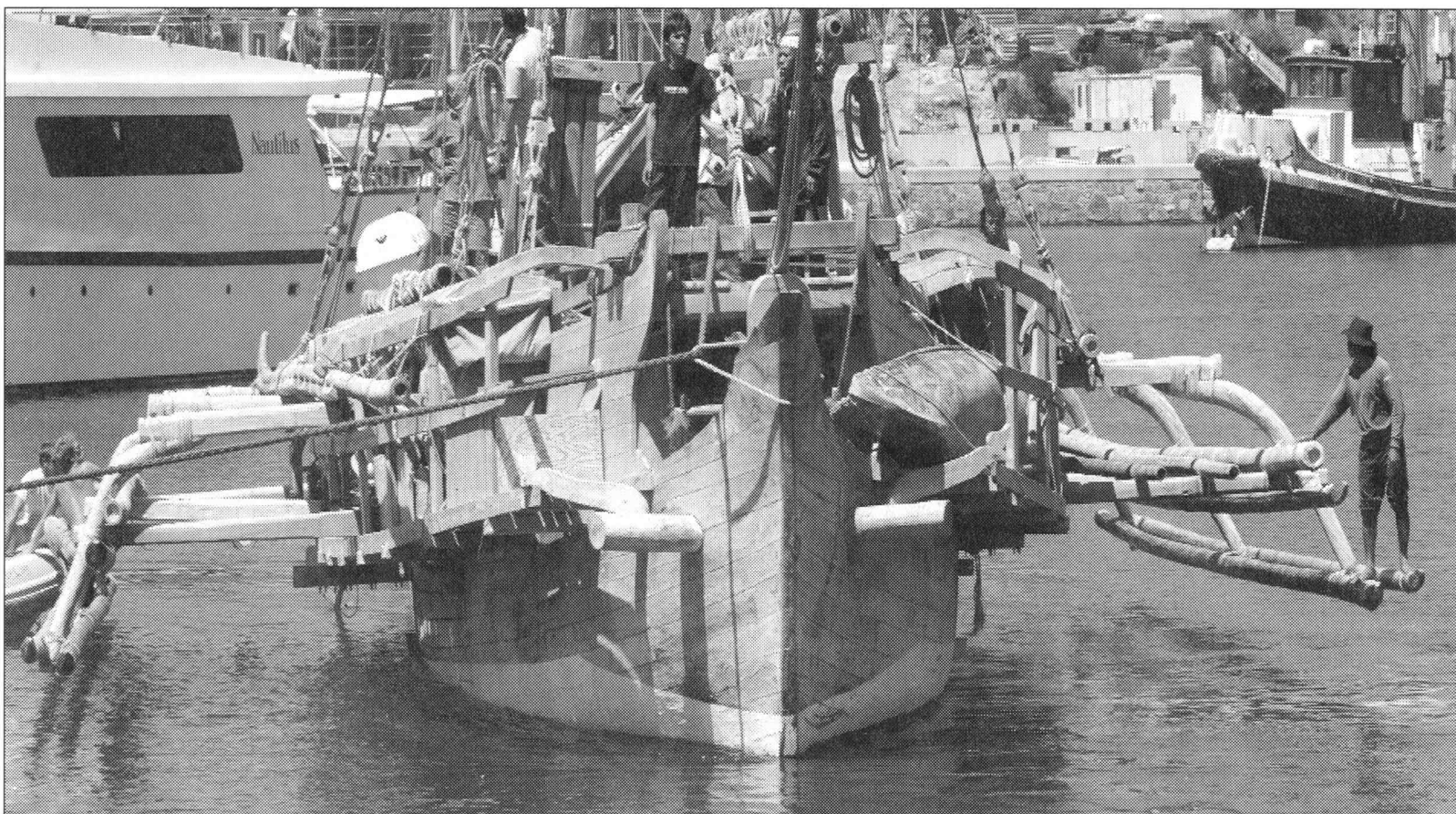
The Borobudur, and a 15-person crew, including eight Indonesians, visited the Maldives and Madagascar before stopping off in Cape Town. It sets sail for St Helena after a week's break, the final stop before the journey ends in Accra, Ghana around February 20.

The trip was extended by more than a month after a vicious Indian Ocean storm shredded one of the main sails.

The boat was built on Kangean Island, north of the Indonesian island of Bali, using tools and materials that would have been available in the 8th Century A.D. Its two huge cotton sails, hoisted and lowered by hand, can push the 38-tonne craft to a top speed of around eight knots.

The Borobudur's teak planks above water are held together by wooden dowels and below the water-line dense ironwood keeps the sea water out — as far as possible.

Even so, every 20 to 30 minutes the



The Indonesian ship the Borobudur leaves Cape Town en route for west Africa, January 17, 2003. The 19-metre-long (57-foot) wooden vessel, based on an 8th century Indonesian design, left Jakarta in August and is on its way to Ghana — seeking to prove that trade links between Africa and southeast Asia were thriving more than 1,000 years ago. REUTERS

crew must work a bilge pump at the back of the ship to expel inevitable seepage.

"It won't fall apart, it's built like a tank," Beale said proudly.

Crew members, who work in four-hour shifts at night and six-hour shifts during the day, have few luxuries, apart from a small hi-fi powered by a diesel

generator.

There is no toilet or refrigeration on board, and cooking the tinned foods, rice and freshly-caught fish is shared among the crew. Fresh water can be stored below deck.

Indonesian or Indian?

The trip is not without controversy.

Cyril Hromnik, a South Africa-based expert in early African and Indian Ocean history, has questioned the boat's provenance and says the design is Indian, not Indonesian.

Indonesians, he says, were merely passengers on Indian trading routes and were often shipped to Africa as labour for early gold mines.

"What this ship is doing here is terrifically demonstrating Indian trade with the continent," Hromnik said.

Whatever its true origin, the strange craft created a buzz in Cape Town's harbour, drawing crowds of onlookers. The boat likely to go back to Indonesia after the voyage and put on display.

Reuters

Chilean miners bury past in bitter camp closure

By LOUISE EGAN

Living in the middle of one of the world's driest deserts between a mile-high pile of rubble and a smoke-spewing refinery is not everybody's idea of bliss.

But the 2,500 residents of Chuquicamata, one of Chile's few remaining old-fashioned mining camps, are deeply attached to their home and sad they will soon have to leave it to make way for the mine's expansion plans.

"My father worked here 48 years. We go back four generations in Chuquicamata, so you think about that a lot and it is painful," said Orlando Zamorano, who himself has spent more than half of his 54 years living and working at the sun-scorched mine.

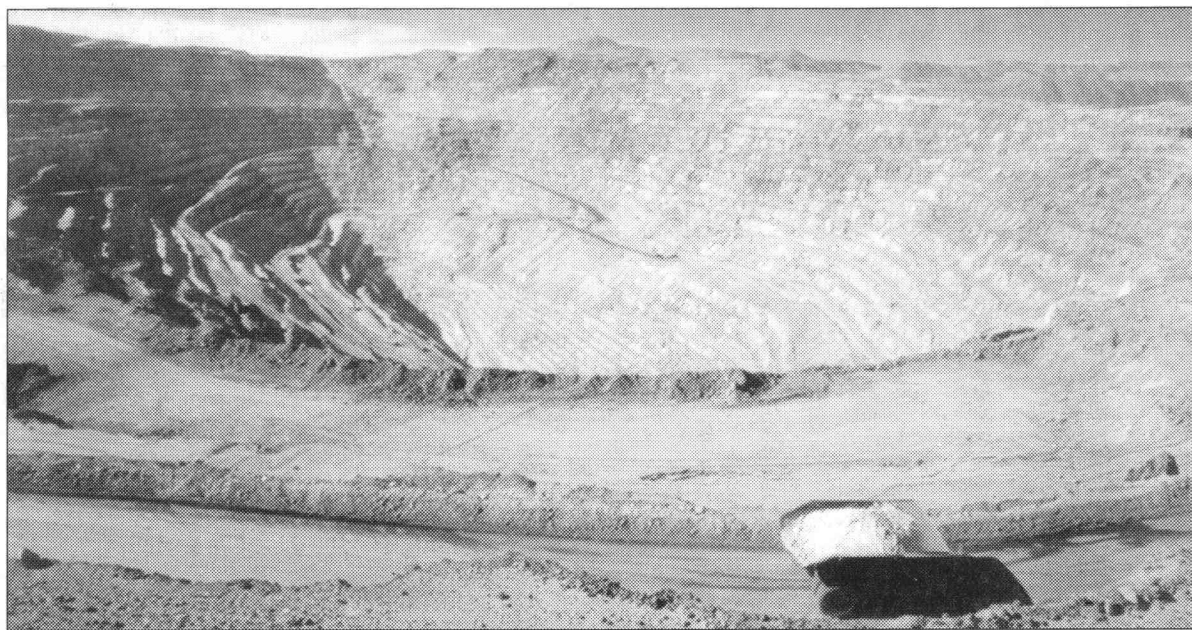
Zamorano's home will soon be buried beneath the Atacama Desert, which covers much of northern Chile. The brown desert dirt has already swallowed a hospital and will eventually engulf the houses, shops, banks, schools and roads that form the 89-year-old settlement, which locals call a "camp" but which actually resembles a sleepy, small town.

