

Among outrage of the journalist community in Yemen:

Thabet sentenced to 'death' in profession

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

In an unprecedented development that upset the press community in Yemen, the Western Court of Sana'a has issued a sentence last Tuesday banning journalist Saeed Thabet, the correspondent of Quds Press Agency, from working for six months and a fine of YR 5,000 (approx. \$45). "For me, the verdict is the equivalent of a death sentence," Saeed Thabet said when commenting on the verdict.

According to the court, the crime of Saeed Thabet was in publishing a news report about an alleged attempted assassination against President Saleh's son, Ahmed.

The sentence comes more than a month since Saeed was arrested on March 5 by the Political Security Organization (PSO) in what was seen as an illegal act against the freedom of the press, especially as the PSO carried out its action without any prior legal or lawful procedures.

YJS denounces verdict

The Yemeni Journalists Syndicate (YJS) on its part denounced the verdict in a press statement, in which it emphasized that banning a journalist from writing is just as damaging as imprisonment. The YYS also said that the verdict contradicted the initial findings and facts provided for the court in its previous sessions and also contradicted the basic rights of the freedom of the press guaranteed in the constitution.

The YYS, which held an extraordi-

nary meeting upon the issuing of the sentence, expressed its disappointment at the verdict and pledged to support Saeed Thabet as he appeals the verdict at the Appeal and Supreme Courts.

"Just as the YYS sees that the first instance verdict against Saeed Thabet did not only dismiss his rights when arrested by the PSO and General Attorney, but also dismissed all his guaranteed assurances for working as a journalist because the court assumed that any false information published in a media enterprise requires the punishment of its correspondent regardless of whether he was the source of it or not."

Saeed disappointed at justice system

Meanwhile, Saeed Thabet expressed his deep disappointment at the verdict issued against him, considering it in total contradiction to facts obtained from earlier sessions. He said that the judicial system has not lived up to his expectations in terms of independence and honesty.

On the other hand, lawyer Mohammed Naji Allaw, the head of the National Organization for Defending Rights and Liberties, also supported this opinion and said that the Yemeni justice system is well connected with the executive authority and follows it due to the fact that the President of the Republic is the



Saeed Thabet said: "For me, the verdict is the equivalent of a death sentence." PHOTO BY MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM

Chairman of the Supreme Court Council and the chairman of the ruling party as well. "In this case, it is quite normal to see that the judicial system will follow the government in everything it says," he said.

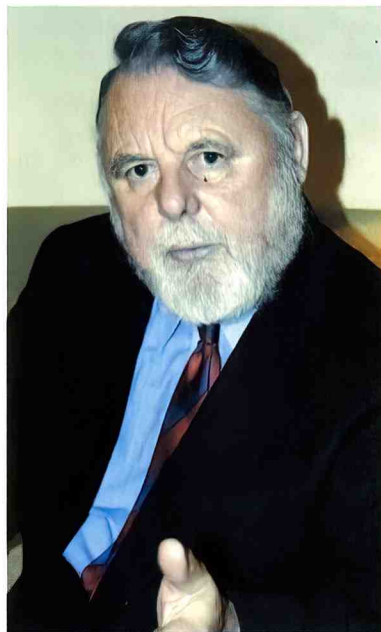
Human rights and due process are essential

Terry Waite knows what it is like to be a victim of terrorism. As a representative of the Anglican Church in England, Waite was known in the eighties for negotiating to free hostages. But on one of his trips to Lebanon, an unidentified terrorist organization set up a trap and kidnapped Waite. He was held as a hostage for almost five years, from January 1987 to November 1991.

Despite his experience as a hostage, Waite continues to help people. He founded and heads YCARE which offers vocational training and therapy for the young who have been traumatized by war. The program operates in Kosovo and in the occupied territories, such as in Jericho and Gaza. He also heads a program in South Africa that deals with mothers and children who are tested as HIV positive. In England, Waite is the president of an organization that assists the homeless, and he spends time working with inmates in prisons.

Waite came to Yemen this week to participate in the two-day human rights conference organized by Amnesty International. The conference focused on bringing together lawyers and families of Guantanamo Bay detainees and called on the United States to release the prisoners or put them on trial.

Peter Willems spoke with Terry



Terry Waite, who came and spoke at the conference "Human Rights for All", supports human rights and legal representation for the detainees at Guantanamo Bay. YT PHOTO BY PETER WILLEMS

Waite while he was in Yemen to discuss why he supported Amnesty International and what he believes should be done for the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay.

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Two Britons freed

YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Two British Muslims convicted five years ago on charges of terrorism and plotting sabotage in Aden

have been released, according to official sources. They were granted release two years before completing their seven-year terms.

The two, Malik Nassir Harhara, 30, and Mouhsin Ghailan, 23, have already flown to London upon their release from a prison in Aden.

The two Britons, along with six others from other Muslim nations, were convicted in August 1999 of attempting to attack Western targets and of forming armed gangs. Three of the remaining six were sentenced to jail terms of between three and seven years. The three others were sentenced to time served and released in September 1999.

Yemeni officials said the early release of Harhara and Ghailan was aimed at improving bilateral relations, which were strained following

the arrests.

The Yemeni government suspects that London-based Islamic cleric Abu-Hamza Al-Masri, also known as Mustafa Kamil, was the one who sent those Brits to commit acts of violence in Yemen. Abu Hamza has been an ongoing concern of the Yemeni government, and repeated requests for his extradition have been made to the British government. All such requests have all been declined.

The suspicions of the Yemeni government are strengthened by the known kinship links between the group of 8 and Abu Hamza. Ghailan is known to be a stepson of Abu Hamza and a further member of the gang, Mohammed Mustafa Kamil, is a son of Abu Hamza. He was released in January last year.

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Yemeni Teachers' Union condemns the events in Iraq and Palestine

The Administrative Board of the Yemeni Teachers Union issued a condemnation statement on Sunday, April 12.

The issuing of the condemnation statement came as an expression of the union members' outrage at the latest events and carnage in the Iraqi city of Fallujah and the Gaza Strip in Palestine.

It statement described the brutal activities of the occupation forces in Iraq as being "criminal activities."

It also emphasized that the occupation "shows the true nature of those claiming to be champions of democracy." The statement also described those events as "a proof of the double-standard policy".

The union greeted warmly the "patient and brave" Iraqi and Palestinian peoples, stressing their

appreciation for their steadfastness.

The union also condemned the "shameful" official stands of the Arab and Islamic governments in regard to such events. Meanwhile it praised the stand the Yemeni leadership, represented by President Saleh has taken towards those events.

At the end of their statement, the union board members specified their demands as:

1-The immediate withdraw of the occupation forces from Iraqi; giving the Iraqi people the choice to choose their leaders and government.

2- Sending "the American and Israeli war criminals" to trial.

3-Urging the governments of the Arab and Islamic worlds to take a firm stand by the Iraqi and Palestinian peoples.

Sana'a University Students Call for Elections

The preparation committee for the elections of the General Union of Yemeni Students at Sana'a University and its branches, in a statement distributed on 29 March 2004, called on all students to participate in the elections. They are scheduled to be held this month, April, according to the timetable set by the preparation committee.

The statement emphasized the importance of the neutrality of the University administration, the board of teachers and the security and local staff in the coming elections.

Promotions for Malaysia continue

Another event to promote Malaysia as a tourist destination has been marked last Tuesday in a dinner reception held at the Taj Sheba Hotel in Sana'a by Tourism Malaysia - Jeddah in cooperation with the Embassy of Malaysia in Sana'a.

The event was attended by tens of guests representing tourism agencies, media personalities, and prominent intellectuals to focus on the wide variety of fascinating attractions of Malaysia.

The event started with an introduction and followed by an address by the ambassador of Malaysia to Yemen, H.E. Dato' Misran Karmain who briefed the attendees of the tourism and investment potentials Malaysia offers and the steps taken to make the country even more attractive for tourists from Yemen and all over the world.

The event was then followed by a presentation by Tourism Malaysia and a video presentation about the fascinations of the country.

The event was concluded by a dinner with entertainment.

Yemeni Minister of Human Rights heads workshop in Turkey

The activities of the Conference of Democrats in the Islamic World are continuing in the Turkish city Istanbul. The conference is to discuss the reality of democracy from an Islamic perspective.

On Tuesday, April 13, Minister of Human Rights, Amat Al-Aleem As-Sosowa, headed a workshop that discussed the relationship between governmental institutions and the organizations of civil society.

The Minister talked about the issue using the experience of Yemen, indicating the importance of such organizations in the political, economic, social and human rights fields. She also asserted that such organizations have, since 1990, assumed very important roles in the process of enriching the Yemeni democratic experience.

The Minister of Human Rights also pointed towards the procedures followed by the Yemeni Government in the process of development, signifying the impact of national legislation that takes in consideration the role of those organizations in the reinforcement of human rights in Yemen.

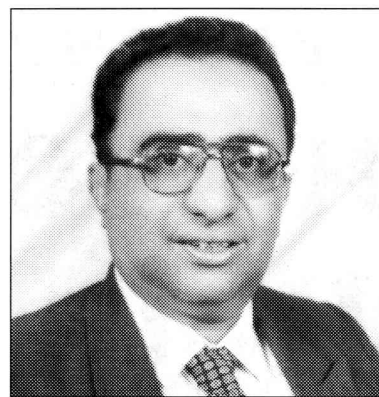
Al-Hubaishy encounters barbaric aggression PGC and Yemeni Journalists Syndicate condemn

Mr. Ahmed Al-Hubaishy, the official spokesman of the ruling party, the People General Congress (PGC), and Editor-in-Chief of May 22 weekly newspaper, encountered early this week a barbaric attack by an armed group on the road between Al-Mansouryeh and Aden.

In a phone call, Mr. Abdullah Ibrahim, a friend of his, said that the armed group driving a pickup with a Saudi license plate intercepted Mr. Al-Hubaishy at 7:30PM. He was stopped under gunpoint. Since he resisted them, they began beating him using their rifle butts and iron bars leading, to multiple wounds to his body, before they fled when a number of citizens hurried to save him.

Mr. Al-Hubaishy, is currently receiving medical treatment at a hospital in Sana'a due to the serious nature of his injuries.

"His writings and what May 22 newspaper publishes against Islamic radical groups and figures may be the primary motive behind the assault



Ahmed Al-Hubaishy

against him. It may be just a message to be followed by his elimination," said a close friend of his.

Mr. Mahboub Ali, President of Yemeni Journalists Syndicate, condemned, as he described it, the criminal attack against a senior journalist. He called on the security authorities to pursue the perpetrators ensure they receive the punishment they deserve.

Readers' Voice

Yemen Times features "Readers' Voice" a popular way for our readers to interact with us. This is your opportunity to have a say on world and local affairs.

This edition's question:

Do you think that the sentence against Saeed Thabet has been politically motivated?

- Yes, the court was indeed acting upon orders.
- Not directly, but hints were given.
- No, the court did it by itself.

last edition's question:

Which in your opinion is more fruitful in achieving a better future for Iraq?

Military resistance	44%
No resistance at all	40%
Peaceful resistance	16%

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Consultation meeting of leaders of Ministry of Justice

On 31 March 2004, in Sana'a began the activities of the first consultation meeting organized by the Ministry of Justice and Heads of Appeal Courts throughout the governorates of the Republic. The meeting aims at the discussion of the role of the judicial authority, in addition to the evaluation of the level of work at the Courts of Appeal.

The speeches of Dr. Abdullah Al-Olefy, Vice Public Attorney, and Dr. Adnan Al-Jafry, Minister of Justice, confirmed the importance of activating and developing the performance of

courts.

ON April 1st, the second day of the meeting, focused on the importance of putting an end to the phenomenon of revenge. This is in accordance with the directive of President Saleh to find a practical solution to eliminate the revenge phenomenon. The meeting concluded with the formation of a commission chaired by Dr. Mohamed Ja'far Qassem, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Justice, to undertake and resolve revenge problems and to promote general reconciliation in the country.

Member of Local Council: Governorate officials cripple and weaken the role of local council

Mr. Hussein Ali Atef, member of the local council in Hanfar Province, Abyan Governorate, complained to Yemen Times that the leaders of the governorate have crippled and weakened the roles and duties of the local council and its administrative board. He stated several incidents that prevented the council from carrying out its jurisdiction in connection with monitoring, planning and execution operations on development projects. The operation of collecting of financial revenues is not implemented in accordance with financial regulations and this operation is frequently restricted to a centralized form at the level of the governorate. This results in the loss of

governorate earnings and fees from the Police Department, consumption bills, qat taxes, construction permit fees. The appointment of directors of departments in the provinces is also conducted without referring to the decision-making authority in the province and property in the province is disposed of without recognizing that that belongs to the province.

Mr. Atef concluded his statement by saying that members of the local council have presented a petition to the leadership of the governorate, suspending their activities due to the lack of a response from the governorate's leaders to them as members of the local council.

Torture of prisoners in Marib and Ibb

BY HASSAN AL-ZAIDI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Mr. Ali Al-Hadad, one of the inmates of a prison at Al-Joubah, Marib Governorate, attempted suicide by firing a bullet to his chest. Families of inmates, including the family of Al-Hadad, hold the prison's security responsible and claim that their son, accused of robbing a commercial store there, have encountered mental and

physical torture, as signs are blatantly clear of practices that are prohibited by the constitution and humanitarian laws.

Similarly, 7 inmates of the Central Prison in Ibb died as a result of torture and terrible health care. A tape recorded by inmates reveals the inhumane treatment inmates encounter there. They confirmed that they either die of illnesses or hunger before judicial verdicts are issued. They also claim in the

recorded tape that tea is sold to inmates in urinating bottles, that they are served food unfit for human consumption and that their medicines are sold outside the prison.

It is worth mentioning that the situations and conditions of Yemeni prisons are tragic, especially in jails of the Criminal Investigation Service, Police Stations and Municipalities and that such prisons not checked by judicial inspection.

Four child smuggling suspects detained

Yemeni Security Authorities detained four suspects at Hared Jail, located on the border of Yemen and Saudi, who is accused of organizing a band involved in the smuggling of children into Saudi Arabia.

The security source stated the four were arrested while attempting to smuggle 8 children, age 8-12 years,

into Saudi.

This comes following the previous arrest of two suspects trying to smuggle 11 children from Al-Mahweet governorate into Saudi during the Omrah season. The two were sentenced to one year and six months respectively by Hared Court last March.

Moreover, Saudi authorities have rendered to Yemen during the last few months 25 children who were detained by Saudi security authorities for illegally entering Saudi territory.

Smuggling of children is one of the most important phenomena confronting the two countries, after the smuggling of arms and illegal drugs.

Workshop on the Information Network in Yemen

April 12, 2004, Sana'a- The Prime Minister, Mr. Abdulqader Ba Jamal, inaugurated last Monday at the National Center for Information a workshop under the title, "Towards establishing a national development network for information and the advancement of publishing and access to information in Yemen".

The workshop was participated in by representatives of the Government and academic corporations, civil society organizations and representatives of donor corpora-

tions and development partners in Yemen. The workshop was held in cooperation with the World Bank and aimed to produce a joint vision to expedite the establishment of a major information network facilitating access to various types of information in Yemen.

The National Information Strategy was among working papers discussed in the workshop. The conference also discussed laying down a vision for the information network, the national library, the geographical

information system, the role of the World Bank in disseminating and circulating information, the role of the UN-affiliated Relief Program in supporting social and economic development using information and telecommunication technology, and how to achieve a development information network.

It is worth mentioning that the number of personal computers in Yemen is estimated at only 160 thousand PCs and the number of subscribers to the internet is 21,000.

Educating of females in Amran Governorate

BY MOHAMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Ms. Sheila Sisulu, Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), inaugurated the food support program presented by WFP to two schools and a health center in Dhe Bayn Region, Amran Governorate. More than 5590 female students from three provinces will benefit from this program.

The project aims to encourage females to seek education, by giving each female student a total of 150 kg of grain and 9 liters of cooking oil per year, in addition to 80 pregnant women who are supplied with grain, oil and sugar during their pregnancies and the families of 120 infants who receive soybeans and sugar during the first nine months of their birth.

In a statement to the press, Ms. Sisulu said, "We are pleased to cooperate with the Yemeni Government. We focus on education and health to

encourage female education. We hope that the Yemeni Government will set the education of females as a priority, if the female was educated, the family would be educated, productive and in good health also if females are being taken care of, their children have a better capability of learning. An educated society produces a society familiar with its rights, healthy, productive and does not need outside support."

She added, "The Yemeni Government is assisting in this direction through the schools' nourishment of Ministry of Education. We hope that the Government will double its support to this segment of people and we in our turn would seek other sources from donors to support it."

Ms. Sisulu concluded her statement by saying that the program works in 17 governorates, the exceptions are Sana'a, Aden and Al-Mahra. Al-Mahra needs our support but, the scattered population of the remote desert regions hinders their work.



The Mayor of Amran, Mr. Taha Abdullah Hajer, praised the UN support to Yemen and asked for the intensification of support to include the whole governorate, the most needy of all governorates as he described it. He said, "Amran governorate is inhabited by 1.8 million people, and the rate of poverty is very high. Thus, the majority of male and female students do not go to schools, especially females. There are even some provinces which do not record any registration of females in their schools. Health service is almost absent in a majority of the provinces."

