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Inside:

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- 5** Although constituting half the labor force, only 6% of Yemeni women have paid work
- 8** Yemen's Microfinance Industry: Booming potential

Readers' Voice

Last edition's question:
 Do you think Al-Harazi would be able to live a normal life in Yemen after having a sex change, or would he be driven outside the country?

I don't know (16%)
 Yes (33%) No (51%)

This edition's question:
 Do you think government of Yemen will be able to control the crisis in Sa'ada after declaring a national emergency situation?

- Yes, with the help of relief agencies
- No, it will turn into another Darfur-like situation
- A don't know

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

RED ALERT

Yemen declares a national emergency situation

Yemen called on international humanitarian organizations to mitigate the crises in Sa'ada after more than four and a half months of continuous war and the dislocation of more than 25 thousand people.

By: Yemen Times Staff
 SANA'A, June 6 — The government of Yemen has sent official requests to international relief agencies to step and mitigate the dire consequences of the on-going war in Sa'ada. Sources in the presidential office and Members of Parliaments, who requested to remain anonymous, expressed their deep concern that there is a state of emergency in the country and that the government requires immediate assistance to control the consequences of the conflict in Sa'ada.

Yemen Times local source in the troubled governorate confirmed the spread of epidemics and the non-existence of medical treatment or even basic sanitarian requirements for local citizens. "You either flee or die, if not from the violent clashes then from diseases or lack of food," he said.

According to WFP, the organization has committed to mitigating the disaster and providing food and shelter to the thousands of Yemenis who fled the war zone. "Many families left their homes carrying only a few of their stuff and camped in remote areas outside the governorate," said Mohammed Kohen WFP country representative.

The assistance from the WFP alone reaches 443 thousand dollars. Other relief agencies also rushed to provide aid, such as Islamic Relief, which



Several locations in Saada governorates were declared war zones; no traffic is allowed from and into these locations, stopping even supply of food.

declared more than 680 tons of food-stuffs would be distributed during this month to cover the needs of 5000 fleeing families temporarily.

However, despite the elevation of the crises because of the formal plea forwarded by the government to international relief agencies, there are still many obstacles against the disaster mitigation and transportation of food, and medical equipments and medicines. Moreover, according to a joint UN agencies commission that was dispatched to review the situation in Sa'ada, the number of the dislocated people, which has exceeded 25,000 individuals, is bound to increase significantly once mobility and transportation constraints are lifted.

Continued on page 3

Sa'ada war still aflame

By: Mohammed bin Sallam
 SA'ADA, June 6 — Tribal and media sources reveal that fierce confrontations continue to flare in most Sa'ada districts between Houthi loyalists and the Yemeni army, with the area of Razih witnessing the fiercest battles this past week.

Further, Houthis waged numerous offensives employing Bazooka and Hawn shells upon Yemeni army forces positioned at the foot of Al-Azd Mountain. In return, the army attacked Houthis positioned in the highlands of Mashraqah area.

The Yemeni army is attempting to seize areas of Razih district in an effort to secure the road leading to the eastern part of the district, as well as take over the road linking Razih with Munbih, Qataber and Baqem districts, the last three districts still being seized by Houthis.

The sources add that government forces won't capture such areas unless they take over Munbih district, entering either from the west or the east, or by entering Baqem through Dhahian in the south, a city the Yemeni army thus far has been unable to seize.

Still held by Houthis, Ghamer district will be the first place to be evacuated if government forces manage to occupy Razih district, whose mountains are comparatively higher than Ghamer's.

Houthis deny government's allegations
 In a statement distributed in the middle of this week, Houthis denied allegations by some high-ranking officials who claim that the war has calmed down in most Sa'ada districts, indicating that confrontations are ongoing between them and Yemeni army forces.

Their statement added, "Those areas allegedly completely overcome by the army witnessed intermittent clashes and battles during the week, especially in Al-Saifi, Razih, Sahar, Magz and Ghamer, leaving dozens killed and injured on both sides."

For more than a week, Yemeni army forces have been attempting to seize Razih district, but they've been met with violent resistance by Houthis, thus preventing them from reaching Al-Qal'ah, the center of Razih district.

Saudi Arabia accused of supporting Yemeni army
 Houthis are accusing Saudi Arabia of backing the Yemeni army, as Saudi forces attacked two different Houthi sites, beginning with Najran. In return, youth began flowing into Sa'ada to back the Houthis, heralding the regime's impending overthrow.

In a released letter, Member of Parliament Yahya Al-Houthi, whose immunity was rescinded, requested Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt halt their support to Yemeni authorities, noting that their armored vehicles gifted to Yemeni authorities are killing and injuring hundreds of their Yemeni brothers, as well as destroying dozens of houses, farms, roads and cars and besieging thousands of citizens.

Continued on page 2

Journalists, human rights advocates protest blocking SMS news services

By: Saddam Al-Ashmouri For Yemen Times
 SANA'A, June 6 — Journalists, human rights activists and politicians staged a sit-in on Tuesday in front of the Yemeni Cabinet building in what's being called "Freedom Square." The sit-in falls within a framework of demonstrations staged to protest the blocking of SMS news services from Nass Mobile and Without Chains Mobile, as well as blocking Aleshteraki.net, Al-Shoura.net and Al-Umah.net web sites.

Ahmed Saif Hashed, head of Parliament's Rights and Freedoms Committee, alleges that the Yemeni government is afraid of such news services because they are able to reach ordinary citizens while the authority attempts to impose one policy and wants its voice heard.

Hashed added, "When the margins of democracy shrink and freedom is restricted by blocking web sites, we don't feel that we belong to this age."

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Journalists and press freedom advocates persist on demonstrating every Tuesday at Freedoms Square in front of the Cabinet Building.

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Southern Yemen prepares for cyclone Gonu

By: Amel Al-Ariqi
 AL-MAHRAH, June 6 — Precautions have been declared for Thursday in Yemen's Al-Mahrah governorate. Emergency units have been alerted, as well as deploying several emergency units and civil defense teams to meet the emergency situation due to the expected cyclone that hit Oman.

However, Al-Mahrah resident Omer Abu-Bakr says, "The situation here is normal. As usual at this time of year, the weather is hot and dusty and there's been no sign of the storm up until now."

He confirmed that local authorities in the governorate's six provinces — Hawf, Al-Khidha, Hasrin, Kashen, Sahit and Al-Masila — have warned fishermen and residents to avoid the coast during these days. "The authorities already have evacuated some citizens living on the coast to ensure their safety," he added.

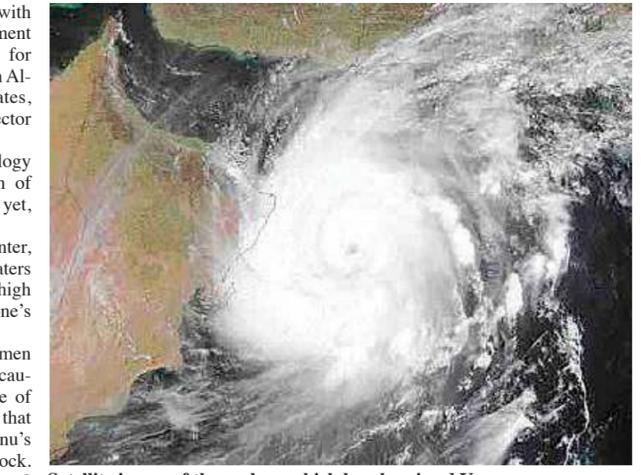
The local council is cooperating with the Civil Defense's Disaster Management Authority and the National Center for Meteorology to handle the situation in Al-Mahrah and Hadramout governorates, Disaster Management Authority director Mohammed Shaban said.

The National Center for Meteorology affirms that it has recorded no sign of cyclone Gonu on Yemeni beaches yet, only rough seas and high waves.

According to a source at the center, "The situation in Yemeni territorial waters is near stable, with the exception of high seas and strong winds due to the cyclone's initial effects."

The center is calling on all fishermen and commercial fishing vessels to be cautious and take care in the rapid pace of strong winds and high waves, noting that it will continue to monitor cyclone Gonu's movement and progress around the clock.

Continued on page 2



Satellite image of the cyclone which barely missed Yemen.

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In brief

SANA'A

Awareness session
of smoking dangers

June 5 – The National Center for education and health awareness carried out a number of awareness sessions and presentations on the dangers of smoking and using tobacco at the center's premises last Monday. The sessions were created on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day under the slogan "No smoking in closed spaces".

Abundant pesticides destroyed

June 4 – The Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation has taken a number of steps in the process of getting rid of excess and abundant pesticides which were stored in various locations affiliated to the ministry. The ministry also has taken a number of steps to reduce the import of such chemicals unless crucially required. The ministry recently got rid of around 460 tons of pesticides accumulated over the last 40 years.

ABYAN

Role of society in
protecting the environment

June 6 – An environment seminar was conducted Tuesday on the occasion of the World Day for Environment at Al-Thawra Open Forum in Abyan. The seminar was organized by Friends of the Environment Association at the governorate and a number of events will be carried throughout the week including lectures, environmental exhibitions and competitions on the occasion.

ADEN

Al-Bustan Tourism
Compound inaugurated

June – 5 – A tourism compound has been inaugurated Tuesday in Khar Maksi area in Aden in the context of promoting tourism in the governorate.

The compound is a project worth of one million US dollars created in an area of two thousand square meters. It includes restaurants, serving traditional Yemeni food and western cuisine, family recreation halls, and a conference hall for events. The compound also provides food delivery services and takeaway.

TAIZ

Reproductive health
awareness for journalists

June 6 – Carried out at Al-Jumhuri Hospital in Taiz, a workshop for educating journalists on reproductive health, family planning, youth and women health issues concluded Tuesday. The training included 35 participants from the mass communication and media offices of various political parties, health office, Women National Committee, Yemeni Women's Union, and development personnel in the governorate.

HUDEIDAH

Elite university students to be
sent on internships abroad

June 6 – Elite students who have won distinctive positions in scientific and sports competition at Hudeidah University will be sent to different Arab Universities on internships during the summer vacation. The internships are a part of an academic exchange program between the university and other Arab universities in order to provide Yemeni university students with an opportunity to get exposure and training outside the country.

SOQATRA

Rescuing a turtle
from becoming a meal

June 5 – Police officers rescued a turtle from becoming a meal in Hadibu the main city of Soqatra on Tuesday. The turtle was captured the night before while it was trying to lay its eggs in the beach sand. The perpetrators were caught because of a call made by some responsible citizens in the neighbourhood to the police stating that they saw a turtle being carried into one of the houses. The police created a unit to investigate the report and rescued the turtle minutes before it was going to be slaughtered and made into a feast.

Whale perished in Al-Mukulla Sea

AL-MUKALLA, June 6 – A perished giant whale, with 10 m long and 2.5 m high, was into the shore by sea waves. The semi-decomposed whale is now stranded in Broom City's Al-Dahs area beach; however, the cause of its death is still unknown.

