

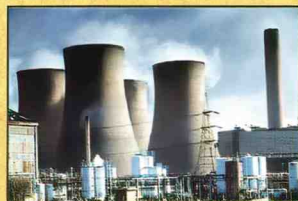
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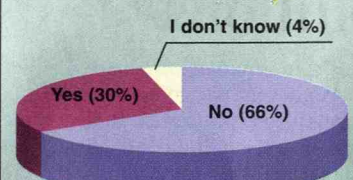
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## Readers' Voice

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Do you think that a new government formation will have a positive impact, assuming corruption is rampant in all of the state's institutions?



This edition's question:

Do you think Ameen Ali Al-Rohani's case could affect Yemeni-U.S. relations?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

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and have your voice heard

## Saleh denies tense relations with Kuwait

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Jan. 17 — In a statement to United Arab Emirates' newspapers, Al-Bayaan and Emarat Al-Youm, President Ali Abdullah Saleh declared that Yemen enjoys good and distinctive relations with Gulf nations based on firm and brotherly ties and particularities that especially link state officials in their official and protocol relations.

He further assured that Yemen welcomes Gulf investments, which will enjoy all care, guarantees and facilities according to effective investment laws.

"We welcomed all of the proposals our brothers in the Gulf Cooperation Council set forth to admit Yemen. Likewise, we submitted our suggestions and asked them to follow the European Union's experience," the president explained.

"If Yemen isn't qualified with a percentage of 45 or 50 percent, then our Gulf brothers can take our hand and provide the means to qualify Yemen within a short time to become an active member of the Gulf family," Saleh



President Saleh

noted.

He added, "There's no tension in Yemeni-Kuwaiti relations. If some individuals spoke ill out of nervousness, we won't react in the same way. That's not the authority's view; rather, it's simply that of some individuals."

Continued on page 2

## Child issues need government attention: Shoura Council



A weight on his shoulders: A usual view in Sana'a, where very young children sit all day, waiting for passers-by to pay 10 rials for checking their weight.

By: Yasser Al-Mayasi

SANA'A, Jan. 17 — The Shoura Council held its first meeting of 2007 this past Tuesday, discussing numerous children's issues in Yemen. Shoura Council Chairman Abdulaziz Abdulghani stressed that the council must give top priority to Yemeni children's issues, which are contained in its plan for the new year.

"Over the past time period, concerned government parties have paid closer attention to children's issues, which were highlighted at the First Childhood and Youth Conference held in the first half of 2006," Abdulghani noted.

He confirmed that the conference came up with an important strategy to organize and direct national efforts toward better child care and protection, as the issue concerns the state and everyone in Yemeni society.

Abdulghani added that all concerned

government parties began dealing with the issue seriously by drafting a legislation package to organize such parties' duties toward a better state for children. Such legislation involves the Yemeni Constitution and the Child Rights Law, as well as other effective laws.

He pointed out that Yemen has demonstrated greater interaction with regional and international conventions, protocols and documents concerning children. "The Yemeni government approved 12 child conventions, protocols and documents, which many executive programs in real-life situations support in order to improve children's situations," Abdulghani noted.

Shoura Council discussions called for doubling both official and non-official efforts to ensure a high level of care and protection for children, as well as provide all of the components for a safer environment for such a group in Yemeni society.

Council members discussed a report by Mohammed Al-Tayyeb, head of the Rights, Freedoms and Civil Community Organizations Committee, on the state of Yemen's children. The report concentrated on children's basic rights, including their rights to access health care and education.

The report covered several other issues and phenomena, such as child labor and trafficking and juvenile

delinquency, as well as discussed government efforts in these areas. It also emphasized the necessity of reviewing the policies and plans of child-related legislation, recommending concerned parties diagnose all of the barriers posed to implementing such laws.

Children's issues have become a top priority and concern for both the government and NGOs, thus necessitating mutual cooperation between the two to suggest possible solutions to these issues, which are hindering Yemen's development. Such issues include child trafficking, girls' education and school dropouts — particularly among girls — and poverty, which exposes children to exploitation and abuse.

Research and studies on children's issues have revealed terrible stories and inhumane crimes practiced against them. Those interested in children's issues indicate that child trafficking in Yemen is done by traffickers, who only seek to exploit children as beggars to bring in money.

According to the studies, such traffickers reach financial agreements with the children's parents, whereby the children are taken from their homes to work as beggars. Smuggled across land borders into neighboring countries, Yemeni children are exposed to various risks, including murder during such trafficking operations.

Continued on page 2

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## In brief

**Yemeni youths participate in World Youth Ship**

Jan. 16 — A. Yemeni Youth team left here on Monday heading for Japan to participate in the program of the World Youth Ship, after 10 years of not taking part in the event. The team includes 11 Yemeni youths and they will present a program about democracy in Yemen as well as Yemeni culture and tourism. Yemeni participants will spend about 15 days on the deck of the ship along with 140 participants from Japan and 150 participants from 14 other countries.

**Dhamar****Cultural and literary programs for 2007**

Jan. 17 — The Cultural Office arranged a number of cultural and literary programs on Monday. The activities include a nightly poetry circle, workshops, lectures and plastic arts exhibitions for many artists and poets with participation for the artistic group of the national occasions. The programs aim to develop and activate the literary and cultural movement and it is a step to encourage poets and artists in the governorate, according to Mohammed Al-Aomari, the general manager of the cultural office.

**Hadramout****Omani delegation visits industrial projects**

Jan. 16 — The Omani delegation from the governorate of Dhofar, headed by the state Minister, governor of Dhofar Mohammed Al-Qatbi paid on Monday a visit to a number of projects and industrial, productive and investment locations in the districts of Mukalla and Shihr in the governorate of Hadramout. Hadramout Governor Abdul-Qadir Hilal briefed the delegation on the technical capacities used for fishing in the governorate. The delegation listened to a detailed explanation from officials in Hadramout, on the planned level of production and exports of fresh and canned fish.

**Hodeidah****New investments across the board**

Jan. 17 — Governor of Hodeidah Mohammed Shamlan held talks on Tuesday with Board Chairmen of Saudi Saudi Real-estate Co. Fares Bin Saleem. They discussed available investments opportunities in the industrial, terrorist, commercial and agricultural sectors. Saleem invited the governor to visit Mecca to know more about investments in the economic field there.

**Lahej****Delegation reviews rural water projects**

Jan. 16 — The General Secretary of Local Council in Lahej Governorate Ali Mater met the Delegation of the French Triangle Organization, which fund rural water projects, headed by Malek Ababa. During the meeting, they reviewed the achievements of Khor Al-Omeira project that cost around \$3000 and the obstacles facing them for maintaining water wells in the region.

**Sana'a****Insulate more than 55,000 citizens in Al-Haimah district**

Jan. 16 — Rocks are still falling in Al-Haimah district from the rock-slides that started more than two weeks ago. More than 55,000 citizens are isolated in villages because the main road is cut. The rockslide is a result of the mines that are used to build streets, according to special geological engineers in the labor ministry. The slides damaged about 132,000 square meters of farmland and damaged houses, according to the chief of services committee in the local council at Al-Haimah district. He calls the special authorities to present support for the citizens still suffering the shortage of food.

**UNICEF meets Social Affairs Minister**

Jan. 17 — The Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, Amat Arazq Homed, met on Tuesday the representative of UNICEF, Abdul Kareem Edbagey. They discussed possibilities of support programs for children and efforts to combat violence against children. The minister appreciated the support from UNICEF in the field of social and welfare services. Edbagey affirmed his readiness to cover all concerned topics according to work plan during the coming years 2007-2011.

## Traders should stop strike: chamber

By: Yemen Times Staff

SANA'A, Jan. 17 — The Trade and Industry Chamber in Sana'a want traders to end their protest against the new sales tax law.

Chairman of the Trade and Industry Chamber in the capital, Mahfoudh Shammakh, said his chamber and the cabinet reached an agreement with regard to ending the traders strike.

He pointed out that the proposal, which was accepted by his chamber, came from Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal. The proposal was made to accelerate the collection of non-sale taxes as of the beginning of 2006 and forward the sales tax law to a world company in order to study it.

"Today the government is studying the proposal," Shammakh said, confirming that there are several options in case the proposal is not approved. "The strike, which paralyzed the capital city's markets, was staged by traders themselves without any approval from the concerned government parties."

"On Dec. 20 the Supreme Court rejected a request by the trade chamber's lawyer not to pass the sales tax law."

Secretary general of the Yemeni Society for Consumer Protection, Mahmoud Al-Nageeb, confirmed that many retailers have gone on strike in different parts of Sana'a in the last two days.

"The sales tax law will be passed on to a small number of wholesalers who in turn will regain what they pay via



The rising prices of some commodities, such as wheat and flour in the international markets, should have no influence on the price of foodstuff in the local markets such as eggs and other domestic products.

increasing prices when selling commodities to retailers," Al-Nageeb recounted.

"Indifference and carelessness of the government gave traders absolute freedom to raise prices of foodstuffs," said Al-Nageeb. "The prices of foodstuffs weren't increased in international markets, as traders claim."

However, the rising prices of some commodities, such as wheat and flour in the international markets, should have no influence on the price of foodstuff in the local markets such as eggs and other domestic products, according to Al-Nageeb.

Prices of foodstuffs go up and down in different world countries, but in Yemen it is impossible for prices to fall

after they increase, he said.

Yemeni consumers have become a victim of poor governmental policies and the greed of traders. They may no longer stand for continuing price hikes.

"I don't know the reason behind the new price hikes in foodstuffs. Our currency is so low. I have to work to sustain my family because neither the government nor tradesmen will give us anything. What can we do?" asked Saleh Abdullah Ubaid, 50.

"The reasons foodstuffs have become very expensive nowadays are the unwise policies of our government," said Nabil Noman, 22. "There's no supervision to control price rigging because we notice monopolizing of foodstuffs without clear reasons."

## Marches in Al-Dhala'e, arrests in Aden

Al-Dhala'e, Jan. 17 — Hundreds of citizens from Al-Dhala'e city demonstrated on Jan. 15 and blocked the main road linking Sana'a to Aden. The demonstrators asked for the release of detainees arrested by Al-Qalwa'a Police in Aden two days earlier, according to Ali Al-Shalal, a local citizen.

The demonstrators also blocked the road extending from downtown and for 2 km with big stones and building remnants and they set abandoned tires on fire.

According to Al-Shalal, the detainees protested against the Al-Qalwa'a Police who evicted a family from their house in which they lived for the past 14 years. The police treated the house owner in a bad manner and policemen hauled women out the

house before locals.

He added they will continue the demonstration until the detainees are set free and the house goes back to its owner.

Al-Shoura.net said that army and central security troops armed with weapons and anti-riot means were dispersed Tuesday morning in the town's streets, but the troops numbers decreased at night.

The same source spoke about a list of 10 to 15 political activists prepared by the security apparatuses to be arrested, accusing them of starting the demonstration during which citizens set abandoned tires aflame and blocked the road between Sana'a and Aden. The demonstration came to an end after the intervention of political and social personal-

ities and the local authority's promise to meet the demonstrator's demands.

There were no arrests by the military or security forces, fearing negative local reaction, according to sources.

Moreover, the security authorities in Aden set free last Tuesday Al-Dhala'e district's local council member Musad Othman Subirah, after he had been in jail together with other six people arrested last Sunday, following their return from the demonstration. The other six are still in jail under the pretext that they have not finished questioning them.

The sources also indicated that Aden's local council declared in a meeting that the house belongs to the family which they evicted three weeks ago.

## Yemen Airways adds new Airbus to its fleet

SANA'A, Jan. 16 — Yemen Airways held a meeting in Sana'a to discuss several issues related with its upcoming development plan. The plan includes the addition of six Airbus Model 350 to the company's fleet to enhance its operating capacity. The meeting assessed the company's performance during 2006 and the estimated budget for 2007.

The event was chaired by Cptn. Abdulkhaleq Al-Qadhi, chairman of the board of directors, and attended by the company's Yemeni and Saudi shareholders and Hani Mansour Aref, member of the company's board of directors and the general manager representing the Saudi side.

During the meeting, the participants discussed how to meet the growing demand of customers for transportation and cargo, as well as the progress of special studies on establishing an airway for domestic flights as required by the cabinet and the agreement with the Airbus Company to update the Yemenia fleet.

The meeting stressed the necessity of accelerating the establishment of a company for domestic flights and negotiating with manufacturers in



The meeting of Yemeni Airways board.

many countries producing air carriers.

The project's significance stems from establishing an airway for domestic flights to different parts of the country and supporting the moves for increasing investment projects in Yemen.

Prime Minister Abdulqader Bajammal and Aref discussed

reviewing the company's capital to enable it cope with developments in the air carriers industry and enhance its capacity to fulfil its promises to customers.

The discussion concentrated on completing the legal procedures with regard to registering the company, its capital and assets.

## TeleYemen offers its customers new services package

TeleYemen, the leading international telecommunications company, announced to its customers a new business service package in a meeting held Movenpick Hotel.

The meeting reflected the company's commitment of continue offering the most advanced technology and services to its clients, responding to the telecommunications needs of the market.

Company officials unveiled a number of new services targeting corporate clients. The CEO, Jean-Michel Latute,



the DCEO, Omar bin Shihab and the Chief Marketing Officer of the company, Jean-Michel Ranchon, made presentations, briefing the attendees about the new services TeleYemen provided for 2007.

Latute also spoke at length about the

## Jail escapee killed in shootout with security forces

SANA'A, Jan 16 — The security forces killed one of the political security jail escapees in a shootout on Sunday.

Yasser Al-Humaiqani was one of the top suspects wanted by the government for his involvement in terrorist plots, a Yemeni Interior Ministry official source said.

The security apparatuses listed Al-Humaiqani, from Sabah district, Abyan governorate, among the top terrorists who escaped from the political security detention.

An Interior Ministry official said security forces shot dead Yasser Al-Humaiqani in southern Yemen on Sunday. Two officers were wounded in the clash, he said.

Al-Humaiqani, an Al-Qaeda fugitive, escaped from the jail along with

other militants last year. A group of 23 militants tunneled out of the Sana'a-based political security jail in February 2006. Several members of the group have been killed or arrested, or have surrendered to authorities.

The fugitives included the leaders of the 2000 bombing of the U.S. warship Cole and the 2002 attack on the French Supertanker Limburg.

The jailbreak embarrassed the Yemeni government, which is battling Islamist militants, and raised questions about Yemen's security measures among its Western allies. In October 2006, the government troops killed Fawaz Al-Rabe'i and Mohamed Al-Tailami, two Al-Qaeda fugitives who were involved in terrorist operations in the country.

## Al-Jumhoriyah journalists accept solutions

TAIZ, Jan. 17 — Sameer Al-Yousofi, chairman of the government institution Al-Jumhoriyah Establishment for Publication, accepted some of demands from his journalists and editors, according to a press release.

The release also said the journalists, who were about to stage a sit-in, accepted the solutions.