Chuquicamata, which means "the tip of the spear" in the language of pre-Colombian Indians who discovered the deposit, is now the world's second-largest copper mine and owned by the state firm Codelco.

The adjacent camp will slowly become an underground ghost town in another 10 to 15 years because Codelco needs the land to dump waste material from the giant open-pit mine. It has run out of space at its current dump site, a towering ridge of barren rock that is slowly encroaching on the camp.

But pollution is the main reason Chuquicamata must close. Codelco, despite spending millions on new technology, is forced by environmental laws to move the population away from the hazardous emissions of arsenic and sulfur dioxide from its processing plants.

"The fact that my birth place is going to be under the ground, that Chuquicamata is going to disappear, is pretty devastating. But if we don't do this, then the mine can't continue to exist," said Grineldo Acuna, a union



A view of Chuquicamata copper mine near Calama, 1,600 kms north of Santiago in this undated handout file photo. Deeply attached to the 89-year-old mining camp where they have lived for generations, the 2,500 residents of Chuquicamata will soon see their homes buried under the Atacama Desert when they are forced by the company's expansion plans and by environmental laws to move to the nearby town of Calama. The move marks an end to an era of paternalism in the local mining industry, but for the miners it's the painful end to a protected way of life, where the company provides not only a job but housing, schools, electricity and other basic necessities. REUTERS

leader who moved to Calama years ago to protect his three daughters from the toxins in the air.

After four years of bitter negotiations with unions, Codelco is ready to move the first batch of 847 families early this year to new houses in Calama, a dusty town a 15-minute drive away from Chuquicamata. The remainder are due to leave the camp by September 2005.

Company town paternalism

The transfer to Calama marks the end of an era of paternalism in Chilean mining, the lifeblood of the domestic economy and supplier of 30 percent of the world's copper. For the miners it is the painful end of a sheltered existence.

The system began in 1915, when a U.S. mining firm set up the camp on company land and continued after the mine was nationalised in 1971.

Now one of the world's most competitive copper producers, up against multinationals drawn to Chile for its political and economic stability, Codelco aspires to increase its efficiency. That means no longer provid-

ing free housing for its employees or other basic needs such as electricity, water, free schooling for children and even garbage collection.

"It's an enormously protective system," said historian Celia Baros.

"The gringos brought the 'company town' model here and installed it as they knew it, but over time the age of the mine and the rising costs associated with maintaining it and the camp itself obliges Codelco to separate the company from the town," she said.

In its heyday in the 1950s, Chuquicamata's population numbered 24,000 and drew visitors from around the world, including Latin America's revolutionary icon Che Guevara during his 1951 motorcycle tour of South America.

Today, there are about 7,000 workers at the mine but only a third live in the camp, whose quiet streets are lined with drab wooden houses and small stores. Mud-streaked company pickup trucks drive slowly as school children in uniform run carelessly across a street to a playground.

Chuquicamata miners, among the best paid in the country, began moving

to Calama in the 1970s to buy their own homes or because the company demanded it.

It is still the largest mining camp of its kind in Chile.

The move to Calama is made worse by the fact that for generations the miners have been loath to mingle with the regular citizens of Calama, a town notorious for crime and prostitution.

Their attitude comes from a revered status as employees of Codelco, whose copper is fondly called "the wage of Chile" because it provides a steady source of revenue for government social programmes.

"They are always making sure others know they are Codelco miners...it's like a caste system almost," said Baros.

Even young ones would prefer to stay in Chuquicamata, which has no cinema or bar, than move to Calama.

"There isn't much to do here but we like the peace and quiet," said 27-year-old Jethro Elizalde. "People are nice to each other and there are never any problems. That's what we're most going to miss the most."

Reuters

The Embassy of the United States of America announces for a job opening within its organization.

"Driver"

The position is located in the Motorpool, of the General Services Office, American Embassy, under the immediate supervision of the Motorpool supervisor and the general supervision of the GSO, Employee will be responsible for routine driving work for GSO.

Education: Completion of elementary school is required.

Prior Work Experience: Must have good driving experience in and outside of Sana'a.

Language Proficiency: Level II English ability (limited) and fluent in Arabic is required.

Knowledge: Must be familiar with local traffic laws and areas traffic patterns.

Abilities: Must have a valid Yemeni private license.

Grade/Salary: *EFM/MOH/Non Ordinarily Resident: FP-BB (to be confirmed by Washington)

Ordinarily Resident: FSN-3

How to apply: Interested applicants should complete OF-612 or submit a current C.V (with awards, recommendation letters, copies of degrees earned) that addresses the qualification requirements of the position as listed above and contact the Embassy personnel Office, American Embassy, Dhahr Himyar Street, Sana'a. Tel: 303-155, no later than January 31, 2004.

NOTE: ALL ORDINARILY RESIDENT APPLICANTS MUST BE RESIDING IN COUNTRY AND HAVE THE REQUIRED WORK AND RESIDENCY PERMITS TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION

VACANCY

CARE International in Yemen has a vacancy for a Logistician in its Sana'a office. Duties will include obtaining visas, tickets and travel papers for staff and consultants, managing vehicle maintenance schedules, payment of bills, obtaining equipment quotations etc.

For a detailed job description please email care@y.net.ye / Tel. 01 504377 / P.O. Box 11101, Jama'a, Sana'a / visit the office at 68 Arwa School Street. Applicants are asked to submit their CV's in English, with a covering letter by 7th February 2004. Only short listed candidates will be contacted for interview.



Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf
Founder of Yemen Times
1952 - 1999

Your Gift From YI

2004 Calender

January

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YEMEN TIMES



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Local Press

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr



Annas weekly, 19 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Woman demonstrations all over the world in solidarity with Islamic scarf
- Killed and wounded in clashes and explosions at various areas of Yemen
- Previous official reports affirm 11 thousand AIDS cases; a citizen prefers death by cremation after discovering contamination with AIDS
- Zindani calls for benefiting from Bush's directives
- "Heavy" high-priced wave after Eid
- Community college students maintain their strike for the second week running

Columnist Nasser Yahya says in an article that all previous indicators and experiments with regard to the government's statements and budgets point out that the Yemenis are going to witness a new wave of price rise. It is a dose the date of which has been delayed probably because it coincided with convening of democracy and human rights conference. It is understood that the delay was a smart step taken by the authority. For it is undoubtedly there would have been prospects that the government carrying out of such a dose could have aroused a popular anger and resentment and then it would have been something embarrassing for the government while hosting the democracy and human rights conference. It is one of the simplest aspects of democracy and human rights for the government to allow the citizens express their rejection of the price rise dose and organisation of protest demonstrations.

The question is now not whether the dose is coming or not. The question is what are the boundaries of the dose? How much can the GPC authority risk in its arbitrary decisions taken against its people?

The logic of reason says that the authority could not improve the people's level of living and thus it has at least to preserve the current level and not to make it worse.