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٣- أن يقوموا بمتابعة الجهات باستمرار وإصرار إلى أن يتم تسديد المبلغ.
٤- أن يكونوا بعظم لائق وتعامل راقى مع الجهات.
٥- يفضل أن تكون لديهم خبرة تزيد عن خمس سنوات.
٦- يفضل أن يكون حاصلًا على شهادة جامعية في مجال الإدارة أو ما شابه.
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- ٣- أن يعدوا نموذج أعمال بين الأعمال التي تم إنجازها.
- ٤- أن يقوموا بتنظيم أوقاتهم ليتعامل مع حجم العمل وطبيعته.
- ٥- أن يكونوا مسؤولين مسؤولية كاملة عن متابعة الجهات لتسديد الفواتير التي قاموا بتوصيلها مع مراعاة تلبية الإدارة فور رفض الجهات السداد.

Continued from page 1

Human rights and due process are essential

Excerpts from the interview

Q: What motivated you to support Amnesty International at the conference in Sana'a?

A: I supported Amnesty International at this particular conference because when I was captured in 1987, I was captured on suspicion. The kidnappers suspected I was involved in something I wasn't involved in, but that was their suspicion. I was blindfolded, taken to a secret location, chained to the wall, and I slept on the floor. I was also interrogated, beaten on the soles of my feet with cables and I suffered a mock execution in which they put a gun to my head.

I had no contact with the outside world. I had no contact with my family, and my family didn't know where I was over those years. So there was no communication, and I was kept totally alone. That was an experience in which I was denied all human rights. That is similar to the experience of the people who have been taken to Guantanamo Bay and Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan.

They have been taken on suspicion and have been denied legal process. Their families don't know where they are. We don't know what treatment they've received, but we know some have been treated rather roughly. Their future is not determined. We are told some are going to face the death penalty. Now that is virtually a hostage taking situation. What is the difference?

Q: What you want to see is that the prisoners are granted due process and human rights?

A: The argument is that these people are dangerous. The US administration went so far as to say that they are some of the worst of the worst and the biggest criminals of all. If that is the case, you must have due process. You must bring evidence, and you must charge them, in any given situation.

So what I'm saying is that my situation was very much like theirs. I can understand what they are going through. I make no presumption at all about these men, about their guilt or innocence. All I say is that we must follow due process. If we do not follow the rule of internationally-agreed law, which is the internationally agreed human rights law, we will get into a very confusing situation.

I, myself, was denied human rights, and I have sympathy for anybody else who is denied human rights. I do not presume that people are necessarily guilty until they are proven and found guilty by proper due process. When people are denied that, I have sympathy for them and their families because I make no assumption whether they are guilty or innocent until they have actually been through due process. That is because I suffered in the same way.

I do not hold any bitterness because I believe from a personal point of view that if you hold bitterness against people, it does you more harm than it does them. It destroys you. So, I am perfectly prepared to put the past behind me. The people in Lebanon have had to put their past behind them and rebuild for the future, just as I have had to do. We cannot go on nursing grievances forever. We must take constructive steps forward. And Beirut is beginning to take constructive steps forward on a nationwide basis, just as we must do on an individual basis.

Q: What is your response to Washington when they say that the

prisoners at Guantanamo Bay have no rights to lawyers because they are enemy combatants?

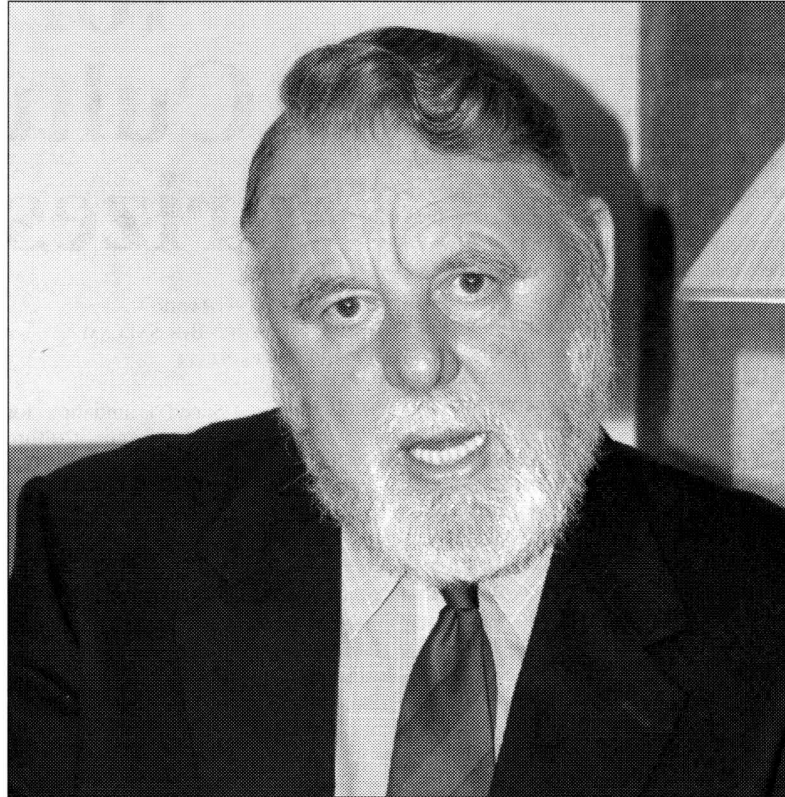
A: The argument used by the Americans is that this is a state of war. And they will say that the terrorists, the so-called terrorists all over the world, have declared war on the United States. Therefore, the United States is justified in declaring war on terrorists and applying extraordinary measures. First of all, it is disputed that this is war. The Americans have given a very new definition to war. Terrorism is a tactic. How can you declare a war on a tactic? It is a tactic designed to terrorize people. So, there is an ambiguity about declaring war on terrorism. Secondly, the assumption is that Al-Qaeda is an organized movement, totally organized, totally structured around the world with one leader, Osama bin Laden, but it is not like that. It is not like that at all. There may be informal linkages in certain places and no linkages in other places. How do you declare war on that sort of amorphous group of people? Thirdly, and more importantly, with terrorism, which is no doubt a scourge of our age, if the new situation in the world demands different legislation, then you cannot have that legislation made by one person alone, one president alone or one nation alone. It must be made through international agreement. That means you must have an international forum for making that particular agreement. That has been sidestepped totally.

Q: Do you believe that there might be negative consequences coming from holding prisoners in Guantanamo Bay without due process?

A: I think this continued detention of people without due process in Guantanamo Bay is a really grave scandal because it means that America and others in association with America are adopting the tactics of the terrorists and have allowed the terrorists to rob them of their human rights. Human rights are now being denied. The other thing we're finding is that because America has taken to detention without due process and trial, other nations are using this as an excuse. They can say, "We can do it because Americans do it." America doesn't have a moral leg to stand on. If tomorrow, for example, Americans were taken in China and subject to the same sort of treatment, America wouldn't have a moral leg to stand on to make any comment at all about what China has done. It is a very bad example to the rest of the world.

Someone once said to me, "When you have this type of trial behind closed doors, it spells the death of democracy." And in fact it does spell the death of democracy if you do that. It is vital that we have transparency in these matters. We must not allow the very real dangers of terrorism, and we mustn't allow those dangers to actually be robbers of human rights and our heritage which has long been fought for.

Already we see tremendous anomalies. For instance, those British detainees who have been released have been given favorable treatment because Britain is an ally. You cannot say, "Oh, I'm going to release this group of people because we are going to release them to friends of ours, and we are going to keep the others because those countries are not so friendly." You cannot do that within the law, and that is not the way law should be exercised. You have got to bring them before the proper judicial process.



Terry Waite

Q: Has detaining prisoners affected the war on terror?

A: I believe that it is not successful. First, I believe that it creates tremendous resentment across the Arab nations. Secondly, it means that more youngsters, radical youngsters, will be encouraged to take up a position of terrorism against what they see to be oppressive regimes. So I don't think it is an effective measure.

What has America done in some of its dealings? It has coerced certain states into adopting repressive measures. There has been a certain amount of economic blackmail that says, "If you don't join with us, we will punish you economically." That is not the way to conduct international relations. It is a shabby, poor way of dealing with other nations. It doesn't have within it the moral content to be long-lasting.

I am not saying we should ignore terrorism. Of course we shouldn't ignore it. Of course we should deal with it. But we should not deal with it unilaterally.

Q: What do you think will be the consequences of the war in Iraq?

A: If you follow due process, you have to have good intelligence. The facts are that if you look back over the whole history of this business since September 11, intelligence has been very faulty, like intelligence regarding Iraq. Even Colin Powell will admit that the great statement he made on TV was full of holes. The intelligence was very poor about weapons of mass destruction, and yet we went in blindly. First, if you take the lid off a repressive regime, you will open a can of worms. That is exactly what happened, and it is exactly what many of us had forecasted before the invasion. Let me make this clear: I have no time for a dictator, I did not support Saddam Hussein and I did not support that regime. But I did not believe that by invasion you were going to resolve the problems of a complex nation like Iraq. As I heard someone say on BBC radio, "I am beginning to believe that Saddam Hussein was a product of Iraq, rather than Iraq being a product of Hussein." In other words, you get the leader you deserve. Iraq is a complex nation, and it is simplistic to think you can resolve that problem by warfare.

I think there is an appalling lack of

West. This is not the same for many Arabs, who cannot speak English, whose customs are different, and who don't have the same familiarity with the West at all. So they are regarded as an alien people, and the understanding of the West towards the Arab people is very poor indeed. The stereotype of Arabs being terrorists is a firm stereotype in the West. It is totally disgraceful that that should be the case, but that is the case. It demonstrates the lack of understanding of the Arab mind and the Arab world in the West.

The western concept of democracy cannot be imposed on people by force of arms or done quickly. Democracy has to have time to grow. You have to build your institutions, and you have to educate people into democracy. It is a slow process. You can't spring it on people overnight, particularly if people have lived under a dictator. It is a foolish notion to think that all you have to do is remove the dictator and you will suddenly be able to create a council in Iraq and have a democratic structure. The problems are far too complex for that. And it shows a naïve understanding of the complexity of the issues facing those nations. That is very distressing. And it is actually creating a gap between not just the Arab world but also the whole Muslim world and the West.

Q: Do you believe the war on terror should be carried out in a different way?

A: Take Iraq as an example. It was argued rightly or wrongly that Iraq was a fostering ground for terrorism. First of all, we should have allowed weapon

inspectors to finish the job in order to get evidence or not. It is now being proven that if they had been allowed to finish the job, we wouldn't have found weapons of mass destruction because they are not there. If still concerned about human rights violations in that country, put human rights inspectors on the ground from the United Nations. If the human rights inspectors had come up and said there were gross violations coming from the President and his cabinet, indict him as a war criminal.

Dealing with terrorism, you cannot deal with it in a unilateral basis. You must deal with it through the international mechanisms that we have, namely through the United Nations. If you require new legislation, it's important to work together through the United Nations. It is in everybody's interest to quell terrorism. It is in very few people's interest to maintain it. It takes longer, but you've got to be able to commit yourself internationally, and the only way to deal with it is through the international mechanisms.

As far as the United Nations goes, it is in many respects a clumsy bureaucracy. There is no doubt that it needs reform. But it will not be reformed by people sniping at it from the outside, like America has done. It cannot be reformed by America refusing to support the International Court of Justice. It can only be reformed by the big, powerful nations actually committing themselves to reform the United Nations. Then the United Nations will be able to look at the problem of terrorism and devise together effective ways to deal with this problem.



JOB VACANCY

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- An understanding of and experience of working in the development sector, and sensitivity to gender and equity issues
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The Programme Representative, Oxfam GB Yemen P.O. Box 1045, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen
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Yemeni Americans watched by FBI

BY SHAKER AL-ASHWAL
YT NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT

According to Najeeb al-Haidary, a Yemeni American from Michigan, the FBI is active in collecting information about the community. "If you are an Arab, or a Muslim, you do not have to commit a crime or even be suspected of planning one for them to be interested in you," al-Haidary said.

"To achieve this aim, the FBI has been using intimidation and threats of imprisonment," he added.

Al-Haidary, who was arrested for inciting violence in a protest in Michigan, was also charged with possessing Qat, a punishable charge according to the U.S. law.

Although it is a common practice for the FBI and law enforcement agencies to pressure criminals to give information that leads to the arrest and indictment of larger criminal networks, it is alarming to discover that the FBI is seeking information on everyone in the community.

Al-Haidary stresses that is not alone. He says that there are at least ten other Yemenis that he knows of who work for the FBI and report on the community in Michigan. The Yemeni community in Buffalo, New York City and other localities must also have agents who are snooping on every Yemeni who is atypical in anyway.

In the summer of 2002, the arrest of sixteen Yemeni-Americans in New York City revealed that Ali Al-Fatmy had been recruited by the FBI to provide and record Yemeni-Americans who later were charged with money laundering. Those who were indicted like Mr. A. and Mr. S. said that they heard his voice on the tapes used in their trial. According to Mr. S., the wiretaps by Al-Fatmy carried recordings of voices and activities in Al-Farouq mosque in Brooklyn. Mr. Al-Fatmy was recruited by the FBI after he was arrested and charged with money laundering; the charges were later dropped as part of a deal struck with the prosecutor and the FBI. Since then he has disappeared, and is believed to be in the witness protection program.

Most Yemeni-Americans today understand that their mosques are under surveillance, and their movements, voices,

travels, and businesses are being closely watched. Neighbors are encouraged to report to authorities on any "suspicious" activity. The Muslim community understands the apprehension and the need for better security, but they also think that level of security has come at the cost of our liberties, and constitutional protections. "The terrorists can declare a win, if the U.S. becomes a State of fear in which our liberties and rights are violated. The terrorists win if the FBI excesses become the norm, our liberties get discounted and our community continues to live under suspicion, carrying the guilt and indictment for a horrific crime our community had nothing to do with," said one of the American Yemenis residing in New York City.

The database containing information on Arabs and Muslims in America exists today, but the question on their mind is "what does it contain?" Until Al-Haidary revealed his involvement, it was believed that the database had names of only suspicious individuals, places, and activities i.e. money transfers. Al-Haidary reveals a disturbing reality reminiscent of FBI activities against Puerto Rican activists during decades of surveillance.

Decades of surveillance of Puerto Rican activists have resulted in the compilation of at least 1.8 million pages on the group by the FBI. Among the millions of pages found there were 100 pages on the activities of a young man from the mountain town of Lares named Ramon Bosque Perez who had protested against the war in Vietnam and advocated Puerto Rican independence. Mr. Perez was only a high school student back then, and the FBI found his activities relevant enough for the agency to open a file for him.

The FBI's records on Puerto Rican activists came out recently as a result of an inquiry by U.S. Representative Jose Serrano, D-NY, when he asked then-FBI Director Louis Freeh to confirm the rumors of their existence. Freeh confirmed the presence of the records and now thousands of pages have made it into the Congressman's office. Freeh acknowledged that the program "did tremendous destruction to many people, to the country, and certainly to the FBI". Loren Shaver, the official in charge of releasing the documents, defended the program and justified the FBI action stat-

ing that the files are "cold war investigation files". She added that, "there were bombs going off and there were people dying. The FBI investigation of them isn't unusual by any means for that period".

Analysts believe that the FBI will do whatever it wants or has to do, and 40 years later an FBI director will appear before a congressional committee to apologize about the FBI's actions and again say that it was justified considering the atmosphere at the time. Only then will the world know the extent of the surveillance and the excesses of the FBI in this war against terror, privacy and personal liberties.

It is expected that the latest revelation will create great mistrust in communities as the members of our community become aware of the presence of a growing number of informants in its midst. Surveys in the USA revealed that even when no one is guilty of anything, people are not comfortable knowing that they are being watched and that their meetings, associations, businesses and lives are scrutinized to degrees correlated to their standing and activities in their communities. Coercing people into becoming informants and using intimidation and threats of imprisonment to recruit people will not give the FBI the reliable informants who are needed to give them the information they need to protect the country.

Arab and Muslim Americans have come to a conclusion that in this day and age, where peace groups and environmental groups are under the same scrutiny, it is crucial to remind ourselves of the importance of preserving our rights and liberties. Regular American citizens, on the other hand, have been urged by Arab and Muslim Americans to rise and question the flow of laws that give law enforcement agencies unchecked authority to conduct intrusive, unreasonable searches, which are seen as a clear violation of their constitutional rights.

It even goes to a further extent for some Arab and Muslim Americans, who feel that these days living in America for them is no different from living under the draconian regimes of the countries they left. They believe that the fear and paranoia they left behind are revisiting them again in the land of liberty and justice for all.

Al-Saeed Foundation for Science and Culture announces prizes of 2003 round

BY ISMAIL AL-GHABIR
AND MOHAMMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Al-Saeed Foundation for Science and Culture announced last Wednesday the results of the competitions for the Al-Saeed Prizes for the year 2003.

