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Yemen unlikely to reach MDGs: UNDP

BY WALID AL-SAQQAF
MOHAMMED AL-JABRI

Sana'a, 17 Oct (YT) – The Human Development Report 2005 launched in Sana'a has criticized the slow pace of development in Yemen and ranked it among the poorest countries in the world. According to the report, Yemen

is still one of the poorest countries in the world, even with ongoing efforts to reduce poverty. In a population of 19.7 million people, 43 percent are living under the poverty rate, which is US\$2 per day.

Yemen is unlikely to reach most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set for 2015 in the current

progress rate, according to the United Nations Development Program. Flavia Pansieri, Resident Representative of UNDP in Yemen, expressed her disappointment in Yemen's development pace during a ceremony held today in Sana'a to launch the Human Development Report 2005, which ranked Yemen at 151, two points lower than last year's ranking.

In the event, which also marked the International day for the Eradication of Poverty, a special emphasis was made on Yemen's need to catch up with other Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that have demonstrated a faster development rate in the last few years.

The Yemeni government however, indicated that this year's slower development pace of Yemen was partly blamed by several factors including insufficient donor support to the country. Yemen's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Ahmed Mohammed Sofan said that despite the growing need to overcome many challenges facing Yemen since

unification, donor support in the form of loans and donations was much lower than expected, resulting in a slower pace in development.

"In the 1980s, the total amount of annual donor support to former South and North Yemen ranged between 600 and 700 million US dollars. Today, and despite an ever growing need because of populations growth and many other factors, donor support fell drastically to about 350 million US Dollars," he said.

This view was also shared by Flavia Pansieri, Resident Representative of UNDP in Yemen, who said that the per capita aid received by Yemen is just over a third of the average received by Least Developed Countries (LDCs). "Hence, even moving towards the international average would more than double the amount of aid Yemen receives," Flavia said. She called upon donor representatives, who attended the ceremony launching this year's report, to increase their aid to Yemen towards developmental purposes.

Continued on page 3

141 Sudan	0.512	56.4	59.0 ^z
142 Congo	0.512	52.0	82.8 ^k
143 Togo	0.512	54.3	53.0
144 Uganda	0.508	47.3	68.9 ^k
145 Zimbabwe	0.505	36.9	90.0 ^k
LOW HUMAN DEVELOPMENT			
146 Madagascar	0.499	55.4	70.6
147 Swaziland	0.498	32.5	79.2
148 Cameroon	0.497	45.8	67.9
149 Lesotho	0.497	36.3	81.4
150 Djibouti	0.495	52.8	65.5 ^{k,l}
151 Yemen	0.489	60.6	49.0 ^k
152 Mauritania	0.477	52.7	51.2
153 Haiti	0.475	51.6	51.9 ^k
154 Kenya	0.474	47.2	73.6
155 Gambia	0.470	55.7	37.8 ^{k,l}
156 Guinea	0.466	53.7	41.0 ^{aa}
157 Senegal	0.458	55.7	39.3
158 Nigeria	0.453	43.4	66.8 ^k
159 Rwanda	0.450	43.9	64.0



Saddam defiant as trial starts

BY REUTERS, AP,
& MOHAMED KHIDR
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

BAGHDAD- Oct. 19- The former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein stood trial on Wednesday for allegedly committing crimes against humanity. He has been suspected of ordering the killing of over 140 shiites that could carry the death penalty if he is convicted.

When the trial began, the former Iraqi leader defiantly stood and asked the presiding judge "who are you? I want to know who you are."

"I preserve my constitutional rights as the President of Iraq," Saddam Hussein said. "I do not recognize the body who has authorized you and I do not recognize this aggression...I do not respond to all this so-called court with due respect."

Saddam, wearing a dark jacket over an open-necked shirt, entered the court shortly before proceedings got under way just after noon in Baghdad (0900 GMT).

The court was presided over by a five-judge panel, headed by Rizgar Mohammed Amin, a Kurd, sitting on dais looking down on the defendants, who were in white metal pens on a marble floor. The scales of justice hung

on the wall behind the judges.

Prosecutors will try to show that Saddam, in retaliation for the botched assassination attempt, ordered his henchmen to hunt down, torture and kill scores of men from the town where the attack took place, on that day and in the years that followed.

The defense is expected to petition the judges for an adjournment saying it has not had enough time to prepare for the trial and arguing that the court, established during the U.S. occupation in 2003, is illegitimate.

The opening hearing may last just hours, however, before the trial is adjourned, possibly for weeks or months. Saddam's lawyer, who said his client was in good spirits on the eve of the trial, is seeking a delay to allow more time to prepare.

Iraq's government, led by long-time enemies of Saddam and looking for popularity ahead of elections in December, hopes the trial will boost the morale of Iraqis struggling against the hardships of the insurgency 2-1/2 years after the war began.

Human rights groups have expressed unease about perceptions of "victor's justice", warning that the trial must not only be fair, but be seen to be fair, and



Saddam Hussein appears before a tribunal in Baghdad in this July 1, 2004 file photo. Reuters

raising concerns about the legitimacy of a body set up during U.S. occupation.

The eyes of the world are on the trial, which is being televised with a 20-minute delay, not just to capture the moment that Saddam stands in the dock, but to watch whether Iraq under its new leadership can fairly try its deposed ex-dictator. Security at the court was extraordinarily tight.

If found guilty, Saddam could face

death by hanging and according to new statutes governing the tribunal, any sentence would have to be carried out within 30 days of all appeals being exhausted. That means Saddam could be executed before being tried for other crimes such as genocide.

While the former president's day in court has been long awaited by millions of Iraqis and others, it may not last long.

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Plan to fight bird flue

BY AMEL M. AL-ARIQI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

SANA'A - Oct. 17 – The general manager of live stock in the Ministry for Agriculture, Dr. Ghalab Al-Ariany, stated yesterday that many dead immigrant birds has been found at the coast of Hadramut. The cause of the dead birds are still unclear, but the ministry is investigating the incident.

This statement came after the urgent meeting chaired by the minister of Public Health and Population, Dr Mohamed Yahya al-Naamy, and attended by the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, Hassan Suweid, and members of the technical committee with officials and specialists from both ministries. Yemen has laid out a national emergency plan in order to confront the bird flu world crisis. The plan has already been approved by the Yemeni council of ministers to face the bird flu and limit its entrance into Yemeni territories via land, air and sea ports.

In its last session, the cabinet listened to a report dealing with the measures taken by concerned parties to protect people from this virus. The cabinet ordered the Ministries of Health and Agriculture to form an operation room for this matter, regarding banning of the import of all kinds of birds, intensification of monitoring of water stations of migrating birds to prevent them from bringing Yemen the dreaded bird flu that has appeared in a number of countries including some Middle East regions. Since Yemen hosts many species of migrants birds which may carry on the virus, therefore the cabinet asked the local authority of

the coastline cities to prevent hunting birds and check if migrated birds bear the disease.

The meeting called for increased media interest on the matter to enlighten people about the epidemic, the way it spreads, and how to avoid contamination.

There are 15 types of bird flu. The type currently causing concern is the deadly strain called H5N1. Even within the H5N1 strain, variations are seen, and slightly different strains are being seen to have different effects. Migrating wildfowl, notably wild ducks, are natural carriers of the viruses, but are unlikely to actually develop an infection. Domestic birds are particularly susceptible in epidemics.

Bird flu was thought to only infect birds until the first human cases were seen in Hong Kong in 1997. Humans catch the disease through close contact with live infected birds. Birds excrete the virus in their faeces, which dries, becomes pulverised, and is then inhaled.

Symptoms are similar to other types of flu – fever, sore throats and coughs. People can also develop conjunctivitis. Researchers are now concerned because scientists who studied a case in Vietnam found out that the virus can affect all parts of the body, not just the lungs. This could mean that many illnesses, and even deaths, thought to have been caused by something else, may have been due to the bird flu virus. A case in Thailand indicated the probable transmission of the virus from a girl who infected her mother, who also died. The girl's aunt, who was also infected, survived the virus.

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Women Forum concerned

SANA'A - Oct. 19 -The women forum for training and study, issued the following communiqué with their colleague Nabeel Al-Sofi last Friday.

"The women forum watches with concern what is happening to journalist

Nabeel Al-Sofi, Editor in chief of the News Yemen website. Al-Sofi faces fierce attacks, threats and defamation from Sheikh Zindani and his office aides, who lack tolerance and do not believe in freedom of speech."

Endowments Manager dismissed

SANA'A - Oct. 19 - Last week, Mr. Abdulgadir Hilal, Headramot governor, dismissed the governate endowments manager, Sheikh Abdurrahman Al-Jafry, and Sheikh Mohamed Ahmed was appointed in his place. The dismissal came after a dispute over the standard time for praying, called Athan time, in the governate.

The problem started when a committee of astronomers, appointed by the authorities, issued a standard time table for the Athan time. The time table was sent to endowment office to be circulated to all mosques, with an order to monitor those who disobeyed. Sheikh Al-jafry did not circulate it, as the timetable contradicted another one that was issued by some Sofi clerics. The Governor was offended by this behavior and ordered his discharge.

Sheikh Al-Jafry says that the time table was not approved by the Tareem cler-



ics group, whom he thinks have experience when it comes to the beginning of prayer time. The decision concerning the Athan time has become a problem to the people in the governate, because of the diversity in creeds and religious ideologies.

2005 Eid Festival launched

SANA'A - Under the patronage of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the 2005 Eid Festival was launched last Tuesday at the Sana'a Expo Center. The festival was launched with the aim to fulfill all the family needs for the Eid.

Omar al-Nihmi, Marketing Manager at the Apollo Company for

International Exhibitions, the organizing company, said that the exhibition includes participants from Egypt, Iran, Syria, China and Yemen, as well as some Arab countries that offer the best of products with suitable prices.

The exhibition covers men's wear, make-up, women's wear, perfumes, and shoes.

Humanitarian principals in Islamic Sharia

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Taiz - Oct. 18 - The International Red Cross and the Yemeni Red Crescent organized a symposium on the humanitarian principals in Islamic Sharia. The symposium was held in Al-Saeed hall for Culture and Sciences, and an International Law and Human Rights Center in Yemen was declared open.

Mr. Mohamed Ahmed Al-ansi, deputy Taiz Governor, praised the ICRC's efforts for promoting principals of rights and justice and protecting human rights in war and peace. Mr.

Martin Amacher, head of the ICRC delegation in Sana'a, said that preservation of human rights during armed conflicts is a very complicated issue. He praised the pioneer role of Islamic Sharia in supporting human rights, and said it was important that agents and legislators meet in order to activate the independent humanitarian factors according to Sharia. He also expressed his concern over human rights abuses whether committed by individuals, states or groups.

Shawqi Alqadhi, member of the human rights committee in the Parliament, said that the humanitarian

Teachers protest against government

SANA'A - Oct. 14 - The Yemeni Teachers Syndicate (YTS) distributed a statement last Friday calling on teachers all over the republic to reject all the governmental procedures associating with the implementation of the new wages and salaries.

In the statement, the YTS claimed that it gave the government a chance till the end of current October. Otherwise, teachers will resort to escalating their protests and objections that are ensured by the law.

The statement reads, "We expect the government officials to take into account the sufferings and hardships endured by citizens, among them teachers and educators, because of tragic situations of living and the skyrocketing prices that exacerbated after the implementation of the prohibitive price dose."

"The government should retreat from its oppressive moves in approving the wages and salary law No. 43 for the year 2005. It should stop its illegal procedures in canceling the accumulative entitlements acquired by employees, including teachers and workers in the educational field, who are covered by previous laws, particularly the Teacher and Educational Professions Law No. 37 issued in 1998. The Teachers and Educational Professions Law distinguished teachers and educators from others, acknowledging the hard role they play in educating children," the statement said.

The teacher's call for non-cancellation of the Teacher and Educational Professions Law should be considered in the payment of work, and in an entitlement that should not be less than

50% of the salary. Secondly, workers in the educational field should be covered by the new law as well as labeled against good posts to help them cope with their current situations.

The third of the teachers' demands is a wage based on fair criteria. The government should put the law in effect according to certain phases and this should be accompanied by the implementation of annual allowances and promotions.

Concluding their statement, teachers invited their colleagues around the republic to escalate their protests against such oppressive procedures taken by the government. They appealed to the President of the Republic to give directives to the Cabinet to be fair in its decisions and the Parliament to defend their rights, being the legislative authority.

Al-qadhi honors distinctive Yemenia agents

SANA'A - Oct. 16- In a ceremony in Taj Sheba hotel last Saturday, Captain Abdulkhaliq Alqadhi, Chair man of Yemenia airways honored a number of distinctive Yemenia agents and other leaders of the company.

During the ceremony which was attended by all the company leaders and the agents in the capital and the governorates, Mr. Alqadhi spoke of the criteria of choosing the distinctives, adding that diligence is the only true measure.



21 Somali migrants defy smugglers dead

Sana'a, 17 Oct. - Some 21 people are reported to have been killed after a group of Somali migrants on board a boat in the Gulf of Aden rebelled against the people smugglers who were transporting them. According to the Qatari news agency around 50 immigrants were on board the craft, seeking to reach the Gulf countries. When the traffickers tried to force their 'human cargo' overboard, to avoid being intercepted by the Yemeni coast guard, the

passengers refused, given the distance from the shore, and the smugglers opened fire.

Despite being unarmed, the immigrants managed to gain possession of some of the smugglers' weapons and in the ensuing battle 21 people - six crew and 15 migrants - were killed.

Last month at least 45 Somalis and Ethiopians died at sea while crossing the Gulf of Aden in an attempt to reach Yemen aboard smugglers' boats from

Somalia.

"People are drowning not because they have been denied access to protection or to the territory of Yemen, or because they fear interception at sea, but because they are desperate and at the mercy of ruthless smugglers," commented Ron Redmond, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, in Geneva.

Redmond said that four boats, carrying up to 400 Africans, had sailed from

Bossasso, in north-eastern Somalia. Off the Yemeni coast, survivors said they were told to jump into the sea and swim to the shore.

Every year, thousands of Somalis and Ethiopians fleeing poverty and, in Somalia's case, insecurity, including desperate refugees trying to escape persecution and violence, fall prey to unscrupulous traffickers in the hope of reaching Yemen, from where many seek to make their way into Europe.

Child trafficking on the rise

SANA'A - Oct. 16 - A security source in Harad, near the borders with Saudi Arabia, revealed last week to different media that a large number of children have been sent to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to be exploited as beggars.

Seven attempts of smuggling nearly 250 children had been stopped during the first week of Ramadan. The security source said that in each attempt of smuggling they found over 30 children.

"12 children did not know the motive for their being trafficked to

the Saudi territory as they are still under six years of age. Other children had some understanding of the reasons behind the smuggling, which was conducted with the knowledge of the parents," the source added.

In the final week of Sha'aban, five infiltration attempts were stopped at the Saudi border. Here, the intention was to pass 220 kids into Saudi Arabia to be exploited in beggary.

According to the security source, most of the child trafficking operations that succeed in crossing borders and reach the Saudi lands are

stopped.