Al-Shoura weekly, organ of the People's Forces Union in Yemen, 18 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Government did not withdraw journalism law
- Food poisoning spread among Yemenis

- Forty prisoners at East Secretariat Court send distress calls
- In response to Iraqi foreign ministry demand, deportation of those accused in stealth of Iraqi embassy to Jordan
- Taciturnity regarding an explosion at the war academy

The writer Abdulrahman al-Rayani has devoted his article to talking about the Iraqi resistance to the American occupation saying every now and then the American occupation gives contradictory statements on the extent of effectiveness and force of the Iraqi resistance. Sometimes there is emphasis that the number of attacks does not exceed 11 per day, and sometimes exceeds thirty and on other occasions they confirm the attacks are not organized and just irregular reactions. At other times the occupying forces say the resistance is following a new strategy never before known in guerilla wars. Lately one of the leading officials at the American intelligence has said the Iraqi resistance is pursuing the Chinese-style of guerilla war.

The American allegations that the number of Americans killed because of the resistance was not exceeding one killed or wounded has been belied when the military operations of the resistance have begun to cause a state of argument amidst American decision-makers circles when the fact-finding committee formed by the Congress carried for them unhappy news after the committee had stayed for 20 days in Iraq after which returned to the congress on the first of August to offer its report. He report has mentioned that number of American soldiers killed everyday exceeds ten and ranges between 12-15 soldiers which means h number of the killed is over than 400 every month. The number of those soldiers who escaped till the 1st of last August was 1200 to 1500, i.e. at a rate between 70-100 soldiers a week. The number of the wounded is in thousands. Fifty per cent of the soldiers wish to leave Iraq or to leave as soon as possible. One hundred officers from the American army have signed a letter to the American president pleading him to take a courageous decision for withdrawing the American forces from Iraq immediately in preservation of America's dignity and honour otherwise he should put on the military uniform and go to Iraq, mentioning they were sure he would escape within twenty-four hours.

Main headlines

- In Aden, conflict between Islah and Salafia
- Al-Mouayad says he defended Yemen against Bin Laden's terror
- Eleven professors protest at Sana'a University
- 200 historical graveyards unearthed in Mahweet
- Popular resentment for the government's justification for price hikes
- Iraq, resistance escalation, Sistani sticks to elections
- Sana'a conference ended with half failure
- Price doses weigh down on the people, political parties keep silent
- Workers and employees of the plastics company in Aden demand their salaries
- Rome agreement on table at the parliament
- The president chairs a meeting of National Defence Council
- The President stresses on translating executive agreements of Jedda Treaty in realization of the two countries' interests
- Evaluation of relations and cooperation between Yemen and the GCC
- The Advisor to the president, Salem Saleh Mohammed: Yemen's joining the GCC should not be subject to inclinations and formalities
- 8 killed in tribal fighting in Amran
- Challenges of journalists syndicate membership last Tuesday
- Yemen rates the third Arab country in AIDS
- Amnesty International delegation discusses prisoners' conditions, more than 250 of Grand Mosque detainees at Political Security prison
- Tension overshadows Yemen relations with Gulf neighbours
- Yemeni committee for defending political prisoners
- Repentant Islamists to be released soon on the occasion of Al-Adha Eid advent
- In a distress call to Aden governor, Liquefied gas workers and employees demand for speedy and radical solution for their problem



26 September weekly, organ of Yemen Armed Forces, 15 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Strict measures to be taken against those who monopolize or manipulate prices
- The president: Democracy and human rights conference reflected the high status of Yemen and the good appreciation it entertains
- A security agreement between Yemen and Lebanon, Turkey, Italy and India
- Electronic system at the ministry of interior for facilitating citizens' and tourists' dealings

Columnist Ahmed Nasser al-Shareef says in an article the great political and material price some Arab countries are paying in return for the temporary silence of the American administration and lessening the pressures on them in addition to Arab rulers fear from keeping pace with the changes the world is witnessing today, especially in relation with peoples participation in decision-making prove to a great extent correctness of what some observers thought that president Saddam Hussein and his regime were right in their confrontation with the west and not yielding to demands of the American administration, represented in enabling them governing destinies of the Arab peoples politically, economically, culturally and socially.

If hold a comparison between stands of the former Iraqi regime in facing the west and languid stands of some Arab regimes as regards issues of their peoples, we would find out that president Saddam Hussein was patriotic in the stark meaning of the word despite the policy of tyranny against his people and problems with his neighbours that accompanied his regime. Were it not for the grave mistake he had committed in the second Gulf war when he fired a number of missiles at the Zionist entity, his destiny would not have been this severe and unexpected end. It is the Jews who have decided to get rid of him and end his regime sine the landing of the first Iraqi missile in Tel Aviv. The American administration is nothing but an implementer in its surrogate war instead of Israel. Although the American administration had managed to convince some Arab countries that Saddam Hussein posed a threat against them in order to win their sympathy and

stand by it for getting rid of Saddam Hussein and his regime which is a scenario that had been actually implemented with an Arab backing.

After the invasion of Iraq and occupying it facts began to be revealed and those facts made those who had believed the American administration fall in a kind of bewilderment, including those Iraqis who were forming an opposition to Saddam and his regime. After the capture of Saddam Hussein and considering him a POW not a war criminal has made many sides reconsider their calculations, thinking that sending Saddam to court as a war criminal may explode facts and scandals many cannot bear, including the American administration itself.



Al-Shumou weekly, 17 Jan 2004.

Main headlines

- Selling the biggest Sana'a hotel to Israeli Jews
- In Ibb manipulation of employment posts, girl employees sacked
- At Khor Maksar power station, more than half million liters of diesel lost

On the price doses the political editor of the newspaper said the new price doses are no longer merely words repeated here and there or just rumours unleashed by political parties in an electoral operation as much as now a live reality and implemented whose heroes are merchants, tradesmen middlemen and government officials all of whom seek to achieve the biggest amount of profits. At a time the dollar is suffering from big retreat internationally in our country there is an unjustifiable rise in food commodities. This is a matter that has become object of the people talk and those whose conscience is dead entertain the groaning of the grieved and feverishly working for illegitimate gains.

All that happens under stark silence of the concerned parties who have nothing but creating reasons for the skyrocketing prices which would not stop at a certain ceiling. The situation will continue like that as long as there are some men in the government who support and stand behind the rise of prices as partners in trade. Thus this partnership falls on the head of the poor citizen who finds himself incapable of buying his needs.

World Press

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

Egypt

Al Ahram

At the first main gathering between Egypt and the Slovak Republic, President Mubarak underlined the importance of the role of Europe and international community in pushing forward the Middle East peace process in parallel with efforts exerted by the United States and Middle East countries.

President Mubarak and Slovakian President Rudolf Schuster discussed in their talks Monday the implications of the situation on the international scene to the region and the need for providing a climate conducive to pushing forward the roadmap.

Al Akhbar

The technical committee participating in the investigation on the crash of the Flash Airlines airplane began to analyze the black boxes of the ill-fated plane after receiving them from the sea.

Shaker Qelada, head of the Egyptian investigation team, said that the results of the recorders analysis will be handed to Civil Aviation Minister Ahmed Shafiq.

Al Gomhuria

President Hosni Mubarak receives Tuesday King Abdullah II of Jordan who arrives in Cairo on a one-day visit.

The summit comes within the efforts of President Mubarak to conclude an Arab unified vision and to close ideas on boosting the joint Arab action.

The Egyptian Gazette

The business delegation accompanying Slovakian President Rudolf Schuster, who is currently on a visit to Egypt, agreed with their Egyptian counterparts on Monday to set up an Egyptian-Slovakian business council and two business centres in Cairo and Bratislava.

Japan

Asahi, Mainichi, Nihon Keizai, Yomiuri

The advance team of Japan's Ground Self-Defense Forces arrived in Iraq.

Nihon Keizai

The Japanese government declared economy recovery for the first time in three years.

Mainichi

Japan's public and employees' pension programs are expected to see 5 trillion yen (46.7 billion US dollars) in red ink in fiscal 2004.

Yomiuri

The crime rate in Japan falls for the first time in eight years.

France

Le Monde

Could President Jacques Chirac be deprived of his Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, whose popularity and controversy kept making trouble within the center-right government?