"The problem has been resolved and a number of demands, included within the letter sent to Al-Yousofi by the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate in Taiz, were met," according to syndicate's administrative and financial official Emad Al-Saqqaf.

Al-Saqqaf, supported by syndicate's general rights ad freedoms official, hoped these demands would be an effective bylaw, from which other

media institutions can benefit.

Moreover, the release pointed out that Al-Yousofi directed the concerned administrations in his establishment to implement his instructions as of the beginning of January.

A journalist from Al-Jumhoriyah, who spoke on condition of anonymity said, "The bylaw agreed upon between the syndicate and his establishment is ambiguous and further it met just about 40 percent of their wished demands. However, we would accept it as a first phase."

Al-Jumhoriyah journalists started raising the red flag on Dec. 10 in protest against their bad situation which led them to despair and frustration and asked their colleagues across Yemen to support them.

## Continued from page 1

## Saleh denies tense relations with Kuwait

Yemeni-Kuwaiti relations recently have become tense after several individuals as well as both official and private newspapers have abused Yemeni leaders and its people following Yemen's announced stance on the hanging of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Previously, Yemen publicly called for not executing him and was the only nation to denounce his execution afterward.

Among Yemen's most outstanding critics is Kuwaiti Member of Parliament Muslim Al-Barak, who has disparaged Yemen harshly on numerous occasions.

He further accuses President Saleh of encouraging Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait again since "war was inevitable."

Al-Barak also says Yemen was the only nation that was against Kuwait's liberation and calls President Saleh "al-shawish" (a low-ranking official or door-keeper). He further alleges that Saleh conspired with Hussein to invade Kuwait in 1990 and refers to Saleh as the "Junior Saddam."

Most Kuwaiti newspapers published such charges following Hussein's execution, whereas Yemen has announced that it won't reply to such accusations.

## Al-Rohani accused of being Yemeni secret agent

Al-Rohani's lawyer, David Torres, stated to Bakersfield newspaper that the U.S. Attorney's Office has resorted to a new charge in an attempt to prevent the suspect's release after his relatives provided an estimated \$1 million in both mobile and immobile property as bail for his release under the court's demand.

Torres denied that his client, a businessman with trade stores, was spying for the Yemeni government. He pointed out that the case file didn't include such a charge in the beginning; however, the indictment says Al-Rohani purchased and conspired to transport military equipment and documents to his Yemeni homeland.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Carl Faller denied Torres's allegation, saying Al-Rohani established a Bakersfield branch of a Yemeni organization called, "The National Society for Yemeni Immigrants." As a leader of that organization, Al-Rohani received instructions directly from the Yemeni government, Faller said.

Operating out of his cigarette store on Rosedale Highway in Bakersfield, Al-Rohani bought military equipment from an undercover agent who told Al-Rohani the goods were stolen from the Army,

according to the indictment. The gear included bulletproof vests, night vision goggles and what Al-Rohani believed were sensitive military laptop computers.

According to the indictment, Al-Rohani originally raised suspicion in 2003 after a U.S. Customs officer discovered boxes addressed to Yemen filled with bulletproof vests, chemical protective suits and other military equipment.

"The Yemeni Embassy in Washington is following Al-Rohani's case," Yemeni Foreign Minister Abu Bakr Al-Qirbi said in a statement to News Yemen, noting that Al-Rohani's defense lawyer informed the Yemeni government that his client is accused of spying with the aim of detaining him. Al-Qirbi denied that Yemen was involved in any act of spying against the U.S.

Arrested Sept. 7 at his Bakersfield cigarette shop, Al-Rohani is one of three indicted Yemenis who had become U.S. citizens. A federal grand jury in Fresno, Calif., last year indicted Mohammed Al-Rahimi, 62, and Ibrahim A. Omer, 40, for illegally exporting sensitive military equipment, including body armor and chemical protective suits.

## Child issues need government attention: Shoura Council

Other studies on children's issues disclosed several reasons for the increasing number of street children, such as extreme poverty and lack of child care. For example, parents and relatives don't watch over children when they travel from the countryside to cities, thereby exposing them to exploitation and various types of abuse. Family disintegration, divorce and poverty are other reasons for increases in child laborers.

A field study found that Yemen is one of a handful of countries where children's issues are on the rise, mentioning that concerned parties' indifference toward such issues, coupled with families' deteriorating economic conditions, only serve to exacerbate the phenomenon.

A third study conducted by a Ministry of Education team on the gap between boys' and girls' education listed numerous reasons for Yemeni girls' illiteracy, particularly in rural and remote areas,

stating that such factors either are social, cultural or economic in nature.

"Despite strenuous government efforts to expand the scope of girls' enrolment in primary and secondary education, large numbers of girls are deprived of education or simply drop out of school," the study argued. "The school dropout phenomenon persists, even among boys, specifically in rural areas where dropouts account for 71 percent of Yemen's female school-aged population."

Observers interested in children's issues recommend the Yemeni government continue fighting child trafficking, child labor and school dropouts without highlighting such issues merely as propaganda to receive support from donor nations. They also urge civil community organizations and rights groups to play an important role in improving the state of Yemen's children.



# Baghdad bombs kill 105

By: Claudia Parsons  
and Alastair Macdonald

BAGHDAD (Reuters) — Bombers killed 70 people, many of them young women students, at a Baghdad university on Tuesday, one of the city's bloodiest days in weeks.

In all, at least 105 were killed in bombings and a shooting in the capital on a day when the United Nations said more than 34,000 Iraqi civilians died in violence last year. Four U.S. soldiers were killed in a bomb attack in northern Iraq.

The Shi'ite prime minister blamed the latest bloodshed in Baghdad on followers of Saddam Hussein. His fellow Sunni Arabs are angry at the botched execution of two aides on Monday, two weeks after the ousted leader was himself hanged to sectarian taunts from official observers, captured on an illicit video.

In Washington, U.S. President George W. Bush said the Iraqi government had "fumbled" Saddam's execution by making it look like a revenge killing.

Saying he had expressed disappointment to Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, Bush told PBS television: "I was pleased with the trials they got. I was disappointed and felt like they (Iraqi officials) fumbled the -- particularly the Saddam Hussein -- execution."

Outside the Mustansiriyah University in central Baghdad, a car bomb tore through students, most of them women, gathered waiting for vehicles to take them home. A suicide bomber then walked into a crowd at a rear entrance, killing more.

"The followers of the ousted regime have been dealt a blow and their dreams



The wreckage of vehicles lies on a road after a car bomb attack near a university in Baghdad, January 16, 2007. REUTERS/Mahmoud Raouf Mahmoud

buried forever," Maliki said in a statement. "So Saddamists and terrorists now target the world of knowledge and committed this act today against the innocent students of Mustansiriyah University."

The Education Ministry, whose employees and students have been frequent targets of what the United Nations report called Islamic extremists, issued a public appeal for blood for the 110 wounded and said the university would close until next week.

The bombings bore the marks of Sunni Arab insurgents. Many Sunnis were outraged by the latest hanging following a trial for crimes against humanity, and they saw the decapitation of Saddam's half-brother Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti by the noose as an act of revenge, not the mishap the Shi'ite-led government said it was.

## 34,000 dead

The United Nations, in its latest two-monthly human rights report on Iraq, said data from hospitals and morgues put the

total civilian death toll for 2006 at 34,452, 94 each day.

Comparable figures for previous years were not available but officials agree sectarian bloodshed has surged in the past year.

"Without significant progress on the rule of law, sectarian violence will continue indefinitely and eventually spiral out of control," the U.N. human rights chief in Iraq, Gianni Magazzeni, told a news conference.

Of the 6,376 civilians killed in the last

two months of 2006 -- 3,462 in November and 2,914 in December compared with a high of 3,702 in October -- three out of four were killed in Baghdad.

Maliki's government, which branded the last U.N. report as grossly exaggerated, has since banned its officials from giving casualty figures and the United States, which has run Iraq for four years, declined to vouch for the U.N. data.

Maliki and Bush are preparing a security crackdown in Baghdad, involving Iraqi and about 20,000 American reinforcements, which is widely portrayed as a last chance to avert a civil war between Sunnis and Shi'ites that could draw in Shi'ite Iran and Arab states on opposing sides.

Leaders of the Shi'ite majority say the plan to stifle militants with extra force, lasting six months or more, must break Shi'ite militias as well as Sunni rebels. Maliki has made that pledge before but Americans critical of Bush's new troop increase say they are sceptical he can deliver this time.

The White House said on Tuesday a planned non-binding congressional resolution against Bush's U.S. troop increase in Iraq could send a signal that America is divided on the war.

Some Bush critics on Capitol Hill think a non-binding vote is not enough. One Democrat with presidential ambitions, Sen. Chris Dodd of Connecticut, will unveil legislation on Wednesday demanding congressional approval for Bush's troop increase, Dodd's office said.

The Shi'ite deputy speaker of parliament said the new Iraq plan's failure would mean an end to American support for the system that has given Shi'ites their first taste of real power in the Sunni-dominated Arab world for centuries.

"One consequence may be a collapse of government," Khaled al-Attiya told Reuters. "I think all the Shi'ite parties are now aware of how dangerous the issue is. Bush...is still supporting the political process and the government. But I don't think that if this plan doesn't work...he can continue."

## Official apologizes to Guantanamo detainees' lawyers

By: JoAnne Allen

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - A Pentagon official who criticized American law firms for defending detainees at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay apologized in a letter to the editor published in The Washington Post on Wednesday.

Charles "Cully" Stimson, deputy assistant secretary of Defence for Detainee Affairs, said last week in a Washington radio interview he found it "shocking" that major U.S. law firms would agree to represent Guantanamo detainees pro bono.

He suggested they would suffer financially when corporate clients learnt of their involvement in Guantanamo cases.

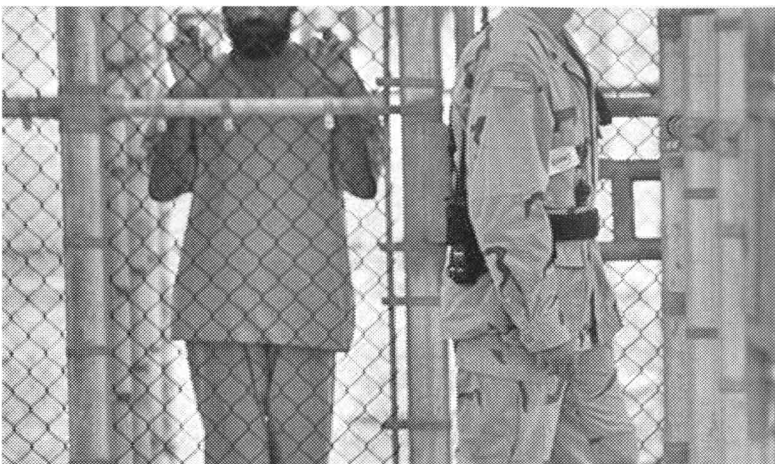
"Regrettably, my comments left the impression that I question the integrity of those engaged in the zealous defence of detainees in Guantanamo. I do not," Stimson wrote in response to the furore over his remarks.

"I apologise for what I said and to those lawyers and law firms who are representing clients at Guantanamo. I hope that my record of public service makes clear that those comments do not reflect my core beliefs," he wrote.

Stimson, himself a lawyer, also said he supports pro bono work and believes the legal system works best when both sides have competent legal counsel.

The apology followed condemnation in the legal community and a call on Tuesday for his ouster.

Four law organizations said in a letter to U.S. President George W. Bush that Stimson should be fired for remarks that were aimed at "chilling the willingness"



In this photo reviewed by U.S. military officials, a detainee whose name, nationality, and facial identification are not permitted, holds onto a fence as a U.S. military guard walks past the grounds of the maximum security prison at Camp 5 in the Guantanamo Bay U.S. Naval Base June 26, 2006. A Pentagon official who criticized American law firms for defending detainees at the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay apologized in a letter to the editor published in The Washington Post on Wednesday. REUTERS

of lawyers to represent Guantanamo detainees.

"The threats by Mr. Stimson are not subtle. They imply these pro bono lawyers are terrorists," read the letter signed by the American Association of Jurists, the International Association of Democratic Lawyers, the National Lawyers Guild and the Society of American Law Teachers.

The Pentagon had already disavowed Stimson's comments, but the legal groups said that was not enough.

"Mr. Stimson should be publicly admonished and relieved of his duties for making these allegations and threats," the organizations wrote.

The American Civil Liberties Union last week condemned what it called an administration attack on lawyers representing the detainees.

Neal Sonnett, president of the American Judicature Society, said Stimson's remarks were a "blatant attempt to intimidate lawyers and their firms."

About 50 U.S. federal public defenders are also representing Guantanamo detainees, pro bono, in habeas corpus petitions.

About 395 prisoners remain at the Guantanamo prison camp, suspected of al Qaeda and Taliban links.

More than 770 captives have been held at the facility, which opened five years

ago, soon after the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in response to the September 11 attacks on the United States. Only 10 detainees have charged with crimes.



## EMBASSY OF INDIA SANA'A REPUBLIC DAY 2007

The Embassy of India, Sana'a cordially invites all Indian nationals in the Republic of Yemen, along with their families, to join in the celebrations of 58th Republic Day of India on Friday, the 26th January, 2007 at the Embassy premises (Building No. 12, Djibouti Street, Off-Haddah Street, Sana'a). They are requested to assemble at the Embassy at 0900 hours.

### PROGRAMME

#### 0915 Hours

- Flag Hoisting
- National anthem
- Reading of the President's Address
- Patriotic Songs/ Cultural Events organized by the Indian Embassy School, Sana'a
- Refreshments

To all members of Indian Community in the Republic of Yemen

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  - (ii) It is requested that cameras/mobiles/bags etc. should not be brought inside the premises. Otherwise these will be kept at checking-point at owner's risk.

## UN to cut Eritrea-Ethiopia mission

The United Nations security council is planning to cut its peacekeeping force which monitors the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The UN wants the military force based on the disputed border cut from 2,300 to 1,700. Vitaly Churkin, Russia's UN envoy, said on Tuesday.

But Churkin, who chairs the security council this month, also said its members "generally support the extension of the [UN] mandate" which expires on 31 January.

Ethiopia and Eritrea went to war over the demarcation of their border in 1998. The two-year conflict killed an estimated 70,000 people.

### UN deployment

UN troops were first sent to Ethiopia and Eritrea in 2000 to enforce the cease-fire ending the border conflict.

As part of the peace agreement, both countries pledged to accept a new border as set out by an international commission.

But the new border has never been marked out after Ethiopia rejected part of it and Eritrea objected that Ethiopia was not being held to its word, leading to a four-year impasse.

The present UN deployment including 1,430 troops and support elements and 230 military observers.

### Growing regional instability

The Horn of Africa region has become increasingly unstable since Ethiopia last month poured troops into Somalia to drive out Islamist forces, backed by Eritrea, that had seized much of the country's south.