He described such operations as "the organized" since they take place according to the consent of parents and smugglers. Parents are usually paid by smugglers in order to allow their children to pass into Saudi Arabia to be used for beggary.

Children who are trafficked into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are subjected to several risks during the infiltration operations, but also after their arrival where they can be subjected to diseases, and physical and sexual abuse.

Psychiatric Hospital opened in Hodeida

HODEIDA - Oct. 19 - As part of its annual celebration, the Popular Charitable Society (PCS) opened the psychiatric hospital to provide medical treatment to people who suffer from mental diseases.

The governor of Hodeida and a large number of senior officials, businessmen and district chiefs attended the event.

Chairman of the PCS, Abdulwas'e Abdulwadood, pointed out that they intended to upgrade the level of medical services at the hospital.

Before, the hospital merely consisted of rooms where people suffering from mental disorders could live. Now,

the facility has been converted into a hospital where the patients will also be examined for scientific purposes.

The PCS made sure that the new buildings were established at the hospital at the cost of 198 million riyals. Locals, business people and traders in the governate had donated some of the money, and the President of the Republic contributed 40 million riyals to the establishment of the hospital. Equipment and furniture will cost 800,000 US Dollars. To this effect, the Minister of Social Affairs and Labor has stated that he will contribute 250,000 thousand Dollars.

The Chairman of the PCS said: "In

cooperation with Hodeida University, we work hard to provide a scientific research center to study the conditions of the patients to help the hospital administration render suitable medicine and distinctive services according to the scientific methods."

The Governor of Hodeida said, that this kind of medical service is not a good deed from us, rather it is a human duty to be done by everyone.

The General Director of the Health Office in the governate ordered the endorsement of pensions for the disabled and encouraged donor organizations to extend their help to the disabled.

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 Saddam's trial will be fair?
- Yes, it will be so
- No, it won't be so
- I don't care
- I don't know

Last edition's question:

A report by UNFPA revealed that Yemen is suffering many problems. Do you think that policy makers in Yemen will take such problems in consideration?

No 85%
I don't know 8%
Yes 7%

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Job Vacancies

The Yemen LNG project involves the construction and operation of a gas pipeline, a harbour and a liquid natural gas processing plant at Balhaf which will export 6.7 million tones of LNG per annum. The project offices will be based in Sana'a and the project has an anticipated lifespan of over 20 years. Yemen LNG Company is now preparing to recruit the temporary and permanent staff who will construct and manage the project.

All candidates applying for these posts must be Yemeni nationals

Head of Human Resources Administration - Reference No. 31

Reporting directly to the HR Manager, the Head of HR Administration will have a wide-ranging and challenging remit within Yemen LNG Company.

Duties will include the development of the company's compensation and benefits policy, the selection, implementation and operation of the electronic HR management system, the establishment and supervision of the Payroll section and the provision of a cost control service for all HR activities. Supervising a team of 7 employees, the incumbent will also manage the induction and administration of Yemeni national and expatriate staff, and will play a major role in the development of a proactive and effective internal communications and employee relations service. The management and supervision of the company's medical support programme and the development of the employee savings plan will be additional significant responsibilities, and the incumbent will also participate in and maintain the results from the YLNG Company job evaluation process.

The ideal incumbent will be a mature individual with a minimum of 10 years' experience of HR or senior-level administration responsibilities within a multinational organisation. Candidates aged 35 or below are unlikely to possess the experience and personal attributes necessary for the post

Deadline: Monday, 31 October 2005

Community Liaison Officer - Reference No. 030

Construction at the Balhaf LNG terminal site has now begun, and Yemen LNG Company (YLNG) is committed to maintaining excellent relations with local communities. A vacancy now exists for a Community Liaison Officer, based in Balhaf area, in Shabwa Governorate, will coordinate relations with all affected local parties in the vicinity of the site. The Community Liaison Officer will report to and act under the guidance of the YLNG Sustainable Development Manager in Sana'a, and will also liaise closely with the YLNG Project Team Site Representative.

This is a demanding and intensive role, and during at least the first six months of the project, an active presence on site is required. Accordingly, the incumbent will be required to work a rota of 3 weeks on site and one week of leave during this period. The subsequent work cycle will be determined in due course.

Specific responsibilities for the post will include the collection of accurate data on the vicinity, and the discussion with local communities of mutually beneficial, sustainable solutions to local issues. The job holder will also meet regularly with local authorities to foster good will and support for all project activities and to establish a meaningful dialogue. Additional essential duties will involve the presentation of YLNG Project Team needs to local communities, and to governmental representatives. The ideal candidate will have extensive knowledge of the Balhaf region, and previous experience of devising and implementing sustainable community projects, especially small scale economic enterprises. The ability to live and work in relatively isolated environments while meeting company and project deadlines, and proven data collection and report writing skills are essential qualities.

Deadline: Thursday, 27 October 2005

All applicants for these positions must have excellent IT skills including extensive experience of Microsoft Office systems. Fluency in written and spoken Arabic and English are essential, and candidates will be tested to assess their current level and training needs.

Applicants should send their CV with a short covering letter explaining why they believe they are qualified for the post either to the address below, or by e-mail to HR@YEMENLNG.COM.YE

The Human Resources Department
Yemen LNG Company
P.O. Box 15347
Sana'a, Yemen

Candidates selected for interview will be contact by Yemen LNG. Please send your CV once only and do not telephone to discuss your application.

Continued from page 1

Yemen unlikely to reach MDGs: UNDP

However, Pansieri also criticized the Yemeni government's distribution of funds on different sectors, which in her view has contributed to the continuing decline in the developmental pace. She gave some key suggestions to improve performance such as the reduction of expenses on defense and other sectors that do not have a relevant affect on development and instead, and allocate more funding for social sectors related to development such as health and education. She said that by allocating only 1.3% of GDP to public health expenditures, while military expenditure accounts for over 7% of GDP, "Yemen is investing precious resources away from development." But Deputy Prime Minister Sofan noted in his speech at the event that security comes hand in hand with development and should also be given priority, somewhat implicitly denying any excessive spending on security or inefficient allocation of donors' funds.

The government of Yemen is fully aware of the challenges that remain ahead and it has issued Millennium Development Goals Report (MDGR) in 2003 and PRSP progress report in 2005 highlighting openly these constraints. These reports detail the gap between intentions and results on the ground.

The MDGR states that Yemen is unlikely to reach most MDGs based on recent rates of progress. Ms. Flavia Pansieri said that the report correctly highlights the importance of reducing inequality in order to ensure that the benefits of growth indeed reach the poor. The issue of Yemeni workers in the region was also noted by Pansieri who encouraged the free movement of labor from Yemen, which "would be most helpful in absorbing an ever increasing pool of surplus labour, as well as providing the country with remittances". Pansieri expressed the need to not interpret these results as a reverse of the development in the country. However, she underlined the fact that progress in Yemen is getting slower by the year compared to many other low development countries. She noted that Yemen's "pace of improvement in HDI has declined from an average annual rate of 2.2% in the 1990-1995 period to 1.6% between 95 and 2000 and to only 1.3% per year from 2000 to 2003."

The Human Development Report for 2005, which was officially released last month, ranked Yemen at the 151st position from 177 countries, two points lower than last year's rank. This decline was not salvaged by efforts that were mentioned in the official media and

were supposedly exerted by the Yemeni government to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals, which were centered on the reduction of poverty. With a per capita GDP of USD 800, Yemen is the poorest country in the Middle East and is one of the poorest in the world. It has suffered from tremendous socio-economic challenges that intensified after unification in 1990 and has more than 40% of its fast growing population below the poverty line and suffers from high malnutrition, unemployment and lack of adequate basic services in vast parts of the country. Despite some efforts in economic and political reforms, the living standard in Yemen, which has the highest population growth rate (3.45%) in the world after Gaza strip, has also been dropping slowly in the last few years.

The launch of the report coincided with the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, under the theme of "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): Empowering the poorest of the Poor."

On this occasion of Ms. Flavia said, "Today is the international day for the eradication of poverty. It is therefore a good opportunity to launch the UNDP Human Development report 2005(HDR), because poverty has a

major impact in preventing progress in human development. Poverty affects people in its various forms, from income poverty to poverty of opportunities, and robs them of the chance to lead a fruitful and fulfilling life."

Launched prior to the World Summit in New York last month, this UNDP report was presented to a large number of world leaders to assess the human costs as a result of the failure to achieve the goals of combating extreme poverty and the avoidance of deaths that can be prevented during the following ten years.

The report called for swift and dramatic changes in global aid, trade and security policies to fulfill the promises made by the international community when world leaders gathered in New York to address these problems five years ago.

The report also stressed the need for international cooperation to achieve the MDGs by 2015, address inequalities in both policies and priorities, and promote international aid, trade and security as interconnected pillars for progress to be made at all development and humanitarian fronts. The report warned that incomplete provisions would not be sufficient to make a real difference in people's lives.

Saddam defiant as trial starts

Sources close to the tribunal say the case may be quickly adjourned so the judges, partly trained in Britain over the past year, can study defense motions for a dismissal or delay.

Saddam, 68, may not speak other than to confirm his name when charges are read out. At a pre-trial hearing in July last year he defiantly gave his occupation as "president of Iraq".

In a statement posted on the Internet on Tuesday, people calling themselves members of the Baath Party urged Saddam's followers to rise up and defy the court with gunfire.

In Baghdad and areas to the west, mortar rounds landed near U.S. military bases, and in Tikrit, Saddam's hometown, dozens of young men ral-

lied and chanted in support of the ex-president.

"The trial is unfair," said student Dawud Farham, aged 18. "They should put on trial those who are tearing apart Iraq and its people."

"Brutal crackdown"

Khalil al-Dulaimi, Saddam's chief lawyer, said on Tuesday following a visit to Saddam's detention cell that his client was calm and confident of his innocence.

An Iraqi with little experience of arguing major cases, such as those involving alleged crimes against humanity, Dulaimi has said he intends to challenge the legitimacy of the court.

The defense team has said he will

present a dossier of 122 points designed to show that the court, set up by Americans, does not have jurisdiction over Saddam and is illegal.

He will also ask for more time to study more than 800 pages of evidence collected by investigators over the past two years and which the defense team received just 45 days ago.

He may also argue that Saddam had presidential immunity.

The charges stem from events that took place on July 8, 1982, when a group of young men linked to the Shi'ite Dawa Party attempted to assassinate Saddam as his armored motorcade passed through Dujail, a town about 60 km (35 miles) north of Baghdad.

In retaliation for the botched attempt on his life, prosecutors will try to show that Saddam ordered his henchmen to hunt down, torture and kill scores of men from the town, not just immediately after that day, but in the years that followed.

Women and children were also alleged to have been forcibly removed from Dujail, taken to Abu Ghraib prison and later sent to an internment camp in the desert near the border with Saudi Arabia where many ultimately "disappeared".

Helicopters and tanks then demolished parts of the town, while Saddam's soldiers laid waste to rich farmland and fruit groves, destroying the people's homes and their livelihoods.

Plan to fight bird flu

UK virology expert, Professor John Oxford, says that these cases indicate that the basic virus can be passed between humans, and predicts that similar small clusters of cases will be seen again. Other cases also indicate that the bird flu can be passed from human to human. In 2004, two sisters died in Vietnam after possibly contracting bird flu from their brother who had died from an unidentified respiratory illness. In a similar case in Hong Kong in 1997, a doctor possibly caught the disease from a patient with the H5N1 virus - but it was never conclusively proved. Experts are concerned that this could happen. But in the Thai case, the virus was only passed to close relatives and spread no further.

In addition, it had not combined with a form of human flu. And this is

the real fear. Experts believe the virus could exchange genes with a human flu virus if a person was simultaneously infected with both. The more this double infection happens, the higher the chance that a new virus could be created and be passed from person to person.

Concern has also been raised by research which showed that the virus which caused the 1918 pandemic was a bird flu virus. Once the virus gained the ability to pass easily between humans the results could be catastrophic.

Worldwide, experts predict anything between two million and 50 million deaths. However, they say that bird flu is not a food-borne virus, so eating chicken is safe. The only people thought to be at risk are those involved in the slaughter and preparation of



meat that might be infected.

However, to be absolutely safe, the World Health Organization recommends that all meat should be cooked to a temperature of at least 70C. Eggs should also be thoroughly cooked.

Some citizens expressed their anger about the slow reaction of the ministry

after the international announcement of the spread of the disease. They feel that plans are being made, but no practical measures are being taken. They have requested that the minister establish a supervising body that can watch the work of the two ministries' committee.

Filipino meeting in Yemen

SANA'A - Oct. 10 - For four days in October, the Philippine Ambassador, Bahnamir Guinomia, visited Yemen to meet with the Filipino Community (TFCY). During his stay, the ambassador also met with officials from other Asian embassies in Yemen to strengthen the bilateral relations with the Yemen Government. The Filipino Community in Yemen had the opportunity to hold their induction of the newly elected officers for the years 2005-2007 with vice consul, Romulo Israel, Jr., who took the oath of office with the assistance of cultural attaché, Carmelita Hidalgo.



Top: Some officers of TFCY & SPY with H.E. Ambassador Bahnamir Guinomia together with Hon. Vice Consul Romulo Israel, Jr. and Cultural Attache, Carmelita Hidalgo plus Mr. Vincent Billeto. (Finance Dir. of Sheraton) at Sheraton Hotel Lobby.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV) invites Yemeni Nationals to apply for the following position:



Country Operations Assistant (COA) Duties & Responsibilities

1. Personnel-related matters:

- Maintains personnel files of all UNV-specialists assigned to the country, ensuring that all correspondence and periodic reports are properly kept.
- Keeps records of the contractual status of all serving volunteers and flags to UNV Programme Officer, follow-up actions on post extensions, renewals, and replacements.
- Maintains up-to-date leave records, and ensures that all UNV-specialists submit their leave requests well in advance to the UNDP office.
- Receives medical insurance claims from UNV-specialists for the UNDP Administrative Officer's signature, and forward these claims to the Van Breda Insurance Company.
- Ensures that inventories of personal effects of UNV-specialists are compiled, updated, and sent to UNV headquarters in a timely manner

2. Logistical Support:

- Ensures, in co-operation with the UNDP office, that all UNV-specialists arriving for the first time in country are met and accommodated.
- Accompanies UNV-specialists, if requested to do so by the UNV Programme Officer, to visit houses/apartments proposed for permanent accommodation.
- Assists UNV-specialists in opening bank accounts, as well as in completing various forms required to obtain residence permits, driving licenses, etc.
- Maintains inventories of all UNV-supplied non-expendable equipment, as well as stock-record cards for all items purchased for UNV-specialists or UNV-executed projects.
- Prepares, when required, in consultation with project manager and/or the UNV Programme officer, travel authorizations for UNV-specialists in connection with their duty related travels within the country.
- Collects travel claims from volunteers, checks for completeness, and forwards them for settlement to UNDP finance section.

Other Responsibilities:

- Drafts and types correspondence, including memoranda and notes for file.
- Performs other functions as may be assigned by the UNV Programme Officer related to the developing and administering of the UNV programme.