Coast Guard Hilal Ahmed told Saba News Agency, Saba, he saw the corpse of the whale far at deep sea at about 11 a.m. and he thought it to be a capsized boat, but it became clear after some time that it was a perished whale. He added the perished whale was accompanied by three other whales that left it upon reaching the shore.

A similar incident was recorded on Feb. 19, 2006 when a 17m long and 5m high whale was found dead in Al-Suqia shore, 15 km. to the east of Bab Al-Mandab Strait. Another giant



Over the years some whales have been washed to the Yemeni shores for unknown reasons.

perished whale, 17m long and 4m high, was found in Bab Al-Mandab's Al-Baten area just one month before Al-Suqia incident.

So far, the reasons causing whales to

perish are not known to Yemeni fishery officials and no studies were conducted over the dead whales to know the cause(s) of their death.

Socotra as world heritage site in 2008

SANA'A, June 5 – Minister of Oil and Environment Abdurrahman Al-Eryani stated that a delegation from UNISCO will visit Yemen by the end of the current year in preparation for declaring Socotra a world heritage site, hinting that such an announcement will lay a great responsibility on Yemen to keep up its heritage.

Italian Ambassador to Yemen Mario Boffo indicated that European countries have assigned US \$5 million, of which US \$3 million granted by the Republic of Italy, in aid to safeguard Socotra environment, indicating that the Italian interest in Socotra comes within the context of the international interest in this island.

Boffo added that Socotra is an important heritage site which made Italy and Italian people become more interested in it, maintaining that Yemen and Italy enjoy distinct relations, dating 80 years back.

United Nations resident coordinator Ms. Flavia Panseiri pointed out that



Local and international efforts are campaigning to declare Socotra as a world heritage site.

Socotra is a world heritage site that should be safeguarded, adding that it is

not a possession of Yemen but of the whole world.

Al-Dhale' locals demonstrate

AL-DHALE, June 5 – Joint Meeting Parties' Executive Committee in Al-Dhale' held an exceptional meeting last Saturday to denounce the aggression against Al-Dhale's local council member Ali Mohammed Al-Awd by security guards at the gate of the General Security building, assuring such an act took place because security affiliates' violations go unpunished.

Meanwhile, thousands of Al-Dhale' locals demonstrated last Monday and passed by the main streets of the city protesting the aggression against Al-Awd and further demanded halting the inhuman violations by security and military men against citizens. "See! Al-Dhale' is obstinate and does not want soldiers' reign," chanted locals while demonstrating.

In their statement released following

the meeting, the executive committee pointed out that the aggression against Al-Awd came within the context of continuous violations committed against those who have strong stance and commitment to prevent them from adopting citizens' issues and such violations are not confined to Al-Dhale' but seen across the republic.

Further, the committee asserted the series of violations affected all people, starting with naive people, political activists, and ending with citizens' representatives, something that is evidence of state's unwillingness to accept the democracy and its results.

The statement also hinted such an act against Al-Awd was basically done because of his firm attitudes and his stance against corrupt officers, who exerted a lot of efforts to silence and

terrorize him.

It added the Joint Meeting Parties will continue their peaceful struggle, asserting that they will follow up the case through the legal means until those responsible for violations meet their fair punishment.

According to the statement, the parties will call for peaceful demonstrations in case the governorate authorities do not respond to their demands as to punishing those responsible for aggressive acts against Al-Awd.

Similar demonstrations, which are not confined to elderly people but also include children, were staged in Al-Dhale' over the last period. In fact, it is natural to see such demonstrations from time to time in the district due to political, social, and economic motives.

Micro-Enterprises
Covention held

SANA'A, June 6 – Themed "Fighting Poverty: 10 Million Customers by 2010", the Social Fund for Development organizes, over the period June 10-16, Micro-Enterprises Days and Sanabel Network at the Sana'a-based Movenpick Hotel. The conference seeks to underscore the importance of microfinance industry in a country's economic development and its contribution to the improvement of living conditions of the low-income households and small entrepreneurs.

This conference, being the third in a row, aims to promote small and micro enterprises in the country. The first and the second conferences were held in August 2004 and September 2005 respectively.

Attended by 400-500 participants from across the globe, the conference will allow participants to exchange information as well as present and discuss the Arab and international experiences in the field. It is also an occasion for bringing together agencies and individuals concerned with microfinance industry worldwide.

Several activities will be launched during the conference including

group discussions, sessions, workshops, short training courses, and "networking". Additionally, a forum on financing, introducing financial services objectives, lending procedures, and targeting clients as well as achievement will be highlighted.

Meanwhile, the microfinance convention will provide clients with a chance to demonstrate and directly sell their products, together with organizing lectures by concerned agencies, aiming at encouraging the microfinance industry in the country.

Earlier to this, the Social Fund for Development has issued a number of newsletters, brochures, and booklets that explain the objectives and mandates of its Small and Micro Enterprises Development (SMED) Unit as well as the achievements accomplished thus far.

In the opening session, prizes will be awarded to 11 winners under what is known to be 'the Regional Steerage of Small Arab Investors'. The winners represent those who achieved success through the services of microfinance in the Arab world and thus created a better future to their families and themselves.

Catheterization Unit marks
100 successful surgeries

By: Sa'eed Al-Batati

MUKALLA, June 5 – Unit of Catheterization in Hadhramaut University for Science and Technology celebrated one hundred of diagnostic and treatment catheterization operations and setting up heart temporary organizer this week. All these operations were conducted successfully.

In his statement, Dr. Adel Mohammed Azmi, manager of Catheterization Unit, said that Catheterization Unit is the only unit in Hadhramaut. The nearby governorates have doubled the university contributions in serving the society through conducting diagnostic and medical services for citizens with reasonable prices. He added that the university provides the necessary medicines for patients.

He pointed out that the number of operations that the university has reached is considered to be a medical and national achievement since it was established in May, 2006.

He went on to say that the university has translated the president's vision in making the Yemeni universities contribute more to introducing sophisticated medical services for cases of incur-

able diseases. The Unit has taken its full budget for providing the medical system with special and outstanding cadre from inside and outside the country as well as the nurses who look after the patients.

Additionally, Dr. Ahmed O'mar B-Mashmouh, the university rector, said that such civil society services introduced by the university are included within the university goals.

These objectives are not limited to graduating qualified medical cadres from faculty of medicine or pharmacology college but also to introducing medical and consulting services, that we aim to intensify through the University Educational Hospital as well as through the Emir Sultan Center for Cancer that are under construction.

In addition to that, the Babyhood and Maternity University Hospital will be opened besides the medical clinic of the university which is in operation.

Moreover, the medical staff in the university will conduct researches to enhance the medical establishment efforts in the society as well as to support programs of civil society establishment, aiming at educating citizens.

Continued from page 1

Yemen declares

These constraints imposed by the Yemeni security forces have banned aid from reaching the areas in conflict.

Together against the war campaign

Consequently, officials from the World Bank assembled with a delegation from the Joint Meeting Parties - Yemeni political opposition parties – and urged them to intervene with the Yemeni authority and allow humanitarian relief agencies to work in Sa'ada. A delegation from the European Union has also met with Yaseen Said Noman head of the supreme council of the JMP in order to discuss the current situation.

Hassan Mohammad Zaid, general secretary of the conservative opposition Al-Haq political party commented on this, during the launch of the national campaign "Together against the war" last Monday. "Yemeni authorities are adamant not to allow any relief or rescue take place unless through it," he said.

Human rights advocates, lawyers, and political activists, launched the campaign at the Sisters Arab Forum premises in order to pressurize the state and international agencies to stop the war.

A press statement issued by the par-

ticipants stated that the war has been blown out of proportion, and local citizens as well as tribal men have been forced into the battlefield without actually being part of the conflict.

In the campaign's launching event Abdulbari Taher a prominent Yemeni writer and politician said that this is a repetition of the civil war in 1994, and the ruling party does not learn from its mistakes.

The assembled participants called on the Parliament and media to join the campaign and call for an end to the war, which has been going on and off since 2004.

Journalists

He continued, "The challenges ahead are large and we should remain firm until the confiscated rights are restored, even if we must resort to demonstrations."

Member of Parliament Fuad Duhabah assures that Yemeni law warrants the right to freedom of expression for every citizen while the state, represented by the Ministry of Information, wants to confiscate that right.

Duhabah went on to say that such demonstrations aim to turn the issue into a public opinion issue, whereby citizens feel that by blocking such servic-

es, they are being deprived of their rights.

The Demonstrators Committee decided on Thursday to resume demonstrations and sit-ins in Freedom Square until all demands are met, including SMS news services from Nass Mobile and Without Chains Mobile, as well as electronic web sites.

Earlier, demonstrators, including hundreds of press members, political party affiliates and women leaders, chose a committee comprised of former Al-Nass Editor-in-Chief Ali Al-Jaradi, head of the Yemeni Socialist Party's media department and executive director of the National Committee for Defending Human Rights and Freedoms, known as HOOD, as well as editor-in-chief of the blocked Al-Shoura.net and Women Journalists Without Chains chairperson, Tawakul Abdulsalam Karman..

The sit-ins will continue every Tuesday until the Yemeni government meets their demands and citizens and parties have the right to operate their own private media, maintaining that they are against blocking of news services.

The demonstrators called on all supporters of freedom of opinion and civil society organizations to join the sit-ins until the authorities meet all of their demands. "Any excuse to impede

implementing these demands by the government is not accepted," they noted in a statement.

Despite Prime Minister Ali Mujawar's directives regarding halting the blocking of Aleshterak.net and Al-Shoura.net, the two web sites once again were blocked four hours after the blockade was halted.

Sami Ghalib, head of the Yemeni Journalists Syndicate's Rights and Freedoms Committee, noted that the Yemeni government deals with media in an improvisational way, maintaining that such government measures and practices are counter to the Yemeni Constitution.

Additionally, the editor-in-chief of Al-Shoura.net accused the Yemeni Information and Telecommunications Ministries of being security institutions whose main task has become blocking and controlling services rather than providing them to citizens.

Southern Yemen

Cyclone Gonu hit Oman's central coast with strong winds and rain early Wednesday, after thousands of residents fled to higher ground. Forecasters said the Arabian Peninsula's strongest storm in 60 years was on a course for southern Iran and the oil-rich Persian Gulf.

According to Omani Civil Defense officials, Gonu's cyclone-force winds churned northwest through the Indian Ocean, with rains drenching the Omani capital of Muscat and surrounding communities.

Analysts warn that it could disrupt shipping in the Straits of Hormuz, causing a spike in oil prices. According to the Associated Press, oil prices rose on Monday but retreated Tuesday, although the storm weighed heavily on the market.

Even with weaker wind speeds, Gonu is expected to be the strongest cyclone to hit the Arabian Peninsula since record keeping began in 1945.