The United States has also recently bombed suspected al Qaeda targets near Somalia's border with Kenya.

In a resolution adopted last September, the UN warned Ethiopia and Eritrea that it would downsize the peacekeeping mission by the end of January if it saw no "demonstrated progress" on marking out the border.

Source: Aljazeera.net

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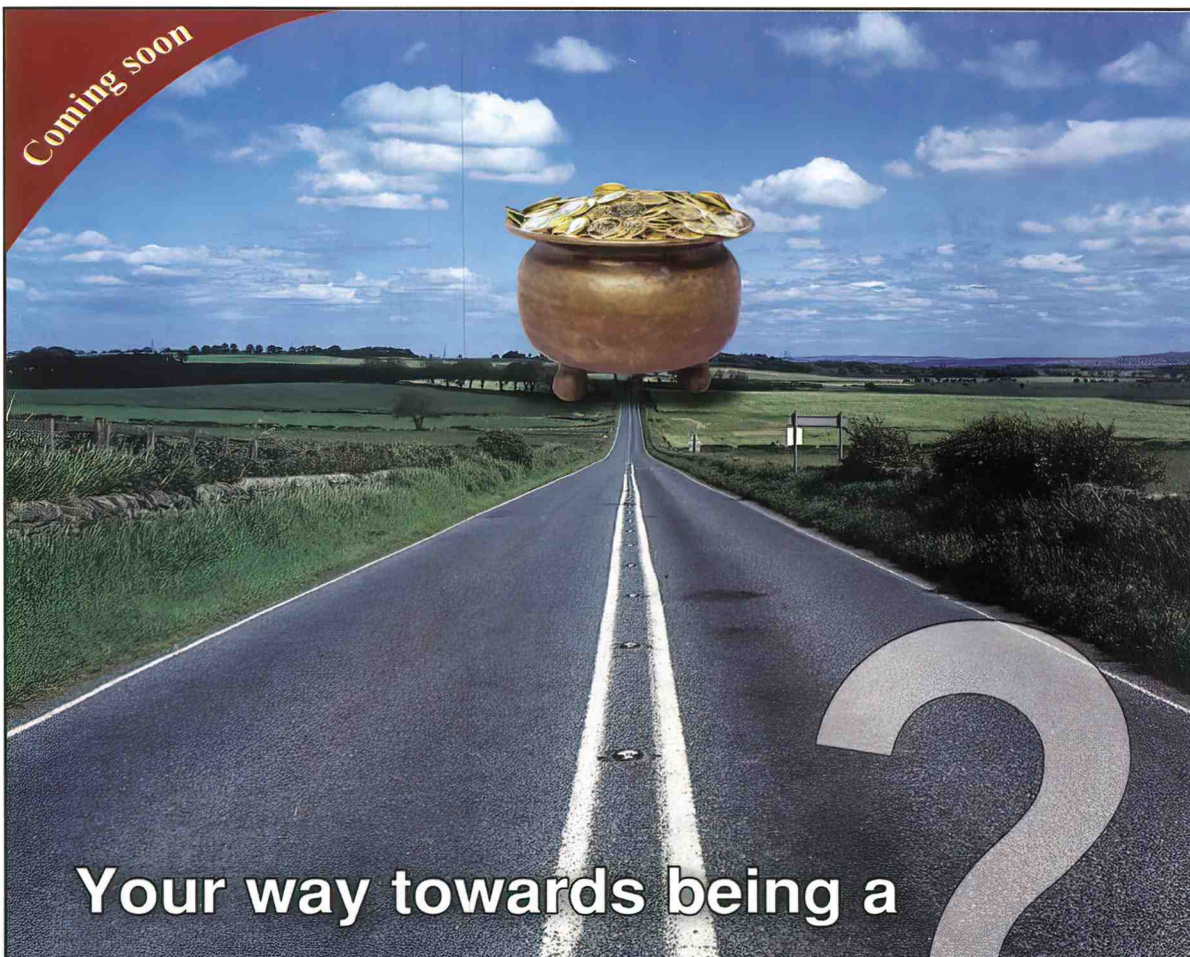
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# First female zone chief describes her experience

By: Aden Bureau

Selecting an eligible zone chief is of great importance because these societal personalities contribute to settling disputes between locals in various parts of Yemen. In Al-Khassaf, where the zone chief post was male-dominated, locals appreciate the way their female chief treats them. An Aden woman, Fikria Khalid Abdu Mohammed, changed the norm to become appointed zone chief in Al-Khassaf area in Sirah district.

To learn more about her experience, the Yemen Times asked Mohammed the following questions:

## How did area locals accept your appointment as their leader?

I'm one of the prominent societal personalities in Al-Khassaf area and I work in the Aden Social Affairs Office. I was shocked at the appointment decision, which was issued in January 2003 by former Aden governor, Dr. Yahya Al-Shu'aibi.

Locals were surprised by the decision because it was the first time a woman became a zone chief in Yemen. However, over time, I worked to serve the locals of my area, despite harsh criticism to which I was subjected. Residents later began to understand the importance of the zone chief's work because this individual works hard to serve the locals and settle any social disputes one by one.

## How do you manage the two tasks, your work in Aden's Social Affairs Office and your work as head of Al-Khassaf zone?

Of course, I manage to do both, as the two are concerned with social issues. However, the zone chief has other social tasks, such as following up issues concerned with water and electricity projects and health care, in addition to other charitable work that helps those of limited income gain a livelihood for their families.



Fikria Khalid Abdu Mohammed

A zone chief must be patient and tolerant, as well as understand how to address locals from different classes and families. Al-Khassaf is a large area whose residents suffer extreme poverty. For this reason, my duty is to help locals overcome poverty and lead a good life.

## As zone chief, what about your relationship with district and governorate leaders?

I always contact these leaders to tackle issues involving locals. Sirah district officials help me settle disputes between locals, as well as extend charitable aid to them.

## Following your appointment to head Al-Khassaf zone, do you think Yemeni women are granted all of their rights and have become equal to men in various political and social spheres?

Women in Aden and in Yemen remain oppressed and they aren't granted all of their rights. Many courses held in Aden so far have discussed numerous social issues, but one realizes that women's participation as zone chiefs is marginalized.

Additionally, the role of women was edged out during the most recent local elections, wherein women were used as voters, not as candidates. We

demand the Yemeni government enable women to exercise all of their constitutional and legal rights, as well as participate in political life.

We urge Aden governorate leaders to pay closer attention to zone chiefs, encourage them to do their best and not edge out their role. Zone chiefs work day and night and their homes always are open to hear issues and complaints by locals.

## Does the government pay you for your social work as head of Al-Khassaf zone?

We only receive YR 2,500-3,000 per month, which isn't enough because many zone chiefs are retired and receive very low pensions. We don't know why the government only gives YR 2,500 monthly when these individuals have long experience in their work. Such paltry payment doesn't motivate them to work harder; thus, we demand concerned parties reconsider the incentives owed to zone chiefs. Many youths are jobless, yet they work as zone chiefs for very low incentives.

## Can you tell us about your relationship with Sirah district's security apparatuses?

I have good relations with security authorities. The zone chief is one of those tasked with improving the area's level of security, which is why we intervene in some social issues, solving them via peaceful methods at Sirah district police stations.

## Do you face difficulties doing your work as head of Al-Khassaf zone and your domestic duties?

Every type of work has its own barriers. For example, we faced several difficulties while following up the water and sanitation project. Al-Khassaf is a popular zone whose residents have no access to water or electricity and most youth are idle, have no jobs and live in a state of extreme poverty.

Born in 1966 in Aden's Crater area, Fikria Khalid Abdu Mohammed is a married mother of three.

# Marriage and divorce: Can we invent a new Yemeni style?

For Yemen Times

**M**arriage: The union of two people, two families, two souls and two bodies that must work as one mind in synergy and synchronicity.

Divorce: The breakup of futures, disintegrating rotten pasts, incomplete hopes and broken promises.

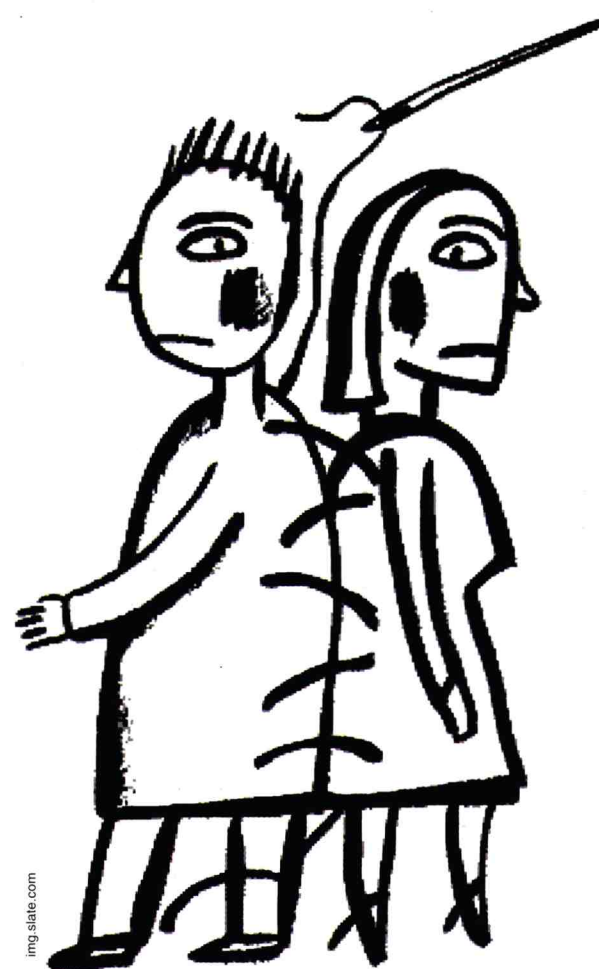
For one Yemeni family, it means a son again is depending on his mother and sisters to cook and clean up after him. In another, it means a daughter has returned empty-handed, brokenhearted, soulless and clueless about a future resembling the dusty streets of Sana'a.

And in yet another – countless Yemeni families, really – a horde of children now sit unaware of father or mother and unaware what impacts life's adult decision making has or will have upon them. Such children later will aim to recreate the very world they fell out of through no fault of their own beyond being born to two people who didn't understand the depth of their commitment to each other.

If every Yemeni of marriageable and divorceable age would have a fortnight-long dream wherein they went from married bliss to nightmarish divorce, stewed with the daily goings-on of life that would put them on the growing roster of talaq (divorce), maybe, just maybe, they'd tread more carefully when jumping onto the marriage/divorce bandwagon.

Because if one goes into it with memories of harsh or wrong words, arguments, missed opportunities to reconcile and the utter ridiculousness of Hollywood/Bollywood glamour – perpetual good looks, ageless beauty, perfectly made food dishes, instant gratification, me-and-only-me-first atrocities – one just might never marry!

On the other hand, if one truly



learned something from this hypothetical experience, at the very least, he or she would think 10 times before speaking or acting on anything the "monkey-like" mind might entice into reaching out for the ever-elusive golden branch beyond the blue yonder.

You'd be surprised at all the heartaches that could be avoided, as well as how many suggestions will come and go, but you won't act upon them because you know what road they'll lead you down.

Then again, are we Yemenis comfortable with such planning? Are we brave enough to understand that marrying off a son or daughter before age 18 without proper understanding of the real responsibilities of life actually is inhumane? That not teaching a child to project toward the future isn't against our religion so much as it's culturally unacceptable?

Can we at least agree that if we don't wake up and smell the coffee, we'll never leave the vicious, elliptical orbit we've launched ourselves into with our denials, disagreements and irresponsibility?

Let us face it, do we really know why we marry or have children? Ask a 24-year-old woman and compare it with a 12-year-old child and you'll instantly realize that the former is light years ahead of the latter because we deal with life according to our age and accumulated wisdom. For example, a 15-year-old will react like a 15-year-old, not like a 25-year-old and definitely not like a 35-year-old.

Do we marry off our children to get rid of or alleviate a burden, for money or status? What motivates such

marriages? If the one marrying ends up better than he or she was at home, then that's a triumph for everyone included in the enterprise; however, if the trajectory leaves one worse off than before, something isn't right.

Then again, marriage isn't a substitute for child or slave labor. At least with Yemeni children selling on the streets, we know they're working and being paid for their services. Child marriages, on the other hand, disguise the child labor part of the agreement – not between the two spouses, but between the child's father or mother, with payment not to the child directly but rather to the donating family.

Sorry, but that's slavery. It's human trafficking – a child bought and sold. It's slavery because the woman has nothing to call her own – not the house, the children or even the dowry, which by Islamic law is hers, not her father's.

# Nuclear energy in Yemen: A conceivable dream?

By: Shaima Mahmoud  
For Yemen Times

According to an economic magazine concerned with Middle Eastern affairs, at least six Arab nations are working on developing domestic nuclear energy programs to vary energy sources within their territory.

Middle East Economic Digest noted that Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Morocco and Algeria are interested in developing nuclear energy stations for water distillation purposes.

"The International Atomic Energy Agency held preliminary discussions with the governments of the abovementioned countries and pledged to offer them help as part of a technical consultative program to conduct a study on energy stations," the magazine reported.

It added that Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates also demonstrated their will and interest in producing nuclear energy, but such plans remain in their infancy.

During his two-month election campaign, Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh declared that Yemen would generate electricity using nuclear energy. Following his victory at the polls, Saleh confirmed that Yemen is serious about implementing the project, which raises the question: Can Yemen conduct such a project amid its failure to tackle numerous minor issues like unemployment, rampant corruption and slow development?

Yemen's declaration that it'll use nuclear energy to generate electricity coincided with Egypt's announcement to carry out a similar project in search of a more economical source of energy. Middle East Economic Digest indicated that Egypt's nuclear program is the best

in the Arab world and that Russia expects to participate in a tender to establish nuclear energy stations in Egypt. Algeria's plans are second in terms of development, according to the magazine.

Yemen Times surveyed citizens about whether they're convinced that Yemen is capable enough to conduct this project, as well as whether Yemen is serious about seeking alternatives to existing power sources.

Several politicians refused to comment on this subject, thus impeding efforts to enrich the topic with more information and determine whether there are serious steps to implement such a project.

"President Ali Abdullah Saleh is known to be fond of such talk," one police officer mocked, "He makes a new promise at every occasion because he knows well how to attract people to his side, irrespective of whether or not he'll fulfill his promises. I think Mr. President has forgotten that the project is merely part of his electoral campaign."

"What is nuclear energy? I don't understand it," university student Jamila Yahya asked. It seems many citizens don't know what nuclear energy is, nor do they know that such energy can generate electricity; consequently, they're unconcerned about what's being said.

However, dentist Jamila Al-Qadhi stated, "Such a project would be

possible to implement if Yemen had rulers like those in the U.A.E., Kuwait or Qatar, who are able to make change."