Qualifications

- University degree in business administration, management or accounting.
- At least five years experience in secretarial/administrative functions, preferably within the UN system.
- Fluency in Arabic and good command of English.
- Good skills in Microsoft word, Excel, access and PowerPoint are essential.

Interested candidates are requested to visit our website at: <http://www.undp.org/undp-vacancies.htm> for detailed term of reference of the position and may submit their applications indicating the title of the post applied for by mail to Human Resources Unit and response will only be made to short listed candidates. UNDP is an equal opportunity organization and female candidates are encouraged to apply.

UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448841/E-mail: registry.ve@undp.org
The deadline for receiving applications is Monday, 31st October 2005

Job Vacancy

A reputable construction company is looking for a qualified

Mechanical Engineer

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- B. Sc. Degree in Mechanical Engineering.
- English Language
- Minimum work experience of two years.

CVs should be sent with supporting documents to fax No. 409929



VACANCY Project Monitoring Officer



CARE has an immediate vacancy for a Project Monitoring Officer, based in its Sana'a Office. The person will support the programme unit in CARE's headquarters but will be expected to travel on a regular basis to field sites. The PMO will help design, implement and record site selection and base line surveys, write progress and impact reports, train field staff in M&E operations and help develop M&E systems for CARE, with particular concentration on ECHO funded projects.

Person Specification

- Good spoken English
- Excellent computer skills
- Excellent English report writing skills
- Experience in INGO operating systems
- Self motivated and able to deliver good quality work with minimal supervision
- Technical qualification in a relevant field (M&E, Agriculture, Education, civil engineering, social studies etc.)

For a detailed job description, call in at 68 Arwa School street or email care_programme@y.net.ye with the subject heading "PMO Vacancy". Application deadline (CV and a covering letter) is Wednesday 9th November 2005. Only short listed candidates will be contacted. Female candidates are encouraged to apply.

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Ramadan in Sudan

BY MOHAMED ALI ABDURRAHMAN
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

Ramadan in Sudan has its own flavor that differs from all other Islamic countries. As children we used to wait for Ramadan with great anticipation, but now as grown-ups who live outside the country, we miss it greatly because it bears the spirit of the Sudanese.

Though it is an Islamic occasion observed by all Muslims, each Islamic country has tintured it with its own environment. Sudan is not an exception in that regard, but one believes that Sudan has extracted the best of these tinctures and observed them as Islamic values.

Being a tropical country where the temperature sometimes reaches more than 40 degrees centigrade, Sudan is affected by the severe heat during Ramadan. When Ramadan comes during the hot seasons, Sudanese start their work early at dawn, especially in rural areas. People say their morning payers in their farms. They work until it gets hot and then they start going back home, where they have a slumber until the time of afternoon prayer.



Some women go to the farm with their families, and when they return, they prepare the evening meal with the help of the other female relatives.

In towns, things are a bit different. People in official establishments go to work at nine o'clock. The markets and other places also start early in the morning. Vegetables and other Ramadan requirements will be in abundance and the markets will start being crowded from ten in the morning and onwards. Ice is an important item; people start buying it from noon and one often finds big crowds at places where ice is sold during this month. One feels

the overall spirit of Ramadan in Sudan, but cannot say exactly what it is or how it feels. One is not sure whether other people than Sudanese can feel it or not.

Women in urban areas usually start preparing the Iftar (breaking the fast) meal at noon or sometimes a bit earlier, to guarantee its freshness at the time of the meal.

Mosques are always full in Ramadan. Religious sites of sufi leaders and others are also full of followers and their number increases near the advent of Eid alfitr (the celebration of the end of Ramadan). Sufi songs, which are known in the Arabian world as Tawsheeh, are often practiced in the nights of Ramadan, accompanied by drums and 'dofs'. Children and elders in rural areas used to gather around old storytellers, an event that is now replaced by radio and television. Others play cards and other sorts of games to late in the night. As for women in rural areas, they gather in houses and chat until it is dinnertime.

In urban areas, TV has dominated the life, though some habits still remain. Social clubs and sport clubs organize card playing contests that continue to the end of the month, but Sufi and other religious groups who oppose this trend, are still immune to that habit.

An old Sudanese habit is to share their meals in Ramadan. All neighbors bring their food together in a certain area, so that guests and those who have no food can take their meal. Older people strongly believe that it is a religious commitment. This habit still occurs during Ramadan, especially

in rural areas and most of the regional towns. During the whole month, one will rarely find people who have their meals inside their houses. All along the roads, people sit around their meals feasting together. Passers-by are happily invited to stay and have their iftar meal. One admits that the invitations are so warm that one cannot say no. The authorities lately adopted this tradition, and massive iftar feasts are held in parks and open areas for all people.

Ramadan starts earlier prior to its actual advent and one's attention will be drawn to its beginning almost two months earlier by the smell of the spe-



cial Sudanese drink called "Abraih" or "hilo mor". This drink, which is especially prepared for Ramadan is a Sudanese brand that no other nation shares with them. Though no one knows exactly who and when it was invented, it is nationwide used. It might be an invention of the Sufi sites or another of its schools that most of the Sudanese used follow. Presumably, it was introduced to people who came from long travels in hot weather. It is well-known that drinking water after a long period of thirst harms the health, and to prevent this sickness, one should in stead be given a mixture of any durra paste. The drink hilo mor might have been invented in these eras. There are two types of hilo mor; the white and the brown one, the white being the most famous one.

The components of this durra drink differ, but they are agreed upon in the different parts of the county.

The 'hilo mor' is an Arabic word that means sweet and sour and is a good description to this queer drink that has a mixture of both tastes. Sudan is famous for its hot weather and this drink has a special ability to eliminate thirst, though other drinks are used as well.

The recipe of this drink contains durra and different kinds of spices, among others cumin dry parsley, cinnamon and ginger. The preparation of hilo mor starts with soaking the durra to make a malt. This takes several days. Another amount of durra is then ground and made into paste. The

housewife scrapes the paste and gathers all the neighbors to help her. The house will be on alert on that day and it is an unforgettable occasion for children. Women take turns on scraping on a hot plate. It used to be a special round piece of pottery but recently a metal plate has replaced it. The thin sheets of wafers of hilo mor are dried on mats of palm leaves, and are afterwards packed in cartons.

Sudanese are determined that an amount of this hilo mor should be given to their relatives who are away from them, even those who are abroad. Another

recent habit is the exchange of hilo mor between families whose sons are newly engaged.

Ramadan is not a season for idleness and relaxation, as it is the case in our normal behavior. The true meaning of Ramadan is to help the individual to control his primitive instincts and to consider freedom of others. It is obvious that animals have no consideration to others and human beings have this animal legacy. Religions, and Islam in particular, aim at humanizing the behavior. This will be through taming the harsh instincts, and by breaking the grip of habit. This cannot be enforced by law, but by strengthening the will. We notice that taming an animal, a horse for instance, is not easy if it is well fed and strong. People tend to weaken and then tame animals. Fasting weakens the body and gives a chance for the mind to dominate. What about the rest of the year? some could argue. The momentum of Ramadan remains for sometime and perfect prayer takes the lead, until next Ramadan.

All this has to do with the teachings of the Sufi belief in Sudan, to which the spread of Islam in the African countries is attributed.

A mandate to end world hunger

BY JACQUES DIOUF
DIRECTOR-GENERAL, FAO
FOR YEMEN TIMES

The relentless quest for food has moulded human history, provoking wars, driving migrations and underpinning the growth of nations. As countries began to discover each other, long-distance trading systems developed which have also had a fundamental impact on what people eat: maize, originating in Mexico, has become the staple food of much of eastern and southern Africa; tomatoes from the Andes are now essential ingredients of Mediterranean cuisine; wheat from the Middle East has become the dominant crop of North America; rice from Asia is today a major universal crop; coffee and tilapia fish from Africa are consumed worldwide; and Latin America owes most of its cattle, sheep and pig heritage to Europe and Asia.

Since World War II, the world has witnessed the most rapid and radical transformation in food production and distribution systems that has ever occurred. While forest-dwelling tribes still hunt for their food in some regions, elsewhere a single person, harnessing modern technology, may cultivate hundreds of hectares of high-yielding crops to meet the food needs of thousands of families on the other side of the globe.

Sixty years ago, on 16 October, as the Second World War just ended, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was founded out of the need for peace as well as the need for freedom from hunger, the two being interdependent as reflected in the words of the founding fathers: "Peace is essential if there is to be progress toward freedom from want."

Today, with the continued existence of world hunger - 852 million persons still suffer from chronic under-

nutrition - and increasingly frequent globalized food emergencies, it is more necessary than ever to have a global forum where consensus can be reached on the international dimensions of food security, including food production, safety, trade and consumption.

During FAO's lifetime, the planet's population has almost tripled to over six billion people. Thanks to the efforts of millions of farmers, to the creativity of scientists and to the growth of industry, trade and communications, we now produce more than enough food to feed everyone. Average daily food intake per person has risen by 23 percent since 1945. This is a remarkable achievement that has defied the prophets of disaster.

However, despite these successes, the world is still not free from hunger. The fact that hundreds of millions of our fellow humans are doomed from birth to live without enough to eat is an affront to the most basic of human rights, the right of every individual to adequate food. That obesity now ranks high on the list of global health hazards is a sad reflection of society's inability to use food in a way that maximises human benefits. That nations invest some 975 billion dollars each year in military spending and spend just under 80 billion dollars in aid which could reduce the hunger and poverty that breeds conflict confounds common sense.

As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Organization, we, at FAO, reaffirm our belief that, in the best interests of peace, a hunger-free world is possible. But it is a goal that cannot be achieved by FAO or governments working alone. FAO thus urges all who share the commitment to end hunger to work with the International Alliance Against Hunger by joining national alliances or other endeavours at local level to translate this shared vision into practical action.

Ramadan misunderstood

BY ASMA' AL-SERAJI
FOR YEMEN TIMES

While life continues to go on, people convincingly try to fit themselves with the hardness and difficulties of everyday life. Sometimes in this situations, they forget about themselves, and ignore priorities, which in reality will benefit them in this life as well as the next. People ask for special occasion to come for a chance to change one self to the better, but humans are forgettable. When they have a chance, they do not realize it. Therefore, never utilize these blessed times throughout the year.

These days, people are passing through the special month of "Ramadan". It is a precious month for Muslims, but are people aware of its real meaning? Unfortunately NO. People prepare for it in advance by buying as much food as they could. They shop so fiercely in store as if they are going through poverty and may die of hunger. They are looking for ward it to eat all the different kind of food.

What is more worrying is their behavior during the length of the day. If you happen to be passing by in streets, especially in 'Souks' (shops), you would notice things that would make you wonder and ask yourself "what's up with these people". Is this what Ramadan is all about? What happened to the practices of the prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon him) which advises us in situations of argument to say I am fasting and walk away. These days if you say that to someone he would think of it as a threat towards him. This implies that people can't control their nerves any more, and may lose their control at any moment especially before 'Iftaar'. When driving around streets, people act as if they want to eat each other from hunger. It becomes dangerous to



People rushing home in the finale minutes before fast breaking

go out in that time. Drivers are driving crazily, and people are walking carelessly as if the world will end at any moment.

All that for what? For six or seven hours of fasting! People sleep most of the day. They are afraid to feel hunger so they escape from it by staying up late 'chewing Qat', and sleep to noon. As if life stops in our country during Ramadan. It seems more like a graveyard. Employees don't go to work, students are forced to go to school, and stores open only the later part of the day.

Is that what Allah wants from us? Is this how we are supposed to act in this great month? Definitely 'No'. Ramadan is a month in which we build our relationship with Allah. We have to learn how to be tolerate, and in the

same way feel how poor people live, and what suffering they pass through. If we only sleep and eat in this valuable month as much as other months, how could we feel the difficulties that poor people around the world go through. We have to know that Allah will never change our situation until we change from within ourselves. We have to go back toward Allah with love and repentance. It is time that we ask Allah to forgive and help us.

This is the month of change, and for those who seek a change to the better, no other time would be more appropriate. In this blessed month, prayers and repentance are accepted more than any other. We just hope that people utilize these days in the best interest of themselves, furthermore looking for the gifts of both lives before its too late.

Invitation for Bid

Ministry of Local Administration announces its bid No 8/2005 for establishing information program system in the Ministry's premises and local Governances as stated in the Terms and Specifications book.

Documents for this bid can be purchased from Store and Purchase department in the Ministry's headquarters upon payment of non-refundable fees of YR100,000.

The following documents are required for identification:

1. 2.5% preliminary bid security by a check valid for 90 days from the date of tender opening and free of terms. Any inconsistent bids will be cancelled.
2. Local companies should attach a copy of qualification certificate valid for 2005.
3. Local companies should attach tax card valid for 2005.
4. Local companies should attach insurance card valid for 2005.
5. Local companies should attach Zakat card valid for 2005.
6. Prices of units should be written in letters in their respective places in Quantity tables. Any inconsistency will result in canceling the bid at envelop opening session.
7. Closing date will be 30 days starting with publishing this advertisement in Althorah, 14th October or Yemen Times newspaper.
8. Foreign companies should have a legal representative office in Yemen.

After vote, Iraqi Sunnis at crossroads

BAGHDAD (Reuters) - Iraq's disaffected Sunni Arab minority finds itself at a crossroads of sorts after taking part in large numbers for the first time in a free election.

Tempting the Sunnis further toward politics and away from revolt will take skilful bargaining by other Iraqi leaders — and U.S. diplomats trying to stifle a budding civil war.

The likely "Yes" result in Saturday's constitutional referendum may prompt an upsurge in violence; but the vote has also forged a Sunni political movement that, for the first time, will fight its corner in a parliamentary election in December.

Some in Saddam Hussein's once dominant community complained on Monday that indications the new constitution looked set to be ratified were proof of electoral fraud, abetted by the United

amendments peacefully in the next parliament.

"We expect the constitution to be ratified and this is not the issue," said Fakhri al-Qaisi of the National Dialogue.

"Now we are concentrating on the next election because I believe a real presence for the nationalist forces in the next parliament will restore balance and serve the Iraqi people."

Ballots and bullets

There may be elements of a deliberate twin-track approach — violence and politics — to secure concessions for the 20 percent minority; but U.S. officials, trying to extract their troops from Iraq while leaving behind some sort of stability, are encouraged by the Sunnis' new participation in politics.

With partial results showing an overall

manipulates things in Mosul and lets the constitution pass the next thing will be general strikes, demonstrations and an increase in military operations."

Toby Dodge of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London said that showed some insurgents, if not the radical Islamist fringe, tacitly backed the political process.

"This is incredibly important as it means that those deploying violence are doing so for political reasons and can be brought into the process by clever diplomacy," he said.

"It is the responsibility of those in the Green Zone (government compound), especially the U.S. ambassador, to make the most of this window of opportunity,"

he said.

Some Sunni political leaders have offered to mediate in direct talks between the Americans and insurgents. Washington insists it will not bargain with "terrorists" but has conceded that U.S. officials have had contact with militant groups.