Sa'ada

The General People's Congress has revealed that more than 343 of its leaders have been killed or injured in the ongoing war in Sa'ada between Houthi loyalists and Yemeni army forces.

Asharq Al-Awsat newspaper quoted Yasser Al-Awadhi, deputy head of the GPC parliamentary bloc, as saying, "The large number of victims among this party's leaders is attributed to their participation with Yemeni army and security forces in the war against Houthis."

Spat over missiles

GERMANY, June 7 — (Herald Sun) A war of words between the US and Russia threatens to overshadow the Group of Eight summit that started overnight in Germany.

Despite climate change officially topping the agenda, US President George Bush steered towards a confrontation with Russian President Vladimir Putin as he took Moscow to task for "derailing" reforms.

The Kremlin rejected Mr Bush's accusations, saying Russia was "a democratic country that shares common world and common European values".

It was the latest flare-up in a row between Moscow and Washington over US plans to base a missile defence system in central Europe.

Moscow describes the shield as an aggressive step that would threaten its security. But Washington argues it is designed to guard against attacks from states such as Iran and North Korea.

Up to 16,000 police have been sent to guard leaders of the world's main industrialised nations attending the summit at a resort on the Baltic Sea.

The leaders of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the US will meet in a luxury beachfront hotel sealed off by a 12km fence topped with barbed



On his guard: violent protests preceded the arrival of US President George Bush and wife Laura in Rostock, Germany, yesterday. Picture: AP

wire.

Protests against the summit by anarchists and anti-globalisation groups have degenerated into violence since Saturday, leaving hundreds of police and demonstrators injured.

Mr Bush, wife Laura, and their entourage arrived yesterday to jeers from anti-war and anti-capitalism protesters.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel,

who is hosting the summit, will be keen to keep any rows between the US and Russia in check, allowing the leaders to focus on her aim of persuading the G8 to reach agreement on mandatory limits on the emission of greenhouse gases.

Ms Merkel has staked Germany's G8 presidency on the climate change issue, but she faces a huge challenge to bring together the differing views of

the US and Europe.

She will try to persuade the leaders to agree to limit the global temperature rise to 2C and to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50 per cent compared with 1990 levels by 2050.

The German plan for a binding pact has won qualified support from some G8 nations, but Mr Bush last week unveiled his own proposals and said a long-term goal for reducing greenhouse gases could be set by the end of 2008.

Ms Merkel wants the G8 to show other nations the way towards negotiations due to take place in Bali in December to find a successor to the UN-backed Kyoto Protocol on capping emissions that expires in 2012.

"We have to take action under a UN framework so that all members of the international community can participate in a binding manner," she said after talks with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Berlin on Tuesday.

Ms Merkel held a pre-summit meeting with Mr Bush yesterday in a bid to find common ground on climate change.

Chinese President Hu Jintao and counterparts from five emerging economies -- Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa -- have been invited to take part in the summit.

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Police injured in G8 protests

By: Erik Kirschbaum

HEILIGENDAMM, June 7 — ANTI-CAPITALIST protesters clashed with police today, injuring eight, as they tried to blockade routes to a summit of major powers in northern Germany.

Police used water cannons to push back demonstrators. Delegates from several G8 countries said the protests were limiting their ability to move around at the summit venue, a seaside resort on Germany's Baltic coast.

Eight officers were injured during the clashes with protesters near the town of Bad Doberan, police spokesman Luedger Behrens said. Police "used water cannons twice after demonstrators bombarded police with stones," he said.

Police said 15 protesters had been detained.

Protesters in the Bad Doberan area were trying to block access to a luxury hotel on the coast in Heiligendamm where G8 leaders including US

President George W. Bush were gathering.

"We're stuck here now. The whole place looks shut down," an official from one of the delegations said by telephone from inside the summit venue.

Akie Abe, wife of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, was forced to cancel a planned tour of the nearby Baltic resort town of Kuehlungsborn because of the demonstrations, Japan's foreign ministry said.

Dozens of protesters blocked a

historic steam train being used to shuttle journalists between the summit venue and the media centre in Kuehlungsborn.

Organisers tried to arrange a boat transfer along the coast for the journalists as an alternative, but protesters briefly blocked access to that as well.

Mr Behrens said roughly 10,000 demonstrators were violating a ban on demonstrations in the area and risked being detained.

Some 16,000 security personnel are

in the area. World leaders are shielded from thousands of demonstrators by a 12km fence topped with barbed wire.

Several hooded and masked protesters had clippers and were cutting through barbed wire police had laid near the fence.

A German court handed down jail sentences to several protesters who clashed with police on Saturday in the nearby city of Rostock where police said almost 1000 people were injured

when a rally turned violent.

A German man and a Spaniard were found guilty of attempted grievous bodily harm and disturbing the peace and sentenced to nine months in prison without parole, a court spokeswoman said.

A Polish man was given a six-month suspended sentence while another Spaniard was given a 10-month jail sentence.

Source: News.com.au



Yemen International Telecommunications Co. (TeleYemen) Vacant Announcement

Yemen International Telecommunications Co. (TeleYemen), would like to call qualified candidates to apply for the following vacant posts within its main office in Sana'a.

Financial Control Analyst

Primary Function

- Responsible for all the Financial analysis
- Assist in the production of monthly management account analysis including budgeting, forecasting, reporting, and tightening up the financial management i.e. accuracy.

Main Duties and Responsibilities Include:

- Prepare inter business activity reports of budgets variances .
- Intenal Control and revenue Assurance enhancement.
- Accounting polices adherence, process and procedure implementations.
- Carrying out Business and performance cost feasibility studies.
- Carrying outs risk analysis .
- Follow up the reconciliations processes.
- Develop functions, and Mapping for finance tasks.
- Carry out feasibility studies for new investment and opportunities
- To ensure that adherence to the international and local related legislations and standards.
- To follow up revenue assurance with the concerned departments and to ensure full compliance to the company's financial rules and regulations budget control.

Job Requirements

- B.S. Degree in Accounting or Finance With MBA or Professional qualifications.
- 5 – 6 years experience in Finance with 2-3 year in a telecommunications role.
- Excellent Mathematics, analytical, problem solving, Financial Modeling skills (especially MS EXEL Skills)
- Skilled in MS, EXEL , Power Point, Word, ability to use applied Modules.
- V.good command of English.

Interested candidates may submit their application letter with detailed Curriculum Vitae ONLY to the following address no later than 15.6.2007 :-Please note that only candidates who fulfill above requirements will be considered.

C/O Manager Human Resources, TeleYemen, PO Box 2646,Sana'a,Yemen Republic.



Yemen International Telecommunications Co. (TeleYemen) Vacant Announcement

Yemen International Telecommunications Co. (Teleyemen), would like to call qualified candidates to apply for the following vacant posts within its Main Office in Sana'a:

IT Coordinator

Duties and Responsibilities:

- To identify the different phases of project according to the defined priorities.
- To validate with IT Manager all necessary network systems.
- To prepare the related technical specifications.
- To launch tenders in coordination with IT Manager.
- To evaluate the bids and to prepare recommendations for choosing suppliers.
- To evaluate the impact of the introduction of new systems.
- To coordinate and to monitor the implementation of the systems.
- To synchronise deployment in relation with other partners (Administration, IS, Technical Direction.)
- To follow up the implementation schedule and the budget of IT project.
- To prepare all procedures for operation and maintenance.
- To manage related Maintenance contracts.

Qualifications:

Education:

- University degree in IT systems or Telecommunications.
- CISCO certified
- ORACLE certified

Experience:

- Telecommunications IT experience 4 to 5 years.
- Good knowledge of IT networking equipments (switches, routers, servers...).
- Management of a team

Disposition and attitude:

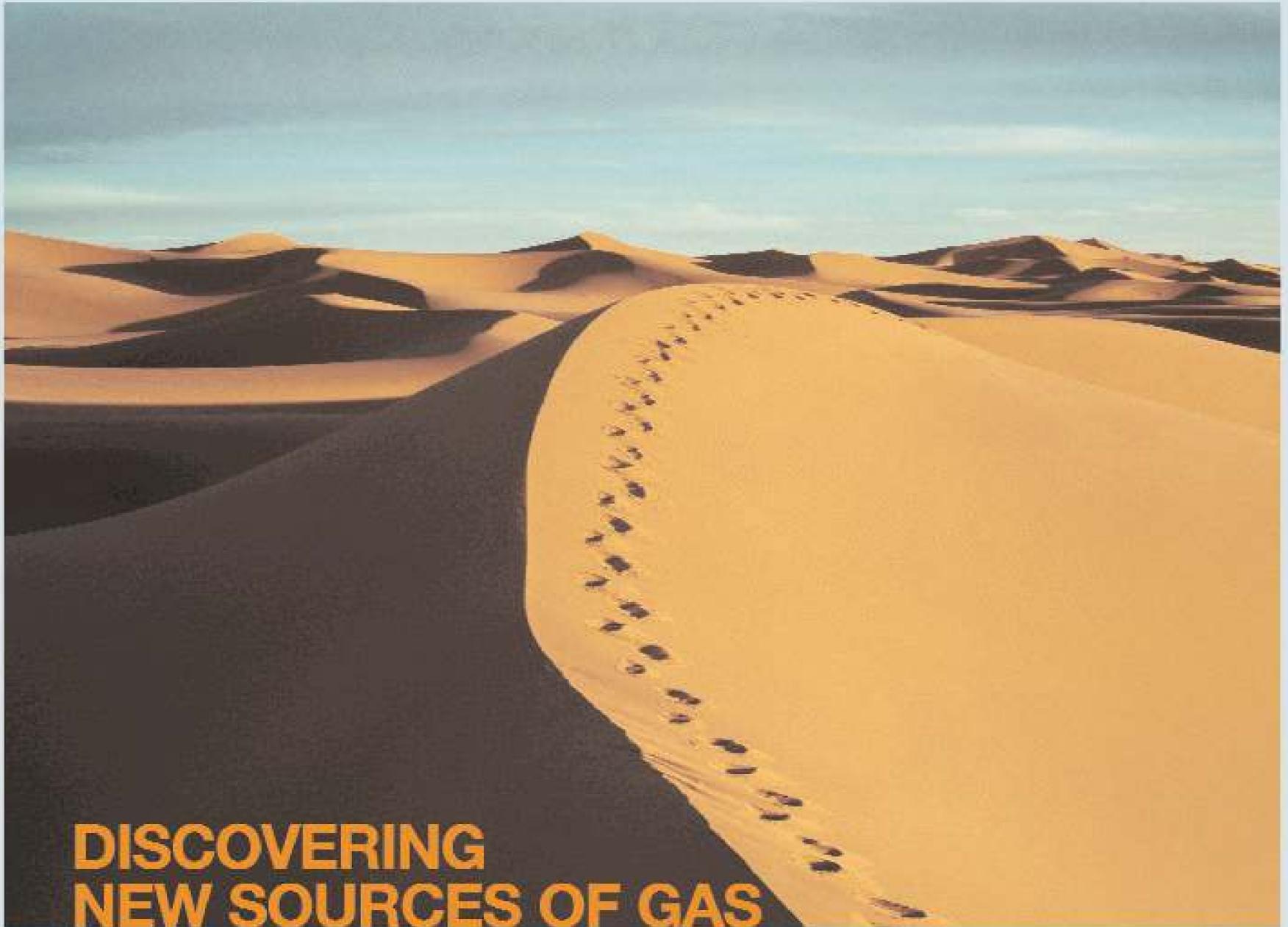
- Ability to communicate in both verbally and written.
- Ability to use own initiative, to plan and to prioritize activities.
- Ability to solve problems.
- Ability to report to hierarchy.
- Clear focus on operational issues and able to translate into plans and actions.
- Skilled in MS office (Exel, Power Point, Word)