The foundation announced winners in four fields, which are:

- 1-Natural Science
- 2-Agricultural and Environmental Sciences
- 3-Islamic Science
- 4-Literature

The Prizes on economic, social and humanitarian sciences were not awarded since the stipulated conditions were not fulfilled.

The prize for the Natural Sciences went to researcher Dr. Abdullah Ahmed Al-Junaid, the prize for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences went to researchers Dr. Ismail Abdullah Muharum, Prof. Dr. Taha Yassin Saeed Al-Ademe, Dr. Fouad Abdullah Thabit Al-Hamdi and Dr. Abdullah Nasher Murshed Muqbel. The prize for Islamic Science went to researchers Dr. Fouad Abdulrahman



Mohamed Al-Bana and Ahmed Mohamed Mujahed Al-Shaibani and the prize for literature went to writer Mohamed Abdulwakeel Jazem.

Mr. Faisal Saeed Fara, Director of the Foundation, explained during the press conference that the number of contestants reached 34 competitors during this fourth round. Mr. Faisal added that the foundation, in addition, has provided practical contributions during the last year, from establishing the Al-Saeed Fund for the Support of Scientific Research to organizing book exhibitions involving more than 75 publishing houses and 130 book titles.

As for as the activities for the year

2004, including those in the framework of 'Sana'a the Arab Cultural Capital 2004', the foundation will carry out 25 activities headed by the Saeed Carnival which begins on April 25 and lasts until 8 May.

It is worth mentioning that Al-Saeed Foundation is a scientific and cultural corporation founded in 1996 in a decree from the Hayel Saeed commercial and industrial group of companies in honor of the late Haj Hayel Saeed Anam, the founder of the group, in appreciation of his services to the development field in general and charity activities in particular, based on his humanitarian and national sense of responsibility and as an embodiment of his wishes for the development of science, culture and technology in Yemen.

The foundation aims at encouraging Yemeni citizens to engage in scientific research, providing additional knowledge and scientific benefits and contributing to creating and developing a generation of scientists, experts and specialists in the natural and primary applied fields of science, technology and development.



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مضمونة النقاوة

Iraq's Sadr Says Ready to Die for Anti-U.S. Drive

BEIRUT (Reuters) - Shi'ite Muslim cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, wanted by U.S.-led forces in Iraq, said Tuesday he was willing to die for his campaign to end their occupation.

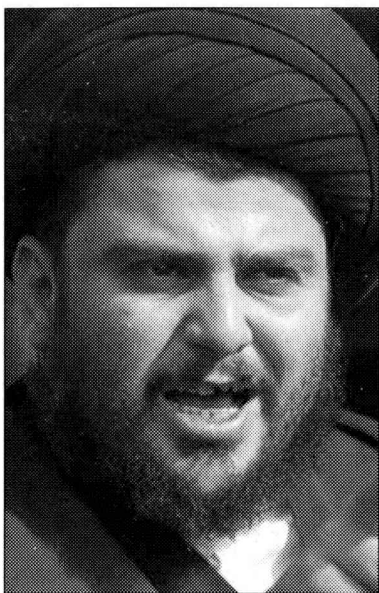
But the radical preacher also appeared to leave the door open to negotiation, saying his only demand was to keep foreign troops out of the holy city of Najaf, where he himself is based.

"I am ready to sacrifice (myself) and I call on the people not to allow my death to cause the collapse of the fight for freedom and an end to the occupation," Sadr told Lebanon's al-Manar television, run by the Shi'ite Hizbollah group.

Sadr, whose Mehdi Army militia has confronted occupation forces including Polish, British and Italian troops, urged non-American soldiers to distance themselves from U.S. leadership "and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Iraqi people."

U.S. commanders in Iraq have said they want Sadr dead or alive and have vowed to re-establish control over Najaf.

Sadr said he was in talks with Iraqi mediators to end the uprising — an apparent opening to a negotiated settlement.



Shi'ite Muslim cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, sought by U.S.-led forces in Iraq, said on April 13, he was willing to die for his campaign to end the occupation of the country. Reuters

But he rejected U.S. demands that he disband his militia and said foreign troops should stay out of Najaf: "My only demand for the time being is the liberation of...Najaf and the withdrawal of occupation forces from it," he said.

Iraq Kidnappers Demand Italian Troop Pull-Out

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - An Islamist group holding four Italians demanded Italy pull its troops out of Iraq, after other kidnappers freed five Ukrainians and three Russians Tuesday in the latest spin of the hostage carousel.

The past week's kidnappings have lent a new dimension to the Iraq conflict, snaring civilians from a dozen countries, some of which, like Russia, opposed the war that ousted Saddam Hussein.

Television pictures showed four men described as Italian hostages seated on the ground holding their passports. Heavily armed men stood around them.

Italy's Foreign Ministry confirmed four Italians were missing and said they worked for a security company. Insurgents said last week they had captured four Italians.

The Ukrainians and Russians were freed a day after they were seized in Iraq, where a U.S. military crackdown has led to the abduction of over 40 foreigners and a flare-up of violence.

But Russia's biggest contractor in Iraq said it was now evacuating all its

370 staff and Moscow said it was ready to help all the roughly 500 Russians in Iraq leave the country.

France also urged its citizens to leave Iraq and postpone any plans to travel there.

Seven Chinese seized separately near Falluja were freed on Monday and three Czech journalists were missing. The fate of three Japanese hostages remained unclear.

PRESSURE ON SHI'ITES

While fighting erupted around the flashpoint Sunni Muslim town of Falluja, U.S. forces kept up pressure on hardline Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr detaining one of his aides in a Baghdad hotel and taking him away in an armored vehicle. U.S. forces released Hazem al-Araji after five hours saying he had no direct part in recent violence by Sadr's militia.

Sadr's Mehdi Army militia staged an uprising across the south last week, posing a new challenge to U.S.-led forces struggling to crush a Sunni insurgency in central Iraq.



A masked Iraqi insurgent holds up a rocket propelled grenade near a burning U.S. Humvee vehicle in Falluja April 13. Reuters

Iran's Frustrated Khatami Drops Key Reform Bills

TEHRAN (Reuters) - Iran's pro-reform President Mohammad Khatami asked parliament to withdraw two bills aimed at tempering hard-line power Tuesday, a move analysts saw as a declaration of frustration at his impotence.

Khatami staked much of his reputation on the bills that would boost his powers and curb the ability of the Guardian Council, a hardline watchdog, to block election candidates.

Khatami in March vowed to give up on the bills after the 12-man Guardian Council blocked them, complaining the presidency had no authority within the constitution.

Vice President Mohammad Ali Abtahi read Khatami's letter to parliament, in which the president said he



Iranian President Mohammad Khatami talks to a family, victims of the December 26, 2003 earthquake, during his visit to the ancient Silk Road city of Bam, April 13. Reuters

would rather withdraw the bills completely than let their spirit be perverted.

"There may be more changes to the bills to contradict their general essence and people's rights...if they remain in parliament," he said in a parliamentary session broadcast live on state radio.

Hard-liners will take over parliament in late May after sweeping the board in February's elections.

Khatami won a surprise landslide victory in 1997 but most reformist attempts to push through change have been thwarted by the constitutional supremacy of hardline bodies.

Analyst Saeed Laylaz said the removal of the bills had symbolic importance.

"He wants to express his total disap-

pointment with the political structure," he said. "He has said he has no power and wants to show his power is only as a functionary."

Khatami criticized the hardline panel of six clerics and six Islamic jurists for barring more than 2,000 mainly reformist hopefuls from February's parliamentary elections.

"Unfortunately, we believe the Guardian Council has repeatedly been violating the current election law," his letter to parliament said.

Iranians will go to the second round of parliamentary polls on May 7. The second round will not damage the conservative majority but will settle seats where no one candidate won 25 percent of votes cast in February.

Tender Announcement

Presidium of Tax Authority
Announces Tender No.2, the year 2004

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International interested specialized companies can obtain tender documents (specifications and general conditions) from the Tax Authority situated at South of Al-Safeyah, near Ministry of Finance for the non-refundable sum of (20,000) twenty thousand Riyals in an official receipt. To be paid by the representatives of companies or the authorized agents at the Republic of Yemen.

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- 2- The tender documents to be presented sealed with red wax with the following included:
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 - b) Copied of (Tax Id + Insurance Id) for local agents effective for the year 2004.
- 3- Tax Authority is not bound to accept the lowest offer.

The Tender's envelopes will be opened publicly at exactly 11:00AM, on Monday 10/5/2004 in presence of offer's holders or their representatives. Offers not meeting required conditions would not be considered.

Address: Safia near the Fianance Ministry, Sana'a
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Emial: taxauth@y.net.ye, WibSite: www.tax.gov.ye

Request for Expression of Interest

Investment Climate Assessment Survey Consultancy

The World Bank has received a modest grant from the Danish Government to engage a consultancy firm to undertake a survey of the investment Climate in Yemen. The Investment Climate Assessment is a standard World Bank diagnostic product administered in most countries of the World. This survey is being undertaken in close cooperation with the Ministry of Planning.

Accordingly the Bank is seeking expression of interest from Yemeni consultancy firms to undertake this survey. Upon receipt of the Expression of Interest (EOI) a short list will be developed and an RFP issued. It is expected that the winning consultancy firm will be required to undertake by way of personal interview, surveys of 500 enterprises in five major centers in Yemen. The surveying process will be conducted in Arabic.

The criteria for consultancy selection will be:

- Previous experience in undertaking interview based surveys
- Capacity to undertake the survey
- Familiarity with issues relating to the investment climate and economic development

Interested consultant should submit their EOI by 30 April 2004, together with a brief capability statement addressing the above criteria.

The address for submission of EOI is:

World Bank
Hadda,
Street No. 40
Sana'a
Republic of Yemen
Attention: Susan Hassan Hameed
An email copy of the EOI should be sent to John Speakman at jspeakman@worldbank.org

any enquiries should be addressed to the task manager John Speakman by email at jspeakman@worldbank.org

South Korean political theatrics play to mixed reviews

SEOUL, April 13 (Reuters) - Last-minute resignations, hunger strikes, ritual head-shaving and gruelling Buddhist marches are hardly textbook campaign tactics, but South Korean politicians are pinning their electoral fates on just such antics.

They have made great theatre in a campaign for the April 15 National Assembly election in which personalities and image have trumped issues such as North Korea or Iraq or policy debate.

"The election home stretch has brought a flood of hunger strikes, head-shaving and tears — emotive politics unseen in previous elections," Yonhap

news agency said in an analysis.

So, do histrionics win votes? Shin Bok-ryong, politics professor at Konkuk University in Seoul, says South Korea's 35 million voters deserve more credit.

"I don't think this kind of image politics will have an impact on voting," he said. "I expect people will make rational choices at the ballot box."

Chung Dong-young, leader of the pro-government Uri Party, began a fast on Monday night after a shock announcement that he was giving up his candidacy for parliament and his post as campaign chairman. Other Uri candidates were also fasting.

Chung had made remarks that offended elderly South Koreans, and Uri Party candidates were demanding his scalp for allowing a conservative rebound after pre-campaign polls had shown a commanding lead for his party.

RETROGRADE STEPS

Opposition parties were quick to denounce Chung's move as a maudlin play for sympathy or a sign of immaturity by the party whose members famously wept and hurled shoes in parliament when President Roh Moo-hyun was impeached on March 12.

But Chung's rivals have tried some odd stunts of their own.

The campaign chief of the Millennium Democratic Party — from which the Uri Party is a recent splinter group — started the race by crawling and bowing for 15 hours over three days in ritual Buddhist fashion to atone for impeaching Roh.

Choo Mi-ae ended up briefly in a wheel chair after her marathon "three steps, one prostration" crawl across the southern city of Gwangju, the party's regional base. The Buddhist ritual is designed to expiate the sins of greed, anger and delusion.

Before Choo's display, fellow Millennium Democrat Kim Sun-mun walked 350 km (220 miles) — and then started a hunger strike. Several men have publicly shaved their heads.

Park Geun-hye, chosen to head the Grand National Party and reverse a backlash against the conservative party for impeaching Roh, moved the party into tents to show humility for political scandals. She also prayed at temples and churches for absolution.

Her predecessor also staged a hunger strike to try to overturn a presidential veto. Parliament, where his party held a majority, later did so anyway.



South Koreans reach out to shake hands with Park Geun-hye, the main opposition Grand National Party leader and daughter of assassinated former president Park Chung-hee, at an election campaign rally in Seoul April 13. REUTERS

Pakistan police arrest six militants, seize weapons



Pakistani police escort Islamic militants, who are covered in cloth, to a court in Karachi April 13. Police have arrested six Islamic militants in the city of Karachi and seized weapons from them, including grenades, officials said on Tuesday. REUTERS

KARACHI, April 13 (Reuters) - Pakistani police have arrested six Islamic militants in the city of Karachi and seized weapons from them, including grenades, officials said on Tuesday.

The arrests were carried out on Monday evening during a raid in a southern neighbourhood of the city, Fayyaz Leghari, a deputy inspector general of police, told Reuters.

Police seized hand grenades, automatic weapons and some bomb-making material, he said.

"These six men were the newly recruited volunteers," Leghari said,

adding the militants belong to the shadowy Harkat-ul Mujahideen al-Alami network, which is blamed by police for a number of high-profile terror attacks in Karachi.

These attacks include a failed assassination bid on President Pervez Musharraf, a suicide attack outside the U.S. Consulate in Karachi that killed 12 Pakistanis and a similar suicide assault killing 11 French nationals — all in 2002.

Earlier this month, police arrested nine other al-Alami militants, including three of its top operatives, and seized a huge cache of weapons.

Al-Alami is a splinter faction of the radical Harkat-ul Mujahideen, which is fighting Indian rule in Kashmir.

But since Islamabad joined hands with the U.S.-led war on terror following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, a major faction broke ranks with the mainstream group to target Westerners, top government officials and religious minorities in Pakistan.

Police have arrested more than 30 members of al-Alami since early 2002, but the group remains active, recruiting fresh members as well as hitting at new targets.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) invites Yemeni nationals to apply for the following position with its project "Strengthening National Capacity in Human Rights".

Job Title: Project Assistant

Responsibilities:

1. Assisting the CTA in the discharge of his/her duties.
2. Liaise with the partners in relation to and supervises implementation of activities pertaining to the information center and civil society.
3. To act as a central liaison point for the Project Team in communicating on a day-to-day basis with the stakeholders, government, and non-government institutions
4. Liaise with relevant UNDP staff on project expenditures, equipment and personnel matters as required.
5. Assist professional compile and prepare background materials, briefing notes for meetings and monitoring exercises.
6. Plan and organize for all meetings and prepare and disseminate minutes of the meetings.
7. Provide translation and interpretation services if and when required.
8. Assist project team members with secretarial and clerical work functions as appropriate, including preparing brochures and pamphlets and making arrangements for training courses, seminars, and missions.
9. Draft simple and routine correspondence. Make copies of important documents/letters and keep for filing distribution when required.
10. Maintain project records, reports, work plans, reference files on various subjects, manuals and documentation.
11. Maintain updated inventory records.
12. Perform other duties as required.

Qualification:

- Possess university degree or equivalent preferably in law or legal profession.
- Excellent command of the English and Arabic languages.
- Excellent Communication and writing skills.
- Proficiency in standard computer software (Microsoft Word, Excel and Power Point) and ability to use Internet.
- 2-3 years of experience in administrative and project management.

Interested candidates who have the necessary qualifications and background for the above position may submit their applications by mail to Human Resources Unit.

UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448841/E-mail: registry.ye@undp.org

The deadline for receiving applications is Wednesday, 21 April 2004

For further details for our vacancies you may visit our website at:

<http://www.undp.org.ye/undp-vacancies.htm>

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme invites Yemeni nationals to apply as **Youth Programme Assistant** to serve with the United Nations Population Fund. This post is a United Nations Volunteers Programme Assignment and based on the values of free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity, which are the foundations of volunteerism

Responsibilities

- Assists the Project Director in the implementation of the project activities including:
 1. Provision of counseling services for adolescents.
 2. Needs assessment survey on the need of youth and newly married couples.
 3. Workshops on key messages audience and channels.
- Local level workshop for NGOs, women groups, outreach workers to design gender sensitive IEC materials and conduct community mobilization IEC activity.
- Production of youth oriented STD/HIV prevention materials.
- Conduct interactive community based activities targeting youth and adolescents to increase their knowledge about benefit of FP, mode of transmission and prevention of STDs/HIV by utilizing summer camps.
- Organize peer-to-peer education activities.
- Hold a number of discussion groups of the risk and consequences of early marriage, early pregnancy, consequences of harmful practices and GBV such as FGM, benefit of girl's education and benefit of FP.
- Supports coordination of project activities, including the coordination between Ministry of Youth and Sport (Boy Scout and Girl Guide Association) and other concerned Youth organizations.
- Supports the implementation of special Population and RH related events through the Ministry of Youth and Sports.
- Undertakes monitoring field visits to the targeted governorates and districts according agreed upon and coordinated plans.
- Assist in financial monitoring, reporting and other administrative works which are required in UNFPA project guidelines.
- Interpersonal communication training at central, governorates, districts and health facilities level.