Administrative officer Hussein Al-Wajih holds a differing viewpoint, affirming that Yemen has changed a lot, compared to 10 years ago. All Yemeni people and its visitors have the same remarks and many Yemenis have no self-confidence that they can change their country for a better future like other Gulf states.

The Transparency International Index placed Yemen amid the world's three most corrupt nations: Iraq, Yemen and Somalia. "How can an energy generating project be conducted in a country suffering rampant corruption? Public spending isn't controlled and there's a real deficit in the state's general budget, coupled with Yemen's external debts," Abdulwahab Ali noted, "Where are the national projects that received much of the state's general budget?"

However, Nabil Al-Jedairi, a simple laborer who easily believes any official declarations, maintained, "I'm sure Mr. President wouldn't say anything unless he knows this thing is possible to do," thus implying that it's possible for Yemen to generate power using nuclear energy.

"I expect Yemen to be totally different after 10 years of development and fighting unemployment," university student Nisreen opined.

Generating energy remains a dream in both the developed and developing world, as well as amid globally skyrocketing energy prices.

Nuclear energy supplies world nations with 16 percent of their power, meeting 35 percent of public demand for electricity in European Union countries. In France, 77 percent of power comes from nuclear reactors, whereas in Japan, nuclear energy meets 30 percent of public demand for power.

In other countries like Belgium, Hungary, Slovakia, Switzerland,

Sweden, Ukraine and South Korea, nuclear energy meets one-third of public demand for electricity. Because Australia's power depends on coal, it doesn't have nuclear stations to generate electricity; rather, it only has stations to conduct nuclear energy

research.

A similar case can be seen in some Arab nations like Egypt and Algeria, which have nuclear stations for energy research, whereas Saudi Arabia and Morocco are interested in establishing nuclear stations for water distillation.



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# We are all responsible

Who is responsible for the bad situations the Arab citizen is suffering materialistically and morally? A question asked daily by millions of citizens living in the Arab homeland, which is meant and intended to be the Middle East. No doubt there are many answers for this question.

Most of the answers attribute the bad situations to invaders and forces of domination. They are correct answers, but the most important answer is still absent or rather floating on the surface of reality or flying in space. What I mean is the answer that makes each individual human in this Arab homeland is directly responsible for that is happening.

I admit personally that I am part of the bad situation in the Arab homeland as I am one of those who read and write and know about the intrinsic nature of things and issues and nevertheless keep silent about them out of fear rather than desire for not talking. If every Arab realized his responsibility and frankly admitted to the



By: Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh

are. But the first one responsible is the citizen. It is we who participate in the acceptability of others to conspire against us and destroy our dreams. The proof is that conspiracies in any country would not succeed unless there was the acceptance from its population that found among them those who market the conspiracy and let it pass, even by keeping silent.

Thus the responsibility becomes internal in the first place and the role of the remote enemy is by taking advantage of the opportunity and benefiting from acceptance. If we were immune patriotically and spiritually against it and refusing all secret machinations concocted by

situations we will be able to discover the right path. It is a matter of fact that the Arab homeland has outside enemies. Some people, especially those who are deemed weak, have enemies conspiring against them and preparing to attack them or to keep their poor situations as they

conspiracies they would not have succeeded and would not have been achieved on the ground whatever the effort the conspirators would have exerted and however strong they were.

We have to be confident that if we are faithful towards our homelands and peoples and admitted to the insincerity of holding the responsibility for what has happened and happening matters would have changed for the better. Each citizen would have felt that his responsibility dictates him to resist all that will open for evil and make situations bad. Recognition of the responsibility is the beginning of the real change and beginning of the aspired reform. There will be no change or reform unless the silent majority admits its responsibility for deterioration of the situation and bad conditions. The responsibility is not just a confession, but also vision, application and insistence on commitment and surmounting all that will keep our Arab societies in a deteriorated state.

A serious and deep reading of advanced peoples situations will reveal to us that the ordinary individual has a difficult role making for any power to break through. The ordinary individual's sense

of danger makes him aware of what will befall his homeland and people and consequently him personally. Despite that it seems the ordinary person is not interested directly in politics and its affairs and he remains awake and open-eyed and calmly watches whatever may destabilize public interest and the interest of his people.

We wonder where we are from or some of the awakening with which the individual in advanced peoples is distinguished. Those peoples however do not feel satisfied with what they have attained, but some of them, out of pride, endeavor to stretch their hegemony on less developed peoples and enter in bewildered searching for outlets protecting their independence and preserving their interests.

The state will remain as it is until each citizen in these peoples admit he is responsible for what is happening in our Arab countries and the disasters that are befalling them.

Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Maqaleh is Yemen's prominent poet and intellectual. He is the director of the Yemeni Center for Studies Source: Al-Thawra newspaper

## COMMON SENSE

### The terror of things to come

It is quite clear that Mr. George W. Bush has no intentions whatsoever of seeing any peace in this world. On the contrary the current White House Administration is vent on making sure that even at the close of his calamitous term in office, he will make sure that the next President of the United States will be so enmeshed in problems that it would probably take five subsequent administrations to clear them up or at least keep them under control so that they do not exacerbate into a frightening Armageddon created by the follies of man.

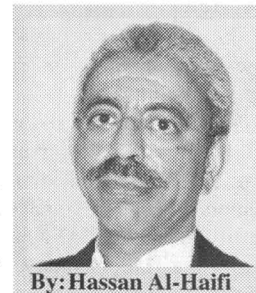
In any case, the observer is inclined to just watch and wonder at the perplexities that men can create out of a sheer desire to spread death, destruction and pain to serve the interests of evil interests that are ready to do anything to make sure that they continue filling their pockets or realize out of this world ambitions, disguised as spiritual dictates, at the expense of human suffering. When this selfish motive is sought after for a durable period, one can surely expect that this suffering will also be enduring, communicative and multiplied many times over, because it will spread like a venomous cancer without cure.

Even when the closest of advisers to the Bush Administration are saying, "No George, you cannot stay the course", because the course is really not taking anyone anywhere, neither the United States or any of its allies or the thousands of victims that are falling monthly for the sake of staying an endless "course", the White House continues to hit us with its clichés of war on terror and other corny totalitarian double think talk. The President of the United States makes it clear that no matter what anybody says, Zionist interests (sometimes disguised as Neo-conservatism, or right wing Evangelical doctrine or any spiritual or political cover) will prevail in the New Millennium and in all the millenniums to come. If anybody doesn't like it then they will fall to the cutting tongues of Abe Foxmann of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/14/magazine/14foxman.t.html?ex=1169442000&en=8a4feb19aea4d29a&ei=5070&emc=eta1>) or to the arm-twisting tactics of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and the many other horrendous "lobby groups" that serve the interests of the international Zionist Establishment – and only those interests – despite the American flags on the lapels of their jackets.

In the final analysis, one is convinced that the American people have, for all intents and purposes, lost control over their destinies, as Walt and Hearsheimer of both the Universities of Chicago and Harvard and the many other concerned Americans, have said, as they helplessly watch their country is being railroaded into one quagmire after another, without purpose or without justification, except that it fulfills the long-term interests of Zionist ideologues of the likes of Benjamin Netanyahu and the military industrial complex (of course as a secondary cause d'être only). Even former President Jimmy Carter clearly suggested that America is not only losing sight of where its true interests lie, but where the moral convictions of the founding fathers of the United States have become distorted beyond rational grounds. To confirm the stranglehold that the Zionist lobby has on all facets of American public life, the Zionist lobby let out its sword on the former crusading president and lashed out with the usual diatribes of "bigot", anti-Semite and all those evil concoctions that the Zionist establishment has engrained in the media world as worse off than bowing to Satan on the Day of Judgment.

Therefore, it looks like the world is in for growing troubles, not only in the Middle East, but in Chad, Somalia, Tunis and Algeria as the terrorists, which the Bush Administration is supposedly chasing, are given new grounds to unleash their bloody nuisance to further give justifications for further Zionist intrigues under the guise of avenging the victims of 9/11 and the other acts supposedly unleashed against US interests (such as the latest attacks against Somalia). In such a setting, prayer seems to be the only relief open to men (and women) of good conscience.

Hassan Al-Haifi has been a Yemeni political economist and journalist for more than 20 years.



By: Hassan Al-Haifi

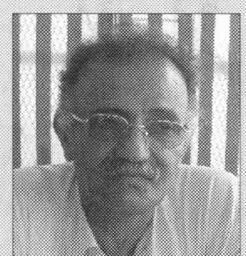
## Palestine, the erosion of dreams

The Palestinian thinker Edward Saeed had keen insight when he distanced himself from the Palestine Liberation Organization under the leadership of Abu Ammar and embarked on criticizing the Oslo and Madrid agreements and what they produced.

The Oslo and Madrid agreements, similar to Camp David, represent the retreating line in the Arab Palestinian cause. The great fault of those agreements is that they depended on promises more than the dependence on genuine references. They have also reclined on dividing an issue of destiny and postponed the comprehensive and just solution to a third stage, whereas the Israeli Shylock did not commit himself or implement the first stage of the agreement.

The Palestinian elections at the beginning of 2006 exposed many things; among them is the truthfulness of the American administrations intention of democratization of the Middle East region. When Hamas won the Palestinian elections in a free and decent way, acknowledged by America and Europe, they began to put batons in the wheels of Hamas's movement and brand it with terror and then imposed a killing blockade against the Palestinian people, preventing salaries, medicines and life.

The American tyranny has forced the entire world to literally commit to blockading the Palestinians and the Arab regimes at the forefront of those committed to the blockade and leaving for Israel the freedom of killing the Palestinians through repeated invasions, assassinations and sustainable war. Egypt has practiced eye-catching pressures on the Palestinians to accept the Israeli and American dictates. The more dangerous is that the leadership of Abu Mazin's Fatah that reluctantly accepted the result of the elections has, since the first day,



By: Abdulbari Taher

begun refusing a government of national unity. Hamas leadership also provided that with its ambiguous slogans and inaccurate distinguishing between armed struggle and legitimate right and terrorist acts aimed at civilians, unstudied and random acts. Thus everything has mixed with everything.

The Palestinian cause is passing the most dangerous stages. The internal conflict is pivoting around the authority. Hamas wants to keep the main ministries, without estimating the danger of the blockade and suffering of the people who are exposed to a war of annihilation and ethnic cleansing as well as uprooting their existence and identity and national soil. Ideological blindness and belief of political right hides from it the real sight of the people's suffering and torture. Fatah leadership on the other hand leans on legitimacy of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and maybe it benefited by feeling strength by virtue of the external pressure on Hamas. Fatah leadership also demands for the major ministries not just lift the blockade, but also invest its control on those ministries in imposing its reading of peace with Israel and to continue to offer the almost free concessions in return for futile peace promises. So the power conflict in the besieged country exposes people to killing and their land to dismemberment and effacement of identity, a matter seriously dangerous and damaging. The Arab stance, which supports the authority, the American and European stance, siding with Israel and antagonistic to the Palestinian national hopes, also contribute to increase the rage of the sedition fire among the Palestinian leadership.

Undoubtedly, the illusions with which Olmert waves about peace and showing elasticity for other certain objectives pushed the Palestinian conflict to its farthest extent. The Israeli state, which

assassinates life in Palestine, displaces the sons of the Palestinian people and builds the apartheid wall, cannot accept the retreat to the borders of June 5 or the return of the Palestinian refugees or the establishment of a Palestinian state with full sovereignty.

The indicators of the danger of the internal fratricide have become clear in their features. There are now the states of security disorder reaching the extent of killing children, repeated kidnappings, every now and then armed confrontations and the exchanged language of deeming each other as traitors and infidels are collectively images of the current catastrophic state. The only beneficiary is the Israeli enemy that promises with crumbings as a price for the fighting of Palestinian brothers.

The dilemma is that the reasonable parties and the voice of reason is steadily getting weaker with the increase and rising of the voice of sedition, distribution of accusations and arbitration to force for solving issues of dispute where force is not needed. When the dispute is focused on sharing the imaginary power shackle with occupation and killed by blockades, logic is lost and opportunists are able to jump to the front to push back the forces of more moderate reasonableness.

The victory of Hamas in the Parliamentary elections was a punishment for the leadership of Fatah that was drowned in corruption and ran after illusions in which both the occupation and the American ally participated, in addition to some Arab regimes. But victorious Hamas did not read the message well and has not realized the danger of the blockade against the Palestinian people and depth of the suffering of people facing war and starvation and erosion of hope. Hamas accepted the establishment of the Palestinian state within the borders of June 1967 and accepted a long truce with Israel and its address was in harmony with the address of Fatah. The power struggle was naked from any ideological or political cover. The dispute over power can be solved in agreement on a government of national unity guaranteeing a balance decision-making and to allow lifting the blockade against the people who have been suffering tragedies of war for more than half a century and are deprived of bread, medicine, security and peace.

What is more important in building a state of national unity is the agreement on common denominations, determination of forms and ways of struggle, beginning with words and ending with the use of weapons and confrontation with colonization alleging the historical right to possess land.

Since the beginning of the Aqsa Intifada, Hamas worked for the militarization of the second intifada, but it has shown disinterest in the democratic and

peaceful struggle. It has mixed, or rather did not distinguish between, the rightful and legitimate armed struggle and the rejected terrorism which affects civilians. It has tried to give this bloody conflict a religious dimension leading in the end to confirm the Zionist and American claims that the conflict is religious. As a result this decision weakened international sympathy with the Palestinian right to sovereignty, independence and to build their national entity.

The Parliamentary elections of 2006 have revealed the power of the Hamas movement which is adherent to the political Islam. Moreover the internal political adversaries between the movement of Fatah and Hamas contributed to affirm the charge of terror and the retreat of the Arab popular support for an issue that was at the entire Arab's central cause. The betting began in international parties and conflicting axis: America, Europe, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Egypt on the one hand and with Iran and Syria on the other hand.

The tragic thing is that the suffering of the Palestinian people has changed into a field of blind conflict and the Arab-Israeli conflict changed into a Palestinian-Palestinian conflict. Israel appears as the only democratic state capable of controlling the rhythms in the Middle East as a whole. The question is whether Abu Mazin and his team will topple the government of Hamas or the call for early election.

Abdulbari Taher is a Yemeni Journalist and the former chairman of Yemeni Journalists Syndicate. Source: Al-Nidaa Newspaper

## Letters to the Editor

### Historic manuscripts

I am from Singapore and I work with museums and private collectors of Islamic art around the world. As many of these museums and collectors are looking at expanding their collections of Islamic artefacts, which include Qurans and other manuscripts for the year 2007, I am working closely with editors in many countries like Egypt and India where there is a large number of Qurans and manuscripts that are usually written centuries ago and are extremely sought after in the arts market. As these edi-

tors know their countries very well, we always work together in getting people who would like to sell their centuries old Islamic artefacts to museums and collectors around the world.

I would be very happy to work with you if there is anybody in Yemen who would like to see his or her artefacts, which are often family heirlooms, exhibited at some of the world's top museums and in the collection of prominent private collectors.