Language:

- Excellent written and oral communication skills in English.
- Interested candidates may submit their application letter with detailed Curriculum Vitae ONLY to the following

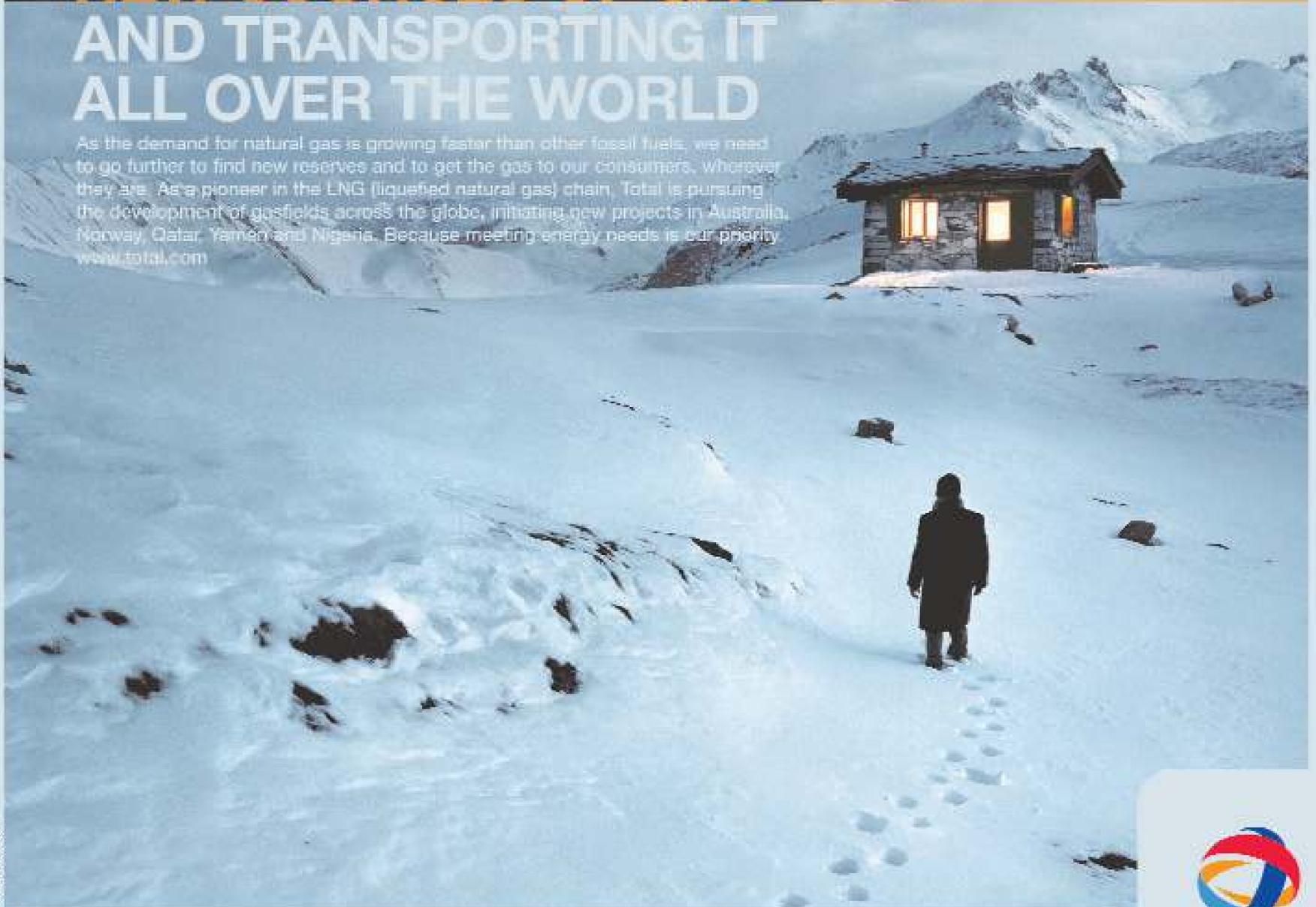
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TOTAL

WNC working women's status report: Although constituting half the labor force, only 6% of Yemeni women have paid work

By: Rasha Jarhum
Jarhum@gmail.com

The Yemeni government has made increasing women's economic participation to 5 percent annually an objective of its third Five-Year National Plan to be met by 2010.

Objectives also include halving poverty for poor women, increasing women's participation to 8 percent annually in the education and health sectors and 4 percent in industrial sectors.

The Women's National Committee also has set increasing women's economic participation to 30 percent as its objective to be met by 2010.

According to 2005 statistical compilations, Yemeni women's economic participation was 9.3 percent in 2004. A draft of the committee's 2006 National Report on Women's Status shows that the Yemeni labor force involving those age 15 and above was nearly 10.82 million in 2004, of which 50.4 percent were men and 49.6 percent were women.

Of that percentage of female labor force, only 8.8 percent of Yemeni women were working, and of those, only 6.8 percent were considered to have a form of paid work, while the rest, accounting for 39.5 percent, were unemployed.

In fact, the report shows that Yemeni women's unemployment has increased

five times since 1999, as it was only 8 percent at that time. In contrast, Yemeni men's unemployment didn't vary much, being 12 percent in 1999 and 13.1 percent in 2004, which is ironic when compared to Yemen's economic growth.

Reem, a university student, states, "I want to get a job, not only to have a sense of independence or to help out my family, but also to improve the nation's economy because we live in a country that's less developed. If 50 percent of the population is just sitting there and doing nothing, how will we ever progress?"

However, fellow university student Ibrahim disagrees, explaining, "Jobs are limited and we have high unemployment. Men have priority to get jobs over women because they have a family to support, whereas women spend their money on lipstick and makeup." This isn't completely true, as a 1998 women's committee study revealed that 13 percent of working Yemeni women are their families' main breadwinners.

The above attitude reflects the continuing constraints preventing women from joining the Yemeni labor market characterized by poor economic conditions and, more importantly, in persisting values and traditions biased toward men's advantage.

As government employee Fatima complains, "We're more dedicated to our jobs than men. Men leave as late as

noon to buy the qat of the day, while you see women go home as late as 6 p.m. After all this, they appoint a man who graduated from college at least five years after you and with zero experience to be your supervisor!"

The latest U.N. human development report for 2005 indicates that women's economic participation in the Arab region is the world's lowest. The report indicates that although the very low economic growth rate hinders women's participation in economic activity, traditional perceptions of men as the family breadwinner, as well as prioritizing men's employment over women's, plays a significant role in women's unemployment.

Sami, an employer in the private sector, comments, "I prefer to employ men, first because they are the breadwinners of the family and second, because they can perform better than women. When you hire a woman, she comes in very excited and motivated at first, but after awhile, she loses all that. Also, women are moody and talkative. In our office, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. is the time for the women to meet in the office kitchen, eat and talk."

Such behavior results from management being gender blind or neutral, as Fiona Wilson indicates in her book, "Organizational Behavior and Gender," which could be its own topic in another article.

According to the 2005 Annual Statistics Book, employment statistics by sector reflect occupational segregation, with women's employment being highest in the education sector in both the public and private spheres, at 59 percent and 21 percent, respectively.

The private trade sector comes in second at 18.6 percent, followed by the private health and social sector at 17.9 percent. In third place is the public health sector with 15.9 percent, followed by public administration and the governmental defense sector at 8.5 percent.

Private sector employee Ali asserts, "I think women should only work in health and education, teaching little children, because it's more appropriate. Women shouldn't work in a mixed working environment with men, nor should they

be alone in the company of a male worker because it's not only inappropriate, it's also *haram*." There are many interpretations of the Islamic perspective on women working, of which this is one.

Discrimination against working women is also exists in wages and earnings. An International Labor Organization study reveals that women receive less monthly earnings than men, but such wage discrepancy is minimal, as it takes into account that women generally work less hours than men.

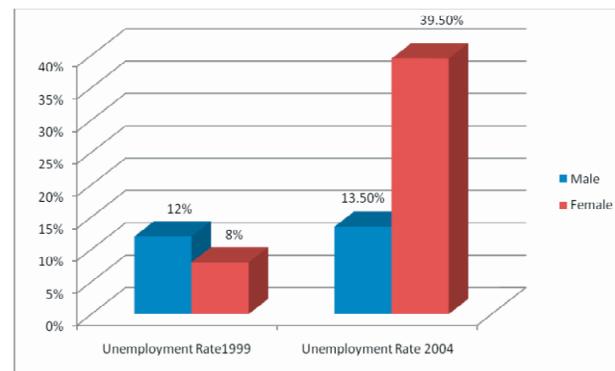
However, the study found that a man will earn double that of a woman in technical occupations, where less than 2 percent of workers are women. In other occupational categories, the study reveals no prominent difference between wages and earnings for men and women.

According to the 2004 World Bank MENA Report, the ratio of women's wages to men's wages in Yemen was 0.64 in 2000 and estimated to reach 0.68 in the absence of discrimination.

Government employee Salwa states, "Although we might have the same salaries, all of the rewards, remunerations and promotions go to men, even if a woman has the same qualifications and experience. In my work, I've seen all of the rewards and remunerations go to men with less qualifications, experience and performance, while women - who work harder, are more committed, more qualified and more experienced - receive nothing. Women then feel less motivated, asking themselves, why work if he's always going to get the money?"

The International Labor Organization study further reveals that men also are given priority regarding training opportunities. For example, out of 31,915 employees at a different organization, 91 percent of men, compared to only 9 percent of women, received training.

As private sector employer Sami explains, "If I'm going to train someone, I'm going to train someone who's constant, who will increase my profits and be worthwhile - and that's a man. Women often leave work when they get married because the decision to continue working isn't in their hands."



According to the Women Status Report 2006 of the Women National Committee, the unemployment rate for women in 2004 has increased by five folds since 1999.