Falluji said disillusion with Saturday's process could mean Sunnis repeating in December their boycott of January's election which left them sidelined when the constitution was negotiated:

"What is the point of this at the end of the day if they're going to fix the result?" he said, warning of mass protests.

Political players

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan conceded the referendum highlighted division rather than national solidarity: "We had hoped that the constitutional process would have been ... totally inclusive, and pull together all the Iraqis ..."

"Obviously, that did not happen and has not happened. So it is very difficult to say what happens after the votes are counted ... Would the violence cease after this process?"

"I don't think we can legitimately expect that. But at least, they have chosen to use ballots and not bullets."

Joost Hilerman of the International Crisis Group think-tank in Amman said political and military strategy were prob-

ably running in parallel for some Sunni leaders, but the high turnout in many Sunni areas showed politics was now important to them.

"They've turned themselves into political players," he said. "It shows a political posture in addition to a violent one."

"The (December) elections are more important to them ... The option of violence is not going to work," Hilerman said. "I don't think they ever thought they could defeat this constitution."

Of whether U.S.-backed talks on amending the constitution would succeed, he said: "Much will depend on the the U.S. government in brokering some agreement. And on the Shi'ites in being willing to make concessions."



States, and warned of a new wave of insurgent military action.

"They want to destroy the real result," said Hussein al-Falluji, a Sunni politician who took part in the negotiations on the constitution and rejected the final draft forced through by the Shi'ite- and Kurdish-dominated parliament. "This is why they need five days just to count the ballot papers."

"If it is proven this referendum was rigged I'm sure the security situation will get worse," Falluji told Reuters.

But, as Saddam prepares to stand trial on Wednesday for crimes against humanity, other Sunni nationalist leaders said they would accept Iraqis had said "Yes" in Saturday's referendum and would seek

"Yes" majority, ratification hinges on the "No" camp not having a two-thirds majority in three of Iraq's 18 provinces. Two Sunni provinces appear to have produced such a vote but in a third, around Mosul, it has fallen short, senior officials said.

Sunni Arabs have cried foul: "They're waiting for what's happening in Mosul," said a militant nationalist in northern Iraq who claims to speak for underground insurgent leaders.

The rebels, he said, had coordinated a general ceasefire which accounted for the relative absence of violence on polling day and was designed to ensure a big "No" vote in Sunni areas.

But he added: "If the government

EU ministers hold emergency bird flu talks

LUXEMBOURG (Reuters) - EU Foreign Ministers held emergency talks on the approaching danger of avian flu on Tuesday, as Greece investigated what could prove the first appearance of the deadly strain in an EU member.

Swiss drugmaker Roche, under pressure to increase output of its antiviral agent Tamiflu, said it would consider granting other firms licences to make the drug. Countries throughout Europe are seeing a run on the drug as alarm grows.

British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, chairing the EU meeting, said the main purpose was to reassure citizens that every precaution was being taken to prevent the avian influenza outbreak mutating into a pandemic that could kill humans.

EU foreign policy chief Javier Solana urged calm amid media reports coloured by alarm after emergence of the H5N1 strain of the virus, potentially fatal to human beings, in birds in Turkey and Romania.

"I don't think we have to enter into panic," Solana said.

Greece was testing a bird found on the tiny eastern Aegean island of Inousses to establish if the virus it bore was the deadly H5N1 strain found in nearby Turkey and Romania.

Greek Agriculture Minister Evangelos Basiakos said he had already ordered an export ban on all poultry products from

the area in agreement with the European commission.

"As a purely precautionary measure we have... imposed an export ban of living poultry, meat and other poultry products from the region of Chios to other areas, the EU member states and third countries," Basiakos said.

Fear for the island

Scientists fear if the birdflu virus, which originated in Asia, were to pass on any large scale from birds to humans it could mutate into a variety that could spread between humans. In a virulent form, they say, this could kill millions worldwide.

No human cases of the virus have been found in Europe.

The World Health Organization has expressed fears that alarm in Europe could distract attention from what is the real seat of the danger in southeast Asia. More than 60 people have died of the disease in Asia where, by contrast to Europe, people often live close to poultry and are exposed to a greater peril.

Media coverage of the approach of bird flu, which scientists believe is being borne over Europe by birds migrating to Africa for the winter, has been coloured by more than a hint of panic in several countries. In Bulgaria, which neighbors Romania and Turkey where the deadly form of the virus has been found,



newspapers have declared "hysteria".

Sofia has urged calm but is preparing a national crisis headquarters and stepping up border controls and surveillance of poultry farms and wetlands near its Danube River boundary — seen as a major conduit for migrating birds.

Romania's agriculture minister said the country had detected new cases of suspected bird flu in the Danube delta, one of them close to the border with

Ukraine. Tests were being carried out to see whether it was the H5 virus, of which H5N1 is one of the deadly sub-strains.

Croatia has also started testing dead birds found by citizens.

Greece, however, was the focus of attention on Tuesday, where results of tests for the H5N1 virus were awaited.

Greeks went in large numbers to chemists to obtain vaccine, causing a shortage in jabs.

People on the island of Inousses, where the suspect bird was found, were invaded by media. The farmer who alerted authorities after seeing turkeys fall ill said he feared for his island.

"Yes I am concerned, but not just for me but for all the people here," Dimitris Komninaris told reporters. "But everyone on the island is keeping calm."

The H5N1 strain first emerged in Hong Kong in 1997, when it caused the death or destruction of 1.5 million birds. Eighteen people fell ill, of whom six died.

It re-emerged in 2003 in South Korea and has spread to China, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, Turkey and Romania. H5N1 has infected 117 people in four countries and killed 60, according to the WHO.



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Words of Wisdom



The Republic of Yemen cannot afford to develop on the basis of the traditional snail-pace growth rate. We need a strong force and zeal to address such grave issues as excessively high population growth rates, rapid depletion of water resources, corruption and mismanagement, etc.

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

OUR
OPINIONMedia monopoly
& development

In most developed countries there are more than one independent Television channel and many independent radio stations. Such verity of media allows the public opinion to be formed objectively and enhances awareness of the people. Having independent TV and radio channels are most important for a country like Yemen because majority of the population watches TV or listens to the radio rather than reading newspapers or checking the internet, due to the high rate of illiteracy.

The daily routine of a rural family in Yemen, for example, habitually includes time for listening to the radio, whether while the woman of the house is going about her chores or the farmer working in the field accompanied by his small battery radio. Laborers and handicraft workers in the city also dedicate time in their daily routine to listening to the radio and all Yemeni families who are able to, watch TV.

However with government's control over such vital mass communication tool it becomes almost impossible for the people especially those uninvolved politically to have an objective idea regarding the issues of their country. The official media is used to convey the government's point of view and to polish the leadership's image regardless of facts. This causes a misunderstanding on the public's part; hence it keeps them in total isolation and hinders their awareness and in turn development process. All Yemeni broadcast services are controlled by the government and there several restrictions to independent or opposition media. This monopoly has a direct relationship with corruption as this monopoly of the media hinders accountability or responsibility.

In spite of the government's understanding that opening media channels for non-official broadcasts would accelerate the development process and enforce transparency and good governance, the government continues to monopolize the media and lays down several restrictions on print media which only reaches an elite minority of the population. However the rise of pan-arab media and regional TV networks can become the resort of the rising opposition which is bound to find communication means that would reach the Yemeni people regardless of the government's monopoly, making this policy to media monopoly nothing but a prime obstacle of the nations' development.

Nadia Al-Sakkaf
Editor-in-Chief



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by Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf

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The politics
of frustration

By RALF DAHRENDORF

Does extreme poverty breed violence and ultimately revolution? Many people believe that it does, and seek to explain phenomena ranging from guerrilla insurgencies to Islamist terrorism accordingly.

But Karl Marx and Alexis de Tocqueville, the two great social analysts of the nineteenth century, knew better what makes people tick, and what makes societies change. Extreme poverty breeds apathy, not rebellion. The very poor can at most be used for occasional demonstrations of anger, but they are not the stuff from which either terrorists or revolutionaries are made.

A far more critical group in any society are those who have begun to move forward to new conditions, but then find their path blocked. Their desires and ambitions are not unrealistic in the circumstances, but they are frustrated. Things do not move as fast as they want them to, or not at all, owing to conditions that they do not control. Opportunities exist, but they cannot be seized or realized.

This group, not the desperately poor and helpless, forms the great mobilizing force of violent protest, and ultimately of major change.

The politics of frustration has been particularly apparent in the postcommunist world during the last fifteen years. The heavy hand of *nomenklatura* rule was gone, and the vision of a new life like that in the open societies of the West seemed real. Yet, in fact, things initially got worse. The route to prosperity and freedom was not straightforward. On the contrary, it led through a valley of tears.

People reacted in a variety of ways. Those who had the chance migrated, first to their homeland's centers of economic progress, then abroad, to coun-

tries and places where the new world could be found immediately. Those who stayed behind began to vote in strange ways – electing, for example, the successors of the old Communist parties that they had been glad to get rid of only a few years before.

The European Union, for all its weaknesses, has helped the postcommunist countries of Eastern and Southeastern Europe immensely. It made the valley of tears bearable both by offering financial and other assistance and by holding out the promise of membership and economic prosperity in the near future. Equally important, had the EU not supported the creation of an administrative and social infrastructure of liberty, there might well have been a more serious communist or even fascist backlash in Poland, Hungary, and elsewhere.

While the politics of frustration was thus controlled in the postcommunist world, it broke out with a vengeance in the Islamic world. Here, too, the phenomenon was not new. With the onset of modernization, millions of people were uprooted from their traditional communities and ways of life. Young men, in particular, saw the prospect of a life more like that presented to them by Western television.

But they soon discovered that realizing this prospect would require a longer and more arduous journey than they had anticipated. In fact, it would take at least a generation, during which much of the effort of modern life would have to be made, while the fruits of this effort would remain elusive.

Earlier generations may have borne the burden of working and waiting more readily, but nowadays people want results here and now. If the benefits do not come quickly – and for most people they do not – they get restless. The massive migration processes that have only just begun will be the major issue of the coming decades. Particularly in Africa,

migration will be almost the only quick route to modernization.

Those who do not manage to get to other countries, or who fail in the countries to which they have migrated, are in a quandary. For them, the old world of traditional ties and customs is gone, but the new world of modernity remains out of reach. They are lost in a limbo of uncertainty and disappointment.

It has been argued that this was one of the problems of “belated nations” like Germany a hundred years ago. Seductive leaders (Hitler among them) exploited the resulting sense of frustration. Whatever the value of such theories, it is evident that the frustration of young people's ambitions in modernizing countries makes them the object of preachers of hate and tempts them to leave the course of plodding progress and turn to more dramatic action.

What we call “terrorism” has many causes, and one must beware of facile explanations. However, the politics of frustration, of ambitions raised and then thwarted, is clearly one such cause.

It is thus also a challenge to those of us living in more fortunate circumstances. If we do not wish to be submerged in violence and authoritarian responses to it, international institutions must do for the modernizing world what the EU has managed to do for the postcommunist countries. For the world's democracies, there is no greater or more important task.

Ralf Dahrendorf, author of numerous acclaimed books and a former European Commissioner from Germany, is a member of the British House of Lords, a former Rector of the London School of Economics, and a former Warden of St. Antony's College, Oxford.

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The boom of Germany's
pathological export

By HANS-WERNER SINN

Germany is the world's industrial bazaar. No other country can offer its international clients such a broad variety of industrial products. Germany has 450 hidden world champions for niche products, and is home to 15 of the 20 biggest trade fairs in the world. It is also the world's top exporter of merchandise and the second-largest exporter of goods and services.

But Germany is gradually becoming a bazaar economy in a different sense, because nowadays it specializes in packaging and selling its products, while outsourcing an ever-larger share of its high value-added manufacturing to low-wage countries. In other words, Germany's role in the world economy is shifting from that of a producer to that of a merchant. As a result, its exports contain an ever-increasing share of imported goods and services and the share of domestic value-added in its exports per unit of output is rapidly declining.

This does not mean that the German-made share of exports is falling in absolute terms. It only means that the total volume of German exports has been rising faster than the total German value-added in those exports.

Is this good or bad? A favorable assessment cannot rest on the fact that the overall German value-added in exports has been growing because this is simply an effect of the German specialization in export-related production. When a country specializes in a certain area, capital and labor move into that area at a rate faster than they move into other areas – indeed, the growth of export-related sectors may come at the cost of a decline in other areas. Simply put, there is such a thing as excessive

specialization.

To assess whether excessive specialization has occurred in Germany, we must focus on the labor market, for it is here that the effect of specialization is most visible. Unfortunately, there is no reason to be optimistic. From 1995 to 2004, Germany lost a total of 1.09 million full-time equivalent jobs in manufacturing and trade. At the same time, no new jobs were created in the rest of the economy. On the contrary, employment outside manufacturing and trade declined, so that the economy as a whole suffered a net loss of 1.26 million full-time equivalent jobs.

In fact, since the fall of communism, the percentage decline in German industrial employment has been larger than in any other OECD country. In part, this was due to the decline in the former East Germany. But even western Germany holds the second-lowest rank of all developed countries.

The automobile and electrical engineering industries have been at the forefront of the bazaar economy. To remain price competitive, they have had to rely on imported components. The manufacture of electrical products, such as such as chips and passive devices, has quite often been shifted completely to Asia, while even automobiles that are still assembled in Germany rely heavily on components produced in Eastern Europe.

At bottom, the coincidence of unemployment and booming exports can be explained by the high and rigid wages from which Germany still suffers. As a consequence of its welfare state and aggressive unions, Germany has had the highest hourly labor costs in the world for most of the last twenty years; only recently has Denmark taken the lead due to a revaluation of the krona. Excessive wages destroy the labor-intensive upstream product stages too fast and

also impairs other labor-intensive sectors like textiles, simple services, tourism, and construction.

As a result, these labor-intensive sectors must release a lot of labor and capital, which push into the capital-intensive export sectors that are better able to cope with high wages. But, while these sectors therefore grow especially fast, their high capital intensity means that they cannot fully employ the released labor, with the result that some of the unemployed workers have nowhere to turn but the welfare state.

At the same time, since returns to capital are kept low by high wages, very little investment occurs. The excess of savings over investment flows abroad as capital exports. Economic growth and job creation slow, while exports soar.

Astonishingly, many interpret Germany's export boom and current-account surplus, which measures these capital exports, as an indicator of the strength of Germany as an investment location. But, according to the Bundesbank, net investment abroad (including financial investment) has already roughly matched domestic investment in recent years.

As the international division of labor proceeds further, the import content of German products will continue to increase, which means that rising exports will lead to fewer domestic jobs and less income growth. Unless and until German workers accept the need for greater flexibility in the face of global competition, export profits will continue to be invested abroad, reducing overall production costs – and reinforcing the bazaar economy at home.

Hans-Werner Sinn is Director of the IfO Institute for Economic Research in Munich.

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COMMON
SENSE

By Hassan Al-Haifi

Hussein's legacy
lives on in Jordan

If there is an Arab country that can truly boast it has progressed and made a name for itself, it is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Jordanian legacy is a true adventure in human development with a track record of ongoing success in meeting all the difficult and perplexing challenges that Jordan faced over its almost three quarters of a century as a viable independent state.