L'Humanite

A new wave of strikes against privatization are to be launched in France,

starting with marches of workers of the EdF Electricity of France on Tuesday, of SNCF, a railway company, on Wednesday and of hospitals on Thursday.

La Croix

The latest statistics show that there exist ideas of cliché about the immigrants, particularly on their total number and birth rate.

Nigeria

The Punch

The stage appeared set on Monday for the national strike slated to begin at midnight on Tuesday by the Nigeria Labor Congress and some civil society groups. Tension arising from the impending strike had gripped most major cities in the country as some Nigerians rushed to the banks to make withdrawals while others who had some cash headed

for the markets to purchase food-stuffs.

Vanguard

Strategies to ensure the success of Jan.-21 strike were mapped out on Monday by the Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC) as the states mobilized for the strike. Parents have been advised to keep their children and wards at home.

Pakistan

The News

Pakistan on Monday offered India technical level talks to initiate bus service between the two countries from two new border check points including the proposed bus service in disputed Kashmir.

The Nation

In a bid to identify a suspected top al-Qaeda leader arrested with six other terrorists in Karachi on Sunday, Pakistan

has sought assistance of US Federal Bureau of Investigation to confirm the big catch.

Dawn

President Pervez Musharraf said on Monday that Pakistan is fully safeguarding its national interests and there is no question of a sell-out on Kashmir or a compromise on the nation's nuclear program.

Philippines

Philippine Daily Inquirer

Presidential Spokesman Ignacio Bunye said Monday in a statement that the government has been successful in its anti-terrorism campaign, after the US warned its citizens anew against traveling to the Philippines.

The Philippine Star

Presidential Spokesman Ignacio Bunye said Monday only a Supreme Court intervention or an order from President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo can

stay the execution of two convicted kidnappers Roberto Lara and Roderick Licayan.

Manila Bulletin

The presidential palace dismissed reports Monday that Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita has been assigned as concurrent chief executive officer of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's campaign team as it expressed confidence that he will keep the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) away from partisan politics.

Kenya

East African Standard

Delegates at the Kenyan National Constitutional Conference in Nairobi on Monday passed a controversial proposal under which a president-elect would not be sworn in before 21 days are over, allowing those who feel aggrieved with the election time to go to court. This proposal would have the effect of creating a power vacuum at the top immediately after a presidential election.

Kenya Times

Residents in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi are in uproar following a move by the City Council to increase rents by 100 percent on its houses.

People Daily:

Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki on Monday appointed Major General Julius Karangi the Commander of Kenya Air Force.

India

Hindustan Times

Direct access to destinations in Europe is set to increase with airlines ready to ramp up new flights. Two European carriers, Lufthansa and Al Italia, are planning to connect Munich and Milan with Delhi.

The Statesman

After the violent protests and fierce agitation against disbanding of Noida district a week ago, the area was turned into a fortress on Monday, with over 2,000 security personnel deployed in every nook and corner of the city.

Prof. (Dr.) Dawood A. Al-Hidabi to Yemen Times

“An uncompromising adherence to quality in education has been our benchmark.”

University of Science and Technology, Sana'a has established itself as a premier institute of academic excellence in the Republic of Yemen, thanks to the versatility, sustained efforts and path breaking leadership of its dynamic President Prof. Dr. Dawood Abdulmalik Al-Hidabi. Since its inception in 1993, the university has been relentlessly pursuing the goals of highest standards of academic distinction in all streams of the university's course offerings. It's small wonder that in the course of just a decade, it has emerged as a unique Academia whose reputation has transcended the geographical frontiers of Yemen. Without any fear of exaggeration its Rector Dr. Dawood can be taken as a symbol of the aspirations of the new generation whose vision and dynamic stewardship has creatively transformed the university's ambience and added so much of luster to it.

With a view to getting glimpses of the vision and versatility of the institution that Dr. Dawood genuinely is, Dr. Ramakanta Sahu, presenter of Education Page and Dr. Muhsin A. Bin Shamian of the English department, Faculty of Education, University of Science and Technology, met Dr. Dawood.

Excerpts

YT: Please give us a brief history of the university.

Dr. Dawood: The origin of the university dates back to 1993 when it began as a community college, the first of its kind in Yemen. It was then called the National College of Science and Technology whose primary objective was to contribute towards human resource development. It eventually grew up into its present form as the University of Science and Technology, the third university in Yemen after Sana'a University and Aden university, and the first ever university in the private sector.

YT: Please throw some light on the current status of the university?

Dr. Dawood: As I said, we have steadily grown and developed since 1993. At present we have more than 6 thousand students, 300 strong faculty, and around 300 non-teaching staff. We have not only diversified our activities, but branched out to establish ourselves as a broad-based institution. Now we have set-up branches in Hodeida and Taiz. Beside we have set-up contact offices in Mukalla, Aden, and Ibb as well.

YT: Could you tell us about the academic programs offered at the

university?

Dr. Dawood: We offer a wide range of courses at this university. In fact there are 30 courses available here at the diploma, graduate and post-graduate levels. They are grouped under 4 major blocks:

a. **Health Sciences** that includes School of Medicine, School of Pharmacy, School of Dentistry.

b. **Management Stream** has as its constituents Schools of Banking, Finance, Accounting, Business Administration, and Marketing.

c. **Science and Engineering** which takes into account areas like Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Telecommunications, Architecture, and Civil Engineering. We have plans to further increase and expand the Science and Engineering stream because of the increasing demand.

d. **Social Sciences** which includes the Faculty of Education.

However, some of the most distinctive courses are Dentistry, Information Technology (IT), Marketing, English and Translation, all of which we regard as our flagship. Some of our programs and course offering may have been offered elsewhere, but we have restructured our courses to make them suitable to the demands of the present context.

YT: What would you consider as your major academic focus?

Dr. Dawood: Our mainstay is Information Technology and the English Language modules.

YT: What special course modules or remedial courses are available for improving the proficiency in English of your students?

Dr. Dawood: I must admit that our high school leavers have a poor knowledge in English. Most of them lack communicative competence in English. In order to give them an optimal opportunity to improve their command of English, we have set up an English Language Unit. We have made it obligatory for all our students to attend a proficiency course in English of 300 contact hours and get a basic and advanced level exposure in communication skills, with the result that, by the end of the course, most of them are able to express themselves in English.

YT: When was this program launched and has there been any evaluation of the efficacy of the program?

Dr. Dawood: We started the program 2 years ago although it has not been subjected to any formal evaluation. Yet we mark a perceptible improvement in the terminal behavior of our students in English after completion of the course.

YT: Keeping in view your unequivocal accent on English what steps do you propose to reorganize the English department?

Dr. Dawood: We're strengthening the English department in terms of recruiting excellent faculty and equipping them with facilities such as a good library, multimedia labs, free internet access to update their knowledge and skill. We offer them an open budget to buy the latest books and subscribe to professional journals so as to enable them to sharpen their professional equipment. Last year our faculty members restructured and improvised the whole curriculum. I hope you too participated in the whole exercise. Moreover, we're visited from time to time by external bodies who give us feedback on and insight into the ways of bringing about further refinement of our existing curricula.

YT: Is there a placement service available at the university to provide a link between the university graduates and the employment market?

Dr. Dawood: We have a Graduates' Club. It is on the web with the names qualifications and grades of the graduates. We have established a link with some companies to facilitate a direct interaction between the prospective employers and the potential employees.

YT: Could you elaborate a little on the distance learning center at the university? Is it active?

Dr. Dawood: Well, our distance learning center is both active and popular. We have a well-prepared plan to have a full-fledged program in open and distance learning. We are recruiting excellent staff in IT, Management which is the first step towards achieving this goal. Hopefully, in years to come this center will register substantial growth as a center of excellence on its own.

YT: Most students enrolled at the university hail from affluent families. Does it not seem to give to the university an elitist halo?

Dr. Dawood: Not really. As I said, students are attracted to this university for its strict adherence to the quality of education. They are obviously capable of paying the university fees which, I believe, are one of the lowest as compared to the universities in the Arab world or elsewhere. We also encourage the poor and meritorious students by offering free studentship to the toppers at the secondary level.

YT: What is the rationale behind having separate campuses for male and female students?