The ILO study confirms that discrimination in recruiting women is prominent in a large number of private sector establishments, which view employing women as a costly endeavor, such as the costs incurred when they take paid maternity leave, as is their right under the labor law.

Furthermore, the study drew attention to other seeming problems in the Yemeni labor market, represented by skills shortages, skills gaps and mismatching of jobs and skills.

Women generally were found to be less skilled than men, with private establishments identifying lack of specific skills among women, such as English language knowledge, accounting skills, good administrative and executive skills, secretarial skills, computer knowledge and marketing skills. Mismatching of jobs and skills also is higher among women.

The ILO study reveals that most employed women who are university graduates work as secretaries, fax operators, customer service representatives, bank tellers and ticketing and reservation specialists at travel agencies.

Poor mismatch was highest among general training institute graduates, with 22.8 percent, university graduates at 20.7 percent and technical and vocational

training center graduates at 18.9 percent.

As private sector employee Nuha complains, "Many of my women friends who graduated from business schools, in software engineering and even architecture mostly work as secretaries or management assistants. They're still in the same position after three to five years, unlike the men, where you hear that X is the CEO of this company and Y is the general manager at that ministry."

In terms of prioritizing the employment of women, the ILO study reveals that among 7,113 establishments surveyed, only 4.4 percent acknowledged preferential treatment in employing women, while 84.6 percent admitted favoring men and the remaining establishments reported no gender priority.

It further found that those establishments that prioritized employing women assigned them to positions in the sectors of education, health and personnel services, respectively, which traditionally are considered to be oriented toward women in Yemeni culture.

The ILO study also notes that there are new emerging economic activities that are very conducive to employing women, including transportation, communications, real estate and financial services.



Female journalists working in Saba News Agency. Traditionally, jobs in the education and health sectors were widely accepted for Yemeni women. However, women have started to work in many other sectors.

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Talk merely for consumption

Talk has become useless in our era, though there are various channels and areas of talk all over the world. People do not read or hear words. They started to seek an opportunity to spend their leisure even if it is immoral.

Why does speech become futile and does not change anything rather makes it worse and more complicated? I'm perplexed. It is a marvelous contradiction while we are in the information epoch, opening skies, and the power of liberalism ideology. Isn't the availability of information and its wide range a guarantee to make talk more important and more able to influence?

The main reason that makes the word lose its real meaning and essence is the power of market economy. This is because everything has become valued by money and talk is one of them. For instance, you find hundreds of books containing thousands of pages sold to students at universities and institutes. But while scanning these books, you find nothing as valuable as their size. You may find a book having automatically transmitted information without any addition or comments mentioned, nor is it translated from a foreign language.

For some people, it appears that there



By: Dr. Samia Al-Aghbari

are a huge number of information coming through channels and media especially satellites and internet. In my opinion, I think the problem does not lie in the quantity of information available but in the information variety and comprehension in different areas, as well as meeting all the needs of the social categories, particularly the lower ones in any community.

More importantly, there must be some kind of balance between the amount of information published and the different opinions, because the repetition of the information will be boring to the extent that the audiences do not keep up with the media. Moreover, if the information available in the local, regional, and international areas does not give anything new but repeat the same thing using different styles, then it is necessary to have deep analyses and

interpretations for this information. Unfortunately, talk has become now merely for consumption that makes us nauseate and feel dizzy. It rather makes minds and thoughts passive.

The talk, consumed during day and night, seems to spoil our energies and powers and paralyze our innovative and creative thoughts. This is basically because our peoples used to receive not to produce. So, we are now mentally passive and physically inert at the same time.

It is the state of our Arab nations that compelled to discuss this matter, as information, event and facts in these nations have become futile and merely for public consumption. For instance, news stories about the situations in Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Somalia, Sudan, Afghanistan and any other countries never add something new to the minds of Muslims and Arabs.

I have much sympathy with presspersons and reporters who handle such news stories and on whom their profession impose the handling of news in such a way. I also sympathize with those having an access to information and news stories produced by presspersons and their media institutions as they are always eager to hear something new.

The repetition of news from day to day and from year to year without

anything new made these news routine and boring. The primary reason behind this is the redundancy of the same ideas and information but in slightly different forms. In addition, there is the lack of a real and effective social action to make a slight change in the situation. The educated people, where they are government officials or opposition leaders, are also repeating the same consumed talk for long decades and have neither desire nor real will to renew and change the way they think.

Monopolizing talks by certain individuals and the lack of equal opportunities to different social groups so as to express themselves by words is another primary reason behind repetition of the same talk, merely for public consumption. We usually find the same people invited to participate in various social and cultural functions without any substitutes, even if these people are not specialized in the major which is the topic of discussion. So we find them repeating the same statements and sterile information, which they produced and highlighted on more than one occasion.

Dr. Samia Al-Aghbari is an active female Yemeni journalist working in Al-Sahwa newspaper and contributes to other media.

Source: Al-Thawra State-run Daily.

COMMON SENSE

Give peace a chance in Sa'ada

One fully understands that the Government must confirm its ability to enforce law and order throughout the Republic of Yemen, in order to ensure stability and tranquility for all Yemenis.

However, one also understands that in Yemen, there is a lot that the Government should be doing and there is no dispute about the inability of the Government to carry out most of its inherent and unavoidable tasks of governance, mainly providing the basic services to all the citizens of the country at reasonable affordable rates with equal ability to access to these services. In fact, it is not difficult to surmise: had the Government been as diligent in the latter as it is now in the former, when speaking in the Sa'ada context, there probably may not have been a Sa'ada problem to start with. There is no doubt that there has been poor attention to the development of the Province or Governorate of Sa'ada, which suffered more deprivation than any of the other Governorates or even outlying regions of Yemen. Even the remote Island of Socatra was accorded more attention and care than the Governorate of Sa'ada.

Therefore it is not impressive to hear the Government consider itself as a mere policeman over the citizens of the country, while looking the other way when asked to also give greater attention to its other duties of state, as if that is only a by-the-way task of governance. Time and again, the Government has organized workshops and seminars on the issues of development this country faces as all of Yemen's neighbors in the Arabian Peninsula achieve overall growth and general improvements in the standards of living of the people living in these countries, while in Yemen development is a retarded process. Surely to suffice by saying that the wealth of these countries facilitate this achievement is no more than a denial of the Yemeni Government's many compounding shortcomings, which seem never to find any relief or remedy.

Thus, one could presume easily that the people of Sa'ada find the Government will go to the point of demanding from them to abandon the religious persuasions that have taken years to be instilled within their spiritual domains. However, at the same time, the Government fails to provide the most basic services of Government. One can then say that the people of Sa'ada are exercising the most logical approach to a Government that demands so much from its citizens, while forgetting that we live in a world of give and take, where respect is deserved only when mutual attainments are realized by the parties concerned. If the Government fails to realize this important aspect of the Social Contract, then someone needs to remind the Government that there are reciprocities involved that can never be overlooked, if Government wants to have the respect and loyalty of the citizens.

The observer understands well that when the war machinery has been activated in this country of ours, it is almost impossible to deactivate it. The instruments of statecraft are still primitive in Yemen, if the military brass and those other sleazy elements in our society can continue to bleed the society of all its resources just so they can serve their naive narrow interests.

Of course the best escape for Government, when faced by mounting pressures from within or from overseas, is to devise a security and military situation that will enable the Government to impose martial law and put the lid on all forms of protest and expression of regrets at the Government's chronic inability to get its act together and start worrying about fulfilling the minimal rightful demands of the constituencies that it wishes to impose its will upon. The issues in Sa'ada have become all the more clear:

- 1) The war is unjustified by any normal reasons for war, and it is regretful that the Government insists on using all its massive stockpiles of weaponry against its very own citizens.
- 2) The situation in Sa'ada could have been avoided from turning into a colossal nightmare that is distant from any near solution, if the Government could avoid phony expressions of "peaceful gestures" and carry on where the former Governor, Yahya Al-Shami left off, by carrying out the promises the Government had given in the past efforts for achieving peace in Sa'ada.
- 3) In short, the Government should start talking about giving peace a chance in Sa'ada, because it has now, for all intents and purposes, failed in relying on war as a solution to the Sa'ada dilemma, which is really its own making to start with. How long must the Government continue to stack failure upon failure and still demand respect from anyone within or outside the Republic?

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

Castro: What he has and what is required from him

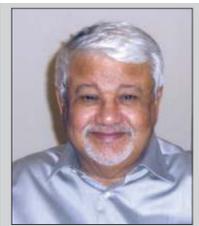
While the Cuban leader Fidel Castro struggles with senility, the international media continues publishing various analyses about Cuba under Castro since the 1959 Revolution against the regime of the former President Partesta, who had closer ties with the United States.

Until the Revolution broke out via guerrilla wars in the mountains of the island, Cuba had been a territory for wasting the U.S. capitals, gambling, and prostitution. The territory had been administered by the American Mafias in collaboration with local traitors.

Cuba was a big tourist destination for American visitors, who used to come from different parts of their homeland, particularly the State of Florida, which is closer to the island (roughly 90 kilometres from Cuba's shore). Up until today, we find the city of Miami in Florida to be Cuban in originality and its population speak the Spanish, in addition to the English because the city remained under the Spanish Occupation until the U.S. restored it in the war it waged in the 19th century to force the Spanish occupiers from the Caribbean Sea and South America. At that time, the U.S. controlled Guantanamo Bay and constructed a military base, airport, and a port in it for unlimited time period. There was no hope for negotiations to help Cuba restore the Bay, which is used by the US as if it is a part of its own land, during the reign of Castro or after his reign.

In this Bay, the U.S. doesn't obey the rights of humanity and citizenship, nor does it apply the requirements and conditions of imprisonment and trials. Since it waged a war against Afghanistan and changed the Bay into a large prison, similar to the ugliest European detention centers in the past and the ugliest African, Asian, and Arab jails at the moment.

Since Castro assumed power and



By: Faruq Luqman

announced in a historic address that his tendency is Marxist but he tried to conceal this tendency during the war in order to win the support of Washington, which has been boycotting Cuba in all areas.

During the reign of the American President John Canady, the U.S. launched a war in 1962 against Cuba via the Bay of Pigs. The U.S. army failed and was defeated in a similar manner to what is happening in Iraq and Afghanistan today, as well as what happened in Vietnam at an earlier time.

Castro remained in power for nearly 50 years, and when senility incapacitated him, he behaved like Kiem Elsung, the North Korean President, and some Arab leaders. There is no controversy that Castro, who asked Moscow for help during his economic and security resistance against Washington, succeeded in carrying out several reforms, which both friends and enemies praised.

The world longest-serving leader eliminated the local and U.S. mafias, shut down the gambling, and publicized prostitution houses. We say "publicized prostitution" as it is impossible for anyone to eliminate all the forms of prostitution.