Jordan was a phenomenal display of astute management of sovereignty, notwithstanding the scarcity of its resources and the difficult political challenges faced as many of the Arab states tried to flirt with nationalist and progressive movements that got most of the Arab nation into a quagmire of defeat, failure and sheer loss of energy and resources. Yet, throughout all these years of disappointments, setbacks and frustration, Jordan somehow never forget that its people must remain resourceful, productive and advancing.

Could one ever forget that it was His Majesty the late King Hussein Bin Talal, the truly magnanimous and chivalrous monarch, who steadily and courageously guided his country and his people to a half century of ongoing human and cultural development and economic well-being? Oh, Jordan and King Hussein had their enemies all around them and no one ever was ready to envy Jordan's geographical setting amidst a sea of hostility, jealousy and greed. Nor were the animosities of a newly entrenched aggressive Zionist enemy right across the border, a whirlwind of failed Republicanism, Arabic style all around and the tragedy of having to absorb most of the victims of the birth of this new hostile neighbor, simple hurdles that just happened to bump into Jordan as it sought to find its rightful place in the international community of forward looking states. Jordan was the little peon that everyone used to think would be either swallowed up by one of its giant neighbors or gobbled up by all of them, just so Jordan would not continue to make them look ridiculous in their different surface renditions of political or sociological orientations. But, in the end it was Jordan that came out to be the shining beacon of hope and inspiration to most of the people of most of the Arab states and not just the surrounding states around Jordan. Amid all the disastrous blunders and misguided judgment of tyranny and repression, Jordan welcomed two thirds of the Palestinian refugees and told them, in true Arab hospitality style, Jordan is also your home and your country and you are just as important to us as the indigenous Jordanians. The Jordanians, monarch and people, opened their arms to their Palestinian brothers and embraced them with full citizenship and honored them by restoring their dignity after having gone through the trauma of forced relocation, death, starvation and torture. While most Arab politicians sang the word of freedom and liberty and reinstatement of the Palestinians, Jordan gave them a home, gave them a hand and most of all gave them their hearts.

How ironic and truly valorous that the weakest of Arab states had the biggest and warmest heart that spoke very little and delivered more than most of the Arabs put together. For sure, many of the Palestinians, who used to feel hostility towards the late King Hussein will realize that, if there was anyone who really cared about their plight and expressed that feeling – not with rhetoric and sob stories – but a place they can call home. In remembering all those years of agony and frustration as our leaders took the nation from one defeat to the next, one remembers how it was the Jordanians, who warned of the coming of the attack of the Israeli forces on June 6, 1967, it was the leaders, who were calling wolf, who turned out to be the lamb. The Jordanian Arab Legion, defended the City of Jerusalem house by house and block by block, fighting with their meager battle gear, compared to the Zionist enemy, who had the numbers and the equipment ... and the wolves became the disgrace of the nation lost in the deserts of Sinai, while their commanders have yet to recover from the partying and dancing of the night before. It is all history now, yes, but, we should never forget that the Jordanian troops fought to the last man for keeping what ever could be kept of the nation's honor. Otherwise, we have not given history its due and we have not done our brothers (and sisters) in Jordan the justice they deserve for all the sacrifice that Jordan gave to keep the honor of the nation upheld.

This observer could never forget that sad day in New York in the 1967 Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, when HM the late King Hussein delivered a 15 minute speech that truly underlined what the agony and frustration that had set in within the hearts of most of the Arabs, which could have been averted had mind prevailed over senseless emotions and had our leaders for once asked themselves, why am I doing what I am doing, and what good truly comes out for the people out of what I am doing? In Jordan, the Jordanians got true to the heart leadership that truly knew what needed to be done in war, but no one listened, and knew how to take the olive branch and provide the peace that the people of Jordan needed to overcome the despair and the sadness of uncalled for defeat after defeat after defeat, brought on by careless leaders, who have wasted the resources of their people and the blood of their misled youth.

With the untimely death of His Majesty King Hussein, Jordan is again blessed with young and understanding leadership. King Abdullah must have comprehended his father's visions better than anyone else, for it was based on this comprehension that the father decided to turn the challenge over to one who must continue the legacy he worked so hard to establish. Jordan understands that empty rhetoric is not the right path to success, no matter how loud it is broadcast. Success only comes with rational minds, hard work and honesty with one's self. That is the story of Jordan for close to three quarters of a century and that is the legacy of the House of Hussein. Welcome to your other home, King Abdullah, welcome to Yemen.

Saddam Hussein before the law

By RUTI TEITEL

What is at stake in the trial of Saddam Hussein, which is set to begin on October 19? Coming just four days after the referendum on Iraq's constitution and touted as a "constitutional moment" akin to the trials of Kings Charles X and Louis XVI, the proceedings are supposed to help advance Iraq's transition from tyranny to democracy. Will they?

So far, all signs suggest that the trial is unlikely to meet its ambitious aims. From the outset in postwar Iraq, criminal justice resembled deracinated constitutionalism: atomistic trials, radical purges, and compromised elections. Most egregious was the post-invasion rush to "de-Ba'athification," which eviscerated many of the country's existing institutions.

The mix of individual and collective responsibility associated with repressive regimes often creates a dilemma concerning how to deal with the old institutions. But, in Iraq, flushing out the military and the police merely left the country in a domestic security vacuum. By the time that mistake was recognized, the damage was done, needlessly sacrificing security. Moreover, potential sources of legiti-

macy in Iraq's ongoing constitutional reform, such as parliament, were also destroyed.

The lack of legitimate institutions needed to rebuild the rule of law is evident in the debate over what authority and whose judgment ought to be exercised over Saddam Hussein. Should the tribunal be national or international? This question highlights the problematic relationship of international humanitarian law to the use of force.

In the Balkans, the indictment of Slobodan Milosevic by the United Nations' International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) provided a boost to political change in the region. Regime delegitimation has become a leading function of the new permanent International Criminal Court.

But Iraq was different. Instead of recurring to an international forum, a devastating war was declared that went beyond deposing Saddam, wreaking damage on tens of thousands of civilians, and thus confounding the message of condemnation.

The origins of successor justice in the war means that the debate over its legitimacy overlaps with the broader schism over the intervention itself. So far, the UN, the European Union, and most human rights groups have not cooperated with the Iraqi Special

Tribunal (IST), owing to their opposition to the original military intervention, as well as the IST statute's authorization of the death penalty.

Ultimately, the debate over international versus national jurisdiction reflects a dichotomy that is no longer apt in contemporary political conditions, for it obscures the fact that international law is increasingly embedded within domestic law. Despite being putatively "national," the Iraq tribunal couches the relevant offenses in terms of "crimes against humanity."

But it is only now, after the war, that successor justice is being aimed at refining and consolidating the message of delegitimation and regime change. Despite its close links to the invasion, Saddam's trial is expected somehow to represent an independent Iraqi judgment, thereby constituting local accountability without exacerbating tensions and destabilizing the country further. Can it succeed?

From the start, the IST must constitute a robust symbol of Iraqi sovereignty. But its close association with the United States-led invasion leaves it vulnerable to the charge of "victor's justice." Although officially adopted in December 2003 by the Iraqi Governing Council, the IST's statute was framed under contract to the US government and approved by L. Paul



Bremer, the Coalition Provisional Authority's Administrator. The US remains the driving force behind the IST, supplying the needed expertise. For many Iraqis, it is hard to view the IST as anything other than an expression of the occupiers' will.

Indeed, the IST's close association with the US-backed establishment of a successor regime is fraught with political pitfalls. Transitional criminal justice must be broad enough to reconcile a divided Iraq, and, therefore, include Shi'a and Kurdish crimes against humanity, while it apparently must also avoid embarrassing the US or its allies, particularly regarding their extensive dealings with Saddam's

regime. But the appearance of selective or controlled justice will defeat the tribunal's purpose.

So will the specter of illiberal trial procedures – another reason for the lack of international support for the IST. The original selection of judges by what was widely viewed as a wing of the occupation exposes the tribunal to allegations of bias and partiality, as have issues regarding access and transparency for defendants and others.

Moreover, the IST statute says nothing about the standard of proof, which means that guilt does not clearly have to be established beyond a reasonable doubt. While the first set of charges concerns the well-documented killings in Dujail and elsewhere in the 1980's, Milosevic's trial by the ICTY shows that it is far more difficult to establish "superior authority," linking the killings to the leader.

According to Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, this problem has ostensibly been "solved" by means of extracted confessions. Of course, if the IST's aim is to evoke the possibility of show trials rather than bolstering the rule of law, Talabani is quite right: problem

solved.

Criminal proceedings may then be downsized to a confession of a single massacre, as subsequent trials are shelved to open the way for punishment – unlike, say, the Milosevic trial, which is now dragging into its fourth year. But rapid punishment – most likely execution – threatens to bury the full record of decades of tyranny under the apparently overriding purpose of fighting the insurgency by other means.

Saddam's trial will thus demonstrate the limits of the law in jump-starting regime transition. An intractable dilemma of transitional justice is that societies ravaged by brutal human rights legacies often appeal to the law to shore up the legitimacy of the successor regime, only to see these salutary aims subverted by the challenges and compromises that are inherent to the transition itself.

Ruti Teitel, Professor of Comparative Law at New York Law School, is the author of *Transitional Justice*.

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Future Youth

Voices of tomorrow delivered today!!

Examples of simple social services

By: ZAID AL BASHA (CALGARY – CANADA) *

It is a fact that Yemen, like most other Arab countries, lags behind most of the world in education, technology, health care, social welfare, etc. Part of the blame falls on the destructive and wild minds and thoughts, which happen to be responsible for (mis)leading the development process, and the march towards Yemen's economical prosperity.

The other part of the blame falls on the Yemeni society, and I simply mean by society the people themselves, excluding absolutely all its political leaders. It is very important to make the distinction between the society and its political leaders, in order to realize the roles and responsibilities of each.

But it is also true that the needs of our society have priorities, and thus first things need to be done first. Our current time is a time of hardship and agony for the majority of our society. There are many people back home that are in dire need of simple things that many of us have taken for granted, such as food, clothes, and a warm place to live in with enough space for a human being.

On the summer of 2004, when I was leaving one of the restaurants in Sana'a with a friend, after a big meal, lots of little poor kids started gathering around us, asking for at least ten Rials so that they buy a loaf of bread to feed their empty stomachs – gone are the days, not very long ago, when five Rials had some worth to it –. That's when my friend suggested, after a little pondering, that a group of people go to these restaurants everyday to gather the remnant food, so that they can later deliver it to the hungry people, who can hardly secure a single small meal for one day.

But one should bear in mind that if

any group of people is to adopt this idea, then they should pay particular attention to the condition of the food they collect. We should love for other people, what we love for ourselves. Therefore, some restrictions must be considered as to what we shall exactly refer to as food remnant, because cats and dogs can also eat food remnants.

There are two simple ideas that I would like to present to you. First, *Collecting Remnant Food from Restaurants in Sana'a [to start with]*. Recently, many new restaurants have opened in the Capital city, mainly along Haddah Street, for all what it is famous for, and on many other locations in the city.

Regardless of whether this new phenomenon is good or bad, there is one thing that we may agree on: it is not fair to throw huge amount of food everyday to the garbage. Usually food in the kitchen that is not served or the leftover from customers' plates is thrown away. The customer pays for all the food anyway, so why not make a better use of food remnant instead of simply throwing it away?!

Second, is a similar idea, which is establishing *Food Banks* at schools, universities, mosques, and neighborhoods. This means that we allocate a small room or a box, depending on the expected amount of donations within a particular community, in which people can make small food deposits from their excess food supply. These food deposits can later be used to supply those who cannot afford essential food items.

People can deposit anything into food banks like pastas, cereals, rice, sugar, canned products like beans and tuna, cheese, you name it. Unlike the one time donations provided to the needy people from charity, a food bank will be a continuous source of food that will cover basic needs for a family or an

individual. A food bank is a simple idea that needs only three resources for its implementation:

1. People willing to *deposit small food items on a regular basis*, it could be as small as few grams of dates,
2. a reasonable amount of space for saving people's deposits, with a 24 hour access to it (a small hole in a wall or box would serve the purpose), and
3. a trustworthy supervisor or a manager for the Food Bank, who could be a school's principle, an Imam of a mosque, or some responsible boy in the neighbourhood.

There may also be the need of providing fridges in food banks for the sake of storing certain kinds of food. In fact, the addition of a fridge to our food bank will make it possible for us to store food remnants, as suggested in the first idea, for some time. Storing of the remnant food collected from restaurants in the food banks, will save us the additional task of having to worry about delivering the food to the people.

There are a large number of ways through which members of our society can contribute to those who need help. By providing aid to the poor and needy, we lift the misery off their life, so that they can focus on other issues, and deal with other concerns. Once we feed our stomachs, we can then feed our minds, and thus contribute to Yemen's economical growth.

As for our government, it should start building a better and stronger infrastructure for the country, to enhance the country's economical growth.

It is beyond [everybody's] doubt that Yemen is a rich country, but one that lacks a productive investment of its wealth and money. We look forward to true investments in education, research

You are forever mine

FUAD NOMAN
fn_001@yahoo.com

A real love in my blood
and heart creeps
How nice your wavy
smile in my hugs sleeps!

All you have done cannot
be forgot in time
I feel you but you
pretend that you fall in slime
You seem like my
land when it dies!
Is it my crime?

If you try to ignore me
Neither you are last
nor I am prime

My sense always tells
"You are forever mine"
So, I am created for you
as you are for me too

Come on my little babe
Your existence to my
life is quite comfort
Your soul's breath is
my real destination port
Your smell is my perfume sort

Yesterday you made my wings to
fly to your soul
You are still for me all in all
Say it bravely
why are you hesitated?
Love is a real existence
It is God's grant for us free
And it is my heart's gift to thee

and development.

* "Zaid Al Basha" is an editor for *ShababYemeni*. *ShababYemeni* is an initiative by a group of inspired Yemeni Youth made specifically for the Yemeni Youth. SY could be contacted at shabab.yemeni@gmail.com

Whispers

By Fahmia Al-Fotih

Watchdogs & the big lie

Democracy? A word repeatedly heard and the well-known slogan that many countries use nowadays while claiming to be a protector of democracy. And democracy becomes the nightmare that threatens anyone who does not adopt it. Some governments, Iraq as example, have been toppled because they lack democracy and they lack freedom of expression!

Democracy was initially practiced in Greece. The democracy was confined to male and free citizens. Greek people practiced their democracy by excluding the majority of people in Athens. Women, children, slaves and foreigners had no right to practice the so-called democracy. Only the elite and the officials had that right. So unfortunately democracy was wrong from the beginning!

Mass media is considered the tools that link the officials and the citizens. It is the only way candidates can present their views to voter, and voters can be informed of the work of their representatives. It is also the arena where problems can be published, and the only way many different alternatives can be debated as well. It is the tool through which both officials and citizens can make their views be heard and known. However, according to traditional liberal theory, media should act as watchdogs checking the state and exposing the wrongdoings of the official authority. Only by anchoring the media to the free market, is it possible to ensure the media's complete independence from government. Once the media become subject to state regulation, they may lose their bite as watchdogs. When the press is licensed, franchised or regulated, it is

subject to political pressures while it deals with issues affecting the interests of those powers.