Dr. Dawood: My answer to this



Professor Dawood (C) in conversation with Dr. Sahu (L) and Dr. Muhsin (R)

question is two-fold: one academic and the other cultural. Researches all over the world have suggested that when the boys and girls study in a mixed setting, there is a marked slump in their achievement levels. Secondly, as you know, in Yemen most of the parents wouldn't encourage their girls to pursue their education in a mixed setting. By providing a separate unit for girls we are encouraging the girls to pursue their education without any inhibition and contribute to the development of Yemen.

YT: How do you ensure the social accountability of your academic edifice?

Dr. Dawood: I would label our university a market-driven university. Our focus has ever been linking our university to the needs and aspirations of the community and the society. So we try to reach out to the community to the public and private sectors as well. We unleash efforts to involve groups of people in mainstream of our academic activities including training programs, conferences, seminars, symposia, fairs, exhibitions. Besides, our research activities are directed at ensuring the sustainable development of the society at large. Consistent with this policy, during the past decade we have been striving relentlessly to address ourselves to the needs of the society so that the social accountability is adequately taken care of.

YT: So you have crossed many glorious milestones and have succeeded in promoting the university as one of the most well-resourced centers by any reckoning. How do you envision its future expansion?

Dr. Dawood: My highest concern has been and still is maintenance of quality. To put it differently, an uncompromising adherence to quality in education has been our benchmark – quality of training being imparted, of the professional competence of the faculty, of the employees, of diagnostic activities aimed at rectifying the shortcomings and achieving greater heights of professionalism and so forth. We strive to make continual evaluation of our academic programs through introspection which is the key to ensure uninterrupted pace of improvement – whether in academic sector, management sector or financial sector. Yet we have miles to go.

Keeping in mind the needs and aspirations of Yemeni expatriates abroad, we are actively formulating plans to open a really good and efficient distance learning unit to cater to them, especially in Social Sciences stream to begin with.

Next year we hope to have impressive dimensions of improvement in terms of infrastructure. We're planning

to launch our state-of-the-art teaching hospital of 250 beds which hopefully would be ranked as the best in Yemen. Our objective is to offer excellent health services to our countrymen. We would also provide good training to our medical graduates. Along side, we would like to offer a residency post-graduate program in Health Sciences. Furthermore, we are in the process of starting a Nursing college in order to provide efficient support staff to our physicians. We have contracted a Jordanian company to manage the hospital for us. It may take around 6 months to open the hospital. We are going ahead with opening the main building of the College of Health Sciences. By next year we hope to open a full-fledged College of Management as well. Along with these three main buildings, we are going to have a building for coordinating and linking all these campuses through a computer network. Now we have a network in every building but we are going to link all of them at a macro level to enable our students make a maximal utilization of all the resources we have.

I would like to tell you that we're going to organize an International Conference in January on the use of IT in improving teaching and learning. This will be the first of its kind in Yemen that would throw a flood of light on the potential of technology for the qualitative improvement of teaching and learning. We have invited distinguished speakers from Malaysia, Britain, Jordan and other countries advanced in this field. This congregation of specialists would advise us not only on what should be done, but present case studies to give us practical and concrete instances of how technology has been used to galvanize teaching learning programs. This would augment our efforts to explore how internet, video conferencing and such other tools that can profitably be exploited to improve the quality of the teaching technology at the university.

We're very ambitious, to tell you the

truth, despite constraints on our resources. We leave no stones unturned to reach out. And you'll find something spectacular next year which may come as a surprise. I don't want to talk about it now.

YT: We're very eagerly awaiting that surprise: not only us but the entire country and the academic community which has been appreciatively observing the impressive growth of the university from strength to strength during the past decade. All of us do expect something glorious in tune with its brilliant track record. In fact, we wish you godspeed in your endeavor Insha Allah.

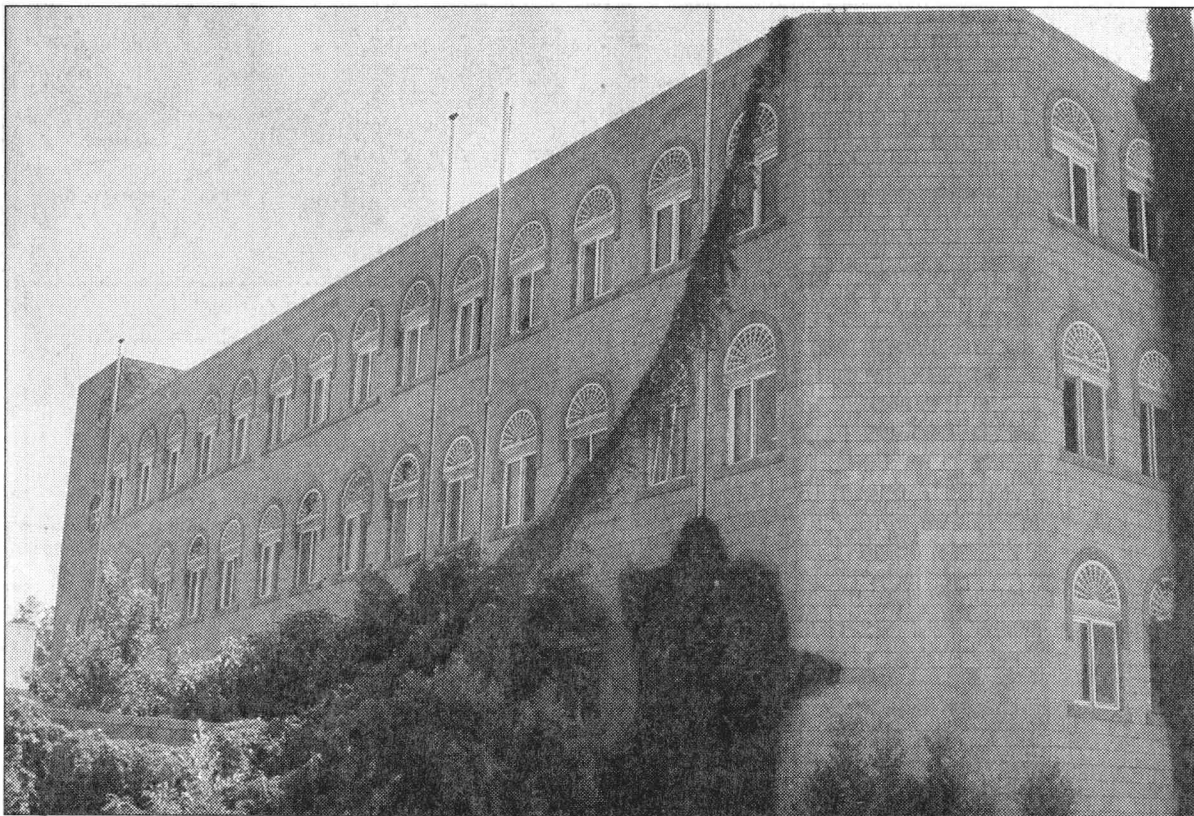
Dr. Dawood: Thank you

YT: How do you assess the impact of the Education column in creating an awareness among the student community?

Dr. Dawood: This indeed is an innovative measure on the part of Yemen Times and they deserve to be congratulated. In fact, the founder of Yemen Times, Professor Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf was my close friend and neighbor. I'm happy to learn that his son and the present Editor-in-Chief Walid Al-Saqqaf is also greatly concerned about Education. Earmarking one or two pages in the newspaper devoted exclusively to education and educational issues would certainly contribute to enhancing the level of educational awareness in our country. This is a kind of effort that should be appreciated and we do really appreciate it.

YT: We would like to thank you for your very candid views on a wide spectrum of issues.

Dr. Dawood: I'm thankful to Yemen Times for giving me this opportunity to share some of our ideas with the readers through your esteemed column. We also feel honored by your presence. Thank you once again.