Additionally, Castro reformed the corrupt civil service system, which had been experienced during the reign of his predecessor and ensured employment opportunities for the people of his country. Moreover, he gave top priority to education and public health. He also sent medical teams to the friendly Marxist

countries with little cost such as the former Democratic Republic of Yemen. Further, he sent professors to teach students of medicine colleges in South Africa and Asia.

Thanks to a lavish assistance from Moscow before the collapse of Soviet Union, Castro maintained the stability of prices of sugar, which is the biggest Cuban product, and low prices for buying oil. Even after the fall of Soviet Union, the Cuban leader concentrated his efforts on improving the living standards of citizens and fighting all the forms of corruption despite the low average national income and the continued immigration of citizens to the U.S. coastal city of Miami.

Cuba is still receiving great influxes of tourists from the U.S. itself, particularly after alleviating the travel restrictions, due to its natural attractions, low living costs, and people being fond of the famous Havana Cigarette. Visitors of Cuba favored the Cuban medication due to the creativity of doctors and the reasonable prices of treatment, compared to the medication prices in other parts of the Americas.

The political and economic stability prevailed the relatively small island, the area of which is 110 thousand square kilometres and is populated by 12 million souls. The average per capita income in the island seems to be good, estimated at \$4,000 per year despite the U.S. embargo.

On the contrary, the people of Cuba suffer the absolute dictatorship exercised by Castro and his brother Raul, who is currently in charge of Castro's duties. The Cuban people are deprived of enjoying human rights, a fact usually realized in some third world countries and the former European Communist countries. Even after the fragmentation of Soviet Union and the end of Castro's reign, colored with the extremist Marxism, nobody expects foreign investments to reach Cuba or any economic liberalism to be perceived in the island due to totalitarianism.

No doubt, Castro's regime is still

easier than any other regimes in some of the third world countries in Africa and Asia. Despite the fact that some Asian countries turned to be liberal, the African states ranked on the bottom of the list of world countries because of their failed democracies and ailing economies.

After Castro passes away, people expect for sure that his brother Raul, who is the aged Cuban leader's student and beloved one, will assume power and rule the island. There is an exception that Raul may not succeed his elder brother if there is a popular revolution due to break out because of a half century of oppression, totalitarianism, and slavery.

Farouk Luqman is a Yemeni journalist from Aden. He is editor in chief of Malayalam News and Urdu Magazine published in Saudi Arabia.

SKETCHED OPINION



By Samer

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Iran opens a window of opportunity on Lebanon

Michael Young

In an interview with French daily *Le Figaro* published on Saturday, the head of Iran's national security council, Ali Larijani, had some interesting things to say about Lebanon. After calling for Franco-Iranian cooperation to help resolve the Lebanese crisis, he proposed a four-point plan. In many respects the plan was a trap, an opening hardly worth considering in most of its details, but for one thing: for the first time, an Iranian official mentioned a mechanism for Hizbullah's disarmament.

Larijani's plan is not so very different, in most aspects, from what Hizbullah is demanding today. In a first phase, Larijani proposed forming a national unity government in which all sides would be represented; in a second phase, holding the trial inside Lebanon, not before an international court, of those suspected of involvement in the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri; in a third phase, in three months, election of a new president who is a consensus figure "not emotionally implicated with one side of Lebanon's political class"; and in a fourth phase, initiating an effort to "convince" Hizbullah to transform itself into a political party and integrate its militants into the Lebanese Army.

The sequencing of Larijani's phases made his plan unworkable, as did the fact that Iran would like to see the Hariri tribunal effectively neutralised. However, two things were significant in the initiative, beyond what it meant for Hizbullah. First, Larijani confirmed that Iran had a crucial role to play in Lebanon's future, especially when it came to the future of Hizbullah, and that it was willing to engage the international community on that front. Lebanon is under de facto international trusteeship today, thanks to the web of United Nations resolutions affecting the country; Larijani implicitly admitted that Iran accepted this situation and was willing to deal with it, but also that it had the means and wherewithal to shape outcomes in Lebanon, negative-

ly or positively.

The second message was that it was Iran, not Syria, that would "deliver" Hizbullah. By suggesting undermining the Hariri tribunal, Larijani didn't stray off the reservation of Syrian-Iranian relations. However, he did pull the rug out from under a major Syrian justification for returning to Lebanon. This might, of course, have been a manoeuvre, and if the Syrians were ever to return, it is not Larijani who would stop them.

The Iranian ambassador in Beirut would only describe Larijani's scheme as "ideas". However, the plan may represent a qualitatively new moment for Iranian involvement in Lebanese affairs, and the Syrians could not have been enthusiastic. Here's why.

It would be foolish to believe that Syria and Iran are at this time divided over Lebanon. Their interests run in parallel, and there is much mileage in continued cooperation. However, Hizbullah Secretary-General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah's speech last Friday may have indicated there are stress marks worth highlighting. Many interpreted his statements on the deadlock in the Nahr al-Bared Palestinian refugee camp, particularly his insistence that both the army and its entry into the camp were "red lines", as a defence of Syrian interests. Partly, they were. Syria doesn't want the army to go into Nahr al-Bared, as this would represent a major setback for its strategy in North Lebanon. It might also lead to the legitimisation of military force when addressing Palestinian groups outside the camps, particularly the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, which is under Syria's thumb.

Nasrallah has similar calculations. The disarmament and elimination of the PFLP-GC is a red line for Hizbullah too, and the secretary-general all but made that clear in the national dialogue sessions last year. Similarly, Nasrallah knows that a Lebanese Army considered credible by a majority of Lebanese is one that makes Hizbullah's weapons look superfluous. That is why the March 14 Alliance (a coalition of anti-Syrian

political parties and independents) rushed up to the Defence Ministry last week to show support for the armed forces and their commander, General Michel Suleiman.

However, there also appeared to be sincerity in Nasrallah's warning to the army. If the army enters Nahr al-Bared, the Syrians will almost certainly respond by encouraging Salafists in the Ain al-Hilweh camp in Sidon to rise up against the army. The mainstream Palestinian groups, particularly Fatah and Hamas, while outnumbering the small Islamist groups, are not united enough to decisively prevent this from happening. What would this mean for Nasrallah? He could find himself, much to his alarm, with a Salafist insurrection at the South's doorstep, which could prove disastrous for Sunni-Shiite relations, and for Hizbullah in particular. This could be the first stage in an effort to make of Lebanon a new Iraq.

Would Syria do that to Nasrallah? After all isn't he a redoubtable ally of the Assad regime? The secretary-general knows that Syria, in an effort to ward off the threat of the international tribunal, may be willing to go all the way in Lebanon, even if it means provoking Sunni-Shiite hostilities.

In the coming months there will continue to be efforts to play Lebanese communities against each other. For the moment we must presume that Hizbullah, while it will spare no effort to advance its own agenda, will not readily allow itself to be pushed toward civil war either. Iran probably agrees. The Larijani plan is a ruse, but it contains a notable idea. The majority in Lebanon, as it watches the United States and Iran begin their dialogue over Iraq, might investigate if there are ways to exploit that notable idea. And it must ask Nasrallah what he thinks about it.

Michael Young is opinion editor of the Daily Star. This abridged article is distributed by the Common Ground News Service (CGNews) and can be accessed at www.commongroundnews.org. The full text can be found at www.dailystar.com.lb.

It's now up to Europe to prove its global relevance

By: Joschka Fischer

Europe today presents a contradictory picture. It is a land of peace, democracy, and the rule of law. It is also a land of prosperity: Its economy is competitive, its currency strong, inflation is low, and its standards of living are among the highest in the world. Europeans benefit from very high levels of social protection, inexpensive, high-quality education, strict environmental standards, and excellent infrastructure. In addition, Europe has unmatched cultural diversity and great natural beauty. It all sounds like a utopian dream.

With its 500 million people and the world's largest single market, Europe, even if not seen by the world as a real union, is still an economic giant. But politically it is a dwarf - and shrinking. Ours is a century of large states, and the further rise of China, India, the United States, and Japan will soon make the largest European powers look puny. Even today the three largest European Union members barely manage to offset Europe's loss of political weight, much less to stem the tide. Without a strong EU, this development will only intensify.

The world outside Europe is changing rapidly, and it won't wait for Europeans mired in an agonizing process of self-discovery. The alternatives are clear: Keep up or be left behind.

In America, despite the current obsession with Iraq, a strategic view is taking hold that defines the 21st century mainly in terms of the triad of China, India, and the US. Japan's role as an American ally is viewed as a given. The relationship with Russia is placed somewhere between partnership and renewed rivalry, but Russia is not really seen as a strategic challenge. And, in strategic terms, the rest is silence - which applies also to Europe.

The bottom line for America is that while Europe no longer creates problems, for the foreseeable future, the

continent, due to its lack of unity, will not be willing or able to contribute to solving the world's problems. Europe's involvement in NATO's efforts to stabilize Afghanistan only emphasizes this ambiguity.

On the one hand, Europe's role in Afghanistan is appreciated by the US, but on the other, it also exposes the Europeans' weakness and the alliance's limited capabilities. While the US political elite has not written off NATO, expectations about its crisis-solving competence are fast being scaled down. This view of Europe as a negligible political entity is fully shared in Beijing, Moscow, and New Delhi.

This is the starting point at which a new generation of leaders is taking over the reins in the EU's three largest member states. Gerhard Schroeder, Jacques Chirac, and Tony Blair are history. In Germany, the government of Angela Merkel has been in power for one and a half years. Nicolas Sarkozy has just assumed the French presidency. Gordon Brown will soon take over as prime minister in the United Kingdom.

Within just a few weeks, this trio will be called on to make a vital decision on the future of the EU. That decision concerns the Constitutional Treaty and its prospects. What the new foundational document is called in the end is a minor point; what is essential for Europe's future is that constitutional reform is revived and gives Europe a strong foundation. The question, then, is whether the new leaders, as early as next month, succeed in a new effort to adopt the vital institutional reforms that the enlarged EU requires.

The best way to proceed is to focus on the essentials. Part III of the blocked Constitutional Treaty is merely a compendium of existing EU treaties, which - because these treaties will remain in force regardless of whether they are part of the new document - can be decoupled from the rest.

Part II of the stalled document, the Charter of Fundamental Rights, can be postponed. To be sure, this would be painful because, as the EU bureaucra-

cies gain more authority, the EU's democratic deficit will widen without clearly defined fundamental rights. If Part II is postponed, the European Court will have to define these fundamental rights for the time being. This is only a second-best solution, but it is better than nothing.

Part I of the treaty, however, is indispensable, as is the new voting procedure, with its "double majority" rule balancing the role of the states and the population. To reopen this part of the debate, and thus to allow a dilution of its substance, would be a historic failure and a major setback for Europe's future. If this is the price of going ahead with the treaty, it is better to do nothing at all and bide one's time.