Unfortunately, the media people who are supposed to be watchdogs become slap dogs.

I thought that we, the Arab, have problems with understanding democracy and press, yet, western media also become a part of a profit-lead market. The media becomes monopolized by few people, who view the readers as consumers. So, many strong and serious questions have been raised about the adequacy of the market model as a democratic forum of communication. Mass media has been linked to "a declining democracy" or "a crisis of the democracy".

Democracy is a complex concept, and talking about democracy and freedom is complicated. Comparing theory with reality can certainly cause a headache or lead to craziness - may Allah protect us.

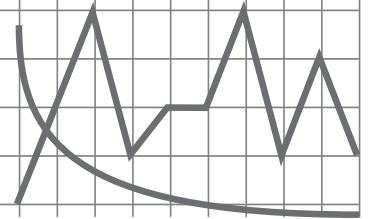
One of the subjects I study at the Westminster University is British Culture and Media taught by Dr. Tariq Sabri. It is an interesting module that not only focuses on British media but also gives you an atmosphere to think, analyze and compare.

I remember two weeks ago, the lecture was about the press freedom in UK, yet, what attracted me was a saying that inspired me to write about this particular topic.

Former American president, Thomas Jefferson, said: "Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

Dear readers, do you agree with him? I bet you do.

YT Business



Government support for the poor rural communities

By MAHYOUB AL-KAMALI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The poor rural communities in Yemen are in actual need of the government support in order to develop and evolve the agricultural system of terraces and also to rebuild the valleys that have been exposed to deterioration after a long time. The Yemenis have stood up to the challenge of nature as they conquered the lofty mountains by building agricultural terraces to be an important source for their food security.

In order to preserve this civilization heritage and the agricultural activity as well as to preserve environment, great efforts have to be exerted to protect

those terraces against deterioration and collapse. The most important in the required support is the breathing life into the activity of caring for forests, guidance, expansion in tree plantation, maintaining terraces against destruction, managing pastures and combating desertification through implementation of many developmental projects.

What distinguishes Yemen's agricultural civilization are the irrigation systems based on dams and irrigation canals. Yemen is suffering from scarcity of rainfall levels in general and exhaustion of subterranean waters that gathered for thousands of years, as well as the acute drop in levels of underground waters, as a result of expansion in agriculture and population growth. For all the above

reasons efforts with regard to irrigation and water installations, were focused on implementation and building of water dams, barriers and cisterns. In this regard, 380 water dams, barriers and storages had been built during the recent years in various governorates of the republic. Among the most important of such installations are:

- The dam of Mareb with storage capacity of 400 million cubic meters and provides irrigation water to irrigate an area of almost 10000 hectares in addition to feeding water to subterranean basins.
- Barqouqa dam in Tihama valley-Tihama
- Continued operation and maintaining water installations in the valleys of Zabid, Rama'a, Mour, Tabn, and Abyan.
- Operation of irrigation installations in Siham valley.
- Completion of irrigation installations in Hagar valley
- Implementation of several works of protection against damage of torrents in many villages and valleys in various governorates.

The challenge facing the population is in providing their need of food and guarantee of their food security which requires improvement the productivity of natural resources in high areas of production and those on the margin simultaneously. There must be an attention given to providing food in all



regions where the relation emerges between the spread of poverty among the population and fluctuation in production in this year and the other. Therefore, the government programs should give priority to work with the rural communities that are poorer and that usually do not possess but a small amount of resources to build their capabilities, also to the areas exposed to dangers and disasters and the remote areas that lack the basic structure and social services.

An all out glance, and given official sources, there can be a demonstration of the extent of the agricultural sector participation in the area of achieving food security in Yemen through projecting percentages of production to

needs of the population for the following different commodities.

- 100% in consumption of maize.
- 7% in consumption of wheat.
- 100% in consumption of pearl millet.
- 42% in consumption of barely.
- 100% in consumption of vegetables.
- 98% in consumption of fruits.
- 99% in consumption white meats.
- 67% in consumption of red meats.

Generally, the local production covers around two thirds of the Yemeni economy needs of food as there are major commodities that are not grown locally and therefore all Yemen's needs of them are imported, such as rice and sugar.

Plan for supporting businesswomen

By YEMEN TIMES STAFF

The ministry of industry and trade intends to implement a plan for supporting presence of Yemeni businesswomen in Yemeni economic and trade life in more active form. Director of Woman Affairs at the ministry Wafaa Abdulah Awadh said in a press statement the plan the ministry is scheduled to carry out in phases aims at helping businesswomen to participate in investment in promising economic sectors and other sectors.

She added that programs of the plan include training of businesswomen on planning for establishment of projects, working out developmental plans and programs and raise their skill and making them acquire a number of administrative and public relations capabilities. She made it clear that the ministry was seeking for the foundation of a national entity special for businesswomen under the umbrella of the general union of chambers of commerce and industry and activation of businesswomen communicating, through that organization, with various relevant government parties and civil organizations such as customs and taxes, investment and workers union and others.

She pointed out that the ministry has put businesswomen among its priorities in the third five-year plan though preparation of a number of programs enhancing the woman role in general and the businesswomen in particular.



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Reflections on Ramadan

The error of radicalism

Why should a Muslim refrain from being a "radical" and prefer tolerance?

Radicalism means supporting sudden revolutionary destructive changes in any sphere and applying a strict uncompromising policy to achieve them. Radicals are characterized by their desire for revolutionary changes and the stern, sometimes aggressive attitude they adopt.



By HARUN YAHYA
www.harunyahya.com

If you examine the Koran you will see that a warm, gentle and tolerant disposition characterized all the prophets. God describes Abraham as "Ibrahim was tender-hearted and forbearing. (Surat at-Tawba: 114) and there is a

verse in which our prophet Mohammed's moral principals are described:

It is a mercy from God that you were gentle with them. If you had been rough or hard of heart, they would have scattered from around you. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them, and consult with them about the matter. Then when you have reached a firm decision, put your trust in God. God loves those who put their trust in Him. (Surat al-Imran: 159)

An evident quality of radicalism is its anger. This disposition can be clearly seen in the speeches, writings and demonstrations of radical people. However, anger is not an attribute of Muslims. When God describes believers in the Koran, he commands, "those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people - God loves the good-doers." (Surat al-Imran: 134)

There is no situation in which a Muslim displays anger. The only thing a Muslim wants from other people is that they believe in God and live according to moral principles, but this is possible only by the grace of God. No matter what we do, no matter how much we try to explain the truth to

people, human hearts are in God's hands. God reminds Muslims of this very important fact in this verse,

"Even if there was a Koran which moved mountains, or split the earth open or spoke to the dead...! On the contrary! The affair is God's altogether. Do those who have faith not know that if God had wanted to He could have guided all mankind? Those who are disbelievers will not cease to be struck by disaster for what they have done - or a disaster will happen close to their homes - until God's promise is fulfilled. God will not fail to keep His promise." (Surat ar-Rad: 31)

There is another verse that emphasizes this same fact:

If your Lord had willed, all the people on the earth would have had faith. Do you think you can force people to be believers? (Surah Yunus: 99)

Therefore, it is the duty of a Muslim only to explain the facts and to invite people to accept them but whether or not people accept the invitation is completely up to their own conscience. God reveals this truth in the Koran when He says that there is no coercion in religion.

There is no compulsion where the religion is concerned. Right guidance has become clearly distinct from error. Anyone who rejects false gods and has faith in God has grasped the Firmest Handhold, which will never give way. God is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. (Surat al-Baqara: 256)

Therefore, there is no coercion to make people believe and become Muslims, or to make Muslims say their prayers and beware of sin. There is only advice. God reveals in a few verses addressed to our Prophet that Muslims are not oppressors:

We know best what they say. You are not a dictator over them. So remind, with the Koran, whoever fears My Threat. (Surah Qaf: 45)

Say: 'Mankind! the truth has come to you from your Lord. Whoever is guided is only guided for his own good. Whoever is misguided is only misguided to his detriment. I have not been set over you as a guardian.' (Surah Yunus: 108)

Muslims are responsible only for explaining their religion, they apply no pressure or coercion on anyone and are enjoined to speak gently to even the most tyrannical deniers. Such persons cannot be "radicals" because radicalism stands for the opposite of those qualities we have enumerated. Indeed, radicalism is an un-Islamic current of thought and political stance that came into the Islamic world later from outside. When we examine social phenomena described in terms of radicalism, it will be seen that these are basically a collection of methods and pronouncements used by communists in an earlier time, or an expression of the bigotry of ignorance that has no place in true Islam.

All Muslims must totally reject an angry, unbending disputatious disposition which goes against the very nature of the Koran and in its place adopt a friendly, gentle, tolerant, calm and compassionate attitude. Muslims must be an example to the world and be admired for their maturity, tolerance, moderation, modesty and peacefulness. Not only in these things, but also in their fine achievements in fields of science, culture, art, aesthetics and social order and others, Muslims must live Islam in the best possible way and be its representatives to the world.

Explaining Islam to others and defending Islam against ideas alien to it are included in what we have listed above. In the verse below, God clearly reveals what attitude a Muslim must assume with regard to others:

Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair admonition, and argue with them in the kindest way. Your Lord knows best who is misguided from His way. And He knows best who are guided. (Surat an-Nahl:125)

To purchase the works of Harun Yahya, please visit www.bookglobal.net

Ramadan Kareem

Fasting people distinguished

Imagine how a fasting person would be behaving throughout the prescribed fasting hours! As you know, fasting is abstaining from eating, drinking, smoking and sexual intercourse.



By MOHAMMED AL-HAKIM
hujary@yahoo.com
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Furious and spitting fire:

People who are addicted to smoking will be more furious. Some do not go to work aiming to avoid trouble-making in the environment that surrounds him. In fact, they prefer to sleep all the day long or to be isolated.

Oh Allah, I am fasting:

During fasting, one has to abstain from shouting, backbiting, gazing at women. A fasting person has to restrain tongue and to think of Allah. In case anybody abuses or wants to quarrel with them, he/she should calm down and say: "I am fasting. I am fasting." This does not indicate any sort of threat or menace.

Showing level of faith:

Fasting people may carry their Holy Quraan versions anywhere they go. Some may get engaged in reading or hanging around. Some will have to go to work where lots of situations are experienced by the fasting people and will test how strong or weak believers are. Just then, a fasting person can be well examined and will exactly prove how much obedience he has for Allah and His Messenger Mohammed (peace and blessings be upon him).

All months are alike:

Many employees have their annual

holiday in Ramadan. Some, however, insist on working, toiling and producing exactly as they are in the rest of the months of the year.

Fasting models:

Nobody should think of gossiping about others' affairs and arguing, fighting or wrongdoing in general. One wishes to get Allah's forgiveness.

Faithfulness:

All are sharing Allah's blessings descending from Heaven. Moreover, all are enjoying their being offered to be reward-winning believers.

Fasting in vain:

Those who prove to be impatient, fire-spitting and disobedient will make no single profit out of their abstaining from eating and drinking.

Human bombs:

Some fasting people in charge of good positions at work lose temper. Sometimes, you feel that if you came nearer to talk to them, they would burst at you. This clearly appears often in their faces and their red eyes.

Whines and whimpers:

Some people get fired and are given the sack. Some wives get divorced and blood is shed sometimes and many car accidents due to improper application of fasting.

Fasting kids:

Children under the age of ten are

trained to fast Ramadan through different ways: 1) a boy/girl is persuaded into fasting half a day and asked to finish his fasting the following day; 2) He/she is directed to fast the whole day and is permitted to eat or drink whenever he/she feels very hungry or thirsty provided that eyes are shut when eating or drinking; 3) He/she is asked to fast one half of Ramadan and the parents get a cotton thread tied around the child's tongue to symbolically maintain their fasting hours till the coming years.

Iftar time:

Before the time of Iftar, some fasting people keep gazing at the breaking meal with their mouths watering until they hear the sound of the Iftar cannon. Smokers are quite preoccupied with cigarette and lighters. Some smokers start smoking as soon as they hear the muazzen (the caller for prayer) trying to prepare the microphone for the calling.

Stick out:

Hakimi: Are you fasting today?
Afnan: Sure. Just see (My neighbor's little daughter sticks her tongue out).

Hakimi: What does that mean?
Afnan: My tongue looks white and this indicates that I am fasting.
Hakimi: Ha..ha..Good. Take care!

Indispensable companion:

What impresses you most is the recitation of the Holy Quraan by fasting people everywhere you go: old and young people from all social classes are reciting verses of the Holy Quraan at offices, shops, hospitals, while driving, atop roofs, etc.

To be continued next issue

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Food pollution causes cancer in Yemen

YEMEN TIMES STAFF

According to a recent study by the University of Sana'a, College of Agriculture, the high incidence of cancer in Yemen is a function of unacceptable levels of pollution in food. The study, conducted in the governorates of Sana'a, Taiz, Ibb, and Dhamr, warned of the effect of toxins that grow up on cereals such as

wheat, corn, soybeans and the fodder fed to animals, particularly poultry.

According to Hamid Jaber these toxins are the result of poisonous mushrooms that grow on the cereals, either while they are growing or after they have been harvested and are being transported.

Naturally occurring toxins, such as Mycotoxins, Marine biotoxins, and toxins occurring in poisonous mushrooms are found at measurable levels in

many staple foods. Sampling of 29 examples of chicken fodder revealed toxic levels acutely higher than international regulations allow. Such toxins cause liver cancer, hepatitis A, and a negative effect upon the immune system leading to fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhea, a loss of appetite and intestinal bleeding. Sometimes they cause chronic health problems, including reactive arthritis and neurological disorders.

The study recommended the careful assessment and monitoring of the stores that keep the seeds, constant monitoring of export fodder, observing animal behavior and a public awareness campaign to allow farmers and citizens to recognize the symptoms of the condition.

Medical sources claim that twenty thousands Yemeni infected of cancer yearly and 25% of yemnies have hepatitis A.

Does vitamin C treat the common cold?

Linus Pauling's book Vitamin C and The Common Cold, published in 1970, was a bestseller and led many people to believe in the value of the vitamin for cold prevention and treatment. But an article in PLoS Medicine reviewing all of the best clinical research on this topic, suggests that the public's enthusiasm for the vitamin may be unjustified.

Robert M Douglas of the Australian National University, Canberra, and Harri Hemilä of the University of Helsinki, Finland, reviewed the best quality studies on vitamin C and the common cold done over the last 65 years. All of these studies compared a daily dose of 200mg of vitamin C or more against a dummy pill (placebo).

Did vitamin C given for prevention reduce the risk of picking up a cold?



The authors looked at 23 studies done in the general population, using doses of up to 2g daily, and found that vitamin C did not reduce the risk. They conclude that "the lack of effect of prophylactic vitamin C supplementation on the incidence of common cold in normal populations throws doubt on the utility of this wide practice."