The imposing structure of the University of Science and Technology (Girls' wing), Sana'a

Prof. Dr. Dawood A. Al-Hidabi
Date of birth: 07/01/1955
Address: P.O. Box 15201, Sana'a

Qualification:

- BSc (Physics, Chemistry) Yemen 1979
- P.G.C.E (Physics Teaching) 1980, UK
- Med. (Educational Research) 1982, UK
- PhD Science Teachers Training, 1980, UK

Research Experience:

Carried out research, studies and consultations for:

- Path Finder, USA
- EDC, USA
- WB, Yemen
- UNICEF, Yemen
- UNESCO, Yemen
- Ministry of Education, Yemen

Teaching Experience:

- Taught several courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels

- Curricula design and development
- Curricula evaluation
- Science instruction for basic, intermediate and high schools
- Research methodology

Other related work experience:

- Designed and implemented many training courses for teachers, researchers and management staff in different fields, Yemen
- Team leader for establishing several kindergartens, schools, colleges and universities
- Supervised more than 30 M. Ed. & PhD dissertations

Publications

- Published more than 20 papers in refereed journals
- Co-author of five textbooks for high educational institutions in Yemen
- Editor of three academic journals in Yemen

Henman breezes into second round

BY OSSIAN SHINE

MELBOURNE (Reuters) - Tim Henman has stormed into the second round of the Australian Open with a convincing victory over Frenchman Jean-Rene Lisnard but the maelstrom of misery which has engulfed Greg Rusedski continues.

The 11th-seeded Henman quickly made himself at home in the chilly conditions, dominating Lisnard under the floodlights with his aggressive serve-and-volley game.

He was cheered on throughout his 6-2 6-4 6-2 win by a sizeable contingent of British fans, who serenaded him with the England rugby anthem "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" during the changeovers. "First for me at a tennis match," said rugby fan Henman. "It was certainly a lot of fun out there...fairly Wimbledon-like."

"I haven't been able to talk too much about the rugby yet. It's a nice reminder."

British number two Rusedski had hoped to let his tennis finally do the talking after his positive test for the banned steroid nandrolone hogged all the headlines in the past two weeks.



Greg Rusedski hits a backhand to Spain's Albert Costa, the number 26 seed, at the Australian Open in Melbourne. REUTERS/Adrees Latif

However, a lacklustre performance against 26th seed Albert Costa saw him eliminated 6-4 6-3 6-4.

"Heavy fever"

The Canadian-born left-hander blamed his performance on illness. "It was difficult because Saturday I had a fever and have had gastroenteritis," he said.

"That's what made it difficult today, to be honest with you I had a heavy

fever, it wasn't the ideal preparation."

Rusedski, who admitted earlier this month that he had tested positive for nandrolone at a tournament in Indianapolis last July, says he will be cleared of any wrongdoing at a hearing in February.

He insisted his off-court troubles had not affected him. "No, it had nothing to do with today. I've just got to wait and see how my tribunal goes, just go from there."

In the women's draw, Venus Williams made a triumphant return to tennis and the ankle injury that threatened to force second seed Kim Clijsters out of the opening grand slam of the year came through the test with flying colours in the night session.

All she had to overcome was a little rustiness to advance 6-3 6-2 over Marlene Weingaertner.

"I didn't really have any problems with the ankle and that's the most important thing," she said.

"For a couple of days I didn't even think I was going to be coming here as a player. So I am very pleased with the way I went out there."

While Clijsters was clearly relieved, third seed Williams was all smiles at Melbourne Park.

Despite not having played a tournament since losing the Wimbledon final to sister Serena last July, the former world number one looked as sharp as ever as she thumped fellow American Ashley Harkleroad 6-2 6-1 in the first round.

"Oh, yes, I'm back now," she giggled, before saying she was missing the

absent Serena, who also beat her in the final here last year.

"It's not the same without her," she smiled, "we are like bread and butter."

Men's Wimbledon champion Roger Federer put his shaky early-season form behind him with a tidy performance against up-and-coming American Alex Bogomolov.

The Swiss second seed had looked far from convincing during the Kooyong International last week, losing to Andre Agassi and struggling against Thomas Johansson. On Tuesday everything clicked as he romped home 6-3 6-4 6-0.

Federer has yet to progress past the fourth round of the Australian Open in four previous visits to Melbourne. This time round the stylish Swiss is the bookmakers' favourite.

"Straight sets in the first round is a good start," he said.

Freak injury

World number five Guillermo Coria slipped up 7-6 6-2 6-4 to Frenchman Cyril Saulnier. The Argentine had pulled out of last week's Auckland Open with an abdominal strain.

He was later cleared to play in Melbourne but was far from his best against the world number 76.

"I had a great result at Wimbledon when I beat Xavier Malisse, but today is something else," said Saulnier.

"Days like this is why we play. I am like a wine that improves with age."

Former world number one Lleyton Hewitt suffered no problems, though, strolling into round two when a freak injury forced Cecil Mamiit to pull out.

Australian Hewitt was leading 6-2 6-4 when Mamiit ran into the umpire's chair chasing a drop shot and hurt his right ankle. He lasted only one more game before calling it quits.

Hewitt's fellow Australian and 10th seed Mark Philippoussis thrilled his home crowd with a 7-6 6-2 7-6 win over 2002 champion Johansson.

The Swede missed most of last year through injury and could not get to grips with the Philippoussis serve.

Third seed and French Open champion Juan Carlos Ferrero did not hang about, pounding fellow Spaniard Albert Montanes 6-0 6-1 6-1 for a resounding victory.

Desailly to end career with Chelsea in 2005

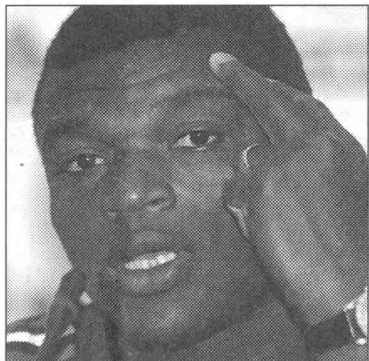
LONDON (Reuters) - France and Chelsea captain Marcel Desailly will retire in 2005 at the end of his contract with the London club.

"Whatever happens, my career will be over when my contract expires," Desailly, 35, said on Monday in an interview with French daily Le Monde.

Desailly, who was born in Ghana, also said he would like to be involved with the African side after he retires.

"I'm planning to help the national team, not as a coach but as a general manager. It would be a nice challenge," he added.

Desailly said he first wanted to focus on France's defence of the European title at Euro 2004, and called on the young players to get more involved with the squad instead of leaving all the decisions to the older hands.



France and Chelsea captain Marcel Desailly will retire in 2005 at the end of his contract with the London club. REUTERS/Charles Platiau

"It is not a criticism but I'd like Thierry Henry, Patrick Vieira and Robert Pires to be more involved in tactical discussions."

Contest (2)

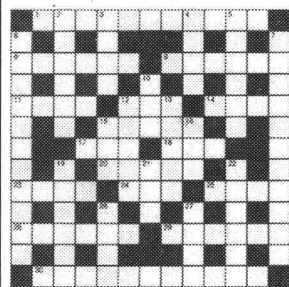
مسابقة رقم (٢)

إعداد معهد الفاروق للغات والكمبيوتر

preperd by Al-Farouk institute of languages & computers

الممثل الوحيد لكليات سانت جيلز ومركز اكسفورد في كل من بريطانيا وأمريكا

The Sole Representative of Oxford LC & ST.Giles colleges UK & USA

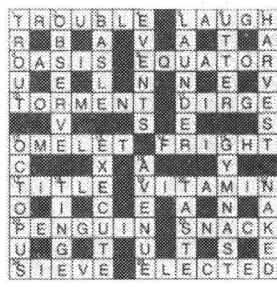


ACROSS

- 1 Dad's Dad! (11)
- 2 Vegetable for chips (6)
- 3 Drive forward (6)
- 4 Brainwave (4)
- 5 Male swan (3)
- 6 Dad's --- TV comedy series (4)
- 7 Petrol company found on the beach? (5)
- 8 Feather scarf (3)
- 9 Hot --- what makes a balloon rise (3)
- 10 Collective noun for more than one (3)
- 11 King of the jungle (4)
- 12 Part of the foot (3)
- 13 Compact --- CD (4)
- 14 Any beast (6)
- 15 Poor man in the street (6)
- 16 Cash for kids? (6,5)