The stakes are thus very high for Europe in the coming weeks. If the substance of the Constitutional Treaty is saved, Europe will increasingly develop into a global player. Only then will the trans-Atlantic alliance also have a future. To be sure, this process will take time, and there will be other setbacks. But the fundamental direction will be correct, and there will be real cause for optimism. If, on the other hand, this attempt, too, should fail, or end in a lazy, useless compromise, Europe's decline will accelerate and trans-Atlantic relations will become increasingly turbulent.

It is now up to Merkel, Sarkozy, and Brown to prove - despite all the differences that may exist between them - that they understand the challenges that globalization poses for Europe: The EU member states will be able to defend their interests in the world of the 21st century only to the extent that the EU itself is strong.

Joschka Fischer was Germany's foreign minister and vice chancellor from 1998 to 2005. A leader in the Green Party for nearly 20 years, he is now a visiting professor at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School. Source: Project Syndicate-Institute of Human Sciences

(c) www.project-syndicate.org.



Yemen International Telecommunications Co. (TeleYemen) Vacancy Announcement

Yemen International Telecommunications Co. (TeleYemen), would like to call qualified candidates to apply for the following vacant posts Within it's main office in Sana'a.

Business Information system Analyst

primary Function

- To assist the administration of Teleyemen central billing and management application systems.
- Perform applications administration configurations, and participate in trouble shooting.
- Create and execute test and validation plans to facilitate development of software.
- Maintain system data integrity application security, and internal control.
- Develop standard and adhoc basic reports and queries for application systems.
- Configure central billing system tasks.
- Coordinate with application vendors for maintaining and developing the application.
- Maintain and Trial Logs for referenced tracking and eventual analysis.
- Evaluate the pattern of both users activities and vendors performance.
- Develop training modules for user of the application systems
- Organize and Monitor all tasks and activities related to information system applications.

Job Requirement

- BS in computer science.
- Oracle experience
- 5 years in Application Systems Administration out of which a minimum of 1-2 years supporting enterprise application systems in a large scale setting.
- Good organization, communication and customer service skills are mandatory.
- Experience with administration & configuration of enterprise application systems required.
- Knowledge of data base management systems and application logic required.
- Exposure to report creation and ODBC interfaces.
- Proficiency with business and/or technical writing.
- Demonstrated customer service skills required, including the ability to defuse stressful or challenging situations.
- An aptitude for problem solving, crisis management and tasks administration.
- Good command of English.

Interested candidates may submit their application letter with detailed Curriculum.

Vitae ONLY to the following address no later than 15.6.2007 :-Please note that only candidates who fulfill above requirements will be considered

C/O Manager Human Resources, TeleYemen, PO Box 2646,Sana'a,Yemen Republic.

www.teleyemen.com.ye

Career Opportunity

A Leading FMCG company is looking to recruit dynamic people to its team. If you feel that you can either fill any of the following position please send in you CV.

Human Resources Manager

The incumbent will be reporting to the General Manager and will be responsible for developing and managing the current HR department.

The incumbent should be a university graduate in either Human Resources or Business Administration with at least 2 years experience in the same field. Should possess a good command of both Arabic and English languages.

Key Accounts Manager

The incumbent will be in charge of Key Accounts clients within the entire republic and will be responsible for developing this channel.

The incumbent should be a university graduate in either Business Administration or in Marketing. Should have at least 2 years experience in the same field and should possess a good command of both Arabic and English languages. Experience in Trade Marketing or Brand Management will be an added advantage.

Brand Manager

The incumbent will be in charge of a number of the company's brands within the entire republic and will be responsible for developing these brands across all channels.

The incumbent should be a university graduate in Marketing or Business Administration and should have at least 1 year experience in the same field or in Trade Marketing. An experience in Sales will be also accepted. Should also possess a good command of both Arabic and English languages.

Please send in your hand written applications and CV to the following address either on or before 15th of June 2007 and state clearly the job being applied.

The Recruiter

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Islamic Microfinance, development of baseline industries, and making dreams come true

Yemen's Microfinance Industry: Booming potential

By: Raidan Al-Saqqaf
alsaqqaf@gmail.com

Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs and Minister of Planning and International Cooperation AbdulKarim Al-Arhabi has announced that Yemen will establish the first "bank for the poor" under the name Bank Al-Amal – or the Hope Bank by the end of this year. He added that the Al-Amal Bank will be modeled on the success of Bangladesh's prize winning Grameen Bank, which is a very successful example of microfinance and rural development in the world, adding that there are over 1,000,000 prospect borrowers who, with a little cash, can be involved in positive and profitable economic activity, and thus, providing employment and livelihood for themselves and their families.



Dr. AbdulKarim Al-Arhabi

Al-Arhabi said that the Social Fund for Development will be actively involved in the set-up of Yemen's first Microfinance credit bank. He added that the Social Fund has developed several Small and Micro Enterprise programs with the objective of providing credit to small and tiny enterprises. Further, he stated that the Fund has adopted global best practices and have made tailor-made solutions for the Yemeni borrowers in terms of the amounts required, targeting most impoverished areas, and in fact developing an Islamic microfinance product to ensure that all segments of the society can borrow from the fund through their respective professional cooperatives and charitable organizations, such as the fishermen cooperative society in Hodeida and Hadhramout as well as agricultural societies, and so on.

There are several spin-off micro credit programs that serve a total of 30,962 clients who are actively borrowing, in addition to 28,192 active savers (March 2007), with

156,203 loans valued at 7,646 billion Riyals, involved in a wide range of economic activities from agriculture and fisheries to handicrafts, transportations and other services. While Statistics from the Social Fund indicate that the successful loan recovery rate ranges from 96 percent to 100 percent.

Minister of Planning Al-Arhabi has further added that Al-Amal bank would boost popular demand for micro credit loans in order to grow the number of borrowers especially among "the talented poor", describing the Yemeni public as highly business oriented and can become very successful entrepreneurs. He also specified that the most important effect such a program might have is providing employment and enabling people help themselves.

However, he expressed the hardship in terms of introducing the concept of "borrowing for business" to the Yemeni society, indicating when Yemeni people need liquidity they

either borrow from their friends and neighbors or sell any of their property, adding that it is hard for Yemenis to sign up to a loan where there are definite repayment terms and a regular monitoring mechanism, because of a social complex resembling in commitment. But he also said that there is a cultural change taking place and that people are more aware and more interested in microfinance.

Mr. Mohammed Saleh Al-Lai, head of the Small and Micro Enterprise Development Unit within the Fund, has stated that although the fund has no restrictions on the sort of business activity to be carried out by the loan, it attempts to develop base-line level industries that are more suitable and inline with the marketable activity of their respective locations, for example in Taiz governorates there are several micro credit programs focused on milk products, dairies, and cheese products which are produced in a cooperative manner.

He also added that the Social Fund for Development have set up an agency for micro and tiny enterprises development, the agency's prime focus is on the technical and managerial training, research activities, and consultation services, with a special focus on technology and the technical developments that might be helpful for the enterprises' development and growth.

"Sometimes the need is to train them on how to market their products and services, how to package it, how to expand the market prospects, and

create a product that suits the needs of consumers in the local market" Al-Lai added.

Al-Lai also told the Yemen Times that the work of the Social Fund for development affects over 310,000 small and tiny enterprises employing over 500,000 employees, adding that the Small and Tiny enterprises sector is the largest employer in the economy and the Fund has a long-term strategy which focuses on building several base-line industries in the economy, he said that if we can grow the number of total people employed in tiny enterprises to 3 per enterprise, therefore we would have a solution to Yemen's unemployment problem.

The Missing role of the private sector

In spite of the great potential for micro credit in Yemen, bankers have taken the backseat in the development of the industry. In fact, Minister of Planning Al-Arhabi has indicated that the Social Fund has held talks and negotiations with several banks in Yemen in order to introduce micro credit products to the Yemeni Market, stating that the Fund has offered technical know-how, administrative support, and other types of support in order to develop a product range, however, he said, the Yemeni bankers have let us down in this regard, forcing the Fund to buy-in Al-Amal bank the stake which was allocated to be bought by the private sector.

However, his Excellency has stated that the bank's stake is going to be sold to two Saudi investors who are interested in Al-Amal bank, adding that there are several other regional bankers, who are currently planning of expanding their operations into Yemen and are working on strategies in order to cater for the needs of the micro credit segment. Additionally, he added that German Development Bank KfW has offered to establish an other pro-poor micro credit bank in Yemen during the coming few years.

Business In Brief

EU finances Yemen's Agricultural Development
The European Union has announced a grant of 15 million Euros for Agricultural Development during the years 2008/2009. This grant would target developing agricultural production, that depends on rainfall, and also developing livestock production.

U.S. to increase development support for Yemen
The U.S. ambassador to Yemen Mr. Thomas C. Krajeski has stated the United States will increase its support to Yemen in terms of enhancing transparency and establishing sustainable development. He stated that while meeting with Prime Minister Mujawar recently.

3.5 million Employed in Yemen
The Central Statistics Organizations has stated that there are 3,55 million people employed in Yemen, out of which 3,044 million are men, and the reminder 311 thousand are women. The government provides employment to 26 percent of the 3.55 million people, out of which slightly over a hundred thousand are women.

AMTC opens new show room
On the occasion of 50 years passing since the First Toyota Land Cruiser arrived to Yemen,

The Automotive and Machinery Trading Center has held an event to mark the occasion, at which a Land Cruiser was given to a lucky winner. It also opened its brand new showroom located in the 60-meter street.

Al-Attar: Yemen must have a stock exchange
Director of the General Investment Authority Mr. Salah Al-Attar has stated that Yemen should have a stock exchange in order to boost macroeconomic development and attract more investors into the country, adding that Investment Authority would carry out an intensive program for promoting investment opportunities in Yemen.

Yemen and Oman joint border industrial zone
Yemen and Oman are currently studying steps to set up a joint border industrial zone to be located in the border district of al-Mazyouna and that the two countries commence work at the same time from both sides. The project was discussed by Minister of Industry and Trade Yahya al-Mutawakil and the Omani head of the Yemeni-Omani Parliamentary Brotherhood Association Ahmed bin Bukheit who also reviewed spheres of both countries commercial and economic bonds, in addition to how to activate the Yemeni Omani Joint Businessmen Council.

الشركة اليمنية للغاز الطبيعي المسال
YEMEN LNG COMPANY

Job Vacancy

The Yemen LNG project involves the construction and operation of a gas pipeline, a harbour and a liquefied natural gas processing plant at Balhaf on the Gulf of Aden which will export 6.7 million tons of LNG per annum. The project offices are based in Sana'a and the project has an anticipated lifespan of over 20 years. Yemen LNG Company is now recruiting the temporary and permanent staff who will construct and manage the project.