Syed Fahmi Shahab  
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SKETCHED OPINION



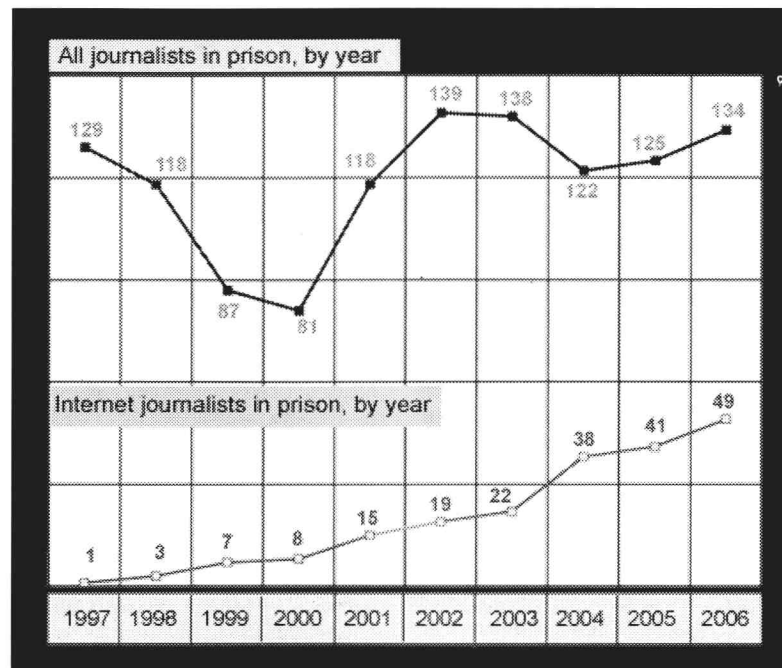
By Samer A.



# Internet fuels rise in number of jailed journalists CPJ census also finds more held without charge or due process

New York, December 7, 2006—The number of journalists jailed worldwide for their work increased for the second consecutive year, and one in three is now an Internet blogger, online editor, or Web-based reporter, according to an analysis by the Committee to Protect Journalists. CPJ's annual worldwide census found 134 journalists imprisoned on December 1, an increase of nine from the 2005 tally. China, Cuba, Eritrea, and Ethiopia were the top four jailers among the 24 nations who imprisoned journalists. Print reporters, editors, and photographers continue to make up the largest professional category, with 67 cases in 2006, but Internet journalists are a growing segment of the census and now constitute the second largest category, with 49 cases. The number of imprisoned journalists whose work

appeared primarily on the Web, via e-mail, or in another electronic form has increased each year since CPJ recorded the first jailed Internet writer in its 1997 census. The 2006 figure is the highest number of Internet journalists CPJ has ever tallied in its annual survey. The roster of jailed Internet journalists includes China's "citizen" reporters, the independent Cuban writers who file reports for overseas Web sites, and the U.S. video blogger Joshua Wolf who refused to hand over footage to a grand jury. "We're at a crucial juncture in the fight for press freedom because authoritarian states have made the Internet a major front in their effort to control information," CPJ Executive Director Joel Simon said. "China is challenging the notion that the Internet is impossible to control or censor, and if it succeeds there will be far-ranging implications, not only for the medium but for press freedom all over the world." Over all, "antistate" allegations such as subversion, divulging state secrets, and acting against the interests of the state are the most common charges used to imprison journalists worldwide. Eighty-four journalists are jailed under these charges, many by the Chinese, Cuban, and Ethiopian governments. But CPJ also found an increasing number of journalists held without any charge or trial at all. Twenty imprisoned journalists, or 15 percent, have been denied even the most basic elements of due process, CPJ found. Eritrea, which accounts for more than half of these cases,



keeps journalists in secret locations and withholds basic information about their well-being. The United States has imprisoned two journalists without charge or trial: Associated Press photographer Bilal Hussein, now held for eight months in Iraq without due process; and Al-Jazeera cameraman Sami al-Haj, jailed five years and now held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. "In Cuba and in China, journalists are often jailed after summary trials and held in miserable conditions far from their families. But the cruelty and injustice of imprisonment is compounded where there is zero due process and journalists slip into oblivion. In Eritrea, the worst abuser in this regard, there is no check on authority and it is unclear whether some jailed journalists are even alive,"

Simon added. For the eighth consecutive year, China is the world's leading jailer of journalists, with 31 imprisoned. About three-quarters of the cases in China were brought under vague "antistate" laws; 19 cases involve Internet journalists. China's list includes Shi Tao, an internationally recognized journalist serving a 10-year sentence for posting notes online detailing propaganda department instructions on how to cover the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square crackdown. The government declared the instructions a "state secret." Cuba ranked second, with 24 reporters, writers, and editors behind bars, most of them jailed in the country's massive March 2003 crackdown on dissidents and the independent press. Nearly all of those on Cuba's list had filed news and commentary to overseas Web sites. These journalists used phone lines and faxes, not computers, to transmit their reports; once posted, their articles were seen across the world but almost never in Cuba, where the government heavily restricts Internet access.

Eritrea is the leader among African countries, with 23 journalists in prison. These prisoners are being held incommunicado, and their well-being is a growing source of concern. A non-

bylined report, circulated on several Web sites in August and deemed by CPJ sources to be generally credible, claimed that three of the journalists may have died. CPJ and other international organizations have urgently sought information from Asmara, but the government has refused to provide basic facts about the journalists' whereabouts, their health, or whether they are still alive. Neighboring Ethiopia has imprisoned 18 journalists, most of whom are being tried for treason after being swept up by authorities in a November 2005 crackdown on dissent. A CPJ investigation in April found no basis for the government's treason charges. Burma, which is holding seven journalists, is fifth among nations, followed by Uzbekistan, which is holding five journalists. The United States, Azerbaijan, and Burundi are seventh on the list of nations, each having jailed three journalists. Here are other trends and details that emerged in CPJ's analysis:

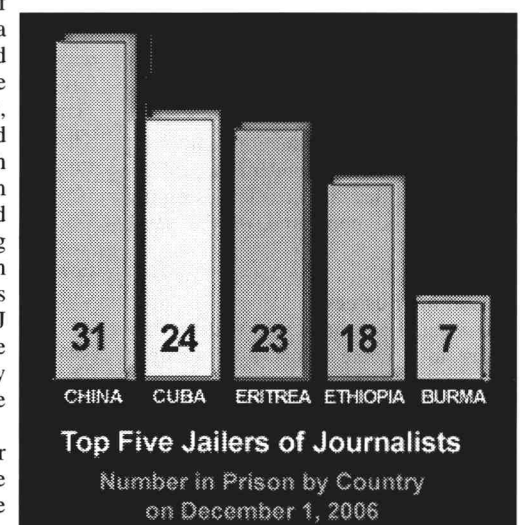
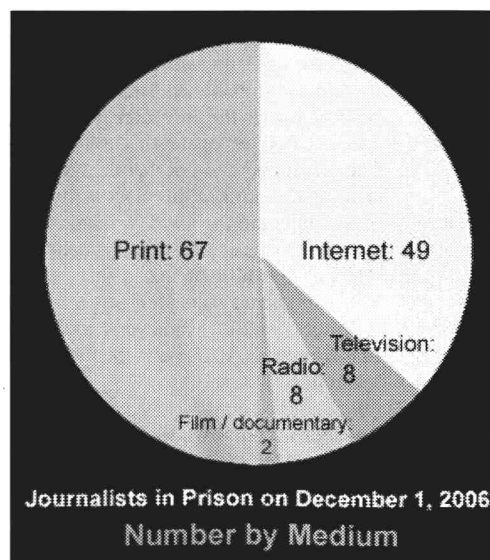
- In about 10 percent of cases, governments used a variety of charges unrelated to journalism to retaliate against critical writers, editors, and photojournalists. Such charges ranged from property damage and regulatory violations to drug possession and association with extremists. In the cases included in this census, CPJ has determined that the charges were most likely lodged in reprisal for the journalist's work.
- Spreading ethnic or religious "hatred" was the next most common charge used to imprison journalists worldwide. Such charges were lodged in about four percent of cases.
- Criminal defamation charges were filed in about three percent of cases, a slight decline from the rate recorded in recent years. A growing number of nations, particularly in Western Europe, have moved to decriminalize defamation and insult.
- Violations of censorship rules account for another three percent of

cases. Burma, for example, jailed two journalists in March for violating prohibitions on photographing or filming the country's new capital, Pyinmana.

The longest-serving journalists in CPJ's census were Chen Renjie and Lin Youping, who were jailed in China in July 1983 for publishing a pamphlet titled Ziyou Bao (Freedom Report). Codefendant Chen Biling was later executed.

CPJ believes that journalists should not be imprisoned for doing their jobs. The organization has sent letters expressing its serious concerns to each country that has imprisoned a journalist. In addition, CPJ sent requests during the year to Eritrea and U.S. officials seeking details in the cases in which journalists were held without publicly disclosed charges.

CPJ's list is a snapshot of those incarcerated at midnight on December 1, 2006. It does not include the many journalists imprisoned and released throughout the year; accounts of those



## Waging war or winning peace

By: Prince Hassan bin Talal

Once again the region rings with the all too familiar cries of hatred, anger violence and bloodshed. It seems we have become unable to disable violence – whether the perpetrators be state or non-state actors. Where is the voice of reason or the eye that sees beyond the immediate? Where is the ear that is prepared to listen?

Only last September at the UN World Summit, world leaders agreed in an historic statement that states have a primary responsibility to act to protect their own populations and that the international community has a responsibility to act when these governments fail to protect the most vulnerable among us. Yet what we are witnessing today in Lebanon, in Palestine, in Iraq and in Afghanistan is no less than the punishment of the powerless, escalating humanitarian crises of mammoth proportions, coupled in Lebanon with the destruction of the very infrastructure of civilised existence.

We are a dishonest lot in the Middle East. Maddened by grievances real and perceived, each of us clamours to call for peace when we have all, through trauma and intransigence, become mesmerised by war. We may fool our media allies from far away, or fulfill the requirements of sloganeers who do not share our air and soil, but we know, you and I, that lasting peace will only come when we look each other in the eye and translate hatred into words that begin a difficult conversation. The people of Israel have made an easy decision not to talk to extremists. Perhaps the bravest step is to engage with moderates and acknowledge that our troubled neighbourhood needs the courage of compassion and the wisdom of longer-term self-interest to undo the damage of macho militarism. The gunfire around us makes it even harder to hear the voices of our marginalised communities. Honesty is the only way to save our grandchildren from the fear and asphyxiation of hope, which we have all known for so long. Our clustered cities of Amman and Tel Aviv, Beirut and Damascus are too close to each other to avoid a tangled future. We, the Children of Abraham, may claim to look in different directions for culture and custom, spirituality and succour, but this small patch of scorched, embattled earth cannot be divided by fences and false bor-

ders of the mind. If the political play does not allow us to admit this to those whose map of our region is distorted by self-interest and misguided strategic obstinacy, then at least let us have the sense to admit it to each other. Enlightened self-interest must compel us to foster human dignity and integrity by addressing the full spectrum of basic human rights, spanning from the rights of children to full respect for the rule of law on a national, regional and international level.

The events of the past three weeks have brought us to the edge of the abyss. They are the result not of timeless and inevitable conflict, but of intransigence, fear and a shocking lack of creativity by leaders in our region and beyond. The indiscriminate loss of life on all sides has polarised our populations and shown diplomacy for the devalued and scorned art it has become. The focus on polemics and the ensuing escalation of violence has sidelined the very real and dangerous concerns that underlie our region's spiralling decline.

Aggressive ideology is nurtured by an increasing lack of economic equality, poor social mobility, a denial to many of human security and the exclusion of the silenced majority. It is evident to us all that military might cannot cure the evils of our region. Violence begets violence and the mass bombings of civilians can only result in increased use of terror tactics further down the line.

It has become exceedingly clear that the current crisis requires the application of a two-fold solution if we are ever to hope for a secure and stable peace for all our citizens. The conflicts that rule our daily lives must be addressed at the political level but we cannot afford to ignore the effects of military overkill on basic humanitarian issues. Human rights are the first casualties of war and the degradation of human dignity in our region has undone generations of agreement and convention on the rights of civilians to protection and wellbeing. The anger and trauma created by hundreds of dead and injured and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians so far can only have violent repercussions for a hitherto democratic, pluralistic and multicultural Lebanon reality. The shockwaves are felt by our entire region.

The continued reliance on violence to tackle problems created by a ruthless ignorance of the right to economic and

existential security of civilian populations can only succeed in handing over to extremists on all sides the power to represent our grievances. A Conference for Security and Cooperation in the region must be a priority for our leaders if human security is ever to become a reality. Diplomatic avenues must be opened and explored and this arduous process should include Syria and Iran. War and its tragic repercussions are inclusive of all, surely a model for peace should strive for such inclusiveness.

In memory of my late brother, HM King Hussein and PM Yitzhak Rabin, we must strive not to wage wars, but to win peace. Real peace must be built, it is not just the absence of war. We need immediately to call a Conference for Security and Co-operation to talk about the endgame, to develop regional understanding, to address the energy issue that is at the heart of so much instability and to devise a multilateral approach to such thorny issues as the proliferation of WMD, together with a regional concept for human rights, prosperity and security. Ideally, it could lead to a regional Code of Conduct and a Cohesion Fund that establishes principles of common interest, responsibility, transparency and a collective defence identity, reflecting the fact that interdependency is the reality today. Anthro-centric policies, policies where people matter, is the way to close the human dignity divide. Through good governance, we must empower the poor and dispossessed who find expression for their frustrations in extremist ideology.

The upcoming Rome Conference must firmly commit to supplanting unilateralist policies with regional strategies with the final aim of drawing up a comprehensive Regional Stabilisation Pact. The sooner a cessation of hostilities is achieved and international peacekeeping forces are deployed on both sides of the border, the sooner a collective strive towards institutionalised regional stability can begin. I cannot emphasise enough the need for diplomacy to transpire violence and this call echoes President Eisenhower's appeal that the "table, though scarred by many past frustrations, cannot be abandoned for the certain agony of the battlefield."

Prince Hassan Bin Talal, Author brother of the late King Hussien of Jordan, is president of the Arab Thought Forum.

## Palestine's necessary civil war

By: Barry Rubin

Regardless of the latest hastily negotiated truce, the battle between nationalist Fatah and Islamist Hamas seems to be gaining intensity. Palestinian politics, always self-destructive, has reached new heights of internal conflict, pulling the population deeper into disorder and pushing them further away from statehood.

The movement's remarkable ability to sabotage itself is not new. In the late 1960's, the PLO, led by Fatah, antagonized its Jordanian hosts until they expelled it by force. During the 1970's, the PLO entered Lebanon's civil war, wearing out its welcome there. The sole issue on which Israel, Syria, and Lebanese political leaders agreed in the 1980's was that the PLO should be thrown out of Lebanon. During the 1990's, the PLO botched its opportunity to govern the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, create a stable and development-oriented regime there, and make peace with Israel.