Qualification:

- Bachelor's degree in social sciences, public health, communication or other relevant areas of study.
- At least 2 years of experience in the relevant area of the work.
- Yemeni young nationals between the age of 22 to 25 in order to provide peer support with the youth.
- Integrity, commitment and respect for diversity
- Good interpersonal communication and ability to work as team
- Ability for analytical and strategic thinking and result orientation.
- Fluency in Arabic and English with ability to clearly communicate and report
- Proficient in current office software applications.

Interested candidates who have the necessary qualifications and background for the above position may submit their applications by mail to Human Resources Unit.

UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448841/E-mail: mohsin.sheikh@undp.org

The deadline for receiving applications is Thursday, 29 April 2004

For further details you may visit our website at:

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Armenian police break up opposition rally

YEREVAN, April 13 (Reuters) - Armenian police broke up an opposition rally early on Tuesday in the centre of Yerevan called to demand the resignation of President Robert Kocharyan. "Overnight, police were forced to dissolve the protest action. Arrests were made and several people were injured," police spokesman Sayat Shirimyan said without giving details.

Several hundred people had stayed on to continue their action overnight after police blocked several thousand protesters marching down Bagramyan Prospekt, the capital's main thoroughfare, towards the presidential office on Monday.

The police action was briefly reported by Yerevan's public television. Russia's Itar-Tass news agency said police used water cannons to break up the rally.

Kocharyan, accused by opposition of rigging his re-election in 2003, has in turn accused his political rivals of attempts to repeat last year's "rose revolution" in neighbouring Georgia.

Opposition parties are demanding Kocharyan's resignation and have pledged to hold rallies throughout this week.

Last November, protesters rebelled against veteran Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze, accused by opponents of rigging a parliamentary election. In less than two weeks the campaign, supported by the West, toppled Shevardnadze.

Kocharyan had run Nagorno-Karabakh — a territory populated by ethnic Armenians which broke away from rule by mainly Muslim Azerbaijan in Soviet times — and became Armenian president in 1998 on a wave of personal popularity.

But he has made little progress in solving the conflict over the territory in which more than 35,000 people have died. Nor have the lives of impoverished Armenians improved.

Participants in the Yerevan rally want to change a law on referendums to hold a confidence vote in Kocharyan. The Constitutional Court had proposed such a vote after Kocharyan's re-election last March, but authorities took no action.

International observers say parliamentary elections last year had less fraud than the presidential poll two months earlier, but fell short of international standards.



Armenian opposition members hold a rally in front of razor wire during a march in central Yerevan, Apr. 12. Razor wire and police cordons halted a march by the opposition activists accused by President Robert Kocharyan of seeking to repeat last year's "rose revolution" in neighbouring Georgia. REUTERS

Australia under pressure to explain Iraq exit plan

SYDNEY, April 13 (Reuters) - Australian war veterans called on Tuesday for the country's conservative government to make public its exit strategy for Australian troops in Iraq.

"There is no obvious exit strategy," said retired Major-General Bill Crews, president of the Returned & Services League which represents serving troops and ex-defence force members.

"If they have an exit strategy, the point I'm making is that they've not made it clear to people," Crews told local media.

Prime Minister John Howard has refused to state precisely when Australian troops would be withdrawn from Iraq, saying only they would end their assignment once "the job was done", despite a wave of kidnappings in Iraq.

"It's an impossible question to answer.

You can't say exactly when you may be in a position to say the job has been completed," Howard said on Tuesday.

Australia's opposition Labor party is committed to bringing troops home by Christmas if it wins an expected election later this year. Labor leads Howard's coalition in opinion polls.

"We need an exit strategy because what has happened is similar to the situation in the Vietnam War where the military occupation becomes more the problem than the solution," Labor leader Mark Latham told local radio on Tuesday.

"You need a strategy to return Iraq to the Iraqi people."

Howard is one of Washington's most vocal supporters and sent 2,000 military personnel to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq last year. No Australian troops have been killed in Iraq and about 850 per-

sonnel remain in and around the country.

Of these, about 540 troops are in Iraq and are involved in security for diplomats, assigned to coalition headquarters, aerial surveillance, training of air traffic controllers in Baghdad and training the Iraqi army and navy.

Withdrawal strategy

Eleven Russian civilians were the latest foreigners reported kidnapped in Iraq and three Japanese were still missing on Tuesday, but China's official Xinhua news agency said seven Chinese had been freed.

Howard said to consider withdrawing troops now would only encourage kidnappings by militant Iraqi groups and that governments should not give in to the threats of hostage takers.

But Australia's main veterans group criticised the Howard government for

not being more open with Australians about how and when it would eventually bring Australian troops home.

"Clearly the government has got some parameters they're working to. Some of those can be made public without prejudicing the security of the operations," Crews said.

He said the RSL was not looking for a specific deadline for troop withdrawals, such as the "troops home for Christmas" commitment by Australia's Labor opposition.

"The league would not support a specific Christmas withdrawal because the job won't have been finished by then," he said.

"It is an artificial deadline that one could not reasonably support. Our national interests have to continue to be served and an early withdrawal probably prejudices that," Crews said.

Cheney appeals to divided Japanese for Iraq unity

BEIJING, April 13 (Reuters) - U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney appealed on Tuesday to a divided Japanese public, in shock over the kidnapping of three civilians in Iraq, to get behind the U.S.-backed mission there at a difficult time.

"We understand what is at stake... The world shares your outrage today at the barbaric kidnapping... and stands with you in your determination to bring your people home safe," Cheney said in a speech at a symposium on Japan-U.S. relations.

Cheney, who later arrived in Beijing on the second leg of his east Asian tour, said it was essential not to retreat from commitments in Iraq despite threats from the hostage-takers and the worst violence since the fall of Saddam Hussein a year ago.

He praised Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi for standing up to militants who have threatened to kill the hostages unless Japan withdraws its 550 non-combat troops from Iraq.

"We think that the position of the prime minister has been the correct one — that is to say it's important that our governments not be intimidated by threats or violence, that we not allow terrorists to change or influence the policies of our governments," he said.

Cheney, whose four-day Tokyo trip was overshadowed by the start by the hostage drama, repeated his pledge to "do everything we can" to secure their release.

Koizumi's decision to send troops to Iraq divided public opinion and he is under mounting domestic pressure to withdraw them to save the hostages' lives.

Appealing for solidarity, Cheney quoted a Japanese proverb: "A single arrow is easily broken but not three in a bunch."

On negotiations towards reopening Japan's markets to U.S. beef, banned because of the first U.S. case of mad cow disease, Cheney said Japan had invited U.S. experts to Tokyo next week and hoped this would lead to a resumption in beef trade.

Before leaving for Beijing, Cheney also met Japanese Emperor Akihito.

North Korea on Beijing agenda
As in Japan, the violence in Iraq is

expected to dominate Cheney's three-day visit to China.

But in a break just hours before his arrival, seven Chinese who had been taken hostage were released, clearing the way for Cheney to focus more on other security issues, chief among them the slow-moving talks on North Korea's nuclear programmes.

"This is a very important issue for us to continue to focus on," an administration official told reporters, adding that part of Cheney's mission was to "move this whole process forward".

Cheney's first meeting in Beijing will be with Chinese Vice President Zeng Qinghong on Tuesday evening.

On Wednesday, he meets Premier Wen Jiabao, President Hu Jintao, and top military leader Jiang Zemin, who yielded the top Communist Party post to Hu in 2002 and the state presidency last year.

On the economic front, Washington is pressing China to revalue its currency and drop proposed regulations that would restrict imports of wireless computers and other hi-tech products. Washington says the moves violate world trade rules.

China, in turn, will press the United States to halt arms sales to Taiwan, which Beijing views as a rogue province, and advise Washington not to send the wrong signal to the island's independence-seekers.

Another issue on Cheney's Asia agenda is hammering out a consensus on a U.N. role in Iraq after a June 30 transfer of sovereignty.

After his speech in Japan, Cheney told a questioner that Washington would soon name an ambassador to Iraq, who will take up the post after the transfer and replace Paul Bremer, the U.S. administrator in Iraq.

The United States hopes to present a new U.N. resolution in mid-May, seeking the 15-nation Security Council's blessing for a new Iraqi interim government, a multinational force and a U.N. role in the country after the handover of power.

Support from China, a permanent Security Council member with veto power, could be critical.

Cheney travels on to South Korea on Thursday after spending a night in Beijing and a night in Shanghai.

Former top FBI officials face 9/11 panel

WASHINGTON, April 13 (Reuters) - Attorney General John Ashcroft and two former FBI directors will face tough questions on Tuesday over why authorities failed to prevent the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and how 70 separate investigations did not uncover the hijacking plot.

Ashcroft, former FBI Director Louis Freeh and former acting FBI Director Thomas Pickard will testify before the national commission examining the performance of law enforcement prior to the 2001 hijacked aircraft attacks that killed about 3,000.

The testimony will likely be a blame game between the various players, with the FBI saying it was given too few resources to fight terrorism properly and

the Attorney General — whose department controls the FBI budget — defending the allocation of money.

They are expected to face tough grilling, in part about an Aug. 6, 2001 secret briefing in which the CIA told President George W. Bush — more than a month before the attacks — that authorities knew al Qaeda members were in the United States.

According to the briefing, the FBI had detected suspicious activity "consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks." It said the FBI was conducting about 70 separate field investigations related to Osama bin Laden.

A likely question will be why 70 investigations did not uncover the hijacked air-

liner plot.

A former senior FBI official said at the time the bureau was investigating every telephone number and any organization that was known to have any connection with al Qaeda.

"Nothing in any of these investigations gave rise to any identification of any of the 19 hijackers," he said, noting that the hijackers were sent in to operate on their own without contacting anyone known to be connected with al Qaeda.

Missed clues

The FBI has been criticized for missing clues, for not sharing information with other agencies like the CIA and for failing to act on warnings like one sent in

July 2001 by an FBI agent in Phoenix who warned bin Laden was trying to send students to the United States for flight training.

Freeh, who left the FBI in June 2001, has said the bureau did what it could to fight terrorism before Sept. 11, but the administration only made it a priority, and gave it adequate funding, after the attacks.

"The fact that terrorism and the war being waged by al Qaeda was not even an issue in the 2000 presidential campaign strongly suggests that the political will to declare and fight this war didn't exist before Sept. 11," Freeh said in an op-ed piece published in the Wall Street Journal on Monday.

The White House has been on the defensive over the past few weeks over the question of whether the Bush administration was negligent in the summer before the attacks by failing to heed warnings about al Qaeda.

Ashcroft was expected to be questioned about why he did not give top priority, and adequate funding, to counterterrorism.

In addition, Freeh and Pickard — the acting FBI director until Sept. 2001 — will likely be asked about the bureau's failure to share information and its antiquated system of passing on possible leads to other divisions the bureau.

FBI Director Robert Mueller, who took his post a week before the Sept. 11 attacks, admits the FBI had many faults and has restructured the bureau and revamped its computer system to address the main problems. Mueller testifies on Wednesday.

Ashcroft's Democratic predecessor, Janet Reno, and Cofer Black — the former director of the CIA's Counterterrorist Center — will also testify on Tuesday.

US sees no alternative to UN Cyprus plan

WASHINGTON, April 12 (Reuters) - The United States warned Greek and Turkish Cypriots on Monday that it saw no alternative to the U.N.-brokered plan to reunify the island and it made no promises to craft a new settlement if they reject the deal.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher's comments seemed designed to pressure Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders who have rejected the plan and to appeal over their heads to the Cypriot people to grasp what U.S. officials call the chance of a lifetime.

"The plan was the culmination of talks between Greek- and Turkish-Cypriots, as well as Greece and Turkey. It is the only plan. It is the final plan," Boucher told reporters.

"There's been speculation among Cypriots that there could be some other alternative to this plan. In our

view, there are no options ... so the vote turns out to be this settlement or no settlement," he added.

Cyprus has been divided along ethnic lines since 1974, when Turkey occupied the north of the Mediterranean island after a brief coup in Nicosia engineered by the military junta then ruling Greece.

The plan, the final details of which were decided by U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan after the two sides failed to negotiate an agreement, proposes re-linking Cyprus under a loose federation of two largely self-governing states.

It will be put to a vote in dual referendums on April 24, in time for the entire island to join the European Union on May 1, if both vote "yes." If either votes "no," only the Greek Cypriot south will join, deepening the isolation of Turkish Cypriots and

harming Turkey's effort to join the EU.

President George W. Bush spoke earlier on Monday to Greek Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis and they both "agreed on the importance to reach a Cyprus settlement," White House spokesman Scott McClellan told reporters aboard Air Force One.

Pressed on whether the United States would abandon any effort to resolve the matter, Boucher softened his stance and said: "We can't say never and ever."

But he then added: "There is no plan B. There is no alternative diplomatic course. There's no promise that if this gets voted down, we'll go back the next day and try again."

"I think everybody's estimate is that there's not a lot of prospects for reaching any other deal, other than this deal."



U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney speaks at an international symposium entitled "150 years of U.S.-Japan Relations" in Tokyo Apr. 13. Cheney appealed on Tuesday to a divided Japanese public, in shock over the kidnapping of three civilians in Iraq, to get behind the U.S.-backed mission there and "overcome the trials of today". REUTERS

Words of Wisdom



One of the key differences between a dictatorship and a democratic system is the role of the media in general, and that of the official media, in particular. If those individuals in charge of the media feel they are more responsible towards the public than towards the politicians, and perform their job on that basis, then that is a sign of a democratic structure.

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

OUR
OPINION

Human resources in Yemen:

An issue of concern

The issue of human resources in Yemen has become one of the priorities of the current Yemeni government due to the fact that humans are the pillars of any development. A whole ministry for vocational and technical training was set up to focus on the issue of developing more human resources needed to bring the desired development to the country. However, that is simply not enough.

Today, Yemen is suffering from a poor educational system that is almost obsolete compared to those in the developed world. We are not teaching our children the use of computers, proper English language, and are not updating them with scientific and historic information needed. This is mainly attributed to lack of funding and finances. However, it is also a result of lack of commitment and awareness about the importance of developing human resources in Yemen.

In a time billions of Yemeni rials are spent on military installations and equipment, in comparison, little attention is given to the educational and health sectors, which are essential for producing healthy, educated, and productive citizens.

When looking at the overall indicators of development in the Arab world in general, and Yemen in particular, we will come to a shocking conclusion that, on average, our people are less productive than peoples of most other countries. This is mainly due to the fact that they are not well-educated, do not have modern skills, did not cope with global changes and requirements.

But eventually, this is due to neglect of the state for so long. For many years, educational curricula have not changed radically to encapsulate the new and important information that is standard in the developed world. In more than 90% of schools around the country, there is not even one single computer, let alone provide computer lessons to regular students.

The United Nations Human Development Report published last year has indicated clearly the need to focus on the people first, then move on to other sectors. Our Arab regimes have marginalized their people in education, freedom, and decision-making ability. This is why Arab citizens have become less productive and energetic than most others throughout the world.

It is not too late however to reverse the course and concentrate more on the people by establishing more training schools, technical faculties, community colleges, and through encouraging the private sector to participate in training their staffers to become more skillful and meet the international requirements.

I believe the donor community has a role to play too. By providing assistance in supporting human resources in Yemen, they will be contributing positively to the development drive in the country. By investing in humans, they would be investing in the future of the country, which will in turn become a good world citizen that is more productive and efficient than it is today.

The Editor



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Bandung Conference,
voice of weak countries

By MOHSEN AL-EMAD
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

In April, 1955, twenty-nine nations met in Bandung, a city in Indonesia. These twenty-nine nations represented more than half the people of the world. The conference was a historic one. Why?

For the first time, people from many different countries met to discuss together problems that were of importance to the world. This conference was a symbol of the rise (not rice) of the countries of Asia, Africa, Saudi Arabia, and Latin America. It showed that they wanted PEACE and were trying to work for it and they made the following decisions:

1-All countries should help each other to raise their standard of living and make full use of their raw materials.

2- All people should have equal rights, whether they are black, white or yellow.

3-All people should fight for free-

dom, independence, human rights, friendship, peaceful solutions and a happy future.

4- All should fight against aggression, the arms-race and (neo-)colonial exploitation.

5-All countries should have the right to become independent according to the CHARTER of the United Nations, which is the one place where they can discuss all their problems.

6-Imperialism is an evil that should be ended and countries must be helped each other to get rid of foreign control.

The members of the Bandung Conference believe that all races and nations are equal and the strong countries should respect the freedom of the other countries.

To respect another country means not to interfere in its domestic affairs, and not to dictate to it. Every country has the right to depend on itself, either alone, or with the help of a friendly country, and this is one of the principles of the United Nations. But although a country has the right to

depend on itself, it does not have the right to another country. All disputes and problems between nations should be solved by peaceful means, not through WAR and force.

The Bandung Conference represented the voiceless masses of the world, and gave small and weak countries a chance to speak about themselves. They not ignorant, and they can rule themselves.

Now America and some of the countries of Europe are the only ones that have a voice in the affairs of the world. Yes, the new alliance who decided that they should have a voice, and their voice should be heard above all, even above their own people.