DOWN

- 1 Decayed (6)
- 2 Mark on a music sheet (4)
- 3 One third of a school year (4)
- 4 Self goods abroad (6)
- 5 March/April housework? (6-5)
- 6 One of fifty-two in a pack (7-4)
- 7 Enemy (3)
- 8 Top Twenty list (5)
- 9 Sharp part of a knife (5)
- 10 Soak up liquid (3)
- 11 Tell fibs (3)
- 12 Playing piece with spots on? (6)
- 13 Charged chemical particle (anagram of NO) (3)
- 14 Not married (6)
- 15 7 Down between ten and queen (4)
- 16 Nought (4)



حل المسابقة

رقم (١)

Answers of

contest num

(1)



الفائز في المسابقة رقم (١)

Winner of contest No(1)

محمد الشجاع

جائزة هذه المسابقة هي مجموعة كتب باللغة الأنكليزية مقدمة من معهد الفاروق للغات والترجمة

The present of this contest is a collection of English course presented by Al-Farouk Institute

الاسم :

رقم البطاقة :

تسلم الاجابات الى سكرتارية المعهد أو ترسل عبر الفاكس في موعد أقصاه الأربعاء وسوف يتم نشر صورة الفائز أو الفائزة مع الاسم في العدد القادم

Answers should be delivered to the institute or send by fax at least on Wednesday

صنعاء - شارع هائل - مقابل مجوهرات الجابري - تلفون : ٢١٣٧١١ فاكس : ٢١٣٥٦٢ 213562 Sana'a Hael St.tel 213711 Fax

البريد الإلكتروني: Email: alfarouk26@hotmail.com الموقع على الأنترنت : www. alfaroukinst.netfirms.coms

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Those who wish to present gift should contact the institute for more details



THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY BY Eugenia



Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)

Open your mind to new possibilities. Pick up some information that will allow you to move into a more lucrative position. You will get the help you need.



Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)

You will have to fend for yourself if you want to be sure that everything is done to your satisfaction today. Someone is likely to withhold information from you. Do your own research.



Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20)

Your interest in everything different from what you are used to will lead to a new group of friends and a new hobby. Romantic meetings will lead to a serious discussion.



Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)

You will have some unusual contact with people in the legal or health system. Take notes so you won't forget anything you hear or say that you'll do.



Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22)

You may be erratic when it comes to affairs of the heart. This can be a good day to clear matters up that have been bothering you. You may be misled if you aren't willing to give the people you care about room to do their own thing.



Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)

Someone may lead you astray, giving you false hope about something you would like to do. Overspending will be a prime concern today. Learn to say no.



Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)

Take a much-needed break and concentrate on relaxing and having fun. A project you are working on will turn out better than you thought.



Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

Someone you live with will not be honest with you, so don't bother trying to get information there today. Someone you are close to may use unusual tactics to manipulate how you handle a financial matter.



Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

Follow your own path today. You can meet someone who will lead to an interesting encounter. Travel will pay off.



Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

Get the work you need to finish out of the way so that you can get on with a project you really want to pursue. Money matters can be misleading. Unusual circumstances could arise, so be careful.



Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

You will find it difficult to hide your true feelings. You can expect to undergo change that may not initially be to your liking, but in the long run it will be what's best for you.



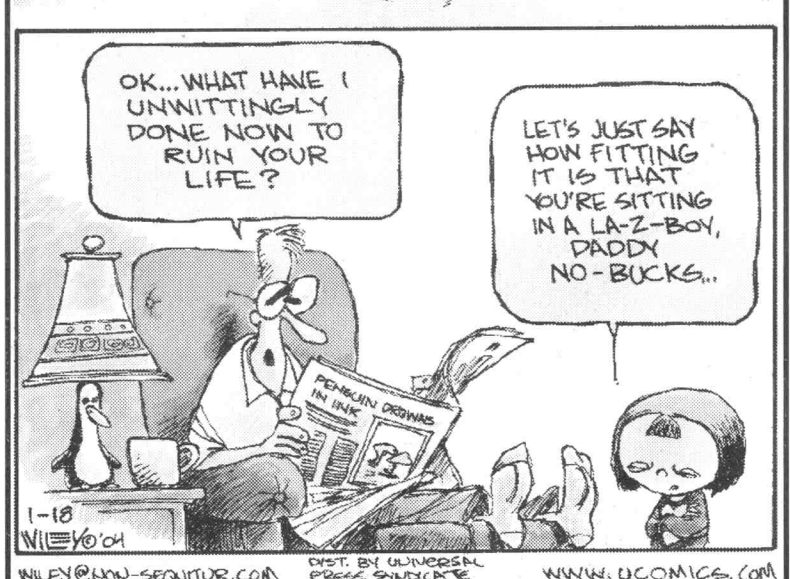
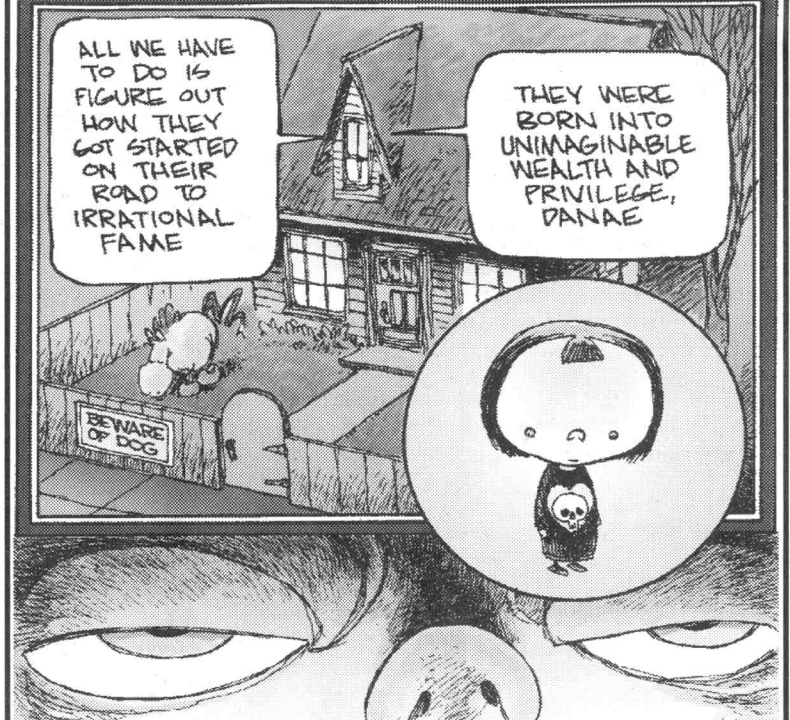
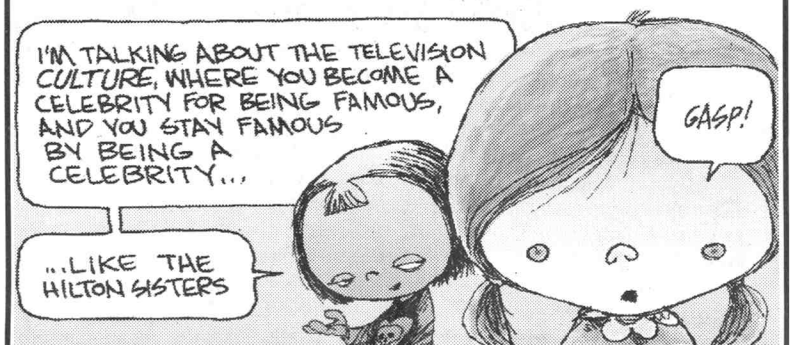
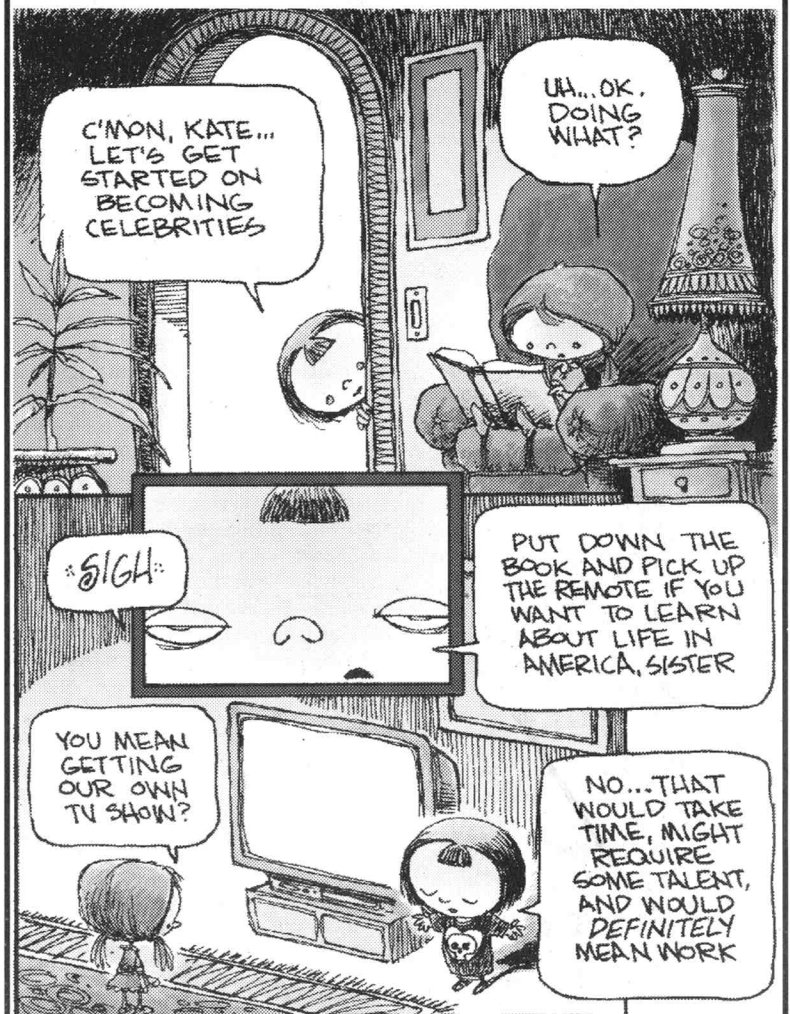
Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20)