Rejecting a deal with Israel in 2000, Fatah instead launched a violent revolt that has lasted ever since then, destroying the infrastructure built up in the Palestinian territories during the previous decade. Massive foreign aid was stolen, squandered, or wrecked by unnecessary violence.

When Yassir Arafat, the perennial PLO, Fatah, and Palestinian Authority leader, died, Palestinians in theory had a chance to end this history of disasters. Yet Arafat's replacement, Mahmoud Abbas, was a colorless, not particularly strong figure with no real political or military base of his own.

During the 1990's, as the challenge from Hamas steadily grew, Arafat thought he could use the Islamists – after all, he was basically one himself – and refused to curb them. He was notorious

for refusing to build strong institutions. So once Arafat died, the roof caved in on Fatah.

Three main factors brought Hamas into leadership in the January 2006 parliamentary elections. First, Arafat's legacy left Fatah and the PLO completely undisciplined. Its deep divisions meant that Fatah candidates split the vote and ensured a Hamas landslide.

Second, Fatah never gave Palestinians any alternative vision. Apart from a few scattered speeches – some by Abbas himself – it never accepted peace and compromise. In this respect, Fatah was not much different from Hamas, and the two competed to prove who waged terrorism better and was more militant.

Finally, Fatah did a terrible job at governing, bringing Palestinians neither material benefits nor a state. Instead, it brought massive corruption and administrative incompetence, together with breathtaking arrogance. When I predicted Hamas's victory before the election, Fatah's campaign manager replied, "Everyone will vote for Abbas and everything will be all right." But while Abbas remains chief executive, Hamas controls the parliament and the government.

Yet Fatah was hardly going to give up. One of Fatah's few remaining assets is that the West, horrified by Hamas's more open hate-mongering and extremism, has largely boycotted the new Palestinian regime and cut off aid. With Hamas allied to Iran and Syria, Fatah has seemed more attractive in geopolitical terms.

On this issue, however, there are unfortunate realities that few will admit. Instead, the West continues to believe that there is still a chance of Arab-Israeli peace, that this problem is the region's centerpiece, that Hamas might become more moderate, and that Fatah and Hamas can somehow create a government of national unity.

People of good will who want a real negotiated solution, with Israel and

Palestine living peacefully as neighbors, simply don't want to face the fact that any such deal is now decades away. In Palestinian politics, total victory and Israel's destruction is still preferable to an honest assessment that this goal is unattainable, terrorism must be abandoned, and law and order must be imposed.

But Fatah is almost as extreme as Hamas. Anarchy rules, and there is no one with the vision and strength to end it. Dozens of international plans and proposals collapse one after the other. The current "ceasefire" with Israel is violated by the daily of salvos of missiles fired from Gaza, while ceasefires among Palestinians have typically been broken by gunfire and assassination attempts within a few hours.

Now Abbas has called for new elections, which Hamas rejects, and it seems unlikely that he has the capacity to impose his will. Many people advocate the simple expedient of "strengthening Abbas" as a moderate, but one cannot strengthen a wet noodle.

The irony is that real change could come about only from a civil war won by moderates. But the Palestinians are not engaged in a civil war pitting moderates versus extremists. The reciprocal low-level violence between Hamas and Fatah is simply a struggle fueled by greed and patronage. There are limits to how far that struggle will go, but the Palestinians are not going to stop fighting among themselves or against Israel.

This is an unfortunate truth. But recognizing it is crucial to understanding why no political solution works, and why every clever plan to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian or inter-Palestinian conflicts fails.

Barry Rubin is director of the GLORIA Center at Israel's Interdisciplinary University and editor of the Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA). Source: project syndicate.



# General Sales Tax: A difficult dilemma?

By: Raidan Abdulaziz Al-Saqqaf  
alsaqqaf@gmail.com  
And Mahyoub Al-Kamali

A way from politics and partisan quarrels, what is the big idea behind General Sales Tax? And what are the secrets behind the unrest associated with the announcement of enforcing this law which was first approved four years ago and has been delayed more than once? While businessmen continue to challenge this law and threaten to go to the streets en masse especially since the public are already concerned about the implications of the tax and expect a price hike once the tax is enforced.

The tax has been enforced in spite of the delay, the delay which was for political reasons according to Mohammed Al-Afandi, director of Center for Strategic Research, reasons seem to be associated with the political support of businessmen for President Saleh as well as funding his elections campaign with YR 1 billion last September.

In line with that, Noman Al-Suhaibi, director of the Tax Authority, indicated that the fuss on the issue of the sales tax is unreasonable, especially since the law was first legislated in 2001 and was delayed on more than one occasion in order to allow the business community to understand the law and prepare to deal with it in a systematic manner. They could get their accounting books up-to-date so taxation can become an organized affair. He also added that there will not be an actual burden as this law is a replacement of the 1991 law for taxing production and consumption, with the fundamental difference being that the new law is highly sophisticated compared to the 1991 law.

## Good for Business

Al-Suhaibi also indicated that the law aims to regulate business transactions and also provide information on the different stages and level of business in such a manner that allows the government to monitor and control prices and availability of commodities in a highly transparent manner, which acts in the favor of the consumer. However, several businessmen see the new law as a cut



General Sales Tax is perceived as an additional cost to the business community

in their profitability as it will not allow them to play the market and manipulate prices through controlling the supply of goods, which was possible under the 1991 act as it only taxed goods upon entry to the country or production. It left businessman free to do anything thereafter and price them according to what he sees fit. The new law will keep a constant eye on the movement of goods.

The new law also motivates businessmen to take the lead in the process by being proactive, as business enterprises can voluntarily calculate tax and deposit it into bank accounts without having someone from the tax authority visit them and follow their tax payment. This mechanism will not only curb corruption, but it would also save time and resources of both the enterprise and the tax authority while maintaining high levels of transparency and clarity and in turn making business operations run smoothly.

## Tax Avoidance

The General Sales Tax law also aims at curbing tax avoidance by forcing business enterprises which annual sales exceed YR 50 million (YR 40 million for service-based enterprises) to maintain sound accounting records and to keep record of all financial transactions. This law will make the amount of

tax clear. The law also forces businesses to provide annual statements describing the size of their operations, coupled with the mechanism in place to allow voluntary calculation of tax on the part of the businesses by submitting monthly or annual reports on their operations, while the tax authority would acknowledge receipt of those reports and check for cases of fraud or tax avoidance.

The ironic issue regarding this law is that the government has said that only 1500 businesses will be affected by the law. They are large enterprises which annual sales exceed YR 50 million or YR 40 million for service-based enterprises. Those businessmen say that once this tax law is enforced prices will raise by 5 to 10 percent, in spite of the removal of other taxes from the 1991 tax law. At that time prices of most goods were hiked including several food commodities, which were exempted from taxes under the new law. Therefore the eventual cost of this law is faced by local consumers who are manipulated by the business community with no attention given to their suffering from the authorities.

Al-Suhaibi also indicated that the new law does not provide additional yield for the government, as it comes only as a replacement for the 1991 tax law, with a difference that new taxes will be imposed on the sale of acces-

sories and recreational products which are used by limited numbers of people in the upper segments of the society. The new tax has also allowed 300 goods to be sold tax-free falling within 27 categories including food and agricultural products and medicines, in addition to 17 basic services such as power, water and fixed phone services.

## Businessmen Objections

Director of the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce, Mahfoud Shammakh, says that after the court of appeals refused to halt the operation of the General Sales tax law, that it has become government policy to interfere with the legal system and prevent us from explaining to the public how unconstitutional the new tax is. He also added that the Chamber of Commerce tried to discuss the tax law with cabinet ministers and the prime minister but eventually the new tax prevailed and has become a new obstacle to investment and enterprise in the country.

The business community has summed up their objections that the new law allows the Ministry of Finance and Tax Authority unlimited authority which contradicts with several civil laws which does not allow government agencies to such authority without a court order. Additionally, they say that the new tax has a potential to result in uneven pricing strategies of products which would result in the collapse and even bankruptcy of several businesses which operate with thin margins of profitability.

Discussions between government legislators and the business community have resulted in several changes in the General Sales tax, which were approved in the parliament in July 2005 in spite of strong resistance of the opposition. However, Yemeni businessmen still see that the implementation of the law in its current form would eventually result in a price hike, and would potentially hurt the role of business in national economic development as well as increase poverty in the country, counting on President Saleh to interfere and order suitable changes of the law in a manner that maintains current prices and is considered fair to the business community while ensuring transparency in the tax collection mechanism.

## Business In Brief

### 2006 Tourism profits reach US\$278 million

An official report issued by the Ministry of Tourism indicated that the total returns of the tourism industry reached \$278 million in 2006 compared to \$236 million in 2005. The report also indicated that the total number of tourists who came to Yemen during 2006 was 355,000 tourists up from 300,000 tourists in 2005, while the average spending of each tourist increased to \$135 per day in 2006 a rise of \$5 daily.

### Khalid Bahah expands Indo-Yemeni relations

Minister of Oil and Mineral Resources Khalid Bahah have announced that India-based Reliance Industries is setting up an oil refinery in Yemen with a capacity to process 50,000 barrels of crude oil a day. This comes after several Indian Oil companies have secured a total of five onshore following the in the third round of auction held last year. Minister Bahah has also met with several Indian Officials and discussed advancing bilateral relations during his current visit to New Delhi on the margins of the Petrotech 2007 exposition.

### 47 blocks to produce oil in 2007

Sources at the Ministry of Oil indicated that the number of oil producing blocks is forecasted to increase from the current 26 blocks to 47 blocks by the end of 2007. Yemen's oil production will exceed 400,000 barrels per day from the current 370,000 barrels. Yemen's oil reserves are estimated at 9.7 billion barrels.

### WB: Yemen leads corruption battle

The World Bank has announced that Yemen's anti-corruption measures are ranked among the first in the region as it was the first to establish an anti-corruption body among Arab countries. This announcement was made during a seminar presenting the World Bank's global anti-corruption and good governance strategy.

### President Saleh calls on investors to complete projects

President Ali Abdullah Saleh calls on investors who have announced plans to invest in selected industries in Yemen to go ahead and construct

those projects and make sure that actions follow words, emphasizing the importance of such strategic investments for developing the economy and providing employment opportunities. He made this statement while visiting the cement plant being constructed in Mukkala, an investment of \$260 million.

### YR 600 m. for agricultural research

Ministry of Agriculture has allocated YR 600 million for agricultural research in order to activate the role of the Agricultural Research Authority and boost the national agricultural production. The ministry is also working on a plan to plant sunflowers for industrial purposes and construct a \$2 million sunflower processing plant to produce sunflower oil.

### Anti-Money laundering conference

Held in Aden between Jan. 14, the three-day conference on combating money laundering and terrorism was concluded with several local and Arab banks participating. The conference was raising awareness on the dangers money laundering and financing terrorism and the dangers Arab banks suffer because of such illegal activities. The conference also aimed at educating participants on how to identify cases of money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

### Lahej's Iron plant starts operation

Director of investments in Lahej, Sulaiman Mohammed Al-Haboub, has indicated that the iron core processing plant started test operations as a pilot for the actual operation of the plant. He has indicated that once the plant starts full-scale operation it will produce over 500,000 tones of iron core annually. Al-Haboub has also indicated that several other industrial plants are preparing for operation in 2007, in several industries including iron, steel, petrochemicals and ceramics.

### Plans for Shabwa Industrial Zone

A team of technical experts and civil engineers from the department of lands and urban planning are drafting an industrial zone in the areas of Bir Ali, Belhaf, Ayn Maabad and the port area around the YLNG plant in order to attract more investments to the area and boost the national economy.

# The False Promise of Financial Liberalization

By: Dani Rodrik

Something is amiss in the world of finance. The problem is not another financial meltdown in an emerging market, with the predictable contagion that engulfs neighboring countries. Even the most exposed countries handled the last round of financial shocks, in May and June 2006, relatively comfortably. Instead, the problem this time around is one that relatively calm times have helped reveal: the predicted benefits of financial globalization are nowhere to be seen.

Financial globalization is a recent phenomenon. One could trace its beginnings to the 1970's, when recycled petrodollars fueled large capital inflows to developing nations. But it was only around 1990 that most emerging markets threw caution to the wind and removed controls on private portfolio and bank flows. Private capital flows have exploded since, dwarfing trade in goods and services. So the world has experienced true financial globalization only for 15 years or so.

Freeing up capital flows had an inexorable logic – or so it seemed. Developing nations, the argument went, have plenty of investment opportunities, but are short of savings. Foreign capital inflows would allow them to draw on the savings of rich countries, increase their investment rates, and stimulate growth. In addition, financial globalization would allow poor nations to smooth out the boom-and-bust cycles associated with temporary terms-of-trade shocks and other bouts of bad luck. Finally, exposure to the discipline of financial markets would make it harder for profligate governments to misbehave.

But things have not worked out according to plan. Research at the IMF, of all places, as well as by independent scholars documents a number of puzzles and paradoxes. For

example, it is difficult to find evidence that countries that freed up capital flows have experienced sustained economic growth as a result. In fact, many emerging markets experienced declines in investment rates. Nor, on balance, has liberalization of capital flows stabilized consumption.

Most intriguingly, the countries that have done the best in recent years are those that relied the least on foreign financing. China, the world's growth superstar, has a huge current-account surplus, which means that it is a net lender to the rest of the world. Among other high-growth countries, Vietnam's current account is essentially balanced, and India has only a small deficit. Latin America, Argentina and Brazil have been running comfortable external surpluses recently. In fact, their newfound resilience to capital-market shocks is due in no small part to their becoming net lenders to the rest of the world, after years as net borrowers.

To understand what is going on, we need a different explanation of what keeps investment and growth low in most poor nations. Whereas the standard story – the one that motivated the drive to liberalize capital flows – is that developing countries are saving-constrained, the fact that capital is moving outward rather than inward in the most successful developing countries suggests that the constraint lies elsewhere. Most likely, the real constraint lies on the investment side.

The main problem seems to be the paucity of entrepreneurship and low propensity to invest in plant and equipment – what Keynes called “low animal spirits” – especially to raise output of products that can be traded on world markets. Behind this shortcoming lay various institutional and market distortions associated with industrial and other modern-sector activities in low-income environments.

When countries suffer from low investment demand, freeing up capital inflows does not do much good. What

businesses in these countries need is not necessarily more finance, but the expectation of larger profits for their owners. In fact, capital inflows can make things worse, because they tend to appreciate the domestic currency and make production in export activities less profitable, further weakening the incentive to invest.

Thus, the pattern in emerging market economies that liberalized capital inflows has been lower investment in the modern sectors of the economy, and eventually slower economic growth (once the consumption boom associated with the capital inflows plays out). By contrast, countries like China and India, which avoided a surge of capital inflows, managed to maintain highly competitive domestic currencies, and thereby kept profitability and investment high.