Many thanks to all civilized nations around the world who condemned the war in Iraq. Really, these nations remembered us. What happened in London itself, 30,000 British people gathered in Trafalgar Square, shouting "Law not war, Eden"?

That was after one year from Bandung Conference.

Ordeal of earning livelihood

By ABDULWAHAB AL-SOFI
HODIEDAH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES
Abdulwahab_alsofi@yahoo.com

The difficulty of earning a livelihood insults persons who cannot sleep without feeding his children. Our children are our livers walking on land. The pain of your child is your heart's wheel. There is nothing like health and stability for making people happy. We have to do justice and love mercy. It is one picture for all. After he had narrated his story, we burst into tears. It was an affected story, in which feelings have emerged from the heart. He came to school weeping. The tears that flowed on his both cheeks are like streams. His eyes were as red as a dewy rose. At the beginning, he couldn't speak a word, as if a heavy load was on his chest. He was so sad that his face was washed by tears.

We started to heal his feelings.

Afterwards, we knew that that his baby was sick. His little son was twisting in pain, as he was diseased. "Two days ago, I started to look for money, but in vain" said the wounded father. Then he was obliged to stay at home waiting for auto determination, but his

son worsened. He had no money as his salary had finished. It was distributed among the grocery, pharmacy and the rent. He wanted to borrow some money to take his baby to the hospital. He demanded help from his colleagues who were in a similar position. Most of them were waiting for their salary, which was still two weeks away.

The majority of employees in our country are chased by poverty, which is considered to be a polite death. It threatens poor people but many prefer it to a life in which they cannot feed their children. They cannot heal their children's wounds. They have not the ability to go to the doctor for any simple medical cure. It is a catastrophe, which we fear to increase. It is not that only employees live this calamity, but the majority of people live this misery.

Thus, we have two main points in our life. These two points upset us day and night. They are the mere necessary food and medicine for our diseased people. Health and food are very necessities for human beings. Enough food for a person may prevent them giving even the minimum food to their children. What about the other needs for children? I have no answer...! That's why people are easily exposed to diseases. They are suffering from the bitterness of disease and starvation. These

two effectual elements controlled our mind instantly. We have no chance to claim our simple rights. Hunger makes a person unable to think. As war brings ruin and misery, poverty also brings disease, pain and ignorance. They are part and parcel of each other. Moreover, many dangerous diseases are spread among poor people who cannot afford the necessary food. Salaries don't provide the minimum food for two weeks of a month. Our government should be aware of this suffering. It should secure food and medicine for poor people at least.

In addition to that, food item prices are increasing. Bread, which is the main food, has become thin. What spirit does the government keeps silent as greedy merchants rule the government, not the opposite. Or is this the new policy of the government? It is known that any society is divided into upper, middle and lower class, but our society is divided into upper and lower classes only. The middle class was swallowed by the upper class. We demand our government to stop the upper class eating the lower class. The government has to keep away from the Arabic proverb: should you starve your dog, it will follow you. I think it is unfair our government treat us like that.

My diary in Iraq: Day Two
Leafleting village by village to
announce the forthcoming elections

By EMMA BONINO
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Today begins with a meeting with the team of civilian workers of the Research Triangle Institute, which operates in Nassiriya under the direct control of Barbara Contini, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority for the region. The team leader is another woman, the courageous and determined Belgian, Caroline Roufosse. Caroline and her team talk to us about the question of security, linked to common crime, terrorism and the funding of terrorism. One of the most serious problems is the kidnapping of children for the purpose of extortion, mostly to finance terrorist organisations. The general elections, planned to be held by January 2005, will be crucial. Caroline Roufosse stresses the importance of the painstaking work in the small towns and villages, which has allowed, and will allow, the election of local representatives. It may well be them, the local representatives gathered together in an assembly, who will appoint the new government.

The legitimacy and authority of political representatives: this must be the starting point to deal with unemployment. In a country in which there are provinces like Nassiriya where 60% of the population are uneducated, the citizens are involved by direct contact - as the Italians do by handing out leaflets village by village - or via TV

At the intergovernmental conference in Sana'a, Yemen, organised in January of this year by No Peace Without Justice, Iraqi ministers invited Emma Bonino, Radical Party Member of the European Parliament and member of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, to Baghdad. A delegation of Radical MEPs - Bonino herself, Marco Cappato and Gianfranco Dell'Alba - accepted their invitation. This is the second of a four-part serialisation of their diary in Yemen Times.

and radio, as the Japanese do. The Japanese government has acquired TV slots on the two most important Arab-language satellite channels, Al Jazeera and Al Arabiyya, to explain to the Iraqis the purpose of the Japanese presence, especially after the offer of a further \$260 million in humanitarian aid.

We depart for Baghdad from Kuwait City. We travel in a British Royal Air Force plane with government officials, NGO technicians and experts, and a platoon of rather bewildered Malayan soldiers. We fly over Iraq without any hitches, and are welcomed on our arrival in Baghdad by the Italian Ambassador Gianluovico de Martino. On the drive from the airport we come across marines jogging with machine-guns and the remains of Saddam's monumental buildings. At the checkpoint, the guard looks at our documents and quips: "Smile, guys, you're in

Baghdad". We smile.

The first meeting in Baghdad is with Paul Bremer, who has put a sign on his desk: "Success has a thousand fathers". Bremer lists the figures of the achievements since the fall of Saddam: over 200 newspapers and 180 political parties set up, and above all a constitution that is "revolutionary for the Muslim world, from Casablanca to Kuala Lumpur". From an economic point of view, unemployment has fallen by 60% compared to the pre-war situation, per capita income has increased by 33% and the gross domestic product by 60%; the real problem, with the injection of \$18 billion in the next 15 months, will not be growth, but inflation.

Great stress is placed on the development of democracy, for which over \$500 million have been set aside. On the other hand Bremer does not hide from the difficulties: it will be extremely difficult not only to manage the process of transition but also to create the necessary checks and balances in the future institutional framework. Bremer hopes for greater involvement from the international community and believes that a new United Nations resolution would be useful, especially as a political acknowledgement of the institutional and electoral deadlines set out in the provisional constitution. This is precisely what Ayatollah Al-Sistani turns down bluntly later in the day in a fiery statement: "If the United Nations serves to legitimise this constitution, it would do better not to come."

COMMON
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

American Troops in Iraq:

"I hate this place
more and more
every day"

If these are the words of the American troops fighting in Iraq, you can imagine what the feelings of the Iraqi people are. Even with the June 30 deadline fast approaching, it does not seem that the American fiasco in Iraq is anywhere near completion. For one thing there is a force of some 150,000 American troops and a fledgling number of other "coalition" troops and there does not seem to be any effort to withdraw any of them. On the contrary, all signs point to a permanent presence of American troops in the Fertile Crescent and possibly an increase in their number to meet the increasing "insurgency", as the mounting resistance is being called by the American Military Central Command, which obviates the rising displeasure among the Iraqis for the determined American to maintain an indefinite presence in their country. This is confirmed by the existing contracts to construct 14 American bases (of course given to Halliburton) throughout Iraq. In addition, the American Proconsul, Paul Bremer has issued so many directives that clearly signal a permanent American presence in Iraq and indefinite control of most of its resources and even economic activities. For sure, the intention is to keep Cheney busy dividing the spoils of war amongst the big contributors to the Bush campaign effort for the second term of the G. W. Bush Presidency.

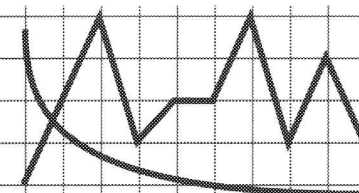
So, where is this sovereignty that George Bush insists must be given on June 30, if the interim government (up to the elections) will be handpicked by Bremer and with Bremer and his corps of "embedded" advisors and consultants continuing to have the first and last say in all matters of statecraft. Of course, according to the Guardian, Bremer has not so reluctantly given the control of the hospitals and other health facilities to the Iraqis, without any genuine effort to upgrade or even restore the quality of health services to their already unsatisfactory pre-war level, while they bear the major brunt of dealing with the hundreds of Iraqi casualties falling from Apache assaults and random firing of disenchanted American troops, who have no genuine desire to be there in the first place. Most foreign reporters clearly have indicated that even the most loyal of the American ground troops engaged in Iraq (and their families at home) have no taste for the kind of war George Bush wants them to fight in Iraq, because they are in direct contact with the openly displayed displeasure at the American occupation of Iraq and the outright robbery of its resources. Speaking of hatred, it is not hard to see why such hatred would mount, when we see that hundreds of Iraqis have been victimized in Faluja, in an operation of cold blooded vengeance against the death of paramilitary personnel on a defense contract, who were mutilated in a frenzy of mob violence. Needless to say, the American troops nearby might have been able to prevent this horrible display of discontent, if they really cared to, or if the order had been given to them to do so. But in Iraq, strange and sometimes ugly things will happen, simply because the Americans want to beef up their fluid case for a continued presence in a country that is not at all pleased with their stay. Why should they be pleased, when they have replaced Saddam with a worse dictator than Saddam, the former personified by a Proconsul, who rules by decree. Wasn't that how Saddam also ruled Iraq?

Yes, Iraq is under an indefinite American occupation and the Arab World and the international community are completely out of the picture. Whatever happened to the sanctity of the Holy Land from the destructive force of evil greedy hoarders of the domestic resources? One would think that the West has tired of hearing how ugly imperialism and colonialism was and the black marks they left in the great histories of societies of grandeur such as the British or the French. One would think that globalization was to be spiced with all the nice trimmings of social and political consciousness that mostly evolved as western civilization began to sense that the world must be made a nice place for all its inhabitants. Wishful thinking! 30 million American Evangelists and 5 million Zionists have decided to make this world and its resources a bounty to plunder as they see fit, with the might and resourcefulness of the United States at their full disposal to bring death and destruction to anyone who stands in their way.

Even if the members of the Armed Forces are now pointing out their disapproval of their Government's murder campaigns in Iraq, just like the Israeli members of the Armed Forces who stood up to Sharon and said: "Hay, this is uncivilized behavior we are perpetrating in the Holy Land and we want no part in it!", Bush and his neo-cons meet all opposition with contempt and slander!

Perhaps, Iraq will be Bush's Vietnam, as Ted Kennedy said. There are those who say that Kennedy was exaggerating when he said this, because Vietnam cost the US 55,000 fatalities. But, let us not be fooled by statistics, because for one, this is only the first year of American involvement in Iraq and because the death toll is rising day by day on an incremental basis (23 deaths in just three days during the latest fighting). God forbid that Iraq should reach Vietnam proportions, but it is not far-fetched to declare that the situation in Iraq is bound to engulf a wider zone of combat and bloodshed all because some buffoons in the Pentagon decided to play out their simulated war games in the Fertile Crescent, without either knowing what they are getting into or without a care as to the monumental bloodshed that these war games turn into when they are played out in real turf.

YT Business



French-Yemeni investment and trade partnership

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

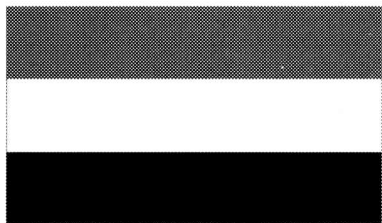
Yemeni and French political and economic relations come under the reciprocal interests and benefits and also the partnership that pours in interest of French exports to Yemen.

Yemeni president Ali Abdulla Saleh's regular visits to France have resulted in deepening the two countries' relations and contributed to attract French com-

ment and offering support for democratic program and human rights in the next three years.

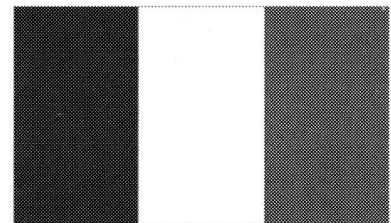
France has decided to include Yemen among its priority program for solidarity where it has given Sana'a a special significance in getting annual direct assistance in areas of supporting animal wealth with 2.5 million Euros and a help in supporting education projects as well as backing issues of development and economic and financial reform.

the Yemeni government appreciates



panies for investing in Yemen especially in areas of oil and gas. In this regard the French Total company is exploiting some oil fields in the governorate of Shabwa and obtained, along with other world companies, a concession contract for exporting natural liquefied gas from Yemen, but for reasons related to external markets the project has not been operated yet.

In appreciation of France for the economic and political reforms in Yemen, a meeting of the French-Yemeni cooperation committee's third session was held in Paris on 7 November 2003. The meeting discussed the establishment of a partnership between the two countries aimed at assisting Yemen in develop-



the support offered by France in area of development and cooperation in reducing burdens of debts and coordination between the two countries in fighting terror.

The central apparatus for statistics mentions that the value of Yemeni imports from France in 2002 amounted to 18.298637 million riyals whereas the value of Yemeni exports to France amounted to 10.044.011 million riyals and re-exporting operations at 389.872 thousand riyals

The balance of payment during the same year reached to YR 17.464790 million but it tilts towards the French exports to Yemeni market.

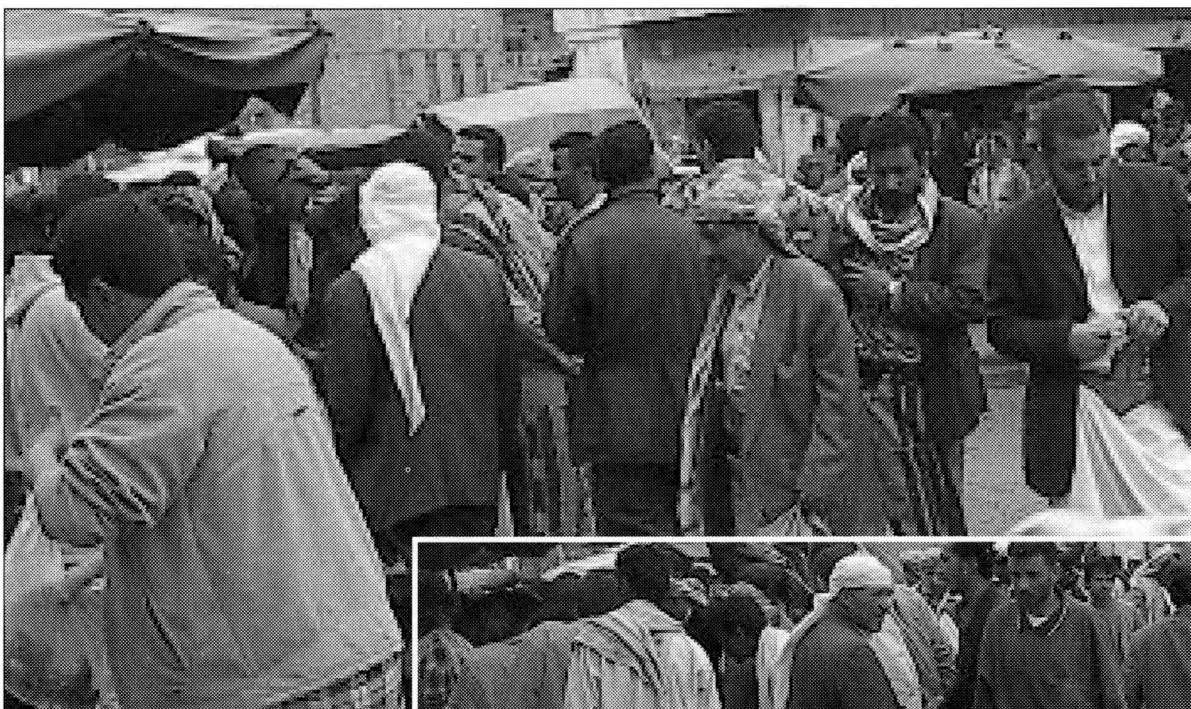
Reorganization of popular marketplaces, a necessity

BY MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The council of ministers has formed a committee from specialized parties to work for reorganization of popular marketplaces in Yemen particularly in the aftermath of a trailer crash inside the marketplace of Yarim in the governorate of Ibb that caused the death and injury of a number of shopping people and others who happened to be near the scene of the incident. The incident has reminded the government of the existing misplanning that is in distributing those markets.

Popular marketplaces are found in the capital Sana'a and major cities and distributed at small and narrow areas and very crowded. They are moreover a source of disturbance and annoyance for the inhabitants of the quarters where they are present. These marketplaces deform the beautiful images of the cities entrances and major centres especially the markets specialized in selling qat, the non-nutritious stuff the Yemenis consume for giving themselves a sense of ease at the time of siesta and usually has detrimental impact on the environment and human and cleanliness.

For reorganization and redistribution of those marketplaces in the capital and major cities the government needs investment funds for buying areas of land for building new market areas in modern methods and for being spacious allowing teams of civil defence and police to have access to them for implementing their tasks in emergencies.



Chaos and crowdedness, characteristics of popular marketplaces

But the problem lies in abstention of some capital owners from investment in the marketing sector and very rarely the private sector would take the initiative to invest in building popular markets because rents of small shops in those markets are low.