In these prevention studies, those people who were given vitamin C and then caught a cold experienced a small reduction in the duration of the cold compared with those taking a placebo. The authors say that the clinical significance of this minor reduction "is questionable, although the consistency of these findings points to a genuine biological effect."

But the authors did find evidence that the vitamin could help prevent colds in people exposed to extreme physical exertion or cold weather. They found six studies in which the vitamin or a placebo was given to marathon runners, skiers and soldiers exposed to significant cold and/or physical stress. Those taking the vitamin experienced, on average, a

50% reduction in common cold incidence. The authors urge "great caution", though, in making generalizations from this finding in 6 studies that is mainly based on marathon runners.

What about vitamin C as a possible treatment for an established cold? The authors found seven trials (all in adults) evaluating whether vitamin C taken when their symptoms started would shorten the cold. When they looked at all seven studies together, they found no benefit from taking the vitamin. But in one of the seven trials, patients took a single very high dose of the vitamin (8 g) on the day their symptoms started and experienced a shorter illness compared with people who took a placebo pill. (3) The authors say that the results in this single trial are " tantalizing and deserve further assessment."

Exercise amount more important than intensity

How much you exercise may be more important than how hard you exercise in terms of heart health, according to a study of sedentary overweight men and women. And, many will be happy to hear, exhaustive amounts of

exercise are not needed for heart health.

In journal CHEST, researchers from North Carolina report that people who walk briskly for 12 miles per week or for about 125 to 200 minutes per week will significantly improve their aerobic fitness and lower their

risk of developing heart disease.

"Anything beyond walking briskly for 12 miles per week, whether increasing your intensity or the amount of miles, has additional benefits," Brian D. Duscha from Duke University Medical Center in Durham who was involved in the

research said. "So there is a separate and combined effect."

He also emphasized that the 12-miles-per-week walkers in the study improved their fitness without losing any weight. "People need to know: even without losing weight, you are getting significant benefits by exercising — you're improving your fitness level, decreasing fat and increasing muscle and improving your lipid panel — so don't stop exercising," Duscha said.

"The other thing to realize is that people gain 3 to 4 pounds a year, so exercise is really important for weight maintenance," Duscha said.

There is a clear link between heart health and fitness. However, less is known on how the amount and intensity of exercise relates to increases in fitness for individuals at risk for heart disease.

To better understand the effects of different amounts of exercise on aerobic fitness, Duscha and colleagues randomly assigned 133 overweight sedentary men and women showing signs of rising cholesterol levels to 7 to 9 months of no exercise; low amount/moderate intensity exercise (the 12-miles per week walkers); low amount/vigorous intensity (12 miles of jogging per week); or high amount/vigorous intensity (20 miles of jogging per week).

The study subjects did not alter their diet during the study.

After completing their exercise assignment, all of exercisers had improvements in peak oxygen consumption and time to exhaustion — two established markers of fitness — compared with levels at the beginning of the study.

Interestingly, however, the vigorous intensity exercisers did not get any "fitter" than the moderate intensity exercisers. "The moderate intensity group only exercised to 40 or 50 percent of their max," Duscha explained. "That's walking briskly up a hill or walking fast — you could walk around the neighborhood after dinner and get that in. You don't have to go jog, climb on the stairmaster or elliptical trainer and kill yourself."

However, increasing the amount of exercise from 12 to 20 miles per week — at the same intensity — provides even more cardiovascular benefits.

"Therefore," Duscha and colleagues conclude, "it is appropriate to recommend mild exercise to improve fitness and reduce cardiovascular risk, yet encourage higher intensities and amounts for additional benefits."

Reuters

Public Health Affairs



By Dr. Saleh Al-Habshi
Msc. in Public Health

Reproductive Health in The Middle East:

Achievements and challenges

By Dr. Saleh Al-Habshi
Master of Public Health

Reproductive health (RH) is a relatively new concept that comprehensively addresses all of the health issues regarding reproduction for both women and men, whether young or old. RH sometimes addresses women's health issues as a whole, since most of them are closely related to reproduction. The countries of the Middle East (ME) region face unprecedented challenges to promoting social and economic development in this rapidly changing and competitive world. Governments in the region are struggling to sustain the improvements in the quality of life of their citizens that they have worked hard to bring about. Each government tries to achieve equity in terms of the basic needs of all citizens, and to guarantee the rights of each individual, while respecting the cultural values of the people and preserving the unity and integrity of the country.

In terms of health outcomes ME countries have achieved significant improvements during the last three decades. For instance, total fertility rates declined remarkably in the 1980s in several countries, and infant mortality rates decreased in most ME countries as well. Despite these achievements, however, some RH problems persist, while unfortunately new issues have emerged to increase the burden. The major RH problems in the ME region, which represent the current challenges, include high maternal mortality in several countries; high fertility and a slowing of the decline in fertility rates; early marriage and high teenage fertility; increasing prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV/AIDS; and female genital mutilation (FGM) in Egypt and Yemen. Maternal mortality ratios (MMRs) remain high in several ME countries such as Yemen, Egypt, and Morocco, and the rate has increased in Iraq. Among the 18,000 maternal deaths in the region each year, 7,800 occur in Yemen, 3,000 in Egypt, and 1,600 in Morocco. Overall, a leading cause of death among women of reproductive age is pregnancy-related illness. The major causes of maternal mortality are bleeding, infection, and pregnancy-induced hypertension: about 25-30 percent of maternal deaths are attributable to severe bleeding. The share of maternal deaths caused by unsafe abortion in the region is lower than the global average. In Egypt, one-quarter of maternal death cases involved the death of the fetus also, and one-third of the cases involved the subsequent deaths of infants that were born alive. Both increased prenatal care coverage and increased rates of deliveries assisted by skilled attendants correlate with a decrease in MMR. The most effective intervention for preventing maternal deaths is attendance at birth by health professionals trained in lifesaving skills, with backup for care of severe complications. Better postpartum care and postabortion care also reduces MMR. Among ME countries, there are significant gaps between urban and rural areas in terms of access to and quality of services, and the gaps are particularly large within lower-income countries and countries with higher MMRs. This indicates that interventions should be targeted to decreasing maternal deaths among the underprivileged population. Although fertility has declined substantially in the ME countries over the past 15 to 20 years, the region has the second-highest rate of natural increase in the world. The total fertility rate (TFR), or expected number of children per woman, is approximately 5 in the ME region, much higher than the global average, which reached 3.2. Among ME countries, TFRs range from less than 3 in Iran and Tunisia to almost 6 in Yemen, Saudi Arabia, and West Bank and Gaza. The decline in fertility in ME is due to the increased age of women at marriage, increased age at first childbirth, and increased use of contraception. Fertility decline started to occur in the region in the early 1970s and accelerated considerably in the early to mid-1980s. In several countries, however, the pace of decline slowed in the 1990s. Fertility decline is encouraged by several factors, including low infant and child mortality, high female literacy and education, and active family planning programs. Even without widespread use of contraception, fertility decline may occur as a result of broader changes in the social environment that affect the status of women, better health services that reduce infant mortality, and increased income levels and urbanization. In the ME region, however, the relationship between income and fertility is less clear-cut: TFRs in ME countries are high compared with those of countries in other regions that have similar

income levels. High fertility and rapid population growth place pressure on various sectors and can therefore hinder economic and social progress. Frequent, closely spaced births often take a toll on the health status of both mothers and their children.

Despite recognition of the negative impacts of rapid population growth, fewer than half the countries in the region have explicit policies to lower fertility, and access to family planning is still limited. The prevalence rate of modern contraceptive methods is only 10% in Yemen and is less than 30% in countries such as Oman, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates. The two primary reasons for not using family planning services or for discontinuing the use of contraceptives are the desire for another child and the fear of side effects. Lack of access to quality services is a major reason for unmet need, indicating that both access and quality issues must be addressed. Expanding the mix of methods, improving counseling, and strengthening the technical competence of providers are essential steps for improving access and quality. To some extent, higher income levels, increased health expenditures, and rising educational levels for women are each linked to a decrease in MMR as proved by many studies. However, contrary to the global experience, these factors do not necessarily correlate with the expected number of children per woman in ME countries. In addition, women's increased share of household income does not correlate with either decreased MMR or the expected number of children per woman.

Although the estimated prevalence of STDs in the ME region was the second-lowest among six developing regions, around 12 million people in the region suffer from STDs. Compared with other regions, estimated adult HIV prevalence also remains low; however, the total number of AIDS deaths has increased almost sixfold since the early 1990s. Main transmission routes include intravenous drug use in Iran and sexual contact in Yemen. About 1.6 million girls are married before age 20, and every year about 900,000 babies are born to teenage mothers. High teenage fertility in ME countries is due to the high incidence of early marriage. Approximately 60% of married women are under age 24 in Yemen and Oman, and more than 40% in Egypt were married before the age of 20. Teenage fertility rates in Yemen, Oman, and Libya are twice the global average. The health risks associated with pregnancy and childbirth are generally higher for young teenage mothers than for women in their twenties.

Despite international condemnation and a government ban, FGM of young girls is practiced in many ME countries particularly in Egypt and Yemen. Most Egyptians have a positive attitude toward the practice, and almost all Egyptian women have undergone the procedure. FGM is practiced in Yemen as well, particularly in rural and coastal areas.

RH problems in the ME are attributable to complex factors, and issues are deeply related to a country's levels of social and economic development and gender equity. Compared with countries at similar income levels in other regions, the ME region is unique with regard to its high total fertility and adolescent fertility. Countries with high maternal mortality have an urgent need to improve maternal care; those with high fertility need to develop effective strategies and improve access to and quality of services; and all countries should strengthen STDs/AIDS prevention programs. Strategies and interventions will differ depending on each country's economic and social situation. Potential policies and strategies for improving RH in the region should be developed. Strong political commitment is essential to overcoming social and cultural constraints. A Comprehensive approaches will work best in this regard, by focusing on priority issues. Solutions could be reached by overcoming all obstacles, such as shortage of financial and human resources, and cultural resistance. Developing sustainable financing mechanisms to ensure access to essential services and to provide incentives that encourage preventive care would be of great help. A fundamental issue is raising awareness and changing behaviors of individuals through effective information, education, and communication, particularly among community leaders and decision-makers. Regionally, health system reform efforts must include RH services in public and private sector. For ensuring realization of fruitful results, sustainability of RH activities and women empowerment by promoting their participation in decision-making and overall developmental process are crucial to be considered.

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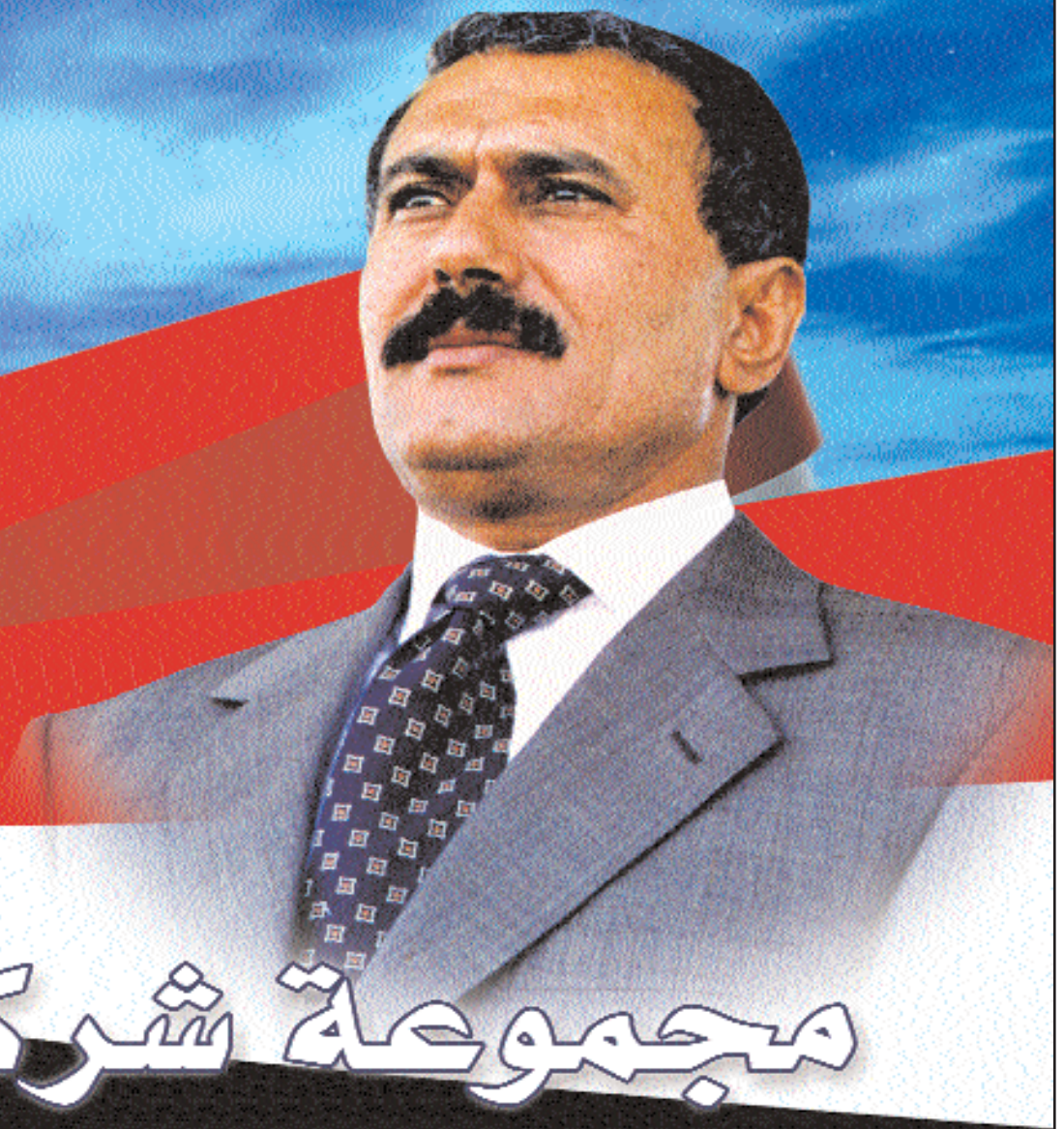
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UNDP, P.O.Box 551 Sana'a/Fax: 448841/E-mail: registry.ye@undp.org

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Aussie bowler unwraps England's sweet secret

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Australian fast bowler Nathan Bracken suspects a mint sweet could have been the secret weapon behind England's stunning Ashes victory.

Australia's batsmen were baffled by the way England's bowlers, particularly Andrew Flintoff and Simon Jones, were able to make the ball reverse swing when their own paceman could not.

Bracken, a regular on the English county circuit, believes he may have unwrapped the mystery that played a significant part in Australia's 2-1 series loss.

"It is just a breath mint you put in your mouth but it makes your saliva very sugary and that is being talked about being used over there," he told reporters in Australia on Wednesday.

"Every team has lollies and things like that, we had all our lollies



Australia A pacer Nathan Bracken bowls against Pakistan A during their third one-day match in Lahore Sep. 27. REUTERS

checked before the first game to make sure there was nothing illegal that we had.