The lesson for countries that have not yet made the leap to financial globalization is clear: beware. Nothing can kill growth more effectively than an uncompetitive currency, and there is no faster route to currency appreciation than a surge in capital inflows.

For those countries that have already made the leap, the choices are more difficult. Managing the exchange rate becomes much more difficult when capital is free to come and go as it pleases. But it is not impossible – as long as policymakers understand the critical role played by the exchange rate and the need to subordinate capital flows to the requirements of competitiveness.

Given all the effort that the world's “emerging markets” have devoted to shielding themselves from financial volatility, they have reason to ask: where in the world is the upside of financial liberalization? That is a question all of us should consider.

*Dani Rodrik is Professor of Political Economy, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2007.*

# Announcement

The Vice-Rector of Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research – Sana'a University announces the opening of the second enrollment in the Diploma/MS program in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) at the Water and Environment Centre (WEC) during the second semester 2006/2007.

For those who want to apply for this program should submit their applications to the Graduate Studies and Scientific Research – Sana'a University within three weeks of this announcement (18/1/2007).

For enquiry contact the training department at WEC.

Tel.: 00-967-1-212621

Fax: 00-967-1-212622

e-mail: [wec2@y.net.ye](mailto:wec2@y.net.ye)

website: [www.wec.edu.ye](http://www.wec.edu.ye)

## Requirements for Diploma/Master program in IWRM at WEC

1. Bachelor degree in Science, Agriculture or Civil Engineering or a BSc in Education or Art with an experience in Water and Environment.
2. Good English and computer skills.
3. Experience in the sector of Water and Environment.
4. Evaluation by acceptance committee of WEC.

# إعلان

تعلن نيابة الدراسات العليا والبحث العلمي بجامعة صنعاء عن فتح باب القبول لبرنامج الدبلوم/ماجستير في مجال الإدارة المتكاملة للموارد المائية بمركز المياه و البيئة جامعة صنعاء- وذلك في الفصل الثاني للعام ٢٠٠٦/٢٠٠٧م و على الطلبة الراغبين للتقدم لهذا البرنامج تقديم طلباتهم لنيابة الدراسات العليا و البحث العلمي في موعد أقصاه ثلاثة أسابيع من تاريخ هذا الإعلان (١٨/١/٢٠٠٧).

للاستفسار عن البرنامج يرجى الاتصال بإدارة التدريب بمركز المياه و البيئة.

تلفون: ٠٠٩٦٧-١-٢١٢٦٢٢١

فاكس: ٠٠٩٦٧-١-٢١٢٦٢٢٢

بريد الكتروني: [wec2@y.net.ye](mailto:wec2@y.net.ye)

الموقع على الإنترنت: [www.wec.edu.ye](http://www.wec.edu.ye)

## شروط القبول للدراسات العليا دبلوم / ماجستير بمركز المياه البيئة

أن يكون المتقدم حاصلًا على البكالوريوس في العلوم، الزراعة، الهندسة المدنية و يمكن قبول من لديه خبرة في مجال المياه و البيئة بكالوريوس تربية أو أداب أن يكون ملماً باللغة الإنجليزية قراءة و نظماً و يجيد استخدام الحاسوب. أن يكون لديه خبرة عملية في مجال المياه و البيئة. أن يخضع لاختبار قبول و تقييم من قبل لجنة القبول في المركز.



# OPM proposes to turn Aden port into transshipment hub. It wants to invest in developing the port in phases to handle 1.5 million TEUs

**PRIVATELY** held Overseas Port Management (OPM), led and managed by several former PSA executives, has proposed to the Yemeni government to turn the country's port into a container transshipment hub for the Red Sea-Mediterranean region, and boost its economy in the process.

The Singapore management company is making an ambitious bid to invest in the development and extension of Aden's container terminal port, its confidence stemming from its success in managing the terminal for the past three years.

Strong management: OPM has helped boost services to Aden Container Terminal (above), and has brought in five leading shipping lines.

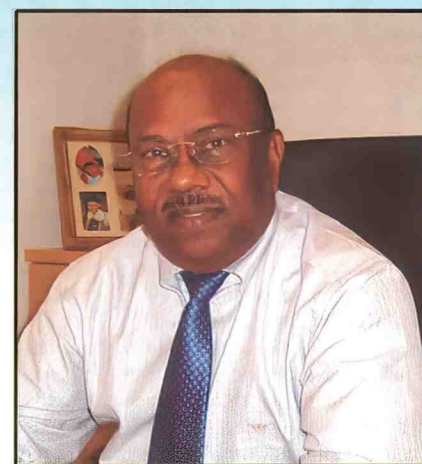
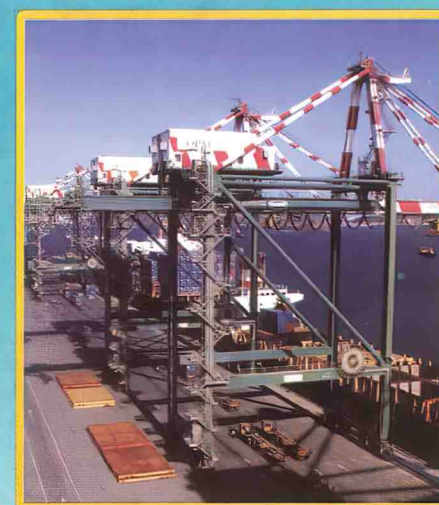
Other benefits for the country, if OPM's plans materialize, include more employment, strong feeder networks and more confidence from foreign investors in Yemen, a nation previously torn by civil strife and hit by major security threats.

OPM's proposals come just as it received word yesterday of a one-year extension to its current three-year management contract to operate the Aden Container Terminal (ACT), which Singapore's PSA Corporation withdrew from in 2003 following security threats in the region resulting in insurance underwriters charging shipping lines hefty war risk premiums.

OPM boosted last year's cargo handling at the Aden terminal by 26 per cent to 350,000 TEUs. It started off in 2003 with 117,488 TEUs. Now, it has ambitions to develop the terminal in phases to reach a handling capacity of 1.5 million TEUs.

On the back of such increases, OPM says it is now preparing for a significant round of fresh investment in the expanding container terminal.

It has indicated to the Yemeni government its strong interest in investing in the port's future development, OPM chief executive officer MMJ Subramaniam told BT yesterday.



Mr. MMJ Subramaniam

"OPM, with its strategic partners and investors, is prepared to develop and construct a new berth of 350 metres, in addition to the existing 700 metre berth, to increase ACT's terminal handling capacity to 1.5 million TEUs and more," he said.

He disclosed that OPM has now accumulated sufficient retained revenues for ACT to extend yard space, buy new cranes and equipment and an IT terminal operating system to expand the business.

"As demand for more berths arises, OPM group is prepared to develop the second 1,000 metres of wharf in ACT so the terminal can have a total of 2,000 metres of wharf/berths in phases. This will of course depend on the success of the Free Zone Public Authority's ability in successfully implementing an industrialization programmed," he added.

With three years of operating experience and achievements under its belt at ACT, OPM is prepared to go from a relationship of management to investment in the terminal, said Mr. Subramaniam, a former PSA senior vice president for international business.

He said the renewal negotiations with the government had proved amicable and straightforward. "We have an excellent relationship with Yemen, and there is no doubt they see the value OPM brings to ACT".

"We believe the international shipping community's confidence in ACT and Yemen has been restored. ACT and Yemen has been restored. ACT is being recognized as growing hub, and is also designated by customer-lines as a "catch up" port when ships are on tight schedule," he said.

He said OPM has trained 70 per cent of the operational staff at the terminal, mostly Yemenis.

"OPM has earned and accumulated for ACT US\$17.5 million in retained earning (Ebitda) over the last three years. This is a very creditable number, and we hope we can improve on this even further given time," he said.

Business Times, 5 January 2007



## ADEN CONTAINER TERMINAL



# Saddam and his ending

By: Barkatullah Marwat  
bumarwat@hotmail.com  
Kuwait

Sometimes I feel we are stupid creatures although Allah created us as his caliphate on the surface of the earth to enforce and practice his teachings and ordains, yet our minds have been stuffed with awkward thoughts and ideas by Satan who has been a staunch enemy to humanity that's why Allah sent his Prophets from time to time to put the derailed train of humanity back on the right track.

Most of us enjoyed and rejoiced the execution of Saddam, but we totally forgot one established fact the one day you, me, Bush, Musharraf and others will have to die. Today we saw Saddam hanged in TV visuals but we are not sure about how our own death will greet us. Will it be in the form of an accident, bullet, cardiac failure or what?

I utter this as the man who used to consider himself as the president of his country ultimately met his fate. The man who invaded his neighbour and killed almost 600 Kuwaiti POWs. The man who killed his own people especially those whose case led him to execution.

The man who fought against his giant neighbour, Iran for 7 or 8 years. The man who was full of mistakes and errors. But still there is something which makes one think what kind of justice it was. If Saddam could be hanged for the killing

of 148 Shittes in Dujail area, then one can assume that there are lots of leaders who fall under the same category.

First, it's Uncle Sam, who killed thousands of Japanese by shelling atom bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Then comes General Pervez Musharraf who took responsibility for killing 83 innocent students of religious missionary in Barjaur on Oct. 29, 2006. Though it's Uncle Sam who committed the barbaric act through his drone, yet it's Musharraf who claimed the responsibility in order to avoid further disturbance of his people.

On a private channel, during a political debate regarding the execution of Saddam, one of the journalist referring to the incident of Bajaur area disclosed that U.S. authorities had principally and formally intimidated Pakistani authorities at 4 am that an aerial attack was being made through U.S. drone on the missionary school at 5 am and exactly that time it happened.

Top it all, Saddam was hanged while Eid was being celebrated by the Muslims across the world and secondly, it has clearly been stipulated in the Constitution of Iraq that no one, regardless of religious affiliation, should ever be hanged or killed on religious festivals.

But ironically, all moral, religious, political and constitutional laws and norms were put back while hanging Saddam. According to the political experts, the rat-hole movie was just staged though in fact he was already arrested but he was kept in the bunker

with such make-up. But to be honest, the spirit he had at the time of execution was a clear indication that he was not scary like the rat in the way he was portrayed. On the contrary, our president, General Pervez Musharraf, has started thinking right from now about his future.

The situations in Iraq are unlikely to be normalised so easily in the wake of his execution. First, it was Saddam's sons who were killed, then Zarqawi's killing, then the arrest of Saddam and finally his execution all tactics miserably failed. Let's not forget one thing that since Hazrat Ali, 4th Caliphate of Islam, could not rule Iraq easily then who is Uncle Sam to do so. I was really astonished to stumble upon a piece of history that dated back to 1899 where Philippines also defeated Uncle Sam followed by the Vietnamese. I am sure this time he will face visible and clear defeats not only in Iraq, but also Afghanistan.

The other day Pakistan's private TV channel interviewed a commander of Taliban in Afghanistan, which I watched very closely, especially when the journalist asked, "How long could you fight off U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan?" What he answered was, "As regards to Afghanistan, we cannot only fight U.S. and his allies till his exit from our country, but make him exit America too."

According to the comments made by the ex-ISI chief, General Hamid Gul while talking to ARY, "Taliban have occupied 70 percent of Afghanistan, NATO occupies 25 percent while the

puppet Afghan President, Hamid Karzai's hold is only 5 percent confined to Kabul. It is also reported that NATO forces have to pay for the recovery of their killed soldiers from the occupation of Taliban."

Needless to mention, a constitution is what plays a significant role in a democratic system, even Bush has been pursuing and lecturing the entire world on adopting, enforcing and introducing democracy in their respective country's, but he himself does not bother to respect it in other countries except the U.S.

According to experts who were against Saddam's policies, they are now conceding that he was not tried fairly and freely, adding that he was supposed to be tried in the International Criminal Court or International Court of Justice where a lot of criminals of war have been tried, but in Saddam's case a kangaroo court was set up which was supervised by the puppet government of Iraq. Even the judge was anti-Saddam while some of his lawyers were killed who fairly tended to pursue the case. Likewise, Bush and Co. admitted the fact that no reduction of violence could be witnessed in Iraq but would continue for a long time. There are no clear indications to ensure normalcy.

Last but not the least, it was slap on the face of Muslim Umma whose leaders are nothing but just puppet like Al Maliki and General Musharraf in the hands of Uncle Sam. I think there is no use to have union in the shape of OIC which is acting just like a housemaid for the Uncle Sam's interests.

## Obituary for Common Sense

Original in French by an unknown author  
Translated by: Aiman Abdulmalik Aleryani

Friends and relatives would like to express their deepest regrets and condolences in taking part in the funeral and burial of Common Sense who had lived among us for a long, long time.

Nobody knows his exact age. His birth certificate has long been lost in the myriads of bureaucracy. We remember him for the lessons of life he

taught us like: "The early bird catches the worm", "If you want anything done, do it yourself", and "what happened may be MY fault".

Common Sense lived abiding by simple and practical rules, one of them being: "Do not spend more than you have" and by clear educational principles "It's the parents, NOT the children, who have the final word".

Common Sense started falling ill after parents criticized teachers who were doing their job for them (only wanting to teach children good manners and respect). A bad fever took hold of him once a fiscal law was promul-

gated driving well-to-do people out of the country, ultimately aiding to the detriment of people living on the welfare system. He lost the will to survive once criminals started receiving better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense died having lost all faith and was not given proper burial. Seeing that after legal proceedings a woman who had spilled a cup of hot coffee on her leg received a very substantial amount from the coffee brewer, manufacturers of the water boiler, the cook, and the water distributors.

He left behind three false-brothers: "I know my rights", "It's his fault, not

mine" and "I'm the victim here".

Before his death, Common Sense was devastated by the loss of his parents, Truth and Trust, his spouse Discretion, his daughter Responsibility, and his son Reason.

Other than a few loyal friends, there was no one at the funeral of Common Sense. Mainly because everybody was busy, and did not know he was suffering. Almost everybody had already forgotten his name.

If you have had the chance of meeting him, and if you remember him, try to carry on his legacy, or else do nothing!

## THROUGH THE MIND'S EYE

By: Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy  
maged\_thabet@hotmail.com



## What speaks louder, work or words?

In both the public and private workplace, staff are evaluated annually or semi-annually in order to determine promotions and the annual increase in salary, but what's the evaluation criteria? Is it according to work done, the attendance record or personal relationships?

It won't be fair at all, if it's only according to personal relationships or mediation. The attendance record can be considered a means of evaluating and noting those who are regular and those who are not, as well as those who aren't punctual. However, taken alone, I think this is unfair. Work achievements are a good means of evaluation; thus, attendance can be used together with achievements of work done, in order to ensure a fair evaluation.

When mediation or personal relationships are used as an evaluating standard, this is a real corruption. Some work hard, while others are rewarded and the rights of such hard-working individuals wrongly are granted to those who take jobs as entertainment or waste time.