The other challenge before reorganization of such markets is in the capital is the remoteness of pieces of land suitable for building such markets from population areas despite of the fact that the organisation process has many positives. Most important of such benefits



and positives are reducing crowdedness and the noise produced by loudspeakers used by sellers using movable carts.

The government hopes to overcome

these challenges and organizing popular markets and push away their ill impact on the citizens, public order, environment and beauty of cities.

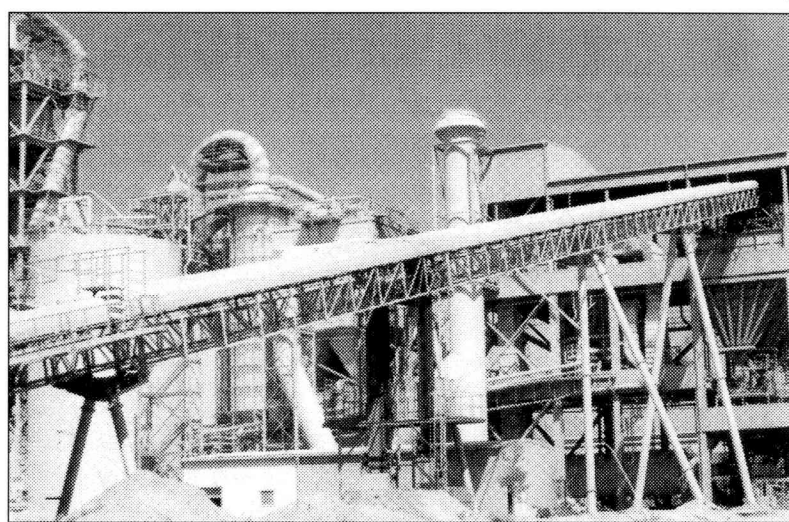
Projects for development of cement factories production lines

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The Yemeni state establishment for industry and marketing of cement is in the process of implementing investment projects to expand production lines in the government factories of cement for the purpose of meeting the escalating local demand at a rate of 5.6% compared to the last year situation.

The developing projects include the expansion of production of Amran cement factory by building a new production line with a capacity amounting to one million tons per year. It is expected that the expansion project would be finished at the end of this year and funded by the factory's budget.

The development plan also includes



Amran cement factory

the expansion of the production capacity of Bajil cement factory by 600 thousand tons a year with contribution of Chinese and Egyptian companies. After the new expansion the factory's production capacity would increase from 200 thousand to 800 thousand tons per year. The state establishment for cement industry and marketing is also preparing a study for developing the production capacity of al-Barah cement factory in the governorate of Taiz. Geological studies on the area indicate that there is a possibility for increasing the factory's production by large quantities. In addition there is a plan for accomplishing the Batees cement factory in the governorate of Abyan with a production capacity of around 500 thousand tons per year.

The Batees cement factory production would cover demands of the governorates of Shabwa, Aden, Lahj and Abyan, and there are studies confirming the possibility of raising this facto-

ry's production.

There is also a new investment project in the cement industry in the city of Mukalla aimed at covering the eastern region's needs. The governorates of Hadramout, Mahra, areas of Shabwa and the governorate of Abyan. The new factory's annual production capacity amounts to around one million.

Implementation of the plan is aimed at covering and making up for the deficit occurring in consuming cement along with the existence of strategic investment projects under construction. The plan also aims at lowering the volume of cement imports from abroad.

The three government factories; Amran, Bajil and Barah, had last year produced 1,541,352 tons, at an increase amounted to 271,352 tons compared to the total production of 2002. But demand for cement has in this year doubled by 25%.

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST CONSULTANT SERVICES

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

TAIZ MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT AND FLOOD PROTECTION PROJECT

(TMDFPF)

CONSULTING SERVICES

Credit No. 3575

Project ID No. TMDFPF-II

Expressions of Interest

The Government of Republic of Yemen has received a Credit the International development Association (IDA) toward the cost of the Taiz Municipal Development and Flood Protection Project (TMDFPF) and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consultant services.

The services include all necessary activities needed for carrying out the study of the three related activities - Environmental Management Plan (EMP), a Municipal Solid Waste Management Strategy (MSWMS), and a public Awareness Campaign (PAC) for Taiz City, the implementation period for carrying out the required study will be about 10 months.

The Ministry of Public Works and Highways (MPWH) Represented by project Management Unit (PMU) now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services.

Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.) Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.

A consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank's Borrowers, January 1997 (revised September 1997 and January 1999).

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address below during office hours from 9.00 A.M to 2.00 P.M hr.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below by at or before 12.00 noon's Monday May 17, 2004.

Eng. Ibrahim Hassan Othman
Director, Project Management unit (PMU)
Ministry of Public Works & Highways (7th floor),
Hadda Complex, Hadda Street
Sana'a Republic of Yemen

Tel/Fax. +967-1 263-135, Sana'a or Tel/Fax.: +967-4233-098
E-mail: undputmdfpp@y.net.ye

Exchange Rate for the Yemeni Rial

Currency	Buying	Selling
US Dollar	184.3800	184.6300
Sterling Pound	338.1300	338.5800
Euro	222.7800	223.0800
Saudi Rial	49.1700	49.2300
Kuwaiti Dinar	625.4800	626.2300
UAE Dirhem	50.2000	50.2700
Egyptian Pound	29.8800	29.9200
Bahraini Dinar	489.0700	489.7300
Qatari Rial	50.6400	50.7100
Jordanian Dinar	260.0600	260.4100
Omani Rial	478.9300	479.5800
Swiss Franc	143.6000	143.7900
Swedish Crown	24.3000	24.3400
Japanese Yen	1.7372	1.7396

Source: Central Bank of Yemen

Mysterious Characters

BY LUTFI SUBET BAJENDOH
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES
MORSHED2004@HOTMAIL.COM

Most of us like to discover ancient things. Perhaps if you spend many years searching from one place to place and in the end you find a piece of stone on which some writings are engraved by an unknown person, sure we will be glad for your achievement. Some years ago, I used to hear elders talking about certain handwritings whose place only they knew. They did not know the real value of such things. They were always pointing to a certain mountain and just doing nothing. As I grow up, I eagerly wanted to see those mysterious writings, and, one day I decided to do that. I climbed up in a group of four young men. The way was safer than we expected, and fortunately we found the handwriting easily. It was engraved on a big hard rock, yet it was unclear and seemed illegible because it was covered with dust. We brought some water and washed the dust away. Having a pen and some paper, I copied the character. My company was glad and so was I. While I was thinking about the interpretation of these characters, my friends fancied that this thing would lead to the discovery of a treasure. They imagined a big box on which the sign of two bones and a skull was imprinted with treasure inside it, but



Mr. Lutfi Subet Bajendoh standing beside the rock on which he discovered the inscription

that was nonsense and we spent a wonderful time and went back home. After that day I tried to get the interpretation of the letters I had

copied, but unfortunately, although the letters formed words, these words did not make sense, people in ancient times used languages we do

not use now. The letters are shown below:

Dear reader, I admit my failure, and I will be grateful if you would

help me in finding the interpretation of the letters above, I am sure this handwriting has not been interpreted yet.

RUU/B/PO82B/IRU/KOYE 8BCB18418CR

A cultural enlightening week to combat revenge in Dhamar

BY YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Preparations are underway to hold a cultural enlightenment week to combat revenge and violence and spread of virtues of peace and forgiveness, to be organized during the month of April by Dar Al-Salaam Organization, in cooperation with Al-Wafa Women's Social Association and Al-Waheda Social Association. This week comes within the framework of a national campaign to fight the revenge phenomenon.

A seminar participated in by an elite of intellectuals dealing with this phenomenon will be held in support of the call of President Saleh to all Yemeni tribes to discard this habit, as part of the activities of the week. A peaceful march consisting of students, children and widowed women will take place in Dhamar to condemn and denounce this phenomenon. A photographic exhibition will also be held during 10-15 of April.

Julius Caesar in Sana'a

BY MOHAMMED SAEED AL-MEKHLAFI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

A hundred years have gone by since the Yemeni theatre was established. On this occasion, many plays were performed in the cultural centre in Sana'a. Julius Caesar was performed in English by a batch of young students from Aden University to mark the happy occasion of Sana'a now being the cultural capital of the Arab world. Nowadays universities, throughout the world, pride themselves not only in the execution of academic work, but also in these entertaining and simultaneously supportive and instructive extracurricular activities. Those young students had been chosen by Professor Aziz Al-Muttalibi, who paid increased attention to teaching them how to pronounce Shakespearean language properly. After working hard on this play, the students could stand up to the problems they faced - time wasting, the negative reaction the college and others. The obstacles put in their path, were all in vain in front of their determination. On the other hand, the well-known director Jamal Mahfoudh and assistant Fuad have done their best to direct this play, which has modified the intellectual public mood.

The central act of this play is the stabbing of Julius Caesar. Led by the principled Brutus, and urged by the pragmatic Cassius, the conspirators perform a 'bloody' act which will have terrible consequence. But why does Shakespeare name a play of action after a character that plays only a small part (130 lines out of 2,500), a character in

addition who dies in the middle of the dramatic action? The answer could be that although Caesar appears for a short period on the stage, shorter, in fact than any other of Shakespeare's major characters, in name he dominates the play. It occurs, echoes and re-echoes more than that of any of Shakespeare's major protagonists, 211 times in comparison with Brutus' 130 times. This point suggests that the body goes but that the name lives on. In a relevant sense, Caesar and Brutus both refer to themselves in the third person. Here the self and the name are twined. Cassius 'seduces' Brutus to his designs by referring to Caesar's name. "What should be in that 'Caesar'? Why should that name be sounded more than your?"

The names of 'Rome' and 'Romans' are also often heard in the play. They, in fact, occur seventy-two times. But it is the imaginative vision of Julius Caesar that impresses us. Shakespeare's lurid and startling imagery here carries its effects lightly. It reveals itself, for instance, in the animal suggestions and recurrences that pervade the dramatic scene. We have beasts, of all kinds, vividly illustrated: dogs, horses, lions, lionesses (a lioness, says Calpurnia, hath whelped in the street), eagles, ravens, crow, owls, kites, deer, etc. Over Caesar's body we see Antony lamenting "How like a deer, struck by many princes".

These references are presented as ominous symbols of disorder. Likewise, dramatic action is illumined by the flash of metals. Daggers and swords abound and suggest spirited action. Thus, a quarrelsome Cassius, who repents his previous acts, tells angry Brutus to kill him with his own

dagger. "There is my dagger. And here my naked breast, within, a heart Dearer than Plutus' mine, richer than gold, will give my heart". This sympathetic human realism recounts not only ordinary things such as Caesar's parks, city walls, towers, etc. but also small things like napkins, tapers, hats and closets: "And will he steal out of his wholesome bed?" Portia protests against Brutus's vigil. References to personal appearances also enact this human realism. Thus 'countenances', 'brows', 'looks', 'smiles', 'eyes', 'ears', 'tongues', 'feet', 'fingers', 'beards', 'wounds', 'throats', 'breaths', 'breasts', etc are dramatically repeatedly referred to. Here are three illustrative examples from an endless catalogue, referring to 'brows', 'eyes', and 'smiles'. Thus the noble Brutus soliloquizes:

"O conspiracy. Sham'st thou to show thy dangerous brow by night when evils are free?" Brutus, also, seeing, Caesar's ghost cries: "I think it is the weakness of my eyes. That shapes this monstrous apparition." And this shows us how Caesar describes how a grim Cassius seldom smiles and smiles in such a sort.

Shakespeare emphasises that which nourishes the body, i.e the life forces of eating, drinking and sleeping. Thus the apprehension of the human body is coupled with that which refreshes it. However, the forces of life are enunciated as being vitiated by their opposites. Accordingly, illness is shown to pervade the play. Portia cries in Act II, "O, I grow faint." She also asks Brutus ironically if he is ill. Caesar's 'fever', makes him 'shake'. He is 'deaf' in his left ear (a dramatic addition of Shakespeare). His gesture to mark

Antony is quite suggestive. "Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf". Rome itself is 'sick' and calls for 'redress'.

Yet all throughout the play, there is the suggestion that the body if weak, the spirit is not. Julius Caesar may be rightly called the play of emotions. We have passages where tears are freely shed and where weeping punctuates the texture of the poetic text. There is, thus, much weeping in Mark Antony's speech. He himself is seen, through the crowd's eyes, weeping and has to stop his speech. "Poor, soul, his eyes are red as fire with weeping". He also entices the citizens to weep. "If you have tears, prepare to shed them now the swaying plebians also weep. O, now you weep, and I perceive, you feel the dint of pity: these are gracious drops his end, his eyes are tearful. As Caesar loved me, I weep for him. There is tears for his love." A kind of sympathetic sorrow regulates 'love' in these highly emotional passages. 'Blood', a life force, overwhelms the whole play. It, in fact, drenches it. In this play, Shakespeare equates it with 'honour' or 'love'. Brutus, thus, refers to 'blood' to soothe his worried wife. "You are my true and honourable wife. As dear to me as are the ruddy drops that visit my sad heart". Blood imagery that imposes itself on us does not frighten us as it does in gruesome Macbeth where the horrible effects are carried heavily. The recurrent references to 'heart' also associate themselves with 'honour'. Brutus had rather 'coin' his heart than accept bribery. The references to 'heart' thicken with the murder of Caesar, the 'heart' of the world as Antony declares.

CHANGE She Wrote What women want

BY SADAF SHAH
MSADAFSAH@YAHOO.CO
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

The most asked and forever confusing question that men often find themselves in a rut attempting to answer is 'what does a woman want?' Do women want jewelry, a big house, fortune? Well, these things are not limited to women alone; even men want them. Basically, we want the same things men want: world peace, and equal rights. We want to be able to raise our children in a world free of racism, sexism, and extremism. We want to be respected and not be objectified. Most of all, we do not want anybody assuming to know exactly what we want without our expression!

Muslim Women Not Oppressed

For some odd reason, the West has this crazy idea of Muslim women being oppressed just because they choose to wear the veil or the simple 'hijab' (scarf) covering their head. Modesty is not equal to oppression. Being able to flaunt one's sexuality is not an extraordinary freedom that Muslim women are dying to adopt. Modesty is a virtue, and it is ordained by the Almighty for the sole purpose of protecting women against being objectified by men. So we are living in a modern world with man's achievements going past our wildest imaginations. But this is exactly the modern man's folly. Throughout history, man of the present time has always viewed himself as being advanced, and the man before him in history as backward. Advancement and modernity is relative to the time in history it is applied to. A few years down the road, and history will label us at the present time as not knowledgeable enough and possibly 'backward'. Virtues such as modesty, truth, and honesty have transcended time and will always be honored. For the Western woman to be able to flaunt her beauty is considered an equal right. For the Muslim woman, there is no such freedom to fight for. Freedom is to be able to wear what a woman wants without discrimination. And Muslim women choose to dress themselves modestly. There are some who do not wear the head covering and that is their choice. They are not answerable to any government official as was done under Afghanistan's Taliban regime. That was wrong and not at all sanctioned by any principle of Islam.

Separation of State and Religion

There is no place for religion in the political arena of a state. According to the Holy Qur'an there is no room for a theocratic state. Islam is a religion that emphasizes the role of secularism in government. As members of government, one must discharge one's responsibilities with the principle of absolute justice regardless of the religion, color or creed of the people over whom one rules. The only known system of dispensation of government in Islam is that based on absolute justice.

Having said all that, why then, one may wonder, does an Islamic country not exist in the world that exercises absolute justice towards its citizens? It is a shame truly, and there is no excuse except that of corruption of the human spirit, lack of knowledge and the pursuit of power. It is politics that exploits religion to spread hatred and to encourage the killing of others. No religious document in the world has sanctioned the killing of a people of another religion or race. It is simply the exploitation of religion by corrupt politicians.

Traffic chaos in Yemen



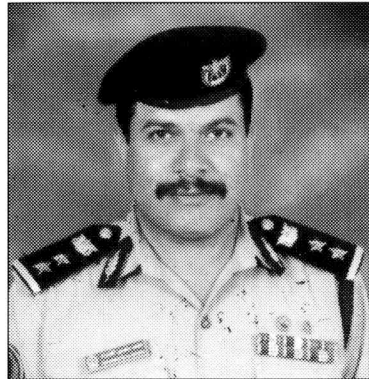
BY ISMAIL AL-GHABRI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

There is no doubt that the increase of number of cars in Sana'a, the narrowness of many of Sana'a streets, the absence of parking lots, the absence of traffic lights and pedestrian signal lights and consequently intolerable traffic jams have become an unbearable phenomenon, negatively reflected on society.

Yemen Times' Ismail Al-Ghabri conducted the following report on traffic chaos in Sana'a:

Abdulwahab Al-Kuhlani emphasized the importance of beginning to embed traffic regulations and laws in the understanding of the young generation as the best means to improve the flow of traffic in the future. The traffic must become a focus at schools, homes, universities and mosques.