"When I was playing at Gloucester a couple of years ago as soon as we needed the ball to go 'Irish' the captain would call and they would bring out some of these mints and it would work."

There is no suggestion England's players broke any rules as players are

permitted to apply saliva and sweat to polish the ball.

However, officials have begun to crackdown on any suspicious activities with Cricket Australia issuing an advisory to watch out for anyone "loading" one side of the ball.

Bracken's explanation about the art of reverse swing, the ability to swing an old cricket ball in the opposite direction to that expected by batsmen, is the latest in a series of theories that have puzzled the cricket world for decades.

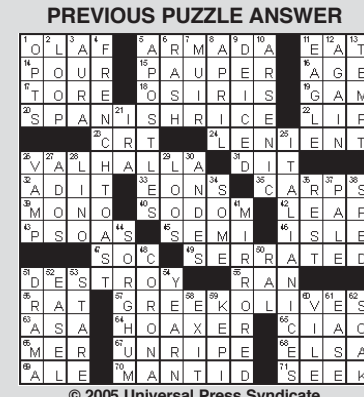
Most were based on suspicion and claims it was done illegally, with bottle tops and penknives and sharp fingernails while some players were caught on tape trying to scuff up the ball or apply lubricants, earning the practice a dubious reputation as ball-tampering.

Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

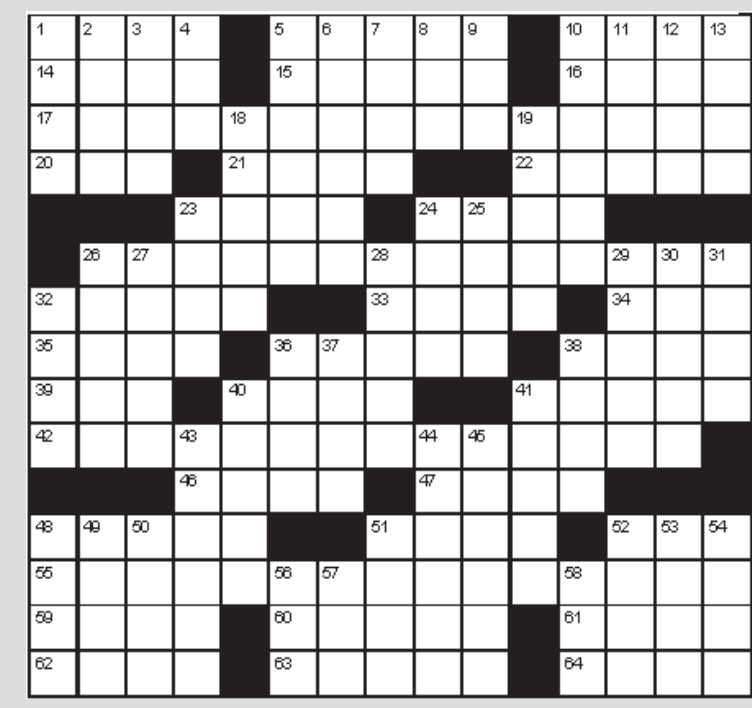
- ACROSS**
- 1 "Goodbye, Columbus" author
 - 5 Pythias' partner
 - 10 Sheffield stroller
 - 14 Best-selling cookie
 - 15 "The Life of Zola"
 - 16 Philbin's side-kick
 - 17 Big top two-some
 - 20 Terrorized street of film
 - 21 Hit bottom
 - 22 Base negotiating amounts
 - 23 Give way
 - 24 Charged atoms
 - 26 Table mates
 - 32 Music to a comic's ears
 - 33 It lands at Ben Gurion
 - 34 Bale fodder
 - 35 Checked out
 - 36 Herculean types
 - 38 Gael's language
 - 39 Decay
 - 40 Place for an ace
 - 41 Does the get-away driving, e.g.
 - 42 1948 Oscar-winning song
 - 46 Double-curved molding
 - 47 Mediterranean gulf
 - 48 Garlic feature
 - 51 "___ plaisir!"
 - 52 Type of station
 - 55 Travelers' stop, perhaps
 - 59 Give off
 - 60 Antelope with twisted horns
 - 61 Song for Madama Butterfly
 - 62 Rat Pack nickname
 - 63 Map collection
 - 64 Bone reading

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER



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"BUSY BEES" by Fran & Lou Sabin



Bayern rediscover sense of adventure

MUNICH, Oct. 19 (Reuters) - Bayern Munich are dreaming of a fifth European Cup win after a rediscovered sense of adventure brought them a 2-1 victory over Juventus.

Bayern needed to atone for two dispiriting defeats by Juventus in the group phase of the Champions League last term, when they were punished by the Italians for nervous, overly defensive displays.

They came out with a different attitude on Tuesday, showing more aggression in midfield and more wit in attack to become the first side to beat Juventus all season.

"That was our best performance in

the Champions League since we won it in 2001," club chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge said.

"It was very important because recently we've lost a lot of games against the big teams. It was great to have a stunning display against a team like Juventus.

"The result means we are all but through to the next phase and now we'll see. I think we're on the right road."

The German champions lead Group A with nine points from three matches, with the away fixture against second-placed Juventus next up on Nov. 2.

On the strength of Tuesday's display they have every right to regard themselves among the favourites, even if form at this stage of the season is a rarely a pointer to the eventual winners.

Juventus have started the defence of their Serie A title with seven straight wins but they found Bayern's new World Cup stadium an uncomfortable place from the beginning.

Bayern goalscorers Sebastian Deisler and Argentine midfielder Martin Demichelis were the pick of the players but Oliver Kahn, Michael Ballack and Lucio also played important roles in limiting the Juventus

threat to the odd long shot.

Zlatan Ibrahimovic got a goal back in the final minute but by that stage Bayern should have been out of sight, with Roy Makaay's series of missed chances the night's only negative from the German side's point of view.

"This was a vital win in terms of our self-belief," said Kahn, the club captain. "We deserved it, and only their late goal dampened the joy a little.

"We're Bayern and we want to win every competition we're in. That's normal - it's not arrogance.

"We're going to try and go as far as we can."

Man.U shortcomings exposed

MANCHESTER (Reuters) - Manchester United's disappointing 0-0 Champions League draw with Lille on Tuesday exposed deep rooted problems at the English club.

Depleted by injuries and deprived of the suspended Wayne Rooney, United struggled to break down a well organised defence and the writing was on the wall long before Paul Scholes was sent off midway through the second half.

With five points from three games, Alex Ferguson's side should still qualify comfortably for the knockout stages but they face an uncertain future.

Ferguson was forced to play 20-year-old Phil Bardsley at right back in only his third Champions League game with John O'Shea, a right-footed central defender, on the left.

Replacing injured captain Roy Keane in midfield was striker Alan Smith, who worked hard alongside young Scot Darren Fletcher but does not have the necessary experience of playing in the most important position in the side.

Scholes's dismissal for two late tackles was symptomatic of the former England midfielder's indifferent form this season.

He has failed to score and, perhaps missing Keane and reluctant to assume the added responsibility, the 30-year-old looks badly off the pace and lacking the attacking flair that was once his trademark.

United's substitutes' bench also revealed a lack of quality.

Although Smith and Fletcher were clearly exhausted by their efforts, particularly following the loss of Scholes, Ferguson made only one substitution when he was forced to bring off Ryan Giggs with a fractured cheek bone and replace him with Ji-sung Park.

The Korean made a useful contribution with his energetic running but Ferguson's attacking options were 18-year-old Italian Giuseppe Rossi and 19-year-old Sylvan Ebanks-Blake. The only other experienced midfielder available was Irishman Liam Miller who has made little impression in just over a year at Old Trafford.

Adequate depth

Ferguson can justifiably point to



Manchester United's Paul Scholes (2nd L) is booked by referee Stefano Farina (L) for a foul on Lille's Mathieu Bodmer (2nd R) as Bodmer's team mates Rafael (R) and Jean Makoun (C) look on during their Champions League Group D soccer match at Old Trafford in Manchester, northern England Oct. 18. REUTERS

injuries to Keane, experienced defenders Gary Neville, Gabriel Heinze and Wes Brown, striker Louis Saha and utility player Quinton Fortune but he does not have adequate depth in his squad.

Park and goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar were the only experienced players to join United following their second successive season without winning the league title. Although Ferguson acknowledges the need to find a long-term replacement for the 34-year-old Keane he has not made that task the glaring priority it surely is.

Giggs's injury will further stretch Ferguson's resources and although Saha and Brown may return within two weeks, United are already 10 points behind Chelsea in the Premier League.

American businessman Malcolm Glazer, who took over the club in May, faces a difficult decision.

Ferguson will complete 19 years as United manager next month but Glazer may be reluctant to release significant funds to strengthen the squad until he has installed the 63-year-old Scot's long-term successor.

Ferguson can still entertain realistic hopes that, when the injury situation improves, United are good enough to win the Champions League for the second time under his management.

If they get knocked out of Europe's most prestigious club competition before the semi-finals, however, it could be the moment Glazer acts swiftly to end Ferguson's glittering reign and start to tackle the underlying problems at Old Trafford.



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Marib: Land of heavens and thrones

COMPILED BY:
By YASSER AL-MAYASI
YEMEN TIMES STAFF
& ESHRAQ AL-BODIGI
FOR THE YEMEN TIMES

Marib is one of the most famous ancient cities in Yemen. It was the capital of the Sheba Kingdom for several centuries, and is situated 173 km east of Sana'a. Its location was the controlling point of the ancient caravan route of the Arabian Peninsula, and the connecting link of the Silk Road starting from Southeast Asia.

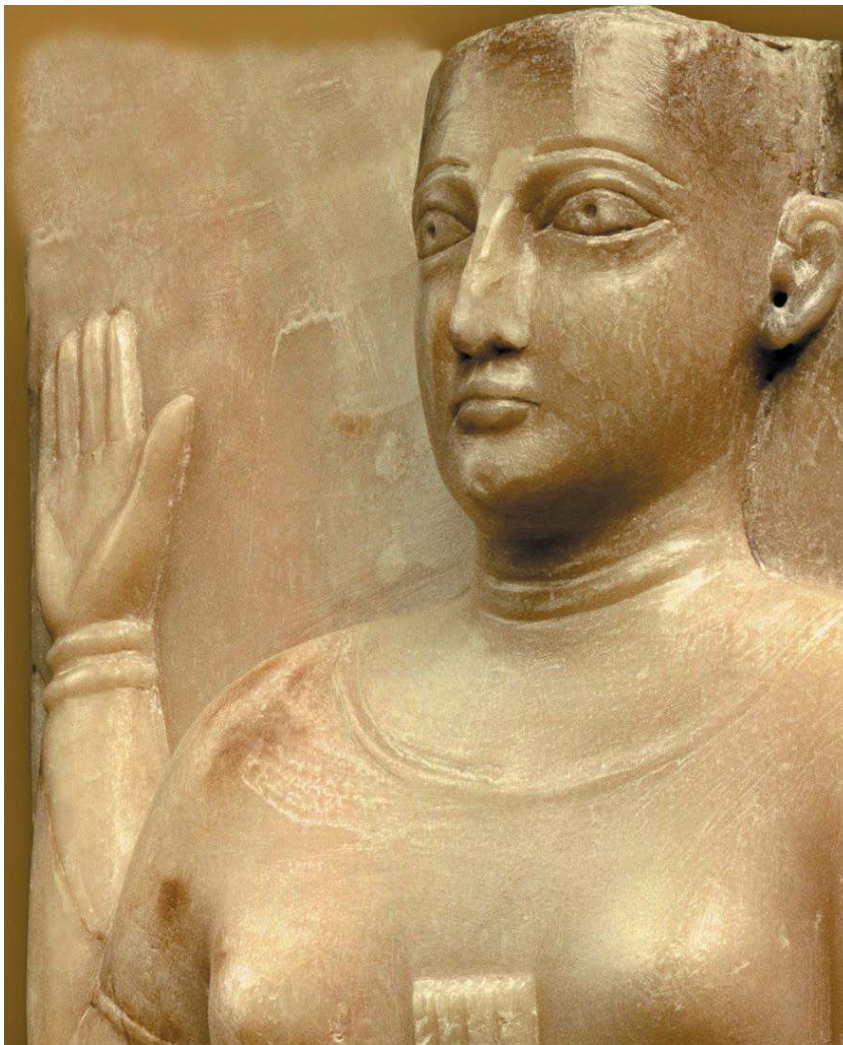
Its fame dates back to the glory of the Shebaen civilization, the traces of which is still visible through the archeological monuments many of which still buried underground.

Marib Governate includes 12 provinces among which are Marib, Serwah, Rahaba, Horeib, and Magzar with Barakesh, a famous ancient city which dates back two the 7th century B. C. It is the second city after Ma'aen, the capital of the Ma'aen country.

Agriculture and sheep are considered at the top of the list of economic activities in this governate, and these are extensions of Marib's old activities and civilizations. In the area people produce crops such as seeds, fruits, and vegetables.

The great Marib dam

This dam is considered the symbol of the Sheba kingdom, as it reflects the zenith of its power, while at the same time marking of its downfall. According to inscriptions, the dam was constructed in the 8th century BC. Whatever the starting point of construction, the great Marib dam continued to be a working monument through all ages of Yemen civilization. Inscriptions indicate that the dam collapsed and was renovated several times. The last time major work was



Queen of Sheba side view

carried out on the dam was during the Abyssinian occupation of Yemen in the 6th century AD.

The dam is 35 m high, 720 m long and 60 m wide and the foundations were built of bulky pieces of rock covered with rough volcanic stones. At the tip of the dam two gaps were left open through which water flowed into the irrigation system and canals, and the surface of the exterior wall was covered with rough volcanic stones. The wall of the two openings, Al-Sadafain, still exists, as described by Al-Hamadani more than 1000 years ago. The clever irrigation system was centered on the collection of water flowing from a number of

valleys. When the water level was high irrigation of the largest area of the land was possible.

The Marib Dam is considered the most famous archeological monuments in Yemen, and the greatest technically constructed object of archeology ever to be built in the Arabian Peninsula. It was erected between the northern and central Balak Mountains, 8 km southwest of Marib city, and 167 km from Sana'a. Two of its main controlling water banks are still in good shape. Today, Marib also has a new dam close to the ancient one, built after the 26 September Revolution.



Ancient Temples of Marib

Bilqis Shrine

The Bilqis Shrine is the most famous and important temple in Marib. Its original name is Awam Temple, and the ancient Yemenies called it Al-Shams Temple, the temple of the sun. The latter was the worshiping goddess of "Al-Maqa", a term in the language of Sheba, which meant the moon. It is as an oval shaped building surrounded by a fencing walls made of rocks and stones.

Baran Temple

The Baran Temple is generally known as the "Throne of Bilqis". Until now, only few of the huge stone pillars related to this and the above-mentioned temple are in place in the desert sands of Marib.

The region of Serwah

The region of Serwah has many archeological ruins. This area is situated 120 km east of Sana'a. It was the capital of rule in the Sheba kingdom, and has the biggest ancient Yemeni sculptures and inscriptions collectively known as "the Victory".

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