Once such hard-working individuals realize this, people will ask, why work then? In this case, good and hard-working employees will be discouraged and there will be no new progress in the work field. It negatively affects the personal morale of such individuals. Moreover, it affects the work itself and, subsequently, the institution of work as a whole.

An attendance record or any device checking time and attendance is an official procedure all firms and institutions are supposed to follow because it obliges employees to respect work time and be

punctual. However, it's useless to count minutes and seconds in an effort to evaluate, which can badly affect annual promotions or salary increase.

It's actually a good standard if one is indifferent about his or her work duties, as it may wake him or her up to respect their responsibilities. The case may be different when the attendance device is used to determine the present and/or future of one whose actions and achievements speak louder than words or signatures. Lay aside emotions and hard restrictions because an employee's work always proves his or her seriousness. If circumstances prevent one from arriving on time or even coming at all, it doesn't mean that he or she is careless or indifferent.

All of us experience hard times and bad circumstances, which must be taken into account when evaluating staff, especially when it's used to determine such individuals' personal lives. They're sometimes punished by either reducing their salary or canceling it. What's the use of that person working and what's the reward for his or her seriousness?

Everyone can be regular and punctual – or they may do nothing or not take their work seriously. In such cases, if they're evaluated as good and excellent employees, it's vanity. Work must be superior and any additional criteria comes later. Other rights can be changed and make them become accustomed to, but achieving better work is supposed to be more important. Some institutions and firms are successful due to following such evaluation methods because they view the matter through the mind's eye.

Maged Thabet Al-Kholidy is a 26 year old writer from Taiz, currently doing his M.A. at English Dep, Taiz Uni. An ex-editor of Eng. Journal of the Uni. (maged\_thabet@hotmail.com)

## Universal Crossword

Edited by Timothy E. Parker

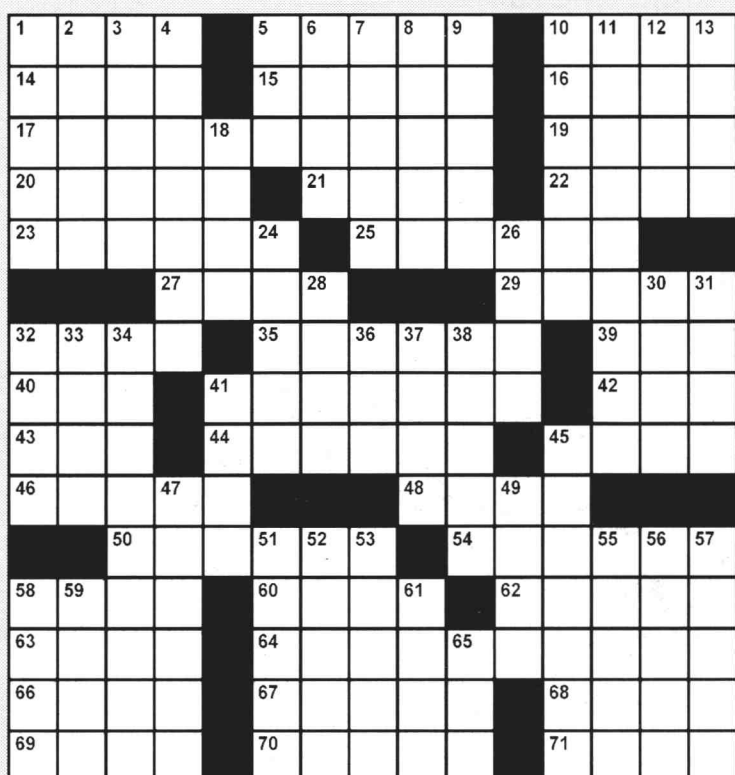
### ACROSS

- 1 Absolute requirement
- 5 African capital
- 10 Hangs heavy
- 14 Atahualpa, for one
- 15 Political prison
- 16 Fastening item
- 17 It can leave you all washed up
- 19 Eye lasciviously
- 20 Lacking in resonance, e.g.
- 21 Lot measurement
- 22 Dough
- 23 Villainous visages
- 25 Attack with vigor
- 27 "King of the ..."
- 29 India's first prime minister
- 32 Like a post-eruption landscape
- 35 Makeshift shed
- 39 Fine and dandy
- 40 Crib talk
- 41 Dance in a barn
- 42 Sprain application
- 43 Furrow
- 44 Make violently mad
- 45 Cumbersome water vehicles

### DOWN

- 46 Homer's first letter
- 48 Clods
- 50 Production manager's concern
- 54 Tony-winning musical of 1954
- 58 Some are martial
- 60 Victor over Connors at Wimbledon
- 62 Big name on the farm
- 63 Rider of the lost ark
- 64 Type of cook
- 66 Nobelist of 1984
- 67 Earth, in sci-fi fare
- 68 Involuntary movements
- 69 Bus destination
- 70 German surrealist
- 71 Fill to excess
- 1 Fine sprays
- 2 Remove, as a badge
- 3 Teatime treat
- 4 Leather outfit?
- 5 Number that changes once per year
- 6 Island in the West Indies

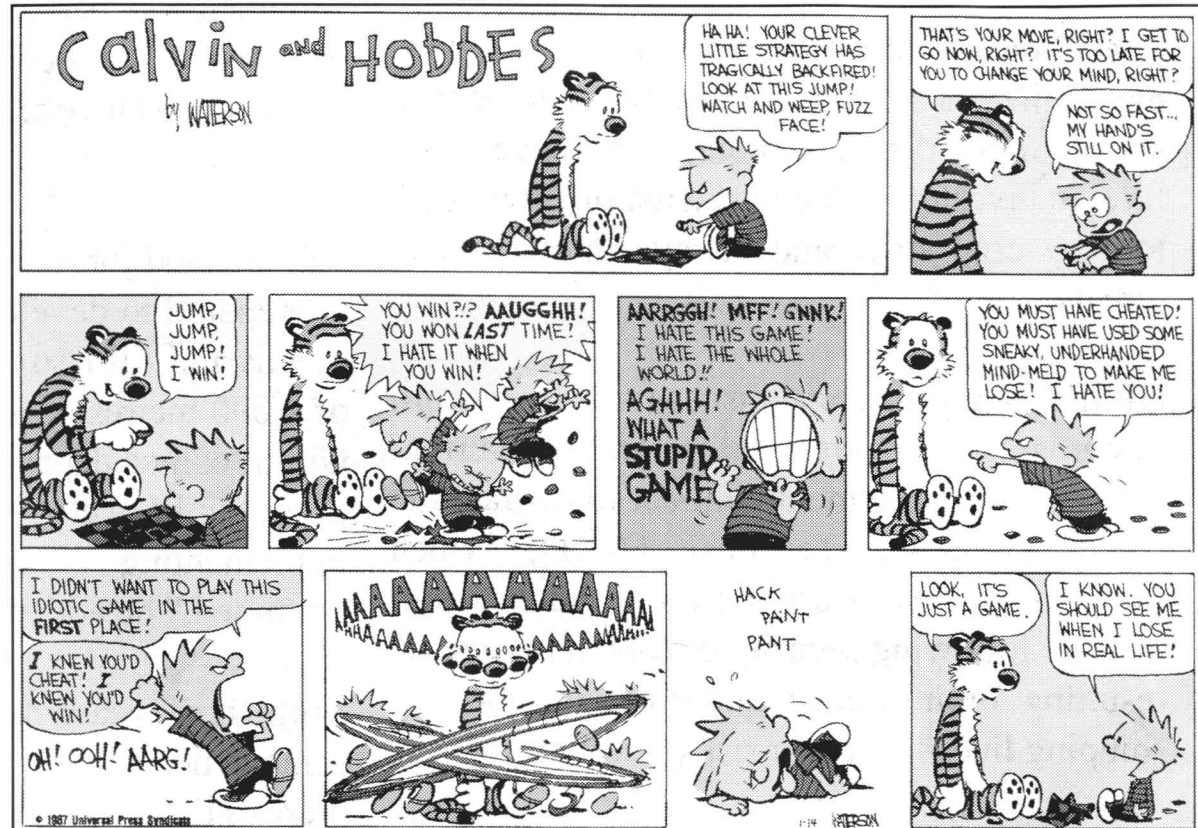
### "MORE CAKE" by Lynn Lempel



### 7 American Red Cross organizer

- 7 American Red Cross organizer
- 8 Barton
- 8 Puts a value on
- 9 Sheiks' guests, maybe (Var.)
- 10 George Burns prop
- 11 Spaghetti alternative
- 12 Aquatic bird
- 13 Editorial notation
- 14 Greek deli order
- 24 Place to curl up and dye?
- 26 Soon, poetically
- 28 Taxidermy subject
- 30 Plymouth landmark
- 31 Maui music makers, briefly
- 32 Shah Jahan's burial site
- 33 Kind of food or music
- 34 Something dropped
- 36 This org. has a lot of pull
- 37 NASA failure
- 38 Fine-tune
- 41 Kind of wave
- 45 Professes
- 47 "Quiet!"
- 49 Friend for Rover
- 51 Dupe's diamond
- 52 Wedding participant
- 53 Irritant in one's side?
- 55 Press for news?
- 56 Have fun with Lego blocks
- 57 Pithy
- 58 Home invaders, at times
- 59 Drubbing
- 61 Slips up
- 65 Make lace, in a way

### PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER









# YEMEN TIMES

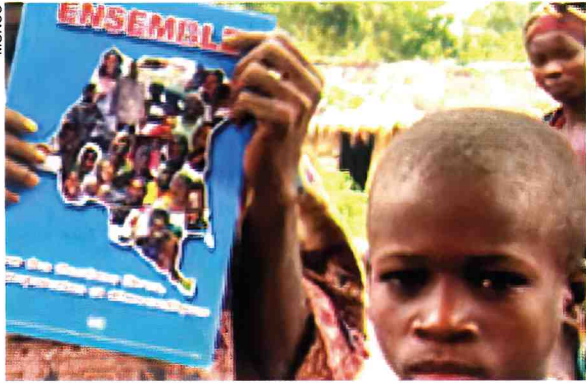
Yemen's first and most widely-read English-language newspaper

## DR of Congo: As the country moves boldly towards historic vote, humanitarian concerns continue to demand attention

As the world is applauding the determination of the Congolese people and leadership to take a crucial step in the country's transition from a bloody civil war to peace and democracy, the steep humanitarian challenges facing the devastated nation must not be forgotten.

### The story

This is a year like no other in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. After 45 years of dictatorship and intermittent wars that have claimed roughly 4 million victims in the last five years alone, the DRC is bravely



Explaining democracy: UN agencies undertake sensitization efforts to spread the concept of civic engagement among the Congolese.

preparing for its first multiparty poll, scheduled for July. Thanks, in part, to the efforts of MONUC, the UN Mission in the country, large swathes of the nation are now at peace, while the registration of 26 million Congolese voters has testified to their commitment to change and the hope they place in the elections.

But while the country is on the verge of changing the course of its destiny, peace is fragile and the infrastructure is sorely inadequate, with many of the hospitals, schools, factories and railroads in a state of ruin. Today and every day, 1,200 people die from largely preventable causes — the equivalent of a tsunami toll every six months. Yet, the immense human suffering implicit in these numbers all too often remains outside the glare of sustained media attention. Funding for humanitarian aid in the DRC also falls short of the country's staggering needs. Warning about the risks of neglecting this situation, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs points out recent UN funding appeals for the DRC have received only slightly more than half of the amount necessary to meet the most minimal requirements.

### The Context

- The DRC is Africa's third largest country, comparable in size to Western Europe. It is five times larger than Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia

and Sierra Leone combined, with more than twice their population — nearly 56 million.

- The UN Organization Mission in the DRC (MONUC) is the largest peacekeeping operation ever fielded by the world body. It has an authorized strength of some 17,000 uniformed personnel, as well as civilian specialists in such areas as human rights, humanitarian affairs, child protection, political affairs and medical support.
- Preparations for the scheduled July vote, which is aimed at cementing the DRC's transition from a six-year civil war to political stability, constitutes the biggest and most

## "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About"

In 2004, the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI) launched an initiative called "Ten Stories the World Should Hear More About" to draw attention to important international developments and issues that fall outside the media spotlight. The list includes stories on an array of issues and from several geographical regions. Some of the stories on the list focus on troubling humanitarian emergencies and conflict situations, but they also highlight such vital areas as human rights, health and development. Every issue, we will bring a new story to you, hoping that our little effort to advocate for human rights all over the world would make a difference, some how, some way...

The editor

complex electoral-assistance mission the UN has ever undertaken.

- About half of the 56 million Congolese are under the age of 18 and children are particularly affected by the crisis. Some 20 per cent of children do not live until the age of 5, while 38 per cent suffer from malnutrition — 20 per cent severely. Half of those between 6 and 11 years old do not attend school and nearly 10 per cent are believed to have lost one or both parents to the

AIDS pandemic. An estimated 20,000 have been child soldiers.

- At 1,300 deaths per 100,000 live births, DRC has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios in Africa.
- With nearly 80 per cent of the population trapped in extreme poverty and more than 70 per cent undernourished, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has appealed for \$50 million to support the agricultural rehabilitation of the vast country.

## AL-MUTAHAR FOR IRANIAN CARPETS



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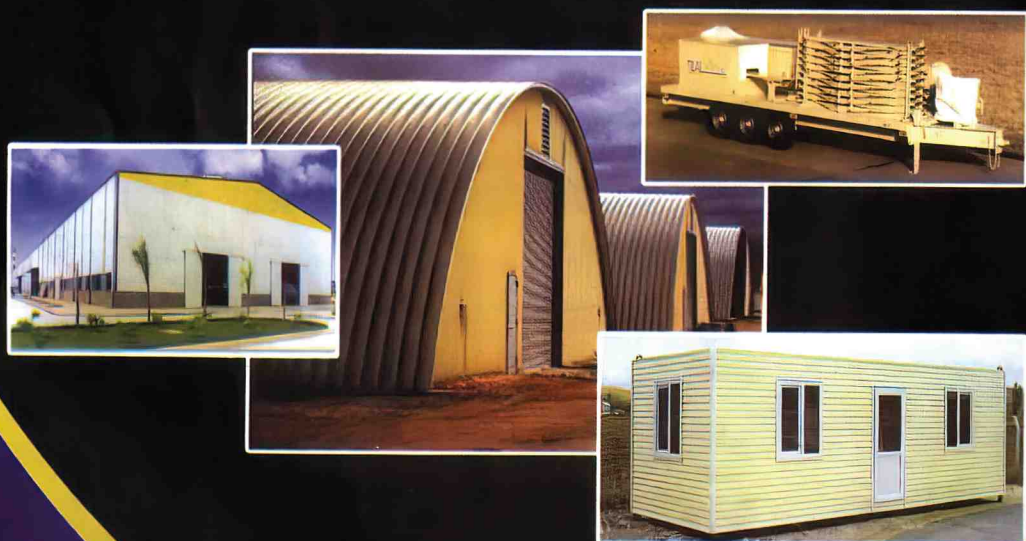
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