Col. Mohamed Mansour Al-Ghadra, Director-General of Traffic Police in Sana'a, clearly pointed out that respect of traffic laws is the responsibility of all. He explained that the objective of introducing some solutions to the flow of traffic in Sana'a city was to ease traffic congestion taking place in many streets and to reduce the randomness of the flow of traffic, based on solid ground of laws to be implemented. The laws, rules and traffic instructions had to be obeyed by all in order to show Sana'a in a reasonable, acceptable guise. The police plans included setting specifications and standards for technical and mechanical conditions for buses and taxis and emphasise the importance of excluding taxis and buses with different plates from those permitted as public transportation working inside Sana'a city. These are some of reasons the Department of Motor Vehicle in Sana'a has adopted these preventive measures and presented some solutions to the traf-



Col. Mohamed Mansour Al-Ghadra,
Director-General of Traffic Police in Sana'a

fic problem in Sana'a city.

Brig. Ali Al-Shameri, Director of Public Relations at the Ministry of the Interior, said passenger buses as much as they contribute to public services, are the main factor behind traffic jams and air pollution since many of them, along with many taxis, are no longer considered a safe means of transportation. The validity of their vehicles has expired a long time ago.

The fact that many buses are hired to transport school students aggravates the situation due to the panic many of these drivers encounter at rush hours. They commit all kinds of violations trying to unload their buses and make it on time at the schools to pick up students. The students are encountering high traffic risks generated from these bus drivers who seek to drop the students at homes as fast as possible in order to return to their first jobs. The passengers and students end up at the mercy of these drivers who consider the high speed and endangering passengers and students legitimate for the sake of making their livings.

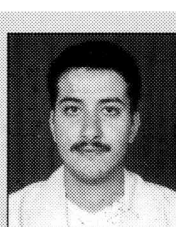
Major Ali Al-Ashwal, Director of Tahreer Square Traffic, pointed out other factors contributing to the traffic mess in many streets of Sana'a city. He mentioned the near absence of traffic lights, pedestrians signal lights and the lack of awareness of the importance of



Brig. Ali Al-Shameri,
Director of Public Relations
at the Ministry of
the Interior



Dr. Ahsan Al-Rubahi,
Pharmacist



Muae Ibrahim,
Employee



Abdulwahab
Al-Kuhlani

following traffic rules, regulations and instructions among buses and taxi drivers, private cars drivers and pedestrians combined. Many are not familiar with the meaning of the three different colors of traffic lights and what arrows signs really mean. Some drivers do not know the right way to park their cars. Some park opposite the road direction and some park in the middle, leading to confusion and blowing of cars' horns with no near hope of realizing traffic rules and instructions.

Lt. Ali Al-Fageah, viewed transportation as the distinguished characteristic of this era. Transportation means have become an essential part of life and not a luxury. Far distances are shortened and life has become easy. Sana'a city, the capital of our beloved country has had a big share of development progress, accompanied by an increase in the number of cars for various uses, which has resulted in congestion in its streets. That there is no possibility to widen streets combined with lack of public parking lots and this is exacerbated by the absence of respect of many drivers who park their cars in illegal parking spaces are the reasons behind the chaotic traffic seen on our daily life.

Moaen Ibrahim Al-Maghafy, an employee, pointed out that seatbelts are not used while many serious cars' injuries would be prevented by wearing them.

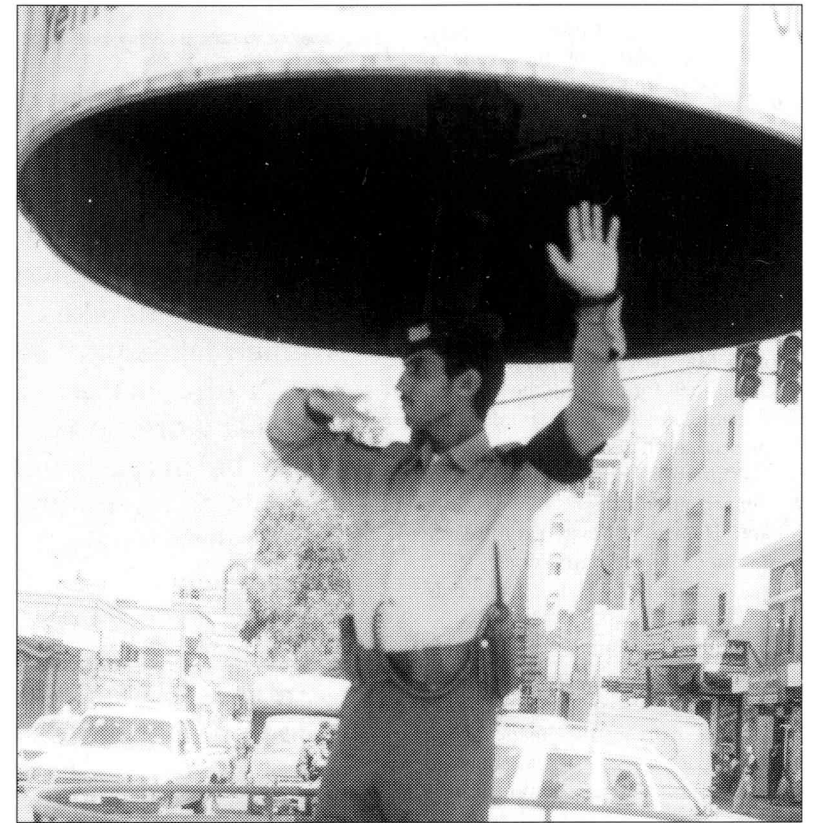
Many traffic accidents take place in our streets resulting in temporary and permanent disabilities due to reckless driving by young children of influential ministers and high-level government officials. The fact that traffic laws are not activated is another reason for this traffic mess.

Dr. Ahsan Al-Rubahi, views the many accidents and the consequent financial and material losses as a result of not abiding by traffic rules and regulations, reckless driving, high speed and not wearing the seatbelts. Many car accidents, especially those on inter-city highways, result from the unfit conditions of cars due to the absence of regular mechanical checkups imposed by Traffic Authorities and the lack of awareness by drivers themselves of the importance of checking properly and regularly their cars for possible mechan-

ical problems.

Mr. Ahmed Al-Shuja, a policeman, on duty at Al-Qadesyah Intersection, bitterly expressed the major concerns policemen have, which many people may not know about and which have with no hope in sight of being addressed. Deprivation of annual vacations or emergency leave, long working shifts at in direct sun light, working on weekends and legal holidays and sometimes compulsory overtime during the coverage of important activities and conferences are amongst these grievances. All of these are negatively reflected in the ability performance of policemen.

Truck drivers, attempting to gain additional money, occasionally overload their trucks with construction materials. When they sense they could be ticketed, they download some of what they carry on unattended roads contributing to more blocking of already narrowed streets. This normally leads to traffic jams and unnecessary accidents. Many drivers, especially those having back-ups, are simply arrogant. They commit major traffic violations and do not worry about being ticketed and fined, because either the fines mean nothing to them or they have their sources to avoid paying



the fines at the time of renewal of their car's registration papers and driver's licenses, assuming they actually have them.

So basically, we have no traffic laws being respected and obeyed, especially by drivers of red, blue and green license plates' cars before ordinary ones, no traffic lights and pedestrian signal lights regulating the smooth flow of traffic, and no full understanding of traffic rules by ordinary drivers and pedestrians. A lack of parking lots and not enough public parking spaces, narrow streets versus

large number of motorized vehicles. A near total absence of signs determining the speed limits of various cars in our streets and highways, and a lack of public awareness of the importance of following and abiding by traffic laws, which reflect the level of a civilized society. These really have direct consequences for the traffic mess we regretably see and encounter every day, and the many temporary and permanent disabilities for those lucky ones who escaped death from different kinds of vehicle-related accidents.



Some pedestrians show no respect for traffic lights



Wrecked car like this may teach people not to exceed the speed limit

International seminar on detainees at Guantanamo

Demands America to end violations against detainees

BY MOHAMED BIN SALLAM
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

At the conclusion of the International Seminar on Detainees at Guantanamo Bay, organized jointly by Amnesty International and the National Organization for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (HOOD) and held on 10-11 April at the Taj Sheba Hotel, Sana'a, the participants condemned the violations being committed against the detainees and issued the following statement.

Yemen: End human rights scandal in Guantanamo and other places

"I'm in a cage like an animal. No one asked me am I human or not" A former detainee of Guantanamo Bay

Sana'a - Yemen - Governments must stop undermining rights they have promised to defend said Amnesty International on Sunday at the conclusion of a two-day conference on the impact of the illegal detention of the Guantanamo detainees and other detainees held after September 11 in the Gulf region.

"The situation at Guantanamo Bay is a major human rights scandal that has

widespread implications for the whole world," said Javier Zuniga, Senior Director at Amnesty International. "This policy promotes a world in which arbitrary and unchallengeable detentions become acceptable."

The harsh conditions of detention of the Guantanamo Bay detainees have had far reaching consequences for their communities and families, including voiceless women and children, whose rights must also be recognized and respected, participants said. Similarly, the continuing arbitrary and illegal detentions of thousands of persons in many countries in the Gulf represents a fundamental challenge to the rule of law and constitutes a betrayal of fundamental human rights principles.

The conference is the first to gather relatives of detainees in the Gulf, human rights organizations, lawyers from throughout the Middle East and around the world, activists and members of civil society institutions. It was organized jointly by Amnesty International and the National Organization for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (HOOD) in Yemen on 10-11 April.

"Progress and civilization must not be measured only by scientific, technological and military progress. They must be measured by the human con-

science, the degree of disapproval of human rights violations and by what we can do to bring human sufferings to an end," said Amat al-Alim al-Soswa, Yemen's Minister of Human Rights, in her opening speech at the conference on Saturday.

"Stripping detainees of access to the due process of law or even their fundamental entitlement to the most basic human rights standards constitutes an unprecedented human rights scandal," a document released at the end of the conference said. "As human rights defenders, it is our most central belief that every woman, man, and child has inherent rights that belong to them as human beings."

The document entitled the "Sana'a Appeal" criticized the abuse generated by sweeping security measures adopted by many governments after the 11 September 2001 attacks in the United States, and which amounted to "a human rights crisis that poses a threat to the people of the world."

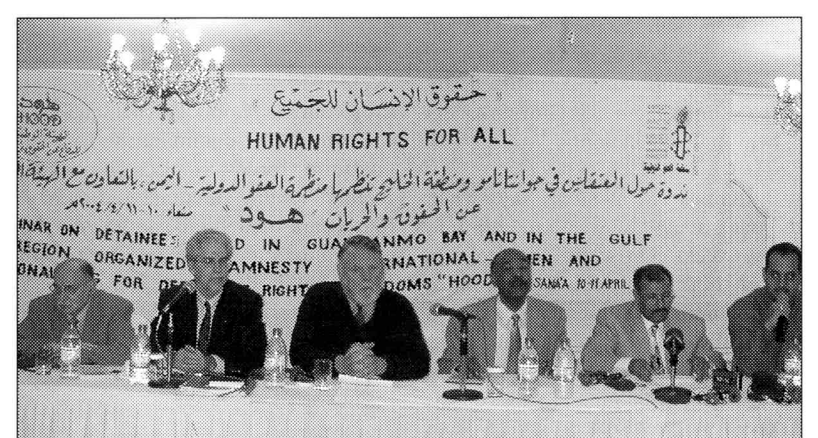
The appeal called on the governments of the United States and the Gulf region to end the legal limbo of all the detainees, including those held in undisclosed locations, and to grant them full access to lawyers, doctors, families and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

"Governments must ensure that all those held are charged and given fair trials or released... They must ensure that detainees are treated humanely and halt the forcible return of foreign nationals to countries where they would face serious human rights violations," the appeal said.

Participants also called on governments to ensure strict compliance with human rights standards in any security cooperation between states and by all security training organizations granted access to detainees and officials in Guantanamo Bay, Bagram Air Base, and all undisclosed locations.

"The detention of individuals in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and Bagram, Afghanistan, without regard to due process is a major threat to all our freedoms," said Terry Waite, human rights activist and former hostage. "International human rights have been hard-won across the years. I thank God for organizations such as Amnesty International who refuse to allow them to be lost at this point in our global history."

The international community must also ensure that the United Nations (UN) human rights mechanisms urgently address the abrogation of fundamental norms in the detention and treatment of persons in Guantanamo



View of the panel

Bay, Bagram Air Base and other undisclosed locations, urged the appeal.

Non-governmental organizations and civil society must press their governments to review security legislation against the standards of international human rights law and to seek respect for the fundamental human rights of nations of their own country held in Guantanamo Bay, and to support and disseminate the appeal.

They are also urged to develop initiatives to educate the public regarding human rights obligations and create and support a mechanism for lawyers

and jurists in the region to share information and coordinate efforts on legal appeals for detainees.

"We, the families, honestly need you," said Khaled al-Odah whose son Fawzi al-Odah has been detained in Guantanamo for the past two years. "Organizing such conferences will keep this case alive in the conscience of the world community."

The seminar was attended by a number of civil society organizations, the competent related authorities involved in human rights and some families of detainees.

Local Press

Prepared by Mohammed Khidhr

Al-Mithaq weekly,
organ of the General
People's congress, 12
Apr 2004.

Main headlines

- President Saleh: Success of Yemeni reforms reflected on security, stability and development
- Changes movement in the judicial apparatus
- Armed group attack editor in chief of 22 May newspaper in Aden
- Committee for tackling the problem of nationalized houses implements the second phase,
- Al-Shuaibi: Final touches on compensation plans
- Abu Hamza al-Masri promises to surrender himself to Yemen if he was convinced by Hattar arguments

Columnist Abdualaziz al-Maqaleh says in his weekly column this week I presume there is no power in the world capable of marring the image of the United States of America as much as the present American administration does.

I also presume that this administration has excellently succeeded in deforming the most important bases this great power was depending on, namely, democracy and adoption of the call for human rights. What has been happening in Palestine and Iraq is the biggest conclusive evidence on that purposeful deformation which goes beyond of even the intentions of America's enemies in this respect. What is happening in those two countries instigates the feelings of anger and tension in all Arab and Islamic countries and also inside the United States itself.

Where are the human rights in the American administration shameful silence regarding the killing of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and the evasion from condemnation of the state terror of the Zionists? Where is the democracy vis-à-vis of the massacres perpetrated in Iraq that has changed with all its ethnic and sectarian groups into a daily war field expressing the refusal of the foreign presence and the democracy delivered by bombs and missiles?

Annas weekly, 12 Apr 2004.

Main headlines

- Criminal Investigations in Rima violates humanism of a citizen
- Various reactions concerning cultural efforts for discovering artistic talents
- Thieves using magic
- Trading and manipulation in jobs in Lahj governorate
- First batch of gunboats for Yemen inaugurated
- Yemen sets free the last British national from jail In Hajjah, a criminal shoots four shots at an infant under claim of vengeance
- Legal symposium organised by Hood on Yemeni and Gulf prisoners held in Guantanamo

Columnist Ali al-Surari says when the transitional law was issued in Iraq a few weeks ago some Arab leaders did not think deeply about possibilities of the coming developments and thus they had quickly sent congratulations to the civil ruler Paul Bremer, referring to the man's wisdom and shrewdness. Those few Arab rulers should have waited for some time to test seriousness of the descriptions they have given to the man. To his and their ill-fortune the violent and tempestuous development seen in Iraq in the past few days confirmed the non-wisdom with which this occupied Arab country is run and that Paul Bremer deserves to be chided by his bosses because of his direct responsibility for the expansion of violence circle in Iraq.

The opportunist character of those rulers has pushed them to hastiness, thinking that congratulating Bremer would pen the way to his heart in an attempt to gain his support that could perhaps benefit them when they would

Main headlines

- President Saleh: Not convening the summit complicates matters
- President's directives to the government on rectifying mistakes
- Yemen takes part with a delegation headed by Dr Abdulkareem al-Eryani, Democracy in Islamic world in Istanbul discusses compatibility between democracy and Islam
- Sana'a call demands America to end the impending legal state of Guantanamo detainees
- Pensioner in Lahj kills his two daughters
- A gang for smuggling children to Saudi Arabia, arrested
- Clock bomb injures three children in Sana'a
- Inn Hudeidah: More than 20 citizens from Zaraneeq arrested for refusing confiscation of their lands
- Confrontations in Sana'a between security forces and thieves gang claim lives of six people
- Strong popular uprising in Iraq
- Al-Haq party condemns killing civilians in Iraq, the National Conference calls for holding Arab summit
- Sheikh al-Ahmar: I refuse entry of Israelis, normalization is degradation
- In an extraordinary meeting, the JMP condemns aggression on the Iraqi people
- Three Arab Islamists arrested
- Saudi anger suspends Al-Tagamou newspaper
- Under circumstances of intentional plundering, Transport workers and employees demand the government to treat them with mercy
- President Saleh visits France
- 26 April, a decisive session of the court on the issue of Jarallah assassination
- Admiral Smith: Yemeni Coast Guard; an important part of American Coast Guard
- "Cowboys madness" ignites liberation revolution in Iraq
- Sana'a hosts the first conference of Senates, Shoura Councils and parliaments
- Yemen takes part in educational competition of the GCC
- Russian great support for Yemen's efforts for the establishment of peace and resolving conflicts
- Defence minister and Chinese ambassador to Yemen discuss areas of cooperation between the two countries

be face to face before the American project in the region. Bremer and with the military commander of the coalition forces in Iraq have got themselves in a dilemma and entered into a dark tunnel, raising the political and military predicament the United States put itself in.