Your involvement with institutions or government agencies may be a little unnerving. You may want to check with an additional source.

7-Day Weather Forecast

Sana'a	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
Hi	23	26	26	26	26	23	23
Lo	4	4	4	4	3	3	3
Aden	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
Hi	28	30	31	31	31	31	30
Lo	22	22	22	22	21	20	19

NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY



Calendar 2004



شركة صناعة السجائر والكبريت الوطنية المحدودة عدن

National Cigarettes & Matches Industry Ltd-Aden



January

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November

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فكر الصناعة الوطنية

2004

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■ Required for a reputed company, an experienced secretary, knowing independent Englis/Arabic correspondence and proficient in computers (Female) Po box 3898 email: whatacat@softhome.net

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Frontier spirit needed for rebuilding Iraq's railways

By RAJU GOPALAKRISHNAN

The railway station at Sheik Dari used to be a vibrant and picturesque stop just outside of Baghdad, admired by hundreds of train passengers everyday.

Now the single-storey yellow brick station is a forlorn sight, its doors pulled out, windows smashed and furniture and electrical fittings stolen.

"What they couldn't take, they broke," said stationmaster Hashim Shakir, describing the attack last summer in the wave of lawlessness after Saddam Hussein was overthrown. "They were Iraqis but they were destroying Iraq."

"We used to have six passenger trains every day and many freight trains.

There were lots of passengers, lots of activity," said Shakir, standing next to what had been his pride, the automated signalling system.

Wrapped in jackets and mufflers to protect them against the blustery wind blowing down the track, he and a friend were the only people on the platform when the train from Baghdad — the only one to pass by each day — pulled up for a one-minute stop on its way northwest to the town of Qusayba on the Syrian border.

The console was streaked with dust and cables had been pulled out of the back and twisted aside.

Transformers and relays in adjoining rooms were broken and hurled to the ground and broken tiles and glass shards littered the floor of the station, 35 km (20 miles) west of Baghdad.

In the heyday of early 1900s rail travel in Iraq, trains went from Baghdad to Istanbul and linked to the Orient Express on the other side of Bosphorous, going all the way to Paris and London.

The railways were cheap and popular in Saddam's Iraq and used widely by the military, but the service deteriorated sharply in the 1990s as U.N. sanctions ate into the economy. Last year's U.S. invasion led to its breakdown.

Now the U.S.-backed local authority in Iraq has earmarked about half a billion dollars to resurrect the country's trains. The programme is well under way with a pioneering and somewhat frontier spirit — there are no signals, and messages between stations and train drivers are often exchanged through handwritten notes.

Most basic

"It's the most basic form of railway operations possible," said Gordon Mott, an American who is principal railway adviser to the Ministry of Transportation.

Two passenger trains leave Baghdad each morning — one for Qusayba and the other for the southern port city of Basra. Some freight has begun to move, including phosphate from a mine in the western town of Akashat.

An international service leaves the northern town of Mosul for the Syrian city of Aleppo once a week, but there are no trains between Baghdad and Mosul because of security worries.

The Baghdad-Mosul line passes through Saddam's hometown of Tikrit and other areas north of the capital where opposition to the U.S. occupation is fiercest. Trains have been attacked, sometimes by bandits looking for quick money, sometimes in anger against the new government.

The train services from Baghdad and the return journeys are timed to end well before sunset.

Mott said funds coming in would be used for track repairs, new locomotives, freight and oil tanker wagons, spare parts and a communications-based train control system which would be about the most advanced in the world.

Some money is also being spent on refurbishing Baghdad's main railway station, an imperial British-built building in the centre of the city with two clock towers and an old, dust-covered but working chandelier in the domed entrance hall.

The passenger coaches are also badly in need of repair.

But Dala Abdullah, a wrinkled, 65-year-old woman in a black abaya gown and headscarf who was travelling to the town of Ramadi to visit relatives, was happy.

"The train is much safer," she said as the carriage swayed and rattled through Baghdad's suburbs, past freight wagons in a disused train yard and a bombed telecommunications exchange. "I am afraid of the roadside bombs aimed at the Americans when going by car."

It costs 750 dinars (about 50 U.S. cents) for a ticket on this train, whether to an outlying suburb, to Ramadi or on the full 350 km (250 mile) nine-hour trip to Qusayba. The trip to Basra, 12 hours and 550 km (340 miles), costs 1,000 dinars.

"It has to be a loss-leader as the country re-invents its industrial base," said Mott. "The railway has to be improved as a prelude to revamping industry."

While there are grand plans to extend services to Iran, to Turkey and to Syria's Mediterranean ports, he says the primary job is to improve the basic domestic train service.

"I have said when I leave, I'm going by train," Mott said in his crowded office at Baghdad's main railway station. "I am going by train from here to Europe. I am going to do it."

Reuters



An Iraqi train makes a stop in the town of Sheikh Dari, north of the capital Baghdad Jan. 15. In the heyday of early 1900s rail travel in Iraq, trains went from Baghdad to Istanbul and linked to the Orient Express on the other side of Bosphorous, going all the way to Paris and London. The railways were cheap and popular in Saddam's Iraq and used widely by the military, but the service deteriorated sharply in the 1990s as U.N. sanctions ate into the economy. Last year's U.S. invasion led to its breakdown. Now the U.S.-backed local authority in Iraq has earmarked about half a billion dollars to resurrect the country's trains. REUTERS



An Iraqi couple travels by railway north after leaving the capital Baghdad Jan. 15. In the heyday of early 1900s rail travel in Iraq, trains went from Baghdad to Istanbul and linked to the Orient Express on the other side of Bosphorous, going all the way to Paris and London. The railways were cheap and popular in Saddam's Iraq and used widely by the military, but the service deteriorated sharply in the 1990s as U.N. sanctions ate into the economy. Last year's U.S. invasion led to its breakdown. Now the U.S.-backed local authority in Iraq has earmarked about half a billion dollars to resurrect the country's trains. REUTERS



An Iraqi views a palm grove, through a window shattered by a bullet, after leaving the capital Baghdad Jan. 15. In the heyday of early 1900s rail travel in Iraq, trains went from Baghdad to Istanbul and linked to the Orient Express on the other side of Bosphorous, going all the way to Paris and London. REUTERS



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