Job Title: Senior SAP Administrator – Reference No. 139
Reports to: SAP Project Manager
Contract Status: Two years fixed-term contract
Work Location: Sana'a, Yemen

Duties & Responsibilities:

- Manage all local environments for SAP R/3 and BW and provide BASIS support: backup, restore/recovery, reboots, disaster management
- Create SAP client copies and refresh training environment when needed
- Log and execute transport orders from one environment to another environment including OSS notes, support pack application, and technical upgrades
- Resolve and follow-up all technical incidents as per the SLA and generate system statistics and monitor KPIs
- Run manual batches and schedule and monitor automated batch jobs
- Monitor and manage hardware/server performance: infrastructure survey and monitoring, installation and troubleshooting, operating system installation, printers/spool management in SAP environment
- Monitor and maintain Oracle Database: Table space's monitoring and management, Tuning, Database incident and problem management
- Monitor BW info cubes loading and monitor all interfaces between R/3, BW, and other applications
- Test authorization profiles and perform user/authorization activities for both R/3 and BW
- Maintain system security and manage SAP related software: SAP GUI, protection, anti-virus application, security SAP Routers
- Maintain all technical infrastructure and authorization related documentation
- Supervise, train and develop SAP BASIS Administrator

Qualifications required:

- Bachelor degree in Computer Science or equivalent
- 7+ years experience in SAP BASIS Administration (preferably in oil and gas industry)
- SAP BASIS certification. Certification in user administration and security is a plus
- Hands-on involvement in SAP implementations or upgrades (BW experience is a plus)
- Excellent management, communication, interpersonal and teamwork skills
- Fluent English both spoken and written

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Visit Yemen LNG's newly launched website at (WWW.YFMENI.LNG.COM).
- Go to Careers, then to Vacancies to enter our Web Application System.
- Register your personal and professional data in order to log in and apply, mentioning the title and the reference number of the position you are applying for.
- Do not make duplicate applications by fax, etc.
- Yemen LNG Company will contact the selected candidates for interview and further assessment.
- Applicants who are not contacted have not been successful but can still apply for future positions.

Closing Date: 17 June, 2007

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On the occasion of World Labor Day Al-Yamania Airlines recognizes outstanding employees



On the occasion of World Labor Day, AlYamania airlines honored 215 of its employees during the celebration held at the head office in the capital city of Sana'a. At the commencement of this occasion, Cap. Abdulkhaliq Al-Qadhi delivered a speech in which he congratulated the honored employees, commented: "We are celebrating Labor Day after the passage of one year of serious work and excellent performance of all the company employees and the certificate, IOSA, that we must take pride of, is a result of that work. This certificate is one of the international certificates granted to conservative companies for quality and safety."

He added that they do not work to spend time but work according to the international standards approved by international organizations. "The awarded certificates were not given as compliments or at the expense of other political matters, yet they come as a result of the serious work and because of what the specialists have done in the operation and maintenance department," he maintained.

Al-Qadhi went on to say, "You know that since last year there has been an open air program that led to breaking the monopoly Yemenia had had over the previous years over Yemeni skies. Opening the air will lead to extraordinary competitions besides the external ones coming from gulf countries and the potentials they have make us alert to the competition," Al-Qadhi added.

He affirmed that Yemenia's existence requires it to keep up with the current changes, pointing out that there are

false rumors indicating crises in the company. "We are in a good conditions and our situation is like Emirates or Gulf Airlines, if we continue working," Al-Qadhi assured the employees. He also affirmed that for competing they need suitable conditions and upgrading airplanes, developing the services and competent and highly qualified man force. "We are facing intimate associates who have limited capabilities due to training or education," he said. Al-Qadhi went on to say that they have extra employees because there was a merger of two companies of the same level and staff numbers so as to compete and increase the performance in every sector of the company. This necessitates restructuring in most of the departments and Yemenia is about to finish that, adding that there are some employees who are to retire as well as incapable health wise. Such employees must not be thrown into the street without having continuous pen-

sions and if Yemenia decides so, they must have their complete rights without any disadvantages at all, and however, they can seek another opportunity outside Al-Yamania, AL-Qadhi asserted.

"We are working with the government and Saudi Arabia to find financial compensations for pensions for permanent, but we will not announce these compensations until determined," he declared.

This is what Yemenia wants to assure its staff about. He urged managers of main administrations and sub-divisions to inform top management about extra employees and that every one must increase his/ her level of productivity, if they do not want to be considered among redundant staff.

"Flight schedules have been prepared and they will be economic, and I think the process is working out," Al-Qadhi maintained. He added that the performance of employees will



increase and their financial status will be better but not at the expense of the employees who went out. He finished his speech saying, "today we are going to recognize a group of the outstanding employees and those who worked with Sibar during restructuring as well as

electronic tickets team. Honoring is for all, I would like to renew my congratulations to everybody, particularly those working behind the scenes every where, thanking those who contributed to make this company a real success and later on they will be honored."



Aden Sewerage Project, Contract No. 3A Republic of Yemen

EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PREQUALIFICATION APPLICATION

Further to our advertisement on 7th May 2007 in Al Thawrah and Yemen Times newspapers, inviting prequalification of Contractors for the Aden Sewerage Project, Contract 3A, the Project Management Unit, in response to requests for extension, is pleased to announce an extension of one week in the date of submission of application for prequalification.

Accordingly, the last date of submission of application along with necessary documents shall now be 13 June 2007.

Please note that no further extensions will be granted and no application will be accepted after the above date.

For more details, please refer to the above mentioned publications.

مشروع مجاري عدن، العقد A3 الجمهورية اليمنية تمديد لآخر موعد لتقديم بيانات التأهيل

عطفاً على إعلاننا المنشور بتاريخ ٧ مايو ٢٠٠٧م في صحيفتي الثورة واليمن تايمز، والداعي لتقديم بيانات تأهيل المقاولين لمشروع مجاري عدن، العقد A3، يسر إدارة المشروع، استجابة للعديد من الطلبات، ان تعلن عن تمديد آخر موعد لتقديم بيانات التأهيل وذلك لأسبوع واحد.

وعليه، فإن الموعد النهائي لتقديم بيانات التأهيل مع الوثائق الضرورية الأخرى قد صار الآن في ١٣ يونيو ٢٠٠٧م.

ويرجى مراعاة انه لن يتم منح أي تمديد آخر ولن يتم قبول أية بيانات بعد هذا التاريخ. للمزيد من المعلومات، يرجى مراجعة إعلاننا المذكور أعلاه.

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رئيس الجمهورية
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JOB VACANCY

For the execution of the project "Support of Yemen's Accession to the WTO" funded by the European Commission, GTZ International Service (Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH, International Services) will employ a translator (English/ Arabic/English) up to the end of 2008 (November 2008). The position can be described as follows:

Legal Translator

Qualifications and Skills:

University degree in English, preferably majoring in translation, and excellent command of English language are extremely essential. Must be computer literate with at least 5 days of experience in trade-related translation from Arabic to English and vice versa. Previous experience with an internationally aided project, legal firm, or international company/organization is a plus. Secretarial skills are also welcomed.

Duties:

- Translation into English of all Accession submissions to WTO Secretariat, including Answers to questions from WTO members;
- Translation of WTO-related materials into Arabic;
- Preparation of draft translations of Yemeni Laws and Legislations;
- Occasionally simultaneous interpretation in Project-related events, including Seminars, Workshops, Presentations, etc.;
- Preparation of correspondences and reports in English; and
- Any other duties related to translation/interpretation from English to Arabic or vice versa.

- Employment will start 1 August 2007 (or earlier), depending on ongoing procedures.
- Yemeni Nationals of suitable qualification are invited to present their application in English prior to 1st July 2007 to:

Coordination and Communication Office with the World Trade Organization/Project Management Unit, c/o Dr. Achim Seiler, GTZ, P.O. Box 692, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen, Tel.: (01) 561 114 118, Mobile: 733 777 398; 733 777 398.

- Shortlisted applicants will be invited for interviews in early July

Under the auspices of His Excellency,

the President of the Republic

Ali Abdullah Saleh

and under the motto

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Jeita Grotto: An exhibition sculpted by water and time

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There are many sites in Lebanon that tourists and visitors take pleasure visiting and which interest them to tour. Maghareh Jeita is one of the most beautiful caverns in the Middle East and in Lebanon, in particular. They are green on the outside of the mountain and limestone inside the caverns. The outside of the mountain is green while inside the caverns is limestone.

The action of water Dripping, has created beneath the wooded hills of Mount Lebanon. A water carving exhibition exists under the hills of the forests on the mountains of Lebanon.

Visitors to Jeita grotto can witness the amazing views that many talk about, as curiosity causes them to discover the secrets of Jeita grotto's caves. It is a natural exhibition sculpted by water droplets and several million years. During the short visit presented via this article, readers may be able to see and imagine the grotto's exhibition. The exciting two-hour tour begins

with a short ride up the mountain in one of four Austrian cable cars.

The first part of the tour begins by going on foot to the upper galleries, while the second includes a boat ride through the lower galleries. There's also a film presentation depicting Jeita grotto's history in different languages.

The upper galleries

Visitors begin their tour in the upper gallery. The approach to these dry galleries through a 120-meter-long concrete tunnel does little to prepare visitors for the surprising world beyond. Formed several million years before the lower caverns, this section shows what the entire cave system was like before geological conditions displaced the subterranean river to its present level.

For 650 meters, visitors wind their way through the caverns' different levels, contemplating the flowing stone draperies and other formations. Perhaps the most dramatic sights are the yawning canyons and sinkholes, some dropping more than 100 meters.

Geologically, the caves provide a channel or escape route for the underground river, which is the principal source of Nar Al-Kalb, or Dog River.

The modern discovery of the underground river of Jeita dates to 1836 and is attributed to Rev. William Thomson, an American missionary who ventured some 50 meters into the cave.

The upper galleries were discovered in August 1958 by Lebanese speleologists and required at that a hazardous climb to 650 meters above the entrance of the underground river. The upper galleries opened in January 1969.

The lower galleries

Before entering the lower galleries is a huge statue of a seated elderly white man who seems sad, but no one knows why. Called the "Man of Time," he appears to look at the visitors, observing them wisely and patiently.

The lower galleries take visitors from the caves to an underground world of severe beauty created over millions of years. The area contains the voice of water flowing and a sense of cold air.

The 600-meter boat trip on the

subterranean lake is just a sample of the system, which has been explored for nearly 910 meters.

The first impression of this area is the sound of rushing water and a sensation of clean, cold air. However, the roar of a waterfall at the entrance gives way to profound silence as visitors glide deeper into the cave where an effective new lighting system illuminates expert rock climbers who marvel at the columns and sculptures fashioned by those great architects: water and time.



Jeita grotto is considered the essence of Lebanese tourism. The "Man of Time" appears amid near Jeita grotto's lower galleries. Yemen Times photo by Fatima Al-Ajel.



A view of part of the upper galleries depicting limestone. www.yazeinab.org



In the lower galleries, visitors ride in small boats to tour the underground river, which is the principal source of Nar Al-Kalb, or Dog River. www.lgic.org

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