Al-Nahar weekly, 8 Apr 2004.

Main headlines

- The president visits France
- Blackmail campaigns against internet cafes
- Symposium on poverty and AIDS in Taiz
- Bajammal returned from China with a number of agreements contributing to expand Chinese investments in Yemen
- Britain opens an office for international development ministry in Sana'a
- Electronic education classes project, opened
- The government intends to

reconsider issues of investment

Columnist Faisal al-Soufi says the United States of America puts pressure on the Arab governments to implement political reforms and in return makes it easy for them. The U.S. spared the Arab governments efforts and time and prepared for them a reform plan and America is also willing to take part in the implementation process.

The Europeans on their part also pres for that and say there should be a reform in the Arab world but, as it is their habit, they are slow and miser in that they did not take an effort for preparing a ready-made plan under allegation that the Arabs have to work out the plan by themselves and carry it out by themselves. The Arab governments that do not admit the existence of corruption have on their part took the initiative and put forward seven plans for reform initiatives for the Arab League and the regimes. One of those initiatives was worked out by an Arab country the second strong man in it said that his country was not ready at the time being for accepting the



people right to elect their representatives in parliament because the citizens do not know where their interests were and if they were given the freedom of election they would

select illiterate and inefficient candidates.

In the course of time there would be many initiatives and we would discover in the end that the Arab world

will be amidst a sea of reform initiatives and then we would discover that there was much time squandered in producing reform initiatives without reform.



By Yahya Al-Olfi
alolfi@hotmail.com

Reflections

Banks Merger: will it make any difference!

Last week I heard about an impending merger of the many state banks and as I have no idea about the banking jargon, the banking systems, let alone the different elements of arithmetical calculation and other related matters, I really do not know whether this serious intended step is good for our ailing economy or not. Thus, I shall restrict myself to my personal experience of treatment in two state banks and a third of the private type.

I have always thought that because banks are dealing in money and as a matter of fact their work involves mathematics on a constant basis, a science that has taught man orderliness, shaped human life and achieved evolutionary strides, I was certain that I would find a better atmosphere over there and, God willing, this time anticipated improved circumstances.

To my complete surprise I found out that things, instead of advancing, are deteriorating. What! Even in banks. Bank employees are supposed to be precise, active, helpful and well organized. To tell you the truth, I always hate to cash cheques at Yemeni banks because of the unruly treatment of clients. This time some company owed me money and when I asked for cash they said that they deal exclusively in cheques and that if I would like to get my money I should have to take a cheque.

I was angered at the idea but I had to accept, so I went to one of the nearest banks and upon arrival it appeared as if I had just entered a Qat market, due to the uproar and hurly-burly situation I found there. I discovered that people are not treating each according to his turn but according to who reaches first, who knows more employees and who is ready to use the services of the ever-present helper.

The helper is a man or woman

closely connected to the bank (an employee, office boy or a servant). He or rarely she mixes amongst the clientele of the bank and helps to expedite formalities in return for a tip. As I could not get anywhere and the time was approaching the end of business hours I had to accept the offer made by the said helper. While waiting for the helper, who took the cheque and the ID card and went from one place to another, one of the bank clients standing next to me complained that the bank cheats with regard to interest and according to him bank employees who manage not to pay the originally determined interest get percentages in return for their good services.

I had a glance at the helper and saw that he obtained various signatures. Obviously as he is well known to the bank employees and of course they know what he is doing, and they quickened formalities because as I noticed he entered their small cabins freely without any protest or impediment.

Anyhow, at last he came out to me with the money and told me that it is all O.K. and that I could go. I thought, "Well, as long as this man is not that persistent like his equals he verily deserves YR1000 instead of the usual YR500. Happy with the tip the helper went in search of another prey.

As the amount was in YR100 banknotes I thought it was inappropriate and impractical to stay and count the bundles and I sufficed myself with a quick look at each bundle and thought that all was well. When I returned home I told myself, "Why not check if the amount is exact", so I started counting and just as I feared most of the bundles were either YR200 or YR300 less than the supposed amount. The ultimate amount lost summed up to YR3000.

The problem does not lie in the amount lost, but this is a portent of an

underlying defect in our banks. I told myself that there was no problem, that it was merely a petty cash and there was no use crying over spilt milk. But, hold it! Does the same happen to foreign guests who might have to approach such banks? Therefore, let us seize the opportunity of the state banks merger and remedy such overlooked illnesses.

After this incident, I thought about the treatment in our banks compared to the European ones and found out that there was a widening difference. There, as soon as one enters, he or she ought to take a number and then wait for their turn. When approaching the counter the competent bank employee takes the required documents, which are expediently handled, and immediately one obtains the amount of money, no mess no fuss, just as simple as that. In European banks one feels comfortable and happy because people are treated equally and the process goes smoothly (there is no need for a helper to quicken the pace). The impending merger of our state banks must take into account raising the salaries of the banking sector employees (a minimum salary limit should be determined) so that they do not have to snatch from money bundles. Those in the anterior counters should be exceptional in their manners and treatment towards the clientele. The one-turn one-number system should be introduced so as to get rid of unnecessary delays. Less bureaucracy and reduced paperwork should be considered. The employees in direct contact with the patrons of the relevant bank should be always under scrutiny and video cameras should be installed so that bank executives can have a look at the daily work process, namely where clientele are involved. Shaping up the banking system is a key factor to encourage a good investment climate.

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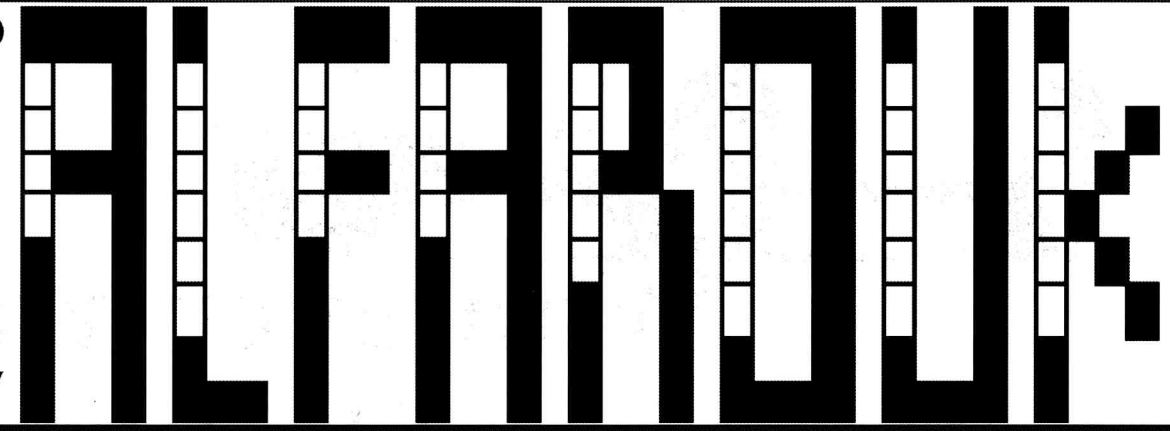
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answer
and winner
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تخفيض ٢٠% للإجابات الصحيحة التي لم توفق بالقرعة

1. Infants
2. Big gun
3. Not fast
4. Capital of Italy
5. Higher than
6. Not difficult
7. Give a job to
8. Small



Ans. Cont.8

- 1.also
- 2.outlaw
- 3.ransom
- 4.moon
- 5.hero
- 6.plans
- 7.father
- 8.repeat

Winner



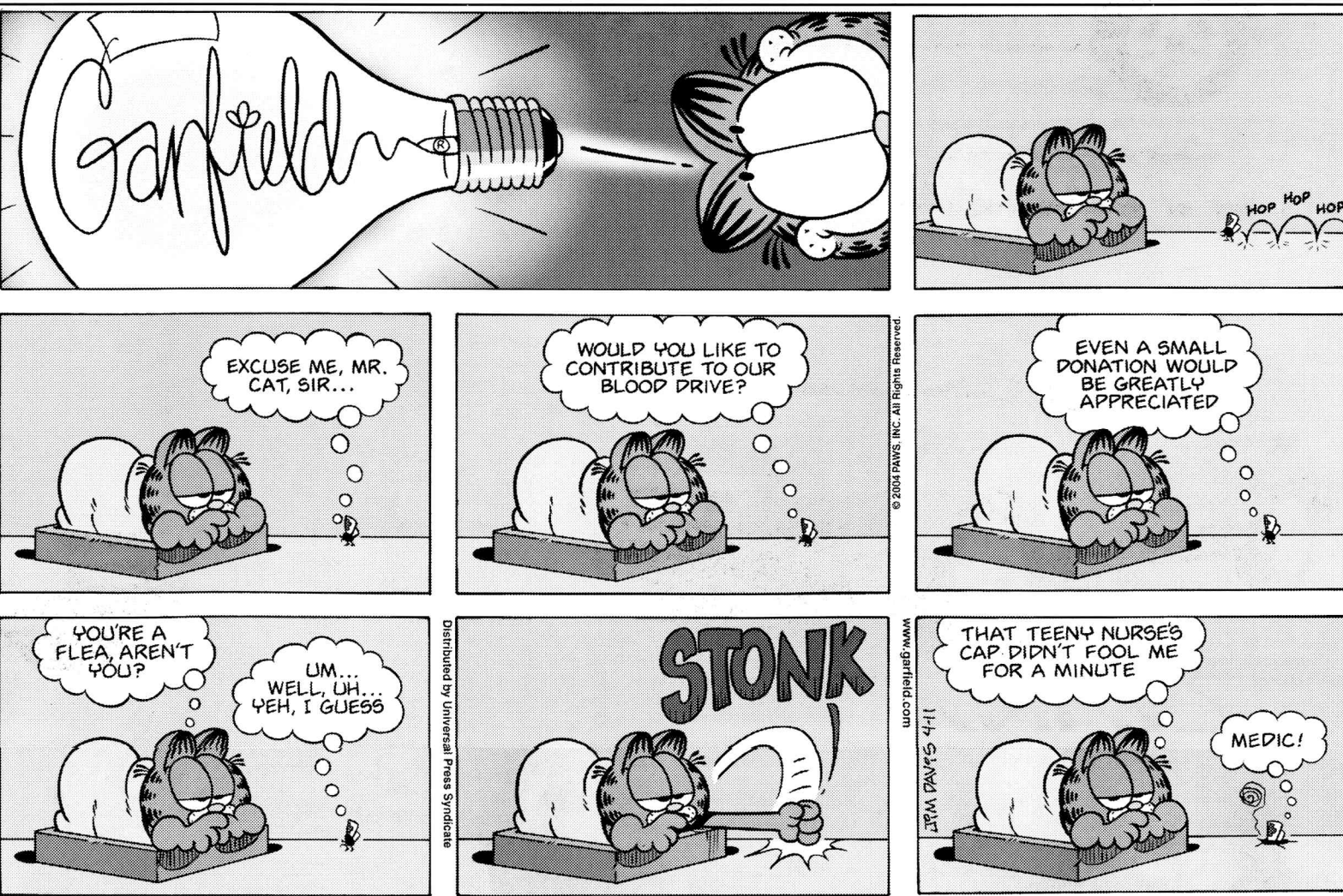
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THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY



BY Eugenia

- Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)**
There are a lot of changes going on behind your back. Ask questions and don't trust anyone with your business or financial interests. Not everyone is as honest as you are.
- Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)**
Business and personal partnerships will be rewarding today. Your ideas are unique and everyone will look up to you for taking control and making things happen.
- Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20)**
Don't push your luck when dealing with peers today. You should focus on doing your best job and refuse to get drawn into other people's affairs. Gossip will only lead to your own demise.
- Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)**
Get out with friends and meet as many people as possible today. People from your past may pop back into your life. Your sensitive and compassionate nature will win approval.
- Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22)**
You can come into some fast cash through a rebate, surrender, inheritance or investment you made. Circumstances surrounding money will be unusual, but at the same time should be positive.
- Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)**
Getting involved in something of an intellectual nature or something you believe in will lead to romance. A sudden change of heart may occur with someone you have been questioning lately.
- Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)**
If you challenge yourself, you will come up with something unique and exciting. The more time you spend working toward your financial and professional goals, the better.
- Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)**
Socializing with other creative people will spark a renewed enthusiasm in something you have been working on. Let your imagination wander and you will find a unique way of expressing yourself.
- Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)**
Don't count on anything going according to plan today. Sudden disruptions will occur, leaving you wondering where you stand. Don't be too quick to make a change.
- Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)**
You can take a new connection you've made and turn it into something more. If you've been thinking about someone from your past, get in touch with this person.
- Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)**
Sitting around with time on your hands is a waste. Take the initiative to make things happen; you won't be sorry when the money starts rolling in. Believe in yourself.
- Pisces (Feb 19-Mar 20)**
You'll be emotional, sensitive and very much in the mood for romance. Don't hesitate to make the first move. You can contact someone from your past.

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Henna ...treatment and ornament in Yemen

By YASSER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

People in Arab and Islamic countries and other regions of the world, especially in Africa and South-East Asia, are familiar with henna. Henna has been used in connection with ornamenting body parts of women, in addition to utilizing it also as medicine and a hair-coloring substance.

For centuries, henna has been strongly tied with the lives of several societies, the Arab and Muslim societies in particular. People have been using henna and have inherited it from one generation to another until current time. Henna is extracted from a tree similar to a pomegranate tree, a tree of lythracees family.

The henna tree can survive a span of ten years. It has white-ish and sometimes reddish small aromatic blossoms. The blossoms contain aromatic oil. The leaves are picked, dried and ground and then sold in the form of power.

A specific quantity of henna powder is mixed in water to form a dough-like mixture before it is spread on the designated body-part.

The plantation of henna trees is widespread in hot regions. History books indicate that the Arab peninsula, Persia, Egypt, India and some countries in Africa and Australia are the origins of henna before it was transplanted in America and other regions of the world.

Henna substance has

earned wide popularity, especially among Arabs and Muslims, probably due to the Prophetic

testaments existing in the Islam.

Today, many scientific references attest that Henna heals headaches, regulates the heart beat and is used to treat wounds because of the effective antibiotic substance it contains. It is also used to relieve foot pain and to treat kidney stones.

Yemen and Henna

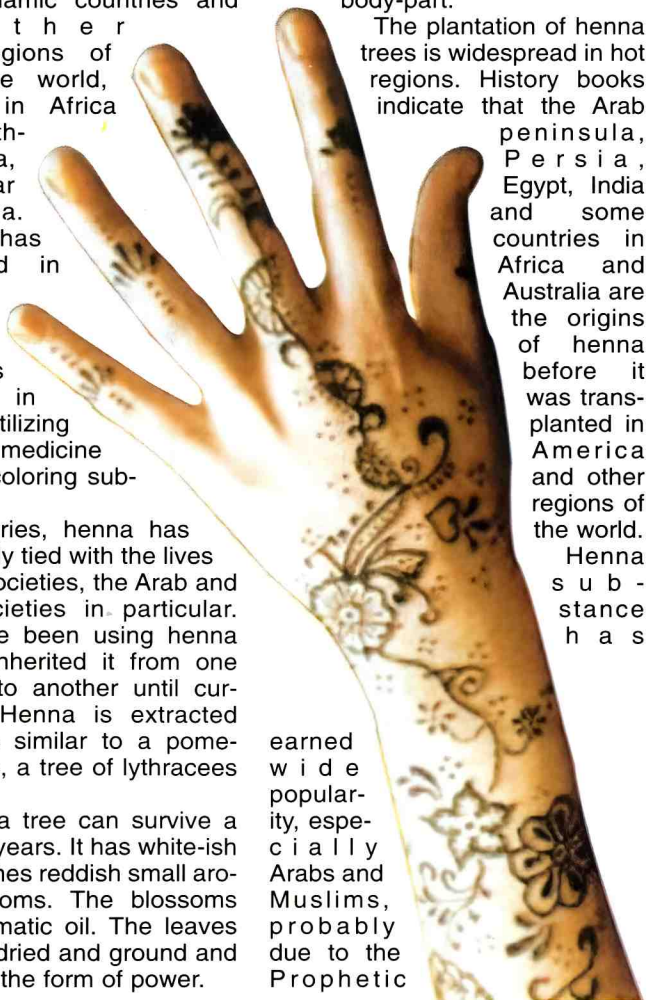
Yemeni people, generation after generation, have been using henna on a broad scale in most regions of Yemen. Henna trees are growing in many parts of the country. Yemeni women remain the greatest utilizers of henna, as it occupies a distinguished status comparable to other makeup and

artificial cosmetics

used by women. Most Yemeni women use henna on some parts of their bodies (hand, arms and legs) on various occasions, including engagements and weddings. Henna is applied solely by other specialized women, who from time to time create innovative shapes and designs to attract

new customers.

Hairdressers, in recent years, especially in major cities, do the henna-work on brides on the eve of wedding night. This habit is also common in the Gulf region and Arab Peninsula. The henna tree is truly a tree worth taking care of.



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